in theories on the formation of government coalitions, researchers implicitly argue that political parties act like single individuals. They assume that in coalition negotiations the party leadership decides for the whole party. Hence, most authors concede that in such instances the party behaves like a unitary actor (Laver and Schofield 1990, 217ff).

A similar defense might be marshalled in support of the unitary actor assumption in my model. Given the setup of my model, however, a simpler, though technical justification is adequate. In the theoretical model the established party only chooses between two options, namely whether to accept or reject a given demand by a potential new party. The binary character of the set of actions renders my justification for the unitary actor assumption much easier. For instance a simple majority vote among party members in favor or against accepting a particular demand will look like a decision of an individual with a consistent preference schedule. A complication appears with the fact that in the equilibria discussed above, the established party sometimes adopts a mixed strategy, implying a probabilistic acceptance of a particular demand. Consequently, my technical justification for the unitary actor assumption only holds, if either all relevant party members have similar risk attitudes, or the aggregation of the individual risk attitudes leads to a well-behaved aggregate. Along similar lines the unitary actor assumption for the potential new party can be defended. For this composite actor the defense is less difficult, since in equilibrium it always adopts a pure strategy. This pure strategy describes whether the potential new party should make a high or a low demand. Again, this set of actions is binary, which allows for a representation of a whole group as an individual actor.

CHAPTER 4

Studying New Parties

My theoretical framework mainly yields predictions on the formation of new political parties. It suggests a series of relationships between theoretical variables and the likelihood of party formation. Some implications also address the relative strength of these new competitors. Together these two sets of predictions offer insights into the two central questions in the study of new political parties: Why do new parties emerge and what determines their subsequent success?[1] These two questions are obviously related, since the success of a new party is dependent on its prior emergence. My theoretical framework renders this link even more explicit, since both sets of predictions stem from a common model. In addition, this model suggests that the success potential new parties expect is part of the explanation of their emergence. Provided that this expected success is related with the realized success of new parties, my framework suggests a close link between the explanation of the success of a new party and its emergence. This link is also the reason why my theoretical model, which focuses on the emergence of new parties, allows for some limited insights into the initial success of newcomers on the electoral scene. These insights are obviously on stronger footing, if the relationship between expected and realized initial success is strong.

This close link between explanations of success and emergence, while derived from my theoretical framework, is also implicit in most contending models attempting to explain the success of new parties.[2] While this link only partly affects the appropriate research design to study the emergence of new political parties, it raises considerable problems for studies focusing on the

1. Here I neglect studies of a more exploratory character. These focus mostly on organizational forms (e.g., Poguntke 1987; Lepzy 1989) or the electorate of new parties (e.g., Boy 1981; Mayer and Perrineau 1989, 1992).

2. This is most obvious in Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus's (1984) study on third parties in America. These authors directly address this link, and the problem it gives up for the appropriate research design, in their empirical work. The link is much more implicit in other work, where similar or identical variables are used to explain formation and success of new parties (e.g., Harmel and Robertson 1985), or where no distinction between formation and success is made (e.g., Kitschelt 1989; Müller-Rommel 1990). In these latter studies the problem raised by this link for the appropriate research design is hardly discussed.

latter's subsequent success. Given that the link is implicitly acknowledged in most studies on new political parties, it must surprise that the ensuing problems for the appropriate research design are seldomly addressed. For this reason, this chapter discusses in some detail the research design employed in this study. In the next section I first discuss the research design proposed for the empirical study of the emergence of new parties. As argued above and reiterated in this section, this research question can be dealt with separately from the appropriate design for the study of the success of new political parties. I deal with this second research question in the second section. The close link between the two research questions suggests a particular approach, taking into account problems of selection bias. More precisely, the new parties that we can observe empirically form a self-selected sample from all potential new parties that ever considered competing in a national election. As I will demonstrate both conceptually in this chapter and empirically in chapter 6, failing to take into account this selection problem may lead to erroneous results.

Given that both research designs employed in this study are considerably different from the ones prominent in the literature, I discuss competing designs in the third section. While some of them have considerable advantages, they often achieve these at the price of serious drawbacks. Provided that my arguments in support of the research designs employed in this study are correct, empirical results obtained with competing designs have to be taken with considerable caution. It is likely that faulty research designs largely explain puzzling empirical findings. Similarly, differences in research design may also explain some empirical results which are at odds with the existing literature (chapters 5 and 6). I will address these likely differences in the conclusion to this chapter.

Studying the Formation of New Parties

Proposing a research design for the emergence of new political parties is the easier part of the task which lies before me. Since the emergence of a new party precedes its possible success, the research design for this first question can neglect the issues that the second one has to deal with. In addition, my theoretical framework suggests a series of testable relationships between theoretical variables and the likelihood of party formation. These relationships are independent of the future electoral success of new parties, except for the latter's link with the expected success that potential new parties anticipate. While the theoretical model focuses on a single interaction between one established party and a potential new party, it is likely that over time a series of such interactions takes place. Some of these interactions will result in the formation of a new electoral competitor, while some others lead to no changes in the

party system. Given my definition of new political parties, we observe the outcome of these interactions at the time of a national election, when newcomers present themselves for the first time. Since we do not observe the individual interactions between established parties and potential new ones, a natural unit of observation is the time of a national election in a particular country. At that time we can determine which parties compete for the first time at the national level, and are thus considered as new parties.

Given this unit of observation an obvious way to define the dependent variable is to count the number of new parties that appear on the ballot for the first time at a particular national election. Since we cannot directly observe the processes that lead to the formation of new parties and those that failed to produce newcomers, counting the number of successful outcomes is an appropriate aggregate measure. Obviously, for a series of elections this dependent variable will take as value zero (no new party), while in all others it will be strictly positive. This property of the dependent variable questions the use of traditional statistical models, since a series of assumptions are violated.[3] Nevertheless, the properties of this dependent variable nicely fit the increasingly used event-count models, which rely on Poisson or related distributions. These allow the researcher to correctly model the way in which the data are generated (King 1988, 1989a, 121ff, 1989b).

In the present case the theoretical model presented in chapter 2 nicely matches the assumptions of such event-counts. The model relates a series of variables with the probability of party formation. This probability finds as natural equivalent the probability of an event occurring in the framework of an event-count. In both cases we do not directly observe the process that leads to the event (or non-event), but only the number of events taking place. Consequently, I will employ in my empirical tests an event-count model to estimate the various relationships suggested by my theoretical model.

Having determined the unit of observation and the dependent variable, we still have to determine the universe of observations. Since my theoretical model specifies relationships which should not be context dependent, a comparison between different countries is of particular advantage. A series of theoretical variables discussed in chapter 3 are likely to vary only from country to country. Consequently, only a cross-national design may capture the effects of such variables. But at the same time some of these theoretical variables are also likely to vary across time in a particular country. For instance, changes in the electoral system or the requirements to access the ballot undergo changes over

3. The standard solution is to take the logarithm of the count variable to which one half is added. Adding a constant is necessary, since the logarithm of zero is not defined. The transformed variable follows approximately a normal distribution. See King (1988) for a critique of this standard solution.

time. Aggregating these time-varying measures into single indices is likely to depreciate their effects compared to variables that do not change over time. Consequently, I keep as basic unit of analysis a national election in a particular country. Given the already defined comparative dimension, this suggests a cross-national cross-time design of the dataset. For the period of observation and the countries considered the number of new parties at each national election have to be counted. These counts of new parties then are related to the various explanatory factors derived in chapter 3. Estimating the different effects has to rely on an event-count model, given the particular nature of the data.

This research design comes very close to what Campbell and Ross (1970) call an "interrupted time-series design."[4] Changes in independent variables from one election to the other are the background against which the frequency of new party formation can be checked. This research design also permits the integration of theoretical propositions from other authors as a check for the validity of the model we are using. By using such a procedure I can control whether the choice of my research design leads to substantively different conclusions than the ones other researchers found in their studies.

Studying the Success of New Parties

While the study of the formation of new parties requires a rather straightforward research design, the same does not hold true for exploring the success of new parties. As noted above, choosing a research design for this second important question in the study of new parties cannot be decoupled from the previous one. More precisely, given the intimate link between the emergence and success of new parties, the latter cannot be studied without taking into consideration the factors explaining the formation of a new party.

In addition to this first difficulty, the study of the success of new parties also requires a different unit of observation. Since in most western democracies often more than one new party may emerge at a given point in time, the national election can no longer serve as unit of analysis.[5] Consequently, I employ the newly formed political party as unit of analysis. Given that my theoretical framework suggests several relationships between theoretical variables and the expected success of a newcomer, I employ the initial success of a new party as a proxy for its expected success. I determine this initial success by taking the national vote share in percentages obtained by the newcomer.

4. See also the respective discussion on time series designs in Campbell and Stanley (1963).

5. Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984) in their study of third parties in America resort to the solution of using elections as units of analysis. They aggregate, as a consequence, the electoral fortunes of several third-party challengers, if more than one appeared at a given election.

While this strategy solves the problem of the unit of observation, it highlights even more strongly the problem of selection bias. Obviously the set of new parties for which the initial success can be determined is a self-selected sample of all potential new parties that ever thought about competing in a national election (Hug 2000). The process of self-selection, according to my model, is largely dependent on the success a potential new party expects from participating at a national election. If it were the only factor influencing the self-selection, we would face a classical problem of selection on the dependent variable. Scholars in comparative politics have recently been reminded of the dangers of this problem (e.g., Geddes 1991; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994). While in comparative case studies the solution often lies in a more careful selection of the cases,[6] to induce more variation in the dependent variable, this is not possible in the present case. Quite simply, for all potential new parties that judged an electoral bout too adventurous, we fail to have any information. If information on such potential new parties were available, statistical models discussed in detail by Achen (1986) and Brehm (1993) could be employed.

Ideally, we would have a sample of groups or political entrepreneurs which are considering creating a new political party. Some of them would have formed a new party, while others would have refrained from doing so. Then, the task of the researcher would consist of explaining this variation. But this type of research design is not feasible, almost by definition. It is difficult to determine the universe of groups that have considered creating a new party, and some rule of thumb would have to be adopted in order to do so. For example, in the study of Green parties, a researcher could take all social movements and groups that address environmental questions. But, already, this task becomes difficult to carry out. In addition, it might be that some of these groups never considered forming a new party. Perhaps their only aim was to lobby for a new issue. Then the researcher must decide whether all groups should be included or only those that had the intention to form a new party at a given point in time. Probably because of these difficulties no student of new political parties has, to my knowledge, used such a research design.

Given this impossibility to gather information for all potential new political parties, it is important to note that the emergence of a newcomer on the electoral scene is the result of a conscious decision. But exactly this decision whether or not to form a new party constitutes the *explanadum* in the first research design. Consequently, the research design for the second research question should allow for a study of the relationships explaining the success of new parties, conditional on them having appeared. The conditional part of this research design would obviously draw on similar independent variables

6. Dion (1998) argues, however, that for tests of necessary conditions, selection on the dependent variable is the appropriate strategy.

as those employed to explain the formation of new parties, or equivalently, the selection into the sample. The only remaining question is how this can be included into a research design which explores the success of new parties.

The solution comes from the observation that the sample of self-selected new parties is a truncated dataset. The truncating mechanism in this case is the decision to form a new party. This mechanism can be captured by assuming that an unobserved variable and an accompanying threshold exist, below which new parties do not form. The level of the threshold is fixed, while the value of the unobserved variable is a random variable, whose mean depends on the variables that determine the decision to form a new party. The dependent variable measuring success is explained by a series of independent variables, conditional on the fact that the unobserved variable exceeds the specified threshold. Adopting such a framework allows the researcher to correct for the problems of selection bias (Muthen and Jöreskog 1983; Bloom and Killingsworth 1985; King 1989a, ch.9; Little and Rubin 1987; Breen 1996).

Competing Research Designs

Having proposed the twofold research design employed in the present study, I now review the different research designs adopted in the existing literature. This allows me to stress the strength and pinpoint the weaknesses of each design. The most prominent research designs in the study of new parties are either case studies, studies of a class of new parties, or studies of new parties across time or space. The first two designs distinguish themselves by the fact that their unit of analysis is primarily the new political party. On the contrary, the other two designs focus either on temporal or spatial units. Though all four categories have some overlapping characteristics, and some problems concern more than one research design, I will treat them separately in the order in which I have listed them.

Case Studies

Case studies are in all likelihood the most prominent research designs in use for the study of new political parties. The existing literature is replete with monographs and articles in journals on a new party having appeared in a given polity.[7] Some contributions, which I will also consider under this heading, use several case studies to stress differences or similarities. Most case studies have a descriptive focus and attempt to illuminate the particularities of the

7. Müller-Rommel (1991, 205-211) presents an impressive bibliography of studies on small political parties in European countries. Since most new parties start as small parties, most entries concern new parties.

party under consideration. Because of this, they are valuable contributions to our knowledge on new political parties.[8] Consequently, the most important advantage of case studies is their capability to pinpoint important details that are, and, to a certain degree, need to be neglected in more general studies. Rebeaud (1987), Sainteny (1991), Hülsberg (1988), and Poguntke (1993), for example, present very detailed accounts of the formation of three Green parties. Similar accounts of parties on the extreme right figure in the studies by Lepzy (1989), Roth (1990a, 1990b), Betz (1994), and Ignazi (1994) and in the volumes edited by Mayer and Perrineau (1989) and Betz and Immerfall (1998).[9]

Although the main function of case studies is as tools for descriptions and illustrations, some authors attempt to explain the emergence and success of a party by using the case study approach. But these explanations have to rely heavily on counterfactual arguments. This is especially true when one considers the question of why new parties form. It is true by definition that when studying a single new political party, there is no variation in the variable that one tries to explain. As a result of this authors rely on counterfactual statements, arguing that the party would not have formed if certain conditions had not been fulfilled.[10] These arguments are rarely persuasive. Often, the crucial explanatory factors are heavily correlated with other variables, and it is hard to tell why other explanatory factors do not get the same attention. Thus, these kinds of explanations suffer from overdetermination and multicollinearity. In addition, the generalizability of these insights can legitimately be questioned on similar grounds.

When addressing the question of success, researchers using case studies often rely on a disaggregation of their unit of analysis. They study the success of the party either across time or across space, by looking at different elections or different spatial units. Adopting these strategies often leads to more interesting results, since variation appears in the dependent variable. While this is a step in the right direction, the problems of selection bias often escape the researcher's attention. Furthermore, the question again arises as to what degree the results are generalizable. Some insights might very well be dependent on the particular national context in which the party under consideration appears.

To address this dependence on the national context, several authors use a small number of case studies to highlight differences between a small number of new parties (for example, Kitschelt 1989; Harmel and Svasand 1997). These studies are of as much help as individual case studies for explaining

8. For example, see the informative case studies assembled in Müller-Rommel (1989).

9. In 1992 special issues of the *European Journal of Political Research* 22(1) and *Parliamentary Affairs* 45(3) contained also a series of case studies on right-wing parties.

10. A striking example for this tendency is the account Hülsberg (1988) gives of the German Greens' formation.

the formation of new parties. Again, there is no variation in the dependent variable and authors must rely extensively on counterfactual arguments. When looking at the success of the parties, these studies are at a comparative advantage, since the national context becomes an independent variable. So Kitschelt (1989), for example, explains the varying success of the two Green parties in Belgium and the one in Germany by the difference in the polarization of the environmental conflict.[11] Such an explanation can only be accounted for when different cases are considered. By this feature, such studies can offer more insights than isolated case studies. Their problem lies in the selection of the cases.[12] Geddes (1991), as well as King, Keohane, and Verba (1994), delivers a very powerful warning concerning the importance of this step in each research. Sometimes "the cases you choose affect the answers you get" (Geddes 1991). Consequently, this step must attract the special care of researchers engaging in comparative case studies. An additional problem with such a research design comes with the number of observations. When particularities of the national context appear as independent variables, such as, for example, the polarization of the environmental conflict, problems of collinearity and overdetermination reappear. With only a limited number of cases, each explanatory factor is likely to be highly correlated with other variables. The reader must let herself be convinced by the researcher's argument that some explanatory variables are more important than others. This problem, while prevalent in these studies, becomes even more apparent in studies of a class of new parties. Here, as we will see below, statistical tools find application which render these problems even more visible.

