"Status advantage": Within-party MP status and career progression of elected politicians

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Abstract

How does status shape politicians' re-election prospects? A growing body of literature on the so-called incumbent advantage studies politicians' careers by examining how leveraging the privileges associated with a politician's position increases the likelihood of future electoral success. However, this empirical work falls short in isolating the role of status, given that incumbency also provides access to additional resources and networks. To address this gap, our study introduces a new concept, "status advantage," which arises from disparities in the esteem hierarchies experienced by politicians within their party following their election to parliament. Using data from the Greek electoral system and employing a Regression Discontinuity (RD) Design, we compare the re-election prospects of MPs who received bonus seats with those of "regular" MPs. Our findings suggest that MPs elected as regulars have a significantly higher probability of running in the next election and being re-elected, compared to those elected as bonuses—indicating the influence of within-party status on electoral outcomes. Further analysis is needed to determine whether this effect is driven by a party mechanism, where the party is more likely to promote regular MPs, or an individual mechanism, where MPs internalize their status. Our study contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors driving electoral outcomes and highlights the importance of within-party dynamics in shaping political careers and democratic accountability.

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1 Introduction

Can status help politicians make a career? Defined as respect, esteem, or voluntary deference that individuals are afforded by others (Maslow 1943), social status, or prestige, is distinct from mere class, income, or occupation, precisely because it is inherently subjective and relative (Luttmer 2005; Anderson et al. 2012). And yet, it is very powerful (Bourdieu 2010), a vast literature across the social sciences agrees that perceived social hierarchies transcend almost any facet of social life and, either formally or informally, remain present in all societies (see Anderson et al., 2015, for a review). Status-seeking behavior explains phenomena such as conspicuous consumption (Veblen 2005), while status-based societal structures, such as the Hindu caste system, have the power to regulate social interactions (Deshpande 2010). Cultural anthropologists see status as an emergent product of psychological adaptations that evolved to improve the quality of information acquired via cultural transmission: those who hold status become role models and disproportionately influence others around them (Henrich and Gil-White 2001).

How does status then affect politicians' success and electoral survival? Addressing this question is inherently difficult precisely because of all the side benefits that come with status. One example that helps highlight the problem is the well-known incumbency advantage, defined as an electoral premium guaranteed to insiders of party competition vis-a-vis outsiders (Gelman and King 1990; Lee 2001). Inherent in this discussion is the role of status. Holding office, especially after having won an election, must help to strengthen beliefs about one's skills and competence. In other words, incumbency must enhance one's prestige. How much does this help incumbents' electoral trajectories in the long run?

Tacking this question is very challenging because along with a change in status, holding office comes with privileges and unlocks resources that enhance the likelihood of re-election. Several mechanisms have been proposed to explain the roots of the incumbency advantage, ranging from pork barrel politics to deterring potential challengers and building name recognition (Hall and Snyder 2015; Kam and Zechmeister 2013). Isolating the role of status from all these factors requires a setting that is hard to find in practice. Ideally, it would involve comparing politicians from the same party who possess equivalent resources, hold similar institutional roles, and have comparable skills and capacities, but differ in their status within the party.

The Greek electoral system allows us to construct such a comparison. Since 2007, the winner of the election, i.e., the party with the most votes nationally, enjoys a bonus of 40 (later 50) seats. This is a non-trivial proportion of the total number of seats in the parliament, which throughout this period remains constant (n = 300). How exactly these seats end up being distributed is the result of a complicated process, which we describe in detail below. Essentially, apart from the district magnitude, which rather expectedly is positively correlated with the number of bonus seats per district, it is hard to find other systematic predictors of the number of seats within the district that will be used for the bonus. This near-random allocation of bonus seats allows us to compare two sets of MPs: those who would be elected even without the bonus and those who were elected because of the bonus. Employing a Regression Discontinuity (RD) design, we compare the re-election prospects of MPs who receive bonus seats with those of "regular" MPs, comparing elected MPs of different status.

Essentially, the idea is the following: bonus seats are additional seats given to the first party. These seats are thus filled by politicians who, in the absence of the bonus system, would be best losers. Since elections are open-list, the competition that we are interested in here is between candidates of the same party in the same district, of whom one got elected through the normal, non-bonus route, while the other one received the bonus seat as the candidate with the most (or second, or third most, depending on the number of bonus seats per district) preference votes among candidates who would not have gotten elected without the bonus.

