

# Incidence of Pork Barrel Politics and its Consequences

PMCb1113 Money and Politics

# National, Regional or Worldwide?

- A complex phenomenon in a complex world
- Various political systems with different institutional framework
- Different currencies
- But the same human nature

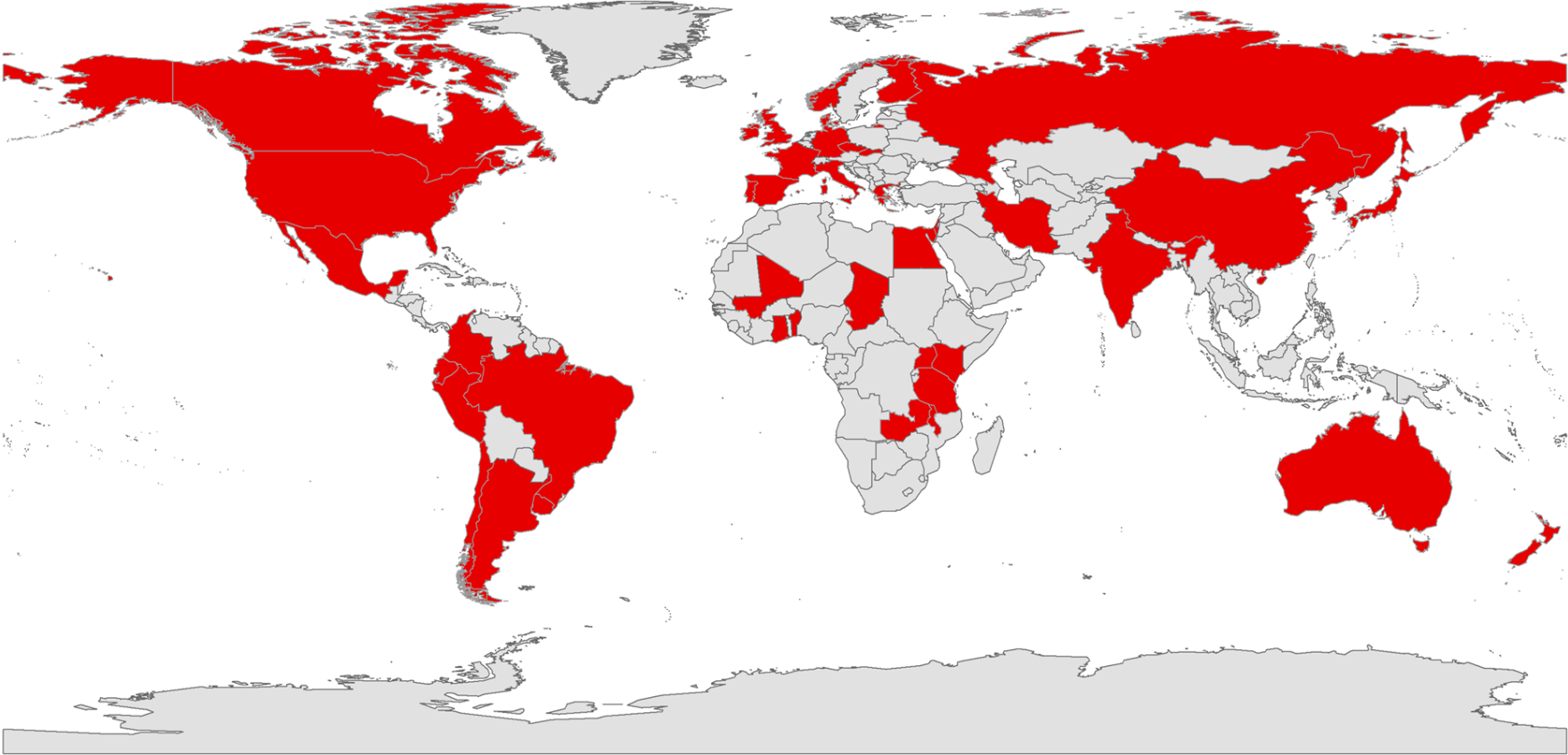
# Spread of Research

- Initial dominance of research in USA
- Pork Barrel Politics as an 'American phenomenon'
- Change in recent decades
- Factors: new data, new approaches, comparative research aims

# Once in 20<sup>th</sup> Century



And now



# Consequences of Pork Barrel Politics

- Important questions
  - Is the distribution of public money based on political interests meaningful?
  - Does it lead to expected outcomes?
  - Or is it just a waste of time (and money)?
- Consequences depend on type of pork barrel politics