Studying a Class of New Parties

Since parties of certain classes often appear at roughly the same time in different countries, comparative studies are very prominent.[13] Authors study left-libertarian parties (Kitschelt 1988), new politics parties (Poguntke 1989), Green parties (Müller-Rommel 1993; Vialatte 1996), parties of the extreme right (Husbands 1981, 1988, 1992a, 1992b; Harmel, Svasand, and Gibson 1992; Betz 1994), or regionalist parties (Urwin 1983; De Winter 1995; De Winter and Türsan 1998). Since these parties are present in several countries, such studies allow meaningful comparisons of the different national contexts.

11. This is a very reductionist account of Kitschelt's (1989) explanation.

12. Beckwith (1990), for example, criticizes the case selection in Kitschelt's (1989) work. He defends his selection very briefly (Kitschelt 1989, 6f), without going into details about the possible problems it might cause.

13. Müller-Rommel (1993, 209f) again provides an important bibliography of cross-national studies on different classes of small parties.

They thereby become extensions of the previous category of research designs, namely the category of case studies.

The focus on a class of new parties again leads to the absence of variation in the formation variable. Since new parties of a given class are the units of analysis, by definition all of them have formed.[14] A way to address the question of formation, when studying a class of new parties, consists of comparing the timing of the emergence. Harmel, Svasand, and Gibson (1992), for example, look at the emergence of parties at the extreme right and tie their explanation to the timing of the formation and the links these parties have to previous extreme-right organizations. A similar idea appears in Müller-Rommel's (1993, 87ff) book, when he compares the different phases of development among Green parties. But this type of approach again comes very close to the next research design, namely the study of new parties across time, so that I will delay its discussion.

Concerning the explanation of the success of new parties of a particular class, this research design is quite advantageous. Since a particular class of parties is under scrutiny, the issues that they address are very similar across countries. Furthermore, there is often a considerable amount of variation in the success of new parties of a given class. But the fact that these parties are part of a self-selected sample causes important problems. This largely seems to explain why institutional factors like the electoral system are often of minor importance in explaining the success of the new parties (for example, Müller-Rommel 1990), despite strong theoretical foundations for such a contention. These findings are not surprising if one considers them in the context of self-selected samples. The impact of the electoral system on the success of new parties can only adequately be assessed when taking into account the fact that the electoral system has an important role in the initial decision to form a new party. Using this approach leads to empirical results much more in line with the theoretical arguments of the literature on electoral systems and the implications of my model. I will illustrate this in more detail in the empirical chapters of this study.

Studying a class of new parties leads to an additional problem, which is the small number of observations. New parties of a given class often emerge in small numbers. Since most studies in this category use statistical analyses, the problem of a small number of cases becomes very visible. Most researchers refrain from controlling relationships for other variables, and frequently focus on bivariate relations. These relationships often suffer from spuriousness,

14. Here I exclude studies of a class of new parties that use countries as units of analysis. In that case one would have variation in the formation variable, since some countries might not have a party of a certain class. I will discuss these studies below, when reviewing research designs that look at new parties across space.

since other variables have a much stronger influence on the success of new parties. But, without controlling for these other explanatory factors, these remain hidden from both the researcher and the reader. Furthermore, with a small sample it is very likely that several independent variables covary heavily, making it difficult to distinguish the independent effects. Researchers attempt to bypass the problem by adopting classification schemes (Kitschelt 1988) or using boolean algebra (Müller-Rommel 1993, 191ff) proposed by Ragin (1987). Such attempts serve as only partial solutions to the problems at hand as King, Keohane, and Verba (1994) convincingly argue.

Studying New Parties across Space

Already in the previous research design, a certain tension pushes the researcher to the adoption of another unit of analysis than the new political party. Such a change in the unit of analysis almost inevitably leads to a solution of one of the crucial problems in empirical studies of new parties. By using countries as units of analysis, authors automatically introduce variation in the variable that measures the formation of parties. For example, Kitschelt (1988), in his study of left-libertarian parties, looks at a series of countries and tries to explain why some of them experienced the emergence of successful new parties of this type, while others did not.[15] Such a change in the unit of analysis leads to viable research designs for the study of the emergence of new parties. Hence, Harmel and Robertson (1985) study the formation of new political parties in a series of countries by looking at how many new competitors appeared in each country under observation. This provides interesting insights into the emergence of new parties. A minor problem with this type of research design stems from the type of dependent variable that is used. More precisely, the number of new political parties in a given country is obviously a count. To use such data as dependent variable does not cause any problems, as long as the researcher considers the particular way in which they have been generated.[16] As discussed above, solutions exist to this methodological problem but have not found sufficient attention in the literature so far.

15. While such a research design is already a great leap forward, the problem of combining both the formation and success of a new party in a single variable is problematic (Kitschelt 1988). First, the absence of a new party is qualitatively different from the presence of a weak, unsuccessful one. Second, if some variables only influence the success of new parties, while others explain both the formation and the success, the latter will be thought more important under certain circumstances.

16. Harmel and Robertson (1985) do not directly use the number of new parties as an independent variable. Instead they classify each country in one of two classes, according to the number of new parties. Such an approach inevitably leads to a loss of information that is contained in the data at hand.

While a research design that looks at new parties across space solves the first problem, it does nothing to remove the second problem concerning selection bias. In one sense it is even aggravated by the addition of another new problem to the existing one. The question arises as to what one does with countries where no new parties appeared. One solution is simply to discard the countries where no new parties emerged. In this case, the researcher is back in the previous research design, where the unit of analysis is the new political party. Another solution is to assume that the dependent variable, which measures the success of the new party, is equal to zero in countries where no new competitor appeared. Such an assumption implies that there is no difference between a country with no new party and a country where a new party gets almost no votes. But a country without a new party is qualitatively different from a country with an extremely weak new party. This clearly appears in the implications of my theoretical model, where some variables contribute to the explanation of the emergence of a new party, but should be unrelated to its subsequent success. It is also implicit in all contributions to the literature, which employ different variables for explaining the emergence and the success of new parties (e.g., Harmel and Robertson 1985).

Similarly, imposing thresholds for classifying new political parties into successful and unsuccessful ones (Kitschelt 1988) does not solve the problem. Equating a country with a weak new party to a country with no new party is problematic, since the formation and the success involve different actors. Most often, voters are themselves responsible for the little success a new party has; but to attribute the decision to form a new party to the same actors is quite problematic.

The very fact that a research design focusing on new parties across space leads to a sample which also includes observations without new parties allows us to directly address the issue of selection bias. More precisely, a researcher could attempt to simultaneously explain the formation of new parties, and, conditional on the formation, propose a model to explain the success of the new parties that appeared.[17] Since the unit of observation is the country, it is clear that whenever more than one new party appears on the electoral scene this research design is of little help. A researcher might explain the total vote for new parties at a given election, or even aggregate over both parties and elections when focusing on certain time periods. But neither of these solutions is convincing. Probably for this same reason, such a research design, where the researcher simultaneously explains the formation and the success of new parties, has, to my knowledge, never found application. Consequently, while looking at new parties across space is a viable research design with which to

17. Such models can be estimated both in the traditional regression framework (Achen 1986, ch. 5) or in the maximum-likelihood approach (King 1989a, ch. 9).

study the emergence of new parties, explaining the success of these parties in the same framework is more difficult.

Studying New Parties across Time

As is the case with the previous research design, studying new parties across time is a viable solution for the first research design problem. By looking at different time points, a researcher automatically introduces variation into the variable which measures the formation of new parties. Authors often use election-years as natural focus points. Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984, ch.7), for example, study the factors that explain whether there are third-party candidates competing in presidential elections in the United States. Such a research question requires that one use presidential elections as units of analysis and determines whether there were "nationally prestigious third-party candidates" running (Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus 1984, 193). Other authors adopt similar research strategies to look at challenges from new parties in particular countries (for example, Fisher 1974; Pinard 1967, 1973, 1975; Marsh 1992; Eagles and Erfle 1993). The use of election years as units of analysis evidently solves the first problem of research designs in the study of new parties. A minor problem might appear with the type of dependent variable that one encounters. In some polities, new parties emerge so frequently that several may appear at the same election. The dependent variable is, therefore, a count of new parties instead of a dichotomy as in Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984).

Nonetheless, the problem of selection bias is still present and only few authors have addressed it convincingly. Certainly, Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984, 152) propose the most elegant solution. When trying to explain the vote for third-party candidates, they argue that an important factor is the percentage of voters that actually could vote for a third-party candidate. But this variable is hardly a completely exogenous variable, and the authors convincingly make the point that "it is likely that the causes of third-party support omitted from the vote equation are associated with the omitted causes of these candidates appearing on the ballot" (Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus 1984, 152). Consequently, they propose a model where they explain simultaneously the presence of third-party candidates and their success. The first variable, while being exogenous, also helps to explain the second dependent variable.[18] This is a viable solution, since they want to explain the vote for third-party candidates. In the context of explaining the success of new parties, however, this research design becomes problematic. Often, at a given election in a certain country, not one, but several new parties appear for the first time on the electoral scene. Consequently, explaining the success of individual parties is not possible in a research design that uses elections as units of analysis. The only thing one could do in such a framework is to explain the total vote for new parties combined, but not for particular ones.

18. More precisely, and in technical terms, they propose a two-stage estimation procedure. Initially, the percentage of voters being able to vote for third-party candidates is regressed on several explanatory variables. The predicted values of this first regression then figure as independent variable in the equation that attempts to explain the success of third-party candidates.

Conclusion

The discussion of research designs used in the empirical literature to study the formation and success of new parties allows two general conclusions. First, though the study of these two questions seems quite simple, two problems are important to consider. These two problems concern the adequate unit of analysis with which to study the formation of new parties, and the problems of selection bias in the study of the new parties' success. While the first problem is relatively minor, the second is at the source of some puzzles that persist in the literature on new political parties. These have persisted largely because researchers have somewhat neglected the strategic context in which the emergence of new parties takes place. This neglect also makes it harder to see the importance of the selection bias problem, since its substantive foundation is grounded in the idea that the new party emerges as a result of an intentional decision.

Second, while some research designs address one of these problems, almost none can propose solutions to both problems simultaneously. Only one empirical study comes close to solving both problems, but it achieves this by focusing on the vote for third parties in general. Since the present study has a comparative focus and is interested in the success of particular new political parties, this research design is only of little help. In this chapter, therefore, I proposed a framework composed of two research designs. This combination of two research designs yields a framework that allows the study of both the formation and the success of new political parties. The link between the two research designs consists of variables that influence the decision to form a new party. In the first research design these variables determine the likelihood of new parties appearing. In the second, they influence the same likelihood, but only enter indirectly through the selection mechanism. While it would be preferable to have a single common research design, this is feasible only at the cost of changing the research question. I would have to focus on the electoral success of new parties in general, instead of looking at them individually. Only by adopting research designs with different units of analysis can the two research questions prevalent in the study of new parties be seriously addressed.

This combination of two research designs is certainly not ideal, and can be the subject of critiques. As I argued, however, the designs that would allow us to simultaneously address the two research questions would force me to change part of one question. Consequently, there exists a tradeoff between two possible research strategies. Focusing on the two initial research questions comes at the cost of not having a unified research design. Conversely, the use of a unified research design comes at the cost of altering slightly the question of explaining the success of new parties. Faced with this tradeoff, I opted for the first strategy. Thus, an interesting extension of the work I will present below consists of adopting the second strategy and comparing its results to those reported in chapters 5 and 6.

As the discussion of competing research designs illustrated, these often fall short of several requirements for an adequate design. Some designs have considerable advantages, but at the same time accepting them has serious drawbacks. Research designs, which use the new political party as their unit of analysis, have the advantage of being able to look at the success of the new competitors. However, the manner in which most of these analyses have been carried out is problematic, since the problem of self-selection has not been addressed. In addition, this type of research design is of limited use when a researcher wants to study the formation of new parties. Here the use of the new party as unit of analysis leads to the absence of variation in the dependent variable. The solution to this second problem is the selection of a different unit of analysis. Viable alternatives to this are studies that employ either countries or time points as units of analysis. Then one automatically introduces variation in the dependent variable, which measures the emergence of new parties.

This is the route chosen by my research design. For the study of formation the use of national elections as units of observation automatically introduces variation in the dependent variable, namely the number of new parties. By doing so, and covering elections both across time and space, the design fruitfully combines the advantages of studies of new parties across time and across space. But this design is only useful for the study of the emergence of new parties and has to be supplemented by an additional design allowing a meaningful study of the initial success of new parties. For this part of the research design I draw on the same tradition of studying new parties across time and space, but avoid the pitfalls of focusing only on newcomers and of failing to distinguish between emergence and success. The research design proposed achieves this by modeling directly the selection process that makes out of the set of new parties a self-selected sample. By doing so, the inherent biases when employing traditional statistical tools can be corrected.

CHAPTER 5

The Emergence of New Parties

The model presented in chapter 3 suggests a series of implications that link several theoretical variables with the likelihood of party formation. Provided that we find appropriate measures for these theoretical variables, hypotheses can be derived and empirically tested. The present chapter proposes empirical tests of such hypotheses. In doing so, however, we have to be careful to employ an adequate research design, as the discussion in chapter 4 suggested. The first part of the research design employed in this study focuses on the explanation of variation in party formation from one national election to the other. Consequently, it also suggests a particular type of dataset that is needed to empirically test the various hypotheses.

I first present and discuss in some detail the dataset used in my empirical tests in this chapter and chapter 6, which deals with the initial electoral success of new parties. The dataset covers new political parties that have presented candidates for the first time at national elections in 22 Western democracies over the postwar period. Figure 1.1 in chapter 1 offered a first glimpse at this dataset. After the discussion of this dataset I summarize the implications to be tested in this chapter. A recurrent and, in many regards, difficult notion is the credibility of a weak new challenger, which derives from my theoretical framework. It influences several of the relationships that link theoretical variables to the expected number of new political parties. I propose a way to measure this credibility, which finds application in the empirical tests that follow. These tests first focus on individual implications, before I propose analyses that respect their interdependence. A summary of the results follows in the conclusion.

Data on New Political Parties in Western Democracies

The appropriate research design for testing my various theoretically derived implications on the emergence of new parties suggests the use of a dataset employing as unit of observation the national election. For each such time point we need a count of new parties that present for the first time candidates for a national elected office. Given the nature of the implications I wish to test,

TABLE 5.1. Countries and elections studied

country	first election after World War II	election years considered for new parties	number of elections
Australia	1946	1949-1990	18
Austria	1945	1949-1990	13
Belgium	1946	1949-1991	15
Canada	1945	1949-1988	14
Denmark	1945	1947-1990	19
Finland	1948	1951-1991	12
France	1946	1951-1988	11
Germany	1949	1953-1990	11
Great Britain	1945	1950-1987	12
Greece	1974	1977-1990	6
Iceland	1946	1949-1991	14
Ireland	1948	1951-1989	13
Italy	1948	1953-1987	9
Luxembourg	1945	1948-1989	10
Netherlands	1946	1948-1989	13
New Zealand	1946	1949-1990	15
Norway	1945	1949-1989	11
Portugal	1976	1979-1991	6
Spain	1977	1979-1989	4
Sweden	1948	1952-1991	14
Switzerland	1947	1951-1991	11
United States	1948	1952-1988	10
total			261

the data should comprise both cross-national differences and variations across time.

Harmel and Robertson (1985) employ such a dataset in their study on party formation. Their dataset covers 19 democracies and comprises 233 new parties over a time span of 20 years. Their number includes all four types of new organizations that I discussed in chapter 2. Almost half of their 233 parties have formed naturally and correspond to my category of genuinely new parties. More than a third appeared as the result of a fission, while the remaining parties are either mergers or "reorganizations of former parties." I will exclude these two latter categories from the analyses in the subsequent sections, for the reasons discussed above.

The dataset for the present study is based on the postwar elections in 22 Western democracies.[1] Table 5.1 shows the list of countries and elections considered. The election immediately following the end of World War II (respectively the first democratic national election in the case of new democracies) is excluded for each country. Most party systems have undergone serious reorganizations in the aftermath of World War II. In order to have an identical base for all countries, I chose the second election after July 1945 as the starting point for my empirical analysis. Consequently, new parties are those formations that presented candidates for the first time in a democratic election after

1. Precise definitions of the dataset and the variables figure in the appendix.

the first one of the postwar period. Obviously, even though considerable time has been spent on collecting information on new parties in the countries studied, the collection is far from complete. Attempting to collect information on all new parties ever formed in Western democracies is an almost impossible task. Often even official election reports fail to give exact returns for all parties. The vote tallies of small parties most often appear collapsed into the category "others." Stöss (1975, 255) notes that even in Germany "fissions . . . often are collapsed in electoral statistics and analyses into the 'others' category." (my translation).[2] Consequently, my dataset is based completely on secondary sources. Employing an identical set of sources across time and space I identify for each election the parties that present for the first time candidates.[3] As in Harmel and Robertson's (1985) study, an important number of new political parties appeared in the 261 elections under consideration. To allow comparisons, it is useful to quickly present all types of parties that emerged in elections since the end of World War II.

