

# Primaries

**Insight, division, importance, effects**

Peter Spáč

13.4.2015

# Primaries

- The most inclusive method for selecting candidates
- Inclusion of „masses“ in the nomination processes
- Opening the gates even for non-members to participate
- Sometimes „primaries“ refer to selection process in general

# USA and Europe

- Main differences:
  - Time of emergence
  - Character of political parties
  - Legal background
  - Spread

# Primaries in USA



- Importance of federalism
- Primaries emerged in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Implementation from the above (Ware)
- A developing story

# Nominations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

- **System of caucuses and conventions:**
  - Caucus – members choose delegates
  - Convention – delegates choose candidates
- **Extremely decentralized:**
  - Different practices among states (even inside the states)
  - No guarantee that delegates follow the line of members
- **Largely without formal rules**
- **Corruption and frauds**

# Nominations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

- Growing dissatisfaction → need for a reform:
  - Support of participation
  - Parties alone had not enough power
- Reform could be done only via legislature
- Supportive factor of adoption of the Australian ballot
- Most states adopted formal rules by the end of the century

# Adoption of primaries

- Crawford County (Pennsylvania) – historically first to use primaries in 1842
- Until the end of century only on county level
- Experimentation on the state level:
  - First years of the new century (until 1906)
  - Various forms – voluntary, mandatory only in some counties, mandatory only when certain conditions were met

# Adoption of primaries

- 1907 – 1915 – intense spread of primaries in states

	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	After 1915
Eastern States					MO		IL	MD	ME		NY		IN	CT
							NH		MA		OH		VT	DE
							MI		NJ		PA		WV	KY
														RI
Western States	WI	OR			IA	KS	AZ	CO	WY	MN				NM
					NE	OK	CA			MT				UT
					ND		ID							
					SD		NV							
					WA									

(Ware 2004)



# Primaries in USA



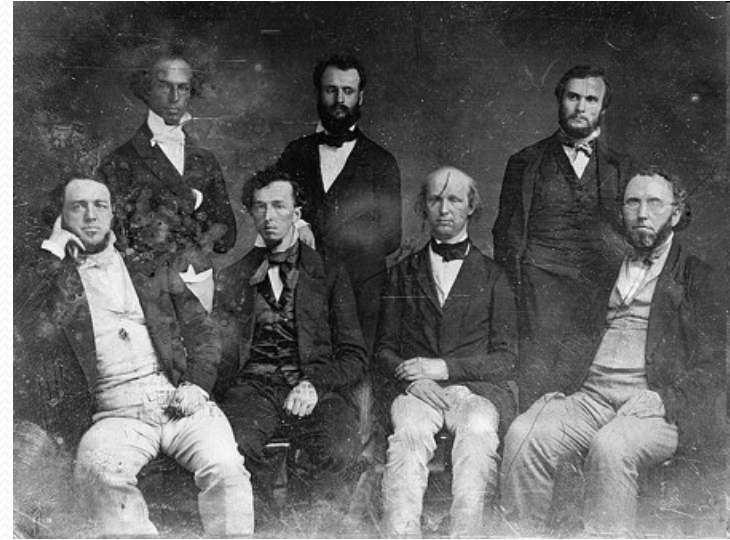
- The „historical“ case
- Development from informal delegate model of 19<sup>th</sup> century to formal rules and further adoption of primaries
- Legislative acts for whole states → forms of primaries in USA states differ

# Primaries in Europe

- The „recent“ case
- Adoption of primaries in later decades of 20<sup>th</sup> century
- More motives:
  - Organizational changes in parties (from cadre to cartel)
  - Compensation of gap between parties and voters
  - An image tool

# Cadre (elite) parties

- The oldest type
- Parties of the nobles
- Decentralization and weak structure
- Typically conservatives and liberals



# Mass parties



- Spread of suffrage in early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Typically socialists / social democrats
- Mass membership

# Catch-all parties



- After de-freezing of party systems
- Lower stress on ideology
- Stronger role of leadership, weakening of membership
- Access to various interest groups

# Cartel parties



- Further trends of catch-all parties
- Strong role of leadership
- De-ideologization and professionalization
- Link to state and cartel with other parties