# Bill Clinton and NAFTA

- NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement)
- Aim of president Clinton to pursue this agenda in Congress in 1993
- Important case of pork barrel politics with crucial consequences
- Congress approved NAFTA in November 1993

# Background

- Clinton as a president who used pork barrel politics before
- Tradition established by previous presidents (Roosevelt, Reagan etc.)
- Exception – Jimmy Carter
- Members of Congress often expect something in return by default



# Background

- Strong opposition against NAFTA:
  - Trade unions (lower wages, export of jobs abroad)
  - Environmentalists (lower environmental limits)
- Split in Democratic party:
  - Initiative to delay the whole NAFTA project
- Republicans leaning more to support NAFTA:
  - Previous term of George Bush
  - Free trade as a value

# Pork Barrel Politics and NAFTA

- Negotiations and proclaimed compromises without substantial effect
- Pork barrel politics as the only choice:
  - Massive launch of deals with members of Congress
  - Lasted until final day of vote in Congress
- Various deals:
  - Guarantees for agricultural sector in Florida
  - Governmental purchases of airplanes from Texas
  - Promise to block subsidized wheat from Canada
  - Money on customs agents (textile) one day before the vote

# Vote in Congress

- Perspective of a clear defeat in October 1993
- November 1993 – 234 : 200 in favor of NAFTA
- Impact of pork barrel politics?

# Vote in House on NAFTA

<b>Vote on NAFTA</b>	<b>Members who did not receive benefit</b>	<b>Members who received benefit</b>
Yes	47.5	84.2
No	52.5	15.8
Total	100.0	100.0

# Probability of supporting NAFTA

	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Republican</b>
No benefit received	.275	.688
Benefit received	.684	.927
Change	.409	.239

# Bill Clinton and NAFTA

- Main aim fulfilled - Congress approved NAFTA
- Bringing home pork as a way how to increase support for NAFTA
- Successfully applied on members of both parties
- Pork barrel politics as a way of changing voting patterns of elected representatives

# What About Voters?

- Pork Barrel Politics as a vote-buying mechanism
- The main logic:
  1. grants are sent to a specific area
  2. a representative of the area claims the credit
  3. voters respond to income of public money and support the local representative
- Does it work in reality?

# Potential Limits (Bickers and Stein 1994)

- Critical points:
  - Do all political representatives seek public money to same extent?
  - Do local representatives claim credit for pork despite their real role in securing the money?
  - Do all voters recognize income of money?
  - Do voters reward local representatives by supporting them in elections?



# Potential Limits (Bickers and Stein 1994)

- Critical points:
  - It depends on the amount of risk of losing in election
  - Yes, by all means (accounts for political representatives regardless of whether they played any role in securing the money)
  - No, it depends on the level of information and interest of people in politics
  - Yes, but it depends on their attitude to incumbent and on their knowledge

# Does Pork Barrel Politics Affect Voters?

- Every 100-dollar per capita increases the vote shares of candidates of the majority party in Canada by 1.5–2.5 % points (Evans 2006)
- Each additional 100 dollars per capita to a district leads to a 2 % increase in the incumbent's vote share in US House of Representatives elections (Levitt and Snyder 1997)
- Indirect relationship (Klingensmith 2019):
  - Pork-barrel grants >> more fundraising >> higher vote share

# Does Pork Barrel Politics Affect Voters?

- Depends on the context
- What might be important?
  - Pure fact of obtaining grants
  - Number of obtained grants
  - Timing of grants
  - Value of grants