Genuinely new parties are the most numerous ones; this finds support in Harmel and Robertson's (1985) dataset. Figure 5.1 shows their increasing frequency over the four decades under consideration. While not completely absent in the fifties, their number is small compared to the spur of genuinely new parties in the middle of the sixties (33 for the whole decade) and especially at the end of the seventies (71 for the entire decade). The eighties show another increase, leading to 94 genuinely new parties in 10 years. This trend also finds reflection in the average number of new parties per election depicted in figure 5.1 as a line.

Figure 5.2 shows the number of elections with given numbers of genuinely new parties. In more than half of the 261 elections under consideration, no genuinely new party made its debut on the electoral scene. But in more than a quarter of all elections, one new party appeared, while in more than a tenth of the cases, two parties made their entrance. Elections with more than two genuinely new parties are rare, but it is worth noting that in one election nine new parties competed for votes.[4] This leads to an average of almost one genuinely new party per election.[5]

The second category in my classification of new parties consists of fissions that have split from an existing party. These are, as Harmel and Robertson

2. In his detailed study on Dutch parties, Lucardie (1996, 1) notes that 257 new parties have attempted to win seats in parliament since 1917. His dataset relies, however, on a painstaking data collection, which would not be possible for all countries under consideration given the state of the official elections reports.

3. More details on the data collection procedure appear in the appendix.

4. This election took place in Spain in 1986.

5. The exact average is 0.885 for 231 genuinely new parties in 261 elections.

Fig. 5.1. Number of genuinely new parties per election year

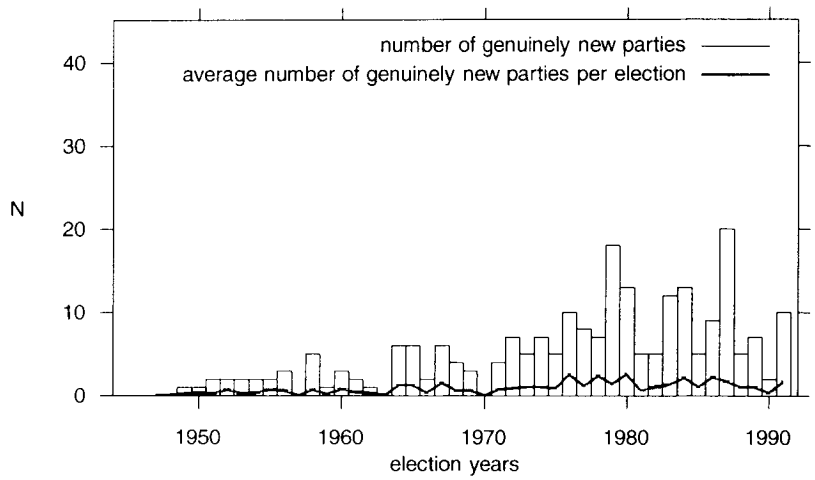


Fig. 5.2. Number of elections with genuinely new parties

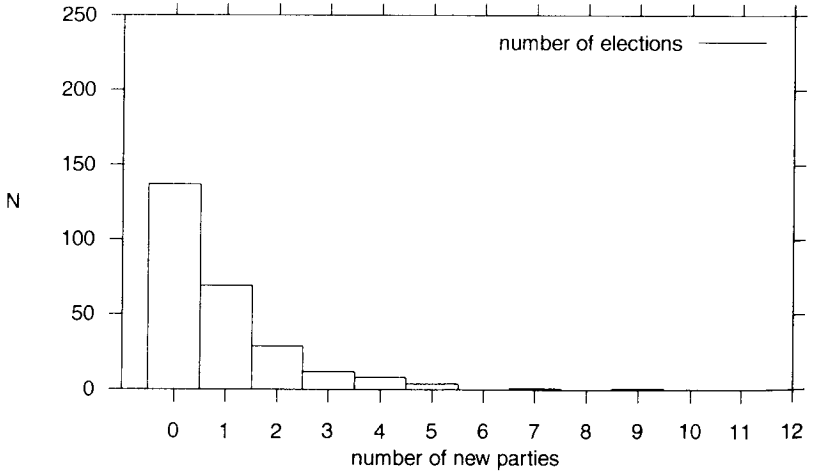
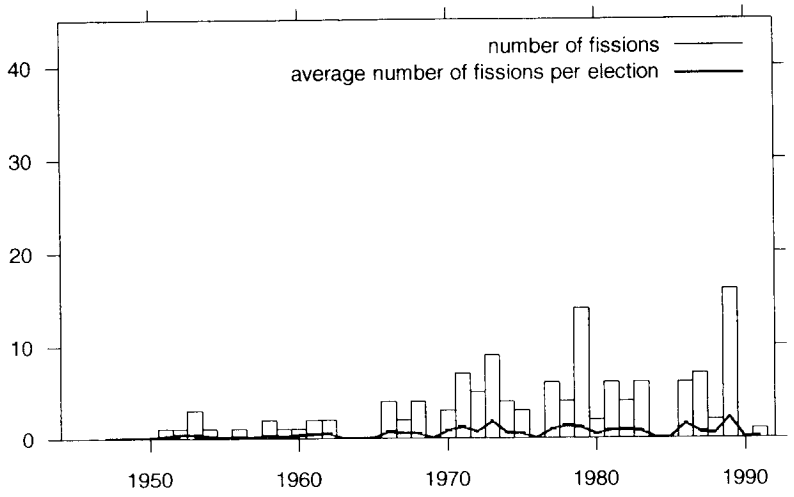


Fig. 5.3. Number of fissions per election year



(1985) note, less numerous. Also, as figure 5.3 illustrates, their appearance over time is different from genuinely new parties. While the fifties and the sixties saw very few fissions occurring, the latter became popular in the seventies and slightly less so in the eighties.[6] This different trend also transpires in the average number of fissions per election year.

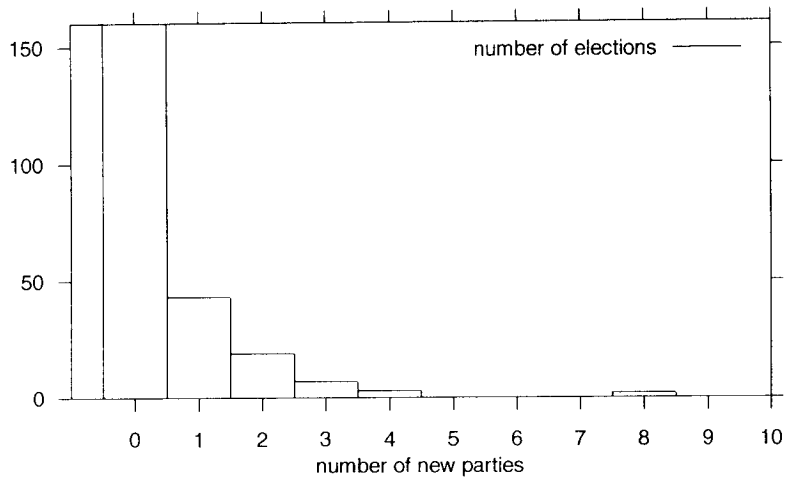
The smaller number of fissions also becomes apparent in figure 5.4. More than two-thirds of all elections take place without a new party having split from an existing one. In some elections, one, two, or even three fissions compete for the first time. On two occasions eight fissions entered the electoral scene together.[7]

The remaining two categories of new parties, namely mergers and electoral alliances, which are excluded from the subsequent analyses, are less frequent. Mergers occur occasionally over the 40 years of observation. They were most numerous in the seventies, followed by the eighties and the sixties. Con-

6. The respective numbers for the four decades are 10 (1950-1959), 15 (1960-1969), 55 (1970-1979), and 50 (1980-1989). I note here that fissions exclude parties that have separated along regional and territorial lines. Consequently, parties that appeared for instance in Belgium through the division of existing parties are not included here. More details on this coding figure in the appendix.

7. The two occasions are the 1979 election in Great Britain and the 1986 election in Spain. On average 0.498 fissions appeared in an election, which corresponds to 130 parties.

Fig. 5.4. Number of elections with fissions



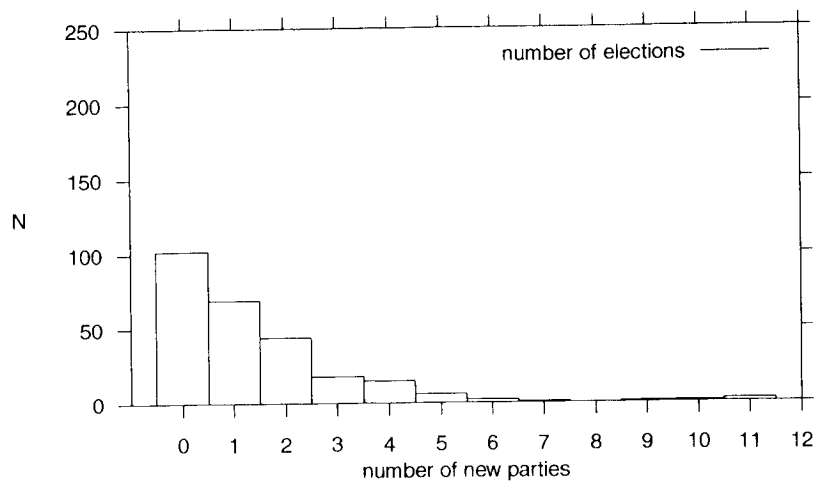
sequently, it is no surprise to note that in most elections no new mergers are present.[8] In less than 30 elections, at least one merger appeared on the electoral scene. The biggest number appeared in the 1979 election in Spain, when four new parties resulting from mergers made their electoral debut. Electoral alliances are even less numerous than mergers. They are also often precursors of the latter, as discussed above. Electoral alliances appear regularly, but in small numbers. A certain increase is observable in the late eighties. But even considering this, most elections take place without new electoral alliances. At most, two such formations appear at the same election, and a large majority of them are just solitary appearances.

After this quick tour through the universe of all forms of new political parties, I will concentrate on genuinely new parties and those that resulted from a fission in an existing party. As I have argued above, only these two types of new parties imply a significant change in the competitive situation faced by established parties. Since I will not distinguish genuinely new parties from fissions in the empirical analyses that follow,[9] it is useful to present the

8. Mair (1990) finds 18 mergers compared to 34 fissions in his sample. However, he excludes France, Greece, Portugal, and Spain when looking at such new parties in the period between 1945 and 1987.

9. I also carried out the empirical analyses presented below for each of the two types

Fig. 5.5. Number of elections with fissions or genuinely new parties



emergence of these two types of new parties together.[10] Figure 1.1 in chapter 1 illustrates the increasing frequency of these new parties. Throughout the fifties and sixties new parties appeared consistently, but the seventies and the eighties saw real bursts of new competitors. In this sense, the electoral year of 1979 is quite exceptional with more than 30 new parties. Overall, however, the eighties witnessed the biggest number of new actors on the electoral scene. This also appears clearly in the average number of new parties per election depicted in figure 1.1. Figure 5.5 shows in addition that in a majority of all elections at least one new party emerged as a new competitor. On several occasions, more than one new party appeared, the maximum number of new appearances being eleven.

While figures 1.1 and 5.5 give us some ideas about the distribution of new political parties across time and any concentration on particular elections, they fail to give us any indication about the cross-national variation. Table 5.2 corrects this by reporting the total number of new parties that have appeared in a given country in the elections under consideration. It also reports the average

of party separately. Any differences between the overall results presented below and such additional analyses are duly noted. In addition, these results appear on the author's website: http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~simonhug/newparty/.

10. From now on I will use the term "new party" to cover both genuinely new parties and fissions. Only if I specifically refer to a party of particular type will I use the more precise term.

TABLE 5.2. New parties in 22 democracies

country	total number of new parties	mean number of new parties	number of elections
Australia	12	0.67	18
Austria	9	0.69	13
Belgium	16	1.07	15
Canada	16	1.14	14
Denmark	14	0.74	19
Finland	12	1.00	12
France	24	2.18	11
Germany	21	1.91	11
Great Britain	29	2.42	12
Greece	15	2.50	6
Iceland	16	1.14	14
Ireland	16	1.23	13
Italy	20	2.22	9
Luxembourg	11	1.10	10
Netherlands	16	1.23	13
New Zealand	7	0.47	15
Norway	10	0.91	11
Portugal	11	1.83	6
Spain	30	7.50	4
Sweden	7	0.50	14
Switzerland	14	1.27	11
United States	35	3.50	10
total	361	1.38	261

number of new parties per election for each country. This average number varies from a low 0.47 in New Zealand to an extremely high 7.5 in Spain. The theoretically derived implications should account for this variation as well as for the temporal variation of party formation discussed above.

Implications, Hypotheses, and the Notion of Credibility

The implications derived from my theoretical model relate the expected likelihood of new political parties to a set of independent variables. These variables derive directly from the theoretical model. Consequently, a primary task of my empirical research is to operationalize these variables and find adequate measures for them. In most other empirical research in this field, authors start from broad concepts like constraints, the political system, the economic system, etc.,[11] which they measure by a series of indicators. The theoretical underpinnings of these concepts, and how and why they relate to the emergence of new parties, are often neglected or introduced in retrospect.

In my empirical undertaking I will rely heavily on previous research efforts, but will integrate the proposed indicators more closely into my theoretical framework. The idea is to give particular meanings to these indicators,

11. For example, Harmel and Robertson (1985) use the categories of political, social and economic variables, while Müller-Rommel (1993) uses six categories to explain the success of Green parties.

TABLE 5.3. implications

implication	direction of relationship if credible	if non-credible
1 new issues	+	+
2 formation costs	-	0
3 benefits of high demand	+	+
4 costs of electoral fight	+	0
5 benefits of weak challenger	+	0

by linking them to my theoretical variables. By doing so, I can rely on previous research efforts and more easily justify the selection of my indicators. The major problem in this undertaking is that my theoretical model captures the interaction between two actors, namely an established party and a potential new party. The empirical tests, however, rely on data at the level of election years, for reasons discussed in the previous chapter. Several characteristics of a given political system and country influence the theoretical variables of my model. But some of them can only serve as proxy for measures which operate at the level of particular established and potential new parties. Consequently, the empirical tests will focus on those characteristics that describe the general political environment in which new parties form.

I will first study separately the theoretical implications which figure in table 5.3. Doing so allows me to establish links with the substantive literature, which has dealt with similar explanatory factors. Table 5.4 lists for each theoretical variable the explanatory factors I employ. Most of these appear prominently in the literature. Justifications for their use appear in the subsequent sections, where I deal with each implication separately. This table also shows that I collapse the tests of two implications. Table 5.3 suggests that the effects of both the costs of an electoral fight and the benefits of a weak challenger display an identical pattern. In addition, as I argue more thoroughly below, these two theoretical variables are largely two sides of the same coin. Variables that affect the costs of an electoral fight are likely to be the same as those that affect the benefits of a weak new challenger. For instance, a high electoral hurdle like the German 5 percent *Sperrklausel* decreases the costs established parties face in fighting potential newcomers. At the same time such a high threshold is likely to decrease the benefits a weak challenger can expect from competing in an election. Consequently, I will use the same variables to measure these two theoretical concepts and proceed to a joint test.