# Why primaries?

- Trends in 2nd half of 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - Party in public office concentrates rather on access to government than seeking of social integration
  - Decreasing membership rates
  - Higher volatility of parties' support, lower loyalty of voters
  - Loss of legitimacy, anti-party sentiments
- **Primaries as one of the solutions?**

# Purpose of adoption of primaries

- **Attractiveness for (new) members**
  - Formally stronger role of ordinary members
  - A link between membership and the parties procedures
- **Image**
  - Primaries as the most democratic decision method
  - Improvement of image compared to other parties
- **New option for voters (open primaries):**
  - Voters may take part on parties' internal processes
  - Citizens without the need to be formal members



# Primaries as power tactics?

- Katz and Mair (1995)
- Primaries as a strategy of party leaderships how to gain more power
- Equal vote for all members eliminates the role of middle cadres and party activists
- Leadership has better chance to control the mass membership than the organized cadres
- **Power game in the name of party democratization**

# Primaries - types

- Not the same terminology in USA and Europe - different role of party members
- Ranging from „open to all“ to „closed“
- Many types - Non-partisan, blanket, open, semi-closed, (American) closed, (European) closed

# Primaries - effects

Selectorate	Inclusiveness	Representation	Competition	Cohesion
Elite / Committee	Low	High	Low	High
Party delegates	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Party members	High	Low	Medium	Lower

# Case studies



# Iceland



- Slightly out of major interest in political science
- Since 1959:
  - List PR system for general elections
  - Very low influence of preferential voting (= high importance of candidate ranking on lists)
- Since 1970s:
  - Introduction of primaries by all major parties
  - Aim – to increase the legitimacy of nomination process

# Primaries in Iceland



- Various forms
  - Open / Semi-open / Closed
  - Consultative / Potentially binding / Binding
  - From limited vote to different formula
- Penetration (share of counties):
  - Social democrats 58 %, Independence party 55 %, Progressive party 37 % and Left-greens 32 %