We call this estimand the "status advantage," which we understand as the impact of within-party status on individual MPs, particularly how winning a seat influences their status within their party. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to theorize and estimate the effect of within-party rank status of MPs on re-election probability. As mentioned, this is to be expected due to limitations in disentangling the effects of status from all other privileges that come from holding office.

Our approach diverges methodologically from the conventional methodology employed in studies of the incumbent advantage, which typically contrast elected and non-elected politicians. Previous work on incumbent advantage compares politicians that inherently differ in characteristics such as competence and charisma, which are often unobservable and challenging to control for. Consequently, differences in re-election probabilities derived from simple comparisons may not accurately reflect the presence of an incumbent advantage, as they could be driven by factors unrelated to holding office.

This study builds upon Lee's (2008) seminal work, which offers a solution to this selection problem by analyzing close elections in the US. Lee discovers that in races where the Democratic Party narrowly won, there was an approximately 25 percentage points higher probability of winning the next election. In parallel, subsequent studies have adopted similar quasi-experimental research designs to explore the presence of the incumbent advantage across democracies with diverse electoral and party systems. For example, Fiva and Røhr (2018) examine open-list proportional representation systems using local elections in Norway and confirm the existence of an incumbent advantage. Significantly, their research reveals that this effect is not driven by voters but by party elites, illustrating that while the incumbent advantage persists even in party-centered environments, the underlying mechanisms driving it may differ. Our work contributes to this literature by shifting the focus to the comparison of solely elected politicians to isolate the effect of within-party status from competence, access to material resources, and name recognition.

Our research is also connected to the literature differentiating between the incumbent party advantage and the individual incumbent advantage (Fowler and Hall 2014; Magalhaes et al. 2020). This distinction is important because in MMD systems, competition for a seat does not arise only between parties but also between candidates of the same party. Hence, in MMD systems, it is difficult to distinguish between the two. In work related to ours, da Fonseca (2017) looks at local elections in Portugal, managing to estimate both and finding that the personal incumbent advantage is what drives the effect. However, further aspects of electoral systems should be taken into consideration as they might affect the relationship between the two types of advantages. For example, according to Carey and Shugart (1995), we should expect intra-party competition to be more intense when the lists are open compared to closed ones.

Finally, our paper talks to the research on political dynasties, particularly in the aspect related to the functioning of democracy. Previous work shows that extending the time a politician holds office increases the probability that a blood relative will also become an MP. Hence, the phenomenon of political dynasties can be conceptualized as an "inherited incumbent advantage" (Fiva and Smith 2018). In a similar vein, Dal Bó, Dal Bó, and Snyder (2009) demonstrate that relatives of politicians that were barely re-elected for a second term had a higher probability of running for office successfully compared to relatives of candidates that barely lost. They suggest that the difference cannot be explained by competence, but they are not able to disentangle whether the effect is driven by name recognition or networks. On the other hand, Fiva and Smith (2018) find no evidence of an "inherited incumbent advantage" in Norway, indicating that when career progression of politicians is determined by seniority, then the effect disappears.

The paper is structured as follows. In the initial section, we articulate the theoretical framework and the expectations guiding our analysis. Following that we delve into the institutional context and data utilized, offering insights into the electoral system and empirical foundation of the study. Subsequently, we detail the research design and identification strategy employed to examine the proposed hypotheses. Results, accompanied by robustness checks, are then presented, offering empirical support for our findings. Finally, the paper concludes by summarizing key insights and proposing avenues for future research to further enhance our understanding of incumbency advantage dynamics.

2 Theory

Before delving into the theorization of the effects of within-party status on re-election, it is crucial to clarify the definition of status as utilized in this study. While political scientists frequently conflate status with class, it is essential to recognize that these are distinct concepts (Mendelberg 2022). Status pertains to a subjective social rank that is socially constructed, whereas class is objective and determined by individuals' positions within a market.

In the context of this study, status differences are defined as ranked hierarchies of esteem that are subjective and socially determined. Individuals occupying higher status categories are perceived as deserving more authority and esteem compared to those in lower categories. Status distinctions become particularly pronounced when they are perceived as relevant to the objectives of a specific context (Ridgeway and Correll 2006). In an electoral context, it is reasonable to assume that the primary goal of a political party is to secure electoral victory. Consequently, Members of Parliament (MPs) who directly contribute to the party's success by winning seats may be regarded as more deserving of esteem compared to those who lost or partly relied on electoral rules for their victory. Therefore, the method and outcome of a politician's attainment of office can lead to the categorization of MPs into different status levels.

