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Geographical Representation Under Proportional Representation: The Cases of Israel and the Netherlands

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It is frequently assumed that proportional representation electoral systems do not provide geographical representation. For example, if we consider the literature on electoral reform, advocates of retaining single-member district plurality elections often cite the failure of proportional representation to give voters local representation (Norton, 1997; Hain, 1983; see Farrell, 2001). Even advocates of proportional representation often recognize the lack of district representation as a failure that has to be addressed by modifying their proposals (McLean, 1991; Dummett, 1997).¹ However, there has been little empirical research into whether proportional representation elections produce results that are geographically representative. This paper considers geographical representation in two of the most “extreme” cases of proportional representation, Israel and the Netherlands. These countries have proportional representation with a single national constituency, and thus lack institutional features that force geographical representation. They are thus limiting cases, providing evidence of the type of geographical patterns we are likely to see when there are no institutions that enforce specific geographical patterns. We find that the legislatures of Israel and the Netherlands are surprisingly representative geographically, although not perfectly so. Furthermore, we find an interesting pattern. While the main metropolitan areas are somewhat over-represented, so are the most peripheral areas. It is the areas bordering the metropolises that are most under-represented.

With national constituency proportional representation electoral systems, we can consider geographical representation as just another form of descriptive representation, to use Pitkin’s (1967) term.² Just as we can ask whether the make-up of the legislature matches the composition

¹ McLean views single transferable vote as a means for providing proportionality with local representation, while Dummett argues that the German mixed-member system has this property.

² We should note that we are considering here descriptive geographical representation and not the behavior of representatives. There is evidence that representatives behave differently in countries SMDP than in countries with PR. In the USA, for example, it is well documented that Members of Congress devote a great deal of resources doing casework for constituents, such as addressing day-to-day problem with the bureaucracy and addressing specifically local affairs with legislation (see for example Fenno, 1978; Mayhew 1974). In the case of the UK, there is evidence that Members of Parliament do increasing amounts of such casework (Norton, 2002) and that the single-member district elected members of the German Bundestag do likewise (Saalfeld, 2002). However, it appears that members of the Dutch Tweede Kamer do very little of such casework, typically conceiving of themselves as professional legislators or representative of a political party and its voters (see Gladdish, 1991; Andeweg, 1997). Similarly Dutch voters are unlikely to approach members of parliament with day-to-day issues, but are more likely to turn to representatives of local government, bureaucrats or even the Royal family (Gladdish, 1991). Interestingly, it appears that Israeli legislators do a great deal of casework for constituents and interest groups (Hazan, 1997). Furthermore, Hazan argues that this trend has increased since the introduction of party primaries. Of course, it is important to be careful about interpreting these behavioral differences normatively. What could be seen as lack of local responsiveness, on one hand, could also be seen as a lack of pork-barrel politics and political interference in the administration of government. However, from a positive point of view it does appear that the way that Dutch parliamentarians represent their voters is rather different from the way that British, American or Israeli legislators do. This, however, is not the focus of this paper.

of the country as a whole in terms of class, gender or ethnicity, we can ask the same question with regard to region. With single-member district elections (and to some degree with proportional representation elections with districts less than the whole country) geographical representation is an institutional matter. Each district by definition has its own representative or representatives, and geographical representation is privileged over other forms of descriptive representation, in that the legislature must be geographically representative, but may not be representative in terms of other characteristics. However, with national district proportional representation, geographical representation is a strictly empirical matter. People may choose to vote for people who are geographically close to them, or they may choose to vote for people who are similar to them in terms of class, race or gender, or they may choose to ignore descriptive characteristics altogether. Only empirical analysis can show us what kinds of descriptive representation are satisfied, and whether there are trade-offs between different forms of descriptive representation.³

Both Israel and the Netherlands have national constituency proportional representation election systems, which impose very weak incentives (if any) to privilege geographical over other forms of descriptive representation. The PR election systems in most other countries distribute legislative seats amongst sub-national units, thus creating a regional basis for representation (although there are sometimes a number of nationally distributed seats to compensate for disproportionalities resulting from the regional results, as in Austria and Belgium). For the Israeli Knesset there is simply a single national constituency with 120 seats. In the Netherlands things are somewhat more complex. The 150 seats in the Tweede Kamer are allocated to parties based on their national vote totals. However, there are 18 sub-national districts, for each of which parties submit a list of up to 30 candidates (Gladdish, 1991; Farrell, 2001). Regional vote totals determine the number of party candidates elected from each list. However, parties can put the same name on multiple lists, or even put the same 30 names forward everywhere, although this would limit them to winning 30 seats nationally. Furthermore, candidates who are placed high enough on several lists to be elected, can choose which list to be elected from, which gives the party considerable flexibility in managing who is elected. Thus the sub-national districts only provide a very weak territorial constraint for parties.

Many parties in both Israel and the Netherlands have internal rules that recognize regionalism. However, in both countries parties are private institutions, and thus these rules represent choices by the parties and not external constraints. Indeed, the degree of centralization varies considerably between parties. For example, the largest liberal party in the Netherlands (the Party of Freedom and Democracy – VVD) retains far more central control over selection than the Labor Party or the Christian Democrats (Koole and Leijenaar 1988). In Israel the two largest parties, Likud and Labor, have had party primaries to select candidates since 1996. In both cases approximately half the candidates were chosen from a national primary and half from regional primaries, although the national candidates disproportionately occupied the highest places on the list in both parties (Hazan, 1997). In the Netherlands, the Labor Party (PvdA) and the Christian Democrats (CDA) allow the national executive to give guidelines for candidate selection, but essentially leave the final decision to selectorates of regional party activists (Koole and Leijenaar, 1988). Interestingly, there has apparently been considerable debate within the Labor Party as to whether the selection system gives too much weight to regional factors at the expense

³ For example, there is considerable evidence that proportional representation with large district magnitude provides more accurate descriptive representation with regard to gender and ethnicity (Farrell, 2001). We can investigate the degree to which this descriptive accuracy comes at the expense of geographical representation.

of other qualifications such as technical expertise. In any case, Koole and Leijenaar (1988) find that it is crucial for members of the Tweede Kamer to retain links with local party organizations, as these are crucial to securing a list position with a reasonable chance of reelection, and around 25% of incumbents fail to be reelected.

Given that parties choose to be regionally representative to a greater or lesser extent, we need to consider why they should behave in this way. There are two possible groups of reasons – vote maximization and internal political competition. In terms of electoral competition, a party would be extremely foolish to field a list made up of candidates from only one region (say, the capital city). Other parties could easily point out this fact and use regionalism as an appeal. Furthermore it may well be useful to have local candidates to campaign in different regions. List places can be viewed as a political resource, which parties aim to distribute in the way that maximizes their total vote, much in the same way as they distribute other campaign resources such as money. Thus even when there are no institutional incentives to be regionally representative, electoral competition is likely to provide some incentive for regionally balanced lists. Secondly, internal party competition is likely to generate some pressure for regionally list balancing as party organizations from different regions compete for a fair share of list places for “their” candidates.

