



# Politics Meets Policies

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The Emergence of

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Programmatic Political Parties

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# Foreword

One of the most striking findings of International IDEA's report *Inside Politics: Changes and Continuities in Political Organizations of the Andean Countries*, the preparation of which I had the honour to lead between 2005 and 2007, was that political parties very often seem to lose their programmatic nature and turn into ephemeral election machines. My co-authors and I interviewed numerous leaders of the most important parties of the Andean region and observed that their organizations faced their responsibilities with a poor capacity to develop and communicate policies and programmes. Naturally, this had the effect of hollowing politics out. We concluded that: 'some (or many) political organizations have stopped making politics. They merely work as good for confrontation situations on newsworthy topics, but increasingly outside the substantive issues such as development, poverty, employment and inequality.'

Today, we could prove that the emptying out of programmatic politics was neither temporary nor limited to the Andean region or Latin America. With exceptions—which this book does well to highlight—the observation could be valid for democracies in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and even Western Europe.

The emptying out of politics harms democracy as military coups often used to. Leaders who govern over this process aggravate the crisis of representation and legitimization they claim to defend. In contexts of crisis and structural adjustments, they often pretend to be democracy supporters by populist rhetoric but without a concrete programme; thus, they do very little to effectively address the social needs of the majority of the people.

Although elections and pluralism are expanding, political parties face this global crisis. They are performing their activities in a context aggravated by what Manin called the 'audience democracy' and Sartori called 'videopolitics'. The mass media have contributed to the profound change in the ways of politics and the practice of democracy. Although in some countries in Latin America (such as Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay) political parties maintain their prominence, in many other countries parties and party systems have eroded. The new politics is characterized by moving from face-to-face relations toward media relations, the transience of government programmes, the predominance of scandals, the 'pollcracy' and a persistent increase in the cost of politics, all of which facilitates corruption and turncoats, and the increasing commodification and privatization of democratic life.

In this context, the phenomenon of non-programmatic parties contradicts the democratic ideal. The democratic revolution emerged with the project and process of converting subjects (who are ordered) into citizens (who are convinced). Nowadays, however it seems that democratic competition is not directed at citizens but at consumers (who must be seduced) or customers (who must be purchased).

To retrieve the ideal of equality that the promise of democracy has been based on since ancient Greece, it is important to define and clarify the scope of the democratic dimension that refers specifically to the social inclusion and effective participation of citizens in the world of politics. These are the aims and expected outcomes of democracy: the right to vote, equality, and formal rules and procedures that protect citizens from abuse by their state, as well as acceptable levels of welfare, including education, health, employment and social security.

Democracies are precarious and poor when they produce or reproduce poverty. Solid and genuine democracies are inclusive, not necessarily old. Although the democratic ideal is old in Latin America, democracies remain poor precisely because they are not inclusive. The United Nations Development Programme holds that disaffection with democracy in Latin America is all about results. There has been a divorce between political activity and the major problems of the region, including poverty and inequality. Polls conducted in recent years consistently show a correlation between citizen support for various Latin American democracies and effective social inclusion. Reflecting concrete results in reducing poverty and inequality in the region, the adoption of democracy is overwhelmingly a growing trend. However, such approval varies by socio-economic status: the poorest citizens tend to adopt democracy less.

There is still much to do—here I invoke Amartya Sen—to develop a citizenry that is capable of achieving freedom through the exercise of economic and social rights. This definition of democracy has historical roots. We find the concept of democracy as pursuing equality between citizens in classical and modern thinkers such as Alexis de Tocqueville and Stuart Mill—equality before the law, with equal opportunities.

Even though recovering egalitarian ideals and programmatic goals seems difficult, the history of countries like Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay demonstrates how sustained efforts—on the basis of policies of inclusion, forming coalitions with forces that were previously marginalized and aiming

to embrace all sectors of the community—produce profits that are even understandable for the concrete aspirations of politicians themselves.

The recent example of the Chilean presidential elections of 2013 is encouraging: coalitions and parties expressed real programmatic dilemmas regarding fundamental issues such as education, taxation and constitutional reform. Not that these discussions did not include personal barbs or other references to people in the parties, but each party showed a strong programmatic core.

This book discusses one of the biggest challenges facing democracy today. I am sure it will inspire technicians seeking to assist all political ideologies, but above all, this book will inspire politicians themselves, both men and women.

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*Member of International IDEA's Board of Advisers*  
*Lima, December 2013*

# Preface

Political parties in many countries struggle to make the shift from relying on personalities and clientelistic favours to debating and implementing policies and platforms. The programmatic development of political parties seems to have taken hold in Brazil and South Korea, where politics were deemed far from programmatic only two decades ago, while political parties in other countries have made less progress.

What have successful countries done that others have not? Is their success related to the nature of their political parties and politicians? Does the level of economic development or the capacity of the state facilitate the sharing of the 'cake' and the provision of quality public services? Do economic or political crises force politicians to change their behaviour and the rules of the game? Or do citizens grow more demanding of better services from their politicians?

The relevance of these questions for democracy today is hard to overstate. Political parties in any democracy are expected to aggregate citizens' interests and voice them in political debates and policy decisions. Delivering social and economic development is the most pressing challenge faced by political parties in the eyes of citizens. Public policies are more than technocratic decisions; they are about shaping countries' futures. Citizens must therefore have a say. Without political parties' intermediary role between citizens and their governments' policymaking, democracies risk losing legitimacy and meaning. When elections become popularity contests, citizens cast their votes without exercising a real choice concerning how they envision the future of their country, thus undermining the entire notion of democracy.

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) called on three teams of distinguished social scientists to research these complex questions. The result is this publication, which synthesizes three comparative analyses of the most conducive environments for the development of programmatic political parties. International IDEA hopes this book will foster debate on the relevance of programmatic politics among a global audience of politicians, students of politics and development, providers of democracy and development assistance, and policymakers.

Questions on the programmatic salience of political parties have been at the core of International IDEA's work for the last decade. Between 2004 and 2007, International IDEA embarked on global research that surveyed the contexts and regulatory frameworks of 50 countries in South and Central America, West and East Africa, Central and East Europe, and South Asia, and

the internal arrangements of around 300 parties. Although there are many exceptions, the research found evidence of a low degree of institutionalization and weak programmatic substance among political parties in all regions.

International IDEA has continued systematizing knowledge on the role of political parties in development, as shown by *Democracies in Development* (2006, with the Inter-American Development Bank), *Politics and Poverty in the Andean Region* (2007) and *Thinking Politics: Think Tanks and Political Parties in Latin America* (2008, with the Overseas Development Institute).

This publication is informed by those efforts, yet it does not represent the final chapter of International IDEA's work. Rather, the Institute intends to continue contributing to the debate on the conditions that facilitate increased engagement by political parties on the major development issues of our times. Most importantly, it aims to provide input to parties seeking to innovate their political playbook in ways that are important for citizens—particularly in terms of developing solid track records for improving citizens' access to jobs, public services, peace, freedoms and an improved quality of life.

*International IDEA*

# Acknowledgements

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Several other people also contributed in one way or another to this publication. Jenefrieda Isberg, Katarina Jorgensen, Emily Perez, and Kristina Jelmin provided valuable assistance at different moments throughout the research project, from beginning to end. Our reviewers, Helena Bjuremalm, Goran Feijic, Diane de Gramont and Rafael Roncagliolo Orbegoso, provided thoughtful, cutting-edge feedback to improve the implications drawn from the research. Kevin Devaux, Alberto Fernández Gibaja and Sam Jones worked on different summary versions of the original research reports. Sam Jones also drafted the first policy brief extracting lessons from this research, and presented it to party assistance organizations in Sigtuna, Sweden, in June 2012.

We would like to extend our gratitude to colleagues involved in organizing the workshop ‘The Challenges for Programmatic Political Organizations’, which brought together Quito politicians, democracy practitioners and researchers to discuss issues raised by the first chapter of this book as early as in November 2010: Ernesto Aranibar, Gabriela Chauvin, Silvana Muñoz, Cristhian Parreño and Terry de Vries from the Agora Democrática Programme in Quito, Ecuador. Alicia Del Aguila, Virginia Beramendi Heine, Alfonso Ferrufino and Carolina Floru from International IDEA’s missions to La Paz, Bolivia, and Lima, Peru, also encouraged further work on programmatic parties.

Last but not least, we are grateful to Kelley Friel for editing the different manuscripts and to Lisa Hagman for coordinating all essential production processes that put ink on paper.

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

AAM	Aam Aadmi Party (India)
AKP	Justice and Development Party (Turkey)
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party (India)
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party (India)
DALP	Democratic Accountability and Linkage Project
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party (Taiwan)
EOI	export-oriented industrialization
EU	European Union
GDP	gross domestic product
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
ISI	import-substituting industrialization
KMT	Kuomintang (Taiwan)
MP	member of parliament
NGO	non-governmental organization
PAN	Partido Acción Nacional [National Action Party] (Mexico)
PF	Patriotic Front (Zambia)
PPP	purchasing power parity
PRD	Democratic Revolutionary Party (Mexico)
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores [Workers' Party] (Brazil)
PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira [Brazilian Social Democratic Party]
RPG	responsible party government

# Introduction

This publication is about programmatic political parties: parties that provide citizens with meaningful choice over policies by reaching out to them through coherent political programmes. It explains what programmatic parties are, in which environments they are likely to emerge and how they come about.

Contributors to this book adhere to the following minimum interpretation of programmatic parties: a political party is thought to act programmatically when it exhibits well-structured and stable ideological commitments that constitute the basis for the link between the party and its constituency, electoral competition among parties and policymaking processes.<sup>1</sup>

The underlying idea linking all contributions to this book is that multiple factors facilitate the emergence of programmatic political parties; they do not fit into a simple formula or a particular sequencing or hierarchy, and operate in ways that seem very contextual. Those influencing factors, as will be discussed further in the concluding chapter, can be categorized according to their facilitating effects into: programmatic enablers (structural conditions such as urbanization, economic development, or institutional capacities that shape the choices faced by politicians and voters); triggers (opportunities to overcome otherwise unfavourable pre-existing settings for programmatic orientation); lockers (institutional reforms that might contribute to secure, already-produced programmatic gains) and agents (actors whose purpose and deliberate actions drive programmatic strategies).

This book analyses the dynamics under which such factors operate, since they are poorly understood. It is the result of a three-year research project. The first step was taken in 2010 when International IDEA commissioned Juan Pablo Luna to conduct a literature review. Its conclusions were discussed at a conference held in Quito in November 2010, at which representatives from various Latin American parties discussed the influence of opposition parties, think tanks and political party funding in their efforts to focus on policy for development.

The interest from politicians and democracy assistance providers in this issue prompted International IDEA to task teams led by Herbert Kitschelt and Nic Cheeseman to look into emblematic cases bearing lessons on the development of programmatic parties and party systems. Preliminary findings were presented to different audiences gathered by the National Democratic Institute in Washington, D.C., in 2011, by the Swedish International Cooperation Agency and the Swedish International Liberal Centre in Sigtuna

in June 2013, by the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy in The Hague in October 2013 and by the Overseas Development Institute in London in November 2013.

## **Understanding programmatic political parties**

In the comparative research and various cases that this book draws on,<sup>2</sup> political parties do not fall into neat divisions of ‘programmatic’ or ‘not programmatic’; rather, they are located along a broad spectrum. All parties, regardless of geography, economy or culture, may (or may not) deploy strategies that can be construed as relying on non-programmatic measures—including, for example, personalism, populism, clientelism, patronage, ethnicity or other identities. They might even display different strategies in different arenas, even simultaneously. This book focuses on emphasis, that is, the degrees to which programmatic strategies prevail over competing party mobilization strategies. ‘Programmatic parties’ are considered to have:

- A collection of policy positions that constitutes a well-structured and stable political programme by which the party is publicly known.
- Internal coherence and agreement on a range of policy positions.
- A commitment and ability to deliver on at least some key programmatic promises when in a position of power.
- A party programme that is the most defining element in how it attracts and engages its members.

The presence of one or more predominately programmatic parties in a given country does not, however, necessarily indicate a transition toward a programmatic political system. Political parties often exhibit both programmatic and non-programmatic characteristics, and if the wider party system is chiefly clientelistic, for example, the pressure can be such that a party fails to build on and consolidate its programmatic side and instead reverts back to clientelism. Only when programmatic politics is widely regarded as the primary method of conducting party politics can the wider party system be characterized as programmatic. The point at which there is a sufficient number of programmatic parties with enough momentum behind them to cause the transition to a predominately programmatic party system can be seen as a tipping point or point of contagion or diffusion. One of the main purposes of this publication is to explain such a transition and consolidation.

## The importance of programmatic parties

Political parties that exhibit programmatic qualities are thought to better represent different groups in society by aggregating their preferences and acting on their best interests; they are therefore accountable to the citizens on those grounds. When political parties commit themselves to implementing a clear set of policy positions if elected, they make themselves accountable to the people to deliver on their promises. Voters can then reward or punish parties chiefly through the ballot box. And because political parties that are predominantly programmatic facilitate stronger democratic accountability, they are more likely to deliver on nationwide development (e.g. jobs, public services, economic growth, security, poverty reduction) than other types of parties that seek to control state resources primarily for narrower purposes. Among other things, the increased accountability of programmatic parties helps legitimize the democratic system, and the focus on governance and debating policy is conducive to economic development and transparency. Given their focus on nationwide public goods, programmatic parties are also more likely to include broader sectors of society.

In many cases, political parties do not base themselves primarily on programmes and delivering nationwide public goods; they instead seek to secure voters' support or run governments using different methods (e.g. particularistic material exchanges, patronage of jobs, ethnic-based or other identity-targeted benefits, a charismatic leader). The performance and legitimacy of these types of representation are highly contingent on the historical, political or economic context to which they respond. With very few exceptions, women and men in countries without programmatic parties are less likely to be fully represented, and both they and democracy suffer as a result.

Where political parties have poor policy performance and a lack of accountability, citizens generally hold them in very low esteem, regardless of geographical or cultural realities, living standards or the country's experience with democracy. Where discontent does not exist, parties tackle the problems of the day through articulated political programmes. In much of the developing world, however, most parties are not perceived to be engaged with the production, deliberation and implementation of policies related to the substance of development.

It is vital for political parties' success to live up to their responsibilities for citizens' well-being. Understandably, politicians in every context try to maximize their

votes, as elections can, of course, be won by more pragmatic means. The risk is that parties that get elected via non-programmatic methods tend to pursue the interests of the few over those of the majority. The research presented in this book shows that countries in which parties compete primarily on the basis of policies are more likely to be better off: they have stronger institutions and are greater socio-economic achievers than countries where parties do not.

A programmatic foundation also presents benefits for the parties themselves. Programmatic parties are cheaper to operate than those based mainly on a patron-client model that survive through material exchanges. A party oriented around policies can allocate a greater proportion of its funds to programmatic campaigning, as well as issues such as voter research and image building. Consequently, the programmatic party model can, for example, help politicians inexpensively sustain the party's appeal beyond that of its current leader, promote internal coherence and more focused campaigning, build a homogeneous nationwide party, link ambitious politicians to a known party label, encourage greater commitment and participation by members, and facilitate fundraising.

## **Overview of the book**

This book is the result of research commissioned by International IDEA on the conditions that facilitate the emergence and consolidation of primarily programmatic parties and programmatic party systems. The first chapter is a literature review prepared by Juan Pablo Luna that places the subject of programmatic parties in the context of the 11 dimensions of the 'responsible party government' model. It also discusses potential correlates and causal hypotheses for programmatic politics, which in turn are run against the Democratic Accountability and Linkage Project data set (which covers data from 88 electoral democracies and a total of 506 parties).

The second chapter summarizes comparative research led by Herbert Kitschelt that probes three potential conditions (hard, soft and potential, in terms of how tractable they are) in the above data set and the parties and party systems in seven countries: Brazil, Bulgaria, Dominican Republic, India, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey. The combination of these sources allows the analytical comparison of different conditions to describe and explain degrees of programmatic party effort and competition.<sup>3</sup>

The third chapter presents research led by Nic Cheeseman that focuses on historical processes and paths of *programmatisation*. The approach offers nuanced narratives on the interplay between structural and contingent factors that shape the programmatic strength of national party systems. The chapter delves into the political trajectories of Brazil, India, Ukraine and Zambia and emphasizes the impact of ethnic identities and social and state organization on the emergence of programmatic parties under otherwise seemingly unlikely conditions.

The fourth chapter brings together the findings from the other three chapters and discusses their implications for action. It distils messages for politicians, party assistance organizations, researchers and others with an interest in helping make democracy and party politics more responsive to the pressing demands of social and economic development.

## Notes

- 1 Luna et al. 'Desk Review on Political Parties' (Stockholm, International IDEA, 2011) available at <[http://www.idea.int/development/upload/Luna\\_Desk-Review\\_Full.pdf](http://www.idea.int/development/upload/Luna_Desk-Review_Full.pdf)> accessed on 17 March 2014.
- 2 Unabridged versions of the whole research project are available on <<http://www.idea.int>>.
- 3 The data set and codebook can be found at <<https://web.duke.edu/democracy/data.html>>.

# CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 1

# Programmatic Parties: A Survey of Dimensions and Explanations in the Literature

*Juan Pablo Luna, Fernando Rosenblatt and Sergio Toro*

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## Introduction

Programmatic parties and party systems are usually regarded as a crucial element of enabling adequate democratic representation. In the developing world, however, parties mostly lack the capacity to structure programmatic linkages with voters. This inability, in turn, has been associated with a lower quality of democracy and suboptimal policymaking structures.

A programmatic party has well-structured and stable ideological commitments that constitute the basis for: (1) the link with its constituency; (2) electoral competition among parties and (3) the policymaking process. Ideally, to be classified as 'programmatic', a party would need to behave accordingly in all three arenas: predominantly structuring programmatic (rather than clientelistic or charismatic) linkages to voters; seeking to implement its programme when in government; and organizing the party in ways that facilitate the construction, diffusion and reproduction of its programmatic platform.

In spite of its theoretical importance, research on programmatic parties has been scarce until recently. This chapter describes the state of the field regarding the conceptualization, measurement and causal explanations of the presence of programmatic parties. It reviews 11 types of literature that deal with different dimensions of the issue: (1) the emerging literature on party system nationalization; (2) the literature on congressional policymaking and the programmatic cohesion of party delegations; (3) the party manifesto project and its derivations for analysing the nature of political parties' programmatic stances; (4) works analysing the relationship between organized interest groups, think tanks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), relevant minorities and political parties

in contemporary democracies; (5) the literature on party organization and internal politics; (6) studies adhering to the party-voter linkage framework; (7) the party system institutionalization approach and its relationship to the presence of programmatic parties; and the (8) structural; (9) political economy; (10) institutional and (11) historical-institutional determinants of the presence of programmatic parties.

The first section introduces basic definitions and responsible party government as the theoretical benchmark for analysing programmatic politics in a given party system. The second section discusses the relative advantages vis-à-vis alternative mobilization strategies from the point of view of party leaders and activists. The literature review is then summarized, along with a conceptual framework for the empirical analysis of programmatic politics. On that basis, the results of the empirical exploration of the distribution of programmatic party systems are then presented for all cases for which reliable and comparable information was available.

### ***How a programmatic party system works: the responsible party government ideal***

The responsible party government (RPG) ideal is a theoretical benchmark for analysing the scope of programmatic politics present in a given party system. It is used to conceptualize and measure what a programmatic party or party system is. Therefore, the terms RPG and ‘programmatic structure of the party system’ are used here interchangeably.

Party systems in which citizens and parties forge accountability relations based on programmatic linkages are thought to better approximate the ideal of political representation in modern democracies. According to the RPG ideal, citizens vote based on their substantive preferences. Meanwhile, parties offer distinct programmatic platforms and, while in office, govern according to those platforms. If they do not, they are held accountable in the next electoral round. Therefore, voters of different parties should have discernible programmatic and ideological stances that match those of the parties they identify with or vote for.

Put more simply, programmatic parties can be thought of as having well-structured and stable ideological commitments that constitute the basis for: (1) the link between the party and its constituency; (2) electoral competition among parties and (3) the policymaking process. In each of these arenas, the party or parties might behave according to programmatic strategies: by organizing the party in ways that facilitate the construction, diffusion and reproduction of its programmatic platform; by structuring programmatic linkages to voters; and by seeking to implement its programme when in

government. Ideally, to be ‘programmatic’, a party would have to stress such strategies in all three arenas.

This definition encompasses three fundamental dimensions that lie beneath the notion of political representation. First, it accounts for *mandate* representation or the degree of party *responsiveness* to the preferences of its constituency (Dalton 1985; Iversen 1994; Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999; Ranney 1962). For a party to be responsive to its constituents, the RPG requires at least three additional conditions: (1) policy divergence among the parties contesting the election; (2) relative policy stability on the part of the parties contesting the election and (3) policy voting on the part of the electorate (Adams 2001a).

Second, by considering the policymaking process, the RPG ideal incorporates the notion of *accountability representation*, which takes place when: (1) voters act retrospectively, voting to retain the incumbent party only when it acts in their best interest and (2) the incumbent party selects policies in order to be re-elected (Alesina 1988; Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999).

Finally, the definition explicitly acknowledges the organizational factors that trigger *mandate* and *accountability* representation. For instance, the degree to which parties mobilize activists and devise internal decision-making mechanisms is a central component of this dimension.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the following traits should be observed in an RPG ideal type:

- Voters of different parties have distinct ideological/programmatic preferences, and vote accordingly.
- Parties compete by mobilizing those distinct preferences.
- While in office, party representatives seek to implement policies that match those preferences.
- This complex set of interactions among voters, office-seeking politicians and parties occurs over time. Therefore, the ability of both parties to compete and pursue, while in office, alternative policy packages (in accordance with their redistributive stances on salient issues)—strengthens (or erodes) the conditions for programmatic linkages. Voters keep a running tally of party behaviour while in office, and retrospectively judge parties’ compliance with previous programmatic commitments and act accordingly—punishing ‘policy switchers’ and supporting those who ‘delivered’.
- If all of the above holds, and an RPG is consolidated over time, all major parties in the system should structure a modicum of programmatic linking to their constituents because (1) RPG requires programmatic differentiation between parties competing in the system and (2) programmatic ‘contagion’ among parties should occur in programmatic-prone systems.

In this light, the degree of programmatic mobilization is more adequately conceptualized as a systemic trait. Moreover, RPG is only viable when more than one party competes programmatically.

However, in rapidly evolving party systems such as those found in the developing world, these types of systemic equilibrium are rare. Therefore, it might be possible to observe, at least for a time, individual parties pursuing significantly different strategies. For instance, the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Workers' Party, PT) in Brazil and the *Frente Amplio* in Uruguay are often described as programmatic parties competing in otherwise clientelistic (and in the Brazilian case, inchoate) party systems. There are different ideal types of partisan organizations that predominate when the level of RPG is low (i.e. in non-programmatic scenarios), for example:

- parties that control a powerful clientelistic machine;
- parties that act as personalistic vehicles for charismatic leaders;
- parties that lack at least moderate and consistent levels of congressional discipline;
- parties that lack the capacity to design, propose and eventually implement relatively consistent public policy packages;
- 'policy-switcher' parties, which compete programmatically but betray their policy proposals once in office; and
- parties that represent single-issue movements that have a well-structured programme that becomes excessively narrow.

Yet an important caveat is in order. Real-world parties and party systems combine degrees of programmatic mobilization with other strategies. What varies is the extent to which they emphasize such a strategy. Therefore, it is important to distinguish, both analytically and empirically, between parties and party systems that give greater or lesser priority to this way of organizing activists, implementing public policies and relating to their voters.