# Touch of Grants

---



# Impact of Grants on Local Elections

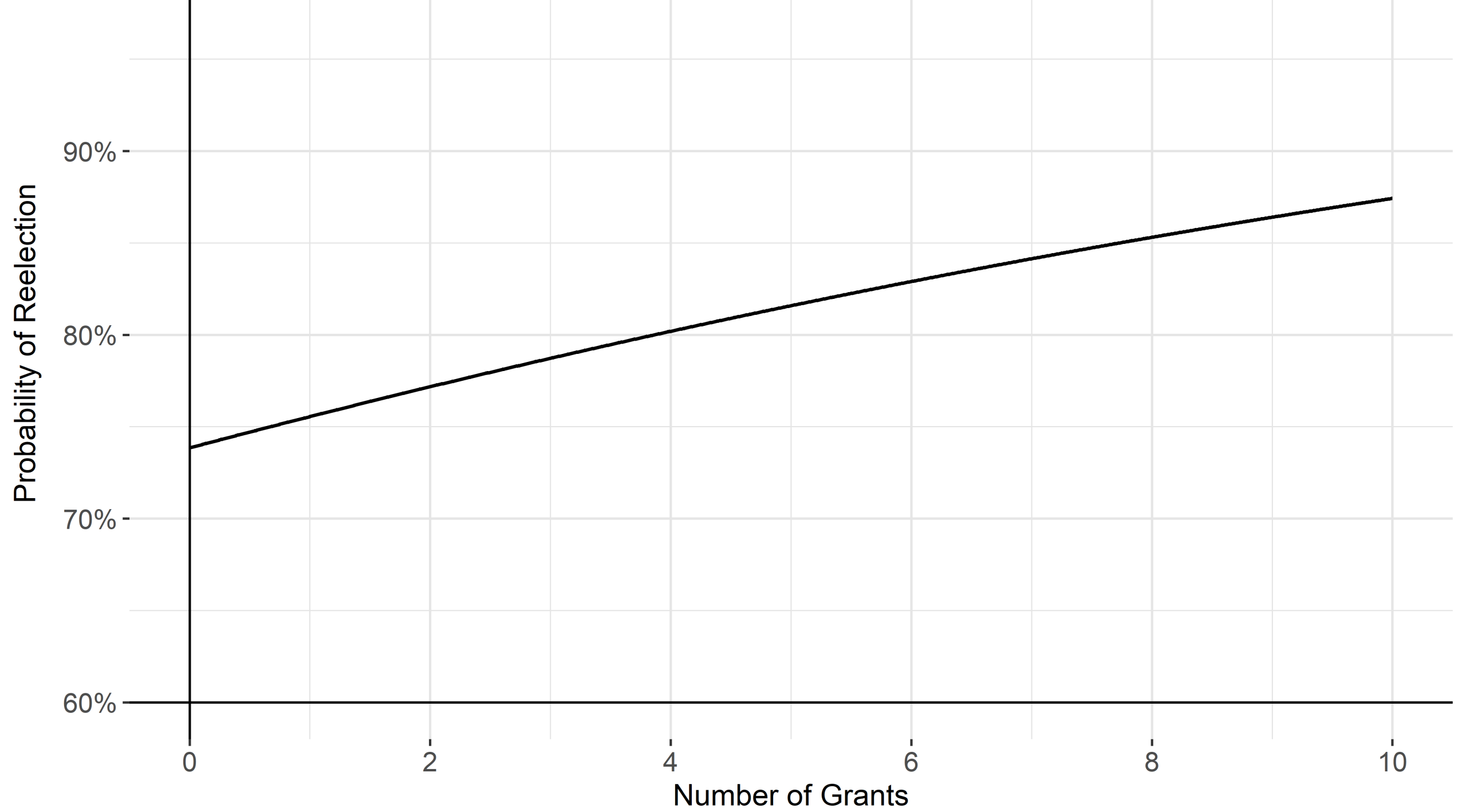
- Case of Slovakia
- Grants as a further benefit for local elected representatives – part of incumbency advantage
- Mayors in Slovakia:
  - Highest municipal representatives
  - Directly elected for four years (FPTP)
  - High rate of reelection in general
- Do grants affect the prospects of mayors when seeking reelection?

