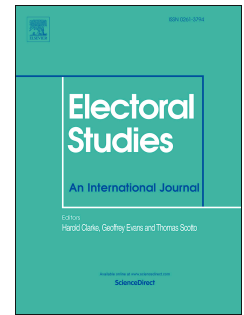


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**Whither the Party Vote Bonus?
Stand-down Agreements in Ukraine's Mixed-Member System**

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ABSTRACT

Comparative research on mixed-member systems suggests that parties have an incentive to nominate nominal-tier candidates in as many districts as possible, as placing candidates in even marginal districts can increase parties' list-tier vote. Yet studies have documented many instances where parties fail to field candidates. We examine stand-down agreements—where parties coordinate the withdrawal of candidates—to understand why parties forgo a party vote bonus. Our interviews document that Ukrainian politicians—while acting strategically—were not concerned over the loss of a party vote bonus when they negotiated the withdrawal of candidates from districts. Our theoretical discussion explains that the incentive for parties to field candidates to obtain a party vote bonus is often insufficient. Using district data from the 2012 Ukrainian elections, we measure the party vote bonus. We show that the bonus gained by parties was small, dependent upon the quality of the candidate, and varied by party.

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