Supporting Information of the manuscript 'How aspiration to office conditions the impact of government participation on party platform change'

This appendix presents the results from the additional analyses (11 in total) that were carried out to test the robustness and validity of the main finding of our manuscript, namely that a party's response to its government/opposition status is moderated by its aspiration to office (see table 4, model 2 in the manuscript).

This appendix is structured as follows. In section 1 we analyze whether parties change more after several spells in opposition. Section 2 examines an alternative hypothesis proposed by Bendor and his colleagues (2011) that parties change their platform when their performance is below their aspiration level. In section 3 we test whether our findings are robust against alternative operationalizations of our dependent variable: party platform change. In section 4 we evaluate whether our findings extend to left-right position shifts. Section 5 tests whether the findings hold when we employ different modeling strategies (i.e., generalized estimating equations and a zero-inflated-negative-binominal regression). Section 6 presents empirical evidence supporting the causal mechanism we propose that parties with little office experience change more than their peers in opposition because they want to become more viable coalition partners and remain in office. In section 7 we present four case studies examining party platform change in first-time government parties. Section 8 tests whether we find the same results when our dependent variable, party platform change, is broken down into two separate components: issue emphasis or issue position change. In section 9 we validate our findings using a different dataset – the Chapel Hill Expert Survey. In section 10 we evaluate whether our findings are robust against the inclusion or exclusion of specific cases. Section 11 adds additional control variables such as public opinion shifts, economic change and different operationalizations of electoral performance to our analysis. The main conclusion we draw from these additional analyses is that our findings are remarkably robust to different operationalizations, data and model specifications.

1. Do opposition parties change more but with a time delay?

As suggested in the main text, some studies suggest that parties – as conservative organizations – take several spells in opposition before they change their platform. To test this, we construct a variable – *number of terms without office* – indicating whether the party is in government (0) or the number of years it has been in opposition without an intermediate spell in

government. The mean of this variable is 3.31, and the standard deviation is 4.12. In model 1, presented in table 1, we include this variable in the analysis. The effect is negative (IRR=<.1), indicating that opposition parties would become *less* inclined to change after successive terms in opposition. Yet, the effect is not statistically significant, and hence we find no evidence that it takes several spells in opposition before parties change.

A valid alternative specification to test this hypothesis would be to create dummy variables capturing the number of successive spells (ranging from 1 to 21) without office (reference category=in government). Analogous to the linear effect reported below in table 1, the coefficients of the dummy variables fail to confirm the hypothesis. For none of the spell dummies we find statistical evidence (p>.05) that opposition parties are more likely to change than government parties. Instead we find that opposition parties with 2, 3 and 4 spells without office, respectively, are *less* likely than government parties to change their platform. Analyses are available upon request.

Table 1. Evaluating a delayed effect of opposition status

	Model 1
	irr/se
Number of terms without office	.997
	(.008)
Years between elections	1.09*
	(.021)
Effective number of parties	1.05*
	(.023)
Seat change	.842
	(.221)
Constant	2.39*
	(.318)
Log Likelihood	-4090.19
N	1686

* p<.05 Panel negative binominal regression explaining party platform change

2. Evaluating the effect of performing below one's office aspirations

While our new theory suggests that a party's response to office payoffs is moderated by its aspiration level, Bendor et al. (2011) suggest that the aspiration level performs a somewhat different role.

Specifically, parties are expected to change their platform if their office performance is below their aspiration level. To examine this alternative proposition we subtracted a party's office payoffs (0 in opposition, 1 in office) from its continuous aspiration level ranging from 0 (never in office) to 1 (always in office). Hence, a score equal or larger than zero denotes that payoffs are equal or higher than the aspiration level, whereas negative values denote that a party's office performance is below the aspiration level. We then created a dummy variable indicating whether this calculation indeed provided a negative value (1 if yes, 0 if no). This implies that the hypothesis by Bendor et al. (2011) is confirmed in case of a positive statistically significant effect of the dummy variable on party change. As can be seen from table 2 (model 2), the effect for *In office-Aspiration* is indeed positive; yet, it is not statistically significant (IRR=1.06, p>.05). In the manuscript we show that in line with our new theory, the logic of the Bendor et al. (2011) hypothesis only applies to parties with a very high office aspiration. Therefore, future research should consider the interaction between a party's office payoffs and its aspiration level rather than merely examining whether a party's performance is below that level.

Table 2. Evaluating whether parties change when performing below their aspiration level

	Model 2
	irr/se
In office-Aspiration	1.06
	(.047)
Years between elections	1.09*
	(.021)
Effective number of parties	1.05*
	(.023)
Seat performance	.916
	(.246)
Log Likelihood	-4089.38
N	1686

* p<.05. Panel negative binominal regression explaining party platform change

3. Alternative operationalizations of the dependent variable

To create a measure reflecting the amount of party change, we collapsed the 56 coding categories from the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) database into 19 scales. Nine of these scales are positional, created by subtracting the percentage of quasi sentences in a coding category (e.g., references to welfare state expansion) from its natural opposite (e.g., references to welfare state

limitation). Note that when coding categories were about the same issue (e.g., a party's economic Left/Right position), we combined them into a single scale. The remaining scales capture the *attention* for the coding categories without a natural opposite. For an overview of the classification approach see table 2 of the manuscript. In a second step, we measured whether a party's score on each of the 19 scales significantly differed at election t from its score at the previous election t-1. Subsequently, we generated 19 dummy variables indicating whether a change was significant statistically (=1) or not (=0). In a final step we summed the dummy variables of all 19 categories, which created a count variable ranging from 0 (no change at all) to 19 (significant change on each scale).

Whereas we believe that this is a sensible approach, we tested whether our findings hold when: a) we counted the number of significant party platform changes on all the 56 individual coding categories identified by the CMP rather than collapsing these categories into scales, b) we employed the CMP grouping of items into seven policy areas (i.e., international relations, liberal democracy, political organization, economy, welfare, morality and culture, interest groups), and summed the amount of significant changes in each, c) when we summed the absolute amount of change (measured in percentage of quasi sentences) over all 19 of our scales that reflected significant change according to the dummy variables. Table 3 reports the results from these three analyses in model 3, model 4, and model 5, respectively.