# Impact of Grants on Local Elections

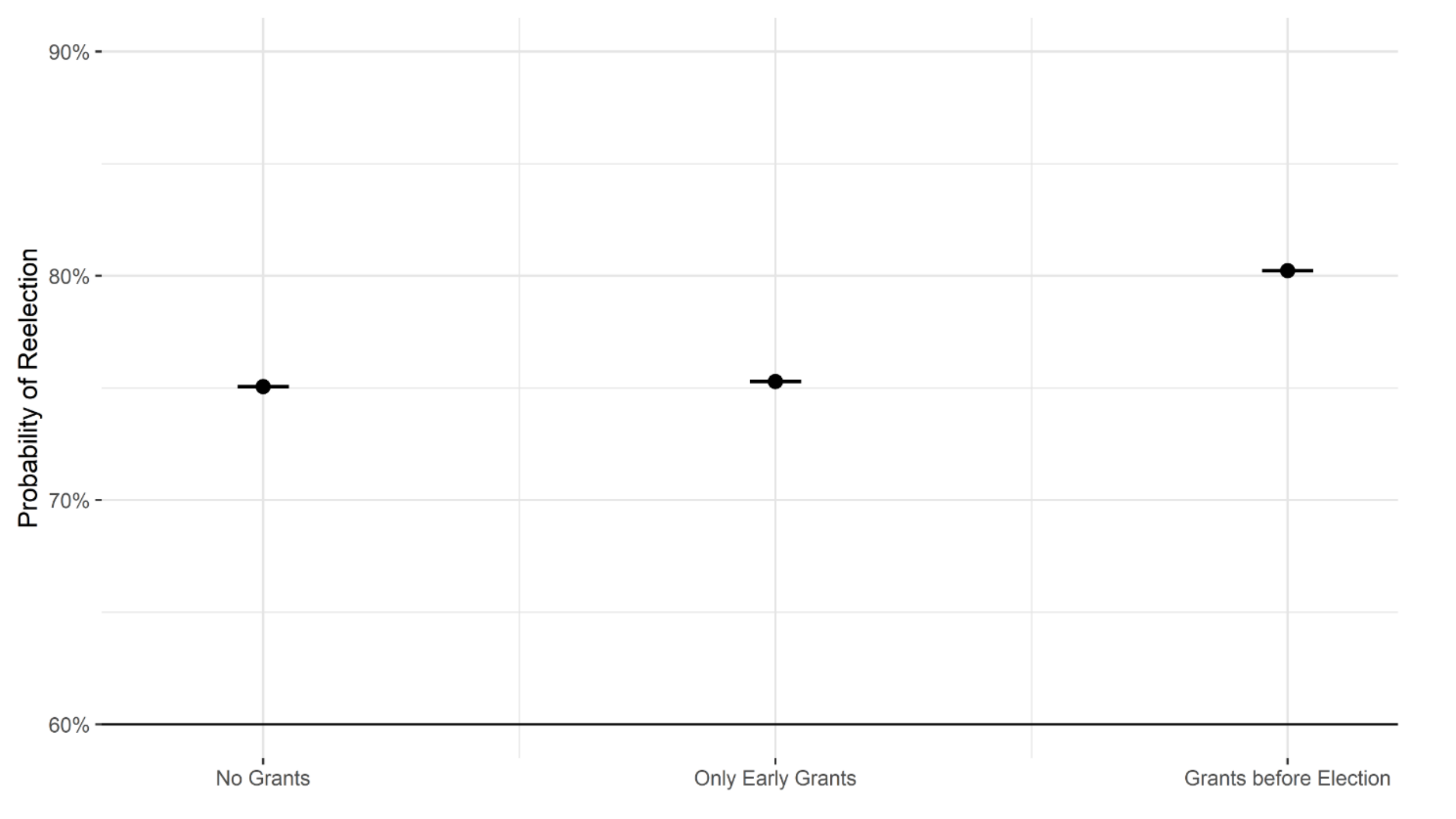
- Local elections 2006-2018
- Included municipalities:
  - Mayor in office during the whole term
  - Mayor runs in election (seeks reelection)
  - Mayor has at least one challenger (competitive election)
- More than 7,300 competitive local elections
- More than 9,700 grants