In the Greek electoral context, it is conceivable that MPs elected with bonus seats may be perceived as having attained their positions with less agency, potentially attributed to luck or external factors. Conversely, "regular" MPs who secure seats through their own electoral performance may be seen as having earned their positions based on individual merit alone. Consequently, MPs obtaining bonus seats may find themselves assigned to a lower status compared to their counterparts elected through traditional means.

We propose three potential mechanisms through which differences in within-party status rank could influence the re-election prospects of elected politicians. First, there may be a voter perception mechanism, whereby voters are able to discern these status differences. However, given that to distinguish bonus MPs from regular MPs a voter would have to study the complexities of the Greek electoral system, obtain the data for each constituency, and make time consuming calculations, the first mechanism is unlikely to be prevalent in this context.

Second, a party mechanism could be at play. Parties might use the bonus-regular distinction as a heuristic to gauge MPs' competence, thereby assigning non-bonus to high status categories and bonus to low status categories. The party then might be more likely to promote high status MPs compared to low ones as the former will be considered as more likely to produce again good electoral results. This differential treatment could be manifested through different channels such as the distribution of cabinet offices, media exposure, or allocated speaking time in parliament.

A third potential mechanism involves the internalization of status by both regular and bonus MPs. This could lead to differences in effort and performance, as individuals may internalize their perceived status within the party (Ridgeway and Correll, 2006) thereby adjusting their behavior according to it. Given that both the party mechanism and the individual one point to the same direction we expect that MPs that are elected as bonus MPs will have a lower probability of being re-elected in the next election.

For an MP to secure re-election, they must first choose to participate in the next elections. However, this decision, made post-treatment, is also susceptible to influence from both party and individual mechanisms. Running for office entails costs, and politicians who perceive a lower likelihood of success may opt to refrain from participating in the next election. Should MPs internalize their lower (higher) status within the party, they would likely assign a lower (higher) probability to their potential success and may consequently be less (more) inclined to run for re-election. Furthermore, MPs receiving less support and promotion from their party may also perceive a lower probability of success, further impacting their decision to participate. Therefore, we expect that MPs elected as bonus MP will have a lower probability of participating in the next election.

3 Institutional setting and data

In Greece, the electoral system operates under an open list "reinforced" proportional representation (PR) framework with a 3% national threshold. This system allows voters to select their preferred candidate from the party they vote. It is important to note that candidates in party lists are listed in alphabetical order. This removes some endogeneity concerns. Depending on the district magnitude, voters have the option to cast votes for multiple individual candidates from the same party, with the maximum number of candidates being four and the minimum one. Since 2007, Greek legislative elections have included a provision whereby the party receiving the highest number of votes is awarded 40 bonus seats. This number was increased to 50 seats from 2015 onwards. Consequently, there is a distribution of 250 (60) seats in total, where all parties surpassing the 3% threshold participating, and an additional 50 (40) seats reserved for the party with the highest vote count that is distributed across constituencies where seats have not been filled.

To determine the distribution of the 250 parliamentary seats among electoral formations that have

surpassed the 3% national threshold, the total number of votes each formation receives nationwide is multiplied by 250. This product is then divided by the total number of valid ballots cast across all formations participating in the allocation. If the sum of the resulting whole-number quotients falls short of 250, the remaining seats are assigned, in descending order, to the formations with the largest decimal remainders of their quotients until the full number is reached.

The allocation process proceeds in three stages. First, for each party in each district, the total number of valid ballots cast in the election is divided by the number of seats in that district and then multiplied by the number of votes the party received in that district. The resulting figure is rounded down to the nearest whole number. For example, if a party is allocated 1.9 seats in the initial calculation, it will receive only 1 seat. Consequently, this initial distribution leaves some of the 250 seats unassigned, as well as some parties with fewer seats than they would be entitled to based on the national distribution. To rectify this, additional seats are allocated to parties with a shortfall, prioritizing districts with available seats according to the parties' largest decimal remainders. This process is repeated until each party receives its full entitlement of seats. Finally, the 50 bonus seats are awarded to the leading party, utilizing the remaining unfilled seats across districts after the previous allocations are completed.