As mentioned, all the implications to be tested relate the likelihood of new political parties to my theoretical variables. Sometimes, however, the relationships vary according to an additional factor, as shown in table 5.3 and illustrated graphically in figure 3.4. If weak potential new parties encounter serious difficulties in credibly threatening to form a new party, some relationships should, according to the model, either change or fail to materialize at

TABLE 5.4. Theoretical variables and operationalizations

	theoretical variable	empirical variables
1	New issues	degree of pluralism (plural, semiplural)
		linguistic homogeneity
		religious homogeneity
		ethnic fragmentation
		size of population
		economic growth
		unemployment rate
2	Formation costs	public party financing
		ballot access: petition signatures requirement
		ballot access: electoral deposit
3	Benefits from high demands	degree of centralization (taxes)
		government change in previous inter-election period
		majority government
		number of parties in government
		provisions for referendums
4	Cost of electoral fight	threshold of exclusion
5	Benefits for weak challenger	threshold of representation
		federalism
		number of parties in government
		number of governments (per decade)

all. The credibility of a weak new challenger is, however, only a shortcut for a simple criterion deriving from my theoretical model. More precisely, I label a weak new challenger credible provided it is better off forming a new party after its demand was rejected, rather than merely backing down from its demands. In the terminology of the theoretical chapter, this depends on the benefits and costs a weak contender expects from forming a new party. When the former exceed the latter a weak challenger is credible, and if not its challenge fails to be credible.

Consequently, the indicator whether a weak potential new party is credible has to rely on the measures of both the benefits of the weak new party and the formation costs. To measure the formation costs I employ three pieces of information (Table 5.4). The first two measure the difficulty of getting access to the ballot (Harmel and Robertson 1985). Among them, the electoral deposit is the amount a party must pay to place a candidate on the ballot. I express this monetary amount as a fraction of the GDP per capita to allow for meaningful comparisons across time and space.[12] Similarly, in some countries, a certain number of signatures is required to gain access to the ballot. This measure reflects the proportion of the total electorate in a given country that has to provide a signature for a candidate to qualify for the ballot. Again, this standardization permits comparisons across time and space. The third variable indicates whether or not a country finances its political parties from public funds. If that is the case, the formation costs are likely to be smaller.

The benefits of a weak new party depend very much on the electoral system and its thresholds (Table 5.4). I employ the two best-known thresholds, namely the thresholds of representation and of exclusion. They measure, respectively, the minimal vote share with which a party might win a seat and the vote share with which a party is assured of winning a seat. The benefits of a weak party decrease as these thresholds become more important. Weak new parties are also likely to benefit more strongly in federal systems. As Chandler and Chandler (1987) convincingly argue, federal polities increase the points of access for new parties and thus increase the benefits that they may obtain through political offices. In addition, weak new parties are likely to get more benefits when the number of parties in government is important and when governments change before new elections. With an important number of parties in government, the likelihood of participating in a government coalition increases, while frequent government changes result in a similar outcome.

On the basis of these eight measures, I construct a summary indicator.[13] The cutoff point that distinguishes between situations where a weak new party is credible and those where it is not is largely arbitrary. The criterion adopted here is that in one fifth of all elections a weak new party will not be credible. Obviously, the empirical results vary as a function of this cutoff point, but surprisingly only the implications concerning the benefits of the weak new party and the formation costs undergo noticeable changes. I discuss these changes when they are relevant for the findings reported below. In table 5.5, all elections are classified according to whether weak new parties are credible or not, based on the criteria outlined.

Using this admittedly crude measure we can begin testing the different implications of the theoretical model. In order to get sufficient confidence into the dataset used here, I will present for each implication some simple bivariate relationships. These analyses attempt to replicate results discussed in the literature on new political parties. In most cases I am able to reproduce these results with my dataset. This lends some additional credibility to the variables used. After these simple analyses I present tests of the implications, based on the theoretical model. These individual tests of implications give a first hint at the usefulness of the theoretical model. Following the individual tests we shall present analyses which test jointly all the implications for the emergence of new political parties.

New Issues

The first implication of the theoretical model relates the importance of new issues with the emergence of new parties. The general idea of the implication

12. A more detailed discussion of this and the other measures appears below.

13. This indicator is the sum of the standardized variables, which were adequately signed. I discuss this construction in more detail in the appendix.

TABLE 5.5. Elections with credible and non-credible weak challengers

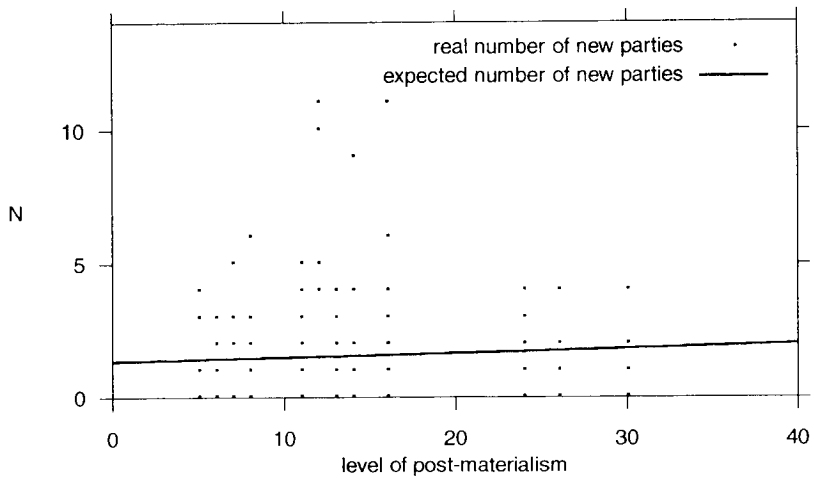
country	credible	non-credible
Australia	1951-1990	
Austria	1949-1990	
Belgium	1949-1991	
Canada	1962-1965, 1984-1988	1949-1958, 1968-1980
Denmark	1947-1990	
Finland	1951-1966, 1975-1991	1970-1972
France	1951-1958, 1973-1988	1962-1968
Germany	1953-1990	
Great Britain	1974(1)-1987	1950-1970
Greece	1977-1990	
Iceland	1949-1959	1963-1987
Ireland	1951-1961,1977-1989	1965-1973
Italy	1953-1987	
Luxembourg	1951-1989	1948
Netherlands	1948, 1956-1986	1952, 1989
New Zealand		1949-1990
Norway	1949-1989	
Portugal	1979-1991	
Spain	1982-1989	
Sweden	1952-1991	
Switzerland	1951-1991	
United States	1960-1988	1952-1956
total number of elections	209	52

is that new parties should be more frequent when new issues become more important, and this should be independent of whether or not weak new parties are credible. This implication is hardly surprising, and indeed finds support in most of the literature on new political parties (Hauss and Rayside 1978, 36f; Harmel and Robertson 1985; Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus 1984, 43f; Kitschelt 1988, 219; Rüdig 1990; Müller-Rommel 1993, 104ff). However, problems arise with regard to finding adequate measures of the importance of new issues. If the focus is on a particular class of parties, for instance Green or right-wing parties, the task is made slightly easier. In the study of Green parties, Kitschelt (1988) uses, for instance, the importance of the conflict over nuclear energy. Müller-Rommel (1993) employs the strength of post-materialism in a given country as indicator. Similarly, studies on new parties on the extreme right often use measurements of immigration problems (Mayer and Perrineau 1989).

Figure 5.6 depicts the relationship between the number of new political parties per election and the level of postmaterialism.[14] Not surprisingly the

14. This analysis uses data presented in Müller-Rommel (1993). Excluded from this analysis are Australia, Canada, Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Portugal and the United States, due to missing data. In addition one has to note that this indicator only varies across space, and not across time. A comparison across time would be possible for most European countries, but only for the period starting in 1970. At that point in time, Eurobarometer survey series started to ask questions about value preferences.

Fig. 5.6. Post-materialism and the emergence of new political parties

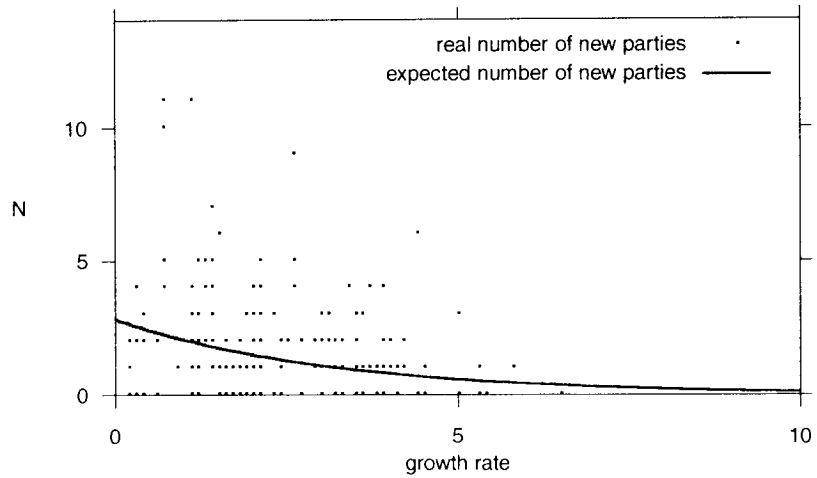


relationship is very weak, though slightly positive.[15] This result confirms the finding of Harmel and Robertson (1985, 516) of no relationship between the formation of new parties and post-materialism. This is hardly surprising, since post-materialism should only favor one type of new party, namely Green parties. But in our dataset a whole set of parties appears, which have nothing to do with post-material values. Nevertheless, the discussion of the Dutch Green party in chapter 2 suggested that even a country with a high level of post-materialism may fail to see a quick emergence of a Green party. Other intervening variables might account for this result. But obviously, univarite analyses cannot account for such a mediating factor. Hence, it fails to surprise that Harmel and Robertson (1985, 516) also do not find a relationship between the level of post-materialism and the emergence of a Green party.

When looking at new parties in a global manner, measuring the importance of new issues becomes more difficult. Harmel and Robertson (1985) provide a series of proxy variables. They use the size of the country, whether the society is plural, heterogeneous, sectionalized, with high income inequality and high

15. A simple bivariate negative binomial event-count model finds the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.29 (0.26), post-materialism 0.01 (0.02) and α 0.84 (0.17) $n = 172$. I used this analysis, as well as the subsequent ones, to calculate the expected number of new parties as a function of the independent variable. This expected number appears as a curved line in each figure.

Fig. 5.7. Growth rate and the emergence of new political parties



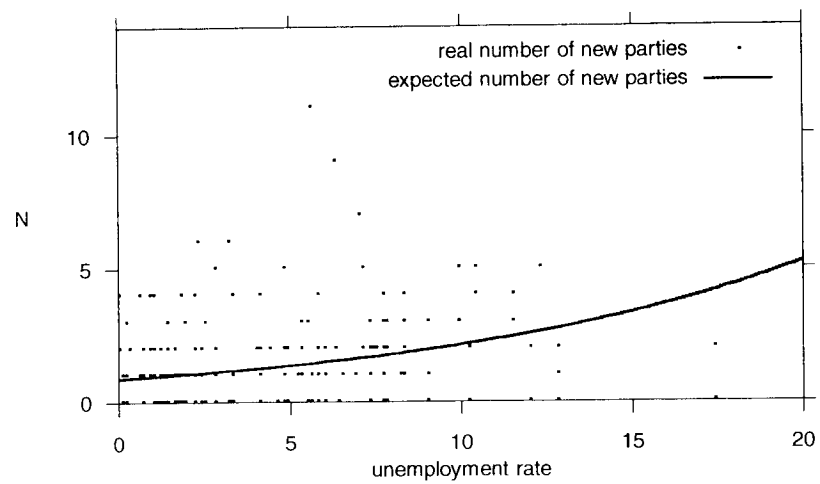
levels of post-materialism. Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984, 134-138) add economic measures, as do Kitschelt (1989), Eagles and Erfle (1993), and Müller-Rommel (1993, 107f, 1996).

These general measures taken individually also relate in my dataset with the emergence of new parties. Figure 5.7 shows a rather impressive relationship between the number of new parties in an election and the growth rate of that year. High growth rates considerably diminish the likelihood of party formation.[16] This result rejoins similar findings concerning general economic conditions by Fisher (1974) and Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984). Müller-Rommel (1996), however, fails to find any relationship between growth rates and the emergence of successful Green or extreme right parties.

Another economic indicator often related to the emergence of new political parties is unemployment. Müller-Rommel (1996) finds a positive relationship between the unemployment rate and the emergence of successful Green parties, but no relationship between the same rate and the formation of successful extreme right parties. In my dataset this same relationship is rather strong (Figure 5.8). As the unemployment rate increases, the likelihood of new parties steadily increases.[17]

16. Lane, McKay, and Newton (1991, 60) provide four figures for the growth of real GDP per capita. I have taken their figure for 1960-68 to cover all years before 1968, and their figure for 1979-85 for all elections after 1979. Between these years, I used the two other figures they provide. The relationship depicted in figure 5.7 stems from the results of a negative binomial regression with the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 1.04 (0.14), growth rate -0.32 (0.06) and α 0.63 (0.12) $n = 261$.

Fig. 5.8. Unemployment and the emergence of new political parties

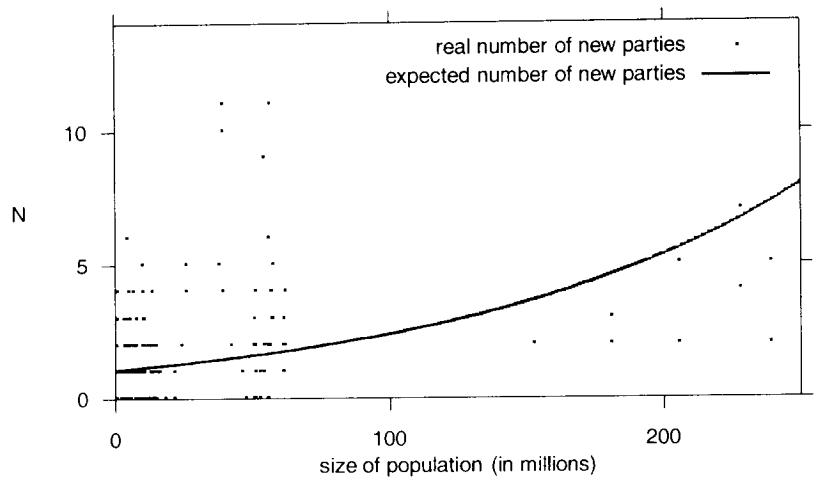


Harmel and Robertson (1985, 502) argue that countries with a large population are more likely to see new parties appear. The reasoning behind this hypothesis is that in large countries it is more likely that different population groups seek representation through specific political parties. Hence, new parties might be able to mobilize unrepresented groups. In my dataset a rather strong relationship between the size of the population and the emergence of new parties appears (Figure 5.9).[18] This rejoins Harmel and Robertson's (1985,

17. The unemployment data that Lane, McKay, and Newton (1991, 60) present cover five years. I have used their 1960 figure for all elections before 1965, and their 1970 figure for elections between 1965 and 1972. Their 1975 figure covers the years between 1972 and 1977, the 1980 data the period between 1977 and 1982, while their 1985 figure covers the remaining elections. I document interpolations used to complete the data in the appendix. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept -0.15 (0.11), unemployment rate 0.09 (0.02) and α 0.56 (0.12) $n = 261$.

18. The figures for the population size stem from Lane, McKay, and Newton (1991, 8). In the appendix I give some additional explanations on these figures. The results from a negative binomial regression depicted in figure 5.9 are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.07 (0.10), population in millions 0.82 (0.24) and α 0.63 (0.13) $n = 261$.

Fig. 5.9. Population size and the emergence of new political parties



514) finding, who also report a positive relationship between the size of the population and the number of new parties.

Concerning the social characteristics of the country several authors claim that in plural, heterogeneous, and sectionalized societies new parties should be more frequent. Harmel and Robertson (1985, 515) find a positive relationship between party formation and the degree of pluralism when considering all new parties, but a non-significant one when focusing on genuinely new parties. Using their indicator, I find an average of 1.91 new parties per election in semiplural societies, but only 0.26 in plural societies.[19] In non-plural societies one can expect 1.27 new political parties per election.

An important factor is also the homogeneity of the society. Harmel and Robertson (1985, 515) find a positive relationship between the heterogeneity of a given society and the number of new parties. This same relationship also appears in my dataset, but is much weaker.[20] In religious homogeneous countries the expected number of new parties per election year is 1.34. This number increases to 1.44 for heterogeneous countries.[21] A very similar relationship appears for the linguistic homogeneity of a country. In homogeneous societies one can expect 1.33 new parties per election, while in heterogeneous ones this number increases to 1.57.[22]

The results for these simple bivariate relationships give some additional validity to the dataset used here, since they largely reproduce findings reported in the literature on the emergence of new political parties. Hence, we can use these same indicators with more confidence while integrating them more closely into the theoretical framework.