We can derive five hypotheses about the expected patterns of geographical representation under national proportional representation. Firstly, there is likely to be some capital city bias. Given that the legislature meets in the capital city, there will be a tendency for candidates (and particularly party leaders) to live there for practical reasons. However this capital city bias is likely to be constrained by the need to be politically appealing across the country. Secondly, regions where regional identity is salient are likely to be more strongly represented than regions that are less distinctive. This follows from parties maximizing votes. We would expect a region where voters will only vote for a party with many local candidates to receive more representation than a region where voters do not care about which region party candidates come from. If it is the case that regional identity is stronger and more salient in peripheral regions, then we may see a pattern where both the capital city and the most outlying regions are over-represented, whereas the regions close to the capital are under-represented.

Thirdly, we would expect parties to over-represent regions where they are strong, but not to over-represent regions where they are in a truly dominant position. Thus the relationship between party vote share and party representation of a region will be curvilinear. This follows from the logic of vote maximization. If parties treat list slots as a campaign resource, it would be foolish for a party to allot many list places to a region that is never going to give the party much support, say because of ideological incompatibility. The party would be better investing its resources in regions where those resources are likely to produce a gain. However, if the ideological affinity of a region for a party is so strong that the party can count on the support of the region without expending many resources, it will make sense for the party to put its resources elsewhere. Of course, in a multi-party system many parties will not be in such a dominant position in any region, so these parties will provide most representation to the regions they are strongest, providing us with a linear relationship.

This logic of campaign resource distribution is quite similar to that outlined by Pattie and Johnson (2003) for single-member district plurality elections. They argue that rational parties will invest their resources in marginal constituencies – if a seat is either unwinnable or safe there is no marginal gain from spending money. Thus the relationship between party support in a seat and its spending should be curvilinear. Pattie and Johnston test this relationship in the case of the

2003 UK General Election and find it confirmed. However, with proportional representation elections we would expect this relationship to be somewhat weaker. Under proportional representation the incentive to devote resources to a region does not completely disappear once a party becomes the largest party in that region. Even if a party wins over 50% of the vote in a particular region, each additional vote it wins still has the same value. By the same argument, parties still have an incentive to allocate resources to regions where they have no hope of being the largest party.

Our fourth hypothesis is that national list proportional representation leads to national politics. That is to say, the main parties compete over the entire country and do not “surrender” certain regions by refusing to commit any resources there. In particular we would expect the main parties to place candidates from all regions high enough on the list that they elect representatives from across the country. The logic of proportional representation leading to national politics is outlined by Caramani (2004). With a single-member district system, if all the seats in a given region are unwinnable, a party may choose to devote very few resources to that region, and the party would elect no representatives from the region. However, under national list proportional representation an extra vote counts the same wherever it is won, regardless of whether it comes from a region where the party is weak or strong. Therefore parties would be expected to try to win votes wherever they can, leading to national competition. Of course, by hypothesis three we would expect parties to deploy more resources in regions that are ideologically favorable. However, we would expect vote-maximizing parties to tailor their appeals so that they are at least marginally competitive in all regions. Thus we would expect them to maintain some degree of regional balance in their vote and in their legislative delegations.

The fifth and final hypothesis concerns the relationship between geographical representation and other forms of descriptive representation, notably gender and ethnicity. It has been noted that large-district proportional representation tends to produce more female representation and more representation of ethnic minorities than small-district or single member-district systems. This is explained in terms of it being far easier to balance a long list to make it representative according to several different criteria, than it is to balance a short list (see, for example, Farrell, 2001). Given that large-district proportional representation is frequently criticized for providing inadequate geographical representation, it makes sense to ask whether its accuracy in gender and ethnic descriptive representation is bought at the expense of less accurate geographical descriptive representation. In particular we may ask whether those areas that are geographically over-represented (particularly metropolitan areas) provide a disproportionate share of female and ethnic minority representatives. Thus our fifth hypothesis is that this should be the case.

Geographical Representation: Empirical Findings

Data collection began at the official websites of the Dutch Tweede Kamer and Israeli Knesset, for collection of the names and city of residence of the 2003 members.⁴ Political party and gender information was also included. Lastly, we collected data on foreign-born members serving in the Tweede Kamer, and Knesset members were classified by ethnicity (Jewish, Non-Jewish) in order to develop measures of minority representation. Multiple Internet sources were used to locate missing information about members and to classify them geographically into sub-

⁴ <http://www.tweede-kamer.nl/> and http://www.knesset.gov.il/mk/eng/mkindex_current_eng.asp.

national regions. All but two members in each country could be geographically classified, for a total of 148 Tweede Kamer and 118 Knesset members. This classification was facilitated through the use of a city population website, the Worldwide Directory of Cities, and maps from various sources.⁵ Every effort was made to validate all classifications.

For comparative purposes, the 12 provincial regions of the Netherlands and the Israeli government's six administrative districts, in addition to settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, are used as primary geographic units of analysis. This level of geographic analysis provides for the clearest tests of our five hypotheses. Lowering the level of inquiry to city/municipality, while providing a more detailed set of data for certain analysis (i.e., rural/urban), would blur the distinction as to what counts as "capital city" vs. adjacent regions, given the fact that many members live in smaller adjacent municipalities or suburbs of larger cities. Conversely, aggregating the data at a higher level might blur important distinctions between these boundaries that are recognized by the national governments. The provincial/district divisions best facilitate the distinctions we classify as core, adjacent, and periphery regions in relation to the national capitals.

We consider our empirical results in three sections. Section A deals with overall patterns of geographical representation, and tests hypotheses 1 and 2. Section B considers the relationship between party behavior and geography, and the effect of this on the system of party competition (hypotheses 3 and 4). Finally Section C deals with the relationship between geographical representation and other aspects of descriptive representation, such as gender and ethnicity (hypothesis 5).

A. Patterns of Geographical Representation

Table 1 displays the number of Members of the Tweede Kamer from each province of the Netherlands, arranged from least to most populated. In order to compare the relative proportionality of members to the population of the province in which they reside, a proportionality ratio was calculated by dividing the percentage of members by the percentage of the population in each province. Perfect proportionality results in a ratio score of 1. Scores above 1 reflect over-representation and scores below 1 reflect under-representation. Overall proportionality for each country is measured using a simple Gini coefficient (G), calculated with the cumulative percentages of population and members for each region.⁶ A score of 1 would reflect perfect proportionality, with deviances from equal proportionality resulting in scores less than 1.

Comparing the percentages of the population to the percentages of total members in the Tweede Kamer, we find significant geographical patterns, even though there are no institutional constraints requiring this to be the case. The Gini coefficient is 0.79. It is true that the metropolitan areas – the densely urban triad of the Holland provinces and Utrecht – are over-represented (proportionality ratios of 1.33, 1.32 and 1.44), which is consistent with hypothesis 1. However the Northeastern province of Groningen and the Southwestern province of Zeeland are also over-represented, consistent, with hypothesis 2, that peripheral regions will be over-

⁵ On cities, see <http://www.citypopulation.de/> and <http://www.calle.com/world/>. For other maps, the National Geographic World Atlas (2003) was useful, and information on Israeli settlements was obtained from <http://domino.un.org/maps/m3070r17.pdf>.