We collected the data on individual MP's and the votes they obtained for five elections where the first party had bonus seats and we had one election afterwards as an outcome, that is 2007, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2019. For the statistical analysis we retained only elected MPs of the first party in the constituencies where there was at least one regular and bonus MP. This means that we excluded, constituencies with only bonus MPs or only regular MPs as we would not be able to create a value for the running variable for them. The resulting dataset comprises 483 observations. The distribution of these observations based on the percentage of party votes obtained in each constituency can be seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1: frequency of observations by distance to the threshold. Green bins denote bonus MPs and blue regular ones

4 Estimation strategy

Comparing bonus with non-bonus politicians would indeed encounter similar selection issues as comparing elected with non-elected individuals. In other words, non-bonus politicians are likely to possess abilities that contributed to their success in accumulating more votes in the first place. Therefore, we employ a regression discontinuity design to isolate the local effect of status at the threshold that determines whether an MP is elected as bonus or regular.

In Single Member District (SMD) settings, estimating the winning margin is straightforward. To adapt our design for a Proportional Representation (PR) system, we adopt the same strategy as Fiva and Røhr (2018). The running variable, that is, the winning margin, can be interpreted as the percentage of votes from the total votes obtained by the party in a specific constituency that a bonus MP would need to receive to be elected as a regular MP. Similarly, for regular MPs, the winning margin represents the percentage of party votes in the district that they would need to lose to be elected as a bonus MP. Thus, the winning margin for each candidate is defined with reference to the last "regular" MP of the first party and its first bonus MP, respectively. To state it formally:

$$WinMargin_{i,l} = \begin{cases} \frac{P_votes_{il} - P_votes_last_regular_l}{Party_votes_l}, & \text{if } i = \text{bonus} \\ \\ \frac{P_votes_{il} - P_votes_first_bonus_l}{Party_votes_l}, & \text{if } i = \text{regular} \end{cases}$$
(1)

The $WinMargin_{i,l}$ is the winning margin for candidate *i* in list *l*. P_votes_{il} denotes the votes that candidate *i* obtained in list *l*. $P_votes_last_regular_l$ is the votes the last non-bonus elected MP in list *l* got. Similarly, $P_votes_first_bonus_l$ is the votes the first bonus elected in list *l* got. Finally, $Party_votes_l$ denotes the sum of the votes that the party's candidates got in list *l*.

The basic local linear regression we estimate is the following:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Status + \beta_2 Status_margin_{il} \cdot Status + \xi_i + \eta_t + \delta_t$$
⁽²⁾

The treatment variable *Status* takes the value of 1 if the MP is elected as a non-bonus MP and 0 if they are elected as bonus. The interaction between the variables *Status_margin_i*. *Status_l* allows for the slope to differ on either side of the threshold. We cluster standard errors at the level of constituency. The terms η_l and δ_t denote list fixed effects and election fixed effects, respectively. We include these terms because intra- party competition takes place within lists and elections. For the main specification Y_i is a binary variable denoting 1 if the MP was re-elected in the next election and 0 otherwise. When testing running in the next election, Y_i takes the value of 1 if the MP participated and 0 otherwise. Given that competition between candidates takes place within districts and elections, we include election and district fixed-effects. For the estimation of the RD bandwidth, we use the mean-square-error optimal bandwidth which offers the best tradeoff between bias and variance (Cattaneo, Idrobo, and Titiunik 2019).

It is important to acknowledge a major limitation of the Regression Discontinuity (RD) design, namely its inability to extrapolate beyond the cutoff. Consequently, we cannot assess the effect of status for politicians elected as regulars or bonuses with significant winning or losing margins. However, the RD design benefits from extensive application in similar settings and the availability of validation and falsification tests to ensure robustness. Thus, we conducted tests for sorting, assessed covariate balance at the cutoff, and evaluated the sensitivity of results to the choice of bandwidth, adhering to established standards in RD analysis (Cattaneo and Titiunik 2022; Eggers, Tuñón, and Dafoe 2023).

5 Results

5.1 Sorting and Covariate balance

One of the fundamental assumptions of the Regression Discontinuity (RD) design is that observations do not systematically sort around the cutoff point. According to Eggers et al. (2014), there are no theoretical reasons to expect candidates to strategically position themselves around the threshold. Such sorting behavior would necessitate access to highly detailed information, which is typically not feasible in electoral contexts. To assess this assumption, we conducted a standard continuity test at the threshold, following the methodology outlined by Cattaneo, Idrobo, and Titiunik (2019). Our analysis, (Appendix A) revealed no evidence of systematic sorting behavior.