### ***Why programmatic parties are useful to political entrepreneurs and might contribute to the quality of democracy***

At least in the normative ideal of political representation, the presence of programmatic parties is not only 'good' for the quality of democracy, but is also an efficient party-building strategy for office-seeking politicians. Accordingly, in the medium to long term—and in the context of stable party systems—ambitious politicians would be better off investing their symbolic and material resources in crafting programmatic organizations. Programmatic parties can contribute to realizing that ideal using a number of methods.

### *Programmatic orientation facilitates internal party cohesion*

Programmatic party organizations select, socialize and bring together office-seeking politicians with similar programmatic agendas, which are then enforced through organizational mechanisms that structure how politicians pursue a successful career. This approach is necessary to ensure that party members share a common programmatic orientation, which facilitates, for instance, party discipline while in office. In turn, programmatic cohesion facilitates policymaking. Not only can these organizational features contribute to congressional discipline, they should also help create more homogeneous partisan organizations across a country's territory. In turn, this should have a positive impact on party system nationalization.

### *Programmatic cohesion reinforces the ideological content of the 'party label'*

The party label is valuable for building systematic linkages to voters. Party labels help simplify complex issues in order to facilitate electors' decisions (Aldrich 1995; Hinnich and Munger 1994). While constraining the behaviour of individual politicians, parties with a programmatic orientation also compensate office seekers for their commitment to the collective organization. Under this model, political parties provide an efficient vehicle for ambitious politicians by pooling symbolic and economic resources to be consistently deployed in campaigns—thus maintaining a programmatic reputation and providing a party label that voters can use as a cognitive shortcut to individual candidates (Hinnich and Munger 1994).

In short, under RPG a candidate's own position and personal characteristics have less value vis-à-vis those of the party, which acts as a guarantee of the candidate's characteristics and policy commitments.

### *Programmatic parties are more affordable than clientelistic machines*

Although programmatic parties should be better equipped to resolve a series of coordination dilemmas (i.e. achieving party discipline in Congress, facilitating leadership recruitment and internal party organization, and promoting vertical integration/nationalization), parties clearly have other means of doing so. For instance, a clientelistic party machine can distribute material rewards in ways that ensure party discipline in Congress and vertical integration throughout the country's territory. This type of organization also provides an efficient way of linking with voters and ensuring their electoral loyalty. An extreme version of this alternative way

of organizing party politics was seen in some post-independence African party systems, in which hegemonic parties consolidated power by capturing and distributing state rents.

RPG has a crucial advantage over other ways of structuring competition. Although it requires systematic organizational investments and endurance, it depends on access to symbolic resources, which are 'cheaper' than the material resources required to implement a fully fledged clientelistic or patrimonial strategy. This should make RPG an attractive strategy for parties that lack material resources, such as opposition parties without access to state rents. In a reasonably competitive democracy, all parties have a chance of being in opposition, thus all parties in the system should have incentives to compete on the basis of (symbolic) programmatic stances. Moreover, as illustrated by Bates' (2010) stylized narrative on African party systems, clientelism can seriously undermine state rents in the medium to long run through economic deterioration, turning it into a self-defeating strategy.

Consider the case of charismatic or personalistic/candidate-based competition. Although also symbolic, thus cheaper and more affordable to all parties in the system than clientelistic strategies, this alternative mode seems suboptimal compared to RPG. On the one hand, charismatic or candidate-based competition is contingent on particular leaders, making partisan organizations too dependent on a handful of visible personalities who come to dominate party politics. On the other hand, policymaking also becomes more volatile, undermining the party label and the party's capacity to structure stable linkages to voters. Since the party as an organization is seriously devalued after the dominant personality disappears, from the point of view of office-seeking politicians in the party, charismatic or personalistic strategies are suboptimal in the long term.

In sum, in the RPG ideal strategic politicians will overtly prefer to structure programmatic linkages with voters over other non-programmatic alternatives, given their greater efficiency in solving the collective-action problems they face when competing (Aldrich 1995). Other ways of forging party-voter linkages (e.g. non-programmatic linkages ranging from different types of clientelistic relations, instances of charismatic mobilization, 'irrational' attachments between parties, voting based on strong partisan identities, or retrospective voting) are considered suboptimal, even from the point of view of office-seeking politicians with medium- to long-term time horizons. There is also a normative predilection for RPG scenarios if there are examples of clientelism or vote buying, which are strongly correlated to an under-provision of public goods and corrupt politics (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007).

### *RPG promotes higher-quality democracy*

Programmatic linkages not only facilitate accountability cycles between voters and parties; they can also enhance the legitimacy of democracy. In addition to ensuring congressional discipline and providing greater consistency in the policymaking process, linkages can also provide much-needed stability to highly volatile systems, which helps parties and party systems survive. Thus, it can also deter the emergence of successful outsider candidates, some of whom have been associated with democratic deterioration in several developing countries. This review found empirical support for these hypotheses: greater levels of RPG correlate with better-quality democracy, more efficient policymaking and greater levels of social legitimacy.

## **Dimensions of programmatic parties**

This section reviews the literature that engages with one or several of the three dimensions of the RPG model (organizational, policy and electoral) and surveys different causal accounts that seek to explain which variables contribute to higher or lower levels of RPG. This approach presents a stylized description of each strand of the literature, for which relevant references are listed in the annotated bibliography at the end of the chapter. A summary table identifies the relevant dimensions that each strand engages with and its main contributions and shortcomings for the analysis of programmatic parties and party systems.

### ***The Party Manifesto Research Project***

The Party Manifesto Project<sup>2</sup> is one of the most ambitious and systematic data-gathering efforts in contemporary political science. Its regional scope has also widened to cover some developing countries. Party manifestos from all relevant parties contesting elections in a country are collected and analysed, often using sophisticated word-analytical technologies. The results allow specialists to trace parties' issue positions on relevant topics for each election and examine the ideological/programmatic evolution of a given party over time. Yet studies in this strand of the literature have important limitations for the purposes of the current analysis. First, they do not distinguish between programmatic politics and other types, and therefore assume that all parties (or party systems in different countries) place equal weight on developing, promoting and using their programmatic stances as instruments for relating to voters and/or providing more consistency to the party's congressional and policymaking behaviour (see Kitschelt and Freeze 2010).

Moreover, as programmatic manifestos are usually lengthy and only marginally addressed in campaigns, there is a risk of analysing 'dead letters'.

Assessing the temporal evolution of partisan stances using manifestos could, however, shed some light on the evolving trajectory of party policy proposals. Arguably, programmatic parties should cluster around a more or less stable (although gradually evolving) set of policy stances, while less programmatically constrained platforms might be characterized by significant changes in a relatively short period of time. The manifesto project could provide instruments for analysing the evolution of different party systems according to these criteria.

### ***Organized interest groups, think tanks, NGOs, relevant minorities and programmatic political parties***

This literature is composed of a heterogeneous set of works, of which this review covered only the major works that have explicit implications for the nature of programmatic politics in a society. There is a fundamental tension in the literature regarding perceptions of organized interest groups and minority groups. If structuring representation around the provision of a set of general public goods is perceived as a general feature of programmatic party systems, parties' relationships to large and encompassing interest groups (i.e. functional organizations such as labour or business, cultural or ethnic groups, beneficiaries of large welfare policies, etc.) might be seen to help achieve that representative ideal.

However, parties' close relationships with small or well-defined interest groups (e.g. districts, well-defined issue groups, business associations) are usually identified in systems in which non-programmatic representation is pervasive. On the basis of this argument, ethnic divisions in a society are usually portrayed as detrimental to programmatic structuring, as politicians are seen as the providers of club goods to a given ethnic constituency. A possible way to arbitrate between these two opposite stances is to take account, following Verdier's 1995 suggestion, of the 'level of (interest) aggregation'. In short, parties' relationships with interest groups can help enhance the programmatic structuring of the party system in which they compete only if those interest groups are relatively large and encompassing.<sup>3</sup>

Recent analyses of democracy and representation in the Andean region provide a more critical view of the impact of organized civil society on the national party system. Especially when coupled with decentralization, which contributes to localizing and fragmenting interest groups (thus reducing the level of aggregation), the mobilization of civil society against the party system, in reaction to failures of representation, is portrayed by some (Mainwaring, Bejarano and Pizarro 2006; Morgan 2007) as a fundamental ingredient of a party system crisis. This, in turn, jeopardizes the chance of structuring programmatic representation, at least in the short to medium run.

A different strand of work analyses the relationship between parties, think tanks and NGOs. In particular, think tanks associated with political parties are usually described as key partners in formulating programmatic platforms, and especially in guiding the drafting of new legislation and public policy proposals. Yet research on the relationship between parties and think tanks in Latin America suggests that those linkages are neither necessary nor sufficient for an institutionalized party system (Garcé 2009). This strand of literature provides three useful insights to explain different levels of RPG and individual parties programmatic strategies:

- the role of interest aggregation in society;
- parties' ability (or inability) to establish systematic relations with interests groups on the basis of their programmatic proposals; and
- the role of think tanks as potential suppliers of 'programmatic content', especially when parties' endogenous capacities are weak.

### ***The literature on party organization and internal politics***

Although a well-established field of study, only a handful of works on party systems explore the possible links between party organization and internal politics, including candidate selection and the scope of programmatic structuring and mobilization pursued by a party or party system. In this respect, the literature lacks useful conceptualizations and explanations of programmatic politics. Nonetheless, a number of works (e.g. Kitschelt 1994; Levitsky 2003; Samuels 2004) address the relationship between party organization and programmatic flexibility. In their view, parties that lack rigid organizations are seen as better able to pursue a programmatic realignment, particularly in moments of shifting electoral trends in a society. More recently, Kitschelt and Kselman (2010) and Hu and Heller (2010) have made somewhat opposing arguments, claiming that parties with more complex and decentralized organizational structures are more likely to adapt their programmes to changing conditions. Therefore, there are no solid predictions on the likely effects of organizational patterns on RPG.

Both Katz (2001) and Siavelis and Morgenstern (2008) claim that party selection procedures shape the sociological and ideological characteristics of party personnel. In this regard, different selection mechanisms are expected to drive different legislator behaviour, depending on factors such as the prime orientation of their loyalty to interest groups, a given constituency and party leaders. Selection procedures that prime ideological traits or partisan loyalties might also help generate a more ideologically homogeneous pool of candidates. Those candidates are expected to focus more on competing on the provision of public goods. In any case, linkages between this literature and a party's programmatic character are still weak.

## ***Party system institutionalization***

Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) conceptualization of party system institutionalization (and its subsequent elaborations in Mainwaring 1999; Payne et al. 2003; Jones 2005 and Mainwaring and Torcal 2006) is to date the most commonly accepted comparative framework for analysing Latin American party systems.<sup>4</sup> The groundbreaking nature of Mainwaring and Scully's contribution to party system theory is also reflected in the fact that the concept has been adopted in the study of party systems around the world, extending its influence to Africa, East Asia and East Europe (e.g. Beatty 2007; Kuhonta 2007; Thames and Robbins 2007).

Although in their original conceptualization Mainwaring and Scully (1995) did not directly cite the presence of programmatic linkages between voters and their partisan representatives as a cause (and indicator) of social rootedness, in later works (particularly Mainwaring 1999 and Mainwaring and Torcal 2006), programmatic linkages gained prominence as being central to the conceptual and empirical treatment of that dimension.

While the first dimension continues to be the stability of voting patterns measured through electoral volatility, the second, roots in society, is measured through the presence of personalistic (as opposed to programmatic) party-voter linkages. Along these lines, Mainwaring and Torcal (2006) note that: 'Personalistic linkages between voters and candidates tend to be stronger when party roots in society are weaker. They also tend to be stronger with weak party organizations and weakly institutionalized parties'.

On this basis, it might be tempting to equate institutionalization with the presence of programmatic linkages between parties and their voters. At best, however, low volatility can be reframed as a necessary but insufficient condition for programmatic party-voter linkages in a given party system. In sum, the literature review suggests the need to:

- treat stability as a necessary condition for programmatic linking because, in general, it takes long periods of relatively stable patterns of partisan competition for programmatic party-voter linkages to consolidate (see Kitschelt et al. 2010);
- treat stability as an insufficient condition for programmatic linkages to consolidate—clientelistic party systems also tend to present stable patterns of partisan competition (Kitschelt 2000);
- consider possible for candidates relying on new technologies (i.e. through the media) to develop programmatic campaigns in the absence of programmatic parties.

## ***Congressional policymaking and programmatic cohesion in Congress***

This literature analyses the impact of party discipline and ideological ideal points on the policymaking behaviour of congressional delegations, which is an important dimension of programmatic politics. It also raises the issue of the tension between legislators' efforts to represent their electoral districts (dyadic representation) and to behave according to their party's programmatic stance (general representation). In this regard, the literature makes an important distinction between territorial vs. functional/national interest representation.

The emerging literature on party system nationalization provides interesting insights, particularly related to possible correlates (and eventual causes) of programmatic structuring. Additionally, although not explicitly, it provides an opportunity to explore the segmentation of linkage patterns across a country's different electoral districts. Much of the literature on strategic party system coordination (which allows for lower party system fragmentation) focuses on the district level. There are therefore long-standing arguments regarding the effects of electoral rules on shaping the nature of district-level coordination (see Cox 1997).

### ***Party system nationalization***

Coordination across districts (which leads to nationalized or denationalized party systems) has only recently become a focus of attention in the party system literature. Denationalized party systems are detrimental to the emergence or maintenance of programmatic representation, at least at the national level. Leading works in this field (Chhibber and Kollman 2004; Hicken 2007) explain nationalization as a function of the centralization of power in a polity, which is related to federalism or the decentralization of institutions. Caramani (2004), in turn, directly associates greater nationalization with the emergence of a left-right programmatic divide dating from national and industrial revolutions. Such a nationwide divide was crucial to allowing a greater level of nationalization of the party system in Europe. In sum:

- There may be an elective affinity between greater levels of nationalization and programmatic structuring.
- Although not all nationalized party systems are programmatic, programmatic mobilization around nationally relevant issues should reinforce nationalization (and vice versa).

### ***The party-voter linkage literature***

This literature deliberately sets out to conceptualize the nature of programmatic and non-programmatic linkages between parties and voters. In this regard, it is particularly useful for providing insights into the electoral dimension of programmatic politics, and for describing its negative side ‘non-programmatic’ linkages (i.e. charismatic mobilization, clientelism, patronage and vote buying). Therefore, this chapter devotes considerable space to analysing this literature.

The interest in substantive policy representation can be traced back to Miller and Stokes (1963). By comparing positions on popular issues across different US districts with the policy positions of each district’s congressional representatives, Miller and Stokes assessed the degree of constituency control over Congress. One of the fundamental problems in this literature, which is acknowledged in their seminal work, is the gap between citizens’ relatively unstructured (and frequently inconsistent) policy preferences and those of their representatives, which is characterized by higher levels of information, structure and consistency. Miller and Stokes’ analysis demonstrated that, given the specific characteristics of an issue (e.g. salience and complexity), politicians could either follow citizens’ preferences or engage in issue leadership. Miller and Stokes compared elite and mass issue positions across three different policy domains, in which they reported different results in terms of interaction between the constituency and its congressional representative.<sup>5</sup>

According to contemporary works in this literature, if voters of different parties hold clearly defined and distinct issue positions in a given (and salient) issue, we can assume the presence of ‘mandate representation’ or a modicum of RPG in the system.<sup>6</sup> Mandate representation captures the degree of party correspondence with the preferences of its constituency (Converse and Pierce 1986; Dalton 1985; Iversen 1994, 1994a; Powell 1982; Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999; Ranney 1962; Schmitt and Thomassen 1999; Thomassen 1994).

More recent works explicitly work around the party-voter linkage framework but have important shortcomings, both conceptual (‘stretching’) and theoretical (i.e. the contingency of the exchange). ‘Programmatic’ and ‘non-programmatic’ labels are applied using very different criteria and without clearly demarcated boundaries. For instance, while some would interpret a leftist party with a significant labour base that implements pro-union legislation as fulfilling its programmatic platform, others would classify it as realizing a clientelistic pact through the delivery of a club good. Meanwhile, a candidate who gives away television sets door to door but who lacks a means for monitoring and punishment (if voters do not turn out for her) will be classified by some as pursuing clientelistic linkages, while others will consider

this not clientelism but regular advertising, due to the lack of coercion and monitoring (Stokes 2005).<sup>7</sup>

In addition, analysing party-voter linkages as the outcome of strategic and ongoing exchanges between candidates and voters has important advantages and limitations. On the one hand, centring the analyses on strategic interactions between two rational individuals (or between a candidate and a small group) provides opportunities for elegant theories that can be tested more easily in a large number of cases. For instance, as poverty increases, the marginal value of handouts, exchanges between poor voters and parties are more frequently expected to be clientelistic than those observed for rich voters.

On the other hand, such theories are quite simplistic. For instance, voters' agency is frequently neglected in mainstream analyses of clientelistic interactions, which focus almost exclusively on party/candidate strategies (see Lyne 2008 as an exception). Furthermore, party-voter linkage theories based on strategic exchanges depend on unrealistic assumptions and neglect factors such as the 'irrational' attachment of a 'client' to her 'patron' that is so frequently described in ethnographic accounts of clientelistic politics (see Auyero 2000). Nor can these theories account for candidates' willingness to disburse clientelistic side payments in the absence of monitoring and coercion.

The assumed contingency is another unrealistic assumption embedded in most of the theoretical literature on party-voter linkages (both for clientelism and programmatic voting), as it sees the exchange of 'favours' and 'programmatic stances' for votes in the short run. That is, a party/candidate should continuously (in every election) 'buy' the vote of its clients or commit to a programmatic platform that represents the views and interests of its constituency to secure its electoral base.

In sum, although the party-voter linkage framework is potentially very useful for explaining observed levels of RPG, it requires a series of amendments that should be integrated into future research:

- avoid further conceptual stretching and improve current conceptualization and measurement efforts; and
- relax the 'contingent-exchange' understanding of linkage transactions.

Finally, this approach also tends to downplay scenarios of linkage segmentation, i.e. simultaneous use of multiple strategies by a party or in a system. Such simultaneous multiple-linkage scenarios are potentially salient in the developing world and deserve further research. First, however, the causal hypotheses that aimed at explaining the observed levels of programmatic (and non-programmatic) mobilization are presented in this chapter.

### ***Institutional incentives***

Authors working within a neo-institutionalist framework pay attention to the impact of electoral institutions on party strategies. On these grounds, electoral institutions that favour the personalization and localization of politics (i.e. open lists, small district magnitudes and decentralized politics, majoritarian electoral systems) are claimed to militate against the programmatic structuring of party systems.

Moreover, non-programmatic linkages, especially clientelism and vote buying, occur in the shadows and are, when pursued on a large scale, expensive. Therefore, stringent and consistently applied regulations on campaign finance are seen as important institutional incentives to constrain the pursuit of non-programmatic linkages that, at least under the trade-off assumption, should inhibit programmatic structuring.

### ***Structural determinants***

Authors working within a political sociology framework highlight socio-structural conditions as being primarily responsible for reducing the levels of programmatic mobilization. For instance, poverty, ethnic divisions and the fragmentation and/or frailty of sizable interest groups contribute to weakening the programmatic orientation of party systems. This applies not only to supply-side explanations, but also to some demand-side accounts (see Lyne 2007). A strong association between clientelism and poverty has also been systematically reported and explained.

Two traditional theses were observed in the literature: one explains clientelism as a permanent trait of certain cultures, the other sees clientelism as a political arrangement that corresponds to traditional (as opposed to modern) societies. Both explanations have proved unsatisfactory (Piattoni 2001; Shefter 1995). Departing from these traditional views, a new wave of studies on clientelism has conceptualized it as the result of exchange relations between voters and politicians, in contexts in which the marginal electoral return of clientelistic side payments is especially high (poor societies and districts). Confirming this result, the measure of 'clientelistic mobilization attempts' included in Kitschelt's expert survey has a strong negative association with gross domestic product (GDP) levels. It remains to be tested, however, whether the same pattern of association (although in the opposite direction) is present for programmatic linkages.

Ethnically divided societies are also frequently expected to display lower levels of programmatic representation. According to received wisdom (see, e.g. Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007), ethnic divisions prompt politicians to

target goods to specific ethnic constituencies, which in turn consolidates a scenario dominated by non-programmatic linkages.

### ***Political economy***

A third set of possible causes relates to the political economy of party systems. The availability of resources (public or private) for crafting non-programmatic linkages is usually seen as a facilitating condition for such linkages. Periods in which import-substitution industrialization or market reforms are implemented should thus affect the types of mobilization that political parties seek to pursue.

Another important argument within this strand of the literature relates to the rapid consolidation in the post-independence period of one-party/hegemonic-party rule in some regions (especially Africa and South East Asia), which has foreshadowed programmatic structuring. Indeed, the party systems of both regions figure prominently as the least programmatic in the world. The political economy of these societies provides enabling conditions for such results, providing incumbents with resources that facilitate the emergence of patrimonial rule based on rent-seeking governance structures.

A different causal story, perhaps more appropriate for analysing Latin American cases, relates to the time horizons of incumbents and opposition parties. One important precondition for RPG to consolidate is the long-term orientation of political parties. In structural situations in which governing parties are subject to rapid citizen discontent, radical turnover and party dissolution are frequent. In such cases, politicians might craft one-shot strategies that (when iterated over time) disable RPG, induce high levels of party system turmoil, and reduce policy and democratic quality. According to Mainwaring, Bejarano and Pizarro (2006), this type of scenario is typical of Andean countries in the third wave of democratization.

This account also matches that of Stokes (2001), who suggests that, at least in low-structured party systems, voters' preferences might be endogenously determined by policy results. In other words, competition would be almost exclusively centred on retrospectively judged policy results (goals) instead of policy instruments (means). In good times, incumbents consolidate power, while in bad times a radical turnover is likely. RPG is not likely to develop and consolidate in either situation.

In still other cases, an opposition party that lacks material resources but can oppose incumbents on programmatic grounds might, if successful, induce the rise of programmatic politics by contagion. The cases of the Partido da

Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB) and Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) in Brazil and Frente Amplio in Uruguay are usually highlighted as positive instances of such a pattern.

### ***Historical-institutional trajectories***

Scholars working within a comparative-historical framework point to still other series of causes by looking at party systems' path-dependent trajectories, usually structured around a series of critical junctures, as a possible explanation for greater programmatic structuring. For instance, Kitschelt et al. (1999) and Kitschelt et al. (2010) explain the current levels of programmatic structuring observed in East European and Latin American party systems as the result of the long-term trajectory of countries in the 20th century. Whereas in Eastern Europe the legacies of communist rule and the capacity to mobilize programmatic stances on that basis might distinctly shape systems' capacity to develop RPG (along with issues such as integration into the European Union (EU) zone or immigration), in Latin America the paucity of democratic contestation during the 20th century, the lack of societal capacities and the low salience of economic grievances reduce party systems' capacity to structure RPG—with only a few exceptions, such as Chile and Uruguay.

Shefter (1986) explains the rise of programmatic parties as the result of the presence of a professional bureaucracy at the time of mass electoral mobilization. Moreover, Mainwaring and Zoco (2007) also draw on a 'timing' argument to explain one important feature usually associated with the presence of stable party systems: stability. Although such an association is not supported in the current analysis, the logic of the historical argument might still be valid for explaining higher or lower levels of RPG. Indeed, from a 'historical causation' standpoint, a similar argument to that of Mainwaring and Zoco might be used to explain why new party systems in the developing world lost a historic window of opportunity to develop programmatic party systems. Of course, this type of argument might be excessively deterministic.

## **Summary**

Table 1.1 presents an overview of the main contributions and shortcomings of each of the strands of literature and explanatory accounts. It also identifies, in general terms, the constitutive dimension/s of a programmatic party/system that each discusses.