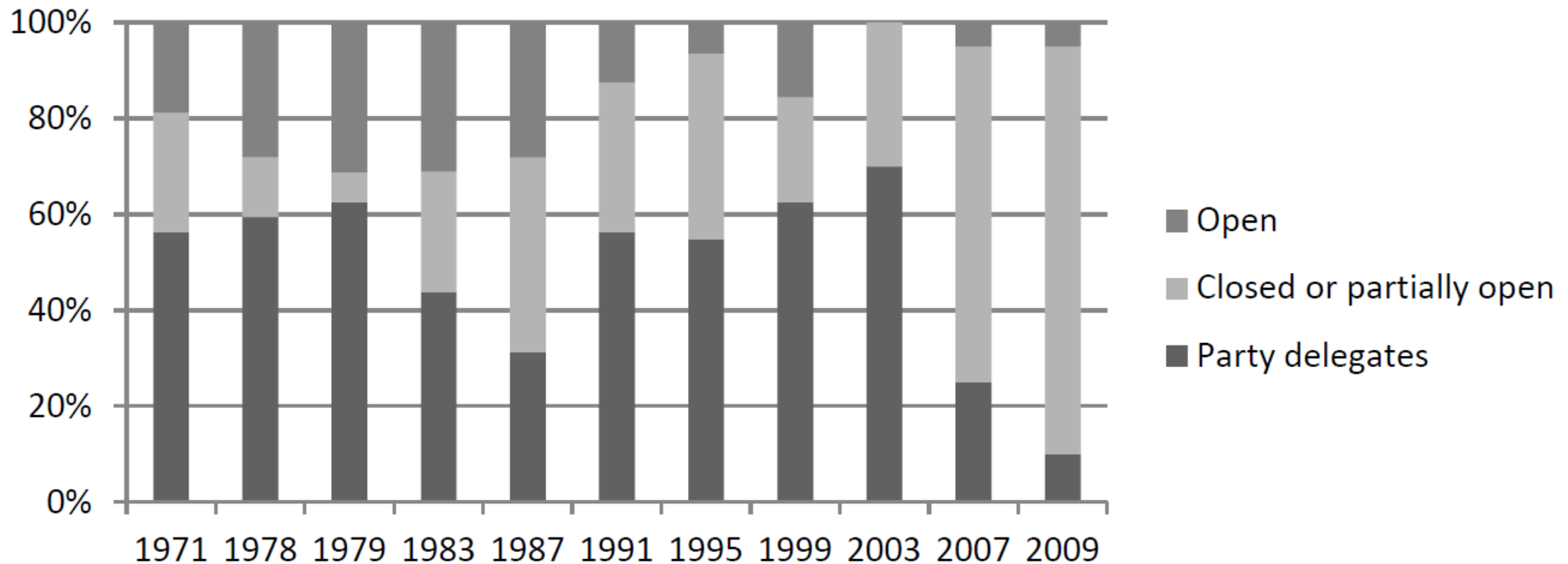
# Selection in 1971-2009



Type of nomination	Frequency	Percent
<i>Party delegates</i>		
Party organs nominate	169	49
Extended party organs	20	6
<i>Primaries</i>		
Closed primary	44	13
Partially open primary	57	16
Open primary	57	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100</b>

(Indridason, Kristinsson)

# Selection in 1971-2009



(Indridason, Kristinsson)



# Primaries in Iceland



- Consequences:
  - **Participation** – membership rates, instant members
  - **Representation** - women, young candidates
  - **Competition** – turnover of incumbents
  - **Responsiveness** – party cohesion

# Participation



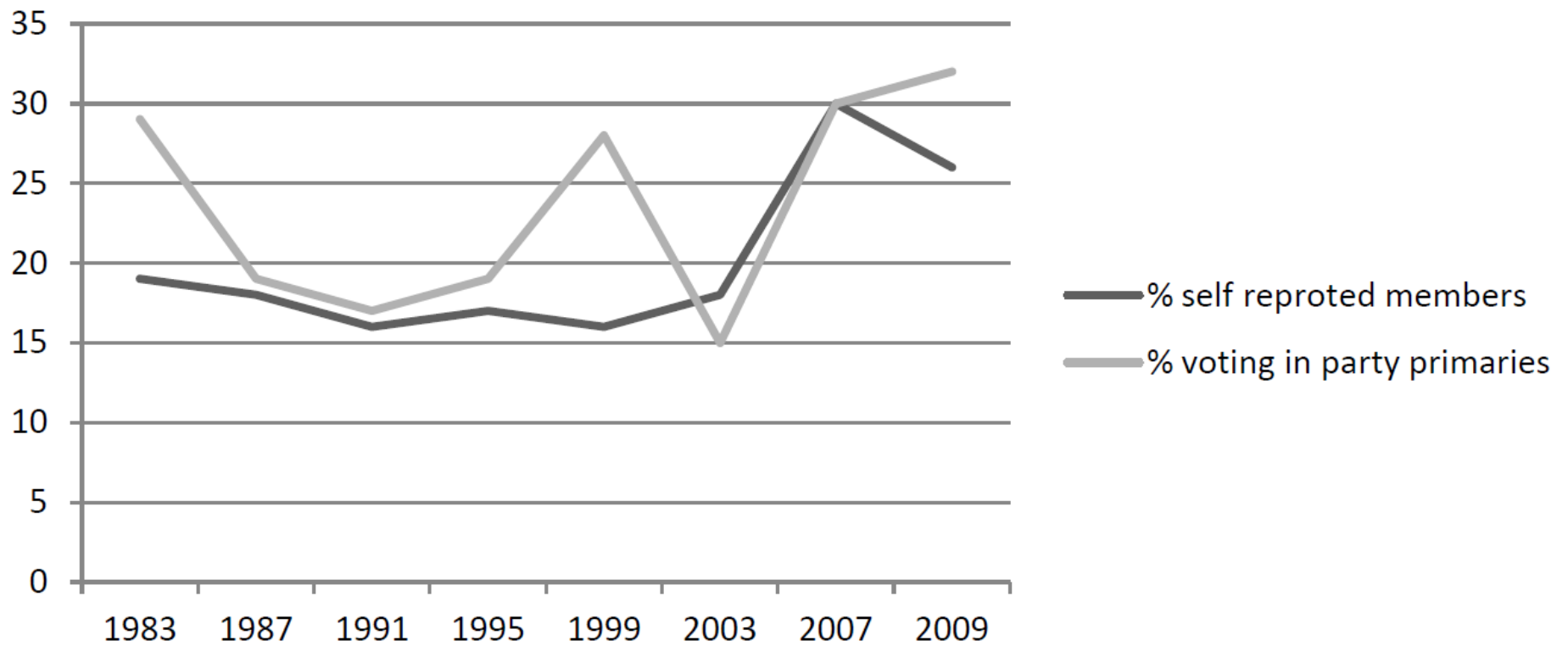
- Specific role of membership in Iceland (resembling more USA than Europe)
- Member fees paid irregularly or even not at all
- Weak link between parties and members
- „Active“ membership often means only participating on primaries