In the present analysis I will use very similar measures, even though these remain quite problematic. First, I use the set of indicators concerning the homogeneity of a given society. The argument implies that countries that are homogeneous in respect to religion and language give rise to fewer new issues, whereas plural or semiplural countries allow for a multitude of interests to be politicized and consequently increase the potential number of new issues. The same tendency appears in countries with an important population. As its size increases, it is likely that subpopulations have different or opposing interests. This, again, increases the propensity for having more new issues. Finally, economic problems, measured by the unemployment and growth rate, are likely to give rise to new issues, or to render old ones more prominent. Higher levels of unemployment increases problems for certain groups of a society, while high growth rates often diminish these same problems.

By their very generality, these measures for my theoretical variable are bound to be error prone. In spite of this I will proceed to a test of my first implication concerning the role of new issues with the help of these variables. As for all other implications that predict identical relations across the two contexts (elections where weak new parties are credible or not), I will use the following statistical model:

$$E(y_i) = f\left(\beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^{k} (\beta_{j1} + \beta_{j2} * x_{ci}) x_{ji}\right) \tag{5.1}$$

In this model $E(y_i)$ is the expected number of new parties at a given elec-

19. These expected numbers of new parties are calculated on the basis of the results of an event-count regression. The estimated coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) are the following: Intercept 0.12 (0.09), plural society -0.58 (0.26), semiplural society 0.41 (0.20), α 0.76 (0.14). The definition of these variables stems from Harmel and Robertson (1985) and additional details on the coding appear in the appendix.

20. For the linguistic and religiously homogeneity of a country I employed the dataset of Banks and Textor (1968). They provide data for all countries except New Zealand. I have coded this country as linguistically homogeneous and religiously heterogeneous, based on information from the CIA World Factbook (1992) and Lane, McKay, and Newton (1991).

21. The estimated coefficients of the underlying event-count regression are the following: Intercept 0.37 (0.12), religious homogeneity -0.07 (0.15), α 0.83 (0.15).

22. The estimated coefficients of the underlying event-count regression are the following: Intercept 0.45 (0.14), linguistic homogeneity -0.17 (0.16), α 0.82 (0.15).

TABLE 5.6. New issues, weak contenders, and new parties

	base model	complete model	
	all elections	all elections	only credible
independent variable	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)
linguistic homogeneity	-0.47	-0.35	0.12
	(0.31)	(1.28)	(1.29)
religious homogeneity	0.10	0.16	-0.15
	(0.18)	(1.32)	(1.32)
ethno-linguistic fragmentation	-0.87	-1.89	1.82
	(0.69)	(3.10)	(3.03)
plural	-0.06	-0.85	0.57
	(0.23)	(2.73)	(2.74)
semiplural	0.11	0.17	0.08
	(0.20)	(1.90)	(1.91)
growth rate	-0.23	-0.20	-0.04
	(0.07)	(0.15)	(0.16)
unemployment rate	0.04	0.06	-0.02
	(0.02)	(0.15)	(0.15)
population	0.83	0.90	-0.34
	(0.27)	(1.54)	(1.57)
Constant	0.83		0.68
	(0.50)		(0.52)
α	0.34		0.30
	(0.09)		(0.09)
n	261		261
log-likelihood	-386.89		-383.11

tion, x_j are the k variables that measure the importance of new issues, while x_c is a variable that takes only two values. It is equal to one for elections where a weak new party is credible and zero otherwise. Thus, x_c reflects the classification of the elections shown in table 5.3. The assumed functional form f corresponds to a negative binomial distribution, which allows for overdispersion in an event-count model. Overdispersion allows the variance around the expected number of new parties to vary, and accounts for correlated events.[23] If my implication is correct all β_{j2} coefficients should be close to zero. If these coefficients were very different from zero, this would indicate that a given variable measuring the importance of a new issue has a different effect in elections where weak challengers are credible than in all other elections. Systematically, I will report in the tables that follow the results of a restricted base model, where all β_{j2} are set to zero, and a complete specification, where these coefficients are also estimated.[24]

Despite the poor quality of the indicators, the results in table 5.6 confirm to a large degree the implication. The results for the base model suggest a series of significant relationships, which undergo only minor changes when

23. If overdispersion is ruled out the variance parameter is restricted to equal $E(y_i)$, which then results in the familiar Poisson model.

24. More details on the estimation procedures figure in the appendix. There I address, among others, the problems of the distributional properties of the dependent variable, the time dependence as well as possible spatial relations.

compared with the complete specification. The comparison between the base and complete model suggests that they cannot be distinguished statistically. This implies that we cannot reject the hypothesis that the coefficients for the interaction variables are equal to 0.[25] Hence, if a variable is related to the number of new parties in all elections, its impact is most often only slightly different in situations where a weak challenger is credible. For instance, as the population size increases, the effect is not much different in elections where weak new parties are credible, compared to all other elections. Figure 5.10 illustrates that the expected number of new parties increases considerably with the size of the population.[26] While the effect is weaker in elections where weak new challengers fail to be credible, the difference with the effect in all other elections is not significant. In these latter elections increasing population sizes lead to a much higher expected number of new parties.

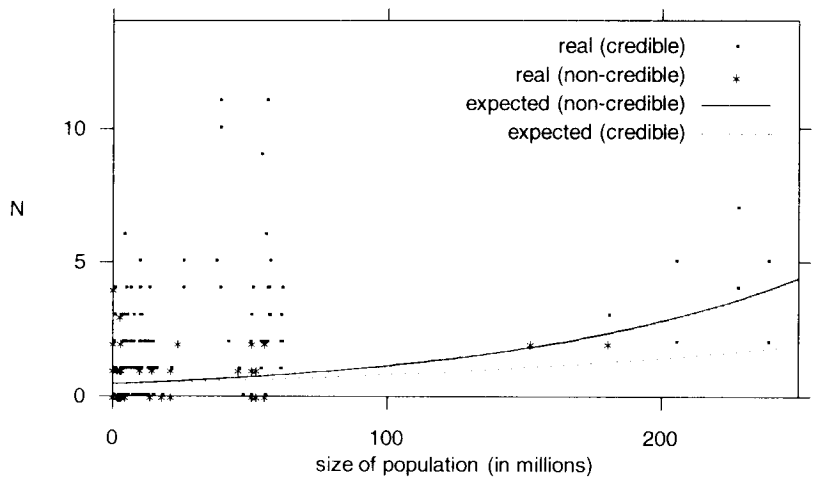
This strong result can be related to the frequency of new parties reported in table 5.2. All large countries, above all Spain, the United States, France, Germany, Italy, and Great Britain have above average numbers of new parties. In Spain this important number of new parties is strongly related to regionalist movements (Salvador Crespo and Molina Alvarez De Cienfuegos 1996). Presidential elections in the United States also attract a considerable number of new parties addressing a wide range of issues despite the low likelihood of electoral success (Fisher 1974; Sundquist 1983; Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus 1984; Mazmanian 1991). Similarly in Great Britain the size of the country appears to be related to the numerous new challengers on the electoral scene. Berrington (1985, 441f) notes that "[t]he British political landscape is indeed littered with the bodies of dead and moribund parties. . . . There has never been any lack of minor parties in Britain."

The results reported in table 5.6 for the economic variables also lend support to the implication. Overall, an increasing unemployment rate leads consistently to more new parties, but in situations where a weak challenger is credible this effect is slightly reduced. The other economic variable, namely the growth rate, also has the anticipated effect on the number of new parties. Increasing growth rates strongly diminish the number of new parties in all elections. The effect in elections where weak challengers are credible is slightly stronger, but this difference can hardly be distinguished from 0. This result resonates with the numerous case studies of new parties that often identify economic conditions as major driving forces. For instance, the Union for the Defence of Traders and Artisans (Union pour la défense des commerçants et artisans), better known under the name of its leader, Poujade, made its appearance when

25. This test is based on the log-likelihood ratio between the two models.

26. The graph represents the predicted number of new parties for the complete model when holding all other variables at their respective means.

Fig. 5.10. Population size and the number of new parties



small shopkeepers suffered economically (Hoffmann 1956). Similarly, the rise of right-wing parties is often linked by scholars to economic problems (Mayer and Perrineau 1989; Immerfall 1998, 250f).

The effects of the indicators concerning the characteristics of the society are more mixed. For instance, in a linguistically heterogeneous country the expected number of new parties equals 1.41, while it drops to 1.11 in linguistically homogeneous countries. If the election under consideration allows for credible threats of weak challengers, this effect decreases.[27] This result resonates well with the important number of regional parties in Spain (Salvador Crespo and Molina Alvarez De Cienfuegos 1996). Language issues and regional autonomy are of considerable importance in this case.

Religious homogeneity has a very small effect on the number of new parties. This characteristic of a given society increases the expected number of new parties in all elections, while this effect is weaker when a weak new party is credible. Contrary to my implication, ethno-linguistic fragmentation considerably decreases the number of new parties in elections where weak challengers are not credible. In all other elections the effect of this variable almost

27. Here, as well as in all interpretations of the estimation results, I will present average changes induced by variations in the independent variable. I hold all other variables constant at their means and report changes in respect of this expected average number of new parties.

disappears. The implication predicts, however, that new issues and, thus, new parties, would be more frequent in situations where such fragmentation is important. It is likely, however, that this variable picks up effects that the other variables measuring the characteristics of society, like the two homogeneity measures, fail to pick up. Consequently, this negative effect has to be considered in the larger picture of the empirical results.

These results underpin my implication that the increasing importance of new issues leads to more new parties, independent of the weak challengers' credibility.[28] The substantive literature does not contradict this claim and most authors find similar results. The size of population, the degree of pluralism and heterogeneity consistently relate also in Harmel and Robertson's (1985, 514) dataset with the number of new parties. The important role of economic variables resonates to some degree with two tales in chapter 2. The formation of the NSDAP occurred in the wake of considerable economic turmoil, while economic problems also played a role in the emergence of the SDP in Great Britain. Similarly, in almost all empirical work, the link between new issues and new parties is of considerable importance.

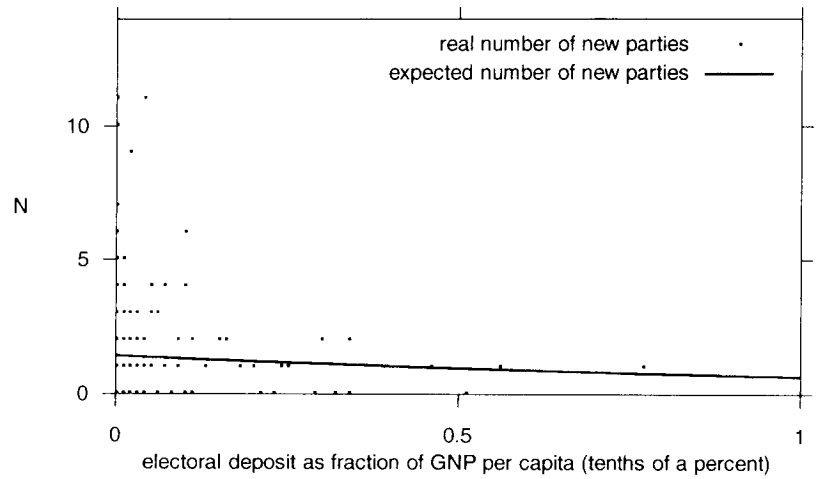
Formation Costs

For the test of my second implication, which concerns the impact of formation costs, I will proceed in a similar way. The formation costs are part of most explanations for the emergence of new political parties. Fisher (1974) mentions this element when discussing minor parties in Germany and the United States. Similarly, Hauss and Rayside (1978) highlight formation costs in their list of facilitators. Among the different types of formation costs, the access to the ballot is of central interest (Harmel and Robertson 1985, 505; Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus 1984, 19-25).

In general, two elements can constitute a barrier for new political parties trying to access the ballot in an election. Some countries require a monetary deposit for registering a candidate. Cole (1992), for instance, shows in an interesting way the changes that an increased electoral deposit had on the number of candidates in British elections. Figure 5.11 shows the relationship between the importance of this deposit and the number of new political parties appearing on the electoral scene. I measure the electoral deposit as a proportion of

28. Choosing different cutoff points for the distinction between credible and non-credible elections leads naturally to some changes in the results. If the number of elections where weak new parties are credible increases, the implication finds stronger support. More precisely, the coefficients for situations where the weak challengers are not credible decrease consistently, which gives additional support to my implication. Similarly, when the empirical model is restricted to the explanation of genuinely new parties, no noticeable changes appear.

Fig. 5.11. Electoral deposit and the emergence of new political parties



the current GNP per capita, expressed as tenths of a percent. The main sources for this indicator were the Interparliamentary Union (1976) and Sternberger and Vogel (1969).[29]

The relationship is negative, as expected, but surprisingly weak.[30] The expected number of new parties decreases only slightly as the amount of the electoral deposit increases. Ballot access, however, also depends on other barriers. An additional element, apart from the deposit, is the signature requirement. Some countries require that a candidate or a party presents a petition with a specified number of signatures before their name may appear on the ballot. I collected this information for each election drawing on the Interparliamentary Union (1976) and Sternberger and Vogel (1969).[31] The absolute number of signatures necessary to get a candidate on the ballot is weighted by the total electorate. Hence, it reflects the signatures required for each million voters.

Figure 5.12 shows a rather strong negative relationship between the number of signatures required and the number of new political parties.[32] Comparing these results with the findings of Harmel and Robertson (1985, 516) reveals one of their shortcomings. They rely almost exclusively on categorical indicators, summarizing a large variation in the underlying variables. By using these underlying variables, I am able to show that at least one element of the formation costs has a considerable impact on the likelihood of party formation. The effect is probably stronger still, since some countries use only a signature requirement, while others ask only for an electoral deposit. The joint effect of both variables might be even larger.[33]

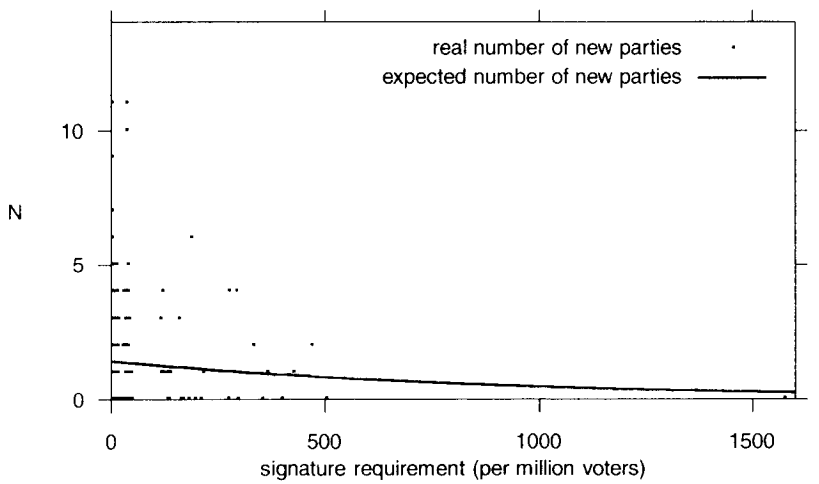
Finally, Müller-Rommel (1993, 180f) rightly points out that the presence of public party financing can be an important factor in explaining the success of Green parties. It is likely that the knowledge that some expenses, when launching a new party, are refunded stimulates new party formation. Paltiel (1981) presents similar ideas on the impact of public financing of parties, as do Rosenstone, Behr, and Lazarus (1984).

29. Additional information and more up-to-date sources for this indicator appear in the appendix.

30. The results from a negative binomial regression model are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.35 (0.08), electoral deposit -0.80 (1.66), and α 0.82 (0.14) $n = 261$.

31. Again, I completed these sources with more up-to-date material as discussed in the appendix.

Fig. 5.12. Signature requirement and the emergence of new political parties



32. The results from a negative binomial regression model are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.36 (0.08), number of signatures required -0.11 (0.09) and α 0.82 (0.14) $n = 261$.

33. This shows again the usefulness of using several indicators, but also the need for joint, multivariate tests.

In my dataset information on whether public financing of parties is available stems from Paltiel (1981, 164ff), who provides indications for most countries studied here.[34] According to the data used here, on average 1.52 new parties appear in countries with public financing of parties. This number drops to 1.22 in countries where such financing of parties does not exist.[35] This finding rejoins Müller-Rommel's (1993, 181) claim that Green parties are more successful in countries with public party financing.