Table 1.1. Summary of the literature review

Literature	Dimensions dealt with			Descriptive (what programmatic parties/systems are)		Explanatory (What causes greater levels of programmatic politics?)
	Organizational	Governmental	Electoral	Contributions	Limitations	Theorized causes of greater RPG
Congressional policymaking		X		Cohesiveness of party delegations in policymaking; party discipline	Necessary but insufficient condition for RPG	In general, institutional incentives shape party discipline. However, party discipline can be obtained by means other than programmatic organization.
Party manifestos	X		X	Mapping of policy divergence and evolution of party programmes	Lack of measures regarding degree of programmatic mobilization vis-à-vis alternatives → analysing dead letters?	Essentially descriptive literature lacks variance on degree of programmatic effort (does not seek to explain it).
Interest groups/ think tanks/NGOs	X		X	Level of aggregation, salience of collective goods and large interest groups, relative importance of think tanks in providing 'programmatic content'	Highly heterogeneous literature, lack of specific framework for RPG	Role of large collective goods in promoting programmatic mobilization efforts. Role of large vs. small interest groups in facilitating programmatic mobilization.
Party system institutionalization	X			Theorizing relative endurance (institutionalization) of party system features and its relation to programmatic rootedness	Stability is a necessary condition for RPG (not for weak programmatic parties). But programmatic parties are not necessary for stability	RPG is obtained after a series of iterations in a relatively stable party system.
Party system nationalization	X			Describing and explaining electoral coordination across districts; analysing effects of decentralization/federalism	Only Caramani (2004) explicitly analyses the interaction between nationalization and programmatic nature	A symbiotic relationship may exist between nationalization and programmatic mobilization. If so, more decentralized polities could have, <i>ceteris paribus</i> , weaker programmatic mobilization.

Literature	Dimensions dealt with			Descriptive (what programmatic parties/systems are)		Explanatory (What causes greater levels of programmatic politics?)
	Organizational	Governmental	Electoral	Contributions	Limitations	Theorized causes of greater RPG
Party organization	X			Concepts and theoretical arguments on party organizational variance, which could in turn be linked to the pursuit of necessary tools for crafting and sustaining the party's programmatic brand	Extremely limited treatment of relationship between organizational features and programmatic nature; contradictory theoretical expectations	More flexible and decentralized parties are better able to adapt and sustain programmatic nature. More rigidly organized parties better able to craft programmatic nature.
Institutional incentives			X	Set of clearly defined theoretical expectations on the effects of institutions (electoral and non-electoral) on programmatic structure. If valid, provides room for deriving policy recommendations	Excessively deterministic (i.e. neglects subnational or cross-party variation within a system or set of institutional incentives)	Institutional arrangements that reduce the pursuit of a personal vote (proportional, closed lists, larger district magnitudes) should favour the emergence of programmatic parties. Parliamentary systems might provide greater incentives to invest in parties as institutions (vs. presidential systems).
Structural determinants			X	Identifying a set of structural constraints on the capacity to programmatically structure political competition	Could become excessively deterministic, obscuring instances of RPG in non-favourable structural conditions, and non-programmatic parties in favourable contexts. Not easy to derive policy recommendations	Greater levels of socio-economic development, especially a reduction in poverty, should increase the likelihood of RPG by increasing the cost of some of its alternatives (clientelism). Low levels of ethnic diversity should favour greater levels of programmatic linkages.

Literature	Dimensions dealt with			Descriptive (what programmatic parties/systems are)		Explanatory (What causes greater levels of programmatic politics?)
	Organizational	Governmental	Electoral	Contributions	Limitations	Theorized causes of greater RPG
Political economy			X	Brings to the fore the availability of financial resources and the possible effects of state-provided goods (bads) on sustaining different types of voter mobilization strategies	Difficult to derive testable explanations for cross-national comparative analyses; too ad hoc if applied to a small series of cases. Not easy to derive policy recommendations	More stringent public budgets and less discretion in public expenditures should promote greater levels of symbolic mobilization. Conflicts involving the provision/reform of large public goods might lead to greater programmatic mobilization. Sustained state crises should reduce the room for RPG.
Historical institutionalism			X	Highlights the importance of long-term factors in shaping current types of partisan structure	Even more difficult to derive policy recommendations; could become too case-specific and overly deterministic	RPG contingent on: (a) timing of electoral mobilization and bureaucratic modernization; (b) timing of party origin; (c) long-term experience with democratic contestation; (d) long-term social development and availability of large public goods; (e) experience with different types of authoritarian regimes in the pre-democratic era.

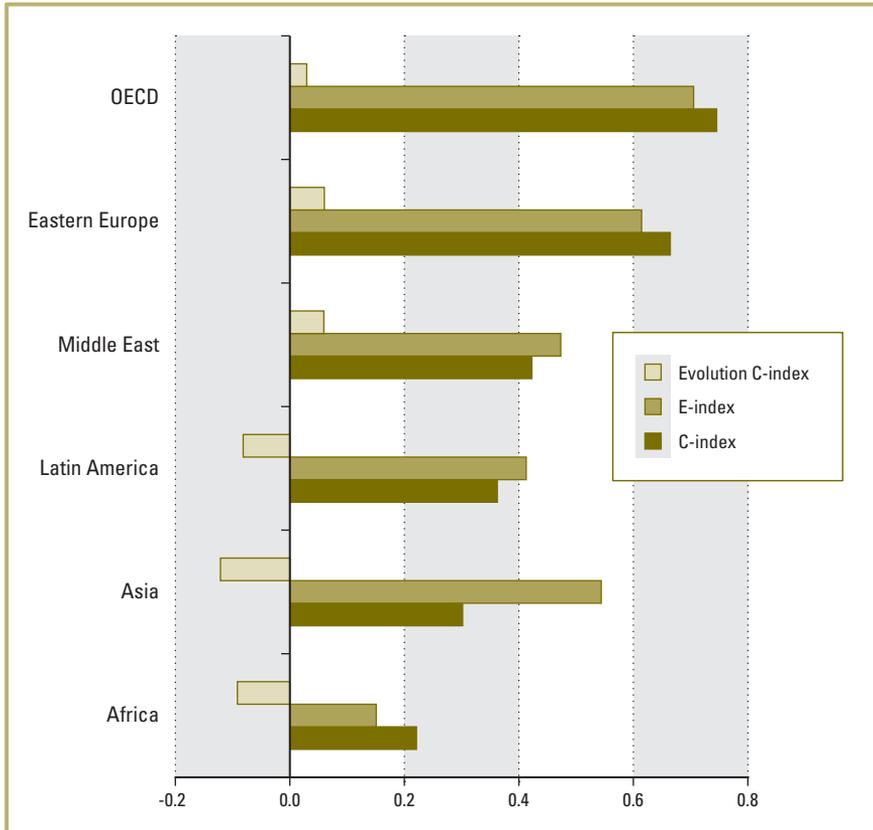
## Empirical findings and explanatory accounts for RPG around the world

According to the different strands of the literature reviewed above, causal arguments for possible triggers of programmatic politics can be categorized into at least four clusters of variables: institutional, structural, historical and political economy.

This section explores the effects of these four clusters of variables on the level of RPG, as approximated by two measures of RPG: the ‘C’ and ‘E’ RPG indexes. ‘C’ refers to *citizens*, as it is built on citizen survey evidence for each country. The E-index is built on an *expert* survey developed by Herbert Kitschelt.<sup>8</sup>

As seen in Figure 1.1, with the exception of Asia, for which the E-operationalization is significantly more positive than that of C, both indices produce an equivalent regional ranking. According to this, only Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries and Central and Eastern Europe (the region that also has shown the greater over-time gains) present higher levels of RPG. Meanwhile, African, Asian (C-operationalization only) and Latin American countries rank at the other extreme of the spectrum. Latin America is the most heterogeneous region, ranging from high levels of RPG (Uruguay with 0.88 in the C-index and Chile with 0.70 in the E-index) to very low ones (the Dominican Republic with 0.05 in the E-index and Peru with 0.08 in the C-index).

**Figure 1.1. Regional distribution of RPG indicators**



A third bar in Figure 1.1 shows the average evolution of the C-index between the 1990s and 2000s, which suggests two implications:

- Programmatic structuring seems to be an enduring feature of party systems, at least at the citizen level and over a 20-year period. This has implications for initiatives to promote programmatic politics.
- There are, nonetheless, cases that significantly gained or lost positions. Detailed studies of countries that experienced significant gains could help explain the causes. Beyond established democracies such as Australia, Italy, Sweden, and the United States, several East European countries seem to have achieved important advances (Czech Republic, Georgia, Moldova, Poland and the Russian Federation). Developing nations figure prominently among the countries in which the C-index dropped between the 1990s and the 2000s: Venezuela and Peru (second and sixth, respectively, in terms of overall losses), South Africa (third), and Estonia, Serbia and Croatia for Eastern Europe (seventh, eighth and tenth, respectively).

To test the explanatory accounts described above, a number of variables or potential triggers of higher programmatic structure were selected, as summarized in the last column of Table 1.1. The results are based on observed partial correlations (controlling for GDP levels) between such variables and our E- and C-indexes of RPG. Our data have certain limitations that prevent the pursuit of strong causal inferences. Therefore, these results are preliminary and should be further replicated and tested with new series of data and new types of causal-process observations (e.g. within-case process tracing).

### ***Institutional incentives***

According to these results, institutional features do not exert a systematic effect on the observed levels of RPG, with three exceptions:

- Presidential regimes seem to have significantly lower RPG scores than parliamentary regimes, which might indicate that parliamentary regimes' organizational inducements might facilitate greater levels of RPG. Alternatively, presidential regimes, which are characterized by a greater concentration of power (at least symbolically) in one personality, might induce prioritizing leadership over partisan characteristics.
- Unitary and less decentralized polities tend to display more RPG, likely due to the affinity between the vertical integration of the party system and territorially unified programmatic mobilization. Although state decentralization might be a normatively desirable outcome, its possible impacts on party localization (and on national party crises) should be further explored in future works.

- Regarding party finance legislation, public disclosure of campaign expenditures and the availability of public funding for parties—which might level the playing field between opposition parties (or new parties mobilizing specific issues) and incumbent or traditional parties—seem to positively (albeit marginally) affect observed levels of RPG.

### ***Socio-structural causes and correlates***

When controlling for GDP levels, several interesting empirical patterns emerge in relation to structural factors:

- RPG tends to decrease as social inequality increases (as measured through Gini coefficients and the relative income of the poorest 20 per cent of the population).<sup>9</sup> Social inequality might reduce the room for the programmatic mobilization of large constituency groups interested in the provision of relatively encompassing public goods, therefore reducing RPG through its effect on the electoral and organizational dimensions.
- Likewise, and according to received wisdom, levels of ethnic fractionalization are negatively and significantly correlated to lower levels of RPG.<sup>10</sup> The most likely causal mechanism sustaining this association is similar to that for inequality.
- The percentage of the population aged 65 and over is positively associated with greater RPG, as measured through both indexes. The possible causal mechanisms behind this association are multiple and uncertain; some of them could be based on historical causation, others on continuous causes. For instance, it could be argued that older citizens today were politically socialized at historical times when ideological and programmatic mobilization were more salient. However, from a continuous causation perspective, it could be argued that older citizens are more easily mobilized programmatically due to their beneficiary status for large public goods (e.g. pensions or health systems). On that basis, they could also forge programmatic relationships with parties.
- Finally, holding GDP constant, higher levels of adult literacy seem to marginally facilitate RPG, perhaps because this increases voters' political sophistication and their capacity to react on the basis of programmatic mobilization.
- Meanwhile, urbanization (or the percentage of rural population) does not systematically relate to RPG.

### ***Historic-institutional and political economy causes and correlates***

Applying valid tests for historic-institutional and political economy causes is more difficult, given the lack of reliable estimates of RPG over time and in

the context of a large-N analysis. However, the following summary might be used as a general plausibility probe for these sets of hypotheses.

- Democratic duration, tax revenues as a percentage of GDP and education expenditures as a percentage of GDP do not have discernible impacts on RPG when controlled for GDP levels. However, all the other variables tested in this literature review seem to have significant impacts on RPG.
- Central government expenditures, as well as health expenditures as a percentage of GDP, have positive and significant impacts on both the C- and the E-indexes.<sup>11</sup> A possible causal mechanism explaining this association is that in societies in which the government spends more on public goods (greater state capacity), parties are better able to craft programmatic platforms to relate to voters on those grounds; therefore, the electoral dimension of RPG might be central in inducing this result.
- The historical development of society as measured by 1975 GDP also seems to positively impact RPG. For this reason, though not clear for democratic duration, historical causation might still be central in explaining current levels of RPG.
- High inflation from the 1985–96 period, when controlled for GDP levels, tends to reduce RPG (only for the C-index). This finding lends some initial support to the impact of poor economic performance, eventually coupled with the state's generally weak capacity to provide public goods, in eroding the bases for developing RPG. Once again, this result is more likely related to the electoral dimension of RPG.

### ***Paradigmatic cases***

The analysis of paradigmatic cases in which RPG has emerged in otherwise non-programmatic party systems could also reveal how the political economy of a party system, and its interaction with path-dependent features, is likely to generate greater levels of programmatic structure. Though not pursued systematically here, an exploration of the empirical patterns found in some emblematic cases (e.g. Eastern European cases that have a shorter experience with democracy and are immersed in contexts that could be comparable to other developing nations in which long-term patterns of non-programmatic linkages receded and provided room for greater programmatic structure: Brazil, El Salvador and Uruguay, and to some degree Mexico) suggests a few patterns:

- In most of these cases, the programmatic structuring of the party system was triggered by the actions of long-term opposition parties (i.e. Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), National Action Party (PAN), Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD), Frente Amplio, Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front) that began to programmatically mobilize the

electorate by politicizing preferences regarding the provision of large public goods. Being opposition parties for a long time, and therefore lacking access to significant material resources, might at least partially explain the adoption of such a strategy.

- Polarization around the market-state divide (and its implications for the reform of the communist welfare system or integration into the eurozone) might have also helped Eastern European parties to structure programmatic parties and party systems.
- Before gaining ground at the national level, some of the emblematic parties identified here (in particular the PT, PAN and Frente Amplio) also engaged in the ‘branding’ of new styles of government at the municipal level, centred on the provision of new and innovative public goods and participatory styles of government. This could have also given those parties a strong programmatic reputation and a positive reputation.
- Beyond case-specific factors, in general these processes entailed a party-building strategy oriented toward the long term, in which the party (as an institution and a collective construct) gained prominence over specific candidates or leaders.
- If successful, strategies like these might eventually induce a systemic contagion, forcing otherwise non-programmatic parties to start competing on new grounds.

## Conclusions

The first and most obvious conclusion is that significantly more comparative research on this topic is needed. For example, conceptual and theoretical pieces on how to more precisely characterize and empirically operationalize the notion of programmatic parties and party systems—in particular the pursuit of new comparative data-gathering projects (especially if sustained over time). Such data could serve as a potential breakthrough in the analysis of the nature, evolution and causal dynamics of the creation of programmatic party systems and their possible effects on democratic governance. However, implementing this type of research endeavour would be extremely complex and labour-intensive. In the absence of strong institutional support from international agencies, the academic community alone is unlikely to be able to implement this type of research project.

Substantively, research is needed that engages with multiple dimensions of RPG simultaneously. Indeed, the most conspicuous limitation of current approaches is the lack of a multidimensional understanding of RPG. Therefore, synergies—and tensions—in the simultaneous pursuit of programmatic strategies in the organizational, electoral and policy arenas remain obscure. While some studies contain explicit hypotheses on the relationship between

one arena and the rest, they remain untested and work essentially as theoretical assumptions. There is much to be gained from research that systematically scrutinizes the relationship between the processes unfolding simultaneously in these three arenas. Finally, even if certain causes or effects of RPG have been attributed to processes that pertain to one particular dimension, there are still no precise instruments to test such claims. In short, there needs to be a better way to analyse and test the precise mechanisms through which specific features of RPG affect democratic outcomes, as well as how the causes of RPG trigger different—and perhaps contradictory—developments across parties' policy, organizational and electoral arenas.

The following possible research topics could (and should) be analysed over time and incorporate a multidimensional understanding of RPG.

- *Identification and in-depth analysis of emblematic cases.* Future research could first seek to identify a larger set of emblematic cases (programmatic parties that emerge in a non-programmatic context and induce a systemic transformation) and then use that set of cases (i.e. around 7–10 from multiple regions) to conduct an in-depth analysis of the causal dynamics of those instances of positive party system change. Comparisons might also be drawn between cases in which different degrees of positive systemic contagion are either strong or more limited. Special attention should be paid to political economy and historical-institutional processes in these analyses. However, it must be stressed once again that political leadership matters for RPG. The analysis of these emblematic cases should therefore be able to identify and pin down specific leadership strategies that have led to successful outcomes amid otherwise structurally and historically unfavourable conditions. Such research would be extremely useful to extract lessons from various democratic assistance initiatives.
- *Identification and in-depth analysis of 'weak programmatic parties'.* The increased impact of the media makes the emergence of this diminished subtype of programmatic party more plausible. Therefore, detailed analyses of this type of party, which can implement programmatic strategies without strictly being a programmatic party, are needed. These analyses could shed light on the advantages and shortcomings of promoting the pursuit of programmatic strategies in the developing world. They could also explore whether this type of pursuit is likely to produce the same positive externalities on democracy as a fully fledged RPG system.
- *Identification of the precise institutional arrangements of parliamentary systems that induce greater RPG than presidential systems, and whether they could be replicated/supplemented in the context of presidential systems.* Although the current analysis claims that parliamentary systems, on average, have greater levels of RPG, the precise institutional mechanisms

that cause this result are unknown. Several hypotheses are available from the long-standing literature on the differences between both regime types. These hypotheses could be extended to relevant components of RPG in each of the three dimensions/arenas identified, and then empirically tested. If successful, this could suggest relevant insights for proposals for institutional reform or organizational arrangements that help 'correct' the negative externalities of presidentialism.

- *Further analysis of the relationship between decentralization, party system nationalization and RPG.* While there seems to be a symbiotic relationship between nationalization (vertical integration of the party system) and RPG, further research is needed in order to tease out the causal dynamics behind this association, and their relationship to decentralization and territorial devolution. One possible line of inquiry is to compare the effects on nationalization and RPG of different decentralization schemes that combine, in different ways, state decentralization and electoral regime decentralization. A comparison of successful cases in the context of unitary and federal systems might also be promising.
- *Trade-offs vs. segmented party-voter linkages.* On electoral linkages, the implications of segmented party-voter linkage strategies for the policy and organizational arenas (that multiple party-voter strategies can be used simultaneously) should, in particular, be further analysed. The implications for the quality of democracy and governance could also be integrated into such an analysis. Finally, programmatic vs. clientelistic linkages should be compared, and other ideal types (e.g. charismatic mobilization or partisan identification) should be integrated.

## Notes

- 1 It should be noted, however, that not every organizational articulation leads to programmatic representation. On the contrary, clientelistic machines could be extraordinarily well developed but at the same time be detrimental to the quality of universalistic political representation by parties. On this subject, Piattoni (2001) presents an interesting argument on the need to overcome our normative bias against clientelism, which she sees as a form of interest representation that acts as ‘a counterbalance to rigid and often clogged institutional channels’. According to Piattoni, conditions in Europe at the beginning of the century (globalization, European integration and the increase of particularistic politics) might favour the resurgence and resilience of clientelism, which in turn could help stabilize contemporary European democracies. Nonetheless, even if clientelism is assessed in terms of normatively neutral criteria, it seems clear that, when widespread, it is conducive to political co-optation, which significantly devalues democracy.
- 2 For more information, see: <<https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/>>.
- 3 However, the criterion ‘the level of aggregation’ is not without pitfalls. Certain types of goods, such as the ever more popular conditional-cash-transfer programmes, are provided at very low levels of aggregation (individual or household). Nonetheless, if delivered fairly (i.e. recipients fulfil the conditions for receiving the plan, and there are no recipients who obtain the benefits without fulfilling those conditions), conditional cash transfers might be perceived as a public good around which parties can structure programmatic platforms, even though they are distributed individually.
- 4 Drawing on this concept, party systems elsewhere can be placed on a continuum ranging from institutionalized party systems to fluid (inchoate) ones. Party systems’ comparative location on this continuum have recently been perceived as determining systemic features that affect policymaking and the quality of democracy (see e.g. Payne et al. 2003; Mainwaring and Scully 1995). Conceptually, Mainwaring and Scully (1995) identify four dimensions of party system institutionalization: (1) the stability and regularity of party competition patterns; (2) the presence of party roots in society, which helps stabilize institutionalized systems; (3) a greater level of party legitimacy in society and (4) the presence of well-developed party organizations as opposed to parties that function as electoral vehicles for personalistic leaders. Mainwaring (1999) explicitly conceptualizes the relationship between these four dimensions as positive linear, assuming that high levels of institutionalization in one dimension almost always correlate with high levels in the other three.
- 5 Miller and Stokes’ article stimulated several methodological and substantive criticisms. Achen (1977) criticized the use of correlation coefficients and advocated the use of multiple measures to assess both the absolute distance between the positions of the masses and elites (‘proximity’ and ‘centrality’) and the extent to which knowledge of each party’s constituency positions allows the prediction

of their party representatives. Weissberg (1978) showed that Miller and Stokes' measures of 'dyadic' representation, which focused on the relationship between district constituencies and their congressional representatives, could significantly downplay situations of 'collective' representation between the whole citizenry and the national legislature. Subsequently, the comparative research tradition on substantive representation focused almost exclusively on political representation by political parties (instead of each district's representative), which came to be seen as the appropriate agent of representation.

- 6 Although it is conceptually misleading to infer the configuration of a political cleavage from the sole presence of social divisions in Western Europe, political entrepreneurs banked on salient social divisions (pillars) to structure stable systems of representation (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). These systems of representation were stabilized around a set of divisions that came to be known as political cleavages, signalling the presence of enduring socio-political alignments in the long term. However, both the contemporary erosion of political cleavages in advanced capitalist democracies and the weakness of cleavage systems in the developing world likely make the concept of 'political cleavage' inappropriate for analysing programmatic linkages in contemporary societies. Therefore, a more suitable concept is required, particularly for developing nations. While also signalling significant divisions in society, issue divides are less stable and can eventually be fluid or transitional, providing an adequate alternative to the more widely used concept of political cleavages (Kitschelt et al. 2010).
- 7 This conceptual stretching is matched by different normative views on 'clientelism', 'pork-barrelling', 'vote-buying', 'earmarks' and 'programmatic linkages'. While in US politics literature, incumbent candidate activities such as pork-barrelling and constituency service are seen as providing stability and facilitating programmatic policymaking in the congressional arena, the same types of activities observed in the developing world are considered inimical to corrupt politics and inchoate party systems (see e.g. Evans 2004).
- 8 The citizen-based index is computed as the average of two partial indexes (a symbolic and a substantive one). The symbolic index replicates Mainwaring and Torcal's (2006) measurement strategy, predicting vote choice on the basis of respondents' left/right self-identifications. The substantive model tries to approximate a substantive measure of programmatic structuring by drawing on three issues that together represent potentially salient competitive divides: state/market, democratic/authoritarian and conservative/liberal positions on moral issues. Although not equally important across cases, we believe that, taken as a group, these three competitive axes should have a modicum of influence on party preference in places where programmatic linkages are stronger. The questions representing these three issues are: (a) 1–10 scale; 1 = complete agreement with 'Incomes should be made more equal'; 10 = complete agreement with 'We need larger income differences as incentives for individual effort'; (b) 1–4 scale reflecting agreement with 'Democracy may have problems but it is better than

any other form of government'; (c) 1–10 scale; 1 = abortion is 'Always justifiable'; 10 = 'Never justifiable'. The correlation between the symbolic and substantive indexes is extremely high for both the 1990s and the 2000s (0.962 and 0.976, respectively).