⁶ $G = 1.0 - \frac{1}{n} \sum [p_i(q_i + q_{i-1})]$ where p = population percentage in the i th interval, and q = member percentage in the i th interval, plus the percentages of the lower intervals, and n = total number of intervals.

represented. Flevoland, the most recently established province, and Friesland just to the north, are the most proportionately represented (proportionality ratios of .96 and 1.09, respectively).

Table 1: Provincial Representation in the Dutch Tweede Kamer

Province	population	MPs	%population	%MPs	Proportionality ratio (1.0 = proportionality)
Flevoland	342266	3	0.02	0.02	0.96
Zeeland	379593	4	0.02	0.03	1.15
Drenthe	513016	4	0.03	0.03	0.85
Groningen	539210	7	0.03	0.05	1.42
Friesland	603134	6	0.04	0.04	1.09
Overijssel	1100465	8	0.07	0.05	0.80
Utrecht	1142371	15	0.07	0.10	1.44
Limburg	1193296	9	0.07	0.06	0.83
Gelderland	1993978	10	0.12	0.07	0.55
Noord-Brabant	2377993	9	0.15	0.06	0.41
Noord-Holland	2556945	31	0.16	0.21	1.33
Zuid-Holland	3475738	42	0.21	0.28	1.32
Totals	16218005	148			
<i>Gini coefficient</i>		<i>0.79</i>			

The lowest levels of Dutch geographical representation occur in the provinces of Gelderland and Noord-Brabant, rather than in the most peripheral provinces. Together these two provinces, the third and fourth largest in terms of population, are home to 27% of the Dutch population but only 13% of Tweede-Kamer members. In addition, Overijssel, Limburg and Drenthe are also under-represented provinces, and among these, only Drenthe has a population below one million. Figure 1 displays this information graphically, showing that it is not peripheral regions like Groningen and Limburg, but those adjacent to the core provinces of Utrecht, Noord-Holland, and the capital province of Zuid-Holland, that are represented by proportionately fewer members of parliament.

Figure 1: Geographical Representation in the Netherlands

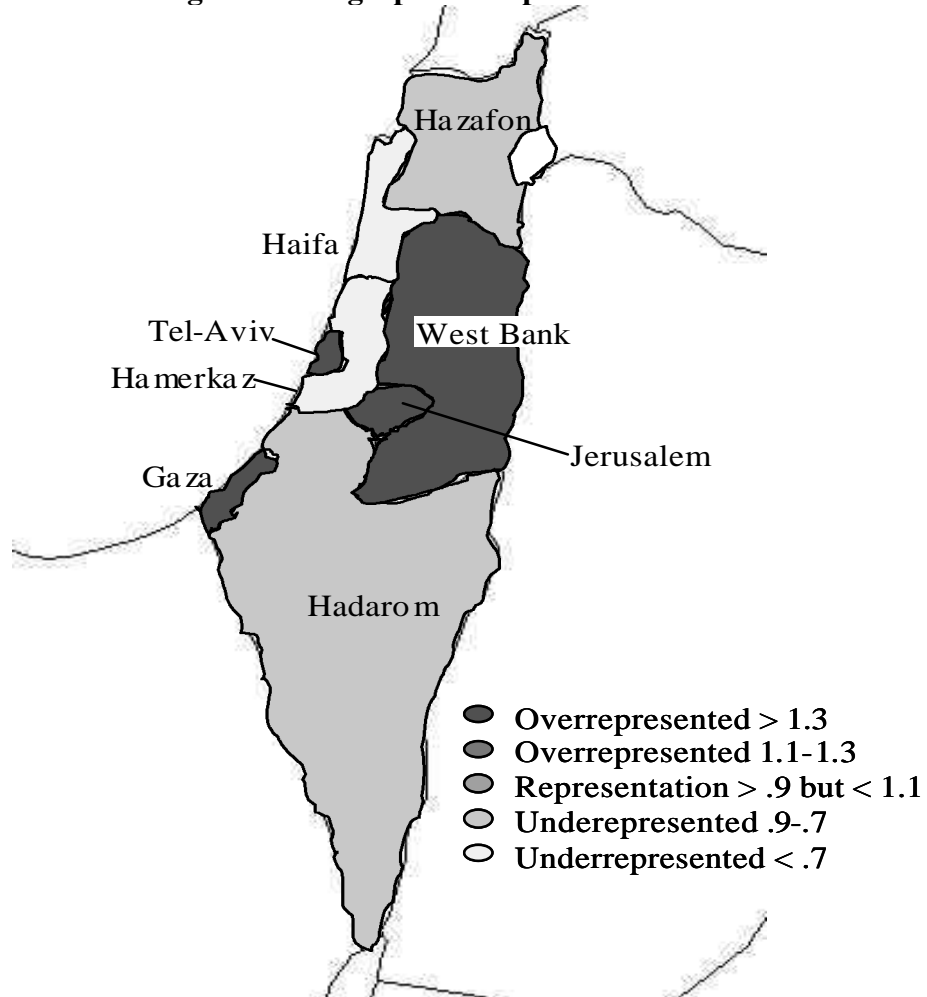


In the case of Israel (Table 2), the corresponding overall Gini coefficient is slightly lower (0.74) than that found in the Netherlands. Like the Netherlands, there is over-representation of metropolitan areas (Tel Aviv and Jerusalem have proportionality ratios of 1.31 and 1.56). However, in Hamerkaz, the central administrative district that holds the largest share of the Israeli population and links the national centers of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem is strongly under-represented (ratio = 0.66) as is Haifa (0.54), which borders it. The mid-size districts of Hazafon in the north and Hadarom in the south are somewhat under-represented, but less so than Hamerkaz or Haifa. By contrast, Israelis living in settlements outside the administrative districts, representing only 3% of the total population, are represented at nearly four times (proportionality ratio = 3.73) the strength at which they would be under perfect geographic proportionality, since 13% of Knesset members reside here. Figure 2 illustrates the deviance from geographic proportionality in the distribution of Knesset seats.