Having explored the different indicators used to measure the formation costs, I now turn to testing my implication. Its basic argument is that increasing costs of forming a new party should diminish the likelihood of new parties. But this relation should only hold when the threat of the weak potential new party is credible. If it is not, the formation costs should not be related to the frequency of new parties. I will use the following statistical model for all implications predicting that a relationship should only hold if a weak new party is credible:

$$E(y_i) = f\left(\beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^{k} (\beta_{j1} * (1 - x_{ci}) + \beta_{j2} * x_{ci}) x_{ji}\right) \qquad (5.2)$$

Again, x_c is equal to 1 if a weak new party is credible, and equal to 0 in all other cases. x_j are the k independent variables that should help explain the expected number of new political parties $E(y_i)$. The β_{j1} coefficients measure the impact of a given variable (x_j) in elections where a weak new party is credible, while the β_{j2} coefficients measure the same effect in all other elections. If the implication is correct only the β_{j2} coefficients should differ from 0, while the others should approach 0. Again, I report in each table results of a restricted model where all β_{j2} coefficients are set to 0 in addition to the results for the complete specification. The functional form f, again, is assumed to correspond to the negative binomial distribution.

Table 5.7 shows mixed support for my implication. In the base model it appears that party formation is mostly affected by the presence of public party financing. If such public funds are available, new parties form significantly more often in elections where weak new challengers are credible. The effects of the two other measures are small and in addition of the wrong sign. Contrary to my implication as the petition hurdle becomes more important, the expected

34. I have coded all other countries as having no public financing of political parties, except for Portugal and Spain. This was supported by Delury (1987) and checked against the data provided in Katz and Mair (1992).

35. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.15 (0.12), public financing of parties 0.32 (0.15) and α 0.80 (0.15), $n = 261$.

TABLE 5.7. Formation costs, weak contenders and new parties

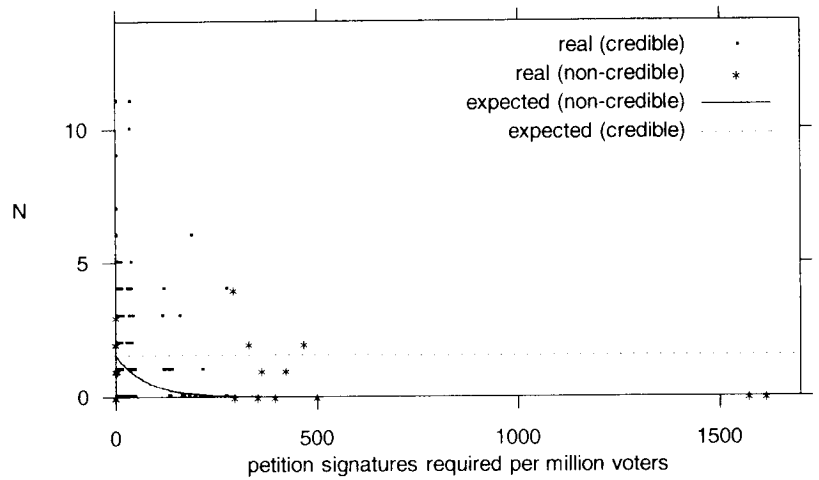
	base model	complete model	
	only credible	only credible	only non-credible
independent variable	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)
electoral deposit	0.80	0.57	-1.37
	(2.31)	(2.31)	(3.14)
signatures for petition	0.03	-0.00	-0.12
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.11)
public party financing	0.39	0.33	0.16
	(0.15)	(0.16)	(1.25)
constant	0.11		0.18
	(0.12)		(0.13)
α	0.78		0.76
	(0.15)		(0.14)
n	261		261
log-likelihood	-419.11		-417.56

number of new parties increases. Also contrary to expectancy, increasing the amount of the electoral deposit appears to affect positively the likelihood of party formation. But both of these latter effects are associated with large standard errors, and, in addition, hardly change in the complete model.[36] Interestingly, in the complete model the effects of both the signature requirement and the electoral deposit have the expected sign in elections where weak new challengers are not credible. But again, both fail to reach statistical significance. Figure 5.13 depicts nevertheless the relationship between the petition requirement and the formation of new political parties. The expected number of new parties decreases with a higher number of signatures required both in elections where a weak new party is credible and in those where a weak challenger is not credible. But the effect is considerably stronger when weak challengers are not credible.

These findings resonate in part with empirical cases. For instance, Day and Degenhardt (1988, 277f) report that the German *Aktion Soziale Gemeinschaft, die Partei der Sozialversicherten Arbeitnehmer und Rentner (ASG)* (Social Community Action (Party of Socially Insured Employees and Pensioners)) failed to collect the necessary 20,000 signatures to participate at its first Bundestag election. Given that they received only 1,834 votes in their participation in 1987, this can hardly surprise. Hence, electoral participation may sometimes be rendered more difficult by high ballot access requirements, but in the present case this only resulted in a delayed emergence of this party. Similarly, the careful study by Cole (1992) on the increase from 150 to 500 pounds of the British electoral deposit in 1985 suggests that it barely affected the number of candidates in by-elections. However, he notes a shift from independent and "other" candidates toward candidates from minor or major parties. Interest-

36. A log-likelihood ratio test does not allow to reject the hypothesis, that the coefficients in elections when weak new challengers are non-credible are 0.

Fig. 5.13. Petition signatures required and the number of new parties



ingly, for the elections considered here, namely the elections since 1985, my classification characterizes them as allowing for credible threats by weak challengers. Hence, according to my implication the effect should be present, but as my results and those of Cole (1992) suggest, ballot access hardly diminishes party formation.

Hence, the results reported here only partly support my implication that increasing costs of party formation should decrease the number of new parties only if the weak potential new party is a credible threat. But only public party financing has the expected positive effect on the number of new parties in both specifications. This same effect is weaker in elections where weak challengers are not credible. The other variables have either the wrong sign or are larger in elections where weak new challengers are not credible. The standard errors attached to these coefficients are, however, quite important and make it hard to distinguish the effects from randomness. Nevertheless, the differences in the two sets of coefficients might explain why Harmel and Robertson (1985) do not find any significant relation between the difficulty of ballot access and the number of new parties. Since the effect is only noticeable when weak new parties are credible, looking at the relation in all elections is likely to lead to inconclusive results.[37]

37. When the cutoff point to determine situations where weak new parties are credible is changed, some results change. If the number of such elections increases, the effects of all variables decrease when weak new parties are credible. Hence the support for my implication is even stronger with other cutoff points. The results reported here also fail to undergo any significant changes if the analysis is restricted to genuinely new parties.

Benefits of High Demands

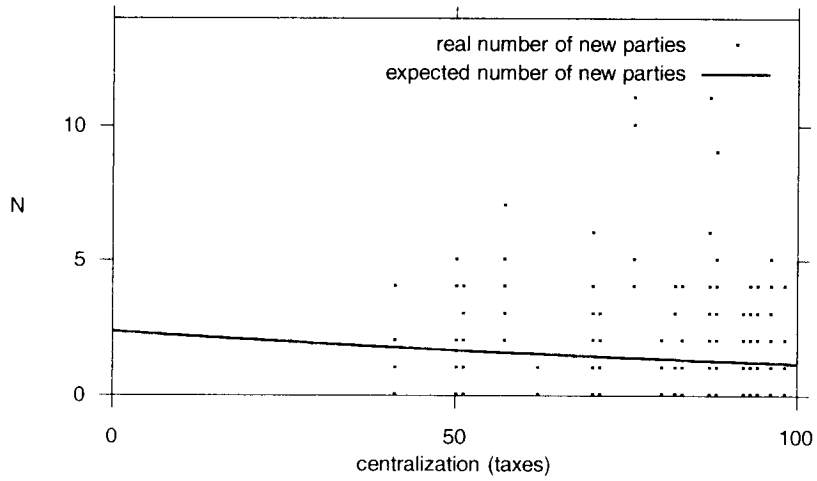
The benefits of high demands are at the center of the third implication. This theoretical variable is practically absent in the literature on new political parties. Implicitly, arguments on the impact of the centralization of a given country on the emergence of new parties come close to this variable. Harmel and Robertson (1985), for instance, argue that in centralized countries the likelihood of new parties emerging should be smaller. A similar argument appears in Chhibber and Kollman (1998), who show that the effective number of parties decreases in the United States and India as a function of increasing centralization. Figure 5.14 gives weak support to this view.[38] It relates the degree of centralization measured as the percentage of taxes that the central government receives, compared to the total taxes for the entire country,[39] with the number of new political parties. The relationship is slightly negative, as Harmel and Robertson (1985) hypothesize, but, as in their analysis, is rather weak.

Also related to the benefits of high demands is the composition of government. Both Kitschelt (1988) and Müller-Rommel (1993) argue that, in the case of the Green parties, an important factor was the presence of socialists in government and the length of their tenure. If such parties did not share government responsibility, the likelihood of appearance of Green parties diminishes. This indicates that a longer presence in government makes it harder to implement new policies. Naturally, when looking at new parties in general, the presence of socialists in government can have both a positive and a negative effect on party formation. Instead I will look at a more general indicator, which basically measures whether there has been a government change since the last election. If Kitschelt's (1988) and Müller-Rommel's (1993) argument can be extended, a recent government change should diminish the likelihood of a new party. Using as source information provided by Lane, McKay, and Newton (1991), I coded each election whether it was preceded by a change in government. Contrary to the underlying hypothesis I fail to find a decrease of party formation after a government change. On average, in elections after a government change, one finds 1.44 new parties. In elections where the same

38. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.86 (0.49), centralization -0.69 (0.63), and α 0.82 (0.15) $n = 261$.

39. Lane, McKay, and Newton (1991, 81f) report the data that is used here. Additional sources and interpolations used are documented in the appendix.

Fig. 5.14. Centralization (central government's tax share) and the emergence of new political parties



government presents itself to the voters this average is only 1.29,[40] a difference that is not statistically significant.

Finally, Müller-Rommel (1993, 120ff, 1996) argues that the presence of provisions for referendums diminish the likelihood of party formation. According to him, referendums allow potential new parties to formulate their griefs in an arena other than the electoral one. In the case of Green parties, however, he finds a positive relationship (Müller-Rommel 1993, 122, 1996). For the case of the extreme right parties no relationship is detectable. Employing data from Lijphart (1984), Austen, Butler, and Ranney (1987), and Nohlen (1990) I find a negative relationship, as hypothesized by Müller-Rommel (1996). In countries with referendums at the national level one can expect 1.27 new parties per election. In all other countries this average increases to 1.83.[41]

My theoretical implication predicts that if the benefits of high demands increase, they should invariably lead to a bigger number of new political parties.

40. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following: Intercept 0.25 (0.13) government change 0.11 (0.16) α 0.83 (0.15) $n = 261$.

41. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following: Intercept 0.61 (0.21) referendum -0.37 (0.23) α 0.80 (0.14) $n = 261$.

TABLE 5.8. Benefits of high demands, weak contenders, and new parties

	base model	complete model	
	all elections	all elections	only credible
independent	b	b	b
variable	(s.e.)	(s.e.)	(s.e.)
majoritarian	0.53	0.66	0.11
government	(0.20)	(1.13)	(1.15)
number of parties	0.12	0.86	-0.79
in government	(0.09)	(0.67)	(0.67)
government change	0.26	-0.52	0.77
	(0.17)	(0.64)	(0.67)
centralization	-0.83	-2.81	2.27
(taxes)	(0.70)	(2.35)	(2.28)
referendum	-0.22	0.02	-0.23
	(0.26)	(0.78)	(0.84)
constant	0.55		0.47
	(0.53)		(0.52)
α	0.73		0.59
	(0.14)		(0.13)
n	261		261
log-likelihood	-416.16		-405.16

I argue that these benefits depend largely on how quickly a high demand can be implemented. Hence, using Kitschelt's and Müller-Rommel's argument, I assume that a recent government change decreases the benefits of high demands. Similarly, if the government is majoritarian, or if on average there are few parties in the government, changes are more likely to be adopted. Here, governmental parties do not need to take as much notice of opposing views, since they have no or only a limited number of partners to listen to. Referendums according to the argument discussed above should decrease the benefits of high demands, since the same benefits can be achieved by launching a referendum. Finally, in highly centralized countries, benefits from important demands are most likely higher. High demands often require decisions which are taken at the center; if a country is highly centralized, the effect of such decisions is much stronger. These five indicators serve as measures of the benefits of high demands.

The results in table 5.8 give little support to my implication. The results for the base model suggest that as expected the presence of majoritarian governments increases the likelihood of party formation. This effect is, however, counteracted by the impact of the number of parties in government. As this number increases, new parties also become more likely. Changes in government preceding the election also increase slightly the chances of seeing a new competitor on the ballot. Since such changes decrease the benefits of high demands, the effect contradicts my implication. It is likely, however, that this measure for these benefits is too crude. A simple case in point is the emergence of the National Democratic Party (Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands, NPD) in Germany (Fisher 1974, 141-151; Mackie and Rose 1991, 161; Day

and Degenhardt 1988, 226f). Its emergence and rise are often linked to the first grand government coalition between the social-democrats (SPD) and the conservatives (CDU). Hence, a government change was instrumental in this party's rise, but for reasons that differ from those underlying the present implication. Contrary to my implication the degree of centralization decreases the likelihood of party formation. Finally, in support of my implication I find that allowing for referendums in a given polity decreases party formation.

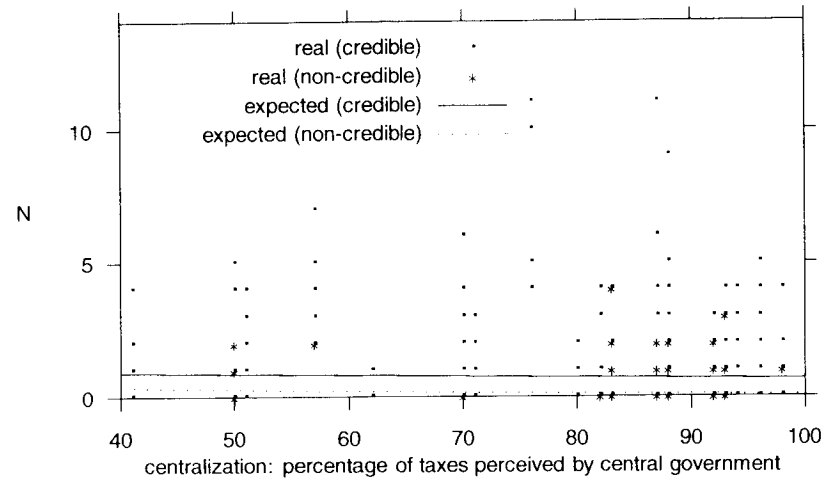
Comparing these results to those of the complete specification suggests that the effects of the various variables are different in elections where weak new challengers are credible.[42] My implication suggested otherwise. Interestingly enough, in the complete specification again two variables have the expected effect. Majoritarian governments increase and government changes decrease the likelihood of party formation. In elections where weak new parties are not credible, the effect of majoritarian governments even increases, while the latter effect largely disappears. Referendums, according to the results of the complete specification appear to decrease party formation mostly in elections where weak challengers are credible, but not so in all other elections. While the direction of the effect is as expected, it should not differ between the two types of elections. A possible explanation might be found in a country where referendums are used heavily, namely Switzerland. Several authors (e.g., Gruner 1977) argue that the formation of parties in Switzerland is strongly related to the development of direct democracy in the past.[43] Referendums required organizations capable of organizing campaigns, and these transformed themselves later into political parties participating in elections. However, in more recent times research has shown that referendum campaigns also drain the resources of social movements that they could devote to other activities (e.g., Kriesi 1995, 96f). Consequently, they may intervene less frequently in elections. This view, in support of my implication, stems from a country where all elections have weak credible challengers. Thus the expected effect of the referendum variable in this context might be in part due to the Swiss cases.