The expert-based index is based on the expert survey conducted by Herbert Kitschelt in more than 80 countries worldwide. Of the different (but similar) measures described and reported in Kitschelt et al. (2010), the present study relies on the results of the 'copsal-4' measure. According to Kitschelt and Freeze (2010), this measure identifies the cohesion, salience and polarization of political parties around a set of four issues (the three issues with the highest scores of 'copsal-4' covered in the common set of issues D1–D5 asked in every country, of which only up to two could be economic issues, plus one country-specific issue score observed in D1–D5). This is an adequate measure because it is based on a core of three cross-nationally available issues, while allowing some scope for relevant variation at the national level. This would prevent the penalization of cases in which programmatic structure is high, but is related to issues not covered by the general questionnaire.

- 9 This result is significant for the C-index, and is consistently signed, though not statistically significant, for the E-index.
- 10 This result is only significant for the C-index.
- 11 The only exception to this is health for the E-index.

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# CHAPTER 2

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CHAPTER 2

# Programmatic Parties and Party Systems: Opportunities and Constraints

*Herbert Kitschelt and Yi-ting Wang*

## Introduction

Democracy is the only political regime with codified rules to hold those charged with governing accountable to the citizenry. These rules include periodic elections of representatives, who normally run on party tickets, as well as guaranteed civic and political rights that create space for citizens to subject public officials to an open debate. But when citizens get a chance to hold elected politicians accountable, what sort of political performance makes them approve of a party and its politicians? Conversely, when politicians anticipate the next election, how do they show their responsiveness to citizens in order to earn their approval? Empirical research shows that many considerations come into play when citizens approve of political parties. For a variety of reasons, normative democratic theory values democratic competition among parties and politicians based on ‘programmatic’ rather than ‘clientelistic’ or ‘personalistic’ considerations.

This chapter seeks tentative answers as to why political parties and politicians decide to prioritize or focus on programmes and policies to seek electoral success instead of relying on clientelistic or personalistic appeals.

The chapter consists of four sections. The first section introduces the notions of programmatic parties and programmatic party systems. The second section presents three sets of factors that are likely to shape programmatic parties: soft, hard and plausible, conditions that are described along with the cases and data this research draws on.<sup>1</sup> The third section presents and discusses the findings of each set of factors. The fourth section concludes with a summary of the main findings.

## ***Programmatic parties and programmatic party systems***

Empirical research shows that when citizens get the chance to hold elected politicians accountable, many considerations come into play. Citizens could value candidates' personal qualities (a politician's charisma); develop emotional ties to a party based on personal or family experiences (party identification); favour the party's willingness to put forward representatives who share similar traits such as gender, ethnicity, race or class (descriptive representation); or reward a party's provision of material benefits targeted to its own voters, whether through gifts (vote buying), the provision of public-sector jobs (patronage) or social benefits (such as subsidized public housing, disability pensions or unemployment assistance), procurement contracts and other means of patron-client relationships of representation.

Citizens could also vote for parties on the basis of their competence in delivering benefits that all citizens want (e.g. collective goods such as low inflation, peace, economic growth) or redistributing resources and power across groups (e.g. redistributive taxes or club goods such as income support, unemployment insurance or health care) through policies formulated to those ends.

For citizens, all these considerations could be equally important, and no single one may be decisive. Parties and politicians might also try to connect with citizens by invoking a range of different considerations simultaneously.

Simply put, what makes a party programmatic is its emphasis on policies. Policies are authoritative courses of action that entail consequences that citizens value positively (as benefits) or negatively (as costs). These consequences affect large categories of citizens regardless of whether individuals belonging to such categories voted for the party or not. A party becomes programmatic when the following steps are taken:

- It announces and competes over programmatic objectives. This requires politicians within a party to agree on some policy positions and (for the most part) speak with one voice on them (cohesion), thus creating a 'party voice' above all the individual voices of each politician.
- Internal coherence especially applies to issues that the party cares about and features in its electoral strategies of communication with potential voters ('issue salience').
- Its positions must be distinguishable from those of other parties (positional competition). If there is no difference between parties, they cannot appeal to voters on the basis of issues. Programmatic politics only develops if parties generate enough political 'polarization' for parties to take opposite positions on relevant issues.

The victorious party or parties that form governments must demonstrate a serious commitment to delivering on promises made in the party campaign platform. Whether partisan governments succeed, of course, depends not only on their efforts, but also on external conditions that give outside actors some say over policy outcomes, or on the state's administrative capacity to implement policies. Of course, other changes in circumstances or public preferences can inhibit this process.

Only when parties achieve these conditions (internal cohesion on salient issues that polarize a party relative to its competitors and that will be executed if the party reaches office) simultaneously are voters offered a programmatic choice in the political landscape. The effort of parties to supply clear, distinct and credible policies is a necessary but insufficient condition for creating a party system based on programmatic linkages between voters and parties. Citizens must make their own contribution to the linkage: at least some citizens must understand party objectives and have personal preferences over them. If citizens develop their own personal issue positions, they can relate to parties and use that information to decide which party to support. Citizens must choose between parties based on their stated policy objectives. For the programmatic linkage between citizens and parties to prevail over the other possible connection modes, there must be congruence between policies that citizens demand and those that politicians intend to supply. In other words, there must be some relationship of representation between citizens and parties.

Programmatic linkages between citizens and politicians are different from clientelistic or charismatic linkages. Clientelistic parties rally voters by reserving targeted benefits for individual voters or small groups of voters, while charismatic parties attract voters due to the unique, idiosyncratic personal qualities of their leaders that instil confidence and allegiance in voters, instead of broad policy appeals or specific targeted material benefits. The relationship between voters and parties in a clientelistic set-up is based on the mutual benefit of both sides. The voter enters a material benefit exchange with the party with the expectation that his or her support will be delivered in the near future. These benefits are not created for the whole constituency but rather for members of the party's clientelistic network.

Each mode of linkage generates its own competitive dynamic among parties. Where programmatic messages resonate with voters, parties compete by offering attractive policy packages. Where clientelism prevails, parties try to outbid each other to provide targeted, contingent benefits. Where parties' leadership personalities resonate with voters, parties take great care to cultivate the style, habits and symbols of their key politicians.

### **Box 2.1. Programmatic structuring in the party systems of case study countries**

In the Dominican Republic, parties show little programmatic appeal. Party programme positions are diffuse, so voters cannot choose among parties based on such information. Parties compete primarily based on clientelistic and charismatic performance.

In Brazil, the electorate demonstrates little capacity to choose among parties based on policy stances, but some of the major parties have begun to make programmatic efforts over the past 20 years, particularly the Workers' Party (PT) on the left, the Social Democrats on the centre-right and the (market) Liberals on the right. Brazil's party system is engaged in dynamic change of its citizen-politician linkage strategies from clientelistic to more programmatic appeals.

In Taiwan, until recently the two major parties differed programmatically on only a few issues and continued to compete for votes primarily, but not exclusively, based on clientelistic efforts.

In India, the highly complex, regionally diverse party system is mostly geared to clientelistic rather than programmatic partisan efforts, and this has not changed in recent decades. Exceptions include two small communist parties as well as a couple of regional parties and party sections.\*

In South Korea, the major parties underwent a rather profound reversal from clientelistic to predominantly programmatic appeals toward the turn of the millennium, but voters have not yet followed. They tend not to choose among parties based on their programmatic differences.

In Turkey, new parties founded since the early 1990s and party reforms have boosted the programmatic efforts of the major political parties. Parties, however, combine their programmatic efforts with vigorous clientelistic ones ('high everything' parties). As in South Korea, there is little evidence yet that voters are able to structure their choices based on the parties' differing programmatic politics.

Finally, in Bulgaria, at the elite level the programmatic structuring of parties is uneven, in part due to the volatility and turnover among the non-socialist parties. Voters do more clearly choose between parties based on their issue positions than elsewhere, but the political elites do not state partisan priorities as clearly as in South Korea and Turkey.

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\*Note: The emergence of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in 2013 might also be considered an exception, but it is too soon to tell.

### ***Why parties and party systems become more or less programmatic***

The conditions that may explain why parties and party systems become more or less programmatic can be divided into three categories. First, there may be 'hard' external circumstances that politicians simply cannot change in

the short or medium run, or that would entail a major change in a polity's power structure. This section explores whether any of the following four conditions constitute 'hard' barriers to (or facilitators of) programmatic party competition: (1) freedom and fairness of elections, (2) cumulative experience with democracy, (3) ethnic diversity and (4) economic development.

Second, there is a class of potential 'soft' conditions that may constrain or enhance a party's ability to compete programmatically, but are to a considerable extent under the control of politicians. Politicians can change these conditions sufficiently to enhance or reduce parties' capacity to compete programmatically. The soft conditions considered here are a country's: (1) political-economic development strategy, (2) economic crises, (3) competitiveness of electoral contestation and (4) internal organization of political parties and legislative partisan caucuses.

Finally, there is a third group of conditions that may plausibly affect programmatic party competition, but the evidence for this is currently too unsystematic and fragmented to determine their causal role with any degree of confidence. The two potential conditions thus identified are: (1) the role of democratic institutions and (2) the role of civil society.

## Cases and data

The analysis documented here draws on in-depth qualitative case studies as well as systematic comparative quantitative evidence. The goal is to determine the conditions under which parties are likely to prioritize a programmatic effort and to be held accountable by their voters for making such an effort. The first strategy of analysis draws on a set of seven qualitative country case studies from Brazil, Bulgaria, the Dominican Republic, India, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey. They cover a total of close to 45 parties in different settings and over time. All countries are in the developing world and/or among recent democratizers. They were selected in order to vary: (1) the extent to which parties make a programmatic effort and/or have changed their effort in the past 20 years and (2) the voters' capacity to choose among parties based on programmatic cues.

The second set of cases draws on the Democratic Accountability and Linkage Project (DALP) expert survey, which was conducted in 88 countries with over 1,400 respondents and covered a total of 506 parties worldwide in electoral democracies or hybrid regimes with more than 2 million inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> These data are used to describe and explain degrees of programmatic party effort and competition. Among the wealth of information about parties in this data set, the survey permits the construction of descriptive measures of parties' programmatic and clientelistic efforts.

- In terms of programmatic efforts, the data reveal the extent to which parties make internally cohesive appeals on at least a subset of salient policy issues, and distinguish themselves from each other by taking different issue positions ('polarization'). This information then permits the construction of an index of programmatic partisan effort that captures a party's capacity to combine cohesion, salience and polarization: *CoSalPo*. The *CoSalPo* index scores can be calculated for both individual parties and for all competitors in a party system.
- With regard to clientelism, experts scored whether parties target individual voters or small groups of voters by offering them benefits such as personal gifts or money (vote buying), social insurance benefits, public housing or jobs, or public works contracts. Again, a combined index of clientelistic effort can be constructed both for individual parties and as an average for all parties in a polity.
- Using both indices, it can be empirically established how parties' programmatic appeals relate to their clientelistic efforts (i.e. do parties concentrate their activities on one or the other, or combine both—'high everything' parties).
- To strengthen the analysis of programmatic linkages between voters and politicians, it is also useful to study the extent to which voters' own policy positions help them choose among parties in the electoral process. It can also be determined to what extent parties' voters share the policy positions of the party elites and generate a 'programmatic congruence' between voters and politicians. This indicates a programmatic 'linkage' between citizens and their representatives.

## **Hard conditions: constraints and opportunities for programmaticity**

### ***Degree of freedom and fairness of elections***

At first glance, it would seem logical that the electoral system and the level of free and fair elections would be important factors in determining whether a party or system becomes programmatic. Where there are limits on political and civil rights, the lack of electoral competition could limit the demand for programme-based politics as well as politicians' ability to communicate policy programmes. Furthermore, and in order to maintain power, dominant parties in less-democratic systems are likely to resort to the use of clientelistic benefits and services to smaller key constituencies to ensure political control (see Lust 2009).

In fact, the data show that where the quality of democracy is weaker, politicians make less programmatic effort. In general, countries with a predominance of parties that make primarily programmatic appeals tend to be fully democratic.

However, the statistically discernible effect of such quality vanishes as soon as further controls for rival explanations are added, particularly for the relative affluence of countries: only among less affluent countries does the presence of a level democratic playing field fail to improve the chances that parties will make more programmatic appeals. The seven country case studies confirm this: they do not show a great deal of difference in the quality of their democracy, as all of them have had free and fair elections in the last decade. But their parties engage in programmatic appeals to very different extents.

### ***Democratic experience***

One might also expect that a country's cumulative experience with democracy would be a strong factor in favour of an evolution toward programmatic politics. This expectation is based on the theory that through repeated elections (and in a long-term relationship between parties and voters), parties improve their understanding and incorporation of voters' policy positions, while voters collect more information about what parties stand for and how credible these stances are. During successive rounds of elections, political parties can hone their messages to voters based on the trust they build in delivering on previous promises (Keefer 2007).

Unfortunately, the empirical facts of the analysis do not appear to bear out these reasonable expectations. The length of time over which party competition has taken place in a country does not predict how programmatic its parties are. The clientelistic effort of political parties initially increases with length of democratic experience, as they build organizational machines to deliver benefits to their constituencies. Beyond a fairly high level of democratic experience, however, this relationship goes into reverse, and older democracies become less clientelistic (see Kitschelt and Kselman 2011). Data from the case studies confirm the statistical analysis. In India, for example, the parties with the longest democratic experience are also clientelistic, and the country with the second-shortest democratic track record (South Korea) has the strongest programmatic partisan appeals of the seven cases compared.

### ***Ethno-cultural division***

Many scholars have suspected a strong connection between clientelistic politics and ethnic or cultural divisions within a country (for a review, see Kolev and Wang 2010). The claim is backed by the hypothesis that politicians in parties formed to represent the interests of a specific ethnic (or religious, linguistic, etc.) group will feel compelled to deliver benefits and services to this group to get re-elected, and therefore will neglect programmatic appeals. The evidence from the seven case studies does not necessarily support this hypothesis.

Indeed, it is just as likely that programmatic parties and systems will develop in ethnically diverse countries as in homogeneous societies. In the sample of case studies, both the countries with the least and most programmatic parties (the Dominican Republic and South Korea) are ethnically homogeneous, while the ethnically divided party systems show various degrees of low-to-intermediate programmatic efforts (e.g. India). These results are robust, even when tested using the large DALP data set.

While ethno-cultural divides are not an obstacle per se to programmatic politics, it is worth noting that our data show that when those divides are deep, politicians tend to make stronger clientelistic efforts. Such association occurs when there are substantial differences in average incomes between ethnic groups. In such cases, voters tend to think that their individual success is tightly linked to their group's fate. Thus, they are more likely to be targeted by, and become clients of, political entrepreneurs who present themselves as partial to their kin.

### ***Economic development: levels of affluence***

The one 'hard' condition found to relate to programmatic partisan effort in empirically robust fashion is economic development, measured as per capita gross domestic product (GDP). More affluent countries tend to have programmatic party systems (see Figure 2.1); the case studies, with qualifications, also suggest that as countries become more affluent, there is an increasing chance that politicians will also create programmatic parties that obtain mass support.

How does this association work? For more affluent countries, citizens generally derive little benefit from the simple social services and gifts generated through a clientelistic exchange. Patronage-based jobs also become less likely as the population's level of education increases. Better-educated voters are also generally not impressed by leaders' charismatic appeals; they realize that sophisticated economies need general policies that permit the infusion of public and large-scale club goods such as infrastructure, education or health care. In less affluent countries, voters are less likely to demand policy-based politics; they rely on personal and small-group benefits and are sceptical that governments have the capacity to deliver collective goods. Vote-seeking politicians thus have little incentive to issue programmatic appeals.



of programmatic politics observed across parties in the case study countries is, for the most part, as expected when compared to other countries and their levels of economic development.

## **Soft conditions: the impact of politicians' choices on programmatic competition**

Soft conditions can be defined as windows of political opportunity in which politicians or political parties may be exposed to incentives to transform their parties by embracing programmatic appeals, while encountering relatively little resistance. These conditions fall along a spectrum from economic to political conditions. They are considered soft because they do not force politicians to take programmatic approaches; rather, they make it attractive for politicians to reach out to voters using a new programmatic appeal.

### ***Political economic development strategies and economic crises***

At different levels of economic development, countries are likely to face new challenges that require them to change their basic strategies on how to link markets and politics to improve the economy and living standards. If an existing development model is outdated and needs to be replaced, this gives politicians the chance to engage in programmatic discourse. In democracies, such big decisions involve political parties competing for control of the government executive that shapes development strategies. Quite naturally, parties may therefore become the locus of a country's discussions of its economic policy alternatives. If this hypothesis is correct, programmatic partisan debates should intensify after a protracted period of economic drift or decline that makes businesses and wage earners cry out for change.

First, borrowing from the literature on the political economy of development—starting with Haggard's (1990) seminal work and Rogowski's (1989) account of trade and political coalitions—three formats of economic development can be distinguished (Table 2.1): (1) poor raw materials exporter, (2) intermediate-income manufacturing exporters and (3) post-industrial knowledge economies.<sup>3</sup> Programmatic debates ensue when one format is exhausted and actors devise and advocate a new format in a period of economic crisis. Where political-economic formats deliver robust economic performance, however, clientelistic partisan-voter exchange may displace programmatic linkages. This applies at least where polities are still catching up with post-industrial democracies at the world technology innovation frontier.

**Table 2.1. Political economic formats: theoretical implications for programmatic politics**

Format	Gross description	Viability	Crisis
(1) Poor raw materials exporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driven by a coalition of export-oriented owners of natural resources</li> <li>• Comparative advantages: unskilled labour, land, raw materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively few opportunities in general</li> <li>• Particularly viable if the regime delivers a modicum of economic growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periods of international resource boom</li> <li>• Political mobilization of incipient skilled rural and urban working (especially if unionized) and middle classes</li> <li>• ‘Populist’ programmatic parties call for state involvement in industrialization and redistribution</li> </ul>
(2) Intermediate-income manufacturing exporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driven by urban political coalition of industrial capital and labour</li> <li>• Developmental state in two major types: import-substituting industrialization (ISI) or export-oriented industrialization (EOI)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong and successful state-led ISI-EOI development might foster more clientelism than programmatic politics</li> <li>• As ISI-EOI countries become richer, parties could combine clientelistic and programmatic policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exposure or adaptation to global economic competitiveness brings challenge of economic liberalization</li> <li>• Parties could compete over liberalization agenda and protect/compensate reform losers</li> </ul>
(3) Post-industrial knowledge economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement away from class-based politics, possibly toward a skill-based conflict</li> <li>• Increasing generation and stratification of human skills</li> <li>• Sophisticated industries and capital markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favourable to programmatic politics</li> <li>• Progressive exclusion of clientelistic networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High skill levels and the market-based economy make clientelism unattractive in all economic climates</li> </ul>

Table 2.1 explores the argument that crises are opportunities that prompt a rise or intensification of programmatic politics. When Formats 1 and 2 go through phases of stability or viability, a transition to programmatic-based politics is unlikely, either because an unskilled labour force and weak state capacity thwart programmatic politics (Format 1) and/or because parties

in an economic interventionist developmental state have the resources and institutional capabilities to pay off electoral constituencies (Format 2). This leaves programmatic transformation to the transition periods, when voters believe that the established political parties are not adequately addressing the challenges of adjusting to the new economic paradigm. Political parties also have fewer resources available to build clientelistic linkages during protracted periods of economic downturn. Simultaneously, crises induce new political leaders and voter groups to seek alternative answers to the challenges society faces, making them receptive to new and innovative programmatic visions of institutional change and the provision of collective goods.

Crises of import-substituting industrialization (ISI) or export-oriented industrialization (EOI) in developmental states—as experienced by Brazil, Turkey and South Korea in the 1980s and 1990s—highlight the empirical relevance of this political-economic argument. At least two empirical implications of the general argument can be tested with the available data, and especially with the seven case studies, as the quantitative data set has limitations for this type of historical argument.<sup>4</sup>

A first hypothesis is that long and successful stretches of developmental state presence should leave their imprint on parties' programmatic strategies. The statistical analysis yields the provisional conclusion that in countries that have gone through intense phases of ISI or EOI, parties make substantially more clientelistic efforts even at high levels of economic affluence than in countries that did not vigorously embrace a developmental state. While the quantitative analysis cannot detect the expected detrimental effect of ISI-EOI intense development on programmatic partisan politics, there is no beneficial effect. The general political-economic hypothesis may be only partially confirmed, because the original drive to establish ISI-EOI regimes involves strong programmatic appeals during a time of crisis of the preceding raw materials export-oriented regime. Even while these programmatic appeals are whittled away, once the resulting developmental states offer politicians opportunities to maintain citizens' loyalty through clientelism and patronage, a residue of programmatic politics will remain. When ISI-EOI falters, in turn, clientelism will not fade away immediately and be fully displaced by programmatic politics, as demonstrated by the South Korea case. Where the displacement of EOI policies is gradual and involves little crisis, clientelism may be even more tenacious, as evidenced by the Taiwan case.

A second proposition tests the core wager of the argument about development regimes: during times of prolonged or deep economic misery manifested by low growth and rising unemployment, politicians should begin to search for new development formats and engage in programmatic appeals. This should resonate with citizens, as their political response is more vigorous in response to bad than to good economic news. Indeed, the investigation finds that in

countries where unemployment has increased a great deal, or where economic growth faltered in the run-up to the 2008 DALP survey, there is a tendency for politicians to show greater programmatic efforts.

The case study narratives illustrate the mechanisms that bring about these phenomena: politicians with new programmatic ideas on how to improve the situation will emerge from established parties (or, more frequently, defectors from such parties); politicians in formerly marginalized parties or political entrepreneurs founding entirely new parties will ascend to prominence with new programmatic appeals. In the case studies, parties in Turkey and Brazil may serve as examples. In the context of Turkey's chronically weak economic performance, combined with a serious financial crisis in 2001, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) emerged as a new party that embraced ideas of economic liberalization. In the midst of the Brazilian debt crisis of the 1980s, the PT emerged as a programmatic impulse in defence of the social security and employment of (primarily unionized) urban public-sector civil servants threatened by the crisis and the politics of economic liberalization. An opposite programmatic impulse followed in the 1990s with the rise of the Social Democrats, which advanced economic liberalization and ultimately compelled the PT to accept much of the new political reality when it won the presidency in the new millennium. In South Korea, the sharp and short financial crisis served as a catalyst to boost politicians from within established parties who had a programmatic drive.

In general, the analysis finds a wealth of indications that economic distress makes (old or new) politicians produce, and divide over, programmatic alternatives. But this effect may be conditional upon the one favourable 'hard' constraint on programmatic partisan politics identified earlier: economic development. Politicians can seize on economic crises and advance programmatic partisan politics primarily in countries with intermediate affluence—i.e. a large wage-earning urban sector with substantial levels of literacy and occupational skill formation. When exploring the relationship between increases in unemployment and programmatic efforts between 1997 and 2007, the strongest association between crisis and programmatic politics emerges in Latin American and Western Europe, the weakest in generally poor Sub-Saharan Africa.

All in all, the analysis shows that even under economic crisis conditions, politicians must decide among alternative courses of action, and programmatic politics may not always appear to be the best option. However, particularly in intermediate-income countries, politicians may be strongly receptive to advice to embrace programmatic appeals, especially when clientelistic parties find themselves in an economic predicament.