Table 2 : District Representation in the Israeli Knesset

Province	population	MKs	%population	%MKs	Proportionality ratio (1.0 = proportionality)
Territoriess	226028	15	0.034056	0.13	3.73
Jerusalem	794100	22	0.119649	0.19	1.56
Haifa	838900	8	0.126399	0.07	0.54
Hadarom	948500	13	0.142913	0.11	0.77
Hazafon	1127200	15	0.169838	0.13	0.75
Tel Aviv	1161100	27	0.174945	0.23	1.31
Hamerkaz	1541100	18	0.232201	0.15	0.66
Totals	6636928	118			
<i>Gini</i>		<i>0.74</i>			

Figure 2: Geographical Representation in Israel



Thus we observe similar patterns of geographical representation in both the Netherlands and Israel. The central metropolitan areas are over-represented (hypothesis 1). However, in line with hypothesis 2, the most peripheral regions are either also over-represented (Groningen, Zeeland in the Netherlands, the territories in Israel) or are only slightly under-represented (Hazafon and Hadarom in Israel, Limburg in the Netherlands). The regions that are most under-represented are those that are adjacent to the over-represented metropolitan areas (Noord-Brabant and Gelderland in the Netherlands, Hamerkaz and Haifa in Israel). This pattern should not be particularly surprising when we consider the logic behind the first two hypotheses. If geography is salient in peripheral areas, either because there is a distinctive culture (Friesland, for example, has its own language) or because it is intrinsically important (the fate of the territories defines the main dimension of Israeli political competition), then parties will need to nominate local people in order to be electorally competitive in these areas. However, this may not be necessary in the areas bordering the metropolises. It may be the case that geography is less salient (for example, people in Noord-Brabant may not mind being represented by people who live in Den Haag or Utrecht). Alternatively, given that these are geographically small countries, Members who live in the capital may be able to campaign and keep in touch with people (and in particular local party selectorates) in the semi-peripheral areas without having to live there, being only an hour's drive or train ride away.

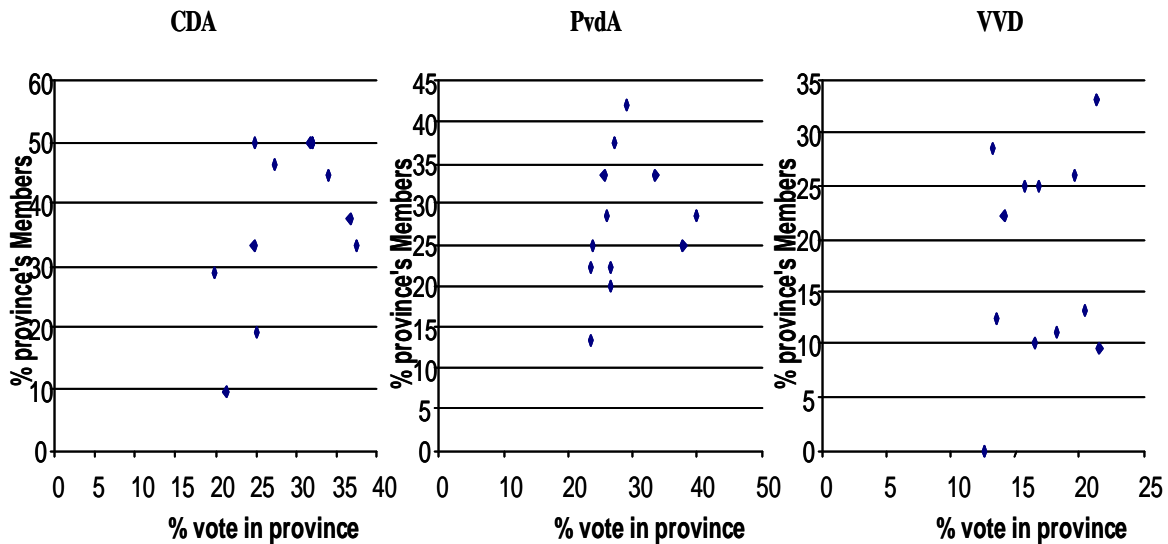
B. Geography and Party Competition

The pattern of geographical representation we observed in the previous section could be the result of different patterns of party behavior. That is, geographical representation could result from every party (or at least the main parties) being nationally competitive and providing representatives from every geographical region. Alternatively, certain parties could specialize in certain regions and not bother to provide representatives in regions where they are less successful, essentially surrendering these regions. To distinguish between these patterns, we need to consider the geographical representation provided by each party. We have two hypotheses. At the micro level, hypothesis 3 states that parties should provide more representation in areas where they are popular, but not in areas where they are overwhelmingly popular. At the macro level, hypothesis 4 states that national list proportional representation will produce a national party competition, where the main parties compete in every region. (An appendix lists all parties in the Netherlands and Israel, together with abbreviations.)

Hypothesis 3 states that the relationship between party vote in a region and the contribution a party makes to representing that region should be curvilinear – parties will provide more representatives in regions where they are strong, but not in regions where they have a dominant position. Figure 3, which plots the party vote for each region against the percentage of that region's representatives the party in question provides, allows us to test this in the case of the three large parties in the Netherlands. In the case of the two largest parties, the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) and the Labor Party (PvdA) we see the predicted curvilinear patterns, with both parties contributing most to the representation of provinces where they win around 30% of the vote, and contributing relatively less to the representation of provinces where they win substantially more or less than 30%. However, there appears to be no relationship in the case of the third largest party, the market-liberal VVD. This may be due to the fact that while the VVD wins votes nationally, its representatives are concentrated in the metropolitan areas. All of the smaller parties concentrate their representatives in the provinces where they win most votes:

the Green Left has 6 of its 8 eight representatives in Noord Holland; the List Pim Fortuyn has 5 of its 8 Members in Zuid Holland; 4 of the 6 Democrats '66 representatives are from Noord and Zuid Holland, as are 6 of the 9 Socialist Party representatives; the three representatives of the Christen Unie come from Friesland, Overijssel and Utrecht, the three provinces where they win their highest vote shares.

Figure 3: Provincial Representation by Parties in the Netherlands



In terms of hypothesis 3, the pattern we observe in Israel is similar to that in the Netherlands, except that no party wins substantially more than 30% in any district. Given that no party is dominant in any district, we do not see a curvilinear relationship between party vote share in a district and the party's contribution to the representation of that district, but rather a linear relationship. Figure 4 shows this in the case of Likud and Labor. Both these parties contribute more to the representation of the districts where they are electorally strong. With Likud this relationship is somewhat muted due to the fact that Likud wins between 27% and 32% of the vote in every district, except Haifa. With Labor the relationship is clearer, with Jerusalem being the only outlier (5 of the 19 Labor Knesset Members live in Jerusalem, although Labor only won 9% of the vote there). Most of the smaller parties concentrate their representatives where they are electorally strong: all of the representatives of Shinui reside in Tel Aviv, Hamerkaz and Haifa, the district where Shinui and the secular sub-culture it represents are strongest; of the religious parties, 7 of the 11 Shas members live in Jerusalem or Hadarom, while 4 of the 5 Yahadut Hatorah Members live in Jerusalem; Ha-ichud Ha-leumi, a right-wing secular party particular concerned with security and settlement issues has 4 of its 6 Members living in the territories; 5 of the 8 representatives of the Arab parties are from Hazafon, where the Israeli Arab population is concentrated. There are two exceptions to this pattern – the National Religious Party and Meretz draw their representatives fairly uniformly from the different provinces.