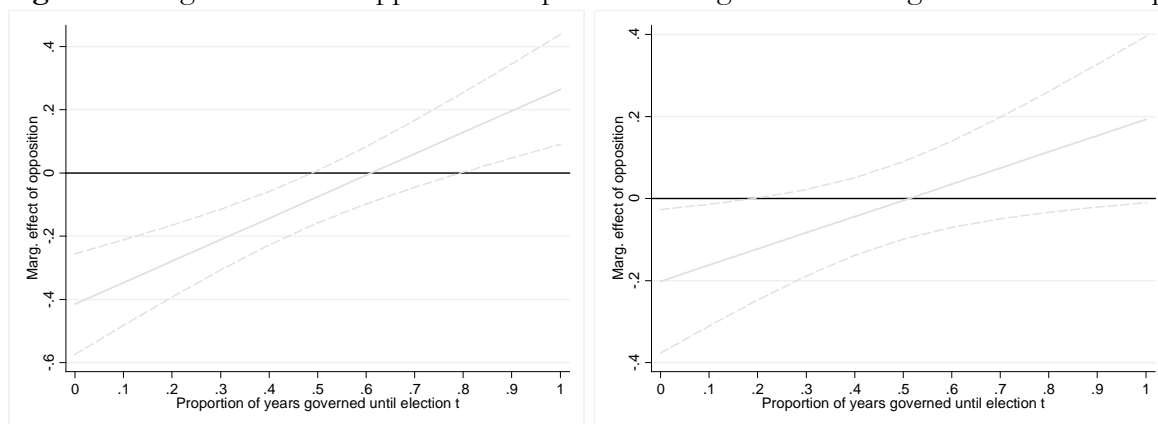**Table 3.** Alternative operationalizations of the dependent variable

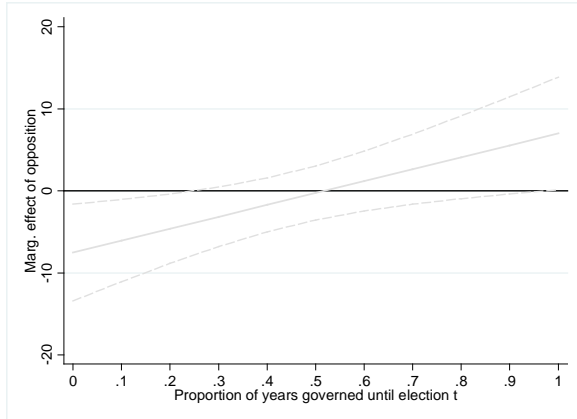|	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	irr/se	irr/se	b/se
In opposition	.66*	.817*	-7.52*
	(.054)	(.073)	(3.01)
Office aspiration	1.07	.964	-.859
	(.143)	(.153)	(4.721)
In opposition*Office aspiration	1.97*	1.48*	14.52*
	(.291)	(.249)	(5.60)
Years between elections	1.10*	1.05*	.458
	(.020)	(.020)	(.613)
Effective number of parties	1.04	1.04	.413
	(.021)	(.023)	(.569)
Seat performance	.893	.924	-5.27
	(.220)	(.257)	(9.498)
Constant	2.01*	24.77*	28.56*
	(.27)	(17.13)	(4.187)

Log Likelihood	-5209.75	-2998.76	-
N	1686	1686	1706

* p<.05. Panel negative binominal regression explaining party platform change (models 3-4), panel regression (model 5).

Analogous to our main model (table 4, model 2 in the manuscript), we find a significant interaction between being in opposition (the reference category is in office) and a party's aspiration to office (IRR=1.97 in model 3, IRR=1.48 in model 4, b=14.52 in model 5). Yet, recall that in H3 and H4 we formulate expectations regarding the effect of opposition (or government) for specific levels of office aspiration. Specifically, parties with a low aspiration to office are hypothesized to change less than their peers (i.e., parties with the same aspiration) in office (H3). Alternatively opposition parties with high office aspiration are expected to change more than government parties with high office aspirations (H4). Thus, to evaluate the effect of government/opposition status on party platform change for different levels of office aspiration (0-1), we need to calculate marginal effects (Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006). Figure 1 shows that similar to the manuscript, parties with a limited aspiration to office are more likely to change in government than in opposition (denoted by negative values on the y-axis), while parties with very high office aspirations are more inclined to change in opposition (positive values on the y-axis). Recall that in the manuscript we find that the first group concerns parties that have governed less than 50 per cent (0.5 on the x-axis) of the years they were included in the sample, while the second group concerns those parties that have governed during more than 95 percent (0.95 on the x-axis) of the elections. On average the different graphs in figure 1 provide quite a similar pattern.

Figure 1. Marginal effect of opposition on platform change for increasing values of office aspiration

Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around. The marginal effects are calculated on the basis of the estimates presented in model 3 (upper left), model 4 (upper right) and model 5 (lower left) in table 3.

4. Do our findings extend to left-right position shifts?

Following a suggestion of an anonymous reviewer we evaluate whether our main finding that parties with little office experience are more likely to change in government (H3), while parties with a lot of experience are more likely to change in opposition (H4), is robust against an alternative indicator of party change that is often employed in the literature (e.g. Adams et al. 2006; Somer-Topcu 2009). We acknowledge that this is indeed important, and therefore, we ran an additional analysis examining whether our findings hold when we operationalize party change exclusively in terms of left-right positional change. The variable 'rile' in the CMP measures the overall left-right ideological position for each party's manifesto in each election year. It ranges from -100 to +100 with positive and higher numbers representing a more right-wing emphasis. To arrive at a variable capturing the amount of overall left-right ideological change, we calculated the absolute difference between party i's left-right position in election *t* and its position in the previous election *t-1*. Contrary to the analyses presented in the manuscript, the resulting dependent variable is continuous, making panel negative binominal regression analysis inappropriate. Following the recommendations of Beck and Katz (1995), panel corrected standard errors (PCSE) were estimated to solve problems arising from panel heteroskedasticity (i.e., different variances in error terms across parties), contemporaneous correlation (i.e., possible correlation in the errors of party *i* at time *t* with those of party *j* at time *t*),

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and serial correlation (i.e., the complications that arise when errors tend to be dependent from one period to the next within parties).[1]

Analogous to the manuscript (Table 4, model 2), model 6 in table 4 shows that we find a significant interaction between being in opposition (the reference category is in government) and a party's aspiration to office (b=6.48, p<.05). Yet, recall that in H3 and H4 we formulate expectations regarding the effect of opposition (or government) for specific levels of office aspiration. Thus, to evaluate the effect of government/opposition status on party platform change for different levels of office aspiration (0-1), we need to calculate marginal effects (Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006). Figure 2 shows that similar to the manuscript, parties with a limited aspiration to office (≤.2) are significantly more likely to change in government than in opposition (denoted by negative values on the y-axis). As for parties without any previous office experience (aspiration=0), for instance, the score of -3.34 implies that opposition parties on average change -3.34 units less between two elections than governing parties that are equally inexperienced. In turn, parties with very high office aspirations (≥.95) are more inclined to change in opposition (positive values on the y-axis). The p-value of this effect is p=0.085, thus we find weaker evidence for this mechanism when analyzing absolute left-right change. This is unsurprising given the very low of observations at this very high level of aspiration. Figure 2 displays these results.