## ***Competitiveness of democratic elections***

As politicians care most about winning elections in the hope of forming a government (or becoming a partner in a coalition government), they invest in programmatic stances only when they advance this objective. A politician on a winning course facing weak competitors will be hard to persuade to upgrade his or her party's programmatic appeals and to define policies that distinguish it from competitors. In general terms, politicians will make greater programmatic efforts when the stakes of winning or losing are higher, e.g. when small changes in a party's electoral support may translate into very big changes in its ability to participate in or dominate a government. This tends to be the case when (1) two parties run neck and neck in voter support and (2) together they are so large that either could become the focal organizer of an alternative government. Competitiveness is thus a function of the closeness of the competition between rivals and the concentration of support among very few rivals.

Intense competitiveness of the democratic game, however, may again be conditional on the 'hard' constraint limiting programmatic party politics: economic development. Even when parties run neck and neck, it will be worth politicians' trouble to make programmatic appeals only if there is a sufficient 'voter market' that responds to such signals. Voters' receptivity to programmatic messages is greater in middle-income countries, as is the probability that politicians will intensify their programmatic efforts when competitiveness makes doing so attractive.

The empirical evidence for the hypothesis that high interparty competitiveness promotes programmatic partisan appeals in middle-income countries is rather mixed. Moreover, it is unclear whether the causal arrow runs from competitiveness to programmatic strategies or the other way around. It may be that programmatic politics makes interparty competition between two lead rivals more competitive in the first place.

Among the seven case studies, competitiveness is highest in the Dominican Republic, South Korea and Taiwan, where most votes in the last legislative elections before 2008 were concentrated on two parties. Yet programmatic efforts go in different directions; South Korea is the only case in which competitiveness clearly appears to coincide with more intense programmatic appeals. But it is difficult to draw causal inferences from only seven cases.

In the DALP data set with 88 countries, a stronger association between intense competition and greater programmaticity can be detected. Yet it is clearly contingent on income levels. Competitiveness coincides with more programmatic effort only in the more affluent countries. In countries with low and intermediate income, intense competitiveness is associated with weaker

programmatic efforts. In very poor countries, more intense party competition may even reinvigorate clientelistic partisan efforts.

Even though it seems plausible that affluent countries have larger markets for programmatic voters in situations of intense competition among the largest parties, without more data from different points in time it cannot be known whether competitiveness creates greater programmatic efforts, or the other way around. Moreover, parties may try to deploy all strategies—programmatic and clientelistic—at once. This possibility is particularly plausible in the presence of authoritarian legacy parties, which were particularly strong in middle-income countries with ISI-EOI policies that relied on a developmental state. Such parties were embedded in intricate networks spanning politics and economics and facilitating clientelistic relations, which they could put to good use under new democratic conditions. Authoritarian legacy parties are now likely to promote both clientelistic and programmatic appeals.

The Bulgarian Socialist Party is an archetypal case of an ex-communist party that managed to preserve clientelistic ties while also creating a programmatic identity. The South Korean Grand National Party (a merger of different parties) developed similar modes of operation against the backdrop of a legacy of involvement in authoritarian rule. The Taiwanese Kuomintang (KMT) is a successor party that has preserved clientelistic ties, particularly because no deep economic crisis disrupted its developmental state strategy. Yet it might be about to develop more sharply programmatic features that advocate the preservation of the political-economic status quo against redistributive pressures from its main rival, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

### ***Parties' internal and legislative organization***

All political parties need capable organizational structures in order to become electorally successful. Programmatic parties, however, need to recruit like-minded activists and coordinate them through processes of deliberation to develop a coherent policy commitment in order to be successful. By contrast, parties interested in different strategies do not seek to create venues for followers to deliberate and coordinate their party's policy objectives. Hence, programmatic parties are more likely to build formal internal networks of personnel, whereas for parties with a non-programmatic purpose, informal networks of existing notables outside the party are more instrumental. Furthermore, leaders of programmatic parties may have to make concessions to mid-level activists' and grass-roots members' desires to have a say in party strategy in order to make their commitment to policy objectives more credible. And in clientelistic settings, the leadership may seek a high degree of centralization of political authority in order to control the intermediate

broker level (Stokes 2005; Stokes et al. 2013). Indeed, activists in the latter type might even be indifferent to a strong concentration of authority.

In testing the cases against those abstract qualities of party organization, three features are placed at the centre of the investigation: (1) assessment of the role of local notables in the party organization (an indirect sign of weak internal networks), (2) the degree of centralization of power over candidate nomination in a party's national leadership (sign of less deliberation) and (3) the opaqueness of internal finance (a sign of less control over leadership).

In the broad DALP data set, parties with intense clientelistic (but non-programmatic) efforts tend to be centralized and rely on informal networks of notables rather than formal membership structures. Parties that are both clientelistic and programmatic also tend to be highly centralized and emphasize formal organization. In the case studies, the Turkish AKP and the Bulgarian Socialist Party realize dual linkage strategies and are highly centralized.

Parties that are only programmatic have a tendency to permit a certain amount of organizational decentralization, namely by giving activists and rank-and-file members more say over the nomination of legislative candidates. In general, greater membership input and leadership accountability to rank-and-file stakeholders thus distinguishes more programmatic parties from clientelistic parties. But when programmatic parties develop large member and stakeholder networks, they inevitably exhibit a certain countervailing tendency to produce more powerful leaders to hold them together (revising earlier findings through more detailed analysis: Kitschelt and Kselman 2014). Compared to clientelistic parties, exclusively programmatic parties distinguish themselves with regard to financial management: they are the only ones in which party finance tends to be more transparent and compliant with legal regulations. Clientelistic parties, by contrast, whether also emphasizing programmes or not, tend to operate with opaque and often illegal financial practices.

The mapping of the internal organizations of the case study countries is consistent with the tendencies just described<sup>5</sup> (see Box 2.2). The only parties in the set that tend to combine extensive formal organization with restrained party centralization are the ones that have the strongest programmatic efforts and weakest clientelistic propensities: the Brazilian PT and the Korean parties. Elsewhere, parties had highly centralistic tendencies and relied on informal notables regardless of whether they were also programmatic.

The case studies, however, do not warrant the conclusion that choosing a particular organizational party structure—formal organization with limited centralization—can make them programmatic. Organizational form and

strategic appeal coincide, but the case studies do not reveal a causal relationship. Yet it can be concluded that programmatic appeal is more likely to survive in larger political parties (e.g. the Brazilian PT) with a party organization that credibly institutionalizes party governance, separates leaders' personalities from the party's corporate strategy and allows its membership to influence legislative candidate selection.

### **Box 2.2. Case studies: programmatic versus clientelistic parties—party organization**

Parties in the Dominican Republic mostly lack a formal local presence and rely on local notables. They also have a highly centralized organizational structure.

Though the two main parties in Taiwan have extensive local units, they tend to ally themselves with pre-existing small-scale social networks in order to mobilize votes. This tendency originates from the KMT's linkage strategies of eliciting cooperation from local elites and securing popular support through local-level elections under authoritarianism.

Indian party organization varies substantially across states. In states where parties are more organized and more clearly follow formalized regulations to select party representatives, voters coordinate around parties rather than individual candidates. Most Indian parties lack the organizational structures that facilitate programmatic partisan appeals.

In Turkey, the party that has the greatest level of formal organizational extensiveness, the AKP, is also the party that makes the most substantial programmatic effort. But it also relies on extensive networks of notables to assist its clientelistic effort. The AKP has become the archetypical 'do everything' party, and its leadership enjoys centralized power.

The increasing importance of Korean parties' programmatic appeals corresponds to the retirement of the 'three Kims' and the depersonalization of party organizations. Parties have made great efforts to institutionalize the internal decision-making process and create greater transparency.

In Brazil, the Workers' Party was by far the most formally organized party in the country, even before the ascent of its leaders to the Brazilian presidency. Whereas the other parties are highly personalistic instruments of their leaders, even a charismatic politician such as Lula was checked by the internal deliberative processes of his party.

In Bulgaria, the fragmentary evidence again suggests that programmatic appeals tend to be made by the more formally organized parties, whereas the less programmatic parties tend to be more personalistic and centralized projects.

### **Legislative organization**

Another important facet of a party's power structure is the governance of its legislative representatives. They are formally free of party instructions in

most legislatures in the world, but *de facto* party leaders often hold sway over their legislators. How do the parties' legislative caucus arrangements relate to their policy efforts? In order for legislative organizational arrangements to be compatible with programmatic politics, two criteria must be met. First, legislatures must function as 'working parliaments' and not only as 'speaking parliaments', to put it in Weber's terms (1919/1978). This means that legislators must be provided with incentives and capabilities to invest in acquiring policy expertise through, for example, a well-endowed legislative committee system. A second criterion is that, simultaneously, legislatures must provide incentives for legislators to cooperate within their party caucuses rather than compete against each other; they must reward collective coordination and give competences to groups rather than individuals, thus making it costly for legislators to defect from their parties.

In at least three of the legislatures covered by this project's case studies (Brazil, Bulgaria and South Korea), and possibly also Taiwan, the evidence may suggest that parties' legislative governance structures have strengthened in recent years. It has become harder and more costly for members of legislatures to switch their caucus and party affiliation. Indications are also that committee work has somewhat intensified. Whether and how such committee work is performed—and how it influences (or is influenced by) programmatic partisan debates—is not understood. Provided that party leaders underwrite a programmatic orientation, a stronger partisan governance of legislative delegations should eventually contribute to more programmatic partisan competition.

Subjecting these observations to systematic comparative analysis proves difficult, given the lack of systematic cross-national evidence (DALP did not collect such data) or detailed studies of legislative party organization in the current case study countries. The case studies assembled in this project are compelled to rely on impressionistic observation and whatever hazardous inferences can be drawn from them. This limitation is regrettable, as party and legislative organizations are elements of the political process that may be altered with fewer political obstacles to reform than when a country's basic democratic institutions or political-economic features are at stake.

### **Plausible, yet weakly explored factors that influence politicians' programmatic choice**

These factors are deemed plausible, but weakly explored or confirmed due to the lack of research evidence pointing to their capacity to influence the programmatic outlook of parties or political systems. The lack of explanatory power of these elements does not rule them out as possible conditions, but rather points to the need for further research on their role and influence.

### ***Democratic institutions and programmatic party formation***

Several studies argue that institutional rules of the game in a democracy matter for parties' linkage strategies. Rules that emphasize competition among individual politicians running for office and holding politicians accountable for wielding public authority are said to obstruct programmatic competition, which requires politicians and voters to focus on ideas and government activities rather than the unique qualities of individual politicians ('charisma') and what they can do for small target constituencies in exchange for votes ('clientelism'). Programmatic politics is supposed to thrive where institutions nudge individual politicians toward cooperation with other politicians in large 'teams' that pool their resources and coordinate their activities under the umbrellas of competing partisan labels.

The institutional elements that are supposed to enhance politicians' programmatic efforts in electoral competition and the daily work of partisan representation include electoral laws, a country's executive-legislative relations and its level of political (de)centralization.

As for electoral laws, where parties compete in proportional representation systems with large districts and voters cannot select individual candidates from party lists (closed-list ballots), parties will in principle have considerable incentives to issue a programmatic message. By contrast, where individual candidates stand in the foreground, such as in single-member or multimember districts with open lists—where voters award their support not to a party list as a whole, but to specific individuals—politicians from the same party have incentives to compete against each other, highlighting their finer programmatic differences or attempting to attract voters through clientelistic inducements or personal charisma.

Next, directly elected presidents with considerable legislative powers (to make, block and implement bills) or executive powers (to appoint cabinet and senior public officials) are thought to personalize the political process. Ambitious presidential candidates often use patronage to distinguish themselves from rivals in their own party. Once nominated, candidates distance themselves from their own parties' programmatic stances in order to win marginal and uncommitted voters. The presidential candidates' programmatic ideas then muddy their party's profiles before elections, and may make legislative support for presidential incumbents quite volatile and unpredictable after elections, as not even a president's own party is unambiguously committed to his or her support. By contrast, a parliamentary government with a prime minister directly accountable to legislative majorities provides powerful incentives for group cohesion around programmatic ideas and the Cabinet.

Last, where the power to allocate government funds is decentralized to elected regional and local decision-makers, these localized party operatives will likely be better able to identify and monitor clientelistic networks. As a consequence, politicians in federalist systems may have fewer incentives to invest time and resources into featuring nationwide policy programmes. By contrast, a centralized government has less capacity to micromanage electoral support ties and therefore relies more on roundabout programmatic (rather than clientelistic) appeals.

Empirically, neither the case studies nor a broad comparative examination using the DALP data set strongly supports these institutional hypotheses (Kitschelt 2011b). The most robust finding is probably the small boost that presidential democracies give to clientelistic efforts. Conversely, however, parliamentary democracies do not appear to systematically enhance programmatic efforts (as suggested in Luna's analysis in the preceding chapter). With regard to electoral laws, they display only weak (if any) effects, which are often inconsistent with the expectations described above. Lastly, no effect of federalism on parties can be identified one way or another, even when assessed using controls for economic development or levels of affluence.

Anecdotal evidence from the case studies reveals, however, that some institutional patterns correlate with parties' linkage strategies in ways that are consistent with institutional hypotheses, though not in a very systematic fashion. The Indian first-past-the-post electoral system, in conjunction with a strict federalism that devolves a great deal of political power over economic resources to the state and local levels, tends to encourage a personalization of partisan politics and is likely to fuel intense clientelism, as is indeed observed. Moreover, the resulting proliferation of state-level parties across India's 35-state federation makes it imperative to convene complex coalition governments at the federal level. Here, in fact, sectoral compatibility prevails at the expense of ideological compatibility (Gowda and Sridharan 2010: 158–9). A coalition government in federalism may thus systematically undermine programmatic orientation. In Brazil, politicians in many parties have, of course, acted on institutional conditions that are conducive to non-programmatic politics, such as the country's electoral law, but not in all parties (the PT defies the pattern). And in Taiwan the transition from a personalistic electoral system (single non-transferable vote system) to a mixed single-member district and closed list with proportional representation removes intraparty competition among candidates, which works against programmatic partisan efforts. The trouble is that democratic institutions by themselves seem to work only in a highly contextualized way, making it difficult to generalize from these examples.

This conclusion suggests the power of the exogenous hard constraints. Where there is little popular demand for programmatic politics that would

be induced by development, politicians and constitutional designers cannot contrive a programmatic party system. Yet politicians are resourceful and may develop organizational party structures that compensate for institutions that are adverse to programmatic competition. The Brazilian PT countervailed institutions that primed individual competition within the party by instituting rules of nomination and conduct that enhanced the solidarity and coordination of the party's elected representatives.

Even though programmatic politics does not appear amenable to single-minded engineering, institutional reforms may help hasten a transition to programmatic politics—provided they occur in conjunction with other helpful hard or soft conditions that are conducive to the rise of programmatic politics, such as growing economic affluence or the exhaustion of the developmental state model of economic growth. Constitutional design alone delivers nothing but institutional blueprints.

### ***Civil society mobilization***

There are reasons to hypothesize that a vibrant civil society with numerous civic associations that are independent from political parties, yet enjoy broad popular support, may force political parties to adopt more programmatic appeals than clientelistic exchange strategies. Citizens who are more associated with relatively independent civic associations than established political parties are hard to incorporate into clientelistic networks. When faced with independent civic associations, politicians may therefore be compelled to resort to programmatic efforts. Additionally, the presence of autonomous civic associations often constitutes a threat to existing political parties. If existing parties fail to incorporate demands for autonomous, mobilized civic associations, new parties nurtured by the activism of civic associations may enter the political scene—which may encourage politicians in established parties to cater to unaffiliated voters by primarily programmatic appeals.

Do these propositions match empirical observations? Since evidence is sparse and more suggestive than conclusive, more study of this subject is needed. In a broader comparison of party appeals and civic associations based on the DALP data, the relationship between parties' more programmatic appeals and their affiliation with civic associations is contingent upon development. Parties with closer linkages to labour and women's movements also tend to make somewhat stronger programmatic efforts, but only in the more affluent countries (per capita GDP over USD 10,000). In less affluent countries, the only relationship is a negative correlation with women's movements, perhaps because labour and women's movements experience corporatist subordination under predominantly clientelistic parties.<sup>6</sup>

Civic associations' autonomy from political parties (and political claims) may make party politicians ponder more or less programmatic appeals. Members of religious or ethno-cultural associations may be more amenable to clientelistic, contingent and exclusionary exchange relations with political parties. Highly encompassing labour unions are more likely to insist that politicians deliver collective and large-scale redistributive club goods, and tend to embrace programmatic politics and abhor clientelism.

Consider the case of South Korea, which has an independent labour movement that was repressed by the military regime in the 1980s, but later re-emerged as an autonomous political force. After the financial crisis of 1997, the movement made good on its threat to form its own party (the Korean Democratic Labour Party), which may have had rather limited electoral success so far, but which may have also hastened the post-crisis adoption of stronger programmatic positions by the two major South Korean parties. In Taiwan, by contrast, unions developed very differently, in a more state-corporatist mould, in which unions are closely intertwined with political parties. The larger labour federation affiliated with the ruling KMT, and the smaller association with the opposition DPP. These party-affiliated associations displayed less militancy and may have been a much lesser threat to push party politicians toward better-articulated programmatic stances.

In Brazil, a radical labour movement was at the cradle of the PT, the first party to espouse a clearly programmatic orientation. Over time, the interplay—and at times the tension—with the labour movement wing has been critical for the development of the PT.

In other case study countries, the DALP experts find close links between several dominant clientelistic parties and labour movements. This applies, for instance, to the major Indian parties, not only to the India National Congress and its small regional allies, but also the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the two small communist parties. In Bulgaria, only the post-communist Bulgarian Socialist Party boasts close labour links. In the Latin American cases, with few exceptions (PT and the Argentinean party Justicialists), the labour movements are generally weak and no longer have strong ties to partisan governments.

### Box 2.3. Democratic institutions and programmatic party formation

South Korea has democratic institutions that do not unambiguously favour programmatic party competition. While it is a centralist democracy, it also has a moderately powerful, directly elected presidency and an electoral system that only recently enacted reforms that have made it less clearly conducive to clientelistic exchange relations.

Turkey has institutions that probably come closest to consistency with observable programmatic partisan efforts, although with qualifications. Its closed-list multimember PR electoral system favours programmatic politics, as does its parliamentary form of executive governance and its centralization of government authority.

Bulgaria has a closed-list proportional electoral system and a centralized form of government, both of which favour programmatic party competition. Moreover, it has a weak (but not entirely powerless) directly elected presidency. In light of these conditions and its level of economic development, stronger support for programmatic benefits would have been expected than is actually observed.

Brazil has institutions that are more or less inimical to programmatic competition, even though an electoral system reform some years ago removed one of the most notorious aspects that fosters clientelism instead of programmatic partisan politics. Nevertheless, parties such as the Workers' Party have changed their electoral appeals and now feature more programmatic appeals.

The Dominican Republic, India and Taiwan have little programmatic activism in their individual major parties. Yet their institutions are not entirely adverse to programmatic party competition and conducive to clientelistic politics.

## Conclusions

This chapter assessed the nature of programmatic partisan efforts using a combination of in-depth case studies and a large quantitative study. Parties focus on programmatic policies if certain conditions are present, and will tend toward clientelistic or personalistic politics if they are not. Programmatic parties seem to follow different paths of creation and consolidation, and different incentives shape such trajectories. Few factors are found across all instances of programmatic party formation in the case studies, but correlations can be observed and nine tentative mechanisms that have some causal influence on parties' programmatic appeals can be identified:

- Economic development shapes a favourable environment for programmatic politics. The overriding hard condition for programmatic party appeals is economic development. Educated, higher-income individuals prefer programmatic partisan accountability for a variety of reasons, and find

little satisfaction with alternatives. Conversely, the prevalence of poverty in a polity does not bode well for programmatic politics.

- Periods of economic crisis offer windows of opportunity to raise the programmatic content of party competition. When the status quo becomes painful, both voters and politicians are willing to consider policy programmes that affect the benefits and costs of large voter groups. The window for programmatic politics is particularly promising when existing long-term economic growth models have become exhausted. This typically occurs in the transition from export-oriented raw materials production to developmental state industrialization strategies, or in the transition from the latter to post-industrial science- and service-based economies. It is not inevitable that parties and party systems will become programmatic at such critical junctures; they result from choices made by politicians and citizens. The advent of the developmental state provides plenty of incentives to build democratic linkages around clientelism rather than programmatic appeals.
- The more intense the competitiveness of democratic elections, the more likely parties are to invest in programmatic appeals, at least in more affluent countries. If the stakes are high for partisan politicians, they will make more effort to attract voters. Where there is a demand for programmatic rather than clientelistic appeals, as is the case in more affluent countries, a high degree of competitiveness will redouble politicians' efforts to feature policy positions. Intense competitiveness in less affluent societies, by contrast, will tend to produce more clientelistic partisan efforts, as most of the voters prefer targeted material benefits over promises of policy change.
- Party organizational arrangements consolidate programmatic efforts. However unlikely it is that politicians' choices of party organizational forms (including legislative caucus arrangements) can *cause* their parties to adopt more or less programmatic linkage strategies, it is a fairly robust finding that certain institutional arrangements are more compatible with, and supportive of, programmatic competition than others. Formal membership with influence over decision-making in less centralized organizations, in which leaders have less control over the nomination of a party's candidates, and more transparent and institutionalized financial practices will make programmatic efforts more sustainable, even though complex programmatic parties require a stronger leadership to bundle partisan voices.
- A level democratic playing field that offers equal chances and equal protection of civil and political liberties for rival contenders in an electoral contest may be a desirable normative goal for designing political systems, but it does not empirically coincide with more programmatic parties. Democracies that are well endowed with civil and political rights also have non-programmatic parties.

- Greater democratic experience is not enough to produce programmatic parties. Parties do not become programmatic by simply competing repeatedly in elections.
- Deep ethnic divisions and asymmetries in income and power in a polity may or may not foster programmatic politics, but they do not reduce programmatic politics per se. Some demands that benefit most members of an ethnic community—such as income redistribution, civil and political liberties, or tolerance to cultural practices—may be framed in terms of general programmatic claims calling for policies that benefit and apply to all members of society, not just those who vote for the party that promotes them or an ethnic group that is over-represented in the electorate.
- Institutional engineering—whether of electoral systems, relations between the executive and legislature, or (de)centralization—appears to be helpful in highly contextualized circumstances. An additional institutional reform might hasten a transition to programmatic politics, provided that it occurs in conjunction with other helpful elements such as growing economic affluence or the exhaustion of a developmental state. By itself, constitutional design might deliver only institutional blueprints.
- Strong unions with durable bonds to political parties may foster programmatic politics, albeit only in more affluent countries. Elsewhere, union-party combinations may foster clientelistic politics and special-interest rent seeking, or at least adds nothing to the programmatic content of a party's appeals.