Having considered the behavior of individual parties, we can now look at the overall patterns of party competition. In particular we are interested in whether we observe a situation where the main parties all compete in all regions of the country (as suggested by hypothesis 4),

or whether parties only win votes and elect representatives from regions where they are strong. Either pattern could produce the aggregate patterns of geographical representation we have described in the last section, so it is necessary to consider party level data. We consider the geographical performance of parties both in terms of vote share and in terms of the residence of their legislators. We find that in the case of the Netherlands that there is strong evidence of national party competition, whereas in the case of Israel this evidence is far weaker.

Figure 4 : District Representation by Parties in Israel

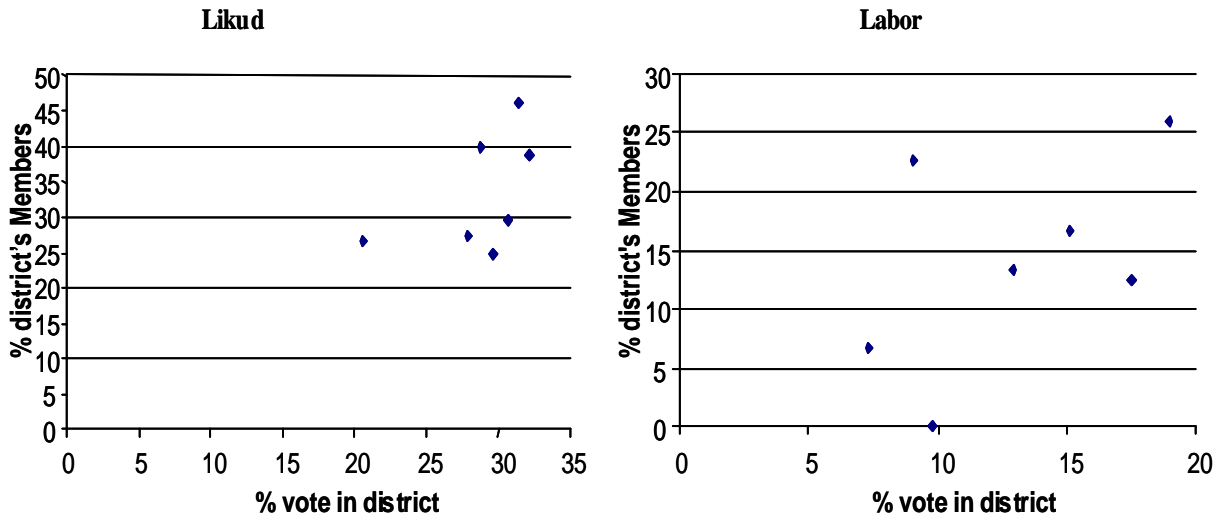


Table 3 gives the party vote by region for the Netherlands' 2003 General Election. Overall we observe national political competition, in that the variation in support for most parties between regions is quite small. The coefficient of variation between regions (the standard deviation as a percentage of the mean) for 6 of the 9 parties is between 18 and 25%. For the Lijst Pim Fortuyn it is slightly larger (31.3%). It is only the small Calvinist parties (CU and SGP) that can be described as only competing regionally, in that they win virtually no support in some regions and have coefficients of variation of over 50%. If we consider the three parties that win over 10% of the national vote – the Christian Democrats (CDA), the Labor Party (PvdA) and the market-liberal VVD – we see that there is three-way competition in virtually all provinces. In the metropolitan provinces (Noord-Holland, Zuid-Holland and Utrecht) as well as in Flevoland, the three parties each have between 20% and 30% of the vote.⁷ In the non-metropolitan provinces, one party typically has a significant advantage over its competitors (in Limburg and Noord-Brabant the CDA has a lead of more than 10% over the PvdA, whereas in Groningen and Drenthe the PvdA has such a lead), but (except in the case of the PvdA in Groningen) does not win more than its two largest competitors combined.

⁷ With the exception of Zuid-Holland, where the VVD has 19.6%.

Table 3: Party vote in Netherlands by Province

	CDA	Pvd A	VVD	SP	GL	LPF	D66	CU	SGP
Flevoland	24.7	25.6	21.3	5.4	4.8	7	4.1	3.6	2.1
Zeeland	32	23.8	15.7	5	3.7	5.3	2.7	2.9	7.7
Drenthe	24.8	37.8	16.8	5.1	4.1	3.8	3.4	2.9	0.3
Groningen	19.9	40.2	13.2	7.4	6.1	3.4	3.9	4.4	0.3
Friesland	32	33.5	12.6	6	4.5	3.7	2.8	3.2	0.4
Overijssel	36.6	27.3	13.5	4.9	4.3	3.4	3	4.4	2.2
Utrecht	27.3	23.5	20.4	5.9	6.7	4.8	5.2	3.1	2
Limburg	37.5	26.7	14.1	7.2	4.5	5.4	2.9	0.3	0.1
Gelderland	31.7	26.6	16.5	5.8	5.1	4.2	3.6	2.5	3
Noord- Brabant	33.9	23.6	18.2	8.5	4.2	5.6	3.6	0.6	0.4
Noord- Holland	21.2	29	21.5	7	6.9	6	5.7	1	0.2
Zuid- Holland	25	26.1	19.6	5.3	4.7	8.7	4.3	2.2	2.6
Coefficient of variation %	20.3	19.5	19.1	18.7	21	31.3	25.1	52.4	121. 4
Total	28.6	27.3	17.9	6.3	5.1	5.7	4.1	2.1	1.6

Source: <http://adam-carr.psephos.org>.

When we consider the degree to which party delegations are geographically representative, we see a rather more regional picture, as evidenced by the amount of white space in Table 4. Table 4 gives the percentage of the legislators resident in each province that belong to each party (thus, for example, 50% of the 4 legislators from Zeeland are CDA). The three large parties provide representatives from every province (with the exception of the VVD in the case of Friesland), although as noted, they provide more representatives from provinces in which there vote is strong but not overwhelmingly so. The smaller parties, however, only provide representatives from the provinces that make up their electoral heartlands. Whereas they do not represent explicitly regional interests, they do appear to represent interests that are regionally concentrated. Thus the Tweede Kamer combines three large parties whose delegations are to some degree geographically representative of the entire nation with small parties whose delegations are restricted to a few provinces, even though those parties win votes nationally.

Table 4: Percentage of Tweede Kamer Members from each Province by Party

	CDA	PVDA	VVD	SP	GL	LPF	D66	CU	SGP
Flevoland	33.3	33.3	33.3						
Zeeland	50	25	25						
Drenthe	50	25	25						
Groningen	28.6	28.6	28.6		14.3				
Friesland	50	33.3						16.7	
Overijssel	37.5	37.5	12.5					12.5	
Utrecht	46.7	13.3	13.3		6.7	6.7		6.7	6.7
Limburg	33.3	22.2	22.2	11.1			11.1		
Gelderland	50	20	10	10		10			
Noord-Babant	44.4	22.2	11.1	11.1			11.1		
Noord-Holland	9.7	41.9	9.7	9.7	19.4	3.2	6.5		
Zuid-Holland	19	28.6	26.2	7.1		11.9	4.8		2.4

Israeli politics appears far more regional, both in terms of party vote share and the geographical representativeness of parties. Table 5 shows vote share by district.⁸ Only Likud and the small left-wing Meretz party have a coefficient of variation of less than 25%. The second largest party, Labor-Meimad, has a coefficient of variation of 34%, and does particularly poorly in Jerusalem, the territories and the southern district of Hadarom. However, it should be noted that the regional character of Labor's vote may be a result of Labor's extremely poor performance in the 2003 Knesset election. The secularist Shinui party, Shas (a Sephardic Orthodox religious party) and Ha-ichud Ha-leumi (a right-wing secular party) all have coefficients of variation between 30% and 40%. The remaining 7 small parties (mostly religious and the Arab parties) have very large coefficients of variation and have extremely concentrated electorates. The one exception is Yisrael B'Aliya, an ethnic Russian party whose support was comparatively national. This party, however, has since merged with Likud.