**Table 4.** Evaluating parties' absolute left-right position change

	Model 6
	b/pcse
In opposition	-3.34*
	(1.27)
Office aspiration	-1.06
	(1.64)
In opposition*Office aspiration	6.48*
	(2.44)
Years between elections	-1.07*

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[1] We used the Woolridge (1999) test to detect serial correlation, a modified Wald statistic proposed by Greene (1990) to detect panel heteroskedasticity, and the Pesaran (2004) test to examine the degree of contemporaneous correlation. These tests indicated that each type of correlation indeed was present in the data. A common alternative for addressing serial correlation is the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable in the right-hand side of the equation (Beck and Katz 1995). More recent work, however, gives primacy to the Prais-Winsten solution, which is used in this study to handle the panel-specific AR(1) error structure, since a lagged dependent variable absorbs a large part of the trend in the dependent variable and likely biases the estimates (Achen 2000; Greene 1990; Plümper, Troeger and Manow 2005).

	(.356)
Effective number of parties	.295
	(.257)
Seat change	-10.04*
	(5.04)
Constant	16.67*
	(1.89)
R-squared	.173
N	1782

* p<.05.

Figure 2. Marginal effect of opposition on absolute left-right change for increasing office aspiration
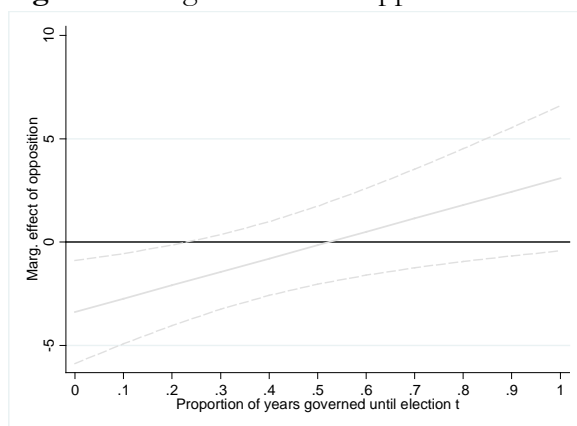
Notes: *95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around.*

We have also examined whether we arrive at the same findings when we not only consider the magnitude of party change (see table 4) but also the direction in which parties change, i.e., to the left or right. These analyses failed to yield additional evidence for our H3 and H4 (analyses available upon request). This poses no threat to the validity of our conclusions, however, since our theoretical framework seeks to explain the magnitude of party change but not the direction in which parties change. We argue, for instance, that government parties with little office experience change to improve their future coalition potential. For a radical-left government party this implies that it moves to the right to adopt a centrist position, while a radical-right government party would have to move in the opposite direction to increase its coalition appeal.

5. Alternative modeling strategies

In the manuscript, we employ the framework proposed by Hausman, Hall, and Griliches (1984) to deal with overdispersion (i.e., the fact that the variance in the dependent variable is considerably

larger than the mean). A drawback of this specification, which can be fitted using Stata's xtnbreg approach, is that the subject-specific intercept and the level-1 overdispersion factor are determined by the same parameter. Hence, it is not possible to have heterogeneity at level 2 without having over ispersion at level 1 or vice versa (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2008). Therefore, we cross-validated our findings using generalized estimating equations (GEE). An additional advantage of the latter type of model is that it simultaneously allows to correct for autocorrelation, i.e. the fact that the amount of party platform change in (the) previous election(s) may affect(s) changes at time *t*, and clustering on the panel variable (i.e. parties). In line with the recommendations of Hilbe (2011), we first estimated the dispersion parameter α in an ordinary negative binominal regression (nbreg) and then inserted α into the xtgee family option. We specified an AR1 autocorrelation term and employed the Huber-White sandwich estimator of variance to account for clustering on the panel variable. The results are presented in table 5. The statically significant interaction *In opposition*Office aspiration* (IRR=1.44, p<.05) in model 7 shows that our results are robust against this alternative framework. What is more, model 8 in the same table demonstrates that our results also hold (IRR=1.41, p<.05) when we specify a considerably more restrictive AR3 term in which election *t-3* may still affect party platform change at *t*.
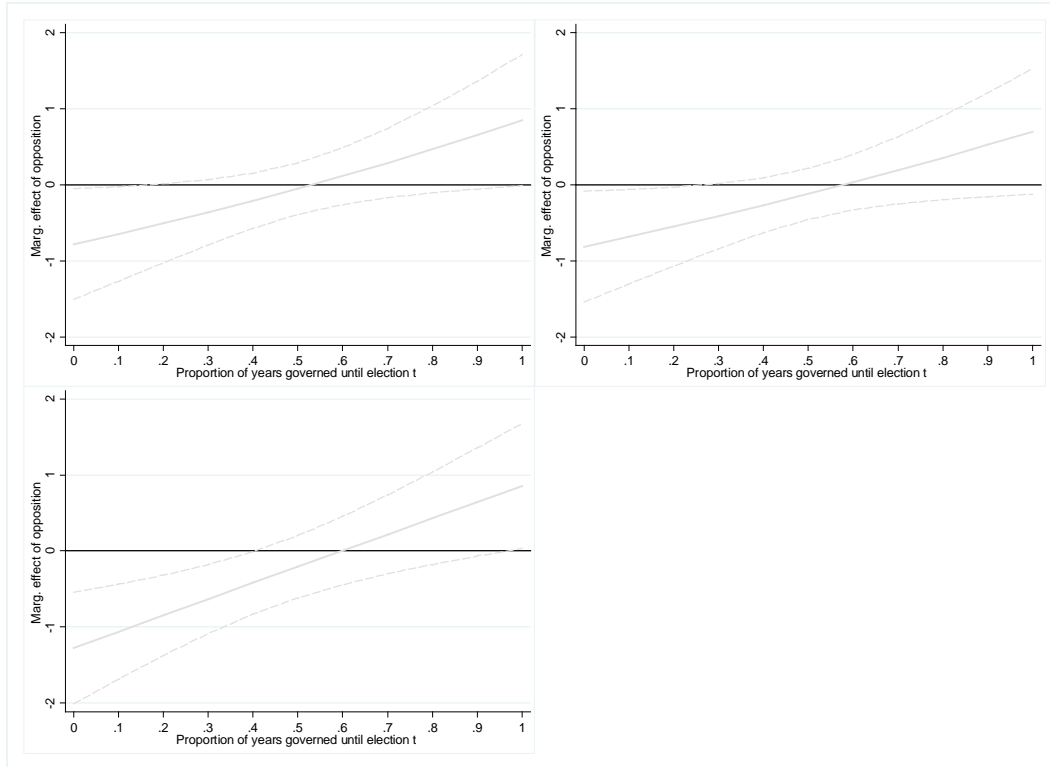
Table 5. Alternative modeling strategies

	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
	irr/se	irr/se	irr/se
In opposition	.824*	.819*	.750*
	(.071)	(.07)	(.057)
Office aspiration	1.03	.999	.786*
	(.141)	(.132)	(.082)
In opposition*Office aspiration	1.44*	1.411*	1.62*
	(.22)	(.212)	(.222)
Years between elections	1.06*	1.063*	1.10*
	(.018)	(.019)	(.019)
Effective number of parties	1.02	1.019	.993
	(.023)	(.023)	(.011)
Seat performance	1.15	.963	1.15
	(.262)	(.219)	(.316)
Constant	3.38*	3.38*	4.49*
	(.47)	(.484)	(.438)
Parameters explaining excess zeros			
Years between elections			-.003

			(.077)
Constant			-1.78*
			(.281)
Wald Chi^2	21.40	20.49	
Log Likelihood			-4144.95
N	1656	1559	1686

* p<.05. Model 7 and 8 report the coefficients obtained from population-averaged models correcting for serial correlation (AR1 in model 7, AR3 in model 8) and panel-specific clustering within parties. Model 9 depicts the results from a zero-inflated-negative-binominal regression.