Finally, the two remaining variables also appear to have their major effect in elections where weak challengers are not credible. Increasing numbers of parties in government lead to more new parties, while stronger centralization decreases the likelihood of party formation. These effects largely disappear when weak challengers are credible. Figure 5.15 illustrates this for the centralization measure. The effect of this variable is almost nonexistent in elections where weak new parties are credible, while the effect of the same variable is

42. This is based on a log-likelihood ratio test between the two models.

43. Jost (1986), however, questions this link between direct democracy and the emergence of parties in Swiss history.

Fig. 5.15. Centralization and the number of new parties



much more strongly negative in all other elections. This, as the results for the other variables, leaves us with a mixed picture for the empirical tests of this implication.[44]

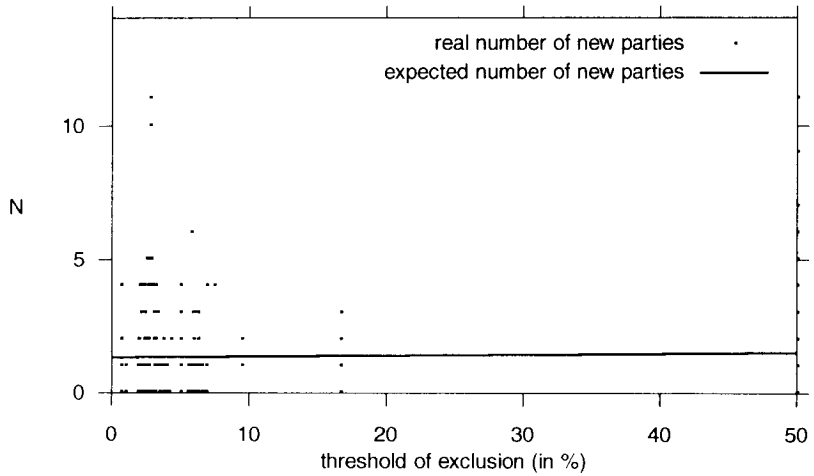
Costs of Electoral Fight and Benefits of Weak Potential New Party

The last two implications concern the costs an established party has to bear when fighting a newcomer on the electoral scene and the benefits of a weak new party. These two theoretical variables are two sides of the same coin. If it is hard for an established party to fight a newcomer, it is almost inevitable that the benefits of the weak challenger are higher. Consequently, indicators related to the former theoretical variable are also likely to be linked with the latter. In addition, since the two implications predict similar relationships, we shall test them together.

Like the first two implications, these last two also find several parallels in the literature. The costs that an established party has to bear in an elec-

44. Interestingly enough, if the analysis focuses only on genuinely new parties the results of the base model suggest stronger effects for the centralization measure and for the presence of referendums in a country. In the complete specification of the model these differences disappear, however.

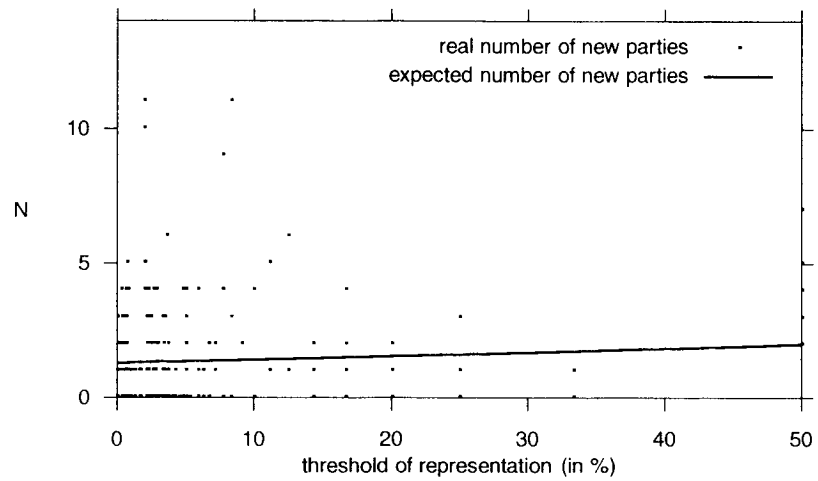
Fig. 5.16. Threshold of exclusion and the emergence of new political parties



toral fight are often linked to the electoral system and its implicit thresholds. Harmel and Robertson (1985, 505) hypothesize that in proportional representation systems new parties should be more frequent. The same argument appears in Müller-Rommel (1993, 1996). While Harmel and Robertson (1985, 515) find a statistically significant relationship, it is of the wrong sign. More precisely, new parties appear more frequently in countries with plurality rule. Müller-Rommel (1996), however, finds that both extreme right and Green parties emerge more frequently in proportional representation systems. At the same time he also finds a negative relationship between their success and the proportionality of the electoral system for the latter parties (Müller-Rommel 1993, 117).

Figures 5.16 and 5.17 reflect some of these ambiguities. They relate two electoral thresholds to the number of new political parties. The threshold of representation corresponds to the lowest percentage with which a political party can achieve representation in parliament. In the Netherlands, for instance, this percentage corresponds to two-thirds of a percent, while in Germany the *Sperrklausel* sets it at five percent. The threshold of exclusion, on the other hand, corresponds to the percentage up to which a party can be excluded from a parliament. In a plurality electoral system a party may fail to win a seat as long as it wins less than 50 percent of the vote. Only with a vote share exceeding this threshold is a party assured of winning a seat. Both thresholds

Fig. 5.17. Threshold of representation and the emergence of new political parties



depend on the electoral formula used in a particular election and the number of parties competing in the election.[45] Despite strong theoretical reasons for expecting fewer new parties where electoral thresholds are high, the relationships turn out to be positive. Hence, as the threshold of exclusion increases, new parties become marginally more likely (figure 5.16).[46] The relationship is slightly stronger for the threshold of representation, but again in the wrong direction (figure 5.17).[47]

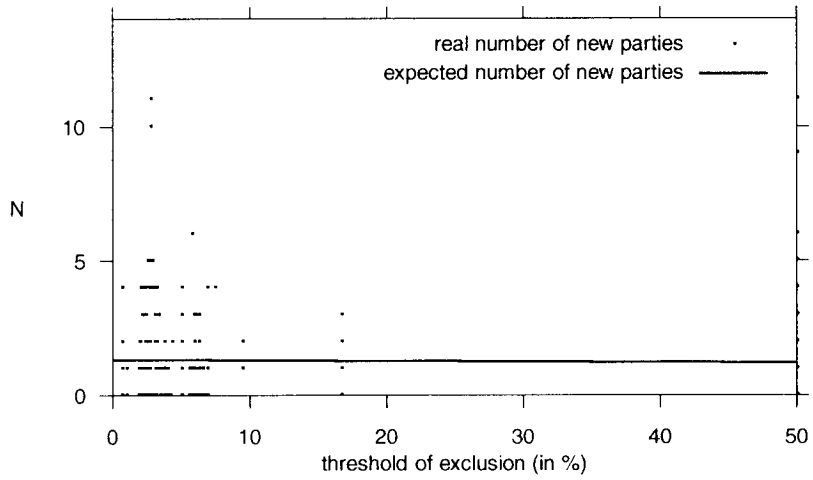
One of the reasons why the relationship between these electoral thresholds and the emergence of new political parties is positive might be the presence of the United States in the sample. As previously discussed, in presidential elections, which we consider here, new parties appear quite frequently. This happens despite rather high electoral thresholds. Consequently, the results based

45. The main sources for information on the electoral system employed are Sternberger and Vogel (1969) and Nohlen (1978, 1990). In the appendix I discuss in more detail these sources and the way these electoral thresholds are computed for various electoral systems.

46. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.27 (0.10), threshold of exclusion 0.27 (0.33), and α 0.83 (0.12) $n = 261$.

47. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.25 (0.09), threshold of representation 0.87 (0.72), and α 0.81 (0.14) $n = 261$.

Fig. 5.18. Threshold of exclusion and the emergence of new political parties (without the United States)



on the complete sample might be strongly affected by the observations from the United States. Figures 5.18 and 5.19, by omitting the United States from the sample, show that this is partly the case. For the threshold of exclusion the relationship becomes negative, though very weakly (Figure 5.18).[48]

The emergence of new political parties appears to be more strongly related to the threshold of representation (figure 5.19). As this threshold increases the likelihood of party formation decreases steadily.[49] For the analyses that follow, the result that the United States are in some sense an outlier will be crucial.[50]

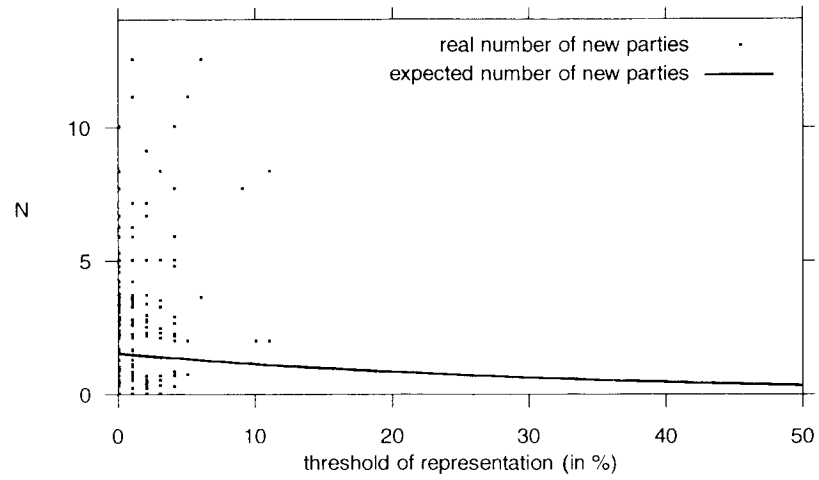
In addition to these electoral thresholds, the benefits of a weak new party are to a large extent dependent on the parties already present in a political system. Harmel and Robertson (1985, 503) argue that in multiparty system the need for new parties is probably lowest. But if a new party should succeed

48. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.29 (0.10), threshold of exclusion -0.20 (0.35), and α 0.85 (0.15) $n = 251$.

49. The results from a negative binomial regression are the following estimated coefficients (standard errors in parentheses): Intercept 0.43 (0.11), threshold of representation -3.02 (1.41), and α 0.81 (0.14) $n = 251$.

50. All other analyses presented in this chapter were also carried out without the United States, but no significant changes appeared in the results.

Fig. 5.19. Threshold of representation and the emergence of new political parties (without the United States)



in a two-party system, its benefits might be considerable. Similarly, Müller-Rommel (1993, 137) makes the point that in a fragmented party system Green parties are more likely to succeed. At the same time, however, he also argues that the likelihood that an existing party has already picked up a certain issue is higher in fragmented party systems. Hence, if these arguments are right, it is not surprising that both Harmel and Robertson (1985, 514) and Müller-Rommel (1993, 138) fail to find even a weak relationship between the level of fragmentation (Müller-Rommel), respectively the number of effective parties (Harmel and Robertson) and the emergence of new parties.

Despite these mixed results of the preliminary explorations, I attempt to test this fourth implication, which not surprisingly predicts that the number of new parties should decrease if the costs of fighting a new party go up. But this relation should fail to materialize if weak new parties are not credible. Similarly, new parties should become more frequent if the benefits of a weak new party increase. Again, this relationship should only hold in situations where weak new parties are credible.

I measure the costs of fighting a new party through characteristics of the electoral system and of government. If the electoral laws provide for high electoral thresholds, the electoral system effectively keeps out an important number of new parties. Hence, the costs of fighting a new party decrease

TABLE 5.9. Costs of electoral fights, benefits of weak new party, weak contenders, and new parties

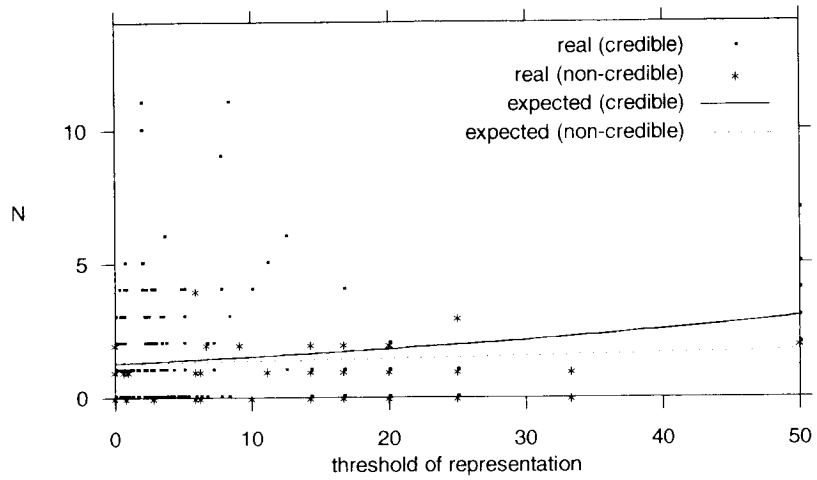
	base model	complete model	
	only credible	only credible	only non-credible
independent	b	b	b
variable	(s.e.)	(s.e.)	(s.e.)
threshold of	0.96	0.74	-0.84
exclusion	(0.53)	(0.53)	(2.24)
threshold of	1.77	1.72	0.64
representation	(1.57)	(1.54)	(3.56)
number of parties	0.10	0.03	0.23
in government	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.34)
number of	0.00	-0.03	-0.21
governments	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.23)
federal	-0.37	-0.47	0.13
	(0.24)	(0.24)	(0.71)
constant	0.01		0.42
	(0.16)		(0.23)
α	0.69		0.64
	(0.14)		(0.14)
n	261		261
log-likelihood	-414.01		-409.79

with the two electoral thresholds, namely the threshold of exclusion and the threshold of representation. It is obvious that the benefits of a weak new party also depend heavily on these thresholds. If the thresholds increase, a weak new party is much less likely to find representation; this will decrease its benefits.

The benefits of a weak new party are also likely to be higher in federal systems. There, even small parties might gain access to executive power, albeit at a lower level than the central government (Chandler and Chandler 1987). Similarly, as the number of parties in government increases or governments change frequently, it is much more likely that a new party can expect to join a government. This increases the benefits which a weak new party might anticipate when forming. By extension, these variables affect in a similar way the fighting costs of the established party.

The results for this combined test of two implications are only partially encouraging (table 5.9). Contrary to my implication higher electoral thresholds increase the likelihood of party formation in the whole sample. The threshold of representation shows the strongest impact. As this threshold increases, the expected number of new parties becomes significantly higher, if the weak ones are credible (figure 5.20). The effect is still positive, but smaller, in elections where a weak new party is not credible. Also, in contradiction to my implication are the results for the threshold of exclusion. Here the effect is positive in elections with credible weak challengers, while it becomes negative in all remaining elections. These results relate strongly to the findings of Harmel and Robertson (1985), who also found a relationship between the electoral system and the formation of new parties in contradiction to their expectations.

Fig. 5.20. Threshold of representation and the number of new parties



Excluding the United States from the sample, however, leads to results much more in line with my implication (table 5.10). While the effect of the threshold of exclusion is still positive, the effect for the threshold of representation is large and negative. As predicted by my implication, this effect is stronger if weak new challengers are credible than in the remaining elections (Figure 5.21).