## Notes

- 1 The case studies were commissioned by International IDEA and the research conducted under the supervision of Herbert Kitschelt. These case studies are detailed accounts of the process leading to programmatization of parties in seven countries: Brazil: 'A Case Study of Clientelistic vs. Programmatic Political Parties in Brazil', by Sandra Osterkatz (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill); Bulgaria: 'Electoral Volatility Polarization and Financial Deficits Lead to Reduction of Clientelism', by Kiril Kolev (Hendrix College); Dominican Republic: 'Electoral Politics in the Dominican Republic: Low Levels of Programmatic Competition', by Matthew Singer (University of Connecticut); India: 'Party Competition: Continued Weak Programmatic Structuration of Partisan Alternatives: A Proto-case Study', by Herbert Kitschelt (Duke University); South Korea: 'A Case Study of Parties' Programmatic and Clientelistic Appeals', by Yi-ting Wang (Duke University); Taiwan: 'A Case Study of Parties' Programmatic and Clientelistic Appeals', by Yi-ting Wang (Duke University); and Turkey: 'The Evolution of Electoral Accountability in Turkey: Cyclical Evolutions in Programmatic and Clientelistic Politics', by Daniel Kselman (Juan March Institute). The research also uses, for the sake of methodological accuracy, data from the Democratic Accountability and Linkage Project (DALP) conducted by Duke University. The DALP is a data set of 88 democracies with different measurements. It can be accessed on: <<https://web.duke.edu/democracy/>>.
- 2 The data set was funded by the World Bank, Duke University and the Chilean National Research Foundation.
- 3 There is a possible hybrid: (4) high-income raw material exporters. It can be equated to a viable Format 1.
- 4 Running hypotheses past the DALP data set is hard because it reflects only a single observation at one time point (2008). As the argument is based on transitions, multiple observations of all variables over time would be needed.
- 5 A word of caution is worth mentioning: the case studies find very little research on the nature of party organizations in developing democracies. Interest in the Brazilian PT is an exception.
- 6 In poorer countries, associational mobilization does not translate into more programmatic politics when such associations are tied to party networks. This result is consistent with the literature on the urban bias of development policies (Bates 2008) and the role of labour unions as potentially boosting inequality and disparities of life chances (e.g. McGuire 1999).

## Bibliography and Further Reading

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# CHAPTER 3

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CHAPTER 3

# Programmatic Politics in Comparative Perspective

*Nic Cheeseman and Dan Paget*

## Introduction

A political system is programmatic when the parties within it predominantly generate policy, mobilize support and govern on the basis of a consistent and coherent ideological position. In other words, programmatic politics is the antithesis of clientelistic politics, in which parties seek to mobilize support through patron-client networks and seek power in order to gain control over state resources. Equally, programmatic politics is distinct from ties between voters and parties that are grounded in the charisma of leaders and communal identities. However, these strategies are not mutually exclusive; many parties deploy elements of both. The development of programmatic politics is important for a number of reasons. In party systems where clientelistic parties predominate, elections rarely generate debate over important issues such as economic policy and may not even focus on the performance of the last government. In clientelistic parties, for example, leaders gain support if they provide sufficient private benefits to their supporters. How well they handle public policy is generally of little importance. For a political party to be defined as programmatic, well-structured and stable ideological commitments constitute the basis for:

- The link between the party and its constituents.
- The internal organization of the party.
- The policymaking process and the platform that results.

In order to better understand the factors that drive or stymie the establishment of programmatic parties, we studied Brazil, India, Ukraine and Zambia, which have all witnessed transitions of varying degrees from clientelistic to programmatic systems.<sup>1</sup> They provide insight into the process of transitioning from a clientelistic to a programmatic system, as

well as the impact of programmatic politics. Finally, a number of policy recommendations are extracted from the findings. Three important conclusions to better understand programmatic development can be drawn from these case studies:

- Previous work in this area has failed to recognize that parties can be simultaneously ethnic (or linguistic, religious, or regional) and programmatic.<sup>2</sup> This often occurs when historical patterns of discrimination result in an overlap between ethnic and socio-economic groups, or when the politicization of some ethnic communities renders them more responsive to certain policy platforms. It may also occur when a particular political party campaigns on a coherent policy programme but also relies on symbols and ideas that are connected to one or more communities, and disproportionately draws upon social networks and organizations from these groups. Of course, such parties tend to adopt stances on policy issues that are favoured by the communities they appeal to. Yet what this means for how parties develop, and how programmatic they are, is far from straightforward. On the one hand, some parties that have generally been characterized as ethnic may need to be re-evaluated, because they pursue coherent policy platforms that have positive characteristics and outcomes normally associated with programmatic parties. On the other hand, it is important to recognize that under some conditions ethnic-programmatic parties represent a clear risk to policy-based politics: when parties rely too heavily on their connection to one community, they are likely to exacerbate the ethnic tensions that so often contribute to political instability in new democracies. It is therefore important to distinguish between ‘ethnic-programmatic’ parties and their ‘civic-programmatic’ counterparts.
- If a country has only one or two parties that are programmatic, while other influential parties are not, this does not amount to a programmatic party system. Analysis often assumes that programmatic parties will drive the ‘programmatisation’ of the party system, but this is not supported by the case studies. Although programmatic parties may have certain advantages over their rivals, a small number of policy-based parties may have little impact if they do not win power, and have to compete against established ethnic, personalistic and clientelistic parties that have greater access to resources. Under these conditions, programmatic and non-programmatic parties can co-exist.
- A comparison of the four cases reveals that two factors in the development of a programmatic party have a strong correlation to the development of a sustainable programmatic party system: (1) the types of linkages that parties construct to voters and (2) whether or not they build strong ties to civil society groups.

### **Box 3.1. Defining and operationalizing programmatic party politics through case studies**

As proposed earlier by Luna, a programmatic party is one that has well-structured and stable ideological commitments that constitute the basis of its organization and activities. Yet parties are not simply programmatic or non-programmatic. The parties identified in the four case studies are distributed across a broad spectrum, from largely clientelistic parties with little programmatic content (such as the Movement for Multiparty Democracy in Zambia) to those that rely on patron-client relations to mobilize support but pursue coherent policy-based agendas (such as the Congress Party in India) to parties that mobilize support along programmatic lines, feature internal structures designed to promote programmatic policy formation and pursue a stable set of ideological goals when in office (such as the PT in Brazil or, to a lesser extent, the Socialist Party of Ukraine). Second, as these examples demonstrate, parties may be more or less programmatic on a number of different dimensions. Because parties may be highly programmatic in some areas and relatively unprogrammatic in others, it can be very difficult to rank them. For example, should Brazil's PSDB (Brazilian Social Democratic Party)—which has a party structure directed toward the pursuit of programmatic goals and attempts to implement them while in office, but relies more on clientelistic than programmatic methods to mobilize voters—be considered more, less or equally as programmatic as Zambia's Patriotic Front (PF), which has developed some programmatic linkages with voters but has yet to consolidate its programmatic credentials regarding how the party is organized and makes policy? This question cannot be answered without first deciding which of the three dimensions of programmaticity set out above is the most important.

### **Box 3.2. Case study in brief: Ukraine**

After the breakdown of the Soviet Union, Ukraine faced the challenge of building a party system from scratch. The emergence and consolidation of the party system over the last two decades has been characterized by many problems and setbacks. For most of this period, parties were uninstitutionalized and non-programmatic. A strong president, a single-member district electoral system and significant corruption permitted clientelist parties to thrive in the 1990s.

The programmatic profiles of Ukrainian parties sharpened considerably after the Orange Revolution of 2004, and in particular after the 2006 elections. In that period, ethno-cultural issues including national language and relations with the EU and Russia became the axis around which party politics was organized. A change in the voting system between 2006 and 2010 rendered clientelist strategies less feasible and strengthened party leaders vis-à-vis their members of parliament (MPs). This enabled party elites to push more programmatic programmes, invest in organizational development and contain party splits that would otherwise have undermined party unity. However, many of these changes were revoked for the 2012 elections.

### **Box 3.3. Case study in brief: Brazil**

The Brazilian party system is complex and crowded. In the 1980s and 1990s, it became notorious for its weakness, clientelism and generally inchoate quality—and its lack of programmability (see Ames 2001; Lamounier 1986; Mainwaring 1995, 1999; Samuels 2000). However, over the past two and a half decades, this chaotic party system has become more stable and more programmatic since the rise of the Workers' Party (PT).

The PT competed against established clientelist parties by relying on trade union resources and left-wing support. As it gained power in certain states, it benefited from the advantages of incumbency. After the PT took the presidency in 2002, its programmatic strategy repeatedly outperformed the clientelist strategies of its rivals. In response, the PSDB strengthened its programmatic profile. Former PT and PSDB leaders Silva and Cardoso, respectively, had charismatic appeal of their own, but they gave faces and personalities to their parties' policy programmes—entrenching programmatic politics rather than weakening it. Although the Brazilian party system remained fragmented, in the 2000s the PT and PSDB formed the bases of regular left and right coalitions that brought order to the political landscape. At the time of writing, a party system is institutionalizing in Brazil that approaches the programmatic character of established democracies (Hagopian, Gervasoni and Moraes 2009).

### **Box 3.4. Case study in brief: India**

The case study of programmatic party politics in India focuses on two major transformations: at the state and national levels. At the national level, India's party system has experienced fragmentation since the late 1980s, when the decades-long hegemony of the Congress Party began to give way to heated multiparty competition. The Indian Congress Party's 'cadre programmatic' party model—in which the programmes formulated by party elites were not used to mobilize voters—was challenged by parties such as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and a range of regional parties. Many of these newer parties have clear programmatic elements, yet they defy conventional categories because they combine programmatic platforms with targeted ethnic appeals to voters. Naturally, elements of these parties' platforms appealed more to some ethnic segments of the population, especially in cases where socio-economic class and ethnicity overlapped. The consequences for the political system were complex. On the one hand, these parties bridged the gap between elite and mass party politics. On the other hand, the often-divisive nature of their strategies was not always conducive to stability in a large and diverse democracy such as India. The BJP, for example, has been accused of inciting ethnic hatred and violence in a number of different incidents. However, there is evidence that, over time, these parties have moderated their emphasis on identity, and as a result have begun to become less 'ethnic' in their style of politics. It is unclear whether the emergence of weak programmatic parties will drive other parties to improve their programmatic nature in order to keep pace.

**Box 3.4. (cont.)**

At the state level, candidates have campaigned in state elections on good-governance tickets, won and proceeded to implement credible anti-corruption programmes. The victory of the Telugu Desam Party and its selection of Chandrababu Naidu as chief minister in Andhra Pradesh is perhaps the best example. These state-led innovations had a powerful demonstration effect and so these political strategies were quickly copied—rhetorically, if not always in practice—by political entrepreneurs elsewhere. As a result, a number of state chief ministers and parties have emerged that have made good governance and economic development the signature feature of their political campaigns.

**Box 3.5. Case study in brief: Zambia**

In Zambia, there have been several fleeting moments when politics have become more programmatic, but it is only since 2002 that an electorally successful form of populism has emerged. Its rise has been not only remarkable, but also significant for programmatic politics elsewhere, because it has developed under conditions that other policy-based parties have found inhospitable. Between 1991 and 2011, the Zambian party system was characterized by a dominant party surrounded by a fragmented opposition. Party labels were not useful as descriptors of party policies. Rather, parties were connected to voters through clientelistic exchanges and politics were personal, ethnic and neo-patrimonial: features that were interconnected and mutually reinforcing. These characteristics can be found in other African cases and beyond. Despite this context, a new party emerged that advocated a programmatic agenda: the Patriotic Front (PF). Led by a veteran politician, Michael Sata, the PF developed strong links to previously untapped constituencies by articulating unsung grievances and developing policies that responded to them. It was able to do so because of Sata's personal charismatic appeal and by drawing on former trade union and church networks that provided mobilizational capacity. The PF expanded its base by targeting specific appeals to ethnic and urban groups, a practice that has resulted in the party's categorization as 'ethnopolitist' (Cheeseman and Larmer 2013). This strategy enabled the PF to rise from the margins of political relevance to win the presidency in just ten years.

However, despite the party's rapid success, its programmatic mission was not institutionalized. The PF had not built civil society groups into its party as the PT did in Brazil and the BSP did in India. Instead, the party grew so fast that it sacrificed institutional consolidation for growth. Its programmatic character is therefore particularly vulnerable to reversal. Moreover, while the PF's rise provoked other parties to take stances on certain issues, it has not yet inspired the development of programmatic alternatives.

## **Structural drivers and retardants of programmatic parties**

Programmatic parties do not develop in all political settings. Some countries have national and sub-national conditions that are more conducive to programmatic party development. Based on the case studies and other analyses, certain background conditions were found to promote or hinder the development of policy-oriented parties.

First, strong, rule-based states encourage the emergence of programmatic politics. Clientelist parties distribute resources through patron-client networks to mobilize support, and many of these resources come from the state—often illegally. When states feature rule-based bureaucracies and merit-based systems, they narrow the space for clientelistic strategies, which in turn renders programmatic alternatives more effective. In contrast, states that are ‘porous’ (i.e. those inside and outside the state can extract resources from it) have fewer opportunities for programmatic parties to emerge and challenge the status quo.

Second, the structure of a society is a critical factor. Some constellations of societal groups and networks make programmatic mobilization more difficult and clientelistic mobilization more feasible, and vice versa. When groups in society are well educated, well informed and well off, but continue to rely on the state provision of public goods, they are likely to be more resistant to clientelistic strategies and more open to programmatic forms of mobilization. Conversely, when groups in society are poorly educated, poorly informed and poorly off, or are not affected by the state provision of public goods, they are likely to be more receptive to clientelistic means of mobilization. With some important exceptions, urban groups more frequently have the former set of characteristics, and rural groups are more likely to exhibit the latter. Consequently, more urban societies are generally more receptive to programmatic appeals than rural societies, although this is far from a hard-and-fast rule. Equally, societies that produce stronger and more politicized civil society groups present political parties with opportunities to enter into strategic relationships with non-state actors that are conducive to the creation and institutionalization of programmatic politics, as discussed in greater detail below.

Third, the design of institutions—not just parties, but also the political system and parliamentary rules—affects party strength and coherence and thereby their programmatic character. Such factors include rules that disincentivize party switching and so reinforce party boundaries, and electoral rules that weaken incentives for party candidates to mobilize voters on local or parochial bases. These factors can ensure that parties maintain their discipline and are able to exert control over individual party leaders and members of parliament.

In turn, this makes it more likely that parties will avoid promoting local, clientelistic promises that are contrary to the party's broader programmatic objectives.

Finally, institutionalized party systems provide more opportunities for programmatic parties to develop. When parties are stable and consistent in their approaches to elections, they can build stronger and more consistent policy positions, and stand a better chance of developing more effective links to citizens on this basis. Likewise, programmatic parties can structure politics in ways that help to institutionalize party systems. Institutionalization and programmatic politics are thus likely to be mutually reinforcing.

## Pathways to programmatic politics

### Box 3.6. Ethnicity and programmatic parties

Three of the four countries studied in this project—India, Ukraine and Zambia—have political parties that advance programmatic appeals and seek to construct programmatic linkages, but whose policy platforms are clearly designed to offer benefits to a specific ethnic group. This is likely to happen when ethnicity and class overlap, as in India, where parties such as the BSP have developed specifically to represent certain castes, tribes and religious minorities. In Zambia, the overlap between ethnicity and class is not as close as it is in India, but the historical politicization of identity groups by different leaders nonetheless had the effect of encouraging the diffusion of certain policy perspectives to specific communities. Michael Sata was able to use the greater sympathy for programmatic politics among his own Bemba community as the foundation of an effective ethnic-programmatic movement that ultimately drew cross-ethnic support in urban areas. Programmatic politics is also likely to have an ethnic dimension when civil groups with an ethnic character become the base of political parties. The BJP in India emerged from Hindu social and civil organizations; while it went on to become a national party with a national programme, its roots in these organizations ensured that Hindu ideas remain central to the party's policy platform.

It is important to distinguish between ethnic-programmatic and civic-programmatic parties, because while the growth and institutionalization of ethnic-programmatic parties strengthens programmatic politics, it presents a different set of risks. Ethnic-programmatic parties may further politicize subnational identities if they choose to focus on their core ethnic bases; alternatively, they may dilute their programmatic message if they try to reach out to other groups at the expense of their core ethnic base.

Programmatic politics refers to a democratic system that has a decisive programmatic character, and programmatic parties as its main electoral contenders. Although programmatic politics can emerge through a number of different processes, this chapter's case studies suggest a common starting

point: the emergence of a new political party that is programmatic in character. While underlying or structural factors determine how favourable the environment is for the creation of programmatic politics, in Brazil, India, Ukraine and Zambia, the eventual character of the countries' politics was shaped by the process of party and party system change that this new party initiated. It is important to appreciate that these changes may take multiple pathways and have multiple possible outcomes. However, this process commonly involves three steps: party genesis, party institutionalization and the entrenchment of a programmatic system.

### ***Party genesis***

Although there are many commonalities between the instances of party genesis and development in Brazil, India, Ukraine and Zambia, each process has its own distinctive features, such as the significance of industrialization in Brazil and Zambia, the reduction of clientelistic resources in India and the significant reform of national political institutions in Ukraine. However, all of these processes share one thing in common: the process of programmatic development is rarely, if ever, driven by an established clientelistic, personalistic or ethnic party deciding to adopt a more coherent policy base. Instead, programmatic development is generally driven by the emergence of new political parties (although not always new leaders), or by the rapid growth of previously weak parties following the collapse of one or more of the traditional political parties. In part, the factors that promoted programmatization are therefore those that empower new opposition parties to overcome non-programmatic ruling parties. In all four case studies, the development of programmatic parties resulted from the combination of three key factors: (1) major changes to the political environment that facilitated the growth of opposition parties, (2) the existence of programmatic constituencies and (3) the ability and willingness of political entrepreneurs to experiment with new forms of political mobilization.

Exactly how these factors manifested themselves varies from country to country. In Ukraine it was driven by major changes to the political environment. First, ethno-cultural issues became more important as its potential membership of the EU and relations with Russia came to the fore. Second, electoral and parliamentary rules introduced after the Orange Revolution gave political parties greater control over their MPs, which meant that they were better placed to create and promote a coherent policy platform based on this new political cleavage—until 2012, when the electoral system was changed again.

In India, the financial challenges of the 1980s limited the government's resources, and thus undermined the feasibility of clientelistic approaches.

In the resulting political vacuum, parties with roots in civil society groups emerged to address issues—such as Hindu nationalism and poverty—that had previously been neglected. At the same time, new rules permitting states to engage directly with international financial institutions empowered subnational leaders to pursue their own programmatic agendas.

In Brazil, the trade union movement and its supporters formed the nucleus of a programmatic constituency. The PT built on the work of the trade unions to develop a party structure that reflected the demands of a well-organized segment of society.

In Zambia, the impetus for change came from the willingness of an opposition leader, Michael Sata, to take a political risk and deploy untested programmatic appeals. He recruited figures from old trade union and church networks, which simultaneously helped him to fine-tune his message, and communicate it to voters. His campaign benefited from the gradual erosion of support for the formerly dominant political party in Bemba-speaking areas, where ethnic identity and distinctive political and economic grievances overlapped.

### ***Party institutionalization***

The four case studies suggest that, after the creation of a programmatic party, its trajectory is strongly shaped by whether it institutionalizes its programmatic commitments and whether it develops with a civic (or ethnic) focus. In other words, the extent to which the party is organized along programmatic lines shapes how likely it is to stay true to its programmatic origins. Whether or not a party is a civic-programmatic party is important, because under some conditions ethnic-programmatic parties increase communal discord and lose their programmatic base over time. Combining these two powerful predictors into a comparative framework reveals much about the prospects for programmatic development at both the party and party system levels.

The most important drivers of institutionalization and ‘civicness’ are the composition of the initial support base of the party and the extent to which the party emerges out of pre-existing civil society organizations. In countries in which ethnic identities have historically been politicized, as in India and Zambia, new parties typically represent distinct ethnic communities, even if they simultaneously embrace a programmatic position. This has two major consequences. First, insofar as the party has mixed linkages, it often struggles to maintain harmony between its ‘ethnic’ and ‘programmatic’ base, which is likely to obstruct the evolution of more coherent policy platforms. Second, the ethnic dimension of the party maintains, and in some cases can intensify, the politicization of ethnic identities. By contrast, where parties do not construct ethnic linkages, it is far easier for party leaders to focus on

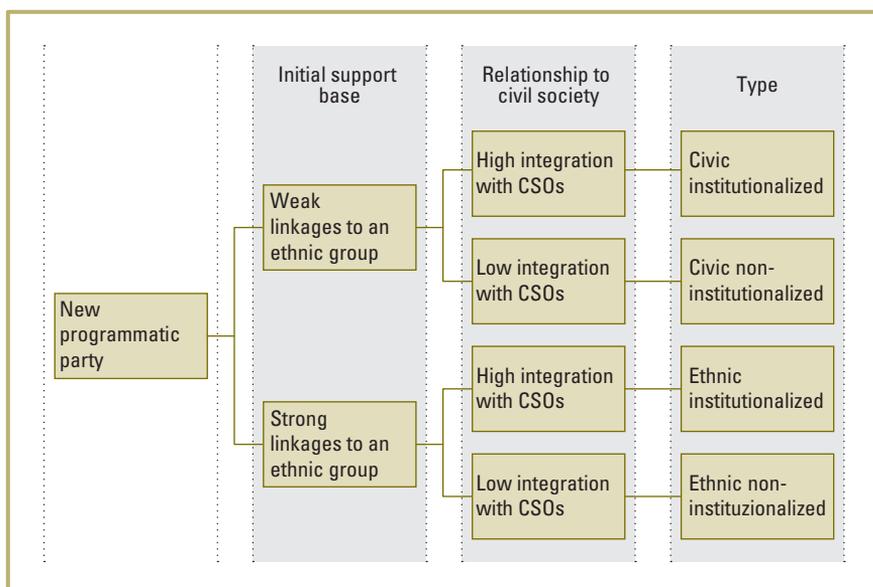
programmatic goals, such as the provision of public goods. The relationship of the party to civil society actors is also important, because where parties emerge out of civil society protests or from particular organizations they are more likely to be created with (or quickly develop) effective organizational structures that build in commitments to programmatic agendas. First, parties that emerge directly from civil society groups often take on something of their form, which gives the party a ready-made internal organization. Second, the relevant civil society group is likely to have developed organizational resources such as trained personnel, cash reserves, offices and vehicles that strengthen the party's structure. These resources can also be withheld if the party does not pursue the programmatic goals supported by civil society groups, which may facilitate a more accountable relationship. Third, civil society groups may be able to gain formal power within parties as members or stakeholders in return for their support, giving them greater influence over the policymaking process itself. Considering the interaction of these factors suggests four main variants of programmatic party development:

1. When fledgling programmatic parties do not establish links to ethnic communities and form strong ties to civil society groups, they are most likely to emerge as *institutionalized civic-programmatic* parties (such as the PT in Brazil). Such parties have strong incentives to identify and pursue programmatic agendas, and thus are the most likely type of parties to maintain a policy-based approach and transmit it to the party system.
2. When programmatic parties integrate the support of an ethnic group but also develop strong ties to (ethnically based) civil society groups, they are likely to emerge as *institutionalized ethnic-programmatic parties*. Like institutionalized civic-programmatic parties, these organizations are likely to have a more developed infrastructure both inside and outside the party that commits them to policy positions, but their diverse set of linkages may nonetheless render it more difficult to maintain policy cohesion. This was the case with the BJP in India, which emerged out of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a Hindu social movement that was founded in 1925.
3. When programmatic parties do not initially integrate particular ethnic groups, but also fail to form strong ties with civil society groups, they will probably become *non-institutionalized civic-programmatic parties*. These parties do not face the contradictory pressures experienced by the BJP, but are unlikely to develop the kind of participatory and consolidated structures that would ensure that they stay true to their programmatic concerns. Brazil's PSDB, and to a certain extent the Congress Party of India represent examples of this kind of party: they campaign on clearly articulated policy platforms, but lack the linkages to programmatic activists and supporters that would encourage them to further strengthen their programmatic credentials. As a result, such parties have rarely driven programmatic development at the party system level.