Besides the question how to deal with overdispersion, we also considered whether a zero-inflated negative binominal regression was a more viable option than a standard negative binominal regression. In the zero-inflated negative binominal specification we explained the excess zeros by the years in-between elections, since in case of unexpected elections, parties often run with the same manifesto (change=0). Indeed, the Vuong test showed that a zero-inflated negative binominal is a more viable option (z=6.26, p<.000). Yet, model 9 (table 5) shows that we reach similar conclusion with this correction. Again we find a statistically significant interaction between *In opposition*Office aspiration* (IRR=1.62, p<.01). Note that in the manuscript we chose to present the results from a standard negative binominal regression (xtnbreg) since to the best of our knowledge zero-inflated negative binominal regression has not yet been implemented for panel data analysis, whereas our party/election observations are nested within parties.

Figure 3. Marginal effect of opposition on platform change for increasing values of office aspiration

Notes: *95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around. The marginal effects are calculated on the basis of the estimates presented in model 7 (upper left), model 8 (upper right) and model 9 (lower left) in table 5.*

Whereas the interaction *In opposition*Office aspiration* is positive and statistically significant in each of these three additional analyses, the marginal effects presented in figure 3 on average also provide quite a similar pattern as our findings for H3 and H4 in the manuscript. In the manuscript we find that parties with an office aspiration lower than .5 are more likely to change in government which all three models confirm. We also found that parties with an aspiration higher than .95 change more in opposition. Model 9 confirms this finding (p<.05), yet for models 7 and 8 we find slightly higher p-values (respectively p=.05 and p=.09). As discussed in the manuscript there are very few observations with an aspiration level of .95 and higher, thus the reduced number of observations in models 7 and 8 compared to the main models in the manuscript probably explains the slightly higher p-values.

6. Examining the direction of party platform change

In the manuscript we argue that governing parties with little governing experience become risk-acceptant to lock in their endowment (see H3). For parties that have *very* little experience in

government, being in office is a shock causing a realignment of party goals (i.e. office compared to policy/votes). Yet, also parties regularly in-and-out-of-office face a substantial chance of losing office. Indeed, our findings demonstrate that government parties are more likely to change their platform than opposition parties when office aspirations are below .5 (i.e., a party governed less than 50 percent of the years it was included in the sample until that time). Yet, what does this degree of change means substantively? We argue that after a spell in office, government parties with little office experience or regularly in-and-out-of-power become – on average - more centrist because this is the best strategy to become a more viable coalition partner and remain in office. An alternative explanation is, however, that these parties change their platform to please those within the party that are unsatisfied with the compromises the party had to make during its term in office. This means that these parties would radicalize after a spell in office.

Table 6 presents the results for a pooled time-series cross-sectional regression model in which we explain shifts in a party's distance to the mean party left-right position.[2] Model 10 reveals that the interaction *In office*Office aspiration* exerts a statistically insignificant effect (b=-1.36) on shifts in its distance to the mean party left-right position. We are especially interested in the direction of positional change among parties with low office aspiration, however, so we must calculate the marginal effects. To evaluate the specific effect for government parties with an office aspiration between 0 and .5, we need to calculate the predicted margins (i.e. predicted shifts in a party's distance to the mean party for all values of office aspiration). Figure 4 denotes that government parties with an office aspiration between 0 and .5 – thus, those with little or no previous office experience or regularly in-and-out of office – shift their position in the direction (as shown by the negative value on the y-axis) of the mean party's left-right position. Specifically, this negative effect (indicating centrist policy shifts) becomes statistically significant at the .1 level when government parties have an office aspiration of .15 (p=.098). This includes many of the parties that just completed their first time in office at the moment of elections. For aspiration levels ranging

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[2] This variable was generated by first calculating the Euclidian distance between a party's economic left-right position (rile in CMP codebook) and the mean party economic left-right position for every election. Since we are interested in the question whether a government party shifts its position in the direction or away from potential coalition partners we then took the first differences. Specifically, the economic left/right issue was selected since in most advanced industrial democracies the left-right dimension constitutes 'the ideological super-issue' bundling a large array of specific policy issues (Pierce 1999) and the main dimension along which parties form their coalitions (Van der Brug and Van Spanje 2009).

between .25 and 1 this effect is significant at the .05 level (see figure 4 left-hand panel). A possible explanation of why this effect is not statistically significant at extremely low values of office aspiration is simply that few parties in government fall in this category, as denoted by the wide confidence interval. Also, opposition parties with an equal aspiration level (between 0 and .1) shift their left-right position away from the mean party (see figure 4 right-hand panel). Thus, parties with a low aspiration level radicalize in opposition, but not while in government. If anything, these parties shift to the center. This underlines our notion that due to the loss aversion mechanism, government parties with low or moderate office aspiration change their platform to increase their coalition appeal. These parties do not respond to intra-party incentives to radicalize, but become more centrist to fulfill their office aspirations.

Table 6. Evaluating party shifts in distance to mean party position

	Model 10
	b/pcse
In opposition	1.25
	(.675)
Office aspiration	-.856
	(1.03)
In opposition*Office aspiration	-1.36
	(1.11)
Years between elections	-.843*
	(.091)
Effective number of parties	.17
	(.094)
Seat change	3.14*
	(1.23)
Lagged dependent variable	-.514*
	.013
Constant	9.77*
	(.729)
Wald Chi^2	4195.31
N	1754

* $p<.05$. Regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors explaining shifts in a party's distance to the mean party left-right position.