# Findings

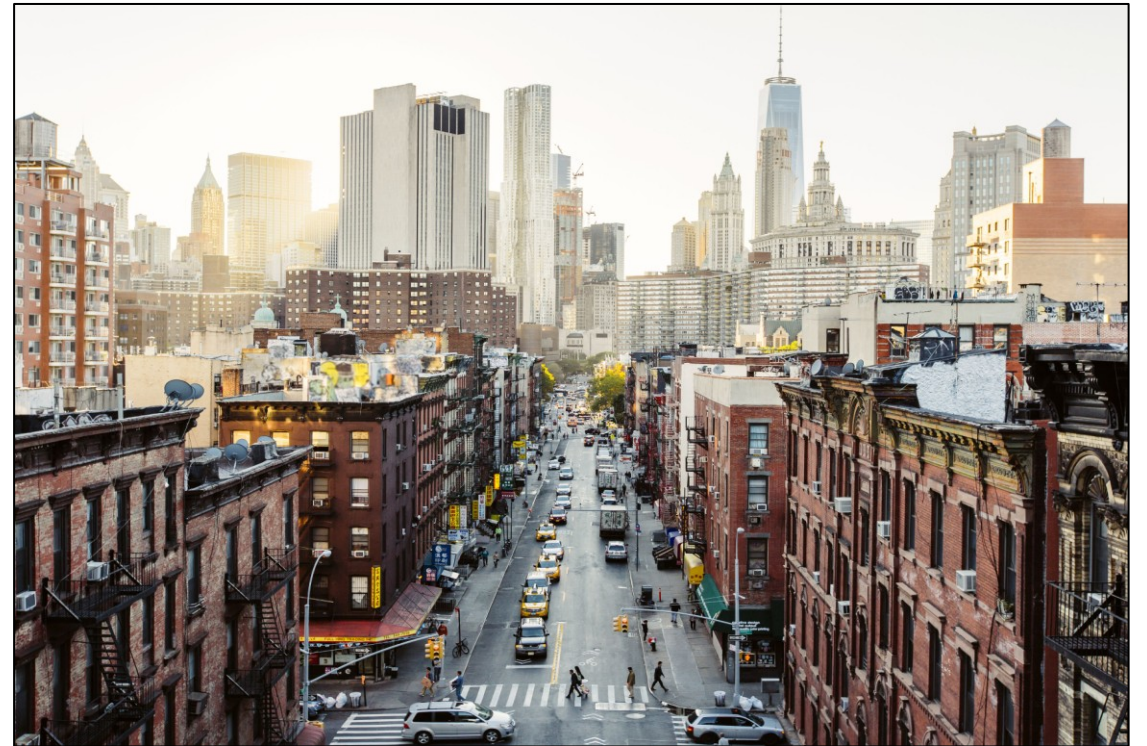
- In general, grants are helpful for local incumbents but only to some extent
- Likelihood of reelection increases with:
  - More awarded grants
  - Grants awarded in the end of term
- The picture is however more complex