Additionally, we employed a series of pre-treatment covariates to further evaluate the robustness of the RD design. Commonly used covariates in RD applications examining the incumbency advantage include prior election success, gender, and personal vote counts from previous elections. To this, we add prior education. As presented in Table 1, our analysis found no significant differences in these covariates at the cutoff point. This finding suggests that the distribution of key characteristics among candidates on either side of the threshold is balanced, bolstering the validity of our RD analysis. RD plots illustrating the distribution of covariates and sensitivity to bandwidth selection can be found in Appendix A and B, respectively.

	Robust Estimate	SE		
Elected (t-1)	0.0213	(0.1018)		
Female	-0.0087	(0.0841)		
Participated (t-1)	0.0172	(0.0977)		
High expertise	-0.1100	(0.0756)		
Other job	0.0846	(0.0908)		
Undergraduate	-0.0674	(0.0612)		
Postgraduate	0.0784	(0.0726)		
PhD	0.0451	(0.0674)		
Observations	483			

Table 1: Covariates balance

Note:Balance tests for covariates at the cutoff. RD estimates are based on local linear specification using a triangular kernel. Standard errors clustered at the constituency level. Statistically significant at * 0.05 level, ** 0.01 level, *** 0.001 level.

5.2 Results: Continuity framework

Figure 2 illustrates the impact of being elected as a non-bonus MP on the probability of re-election in the subsequent election, specifically at the cutoff point. The left panel of Figure 2 reveals a significant jump at this cutoff, indicating that non-bonus MPs experience a statistically significant increase in the likelihood of securing re-election. This positive effect remains robust across various bandwidth specifications, as demonstrated in the right panel of Figure 2. Similarly, Figure 3 shows that non-bonus MPs exhibit a higher probability of running in the next election compared to their bonus counterparts, as seen in the left panel. This effect, too, remains consistent under different bandwidth specifications, as depicted in the right panel of Figure 3.



Figure 3: Participation in the next election



Note: The vertical line represents a zero win margin, indicating a transition from barely winning a regular seat to winning a bonus seat. Plot to the right display RD estimates and 95% confidence intervals as a function of the bandwidth size. The dashed line indicates the MSE optimal bandwidth. RD estimates are based on local linear specification using a triangular kernel. Standard errors clustered at the constituency level.

Table 2 presents the regression coefficients for the discontinuities described above. The results indicate a substantial 23-percentage-point increase in the likelihood of re-election for regular MPs compared to their bonus counterparts. Additionally, the findings demonstrate that non-bonus MPs show a greater propensity to participate in subsequent elections, as reported in the second column of Table 2. In particular, regularly elected politicians are approximately 18 percentage points more likely to run for MP positions in the following national election. Combined, these results show that having bonus status demotivates politicians from continuing to invest in their political careers, while even if they do, their efforts do not appear to pay off in terms of re-election. Overall, the analysis highlights the importance of within-party status disparities in influencing both re-election prospects and political engagement among elected MPs.

This evidence necessitates an inquiry into the reasons behind this demotivation and lower electoral performance. As discussed in the theoretical section, party elites may treat politicians differently based on their status and performance, which could lead to the disengagement of certain politicians from active politics. An observable implication of this could be that party elites may be more inclined to allocate government positions to MPs who entered parliament without requiring additional "institutional support," thereby creating a two-tier parliamentary group. To test this hypothesis, we examine the probability of government office allocation between bonus and non-bonus MPs. The analysis reveals no statistically significant differences in the likelihood of securing office between the two groups, suggesting that party elites do not differentiate between politicians on either side of the cutoff when it comes to allocating government positions.

	(reelection)	(participation)	(office)
Conventional	0.2121	0.1720^{*}	0.0339
	(0.1095)	(0.0710)	(0.0389)
Bias-corrected	0.2378^{*}	0.1758^{*}	0.0272
	(0.1095)	(0.0710)	(0.0389)
Robust	0.2378	0.1758^{*}	0.0272
	(0.1217)	(0.0822)	(0.0435)
Observations	483	483	483

Table 2: Status effects on re-election, participation, and Offices

Note: Results from regression discontinuity estimation with reelection, participation and being assigned to an office/committee position as an outcome. RD estimates are based on a local linear specification using a triangular kernel. Standard errors clustered at the constituency level. Statistically significant at * 0.05 level, **0.01 level, *** 0.001 level.