Figure 4. Predicted shifts in party distance to the mean left/right position for increasing office aspiration
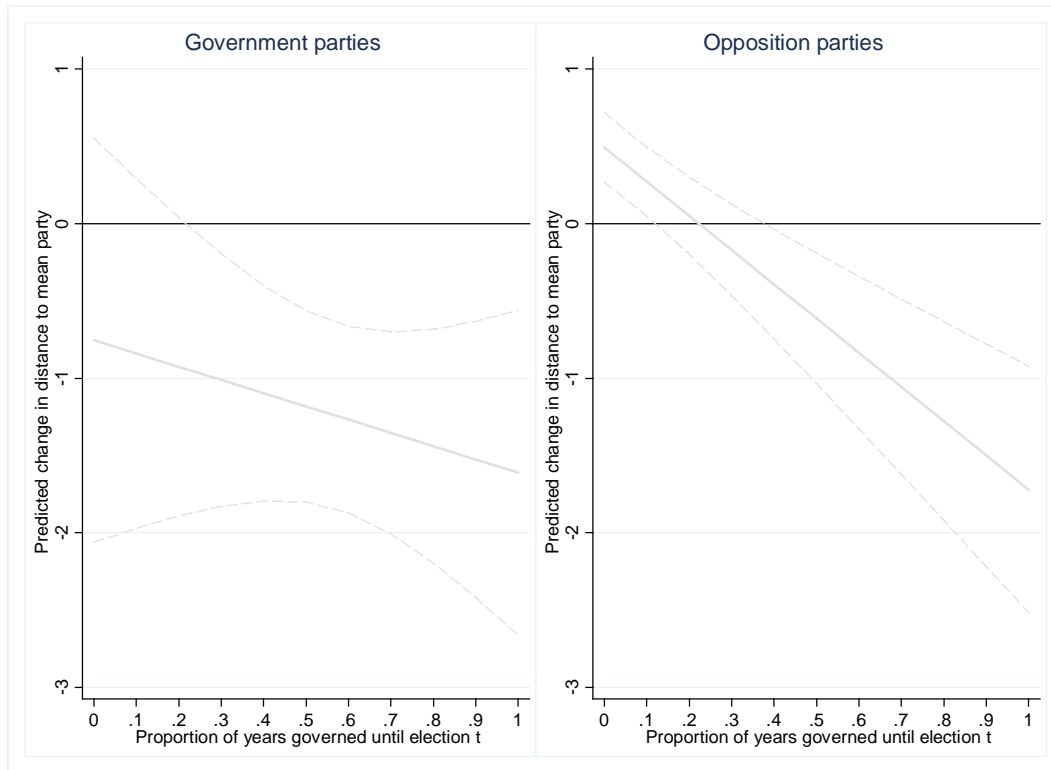
Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the predicted shift in a party's distance to the mean party Left/Right position. Positive values denote that a party changes its position away from the mean party position, while negative values provide evidence that it shifts in the direction of the mean party. The graph on the left presents the predicted distance of government parties for increasing values of office aspiration, whereas the one on the right denotes the same estimates for opposition parties.

7. **Case-studies of low-aspiration parties moving into office for the first time**

We will now look more closely at four parties that governed for the first-time. These parties have a low aspiration, and thus according to H3, we expect that this type of party changes more in government than in opposition, which is indeed what these parties did. In addition to our quantitative results, we analyze this hypothesis more in-depth by looking at four cases – the Socialist People's Party, the Center-Democrats (both from Denmark), the Christian Union (the Netherlands) and the Greens (Germany). Using secondary sources, we briefly describe how these parties transformed their platform when they participated for the first or second time in government. We compare this behavior to their opposition behavior. We selected first-time government parties because our theory predicts that these parties face dire electoral prospects and difficult compromises with other parties. Therefore loss aversion has a strong effect on these parties and we expect them to be the most likely to change after a spell in government. However, other theories may argue that

these parties are the least likely to change because (1) these parties are often niche parties whose horizontal organizations give members strong influence over party policy. This makes these parties less likely to change because of office-seeking reasons. (2) One might also argue that given that these parties never governed before, they must definitely feel that they are doing something right now that they are governing. In other words, now that they perform above their aspiration level, these parties should be least likely to change. Since our predictions are the reverse, first-time government parties are a crucial test of our theory. We specifically selected these four cases out of a larger sample to have a mix of ideologies (Green, Socialist, Social Democratic and Christian Democratic) and party systems and to have reliable and accessible secondary sources.

The German *Green Party* was founded in 1980 and is conventionally perceived as the archetypical niche party devoted to the environmental protection issue. The party has roots in the peace movement and anti-nuclear energy action groups who mobilized large scale protests especially in the 1970s and early 1980s. The Green Party ran for election the first time at the federal level in 1983. It achieved 5.7 per cent of the votes and gained parliamentary representation in the German *Bundestag.* Throughout the 1980s and until the early 1990s the party suffered from political and organizational conflicts between factions of radical grassroots and more pragmatic leaders of the party (Hoffmann 1999; Rüdig 2002). During this period the party was consistently on the fringe and not perceived – neither politically nor organizationally – as *regierungsfähig* (suitable for government). In the second half of the 1990s, the party began a series of changes in order to make it more competitive vis-à-vis the established mainstream parties. Initiatives were taken to improve coordination between the party organization and the party group in the Bundestag, and to reduce organizational disadvantages such as the principle of rotation (Roberts 1999). Thus, in the late 1990s and before the federal election in 1998 the Greens appeared united although the main factions were still present and continued to play a role in the party (Rüdig 2002). At the federal election in September 1998 the party lost 0.6 per cent and achieved 6.7 per cent of the votes nationwide. Nevertheless, after the election the party entered government for the first time as the junior partner of the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

During their first 1998-2002 spell in office the Green Party pursued substantive organizational and ideological reforms. The party had been unable to change its basic program since 1980 which in 1998 still called for the dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Revisions of the program were repeatedly delayed to maintain a peaceful balance between the party factions (Poguntke 2002). The position as government party made them realize that neither the official basic

program nor the internal structures were suitable for a party in government and a new basic program was finally adopted in March 2002 before the federal election the same year (Blühdorn 1998). Moreover, the 'exhaustion of the green project' and decreasing electoral appeal of the party's often radical solutions to be achieved within a short period of time, also led the Greens change their platform during their first period in office. The environmental issue became less important as a platform while economic topics gained significance. For instance, the Greens used to be clearly positioned on the left calling for protection of the welfare state, limitation of economic power and redistribution of wealth. In the early 2000s the party began to switch to a reform oriented platform, arguing in favor of reductions of the marginal tax rate, reduction of business taxes and pension reform (Rüdig 2002). Many activists and traditional Green Party loyalists left the party as a consequence, but the party leadership stuck to its new platform to remain an attractive coalition partner and was successful in doing so. At the 2002 federal election the party achieved 8.6 per cent of the votes nationwide – its best result ever – and continued as the SPD's junior partner after the 2002 election.

The Socialist People's Party (SF) was formed in 1959 as a splinter party from the Danish Communist party and is positioned left of the Social Democrats. SF was traditionally considered a fringe party with a low aspiration for office that endorsed more public spending on social welfare, stronger progressivity in the tax system, and more regulation of business to protect the environment. Around 2008/09 the party started a process to professionalize its party-organization and adapted its welfare and economic policies to mainstream positions (Mortensen 2011). In the 2011 general election, however, the party campaigned on a platform that endorsed expansionary policies in the public sector and emphasized new politics issues – especially the environment. After the election the party entered a center-left minority coalition led by the Social Democrats, and for the first time became part of a government. In April 2012, the first party conference after its entry to office took place, which was dominated by fierce discussions and rivalries over the party's policy line. The party elite, consisting of newly appointed ministers, achieved sufficient support to strengthen the central party organization and switch to a policy position with centrist appeals in general economic matters, tax and welfare policy, while de-emphasizing new politics issues (Bille 2013). The party elite also secured increased autonomy from the party base in day-to-day decision making on controversial issues as tax policy, labor market policy, and welfare reform. This was seen as crucial for the party elite's ability to operate in a government coalition, and also as an indication that for the Socialist People's Party government power was now more important than the consistent promotion of strong

ideological viewpoints. A minister of the party summarized the outcomes of the conference by stating that the Socialist People's Party '(i)s now a true government party' (Jyllands-Posten, April 16 2012: p. 2). Since there has not been a new national election in Denmark (at the time of writing), we cannot evaluate yet how much the party changed its platform. Still, the above mentioned changes suggest that it will.