⁸ This is only approximate, as Israeli electoral districts do not overlap perfectly with the administrative districts.

Table 5: Party Vote in Israel by District

	Territories	Jerusalem	Haifa	Hadarom	Hazafon	Tel Aviv	Hamerkaz	Coef var %	Total
Likud	28.8	27.9	29.6	31.3	20.6	30.7	32.1	13.4	29.39
Labor-Meimad	7.4	9.1	17.5	9.8	12.9	18.9	15.1	34	14.46
Shinui	6.6	7	13.3	11	6.8	15	14.6	35.7	12.28
Shas	11.6	12.6	4.8	12.2	6.3	8.7	7.6	33.8	8.22
Ha-ichud Ha-leumi	10.8	5.7	5.7	8.7	5	3.4	5.1	39.8	5.53
Meretz	3.4	4.9	4.7	3.7	5.1	6.9	5	23.6	5.21
Yahadut Hatorah	9.1	18.1	1.8	3.3	1	6.1	2.8	99.6	4.29
National Religious Party	10.6	6.5	3	3.7	2.6	3.3	5.2	56.7	4.2
Hadash	0.3	0.4	2.8	0.8	13	0.4	1.8	165	2.98
One Nation	1.4	0.9	3.1	4.5	3.9	1.7	2.8	51.1	2.76
Balad	0.8	0.3	3.7	0.8	8.8	0.2	1.1	139	2.26
Yisrael B`Aliya	2.5	2	3	3.9	2.2	1.2	1.8	37	2.15
United Arab List	0.3	0.1	1.1	2.7	7.6	0.3	1.4	137	2.08

When we consider the patterns of geographical representativeness of party legislators in Table 6, we see even more regionalism. Likud is geographically quite representative, providing at least 25% of Knesset members from each district. Labor is nationally representative in the minimal sense of providing representatives from six of the seven districts, but it has no Member from Hadarom and only one from the territories. However, Labor does provide 23 % of the Members from Jerusalem, where it also performed extremely poorly. The remaining parties only provide Members from a few districts where they are electorally strong, with the exception of Meretz and the National Religious Party.

Thus in terms of the behavior of parties in providing geographical representation, our findings are consistent with hypothesis 3. In both Israel and the Netherlands the stronger a party is in a region the more representation it provides, provided it is not electorally dominant there. In the latter case (which empirically seems to occur when a party wins more 35% of the vote in a region), the party appears to take the region for granted and actually provides less geographical representation. In terms of the overall patterns of party competition that result, we find mixed results with regard to hypothesis 4 (that national list proportional representation leads to national political competition). In the case of the Netherlands we see national political competition, both in terms of party vote share and the residence of Members, although there are some parties that are geographically concentrated in terms of their representatives. In the case of Israel, however, political competition is far more regional in spite of national list proportional representation. We may speculate that this is due to the fact that the most salient ideological and social cleavages overlap with geography. There is a secular culture concentrated on the Mediterranean coast, a

religious culture centered on Jerusalem and the south, while the Israeli Arab population is concentrated in the north of the country. Ironically the pattern of representation is not all that different from what would be expected under single-member district plurality elections – two national parties and a host of small parties representing geographically distinct interests – although of course the largest party does not receive a majority of the seats from a plurality of the votes.⁹

Table 6: Percentage of Knesset Members from each District by Party

	Territories	Jerusalem	Haifa	Hadarom	Hazafon	Tel Aviv	Hamerkaz
Likud	40	27.3	25	46.2	26.7	29.6	38.9
Labor-Meimad	6.7	22.7	12.5		13.3	25.9	16.7
Shinui			37.5			33.3	16.7
Shas	6.7	18.2		23.1	13.3		5.6
Ha-ichud Ha-leumi	26.7	4.5			6.7	3.7	
NRP	13.3	4.5		7.7	6.7	3.7	
Meretz	6.7	4.5	12.5	7.7		3.7	5.6
Yahadut Hatorah		18.2				3.7	
One Nation				7.7			11.1
Balad					20		
Hadash-Ta'al			12.5		6.7		5.6
United Arab List				7.7	6.7		

C. Geography and Other Forms of Descriptive Representation

It has often been claimed that proportional representation does not provide geographical representation, but does provide high levels of descriptive representation in terms of other criteria, such as gender and ethnicity (see, for example, Farrell 2001). We can consider whether there is any trade-off between geographical and other forms of descriptive representation. If it is the case that proportional representation facilitates descriptive representation at the expense of geographical representation, then we would expect those regions that are geographically over-represented to provide a disproportionate number of the representatives of various ascriptive groups that tend to be under-represented, such as women and ethnic minorities. In particular we would expect the over-represented metropolitan areas to provide a disproportionate number of the representatives from these groups (hypothesis 5). Essentially, we would expect parties to produce lists that are balanced in terms of gender and ethnicity by selecting women and minority candidates from the metropolitan areas.

⁹ Various authors (Elazar, 1988; Sartori, 2000) have argued that a single-member district electoral system in Israel would probably not reduce the number of parties because of the geographical concentration of many parties' support.

In the Netherlands this appears to be the case. The Netherlands has high levels of gender and foreign born representation. Currently 37% of the Members of the Tweede Kamer are female, second only internationally to the Swedish parliament. Additionally 9% of the Tweede Kamer is foreign born, as opposed to 9.8% of the population (Stalker, 2003).¹⁰ Table 7 gives the number of female and foreign born representatives from each province. It also gives a proportionality ratio for each province, calculated as the percentage of the total female (foreign-born) representatives residing in that province, divided by that province's percentage of total population, so that a score of 1.0 indicates proportionality.

