

## Opportunistic Career Moves of Mobile Politicians

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### Abstract

Using information on more than 1,500 elected Members of the Parliament (MPs) and the votes received by political parties in five consecutive elections in Turkey (1991-2011), and exploiting the randomness generated by the seat allocation mechanism, we show that elected MPs are more likely to switch parties *after* an election if they faced electoral uncertainty and experienced a narrowly-won victory. A number of MP and party characteristics influence the decision to switch. Politicians switch parties after an election to improve their *ex-ante* re-election probability in the following election, and party-switching MPs are more likely to get elected in the next election. MPs switch parties to move towards the median voter. These results point to forward-looking opportunistic behavior of politicians regarding their strategy to win future elections to have a longer tenure in the Parliament.

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### I. Introduction

*Party-switching* by the members of the Parliament (MPs) (i.e. defecting from a political party under which the MP won the election to join another party while still holding the office) is commonly observed in parliamentary democracies. O'Brien and Shomer (2013) report that the share of party-switching legislators in Australia, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland and Ireland is between 10-20%. In Brazil, Canada, Israel and Poland, party-switching rate is more than 30%. Party-switching is prevalent also in developing and middle-income countries such as the Philippines and Thailand where 30-50% of the elected members of Parliaments switched to another party during their terms in 1980s and 1990s (Hickens 2006). In Italy, one in four MPs party-switched between 1996 and 2000 (Heller and Mershon, 2008).

Party-switching can be viewed as a *betrayal of democratic representation* if three conditions hold (Heller and Mershon 2009). First, voters vote for parties and not for specific individual candidates. Second, political ideologies and policy positions of the parties are stable. Third, switchers adapt to their new (destination) party's positions. Under these conditions, if an elected Member of the Parliament changes party affiliation *after* being elected, *s/he essentially offers his/her seat in the Parliament to another (destination) party*. This means that voters who have voted for the original party of the party-switching MP have lost their voice in the Parliament. In this context, party-switching may lead to alterations in the bargaining power of parties, it may result in the change of governments and policies implemented. Heller and Mershon (2009) present several examples.

Previous research suggested that voters (principals) can minimize the moral hazard of the elected representatives (agents) through re-election decisions (Barro 1973, Ferejohn 1986). For example, in models of retrospective voting, voters can evaluate the performance of the

incumbent and vote in the next election to retain or replace the incumbent (Besley 2006, Persson et al. 1997). Yet, in parliamentary systems where voters cast their votes for the entire party ticket and *not* for particular candidates, voter decision as a discipline device is not quite applicable. If an MP switches from one party to another in the middle of his/her term, there is no mechanism for the supporters of the party of origin to punish this MP. Therefore, the potential loss of votes due to party switching is not a concern for the party-switching MP. It is also unlikely that the supporters of the destination party would vote against their party in the next election just because their party has transferred in an MP from another party.

Without the concern of losing votes, elected MPs can switch parties according to their incentives. For example, an MP can switch parties because his/her political philosophy and views on economic and social priorities for the country do not line up any longer with the original party and its voters s/he was elected to represent. Alternatively, the MP may decide to switch to another party after the election because of the expected benefits and rents this move would generate (Mershon 2013). This is because, there are significant returns to serving as an elected member of the legislative branch of the government. For example, in the UK, being a member of the Parliament triples the probability that a Conservative Party member of the Parliament serves as a director of a publicly traded firm, and doubles the wealth of such members (Eggers and Hainmueller 2009). Dal Bó, Dal Bó and Snyder (2009) show that legislators who were successful in getting re-elected to the U.S. Congress are more likely to have their relatives entering Congress in the future, suggesting a self-perpetuating power structure. In addition to financial rewards, holding an elected office also provides non-pecuniary benefits such as the prestige, various perks and the ability to impact public policy (Desposato 2006, Laver and Benoit 2003, Reed and Scheiner 2003).

If MPs switch parties primarily because their ideology or policy position do not line up any longer with the original party and its voters, then MPs' concerns for their re-election prospects and benefits associated with staying in office *should have no influence* on switching parties. On the other hand, if the MPs switch parties during a Parliamentary term to increase their chances of re-election to the Parliament in the next election (by being affiliated with another political party), this would indicate that it is self-interest, rather than political ideology that is the primary driver of this behavior.