4. When programmatic parties build strong linkages with an ethnic group and only develop a weak relationship with civil society organizations, the most likely outcome is a *non-institutionalized ethnic-programmatic party*. Because such parties lack an effective infrastructure, they are less likely to develop internal structures that channel pressure from programmatic constituencies to the party leadership. At the same time, because such parties represent a distinct ethnic group that is likely to claim that it should be the primary beneficiary of party policies—and also of state resources should the party come to power—they are more likely to fall back on ethnic or clientelistic practices. For this reason, non-institutionalized ethnic-programmatic parties are the least likely to consolidate a programmatic organization and policy-based approach. Zambia's PF is one such party. Michael Sata initially set out to mobilize his Bemba-speaking ethnic group, but later sought to marry this base to an urban constituency following a disastrous electoral showing in 2001. Like the BJP, the greater susceptibility of the PF's ethnic constituency to programmatic messages meant that the policy dissonance forced on the party was not as severe as it might have been, but it nonetheless left Sata with an impossible task following his electoral victory in 2011. On the one hand, rural Bemba voters expected higher prices for agricultural products and greater development spending. On the other hand, urban workers expected lower taxes and cheaper food.

### Variants of programmatic party development

Figure 3.1. Entrenchment of a programmatic party system



Other things being equal, the development of programmatic parties makes it more likely that clientelistic parties will disappear and that a programmatic party system will be entrenched, for three reasons. First, programmatic parties are less expensive to operate, since they do not have to make expensive promises or provide costly benefits to voters, as a clientelistic party does. This enables them to direct resources to other activities related to winning votes. Second, when clientelistic parties are in power during an economic downturn, they have limited resources to service their voters, and voters are therefore likely to experiment with new political approaches offered by more programmatic parties. Finally, when a programmatic party forms a government, clientelistic parties quickly lose access to the resources and capacity to deliver for their voters, thus removing their ‘lifeline’—which in many cases forces them to adopt new, more programmatic, strategies.

However, many contingent factors may derail the transition to programmatization through the twin processes of political competition and transmission. Programmatic parties may perform poorly in office, creating sufficient public antipathy to open the door for clientelistic rivals. At the same time, unexpected economic collapse, scandals and foreign policy disasters may undermine public confidence, even in a policy-based party that is otherwise performing well. Low levels of party institutionalization also matter, because if programmatic parties give up on their policy-based commitments, no transformation of the party system will occur. Significantly, non-institutionalized ethnic parties lack the programmatic party structure to ensure the continuity of a policy-based approach and, because they enjoy the support of a particular community, are also more likely to resort to pandering to that group. When such parties win power and can access state resources (i.e. clientelistic strategies become more viable), the case for maintaining a programmatic stance may become less compelling. Ethnic-programmatic parties present different risks to civic-programmatic parties because their representation of a particular ethnic group may create the perception among other communities that they are not represented within the party. In turn, this can enable rival parties to rally marginalized communities, and in the process increase the political salience of communal identities—facilitating the emergence of other ethnic or ethnic-programmatic parties.

### **Box 3.7. Party system institutionalization and programmatic party development: two contrasting examples**

In the 1980s and 1990s, Brazil's party system was inchoate, fluid and largely non-programmatic. Voters could not use party labels as informational shortcuts to candidates' policy positions because parties were not trusted, and the fluidity and fragmentation of the system made it difficult for voters to hold parties accountable. The emergence of first the PT on the left and then the PSDB on the right triggered mutually reinforcing processes of party system institutionalization and programmatization. Programmatic platforms enabled the PT and PSDB to secure stable voting bases, which made the party system more coherent as other parties formed electoral coalitions around them. This stability has made Brazil's party system comprehensible, and parties' policy platforms more credible.

Non-programmatic parties have little to gain, and much to lose, from changing strategies if they compete in countries in which large constituencies are unresponsive to programmatic appeals. In Zambia, the emergence of the PF has done little to encourage other parties to adopt a more programmatic approach. In large part, this is because by the time the PF had risen to prominence (during the 2006 election campaign), it had already captured the country's two main programmatic constituencies: rural Bemba and urban dwellers. Consequently, the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy and the opposition United Party of National Development faced little incentive to develop more policy-based appeals.

## **The impact of programmatic politics**

As the level and nature of programmatic politics changed in the four countries analysed, so did the nature of their politics and governance. Where programmatic parties have entered the political debate and affected government policy, there has been a corresponding impact on (1) representation and accountability, (2) governance and (3) political dynamics.

With regard to representation and accountability, programmatic parties are the only parties that present a clear set of policies that they intend to implement if and when elected to government. This gives voters a clear understanding of what they are voting for, what the party represents and what the electorate might expect once that party is elected to office. In turn, in the subsequent election there is a clear set of policy promises to which the party will be held accountable. This ensures greater confidence in the political system for voters over the course of multiple election cycles.

Programmatic parties tend to focus on substantial policy debate and governance, leaders' capacities and the record of the government. Other things being equal, this is likely to improve the quality of the government's performance on economic and other issues over time. In Brazil, India and

Zambia, the rise of programmatic parties resulted in a greater voice for previously marginalized groups and the adoption of pro-poor policies by governments. In India, programmatic politics precipitated the pursuit of good-governance agendas at the state level, although deeper political realities often limited what progress could be made. Where programmatic party systems developed, such as in Brazil, they imposed order and regularity on party politics and policy formation, which stabilized political systems and made it easier for voters to hold their representatives to account. However, when both ethnic- and non-ethnic-programmatic politics emerged, they typically generated further political polarization, because the evolution of clear ideological cleavages between different constituencies focuses attention on what separates, rather than unites, the population.

In the cases covered in this chapter, almost all programmatic parties have focused on poverty reduction and development. In government and opposition, they have won widespread support by building linkages with low-income constituencies and developed strategies to promote pro-poor growth. In Brazil, the PT rolled out programmes such as *Bolsa Familia* and *Fome Zero* (Zero Hunger)—groundbreaking policies that have had a dramatic effect on income and development (Rocha 2011). In India, the appeal of the BSP drove the National Congress Party-led government to introduce the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, which guaranteed every rural household 100 days of government work per year. With the exception of Ukraine, where ethno-cultural issues have been prioritized, programmatic parties in countries with high levels of inequality have championed the needs of the poor.

A number of parties have also run on explicitly good-governance campaigns, and subsequently delivered on their promises to end corrupt practices and provide more effective and citizen-oriented government. Most notably, in India good-governance candidates have made a significant impact in office at the state level (Sinha 2005). In Bihar, for example, Nitish Kumar made notable improvements to a range of public organizations and line departments, and initiated schemes that provided bicycles to girls who stayed at school and loan schemes for farmers (Chand 2010). In such states, effective economic reforms attracted significant foreign direct investment, provided new jobs and resulted in higher economic growth.

Programmatic linkages also yield two strong mechanisms that make it less likely that leaders will engage in corruption. First, by mobilizing support around positional issues and the importance of good governance, parties become particularly vulnerable to corruption scandals that could erode their electoral support. Second, programmatic parties have less need to misuse state resources because their electoral success does not depend on their ability to distribute patronage to their supporters. This is especially true in programmatic party systems in which policy-based parties do not

have to compete with clientelistic parties and so are less likely to lose an election because they have been outspent. Thus, although all parties in developing countries face funding challenges because their supporters are typically poorly placed to fund the party organization, the incentives for programmatic parties to engage in corrupt activities are not as strong as they are for clientelistic parties.

It is important to remember that the impact of programmatic development on representation, governance and the wider political dynamics depends on the extent to which policy-based politics takes root. When programmatic politics becomes entrenched in competitive party systems, it tends to support less corrupt and more responsive parties, stable party systems and more effective governments. However, when programmatic parties compete in partially programmatic systems, the structural drivers of accountability and representation are weakened. This is because the presence of established ethnic and clientelistic parties, which have no interest in engaging in policy-based debate and instead encourage voters to focus on their responsibilities to their patrons or communal identities, diverts attention away from programmatic concerns.

### **Box 3.8. The outcomes of programmatic politics: giving a voice to under-represented communities**

In each of the cases studied, the development of programmatic politics gave a voice to the policy choices of previously under-represented communities. In Zambia, neo-liberal policy agendas, rooted in the strong influence of international financial institutions, were out of step with popular policy attitudes. By 2010, an overwhelming popular consensus had emerged regarding the failure of the ruling party's economic governance and the need for greater state intervention in the economy. Until the rise of the Patriotic Front, however, no political party had sought to represent these views. Instead, the main parties effectively divided their opposition to the status quo by mobilizing support on the basis of ethnicity and the distribution of patronage. It was only after Michael Sata built a populist movement that brought together discontented members of various ethnic communities that Zambians were able to vent their disapproval of the economic policies of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy government.

In India, the emergence of different programmatic parties increased the representation of two very different constituencies within the party system. The needs of the very poorest in society, which had been marginalized by the domination of the Indian National Congress Party, were given more prominent representation in the party system by the emergence of the BSP. At the same time, the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party highlighted the policy concerns of Hindu nationalists, such as their desire to see the government adopt a more aggressive foreign policy, defend the country's cultural characteristics, and strengthen India's independence from other international and transnational players.

## **Recommendations**

After discussing the conditions and factors that result in the development of programmatic parties and systems, it is important to identify what political party assistance organizations can do to support and promote the development of such parties and systems.

### ***Structural determinants***

Structural determinants such as socio-economic conditions affect voters' receptiveness to programmatic appeals, and hence the efficacy of policy-based strategies for political entrepreneurs. When such conditions limit the development of programmatic linkages, for example where education levels are low, formal employment is low and patron-client ties predominate, it stunts the development of a programmatic party system. Though these sorts of demographic and economic factors take decades to change, this does not mean that party assistance programmes can do nothing to render communities more responsive to programmatic appeals. For example, greater media access may help overcome some of the barriers to policy-based politics that are often said to derive from structural factors. Other things being equal, rural voters are less likely to act programmatically than their urban counterparts because they tend to operate in more 'ethnic' and clientelistic environments, which is partly because such communities are often less well educated, live in more culturally homogeneous areas and are more vulnerable to exclusion from public goods. The significance of these factors is compounded by the way in which limited access to mass media deprives poor and rural voters of crucial information about political party performance and political debates. By implementing programmes that improve and equalize media access, party assistance providers can begin to ameliorate some of the reasons that rural areas tend to feature less policy-based politics. Donors should commission scoping studies to identify which constituencies lack access to public media, and to assess variation in the quality and neutrality of political debate nationwide.

### ***Party genesis***

The early development of new parties constitutes a critical moment in which the emergence of programmatic politics can be encouraged; working with new or young parties should therefore be prioritized. Party assistance programmes could help stimulate the development of programmatic politics by spotting representation gaps in developing democracies and identifying potential new constituencies that are open to programmatic approaches to politics. Such a study would draw on survey data and manifesto analyses to

chart the distribution of policy preferences and party platforms in order to test for disconnects between the two.

Building strong connections between civil society organizations and political parties is particularly important because such connections often galvanize programmatic development. Significantly, donors are well placed to act as neutral conveners to facilitate the development of collaborative working relationships between civil society organizations, existing or new parties, and representatives of coherent programmatic constituencies.

### ***Party institutionalization***

Party funding can address some of the organizational challenges often faced by political parties. Of course, leaders seeking personal gain, or who fear that a more effective party organization would be more difficult to control, may also divert party funding from its intended purpose. But by providing carefully targeted assistance to help parties strengthen their core functions in cases where leaders appear to genuinely aspire to develop a stronger infrastructure, donors can support the process of programmatic institutionalization.

A number of institutional choices may also strengthen or weaken programmatic parties. The introduction of parliamentary and electoral rules that created barriers to floor crossing reversed the erosion of party authority in Ukraine. Likewise, the move from a strong presidency and single-member district elections to a weak presidency and a closed system of proportional representation (until 2012) empowered Ukrainian parties over independent candidates, and enabled parties to maintain their values, reputation and policy agenda. In turn, this supported the emergence of a more policy-oriented party system. In other words, party and party system institutionalization can be promoted through legislative and electoral rules that enable party leaders to enforce party discipline.

Although changes to electoral systems are rare, contrary to received wisdom, this is an area in which donors have often played an important role. For example, in post-conflict cases such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone, donors helped to select and construct electoral systems. Indeed, further opportunities to engage in this area regularly present themselves. Moreover, even where donors find it harder to gain traction on these issues, they can still affect useful interventions by supporting civil society organizations that advocate institutional reform.

Of course, there is a danger that strengthening the position of party leaders will promote institutionalization at the expense of internal democracy, and thus render the maintenance of a party's programmatic identity dependent

on the will of the party leader. It is therefore imperative that the goal of generating more stable and effective parties is balanced with the need to encourage parties to make their leaders accountable to party members and activists. In new democracies, internal party democracy is often characterized by factionalism (Boucek 2010) and clientelistic internal politics. However, when parties have established strong programmatic linkages, the development of representative and accountable structures is likely to strengthen party cohesion and entrench the party's commitment to its ideological stance. When faced with such cases, party assistance providers should try to make their support conditional on the promotion of internal party democracy.

## Conclusions

A political system is programmatic when the parties within it predominantly generate policy, mobilize support and govern on the basis of a consistent and coherent ideological position. For parties to be programmatic, they must mobilize support on the basis of their policies, have internal structures that maintain the commitment of party leaders to those policies, and pursue those policies in office. Such parties may be formed on the basis of either “civic” or “ethnic” support.

A number of underlying factors promote the emergence of policy-based parties. A programmatic party is more likely to develop in an industrialized country with a large urban population, a merit-based bureaucracy and a flourishing civil society. The party is more likely to stay programmatic if it enjoys a structure that institutionalizes the participation of civil society groups and includes active members with established internal democratic mechanisms. Such parties benefit from political and parliamentary rules that encourage party discipline and a party system that is stable and well connected to mass constituencies.

Where these conditions exist, strong programmatic parties—normally new or traditionally smaller parties—are likely to develop, but how much they flourish depends on the context. The rise of programmatic parties is often facilitated by significant changes to the political environment that undermine the basis for clientelistic politics as a result of either a political or economic upheaval. It is also important that there is a constituency within a country that is demanding a policy-based approach to politics. If these circumstances exist, it is also important that one or more political leaders recognizes the potential for policy-based political mobilization and is willing to take a political risk to organize politics differently.

If programmatic parties are successful, it can lead to the transformation of the entire political system to a programmatic system. Once in power, these

parties (if they are capable of governing adequately) will exert great pressure on clientelistic parties to transform into programmatic parties because clientelistic parties typically struggle in opposition because they have no access to the resources their voters have come to expect.

Programmatic parties and systems provide many benefits to a country: voters have a clearer understanding of what to expect when such parties are elected to government, and are able to hold them accountable for the policies they promoted. Such parties are more likely to promote good-governance programmes that address corruption, poverty and other development issues, and when programmatic parties dominate the political system, voters have a clear choice between policies and party platforms, thus resulting in a more stable and predictable political system.

Given that there are clear benefits to the development of programmatic parties, it is important that political party support organizations are strategic in their interventions to promote and support evolutions to this political system. It may be impossible to affect significant change with regard to structural issues such as demographics and industrialization, but support can be provided to get information and media access to rural and other populations that may traditionally continue to support clientelistic parties. Party development programmes should focus on new parties, as these are more likely to support a programmatic approach, and encourage linkages to civil society organizations and identify potential constituencies that will support a programmatic approach. Finally, development organizations can support the creation of viable party finance systems to give political leaders the resources they need to institutionalize programmatic politics throughout their parties.

## Notes

- 1 The case studies were commissioned by International IDEA and researched as follows. India: Adi Dasgupta (Harvard University and South Asia Institute); Brazil: Daniel Epstein (Colgate University); Ukraine: Oleh Protsyk (University of Flensburg); Zambia: Dan Paget (University of Oxford). Each case study provides a historical background in order to describe the processes through which parties became more programmatic and to provide an account of the structural causes of, and barriers to, programmatic politics and contingent factors. The effects of programmatic politics are analysed in each case, and the relevance of each case study for party assistance providers and governance donors is then discussed. This contribution represents the views of Cheeseman and Paget but draws heavily on the studies that Dasgupta, Epstein, Protsky and Paget conducted.
- 2 Ethnic groups refer here to identity-based groups, and so include self-identifying religious, regional, racial and cultural groups.

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# CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER 4

# Implications for Action: Enablers, Triggers, Lockers and Agents of Programmatic Parties

*Jorge Valladares Molleda, Kristen Sample and Sam van der Staak*

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This chapter draws implications from the research on the emergence of programmatic political parties: parties that provide citizens with meaningful policy choices. In formulating the implications, it addresses the question: what factors motivate parties to place a greater emphasis on programmes? These preliminary answers try to logically and consistently connect with the arguments made throughout the volume.

The task is not easy, given the richness and sophistication of the research presented in this book, which brings together three separate, cutting-edge research projects. Luna et al.'s literature review places the subject in the context of 11 different strands of the literature that correspond to the normative benchmark of programmatic politics: the responsible party government model. Their research also discusses potential correlates and causal hypotheses for programmatic politics, which in turn are tested against the DALP data set (which covers 88 electoral democracies and a total of 506 parties). This data set is central to Kitschelt et al.'s research. The comparative report uses this data to probe three sets of hypothetical conditions (hard, soft and potential, in terms of how tractable they are). Further empirical support and potential explanations are explored in country-based reports on Brazil, Bulgaria, the Dominican Republic, India, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey's parties and party systems, which were prepared especially for this project. Cheeseman et al.'s focus on the historical processes and paths of *programmatisation* outlines the interplay between structural and contingent factors that shape the programmatic strength of national party systems. The analysis draws from Brazil, India, Ukraine and Zambia, and emphasizes the roles played by ethnic identities and by social and state organization in the emergence of programmatic parties under otherwise seemingly unlikely conditions.

This chapter takes the diverse research conclusions one step further to reflect on how party politics in democracies can be more responsive to the pressing demands for social and economic development. It is organized into three sections. First, it briefly recaps the definition of a programmatic party. It stresses ‘programmatic’ as one quality among many, the presence of which does not preclude other (even competing) traits such as clientelism, personalism and ethnicity. It then briefly summarizes how programmatic parties are empirically correlated with a better quality of democracy and development. The third section presents the relevant implications of the research on the conditions that favour the emergence of programmatic parties. For ease of reading, arguments in this chapter credit their authors yet do not include copious citations. When possible, conflicting views and relevant accounts are noted.

### ***Definition of programmatic parties***

While recognizing that no party is purely programme-based, all chapters in this book subscribe to a minimum definition of a programmatic party: a party that primarily displays consistent or coherent political programmes that constitute the basis for the party’s links with constituencies, electoral competition with other parties or policymaking.

From the above definition, it follows that programmaticity as a trait is both variable and multidimensional. Indeed, real-life political parties do not fall into neat divisions, as not all of their members pursue their political goals in the same ways. Party members very often do not act only on the basis of consistent political programmes; different strategies are generally at work simultaneously within a party (e.g. charisma, ethnic identification, clientelistic, personalistic). It then follows that programmaticity is multidimensional too, as strategies vary across the arenas in which the party acts: party members can cohesively follow collective ideals in policymaking yet set those ideals aside to rely predominantly on leaders’ personal charisma when rallying votes. Thus, the notion of programmatic refers to the political party’s main focus in this analysis, and programmatic politics is sometimes used to refer to a system in which all major parties are predominantly programmatic.

Hence, political parties that act predominantly as personalistic vehicles for charismatic leaders—or whose members consistently fail to agree on essential policy issues for the party, or use powerful clientelistic machines to attract votes to the detriment of the above qualities—will find it hard to demonstrate some of the most common features of a programme-based party noted in this publication, such as:

- a collection of policy positions by which the party is publicly known;
- a degree of internal coherence and agreement on that range of policy positions;
- a credible commitment and ability to deliver; and
- a party programme that is the most defining element in how it attracts and engages its members.

### ***The importance of programmatic parties***

As the cases featured in this book show, political parties that manifest different types of programmatic traits have emerged in countries from almost all regions of the world in recent years. In the same period, the politics and political parties in some countries have persisted in (or moved toward) non-programmatic variants. There are some reasons to think that countries with higher levels of programmatic politics are better able to tackle the challenges of social and economic development.

Luna et al. and Cheeseman et al. examine the impact of programmatic politics on the quality of policymaking. They both find empirical support to argue that countries in which political parties have a stronger emphasis on consistent political commitments have higher-quality policymaking and better provision of public goods. Luna et al. find statistically significant correlations between programmatic politics and traits of legitimate political systems (such as less invalid voting, and higher public confidence in parties and parliaments), and effective and accountable policymaking (such as a lower incidence of corruption, greater regulatory capacities and provision of public services, a greater voice for citizens).<sup>1</sup> These findings are consistent with Cheeseman et al.'s observation that when political parties in Brazil, India and Zambia engaged in substantial policy debate on the quality of governance and the quality of their leaders, it made governments more prone to adopt pro-poor policies over time.

Increased democratic accountability seems to be at work in producing these results. As parties with better programmatic capacities pursue interest aggregation more effectively, the political system will tend to represent and voice the concerns of otherwise marginalized groups of voters, thereby making governments more responsive to their needs. Citizens are then not only offered clear-cut choices; they also find it easier to retrospectively judge government performance when heading to the polls.

Luna et al. also mentioned that programmatic parties demonstrate less corruption, perhaps due to the lower organizational requirements of a programmatic party in elections. Mobilizing voters through programmatic messages does not involve the immediate material distribution of goods

in exchange for political support. Conversely, parties structured around patronage or clientelism might more often rely on the extraction of state rents or depend on corrupt transactions to illegally finance more expensive electoral campaigns (or buy votes). Programmatic strategies are not only cleaner, they are also cheaper to pursue. Given their expected positive effects on democracy and development, this research has tried to map out the most conducive environments for programmatic parties to emerge.

### ***Enablers, triggers, lockers and agents of programmatic politics***

So, which factors facilitate the emergence of political parties that predominantly pursue programme-based, policy-oriented strategies? The research identifies several. They cannot be fit into a simple formula, as they are not organized in any particular sequence or hierarchy and their effect seems very contextual. They might act differently depending on the programmatic transition's starting point (e.g. predominantly personalistic, clientelistic, ethnic). At the risk of simplifying the richness of the research findings, these influencing factors can be thought of as enablers, triggers, lockers and agents, in terms of their effect on facilitating programmatic politics.

Certain countries' structural conditions seem to act as enablers of programmatic politics. These social (urbanization), institutional (bureaucracy) or economic (affluence) conditions seem to affect the choices and incentives that political parties and politicians consider when deciding on modes of engagement with voters. This chapter argues that the most relevant implication of these enabling factors is that they determine the necessary capacity of the state to deliver on parties' programmatic pledges. However, just as no simple formula can lead political parties to place greater emphasis on policies and programmes, no specific structural condition prevents them from doing so. Thus, a second message from the research is that there are no insurmountable obstacles per se for politicians to mobilize citizens on the basis of policies.

A second set of facilitating factors seems to have the ability to trigger programmatic engagement between political parties and citizens. For example, the research shows that in spite of unfavorable conditions (economic structure, ethnic identities or state capacities), a sudden economic event—such as an economic crisis—may drive parties to become more programmatic. The research indicates that these particular circumstances can potentially engender a programme-based policy orientation in parties.

Third, lockers refer to a set of institutional rules that might contribute to securing programmatic gains. As explained below, rules that help decentralize power over candidate nominations and discipline the relationship between

political parties and their legislative caucus seem to create, in certain contexts, incentives for politicians to emphasize programmes.

Finally, transitions to programmatic politics would be impossible without the purposeful and deliberate action of driving agents. On the one hand, politicians must seize emerging opportunities for programmatic politics themselves. Certain factors influence the extent to which politicians' efforts are likely to succeed, yet capable leadership makes the difference between opportunities that are overlooked vs. those that are taken. On the other hand, programme-minded politicians alone are not enough. They have to be competent and electable as well. Programmatic politics ultimately need voters who are at least receptive to (and preferably demand) programmatic messages. Next, the findings and implications of these four sets of factors are discussed, with a focus on providing the most relevant messages for action.