One point of note regarding the results for re-election concerns the potential effect of consecutive electoral victories by the same party. If the same party wins two consecutive elections and is awarded the 50 bonus seats in both instances, it is likely that these additional seats will be allocated to a similar pool of candidates. This could diminish the magnitude of the observed effects, as some politicians who were initially elected with bonus seats may secure those same seats again in subsequent elections. To account for this possibility, we conduct a subsample analysis, excluding the only instance where the incumbent party was not defeated in the subsequent election—specifically, the 2019 election. Interestingly, the results show an increased magnitude of the effect (see Table 3). This finding provides suggestive evidence of a status advantage between bonus-elected and non-elected candidates. In particular, when the party wins successive elections and reclaims bonus seats, both bonus-elected and non-bonus-elected politicians are re-elected at a higher rate compared to non-elected candidates.

	(reelection)	(participation)	(offices)
Conventional	0.3901^{***}	0.1913^{*}	0.0441
	(0.1176)	(0.0967)	(0.0372)
Bias-corrected	0.4185***	0.1960^{*}	0.0446
	(0.1176)	(0.0967)	(0.0372)
Robust	0.4185***	0.1960	0.0446
	(0.1255)	(0.1067)	(0.0424)
Observations	385	385	385

Table 3: Status effects on re-election, participation and Offices (without 2019)

Note: Results from regression discontinuity estimation with reelection, participation and being assigned to an office/committee position as an outcome without the 2019 wave. RD estimates are based on a local linear specification using a triangular kernel. Standard errors clustered at the constituency level. Statistically significant at * 0.05 level, ** 0.01 level, *** 0.001 level.

Furthermore, we examine whether the differential effect on the likelihood of re-election is driven by varying levels of participation between the two groups under study. Since the decision to run for an MP position in the subsequent election is a post-treatment choice, we refrain from estimating the probability of re-election conditional on participation. Instead, we construct lower and upper bounds of our estimate (Santosh and Juziwara 2016), following the approach of Fiva and Smith (2018). More specifically, in order to obtain a lower bound we assume that had a complier bound MP participated in the elections they would have the same probability of being elected as a "regularly" elected MP. Accordingly, to obtain the upper bound we assume that complier bound MPs would have a zero probability of being re-elected. The results show that the effect of being re-elected conditional on running for an MP position as an always taker or complier is bounded between 14 and 25.8 percentage points.

6 Conclusion

Our study highlights the critical role of status in shaping politicians' electoral outcomes and their willingness to remain committed to their political careers. Building upon previous research on incumbent advantage, our paper utilizes a setting that allows us to isolate the effect of pure status, ruling out the possibility that the observed effects are driven by factors such as competence, networks, name recognition, or pork-barrel politics. This is achieved by focusing solely on elected officials, differentiating between those elected through regular procedures and those elected via bonus seats, rather than comparing winners and losers.

Moreover, our findings offer valuable insights that extend beyond the incumbent advantage literature. The evidence can contribute to a broader understanding of how status influences individual outcomes across various contexts and settings. In essence, our study suggests that merely holding a particular status, which is recognized by one's peers and organization, and of which the individual is aware, can shape future decisions and trajectories.

This phenomenon can be explained by two non-mutually exclusive mechanisms. First, differences in status may be leveraged by those in authority to establish formal or informal hierarchies, thereby prioritizing certain groups or individuals over others. As a result, individuals with a lower or less prestigious status may have fewer opportunities to demonstrate their value or may even encounter unequal treatment. Second, even when status differences are not actively used by others to create hierarchies, an individual's awareness of having been privileged by an external rule may affect their choices. This may stem from personal perceptions of self-competence or the recognition that their initial success was marginal and driven by factors other than their electoral performance.

To better understand the mechanisms at play and the reasons behind the decreased electoral participation and outcomes of bonus MPs, we aim to analyze legislators' speeches. This will allow us to investigate whether the distinction between bonus and non-bonus MPs affects their legislative performance. By examining both the content and frequency of their speeches, we can identify potential differences in policy advocacy and engagement between MPs of different status levels. These proposed analyses will not only strengthen the empirical foundation of our study but also provide deeper insights into the mechanisms underlying the relationship between MPs' status and their career progression.

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Appendix A



Appendix B