Politician behavior is important to investigate, perhaps more so in emerging democracies and developing countries, for two reasons. First, the behavior of politicians and voters in these settings may be different from those in developed countries and mature democracies (Brender and Drazen 2005). Second, voter disenfranchisement and distrust in the functioning of democracy due to political agency problems can have significant political and economic consequences. Consequently, researchers are increasingly interested in analyzing politician and voter behavior in developing countries and young democracies such as Paraguay (Finan and Schechter 2012), Brazil (Da Silveira and De Mello 2011) and Russia (Akhmedov and Zhuravskaya 2004).

In this paper, we investigate party-switching decision of the members of the Parliament in Turkey, a middle-income developing country. Turkey employs a parliamentary system with proportional representation and no split-ticket voting. In such systems, voters cast their votes for a political party, and not for any particular candidate. Our new and unique data contain detailed information on personal attributes, including age, education, field of study, gender, and political party affiliation of each of the more than 1,500 politicians elected in each district in five consecutive parliamentary elections between 1991 and 2011. The data also contain information

on the effort and influence of the politicians in the Parliament along with a number of attributes of their political party.

We combine this information with the number of votes received by each party in each district in these elections, and we make use of an interesting feature of the official d'Hondt seat-allocation formula that determines the winners and the winning margins in election districts. In the application of the d'Hondt formula, a small shift in the distribution of votes between parties in an electoral district has implications on who gets elected. That is, the number of seats won by each party in a given district is sensitive to small changes in the vote shares of political parties in that district. This feature of the d'Hondt method introduces randomness to the process of who gets elected to the Parliament from a given district and who loses by a small margin. Thus, it creates election uncertainty. We explain below the specifics of the d'Hondt method and the randomness generated by it.

Utilizing this unique attribute of the d'Hondt seat allocation procedure, we develop measures of election uncertainty faced by each politician in his/her district and show that politicians are more likely to switch parties after the election (despite the fact that they won a seat in the Parliament) if they have faced election uncertainty. In other words, politicians who had a narrow victory are more likely to switch parties. This result is robust to various measures of election risk. In addition, we document that the tendency of party-switching is related to politician attributes including MP's salaries, age, education and whether the MP is a member of the governing party. Party and district characteristics, such as the age of the party (the number of active years since its inception), whether the party has been led by a single leader over the past

ten years, and the number of contested seats in the district also impact the decision to switch parties.<sup>1</sup>

We further show that politicians switch parties to improve their *ex-ante* re-election probability in the following election. Specifically, we find that party-switching politicians are nominated by their destination parties in the next election in districts and/or ranks on party tickets that are more favorable to their re-election chances. Also, party-switching is associated with slightly *higher* chances of getting re-elected in the next election.<sup>2</sup> Consistent with this finding, we find that in the election for an upcoming Parliamentary term, if a party's ticket contains a politician who has served as an MP *for another party* in the immediately preceding Parliamentary term, the vote share of that party in that district *increases* in comparison to the previous election.

During the term that the MP holds office, his ideological outlook may change and it may shift away from that of his original party. As a result, the MP may choose to switch to another party if the ideology of the new (destination) party is more closely aligned with him. If that were the case, the party-switching MPs would be equally likely to move to the right and to the left on the political spectrum. We, however, show that party switchers change parties so that they move towards the median voter on the ideological spectrum. Furthermore, if ideological realignment

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<sup>1</sup> In a concurrent paper, Kemahlioglu and Sayari (2017) (KS) also studies the determinants of party switching in Turkey. They find that MPs switch parties due to both re-election and ideological concerns. Our paper differs from theirs in a number of ways. First, we study the time period 1995-2011, while their analysis period is 1995-2002. Second, unlike (KS) who measure election uncertainty using MP's party's vote share in the most recent elections, we measure election uncertainty faced by the MPs by using their rank on their party's ticket. Our measure allows each MP to face a different election uncertainty, while in (KS) all MPs of a party in a certain city face the same election uncertainty. Additionally, we investigate election outcomes after switching, such as the probability of re-election.

<sup>2</sup> This is in contrast to some of the past findings. For example, Heller and Mershon (2005) and Grose and Yoshinaka (2003) find that switchers are unlikely to get re-elected in Italy and US Congress, respectively. These authors argue that party-switchers are punished by voters or party leaders. Our paper shows that (destination) party leaders favor incoming MPs by nominating them in districts or ranks that are more favorable to their re-election chances. Also, the vote share of the destination party increases if their ticket contains a party-switcher. As a result, in the Turkish setting the party-switchers are more likely to get re-elected.

were the primary reason for switching parties, election uncertainty and MP attributes would not be significant determinants of the switching parties.