The *Center-Democrats* (CD) were formed in 1973 as a splinter party from the Social Democrats and entered parliament less than a month after the party was established. The party was formed in reaction to the increasing dominance of new left factions in the Social Democratic party (Bille 1997). CD positioned itself as a center party appealing to the new middle class with mainly rightist but also pragmatic views on issues such as the economy and social welfare. In opposition, the party frequently voted with the shifting Social Democratic minority governments in office between 1975 and 1982. In this period the party had a right-wing platform. In 1982, CD attained office for the first time as a member of a four-party minority government led by the Conservative party. Hence, it partook in the economic restoration policies enacted in the first part of the 1980s. Before the general election in 1984 the Center Democrats moved toward a more centrist but still right-wing platform on economic matters. The Center-Democrats suffered a significant electoral loss in the 1984 election, but the coalition renewed its mandate and continued in government. The platform change before the 1984 election was intensified in the period in the run-up to the 1987 election (Garodkin 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987). This was most likely an effort to maintain the government's majority by preventing voters dissatisfied with the government's economic restoration policies from shifting to the main opposition party, the Social Democratic Party. It is clear from the report from the 1986 party congress that the party focused strongly on the political and organizational requirements for keeping the coalition intact to maintain office status (Centrum Demokraterne 1986: pp. 7-8). In terms of our dependent variable – party platform change – the Center-Democrats changed in 1984 (first election after first-time in government) on 3 issues, and in 1987 (after second-time in government) on 4 issues. In the three elections before 1984, in which this party was in opposition, it changed respectively on 1, 1 and 0 issues. In the two elections after 1987, when the party was in opposition again, it changed on 1 issue. Clearly, in line with our expectations, the Center-Democrats changed on more issues when in government than when in opposition.

The *Christian Union* (CU) was founded in 2000 as a merger between two small orthodox protestant parties – the GPV and RPF. The party takes its inspiration from the Bible, is socially-conservative and center-left on economic issues. The GPV and RPF were historically on the fringes

of the Dutch Parliament. They were very small parties and never participated in government, or were seriously considered as government parties. They are best described as *testimonial* parties, i.e., parties primarily engaged in voicing their principles rather than maximizing their appeal to voters or potential coalition partners. This changed in 1994 when the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) lost the elections and the first Dutch (Purple) government was formed without a Christian party – something that had not happened since World War II. The fact that the GPV and RPF hardly profited from the electoral defeat of the CDA and that they fiercely opposed the socially progressive policies of the Purple government motivated these parties to contemplate closer political cooperation to increase their political influence (Hippe 2010). After many hiccups this resulted in the eventual merger (Hippe 2010). In the subsequent national election of 2002 the party for the first time explicitly stated that it wanted to be in office and indicated with which parties it wanted to form a coalition (Voerman 2010). At this election the party failed at becoming part of a coalition government. In 2006 the party was more successful; it not only increased its seat share but was able to form a coalition government with the Labour party (PvdA) and the CDA until the next elections in 2010.

Per H3, we expect a party such as the Christian Union to have a low aspiration to office, and thus to change more when in government than when in opposition. On our dependent variable – party platform change – we recorded a change in 4 issues at the 2003 elections, a change in 7 issues at the 2006 elections, and a change in 10 issues at the 2010 elections. Hence, the Christian Union changed its platform *more* after its spell in office (2010) than when it was in opposition (2003 and 2006). One area in which the party changed its platform was its stance vis-à-vis homosexuals in the party. Following their interpretation of the Bible the party considered homosexuality to be a sin, and therefore it did not accept members or party representatives who were practicing homosexuals (Voerman 2010). This issue received much media attention in 2007 after a CU city council-member made this point of view rather explicit in a media interview. Opposition parties fiercely criticized the CU and demanded an explanation and the interest organization for homosexuals (COC) considered suing the CU for discrimination. The party eventually reconsidered its point of view and proposed some compromise stating that party representatives should live according to the rules of the Bible, but not explicitly labelling practicing homosexuality as behavior unfit for party representatives. Despite the fact that many within the CU party organization opposed this compromise, it was eventually adopted by the party as its policy (Voerman 2010). As a government party the CU's initial position on homosexuality was much more problematic and received much more media attention

than when it was a party permanently in opposition (Voerman 2010). At the time the CU had two choices: (1) stay a party of pure principle, stick to its platform and risk alienating their coalition partner and potential partners in opposition or (2) switch position and stay an attractive coalition partner for other parties. The party chose the latter option, even though this was unpopular within the party. Our interpretation is thus that once in office, the CU did not want to become again a party permanently in opposition. The increased media attention for government parties is a mechanism that reinforces this particular consideration.

8. Examining differences between issue emphasis change and issue position change.

We now examine whether it makes a difference if we explain changes in issue emphases by parties or issue positions. To do so, we deconstruct our dependent variable party platform change into two components; one analyzing the issue position changes, the other analyzing issue emphasis changes (see table 2 in the manuscript for the classification of issues). Table 7 summarizes the findings of these analyses. Model 11 takes issue position changes as dependent variable and model 12 considers issue emphases changes as dependent variable. The results are very similar to that of our main model (table 4, model 2 in manuscript).

Table 7. Evaluating the difference between position and issue emphases change

	Model 11 (position change)	Model 12 (emphases change)
	irr/se	irr/se
In opposition	.658*	.686*
	(.074)	(.068)
Office aspiration	.990	1.08
	(.197)	(.197)
In opposition*Office aspiration	2.14*	1.80*
	(.441)	(.328)
Years between elections	1.06*	1.12*
	(.025)	(.024)
Effective number of parties	1.03	1.10*
	(.028)	(.029)
Seat change	.857	1.10
	(.294)	(.340)
Constant	2.79*	2.58*
	(.579)	(.520)
Log Likelihood	-3177.50	-3483.24
N	2000	2000

* p<.05. Panel negative binominal regression explaining party platform change

Also, the marginal effects (figure 5) of opposition status for different levels of aspiration are mostly in support of the key hypotheses, H3 and H4. Note that the marginal effects are stronger in magnitude in the analysis of issue position than in the analysis of issue emphases and that H4 is only confirmed in the analysis of issue position. This could be a measurement issue - we have more positional items than salience (emphasis) items – or a conceptual issue – our theory is about platform change as a whole, not about parts.