Table 7: Female and Foreign-born Members of Tweede Kamer by Province

Province	population	MPs	Female MPs	% Female MPs	Proportionality ratio	Foreign born MPs	% Foreign born MPs	Proportionality ratio
Flevoland	342266	3	2	3.6	1.72	0	0	0.00
Zeeland	379593	4	1	1.8	0.78	0	0	0.00
Drenthe	513016	4	1	1.8	0.57	0	0	0.00
Groningen	539210	7	3	5.5	1.64	0	0	0.00
Friesland	603134	6	1	1.8	0.49	0	0	0.00
Overijssel	1100465	8	3	5.5	0.80	0	0	0.92
Utrecht	1142371	15	5	9.1	1.29	2	13.4	1.77
Limburg	1193296	9	3	5.5	0.74	0	0	0.00
Gelderland	1993978	10	3	5.5	0.44	0	0	0.51
Noord-Brabant	2377993	9	2	3.6	0.25	0	0	0.43
Noord-Holland	2556945	31	13	23.6	1.50	5	38.5	1.98
Zuid-Holland	3475738	42	18	32.7	1.53	5	38.5	1.46
Totals	16218005	148	55	100		13 *	100 *	

* There is no residential data for one Member

We can see that the metropolitan provinces and Groningen are significantly over-represented amongst female representatives, and that Noord-Brabant and Gelderland are the most under-represented. This pattern is almost identical to the one we observed with regards to geographical representation in section A. It is precisely those regions that are most over-represented in terms of total Members that are most over-represented in terms of female Members. If we compare Figure 5, which maps gender over-representation and Figure 1, which maps geographical over-representation, we will see that they are virtually identical. Similarly, all of the foreign born representatives reside in the three metropolitan provinces. This, of course, does not prove that there is a causal link between the lack of perfect geographical representation and the strong descriptive representation of women and immigrants. However, it is consistent with the hypothesis that parties obtain lists that are balanced in terms of gender and place of birth by

¹⁰ Furthermore, immigrants from countries of recent immigration are represented as well as those born in the former Dutch colonial possessions. Of the 13 foreign-born MPs, six were born in Turkey or North Africa.

choosing metropolitan women and immigrants rather than choosing geographically balanced lists.

Figure 5: Gender Representation in the Netherlands

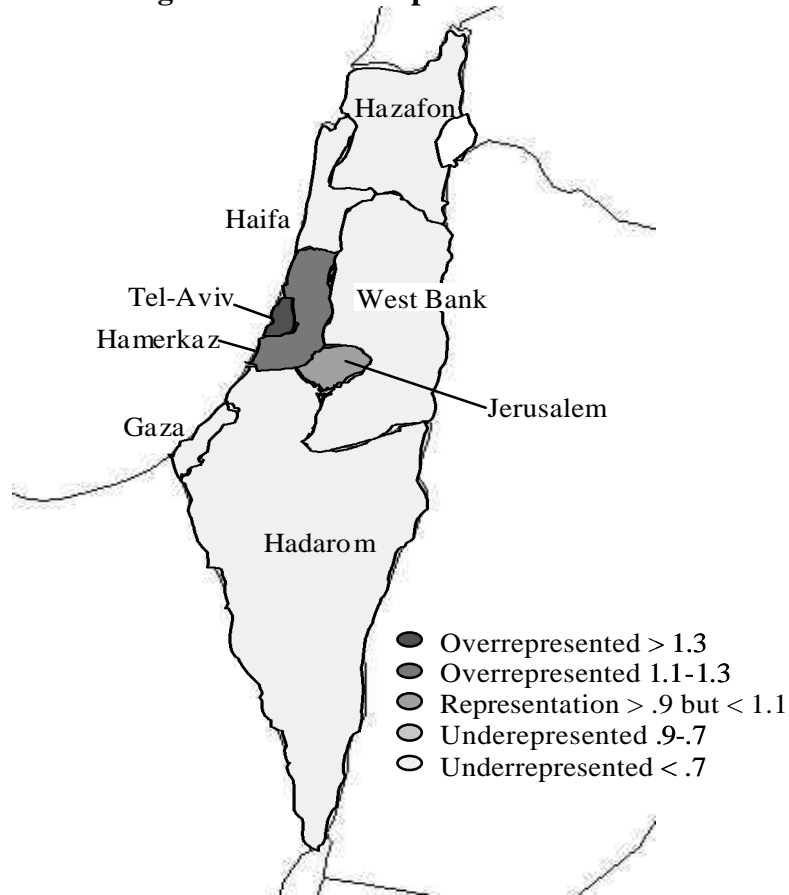


In the case of Israel, the patterns we observe are not consistent with hypothesis 5. Israel has a very low level of female representation for a country with list proportional representation, its score of 15% being comparable with countries with single-member district plurality elections such as the UK and USA (Farrell, 2001). Non-Jewish Israelis are also under-represented making up around 19% of the population (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002), but only 8.3% of the Knesset. In terms of female representation, 13 out of the 18 female Knesset Members reside in either Tel Aviv or Hamerkaz, which is adjacent to it. Tel Aviv is a metropolitan area that is over-represented in terms of Knesset members. However, it is not nearly as over-represented as the territories, which provide no female representatives. Furthermore, Hamerkaz is the second most under-represented district. In terms of non-Jewish representation, 7 out of the 10 non-Jewish Knesset Members are from the northern district of Hazafon, which is where the Israeli Arab population is concentrated. Unlike the Netherlands, metropolitan over-representation does not appear to facilitate a high degree of gender or minority representation.

Table 8: Female and Non-Jewish Members of Knesset by District

District	population.	MPs	female MPs	% female MPs	Proportion-ality ratio	Non-Jewish MPs	% Non-Jewish MPs	Proportion-ality ratio
Territories	226028	15			0.00			0.00
Jerusalem	794100	22	2	11.1	0.93			0.00
Hefa	838900	8	1	5.6	0.44	1	10	0.79
Hadarom	948500	13	1	5.6	0.39			0.00
Hazafon	1127200	15	1	5.6	0.33	7	70	4.12
Tel Aviv	1161100	27	8	44.4	2.54	1	10	0.57
Hamerkaz	1541100	18	5	27.8	1.20	1	10	0.43
Totals	6636928	118	18	100		10	100	

Figure 6: Gender Representation in Israel



These findings warrant further examination of the relation between party seat distributions and descriptive representation of women and minorities, which differs between the Netherlands and Israel. It is worth checking to see if the dominance of regional political parties in Israel contributes to the overall lower proportion of women serving in the Knesset compared to the Tweede Kamer. Table 9 shows gender and immigrant representation by political party for the Netherlands.

Table 9: Female and Foreign-born Tweede Kamer Members by Party

Party	MPs	female	% MPs female	Foreign born MPs	% MPs foreign born
CDA	44	13	30	3	6.8
PvdA	43	19	44	5	11.6
VVD	27	9	33	3	11.1
SP	9	4	44	1	11.1
GL	8	5	63		
LPF	8	1	13	1	12.5
D66	6	3	50		
CU	3	1	33		
SGP	2				
Total	150	55	37	13	8.3

In the case of the Netherlands all parties except the Calvinist SGP and the anti-immigration Lijst Pim Fortuyn have women making up at least 30% of their parliamentary delegation. There is some variation by ideology, with parties of the left (Green Left, Socialist Party, PvdA, D'66) having more female representatives than the more conservative parties (CDA, VVD, CU). However even these parties have a considerably higher proportion of female representatives than any party in Israel. In terms of immigrant representation, the three main parties each have at least 3 foreign born representatives, while the Socialist Party and the anti-immigration Lijst Pim Fortuyn have one each.