# Participation



- Rather stable membership rates with an increase in recent years
- Shift to semi-open and closed primaries as an incentive for supporters to join the parties?
- Instant membership has not been confirmed:
  - High party identification
  - Even in parties with more inclusive primaries (Social Democrats, Independence Party)

# Members in 1983-2009



(Indridason, Kristinsson)

# Party identification in 2009



Feel closest to:	SDA members	PP members	IP members	LG members
SDA	80	6	6	12
PP	0	76	3	3
IP	1	4	74	0
LG	4	0	3	74
Other parties	4	0	4	0
No party/don't know	12	14	10	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

(Indridason, Kristinsson)

# Representation



- Women:
  - Primaries produced more women candidates who won seats (without statistical significance), but less women in competitive positions
  - Primaries increased amount of women on the lists, but out of competitive positions
- Age:
  - Primaries improved chances of younger candidates to win a seat

# Competition



- Primaries did not reduce the amount of competition
- Comparable renewal of MPs by all techniques except the open primaries
- Incumbents are thus not favored when primaries are applied

# Renewal of MPs 1991-2009



Type of nomination	MPs		Candidates in competitive seats	
	Mean	N	Mean	N
Party organs	19.5	82	43.8	144
Extended party organs	16.7	36	36.8	57
Closed primaries	20.0	60	35.9	78
Partially open primaries	18.5	146	28.6	189
Open primaries	29.6	27	37.8	37
Total	19.9	352	35.8	506

(Indridason, Kristinsson)



# Responsiveness



- High unity of MPs voting among parties
- Slightly lower when in opposition, but still over 90 %
- Cohesion comparable to remaining Northern European countries with more exclusive selection of candidates
- Since 80s the parties learned how to secure their cohesion

# Party cohesion 1991-2009



	Final votes on bills	
	Government	Opposition
Independence Party	99.11 (18)	96.06 (1)
Left Greens <sup>*</sup>	98.66 (1)	95.35 (18)
Progressive Party	99.40 (12)	95.27 (7)
Social Democrats <sup>**</sup>	99.35 (7)	96.33 (12)
Weighted average	99.3	95.75

(Indridason, Kristinsson)

# Primaries in Iceland



- An exceptional case in Europe as for the spread and usage of primaries
- After several decades since adopting primaries the Icelandic parties remained united with a strong organization
- Possible role of context

# Italy and France



- Selection of the prime candidate
- Italy:
  - Left. vs. right parties (inclusion vs. exclusion)
  - 2005 – first primaries won by Prodi
  - 2013 – primaries of the left bloc Italia – Bene Comune

# Italy and France



- Selection of the prime candidate
- France:
  - The left inspired by Italy
  - 2006 – primaries of Socialists won by S. Royal
  - 2012 presidential elections – primaries organized by PS and Radicals

# Formal rules



- Open primaries - all citizens, possibly also foreigners, voting under 18 only in France
- Two round system
- Fee (2 EUR in Italy, 1 EUR in France)
- Candidates:
  - Registration
  - Signatures in Italy as the only option, France allows also endorsement by party officials

# Italy



- Primaries for the prime minister
- Italia – Bene Comune – coalition of various parties
- Screening of candidates by council of party officials
- Officially only party leaders were allowed to compete → not fully followed
- 5 candidates:
  - Three from Democratic Party (Bersani, Renzi, Puppato)
  - One each from two smaller parties (Vendola, Tabacci)

# Italy - results



Candidates	First round		Second round	
	N	Valid vote %	N	Valid vote %
Pier Luigi Bersani	1,395,096	44.9	1,706,457	60.9
Matteo Renzi	1,104,958	35.5	1,095,925	39.1
Nichi Vendola	485,689	15.6		
Laura Puppato	80,628	2.6		
Bruno Tabacchi	43,840	1.4		
<i>Total valid votes</i>	<i>3,110,211</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>2,802,382</i>	<i>100</i>