Figure 5. Marginal effect of opposition on position change (left) and emphasis change (right) for increasing aspiration
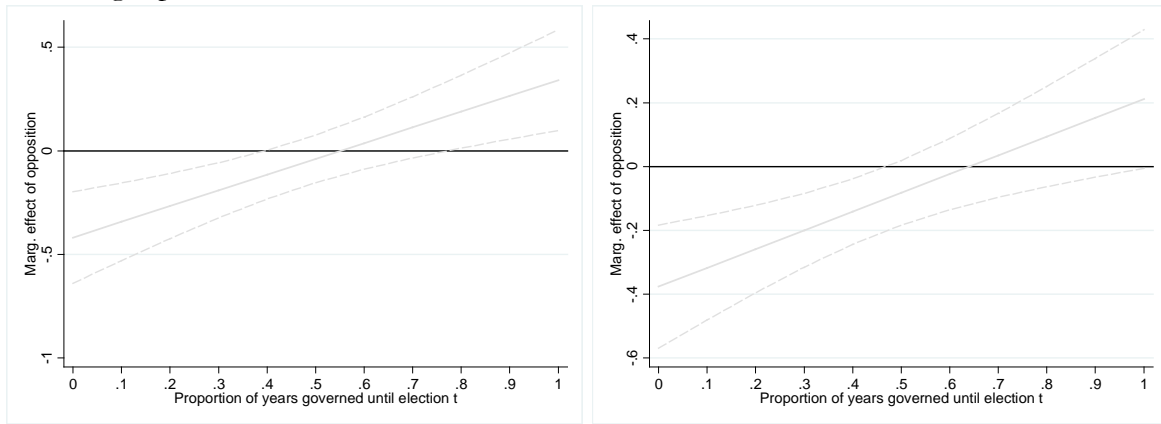
Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around. The graph on the left depicts the results for positional party platform change (Model 11), while the graph on the right considers the results for issue emphases platform change (Model 12).

9. Validating our findings with Chapel Hill Expert Survey data

We have validated our findings using a different dataset. There is no other dataset that has systematically analyzed party positions as expressed in election manifestos. However, expert surveys also measure party positions. The Chapel Hill Expert Survey, for example, measures party positions and emphases on 15 issues (ethnic minorities, international security, regional policy, cosmopolitanism, the environment, urban/rural divide, multiculturalism, immigration, religion, lifestyle, law and order, redistribution, deregulation, EU and spending vs. taxes) for all member-states of the EU in 2006 and 2010 (Hooghe et al. 2010). They do so by taking the mean response of expert placements of parties on scales. We use the standard error of this mean to produce a dependent variable similar to the one presented in the manuscript. For each of the parties, we first evaluate whether the difference between 2006 and 2010 in position or emphasis of each of the 15 issues is statistically significant. This results in 15 dummy variables (1=significant change 0=no change). Subsequently, we sum the 15 dummy variables, which results in a dependent variable

depicting the total amount of party change between 2006 and 2010. This variable runs from 0 to 4 and is not overdispersed, so we can use a poisson regression to model it. Table 8 (model 13) presents the results when we run the same model as the one presented in the manuscript (table 4, model 2) on this new dependent variable.[3]

Table 8. Measuring party platform change on the basis of Chapel Hill Expert Survey data

	Model 13
	irr/se
In opposition	.160*
	(.080)
Office aspiration	.267
	(.230)
In opposition*Office aspiration	28.99*
	(30.88)
Effective number of parties	.981
	(.073)
Seat change	.318
	(.875)
Constant	1.97
	(.996)
Log Likelihood	-97.13
N	93

* p<.05. Poisson regression explaining party platform change

Figure 6. Marginal effect of opposition on party platform change for increasing office aspiration
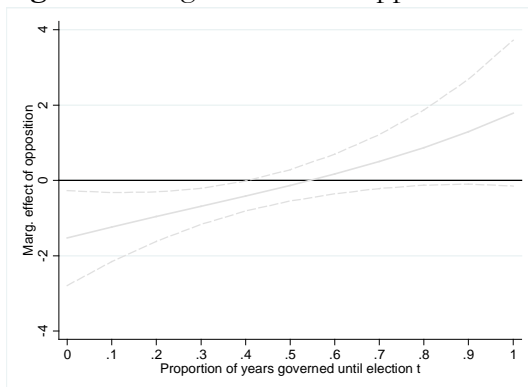
Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around.

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[3] Please note we dropped the years between elections variable because by comparing 2006 and 2010 this variable becomes a constant.

Again, the results are similar to those found in our main analysis (table 4, model 2 in the manuscript). We also plot the marginal effect of being in opposition on platform change for different values of office aspiration (figure 6). For parties with medium to low aspiration, our results are identical to the manifesto change analyses. We cannot, however, evaluate our results for parties with a very high aspiration level (≥0.95) because in 2010 there are no parties with such a high level of aspiration in the data. In sum, using a different dataset we find evidence for H3 as well.

10. Do our findings depend on the inclusion/exclusion of certain cases?

To ensure that our findings are not driven by the inclusion of specific cases, we performed a jackknife analysis. Jackknife standard errors are calculated over a large number of analyses in which parties are left out each in their turn. This way we can evaluate the impact of strong outliers on the conclusions. We find a statistically significant (p<.01) jackknife coefficient of 1.73 (also 1.73 in the manuscript) for the interaction *In opposition * Office aspiration* (see model 14 in table 9).[4] Hence, this analysis continues to support H3 and H4.

Table 9. Jackknife regression of main model

	Model 14
	irr/jkse
In opposition	.700*
	(.067)
Office aspiration	.963
	(.155)
In opposition*Office aspiration	1.73
	(.294)
Years between elections	1.09*
	(.024)
Effective number of parties	1.05
	(.032)
Seat change	.848
	(.213)
Constant	2.81*
	(.541)
Log Likelihood	-4076.51
N	1686

* p<.05. Panel negative binominal regression explaining party platform change

11. Accounting for economic change, public opinion change and electoral performance

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[4] Our results are also robust when countries and elections are excluded each on their turn.

We have run additional analyses in which we control for a country's shift in GDP (measured against current prices and PPPs) and changes in the mean voter left-right dimension (measured between 1 and 10).[5] Including both variables dramatically reduces the number of observations, as can be seen from table 10 (model 15); data on GDP is mostly available from the 1960s onwards[6] and data on the mean voter left right position from 1973s onwards at the earliest. Model 15 (table 10) shows that none of the control variables have an effect on the amount of party change. Moreover, the significant interaction *In opposition*Office aspiration* continues to support our conclusions (IRR=1.97, p<.01, compared to an IRR of 1.73 in the manuscript). Also the marginal effects (see figure 7) are in line with the logic expressed by H3 and H4. Parties with an office aspiration lower or equal than .3 (i.e. they have governed 30 percent of the years they have been included in the sample) change their platform when in office, while parties with an office aspiration equal or higher than .8 are risk-acceptant in opposition. This matches the pattern that we report in the manuscript quite well.