In the case of Israel, an obvious explanation for the low level of female representation is that the religious subculture and the parties it supports are socially traditionalist and do not promote female political representation. However, this cannot completely explain the low levels of female representation that we observe. It is true that the religious parties (with the exception of the NRP) and the Arab parties do not provide any female representatives. However, only 20% of the representative of the three largest secular parties (Likud, Labor and Shinui) are female, still a low level by international standards. In terms of non-Jewish representatives, 8 out of 10 of these are from the three Arab parties, while the other two are Druze members of Likud. This total of 10 represents a decline of 3 from the previous Knesset, due to the fact that both the Labor Party and Meretz did so poorly that their Arab candidates were not placed high enough on the lists to be elected, resulting in all Jewish delegations for these parties.

Table 10: Female and Non-Jewish Knesset Members by Party

Party	MKs	female	% MKs female	Non-Jewish MKs	% MKs foreign born
Likud	40	8	20	2	5
Labor	19	4	21		
Shinui	15	3	20		
Shas	11				
Ha-ichud Ha-leumi	7				
NRP	6	1	17		
Meretz	6	1	17		
Yahadut Hatorah	5				
One Nation	3	1	33		
Balad	3			3	100
Hadash-T'aal	3			3	100
United Arab List	2			2	100
Total	120	18	15	10	8.3

Conclusion

We have considered two cases where we are least likely to observe geographical representation – small, non-federal countries with national list proportional representation. Nevertheless, we observe significant geographical patterns. To summarize our findings, three of our five hypotheses are confirmed in both electoral systems. We find moderate geographical bias in the core regions where capital cities are located. However, over-representation in these regions does not come at the expense of the peripheral regions, but in the mid-size regions adjacent to the cores. The second hypothesis claimed that geographical representation should be strong in politically salient regions, and we find that this is the case, particularly in the peripheral regions of Groningen in the Netherlands, and the West Bank/Gaza Strip territories of Israel. Thirdly, political parties do tend to over-represent geographies where they are strong, but not areas where they are overwhelmingly strong. As a result some small parties do not seat any candidates even in the most heavily populated regions. The fourth and fifth hypotheses, that national PR voting systems contribute to nationalized political parties, and that geographical over-representation is associated with stronger descriptive representation in terms of women and minorities, are supported in the case of the Netherlands but not Israel.

What we do consistently find is that place matters, even in these geographically small countries with national proportional representation. This phenomenon can be explained by the embeddedness of socio-cultural cleavages within geographic boundaries and the manner in which political parties render such cleavages electorally. While there appears to be less overlap of socio-cultural and geographic boundaries in the Netherlands, we still find considerably more sensitivity to geography by political parties than one would expect, given the well-documented

national, power-sharing cohesiveness of Dutch politics (Lijphart, 1999). In Israel, geography and political culture appear so tightly interwoven that they constitute a major determinant of the distribution of party competition. This is strikingly apparent in the settlements, where less than a quarter of a million people are currently represented by five political parties.

The lower levels of geographical representation found in adjacent regions can be understood in part as a practical function of space. Perhaps where the political centers are only a short drive away, voters can be relatively confident that representatives can retain local ties and will therefore “act for” their interests in the capital. Further, since it is the mid-size regions that are geographically under-represented (as opposed to the smallest regions), we can assume that voters have the strength in numbers to affect party strategies or otherwise give electoral expression to politically relevant dimensions of conflict. In fact it appears that because proportional representation is so sensitive to politically salient differences within regions, the smallest regions benefit disproportionately when the main parties recruit and seat at least one member, the minimal level of representation necessary to keep from losing small regions to minor parties. Political activists in the smallest regions also have an incentive to be represented by large parties, thereby increasing their chances of being part of a governing coalition.

Even though stronger geographical representation does not yield higher percentages of women and minorities overall, we find that the various forms of descriptive representation are tied together in important ways. For example, it does appear that the bias in capital city representation facilitates the electoral expression of second-order, or within-party political distinctions, such as a more accurate rendering of female and minority representation. Of course, this will not be the case where other contextual factors limit such expression (i.e., the limited presence of Arabic minorities in Tel Aviv). Furthermore, where we find disparities between populations and representatives along such descriptive dimensions, it indicates that within-party ideology more directly determines the composition of the legislature than does the geographic distribution of seats. Thus, we generally expect that non-geographic dimensions of descriptive representation would be affected more under different districting rules when parties are regionally concentrated.

For these critical cases, then, we conclude that national proportional representation provides for representation of geography *and* allows for voters to link representation to issues of importance where socio-cultural and geographic boundaries do not overlap. In short, it appears to provide for a relatively close resemblance of “characteristics that are politically relevant for reproduction” (Pitkin, 1967, pp. 87). In addition, because of the importance of local ties and the ease with which factions can express distinct differences under proportional representation, parties seeking majority strength need to expand beyond their geographic bases, which can lead not only to more proportional geographical representation, but acts also as a constraint on the number of parties within the system. The geography of a political system is thus an important consideration in evaluating the probability that PR systems will, on average, produce greater descriptive disproportionality or electoral fragmentation than alternative systems, including the use of multi or single-member districts. While this investigation provides only a partial judgment of some descriptive features of representation, future research in the field can benefit from a more exact understanding of the ways that electoral rules shape the composition of elected bodies and thus their activities.

Appendix: Parties in Israel and the Netherlands

Knesset:

Party	English	Seats	Ideology / identity
Likud	Consolidation	40	Moderate right
Labor-Meimad	Labor	19	Moderate left
Shinui	Change	15	Secularist
Shas	Sephardim Religious Party	11	Sephardic religious
Ha-ichud Ha-leumi	National Unity	7	National security / incorporation of territories
Mafdal	National Religious Party	6	Religious
Meretz	Vitality	6	Social democratic
Yahadut Hatorah	Torah and Shabbat Judaism	5	Ashkenazi religious
Am Ehad	One Nation	3	Social democratic
Balad	National Democratic Assembly	3	Israeli Arab rights
Hadash-T'aal	Democratic Front for Peace and Equality	3	Arab / communist
Ra'am	United Arab List	2	Palestinian statehood / Islamic

Tweede Kamer:

Party	Abbrev	English	Seats	Ideology
Christen-Democratisch Appèl	CDA	Christian Democratic Appeal	44	Christian democratic
Partij van de Arbeid	PVDA	Labor Party	42	Social democratic
Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	VVD	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	28	Market liberal
Socialistische Partij	SP	Socialist Party	9	Socialist
Lijst Pim Fortuyn	LPF	Pim Fortuyn List	8	Anti-immigration
GroenLinks	GL	Green Left	8	Ecologist
Democraten 66	D66	Democrats '66	6	Progressive liberal
ChristenUnie	CU	Christian Unity	3	Calvinist
Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij	SGP	Political Reformed Party	2	Calvinist

Sources: <http://www.knesset.gov.il>; <http://www.tweedekamer.nl>; www.wikipedia.org; party websites.

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