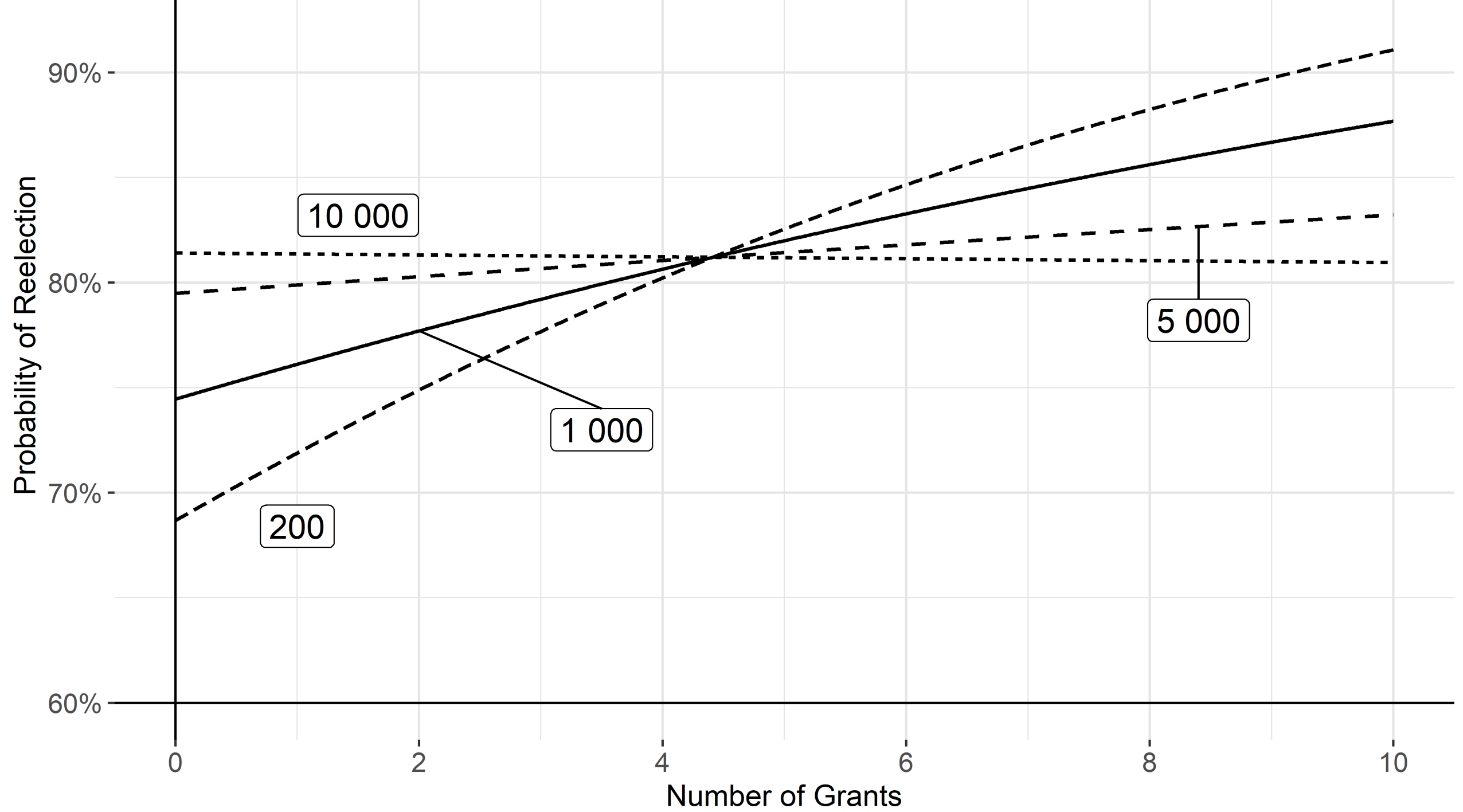


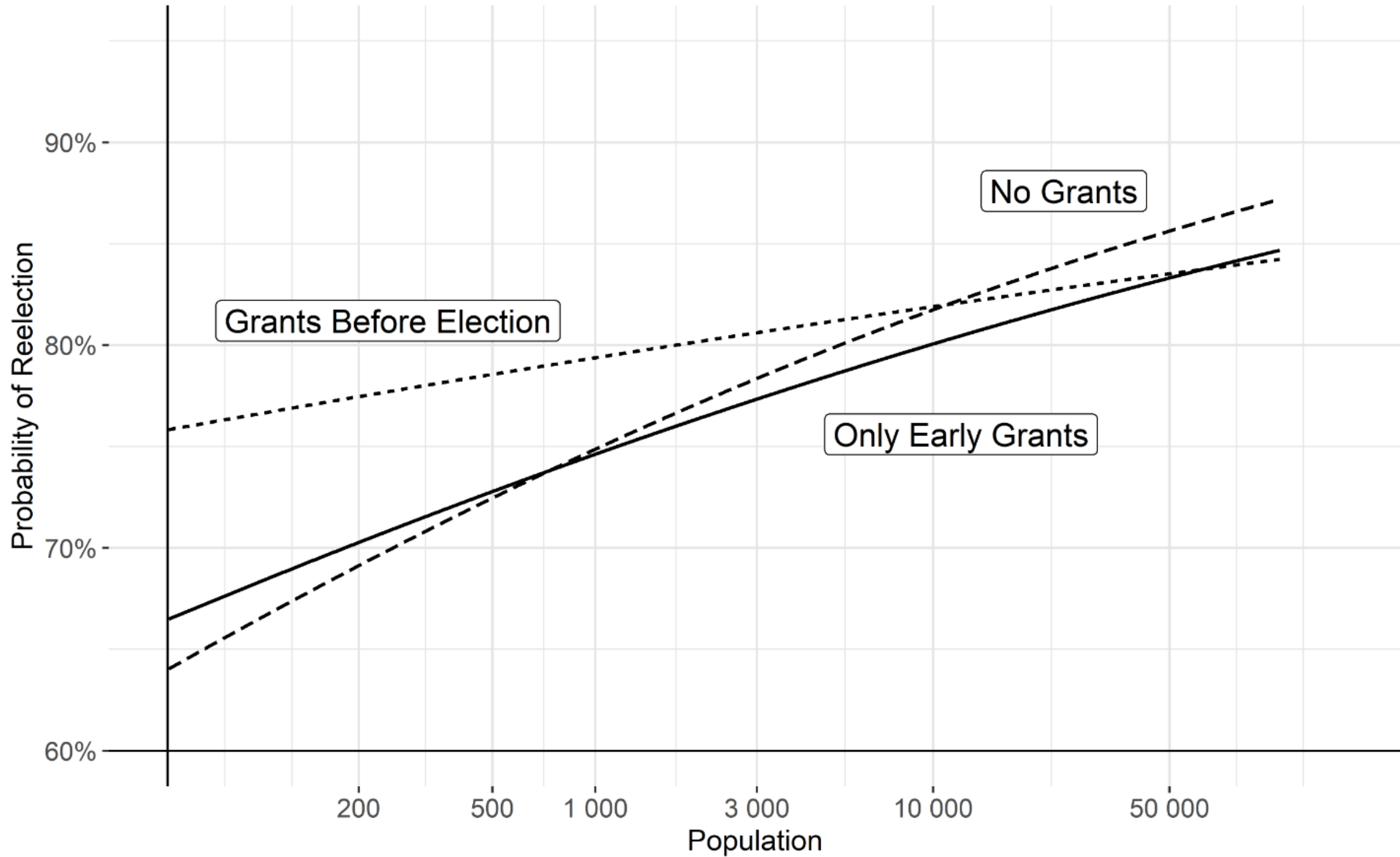


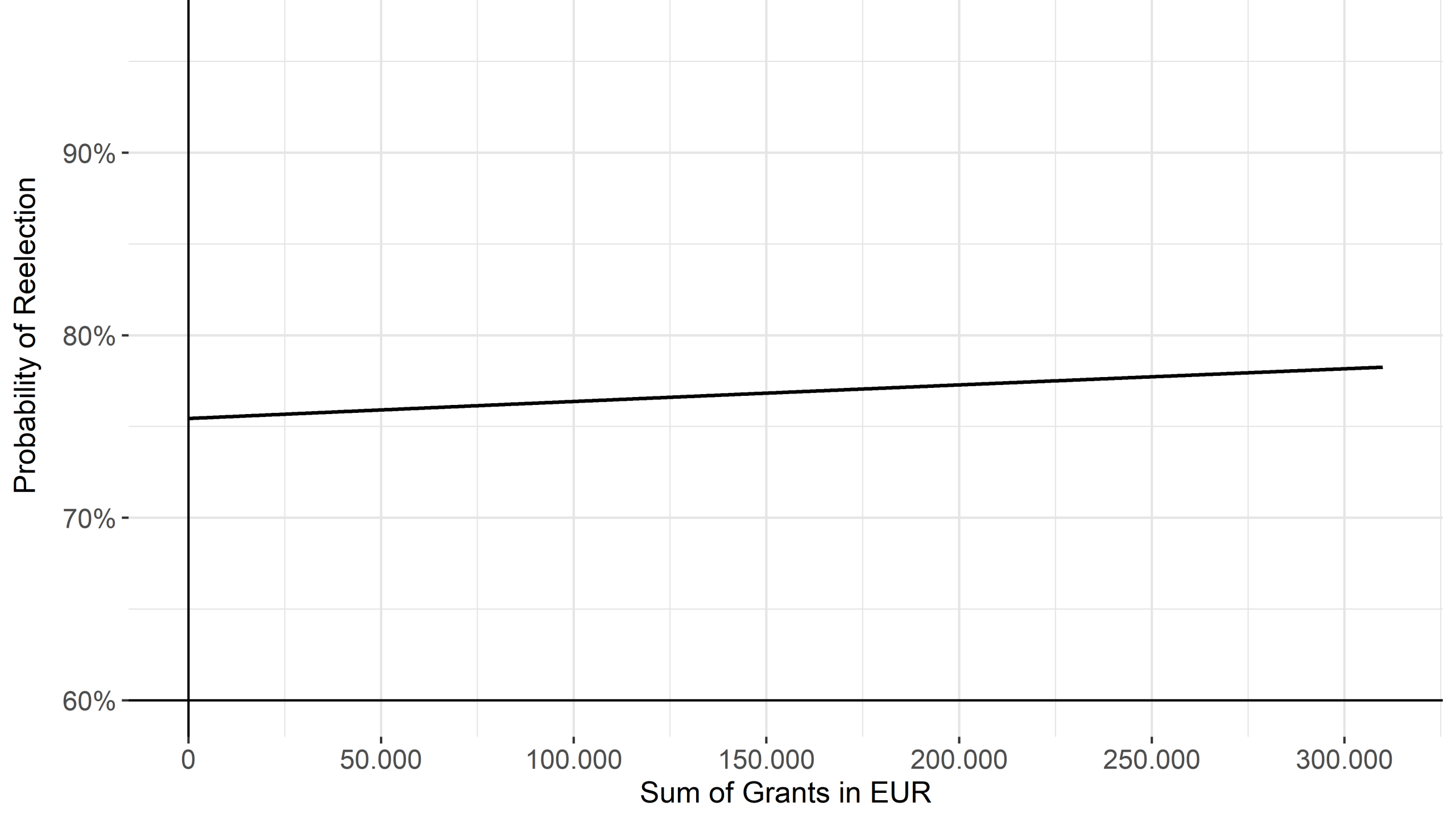