**Table 10.** Controlling for GDP and public opinion shifts

	Model 15
	irr/se
In opposition	.686*
	(.079)
Office aspiration	1.32
	(.297)
In opposition*Office aspiration	1.97*
	(.435)
Years between elections	1.12*
	(.031)
Effective number of parties	1.04
	(.027)
Seat change	.804
	(.320)
Δ GDP	1.00
	(.001)
Δ voter left-right	1.05
	(.237)
Constant	3.68
	(.909)
Log Likelihood	-1625.18
N	638

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[5] Data on GDP was acquired from OECD.Stat, while data on the mean voter left-right position was acquired from the Eurobarometer.
[6] Using other economic indicators would further reduce the number of observations and thereby limit the comparability of this model to our main model.

Figure 7. Marginal effect of opposition on party platform change for increasing office aspiration
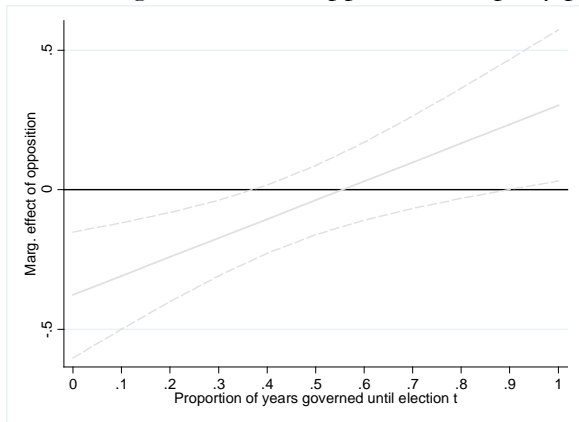
Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around.

In addition to the analyses presented in the manuscript in which we control for the difference between a party's percentage of seats at election *t* and election *t-1,* we also performed two additional analyses to consider the effect of elections beyond government/opposition status. First (see table 11, model 16), we calculated an aspiration level for seats similar to our office aspiration variable and then subtracted the seat aspiration level from the party's percentage of seats at election *t.* This is the *seat change* variable in model 16. We find a coefficient (IRR=.969) that is similar to the seat change variable used in our main model (IRR=.848). Analogous to the manuscript, this effect is statistically insignificant, while the interaction *In opposition*Office aspiration* remains significant (IRR=1.92). Again, the marginal effects graphed in figure 8 (lower left panel) continue to support H3 and H4.

Second, following a suggestion of a reviewer, we ensured that our findings hold when we control for the interaction between seat change (as measured in the manuscript) and government opposition status. As shown in model 17 (table 11), the interaction *In opposition*Seat change* is statistically insignificant, while the interaction *In opposition*Office aspiration* remains significant (IRR=1.68). The marginal effects again confirm the dynamics expressed by H3 and H4. In figure 8 (right panel) we present the marginal effects of opposition/government status for different electoral results. The wide error margins suggest that the effect is mostly insignificant. Only in the interval [-1, 1] we find a significant negative and tiny effect. This means that the better the electoral performance the bigger the difference between opposition and government parties. In other words, opposition parties that won elections change less than government parties that won elections, than opposition

parties that lost elections. Since, the interval of significant effects is rather small, we suggest caution in interpreting this result. Also in this analysis we find evidence for H3 and H4 (see figure 8 top left panel).

Table 11. Additional controls for electoral performance

	Model 16	Model 17
	irr/se	irr/se
In opposition	.663*	.702*
	(.056)	(.062)
Office aspiration	.822	.976
	(.113)	(.146)
Seat change	.969	.896
	(.352)	(.829)
In opposition*Office aspiration	1.92*	1.68*
	(.294)	(.275)
In opposition*Seat change		.965
		(1.46)
Years between elections	1.11*	1.09*
	(.021)	(.021)
Effective number of parties	1.05*	1.05*
	(.023)	(.023)
Constant	2.68*	2.77*
	(.405)	(.428)
Log Likelihood	-3836.61	-4075.57
N	1761	1686

* $p<.05$. Panel negative binominal regression explaining party platform change

Figure 8. Marginal effect of opposition on party platform change for different levels of aspiration (upper [model 17] and lower [model 16] left panel) and for different electoral results (right panel)
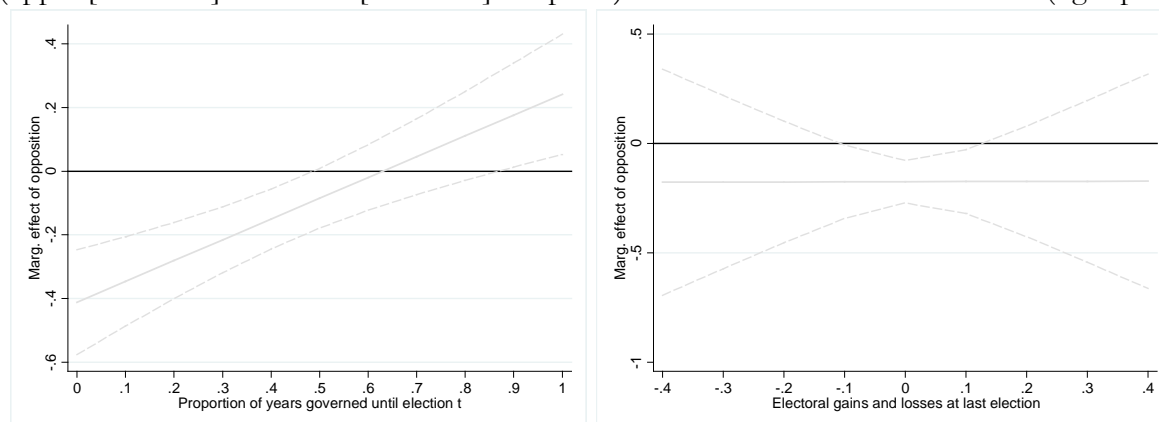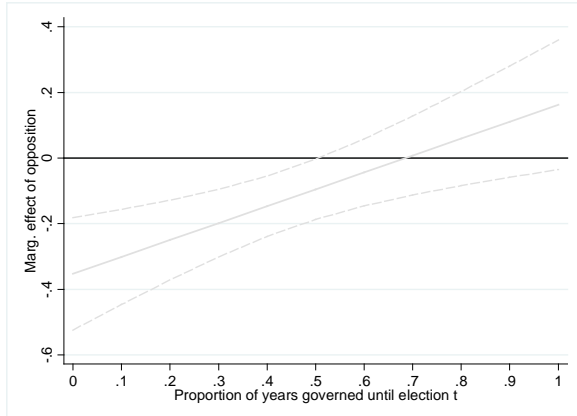
Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. The y-axis denotes the effect (b-coefficient) of being in opposition (reference category is government) on a party's amount of party platform change. Positive values denote that government parties are more likely to change their platform than those in opposition; whereas negative effects provide evidence that this is the other way around.

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