### *The enabling effect of state capacities*

Albeit with different nuances, all of the chapters in this volume suggest some degree of association between levels of development and programmatic emergence. A country's levels of income, expenditures on public services or the quality of its bureaucratic organizations—used as proxies of development as cited by Kitschelt, Luna and Cheeseman, respectively—are closely associated with the likelihood of transitions to more programmatic party systems.

Contexts of scarcity or lack of affluence could limit the space for a political party, once it is in power, to pursue and implement policies that deliver nationwide public goods in different ways. One example of such a limit is that it constrains governments' ability to provide public services. As nationwide service provision requires access to vast financial resources that often rely on complex financing, politicians in government might find it attractive to supply narrow constituencies with services in exchange for political support. It is, however, always possible for a government to privatize the provision of public services. In that case, the state still needs to display the capacity to regulate, monitor and govern the provision of the public good. Hence, in essence, Kitschelt et al.'s argument that the country's income level is an enabler (or the opposite) boils down to the state's capacity to organize public service provision.

Thus, the gist of this argument matches that of Cheeseman et al. on rule-bound, merit-based state bureaucracies that are 'emancipated from society'. Modern, well-developed bureaucracies do not constrain politicians' incentives to exclude groups from the distribution of public goods or patronage in order to win votes. Rather, modern bureaucracies provide the state with better capacities to deliver nationwide public goods due to their merit-based recruited

personnel and more citizen-oriented approach to civil service. Political parties' programmatic pledges will be more credible if, once in government, they have the capacity to implement their policies. As shown in South Korea at the turn of the century, state capacity to expand public goods effectively adds credibility to programmatic politics in the eyes of citizens.

A ramification suggested in Cheeseman et al. is that the accompanying urbanization unleashed by development, an observed pattern in modernization processes, is often related to scaled-up access to public goods. Even though urban settlements can house the very poor just as well as middle- and high-income groups, their high density makes the organization of public service provision easier and cheaper. When urban areas are more affected by the state provision of public goods, they may be more receptive to programmatic appeals. Yet the research suggests that such receptiveness may also be associated with either greater access to education and information channels or with the actions of civil society organizations and trade unions, which facilitate the diffusion of political messages. While the findings do not point to any of these factors as the best explanation of what makes a programmatic constituency, it is clear that better state capacities are more conducive to more programmatic constituencies. And that might explain why programmatic strategies often pay off better in urban areas, where service provision is generally cheaper and more extensive than in rural areas, as shown in the case of Zambia.

However, the relationship between programmatic efforts and development is, as noted by Kitschelt, far from deterministic. For example, the most affluent of the seven countries surveyed by his team (Taiwan) has the least programmatic system. Other less affluent countries such as Brazil or Bulgaria show comparatively clearer traits of programmatic efforts.

An unstated implication that could add to this discussion is that both affluence and economic hardship are time-bound. State capacity does not improve overnight, just as the development factors that underpin it evolve over time. History (particularly recent history) is rich in examples of how material conditions can deteriorate or improve in a given country over long periods of time. Over the last 20 years, for instance, a growing number of democracies from Africa, Asia and Latin America have managed to increase social spending as a share of their gross domestic product. Although such indications are far from irreversible, they show that more favourable environments for improved state capacity can form over time.

While development is an enabling factor for programmatic tendencies, it is not sufficient. What types of efforts could motivate parties to seize on the favourable environment that state capacity provides, or overcome its deficit? Programmatic politicians could reap the benefits of focusing on

those policies, public goods and sectors for which the state has better-than-average capacities. Good performance records might help make their programmatic commitments more credible. This requires first mapping out where capacities such as a competent bureaucracy and public expenditures are strong, improving understanding of the specific ways in which those capacities can be put to work to improve performance records, and even investing in such bureaucracies more heavily.

*Societal factors: ethnic-based might overlap programme-based*

Interestingly, the research shows conflicting views on whether programmatic politics can emerge equally well in ethnically diverse and homogeneous societies. While the preliminary analysis in Luna et al. shows no support for that possibility, Cheeseman et al.'s case studies suggest that strong ethnic identities might not be an obstacle to programmatic politics. The ethnic dimension poses risks for programmatization when ethnic appeals are paired with substantial differences in ethnic groups' levels of incomes, as Kitschelt et al. point out. Such a differential could set the stage for clientelism, as voters from an ethnic group may explain their individual success relative to that of others (Kitschelt et al.), and could create an incentive to target large club goods to specific groups or areas. This scenario, as found by Cheeseman et al. (and to some extent Luna et al.), may be the starting point for a progressive programmatization of politics, if the beneficiaries are disadvantaged groups.

Political parties with overlapping ethnic and programmatic appeals might choose to further politicize their core ethnic identity in the context of other social divisions in society. Whether ethnically based policies would or could be expanded beyond the main group that is represented depends on whether the party in government represents a powerful ethnic group or not, or if the ethnic organizations continue to exert pressure over the party (as is the case with the Bharatiya Janata Party in India cited in Cheeseman et al.). On the other hand, certain policies such as greater access to public services, expansion of the civil and political liberties of minorities, and increased institutionalized tolerance of cultural practices may inspire demands for nationwide expansion.

An obvious implication of these findings is that there are instances when ethnic elements may help to build party identities and might not harm programmatic efforts.

## *Crises trigger opportunities for programmatic strategies to pay off*

This research shows that during crises or transitions, opportunities to emphasize programmatic strategies may arise. One such window identified in Kitschelt et al.'s research is the exhaustion or crisis of an existing economic development model or 'political-economy format'. Periods of rapid economic downturn or crisis may present opportunities for more programme-based parties to increase their relevance and become the main competitors in the political arena.

The research in this volume provides examples of when answers to crises resulted in some measure of programmatic politics—such as Brazil in the 1990s, Turkey and South Korea in the early 2000s—when voters favoured programmatic responses to their difficulties more than before. These parties were new or previously marginalized, but questioned the prevailing status quo and made solutions appear more attainable. As leaders faced pressure to reform, these new opposition parties had to provide more clear alternative policies rather than just leadership change. Either while rallying support or once in government, these leaders had to prove themselves not only electorally successful but also competent in office. Competing parties in the opposition faced stronger pressure to focus their message on solving an economic crisis in order to remain seen as credible challengers. Only where all those conditions concurred did both citizens and politicians find value in shifting their political allegiances. Showing competence in office entailed resisting the temptation of short-term thinking and quick fixes, and instead making tough decisions with a medium- and long-term perspective.

However, the crisis of the political-economy format does not always result in programmatic transitions. In many places around the world, it has also yielded outcomes such as charismatic leaders with uncertain or short-term programmatic concerns, who are sometimes autocratic (e.g. strongmen 'saviours'), such as in Zimbabwe in 1987 or Peru in 1990. Or even if a stronger emphasis is placed on policies, the choices put forward by politicians and political parties could still remain unattractive or of poor quality.

Cases of an increased emphasis on programmatic strategies preceded by crises, such as Brazil (1980s and 1990s) and Turkey (2000s), are examples of windows of opportunity seized, to some extent, by a programmatic leadership. In both countries, import-substitution industrialization models went through inflation or stagnation (as in Brazil) or deep financial problems (as in Turkey). Dealing with the crisis entailed profound reforms that triggered the realignment of political allegiances and paved the way for new political parties. New and old parties increasingly pursued a stronger emphasis on programmatic appeals, yet without entirely giving up on other mobilization strategies such as clientelism or identity.

The case of South Korea adds support to the thesis that state capacities enable, but do not by themselves trigger, programmatic evolution: the country was already affluent for most of the 1990s, yet it only saw programmatic efforts from politicians after the 2000 elections, which were held in the aftermath of the severe financial crisis that affected the country. As Wang describes in her country report, the financial crisis triggered the following sequence: a successful challenger (the last Kim), deep social welfare reform (e.g. national social insurance and health insurance) and mass political realignments.

In the developing world, exposure to crisis and the exhaustion of development strategies are not uncommon. Identifying future windows of opportunity is difficult, to say the least. If a crisis is an opportunity, two specific implications from the above are in order:

- Improving readiness for when opportunity knocks. Politicians should prepare themselves to be able to provide responses in creative ways. Forward-looking thinking and analysis could support future responsiveness to economic crises. Relying more systematically on analytical tools that look beyond the present can prove more successful than focusing exclusively on present events. Conversely, forward-looking analysis and monitoring public and elite opinion over time could help describe prospective political-economy scenarios, identify sensitive policy areas and viable reforms, and recognize allies and adversaries of those reforms. Political leaders who are aware of such information are better prepared to communicate to voters the hard and realistic choices when the country faces fluid, transitional contexts.
- In the event of an economic crisis, quickly intensifying efforts toward identifiable anti-crisis platforms that strike a balance between short- and long-term strategies is likely to pay off earlier rather than later. All leaders—and especially new leaders, either in government or opposition—might be amenable to programmatic strategies at the onset of a crisis if the right incentives are set.

### *Civil society as programmatic agent*

The research distinguishes between two potential positive associations between civil society and stronger programmatic appeals in politics. The first is a pattern observed by Kitschelt et al. in a broader comparison of countries and parties around the world: dense associational life in society may exert positive pressure through a sort of programmatic contagion. When politicians' interaction with civil society groups is focused on specific issues, programmatic appeals might be more effective. Dealing with civil society groups, in turn, strengthens the programmatic traits of the political parties themselves. Such 'contagion' by proximity becomes plausible when parties, generally those

outside government, need to reach out to and mobilize new constituencies of support without co-opting them. The positive effect is enabled by economic development, as it makes the co-optation or subordination of these groups into new or existing clientelistic networks less attractive for both parties and civil groups.

A closer examination of the case studies, however, shows another way for civil society organizations to galvanize programmatic efforts—by directly supporting new entries to the party system. Trade unions' external mobilization was instrumental in the rise of Brazil's PT during the 1980s, and in posing a programmatic challenge to South Korea's major parties by the end of the 1990s. Such a mobilization might have made politicians more responsive to programmatic demands and more accountable to the influence of such external partners. In these cases, member-based trade unions went through a process of politicization that led to building links with a political party—which was either externally created or mobilized by those groups—and eventually its programmatization. Cheeseman et al. stress that in such cases, these organizations are likely to become programmatic agents, as they provide political parties with a portfolio of demands that are ready to politicize (e.g. a consistent package of ideological commitments), a constituency to tap and an organizational infrastructure. The important issue in this case is how encompassing (rather than issue-focused) the organization is.

Contrary to contagion by proximity, external mobilization does not entail total autonomy or independence. Furthermore, the enabling effect of development does not seem to operate here.

This external mobilization effect on programmatic politics coincides with appealing arguments made elsewhere by Shefter (for Europe) and LeBas (for Africa).

1. An implication is that strategic alliances by either close collaboration or simply mutual interaction between large interest-based associations (e.g. professional societies, manufacturers, small-scale traders, trade unions) and political parties can create a positive incentive for programmatic politics. The incentive might exert a stronger influence where the share of programmatic votes is large enough, and the social and economic configuration of the country makes it more conducive.
2. At a minimum, political-social dialogue could potentially give parties greater exposure to societal agendas advanced by organizations that are programmatic in nature. At best, such exposure could increase parties' responsiveness if they address issues at the core of these organizations' agendas.

### *Opposition parties' role as diffusion agents*

Luna et al. note that programmatic structuring in Latin American party systems (from incipient to moderate) has very often been driven by the actions of long-term opposition parties (e.g. the PSDB and PT in Brazil, the PAN and PRD in Mexico, the Frente Amplio in Uruguay, the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front in El Salvador). Since they are in the opposition, these parties began to mobilize the electorate by politicizing preferences regarding the provision of large public goods rather than targeting their distribution (to which, by definition, the opposition lacks access). Cheeseman et al. validate the point when observing that in Brazil, India and Zambia, programmatic development was not driven by non-programmatic ruling parties becoming programmatic, but rather by the emergence of new or previously weak opposition parties that took advantage of the favourable political environment.

This point on the role of opposition parties as agents must be read in conjunction with the argument on the potential of crises to unleash programmatic politics. What specific political mechanisms allow opposition parties to diffuse their programmatic concerns into the broader political system? Winning elections and competence in office seem to serve as a minimum threshold.

Direct competition through democratic elections might support programmatic efforts when election results appear to be tight parties have an incentive to intensify the best strategies to mobilize more votes. Since politicians are only likely to pursue programme-based strategies if they attract votes, voters must be amenable to such programmatic messages. Voters will respond programmatically if the leadership looks electable, as they believe that the parties are credible and that leaders are likely to implement those policies once in office.

Although the research suggests that competitiveness becomes a strong incentive for programmatic efforts in medium and highly affluent countries, and it is unclear whether competitiveness creates greater programmatic efforts or vice versa, two general implications can be drawn from this association:

1. For differentiation between parties' stances on policy issues to yield programmatic gains, three logical prerequisites must concur: the differences are on issues that are relevant to voters, parties and candidates are credible in the eyes of voters, and parties effectively communicate those different policy messages.
2. Politicians will be more inclined to advocate the delivery of public goods that are good for development *and* for attracting votes. Policies in sectors with visible and salient public goods could appeal to immediate gains for specific constituencies, provided that such policies are later implemented successfully.

Successful delivery of short-term public goods could lead to incremental gains in the size of programmatic constituencies and increase citizen expectations that governments will effectively deliver. If attractive to voters, this represents a first step toward making programmatic voting sustainable.

### *Rules of the game that lock in programmatic gains*

The research is somewhat inconclusive in assessing the influence of institutional engineering on programmatic politics, demonstrating the need for further exploration of the full array of institutional choices and potential consequences. At most, shaping institutions might have a lock-in effect for programmatic gains that are already generated, yet are highly contingent on the specific political environments into which they are introduced.

At the system level, Kitschelt et al. and Luna et al.'s broad cross-country comparisons show that presidential regimes are tenuously associated with clientelism. Similarly, wide cross-country analysis finds that centralized polities have parties with a slightly greater tendency to pursue coherent nationwide policies. Notwithstanding, decentralization allows for some degree of experimentation at the local level in the case of India, as cited in Cheeseman et al. The depersonalization of electoral formulas and proportional representation do not systematically prove to be consequential for shifting the focus to programmes and nationwide policies. Such an intended effect appears somewhat temporarily in Ukraine after the 2004 political reform that changed the parliament's electoral system from single-member districts to closed-list proportional representation (only to reintroduce single-member districts in 2011). The shift to a mixed single-member and proportional system did not render similar discernible effects in Taiwan.

At the intraparty level, the research finds that specific mechanisms to decentralize internal power while maintaining cohesion and the party's label (i.e. barring 'personalization') might help consolidate or lock in the party's programmatic efforts. More specifically, democratizing the selection of the party's candidates, increasing the transparency of the party's finances, and improving the programmatic coherence and discipline of its legislative caucus might be more compatible with accommodating the programmatic efforts of the party's leaders or membership. The two main political blocs in Chile (which, together with Uruguay, has the most programmatic party system in Latin America) held simultaneous primaries in the most recent presidential election in 2013. Reforms in Brazil as explained in Osterkatz and Epstein's case studies, counteracted systemic traits that were otherwise favourable to non-programmatic politics, such as the *candidato nato* provision that granted incumbents a sort of 'birth right' to run in the next election, which was abolished in 2002. As explained by Protsyk,

Ukrainian reforms on floor crossing in 2004 could have helped to lower party switching while enforced (there were 563 cases from 1998–2001 and six from 2006–07).

The research also suggests that the extent to which these organizational arrangements play such a supportive role is contingent on contextual elements such as the existence of programmatic voters, the country's political-economy format or even the size of the party itself.

Internal arrangements that lock in programmatic gains might be attractive for politicians going through a process of strategic realignment, or parties in opposition that might be amenable to tapping constituencies that value new modes of internal organization.

Ultimately, institutional reforms are formally initiated and driven by political parties' demands. Moreover, reform agendas will address specific contextual country problems and most likely be decided based on the legacy of politicians' historical experiences with institutions. Although the research does not allow for the recommendation of specific institutional arrangements, the following principles can serve to guide institutional reforms:

- Establishing guarantees for political plurality could favour opposition parties' role in catalysing programmatic competition. If plurality is embedded into political oversight and decision-making bodies (for instance, committee chairs in opposition parties), greater opportunities for competition around policy could potentially emerge. By the same token, reforms designed to institutionalize democratic accountability in a country will provide opposition parties with incentives to monitor and hold government to account on the basis of policies, and create a virtuous circle in the system as a whole.
- Parties that successfully pursue programmatic strategies might further benefit from adopting the decentralization of internal political authority as a principle. In designing a party's decision-making procedures, politicians might boost the party's programmatic traits by crafting a balance among top-, medium- and grassroots-level influence (e.g. by engaging with leaders from different levels in internal policy debates when they emerge). Such a balance may make the party's leader more responsive to policy-motivated members.
- Party leaders who are persuaded to shift power toward policy champions and allow more influence from the rank and file and mid-range leaders may be more likely to attract new policy-oriented co-partisans. More responsive parties will enjoy greater internal cohesion, and their leaders will find it hard to renege on the party's policy positions. The research shows how programmatic parties tend to formalize and institutionalize such a balance. As a matter of course, greater internal democracy in

fundamental decision-making processes such as candidate nomination procedures or policy deliberation is more likely to produce such a balance in the decentralization of internal authority.

- There is value in strengthening the relationship between the party and its legislative caucus. While giving the party some degree of power to discipline its caucus members can help protect its programmatic identity, erasing all trace of individualism might be impossible, and even not desirable. Elected representatives might need space to make choices that are in line with mandates received from voters. It is, of course, difficult to find an appropriate balance between the collective caucus and individual legislators. If institutions place a premium on discipline around core policies and issues close to the party's identity, individual legislators will find it costly to deviate from the party position. Allowing some flexibility on less essential issues, where dissent would not alienate voters, can be a pragmatic way to find that balance.
- As suggested by Luna et al., programmatic parties are more likely to consolidate under more transparent and institutionalized financial regulation. Ensuring a level playing field will, ideally, at least partly offset clientelistic or personalistic appeals to voters. Regulation and practice that promote openness, transparency and some degree of access to financial resources will therefore make the party's programmatic efforts more sustainable.

It follows from the 'lock-in' nature of internal party arrangements that an incremental approach to reform (i.e. to internal democracy, caucus discipline and transparency) that is enacted by policy-oriented leaders could be more effective and attract like-minded party members.

### *The need for programmatic constituencies*

Even with all incentives in place, programme-minded politicians have to be voted into office. As stated above, politicians need voters to be at least receptive to, and preferably demanding of, programmatic messages. Key elements of societal configurations might make voters more or less receptive to programmatic appeals, as the role of urbanization shapes state capacities, and ethnic identities drive or slow down programmatic appeals.

Levels of economic affluence and urbanization are often associated with less access to education and information. The impact of access to education and information on people's lives is thought to constrain the symbolic appeal of programmatic strategies. Higher levels of income provide people with more long-term economic certainty, possibly making them less likely to vote only on the basis of short-term benefits, and with a stronger emphasis on policies.

These assumptions are not fully supported by the evidence, as those structural factors are far from deterministic. The precise extent to which income and access to information shape how voters value programmatic politics is rather inconclusive in the research. Following Cheeseman et al., however, an implication is that regardless of a country's level of income or access to education, the access to (and quality of) political debate and information can contribute to programmatic tendencies if:

- Parties and citizens have broader access to independent and financially sustainable mass media and political reporting and debates. Bringing reporting on public issues closer to the people is assumed to have the potential to create demand for programmatic politics where it is absent. More, and especially better-quality, journalism can potentially amplify the salience of issues pertaining to public services or other policies that are relevant to rural localities. Successfully increasing interest in political debates will lay the foundation for choosing parties based on their programmatic views. Politicians themselves largely depend on (and are attracted to) the media as a means of spreading their messages widely, both at the local and national levels (especially broadcast media, including community-based radio stations, as radio remains the main channel of information in most developing countries). For politicians faced with more policy-focused media, providing them with their policy views to profile themselves against their opponents is generally a more cost-efficient and sustainable way to win voters than spending money to buy votes.
- Increasing access alone may be insufficient, though, as the quality of political news and debate through the independent media is essential. Above all, information has to be relevant to rural and semi-rural areas as well. Politicians have to address their concrete public needs. General political discussions are unlikely to relate meaningfully to people's daily lives. Therefore, rather than blanket solutions for the country as a whole, greater access to information will be more effective if it is tailored to the variety of issues that concern different areas of the country. Admittedly, the effort in rural and semi-rural areas will be more challenging. However, today's technological advancements offer an unprecedented array of options for people to inexpensively connect to a plurality of information sources. New media, although still with a low degree of penetration in the least developed countries, present an opportunity to give audiences a greater voice and influence in setting public agendas. Securing relevance may be increasingly facilitated as access to mobile devices, digital telecommunications, and the internet gets cheaper and broader.

In sum, an approach to media access that combines targeted, relevant content and a greater voice for audiences has a better chance of pushing politicians to

become interested in overcoming barriers to engage in programmatic politics outside urban areas.

### *Leaders as ultimate game changers*

All of the above are favourable, but not sufficient, conditions for the emergence of more programme-based political parties. To take advantage of them, parties need leaders who are capable of identifying and seizing opportunities of timing or circumstances on the one hand, and who have the ability to design, negotiate, maintain and deliver on political programmes on the other.

Successful programmatic transitions depend on electable, politically savvy and competent politicians. Cheeseman et al. and Kitschelt et al. provide some examples in which the role of leaders has been essential in making inroads toward programmatic politics, in countries such as Brazil, India and Zambia. Supporting policy-driven political leaders to impact positively on programme-based politics might imply:

- A focus on leaders who stand out for their emphasis on policies and their track record on pursuing them.
- That matching personal competence and salient policy issues seems an attractive strategy for those policy-oriented leaders. Priming also has the potential to bring policy debates to the fore too. It requires candidates to influence the salience of policy issues and voters' stances on the issues that best fit them. As this process does not take place in a vacuum, priming requires candidates to be responsive to issues that are at the core of public concerns.

Leaders of new and opposition parties that show programmatic tendencies could be especially interested in priming strategies, particularly in tight electoral campaigns. However, it requires rigorously polling and analysing citizens' perceptions of politicians over long periods of time, which makes it expensive. Broadening access to these techniques without jeopardizing their strategic value can contribute to making programmatic appeals more attractive to candidates and parties.

The research presented in this book and summarized in this chapter provides an approximate explanation of how a range of conditions could make a country's environment conducive to programmatic politics. The account provided here is far from conclusive. These conditions might represent obstacles at worst and opportunities at best, yet by no means can they guarantee any change on their own. It is clear that in the presence of one or several of the conditions identified here, a party does not automatically become more programmatic,

but it rather says something about its likelihood. Hopefully, this book has succeeded in persuading the reader that acting upon those conditions is what ultimately explains programmatic politics.

## Notes

1 Luna et al., pp. 35–7.

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# About International IDEA

## What is International IDEA?

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization with a mission to support sustainable democracy worldwide.

The objectives of the Institute are to support stronger democratic institutions and processes, and more sustainable, effective and legitimate democracy.

## What does International IDEA do?

The Institute's work is organized at global, regional and country level, focusing on the citizen as the driver of change.

International IDEA produces comparative knowledge in its key areas of expertise: electoral processes, constitution building, political participation and representation, and democracy and development, as well as on democracy as it relates to gender, diversity, and conflict and security.

IDEA brings this knowledge to national and local actors who are working for democratic reform, and facilitates dialogue in support of democratic change.

In its work, IDEA aims for:

- Increased capacity, legitimacy and credibility of democracy
- More inclusive participation and accountable representation
- More effective and legitimate democracy cooperation

## **Where does International IDEA work?**

International IDEA works worldwide. Based in Stockholm, Sweden, the Institute has offices in the Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia and North Africa regions.