Taken together, these results point to the forward-looking behavior of politicians regarding their strategy to win future elections. They also show that politicians switch parties primarily for concerns that are associated with longer tenure in the Parliament, rather than changes in the ideologies of their voter base. The results also signify that competition between political parties continues *after the election*, in the form of gaining seats in the Parliament by transferring politicians who have won elections as representatives of competing parties. This constitutes another dimension of the political agency problem.

## **II. The Structure of the Election System**

Turkish elections are based on closed-list proportional representation system with a 10% national threshold for representation. Political parties compete for 550 seats in 85 districts. The seats are allocated to the parties using the d'Hondt method. Each party submits a list of "N" candidates in a given district before the election, where "N" is the number of contested seats in that district. Parties announce the rank of their candidates in descending order, where candidate No. 1 is the first person who would be an MP from that party from that district, candidate No. 2 would be the second person to be sent to the Parliament, and so on. Voters cast ballots for a particular party, not for any given candidate. Then the vote share of each party in the district is divided by consecutive integers up to the total number of contested seats in the district (1 to N). Parties with the largest N quotients win seats. For example, in a district with N=7 seats, if a party has 3 of the largest 7 quotients, then that party obtains 3 seats in that district. The top three ranked candidates on that party's ticket become MPs to represent the party, but not the 4<sup>th</sup> ranked

candidate or those who are ranked 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> on that party's ticket. A detailed explanation of the d'Hondt seat allocation method is provided in Appendix 1.

One important property of the d'Hondt method is the randomness in who gets elected. Specifically, *small changes in the distribution of votes can impact the number of seats won by each party*. In addition, because candidates are elected based on *their rank* on their parties' ticket, *even marginal changes in vote distribution in a district may lead to alterations in who gets elected from a given party*. MPs who are elected with smaller quotients are at greater risk of losing the next election. To incorporate this randomness in our analysis, we use the Margin of Victory (MV), defined as the difference between the quotients of each elected candidate and the candidate who just missed qualifying for the last seat from that district. For example, in a district with 7 seats, if the eighth largest quotient (the quotient of the candidate who just missed qualifying for the 7<sup>th</sup> and last seat) is 10, then each of the 7 elected candidate's MV is computed by subtracting 10 from their quotients. Elected MPs with smaller MVs are at risk of losing their seats if the vote distribution in the district changes, even slightly. Appendix 1 provides examples.

Later in the paper, we show that MPs who were ranked differently by their parties (high or low on their respective tickets) have similar observable attributes if they won their seat with small margins of victory. In our analyses, we employ these MPs (who won by small margins) to identify the impact of a candidate's rank on the probability of party-switching. In addition, in some specifications, we use the *Margin of Victory* as an (inverse) measure of electoral uncertainty faced by the politician.

### III. Empirical Framework

Consider politician ( $m$ ) from party ( $p$ ) who won an election at time ( $t$ ) from district ( $c$ ) to become an MP.  $Party\ Switch_{mpct}$  indicates whether the MP has switched to another political party during the parliamentary term which commenced after the election at ( $t$ ). That is,  $Party\ Switch_{mpct}=1$  if the MP switched to another political party after winning a seat in the election at time ( $t$ ), but before the following election. It is zero otherwise. In our data there are 295 party-switches (12% of the MP-term observations).<sup>3</sup> The distribution of the numbers of MPs in each party at the beginning- and end-of-the-term is presented in Appendix 2-Table 1. The total number of MPs who switched parties is presented in Appendix 2-Table 2 for each parliamentary term.

We estimate the probability of party-switching using:

$$(1) \quad Party\ Switch_{mpct} = \beta ElectionUncertainty_{mpct} + \mathbf{Party\&District}_{mct} \boldsymbol{\Omega} + \mathbf{X}_{mt} \boldsymbol{\Psi} + \lambda_c + \pi_t + \xi_p + \varepsilon_{mpct}$$

$ElectionUncertainty_{mpct}$  stands for electoral uncertainty faced by the MP in the most recent election. It is a measure of how easily the MP was elected from district  $c$  after being nominated by party  $p$  at election  $t$ . If the MP has won his/her seat after a competitive race, this indicates that he/she could have lost; and this represents electoral uncertainty in the next election if nothing changes (i.e. if the MP is re-nominated by the same party, from the same district, at the same ticket rank).