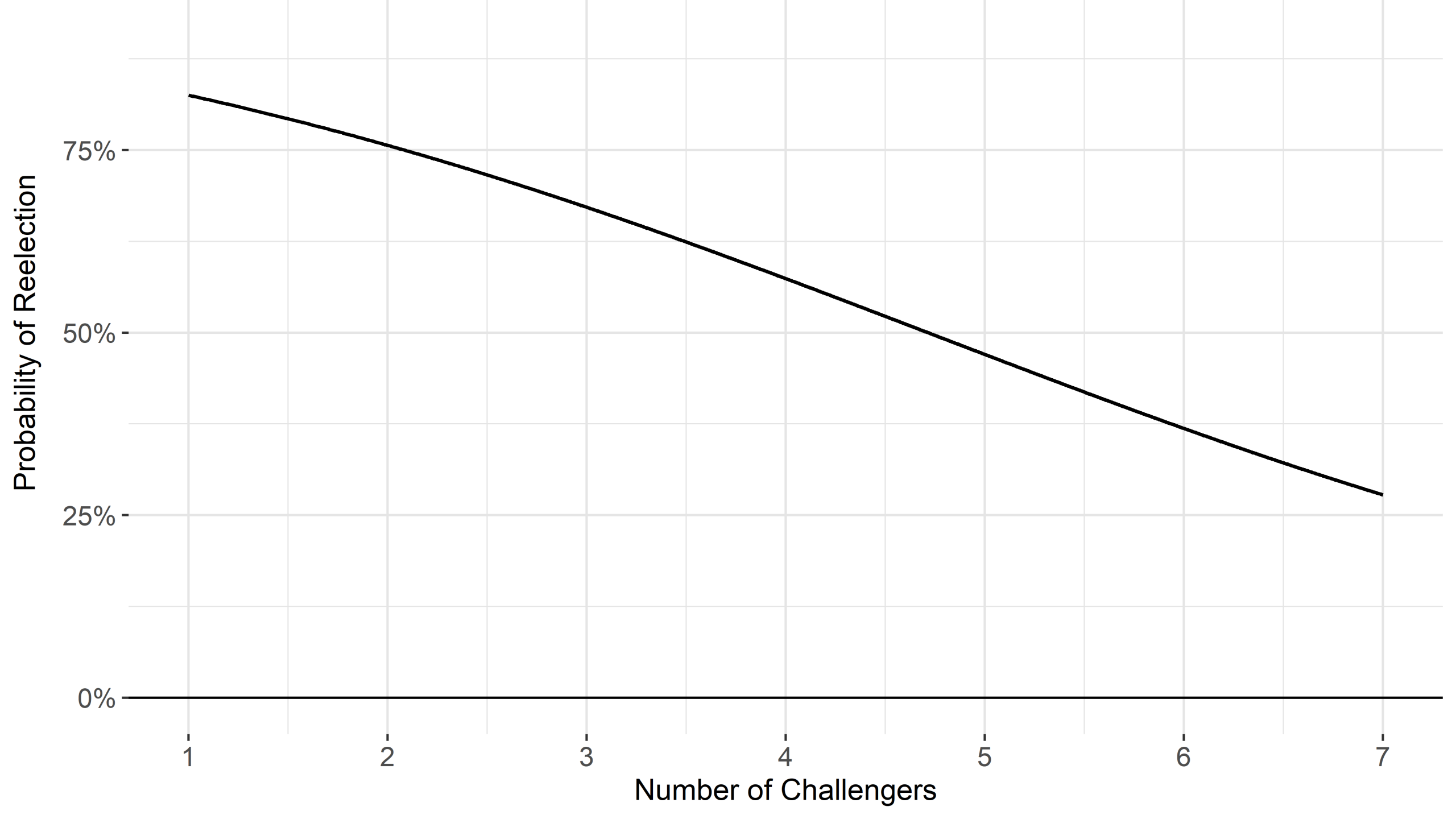
# Any Difference?











# EP Elections and Incumbent Parties

- Henceroth and Oganesyanyan (2019)
- EU Structural Funds affect the results of EP elections
- Analysis of nine EU countries on regional level
- Higher amount of SIF provided more support to gov parties