The estimated coefficients for the number and composition of governments have the expected signs in the sample excluding the United States, but are comparatively small. In addition, in the complete specification it appears that the effect in elections, where weak new challengers are not credible, is larger. Finally, contrary to my implication, federalism leads to fewer new parties, whether the United States is included in the sample or not. On average in the sample without the United States, the expected number of new parties equals 1.28 in unitary systems. If a country is federal and the election allows for credible weak new parties, the expected number drops to 1.02. If the latter condition does not hold in a federal system, it only increases to 1.23. This effect is contrary to the implication, since I assumed that the benefits for a weak new party should be higher in a federal country. But the effect is quite small. Similarly, increasing the number of governments by one per decade or adding another party to government only slightly changes the expected number of new parties. An additional party in government in a credible situation

TABLE 5.10. Costs of electoral fights, benefits of weak new party, weak contenders and new parties (without the United States)

	base model	complete model	
	only credible	only credible	only non-credible
independent variable	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)	b (s.e.)
threshold of exclusion	2.99 (0.92)	2.70 (0.89)	0.29 (2.55)
threshold of representation	-8.79 (4.37)	-8.56 (4.23)	-2.62 (4.87)
number of parties in government	0.07 (0.10)	-0.00 (0.10)	0.23 (0.35)
number of governments	0.04 (0.04)	0.01 (0.05)	-0.20 (0.23)
federal	-0.11 (0.27)	-0.21 (0.26)	-0.03 (0.73)
constant	-0.04 (0.17)		0.39 (0.24)
α	0.71 (0.15)		0.66 (0.15)
n	251		251
log-likelihood	-386.69		-382.59

increases fails to change the expected number of new parties in a significant way, but in all other situations it leads to an increase to 1.51. The respective numbers for an additional government per decade are 1.21 and 0.99.[51]

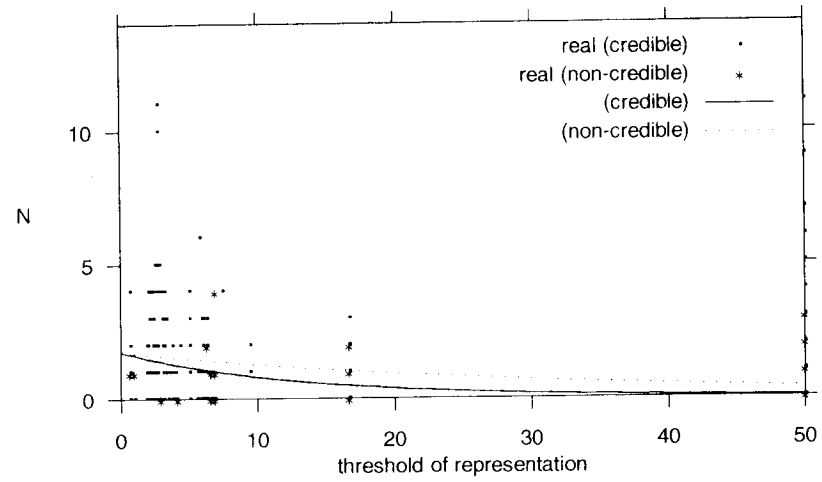
Summing Up

It is obvious that these isolated tests of my implications only partially reveal the importance of the different theoretical variables. Since the latter stem from a single theoretical framework and derive from comparative statics results, it is important to control simultaneously for the other variables. To carry out such a joint test I only use the variables that, according to my theoretical model, should influence the likelihood of seeing new parties.[52] In table 5.11 I present in the first column (Model 1) the estimated coefficients for all variables that should influence the emergence of new parties according to my theoretical model. In order to assess whether each theoretical variable of my model con-

51. If the analysis discussed here focuses on genuinely new parties no important differences appear for the whole sample. If the cases from the United States are omitted, however, the coefficient for the threshold of representation decreases and fails to reach statistical significance.

52. Due to serious multi-collinearity problems, it was not possible to include both sets of variables for each implication. The multi-collinearity problems mostly stem from variables that only vary across space and not across time. With a considerable number of independent variables, such country-specific measures become increasingly problematic. In the appendix I present results from an additional analysis, where for each implication separately the second set of explanatory variables was added. The results suggest, that none of these additional variables contribute significantly to the explanation of the emergence of new parties.

Fig. 5.21. Threshold of representation and the number of new parties (without the United States)



tributes to the explanation of the formation process, I estimate four additional sets of coefficients (Table 5.11, Models 2-5). In each of the four estimations, one theoretical variable together with its indicators was dropped from the equation.

Table 5.11 reemphasizes again the central role new issues play in the formation of new political parties. Their overall impact is strongly significant.[53] Among the variables employed to measure the importance of new issues few changes appear in comparison to the individual test. Again, linguistic homogeneity appears to diminish strongly the average of new parties per election. In heterogeneous countries one expects an average of 2.13 new parties at each election. In homogeneous countries this average drops to 0.92. This obviously again relates to the Spanish case discussed above.

The effect of religious homogeneity is of the wrong sign, but much smaller. Also of the wrong sign, but much stronger, is the effect of ethno-linguistic fragmentation. As this type of fragmentation increases, the average number of new parties decreases. Again, the effect of this variable has to be consid-

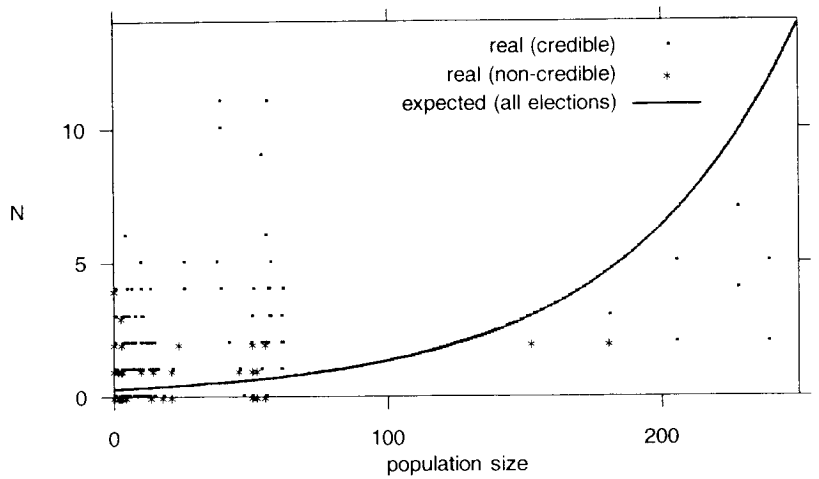
53. Based on the differences in log-likelihoods between the joint model and the other estimated equations, I carried out simple χ^2 tests. If not mentioned, I used a 0.05 level for statistical significance.

TABLE 5.11. Explaining party formation

independent variable	Model 1 b (s.e.)	Model 2 b (s.e.)	Model 3 b (s.e.)	Model 4 b (s.e.)	Model 5 b (s.e.)
New issues					
plural	0.24		0.40	-0.02	-0.22
	(0.36)		(0.32)	(0.30)	(0.25)
semiplural	-0.29		-0.31	-0.08	0.06
	(0.30)		(0.30)	(0.25)	(0.27)
religious homogeneity	0.20		0.23	0.15	-0.01
	(0.29)		(0.28)	(0.25)	(0.28)
linguistic homogeneity	-0.84		-0.73	-1.00	-0.45
	(0.47)		(0.43)	(0.42)	(0.41)
ethno-linguistic fragmentation	-1.38		-1.37	-1.50	-0.81
	(1.12)		(0.95)	(1.07)	(1.02)
growth rate	-0.22		-0.20	-0.24	-0.23
	(0.07)		(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
unemployment rate	0.03		0.03	0.02	0.05
	(0.02)		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
population	1.56		1.53	1.59	0.84
	(0.39)		(0.37)	(0.37)	(0.30)
Formation costs (credible)					
public party financing	0.05	0.29		0.07	0.02
	(0.22)	(0.20)		(0.22)	(0.21)
electoral deposit	2.53	-0.59		2.98	3.73
	(2.31)	(2.51)		(2.25)	(2.06)
petition signatures	0.36	0.16		0.34	0.32
	(0.15)	(0.17)		(0.14)	(0.16)
Benefits from high demands					
centralization (taxes)	-1.15	-1.81	-1.26		-0.65
	(0.94)	(0.85)	(0.84)		(0.65)
majority government	0.08	0.44	0.10		0.09
	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.22)		(0.25)
number of parties in government	0.17	0.09	0.11		0.09
	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.18)		(0.10)
government change	0.05	0.14	0.06		0.07
	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.18)		(0.18)
referendum	-0.22	-0.29	-0.24		0.18
	(0.29)	(0.28)	(0.30)		(0.25)
Fighting costs (credible)					
threshold of representation	-4.77	-0.04	-4.53	-4.54	
	(1.73)	(1.77)	(1.72)	(1.56)	
threshold of exclusion	2.59	1.91	2.62	2.20	
	(0.72)	(0.72)	(0.69)	(0.64)	
number of governments	0.02	0.01	0.02	-0.01	
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	
number of parties in government	-0.09	0.10	-0.01	0.04	
	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.18)	(0.09)	
federal	-0.20	-0.75	-0.34	0.01	
	(0.37)	(0.36)	(0.34)	(0.25)	
Constant	1.74	1.09	1.82	1.17	0.88
	(0.95)	(0.80)	(0.79)	(0.69)	(0.78)
α	0.20	0.53	0.24	0.22	0.28
	(0.09)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)
n	261	261	261	261	261
log-likelihood	-373.45	-403.88	-376.80	-375.11	-380.92
Δ log-likelihood		-30.43	-3.35	-1.66	-7.48

ered together with those of the other variables measuring the characteristics of society. Important effects also come from the economic variables, especially

Fig. 5.22. Growth rate and the number of new parties



from the growth rate. As figure 5.22 shows, high growth rates heavily decrease the likelihood of seeing new parties. The unemployment rate, as expected, increases this likelihood, while the population size continues to relate positively to the formation of new parties. The large countries with important numbers of new parties discussed above illustrate this finding. Similarly, parties of the extreme right like the NSDAP discussed in chapter 3 and the Poujade movement in France provide examples for the effects of economic variables on the emergence of new parties.

The formation costs only contribute slightly to the explanation of new political parties. Controlling the different relationships for other variables also leads to changes for several effects. The required petition signatures have a positive and significant effect on the formation of new parties, while an increase in the electoral deposit continues to stimulate, though not significantly, the emergence of new challengers. The presence of public party financing as expected increases the likelihood of seeing new parties emerge. But compared to the individual test of this implication, the effect is much smaller. Overall the empirical support for this implication is limited. Formation costs fail to have a strong direct impact on the emergence of new political parties. It has to be noted, however, that the effect of these theoretical variables might be mostly of an indirect nature. Since the formation costs are an integral part of the credibility measure, any effect of the latter is related to the formation costs.

Contrary to the two previous theoretical variables, the impact of benefits from high demands overall is hardly significant. Some individual coefficients almost reach statistical significance, but together they cannot be distinguished from 0. The presence of referendums decreases as expected the frequency of new parties. The Swiss case with a high usage of referendums and relatively few new parties, provides illustration for this finding.

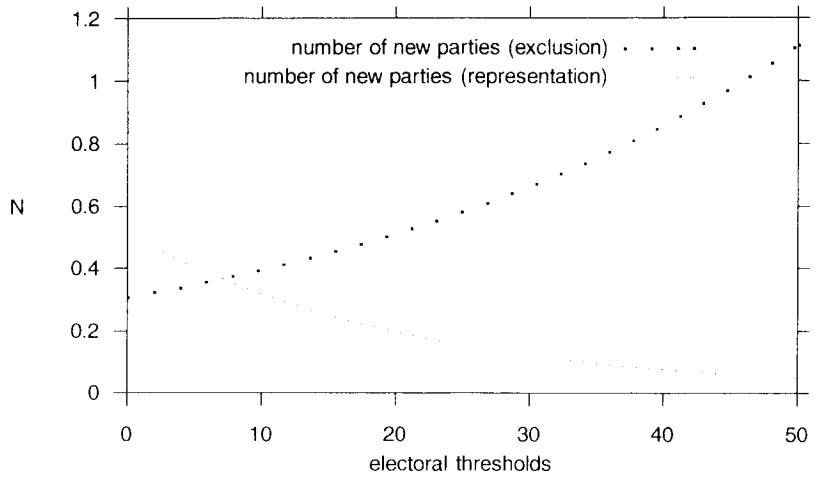
Among the other variables of this third implication, several have much smaller coefficients than in the individual test. The presence of a majoritarian government, for instance, has less of an effect on the expected number of new parties. It increases this number from 1.08 to 1.17, which is much smaller than the effect reported above. Similarly, an additional party in government increases the expected number of new parties from 1.10 to 1.31. The direction of this effect also contradicts my implication. The degree of centralization continues to have a negative impact on the number of new parties.

Finally, when controlling for the other implications, the link between the formation of new parties and the costs of fighting electoral challengers appears as a significant contribution. The threshold of representation considerably decreases the number of new parties, while the threshold of exclusion achieves the opposite (Figure 5.23). These opposite effects are largely due to the fact that these two measures are intimately related. The effects of the other variables undergo only few changes with respect to the individual test. An additional government per decade increases the expected number of new parties from 1.10 to 1.12. Still in contradiction to my implication is the impact of a federal system. In unitary systems the expected number of new parties is equal to 1.16, and it is only 0.95 in federal countries. Since I assumed that federal systems increase the benefits of weak new parties, my implication predicts that the relationship would take the opposite direction.[54]

This joint test strengthens the conclusion that new issues are central to the explanation of the emergence of new parties. If new issues are important, new parties emerge much more frequently. New issues are related with economic indicators, the size of the population, and the characteristics of society. The effect of the costs of forming a new party is rather puzzling in the joint tests. It appears that increasing the petition signatures and the electoral deposit stimulates party formation. This goes squarely against my implication and most stances in the literature. It rejoins, however, the finding of Cole (1992) on the impact of the increased electoral deposit adopted in Great Britain in 1985.

54. Dropping the cases from the United States only marginally alters the results presented here. The most significant difference is that the effect of the threshold of representation becomes much smaller. Given that the direction of this change is opposite to the one found for the individual test of the relevant implication, I do not consider this change in more detail. It is likely that controlling for the other implications, the United States is no longer an outlier. Hence, omitting it from the analyses only reduces the number of cases. When focusing the analysis on genuinely new parties in the whole sample no significant changes appear. But, in parallel with the previous remark, dropping the United States from the analysis decreases the effect of the fighting costs on the emergence of new parties.

Fig. 5.23. Electoral thresholds and the number of new parties



More in line with my implication is the fact that public financing of parties diminishes the costs of forming a new party and consequently stimulates party formation. However, it is unclear whether the effect of the public funding of parties is stronger in elections where weak new challengers are credible, as my implication predicts, than in all other elections. These weak results for the impact of the formation costs on the emergence of new parties have to be taken, however, with some caution. As discussed above, the formation costs also influence the credibility of weak new challengers. Since the implication relating the fighting costs with the emergence of new parties only holds when weak new challengers are credible, it is obvious that the formation costs have at least an indirect effect. At least for this last implication they appear to be an important mediating factor explaining the formation of new parties.

The results for the implication on the benefits from high demands are largely disappointing. These benefits appear to be hardly related to the emergence of new parties. While some coefficients have the expected sign, they fail to contribute significantly to the explanation of party formation. More support appears for the implications concerning the benefits of weak new parties and the costs of fighting a new party in an election. The results show that the costs

and benefits are strongly influenced by the electoral thresholds. Some other factors also play a certain role, but they pale with respect to the effects of the electoral system. Especially the threshold of representation decreases significantly the likelihood of party formation in elections where weak challengers are credible.

Conclusion

New political parties, contrary to an important stance in the literature, arise frequently in Western democracies. At almost every election a new party makes its appearance and disturbs the competitive game between established parties. To show the importance of this phenomenon was the first aim of the present chapter. More central goals of the chapter were the tests of the theoretical model, through estimations based on the implications presented in the theoretical chapter. These implications relate variables from the theoretical model to the frequency of new political parties.

In the present conclusion I summarize the insights of the empirical results. Empirical support is greatest for the first implication, which relates the importance of new issues with the emergence of new parties and their initial success. For the explanation of the emergence I showed that the problem "push" (Rüdig 1990) is crucial. Independent of whether or not weak new parties are credible, the number of new parties consistently increases with the importance of new issues.

Empirical support for the theoretical framework is more mixed for the other implications. Concerning the costs of forming a new party, these do appear to have an impact on the emergence of new actors on the electoral scene. Contrary to my implication, however, the importance of the petition requirement actually increases the number of new parties when weak ones are credible challengers. When controlling for the other explanatory factors, it still appears that public party financing decreases formation costs, and thus leads to more new parties; however, the other indicators display results contradicting the theoretical framework. On both the empirical and theoretical level the relationship between formation costs and the emergence of new parties is a contribution to the literature on new parties. The effect of the formation costs consistently varies according to the credibility of weak new challengers. This aspect is, however, completely absent from the literature on new political parties.

On a similar note, the effect of the benefits of weak new parties and the costs of fighting them on the electoral scene is of both theoretical and empirical interest. The substantive literature advances the hypothesis that these costs and benefits increase the likelihood of seeing new parties. The theoretical framework suggests, and the empirical results underpin, that this effect should only

hold if weak new parties are credible. If they are not, this effect should disappear. This contribution is most likely at the basis of most of the conflicting results on the relationship between the electoral system and the emergence of new parties. Only with the help of my theoretical model was I able to highlight this intervening factor, which is the credibility of the challenge by a weak new party.

The tone is more mixed for the relationship between the benefits that a potential new party gets from an accepted high demand and the formation of new parties. Most effects are rather small, when controlling for the other explanatory factors of the emergence of new parties. In addition only the referendum variable and the indicator whether the government is majoritarian have the expected effects.

Despite the less than perfect quality of the data used here and the considerable number of potential problems, the results lend considerable support to my theoretical model. In the concluding remarks of my study I will discuss these results in this more general context and relate them to possible extensions.