(Di Luca, Venturino)



# France



- Primaries for the presidential elections
- Shift from 2006 presidential primaries (closed) to a fully open model in 2011
- Organized by Socialists and Radicals
- Six candidates

# France - results



Candidates	First round		Second round	
	N	Valid vote %	N	Valid vote %
François Hollande	1,036,767	39.2	1,607,268	56.6
Martine Aubry	805,936	30.4	1,233,899	43.4
Arnaud Montebourg	455,536	17.2		
Ségolène Royal	183,343	6.9		
Manuel Valls	149,077	5.6		
Jean-Michel Baylet	17,030	0.6		
<i>Total valid votes</i>	<i>2,658,667</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>2,841,167</i>	<i>100</i>

(Di Luca, Venturino)

# Italy and France



- Impact of participation and competition on later electoral results
- Expectations:
  - High participation – sign of attractiveness of candidates resulting to better result
  - High competition (close victory) – possible distraction of runner ups’ supporters to abstain from voting resulting to worse result

# Italy - participation



	Primary turnout	Vote to center-left coalition	Vote to Democratic Party	Vote to Left Ecology Freedom	Vote to Democratic Centre
Primary turnout	1	.740 (.000)**	.868 (.000)**	.174 (.070)	-.037 (.701)
Vote to center-left coalition		1	.746 (.000)**	.331 (.000)**	-.033 (.732)
Vote to Democratic Party			1	.002 (.982)	-.172 (.073)
Vote to Left Ecology Freedom				1	.454 (.000)**
Vote to Democratic Centre					1

(Di Luca, Venturino)

# France - participation



	Primary turnout	Vote to center-left coalition	Vote to Socialist Party	Vote to Radical Party of the Left	Vote to the Greens
Primary turnout	1	.675 (.000)**	.498 (.000)**	.006 (.953)	.072 (.488)
Vote to center-left coalition		1	.734 (.000)**	.062 (.546)	-.073 (.480)
Vote to Socialist Party			1	-.462 (.000)**	-.143 (.164)
Vote to Radical Party of the Left				1	-.209 (.041)*
Vote to the Greens					1

(Di Luca, Venturino)

# Italy - competition



	Primary competition	Vote to center-left coalition	Vote to Democratic Party	Vote to Left Ecology Freedom	Vote to Democratic Centre
Primary competition	1	-.412 (.000)**	-.495 (.000)**	.046 (.636)	-.215 (.024)*
Vote to center-left coalition		1	.746 (.000)**	.331 (.000)**	-.033 (.732)
Vote to Democratic Party			1	.002 (.982)	-.172 (.073)
Vote to Left Ecology Freedom				1	.454 (.000)**
Vote to Democratic Centre					1

(Di Luca, Venturino)

# France - competition



	Primary competition	Vote to center-left coalition	Vote to Socialist Party	Vote to Radical Party of the Left	Vote to the Greens
Primary competition	1	-.250 (.014)*	-.348 (.001)*	.253 (.013)*	.229 (.025)*
Vote to center-left coalition		1	.734 (.000)**	.062 (.546)	-.073 (.480)
Vote to Socialist Party			1	-.462 (.000)**	-.143 (.164)
Vote to Radical Party of the Left				1	-.209 (.041)*
Vote to the Greens					1

(Di Luca, Venturino)

# Italy and France



- Correlation outcomes:
  - Turnout in primaries has positive correlation with better electoral results
  - Competition was negatively correlated with electoral results
  - Effects visible only for whole blocs and dominant parties
- Which factor is stronger?



# Italy and France



	Italy	France
Primary turnout	.417	.549
Primary competition	-.131	.021
Vote to PD 2008/PS 2007	.272	.415
GDP per capita	.206	-.247
R square	.616	.680
N	110	96

(Di Luca, Venturino)

# Italy and France



- Final results:
  - Turnout (participation) was the best predictor for the electoral results of both blocs in both countries
  - Higher competition slightly decreased the support of Italia – Bene Comune
  - In France the level of competition had no impact on electoral results of the left parties