We use several measures for electoral uncertainty, such as the *Rank* of the MP on their party's list for the election leading to the Parliament. Candidates ranked lower on their party

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<sup>3</sup> The MPs who passed away before the end of the term are not in the analysis, neither are those who resigned from their party but remained unaffiliated with any party or who were forced to resign by the constitutional court. An MP's move to another party is not counted as a party-switch if their initial party is shut down by the constitutional court. If an MP's party changed names, then this is not considered as party-switch either.

ticket, although they won a seat, faced lower probabilities of election. In some regressions, we include *Rank on the Party Ticket* as a continuous variable or as a set of indicator variables (e.g. *Ranked Second, Ranked Third, etc.*). We also use the *Margin of Victory* in the election (see Panel 4 of Appendix 1-Table 1) as an (inverse) measure of electoral uncertainty faced by the politician

Following the formulation provided by Palomares and Ramirez (2003), we also calculate the *necessary and sufficient conditions* for each candidate in each district to win a seat. Specifically, the minimum share of votes required for *guaranteed election* of each candidate and *the minimum share of votes* (the necessary share) above which his/her election probability becomes positive are obtained using the formulas below:

$$(2) \quad (\text{Min \%Vote for Election Probability} = 1) = 100 \times \frac{\text{Rank}}{\text{Seats}+1}$$

$$(3) \quad (\text{Min \%Vote for Election Probability} > 0) = 100 \times \frac{\text{Rank}}{\text{Seats}-1+\text{Parties}}$$

where *Rank* is the rank of the candidate on his/her Party's list. *Seats* and *Parties* represent the number of seats contested in the electoral district and the number of parties competing in the district. The formulas in equations (2) and (3) provide the *sufficient* and *necessary* share of votes to get elected for each candidate in each election district, respectively. Obtaining a vote share above the sufficient vote share threshold (calculated by Equation 2) guarantees the election of the candidate, regardless of the votes obtained by other parties. Similarly, any candidate whose party has obtained at least the necessary vote share (calculated by Equation 3) has a shot at being elected.

The vector ***Party&District<sub>mct</sub>*** in Equation (1) represents the attributes of the political party and the district from which the MP was elected. They include MP's Party's strength in the district (*Party's Vote Share in the District*) and the number of *Contested Seats in the District*.

We also have two variables that gauge the attributes of the party. The first one, *Party's Active Years in Politics*, is the age of the party at the time of the election. The second variable, *Single Leader Party*, is a dummy variable that takes the value of one if the party had the same leader during the last 10 years. Long tenure of a politician as the leader of the party may signal a more autocratic leadership style of party governance.

The vector  $X_{mt}$  stands for the attributes of the MP. Some of these attributes, such as the age of the MP at the time of election, may impact the probability of switching parties because they are related to the discounted future benefits of staying as an MP (Alesina et al. 2015). Other variables, such as gender, may have an impact if females are systematically different from males in terms of the honesty of their actions. Previous research suggests differences between men and women in various aspects such as criminal propensity (Mocan and Rees 2005) and risk aversion (Croson and Gneezy 2009).

We use the *Relative Salary* of the MP as a measure of financial benefit to being an MP. Nominal MP salaries are increased twice a year. The rate of increase in salaries, however, varies from year to year. We employ the ratio of MP salaries to per capita income of the city from which the MP was elected. Thus, the measure of salary exhibits variation both over time and across MPs.

$X_{mt}$  includes the education of the MP because education determines outside options. Education can also impact values and preferences, which can influence the decision to switch parties. Following Besley et al. (2011), schooling is measured by whether the MP has a master's degree or a doctorate (*MA/PhD*), and whether the MP has obtained a college degree outside of the country (*School Abroad*).

If the MP is a member of the party that has formed the government, the MP's seat is more valuable to the opposition parties because a transfer of the MP to one of the opposition parties weakens the power of the government, and increases the power of the opposition. Thus, we control for whether the MP is the member of party (or parties) that runs the country (*Member of the Government Party*).

When nominating their candidates, if the party leadership ranks candidates on the ticket according to their perceived loyalty to the party (Galasso and Nannicini 2015), and if the probability of party-switching decreases with loyalty, then the estimated effect of the rank may partly capture the effect of party loyalty. We include a variable to indicate whether the MP was *Elected from the Same Party Before* in a previous election. Longer affiliation with the party represents an individual's loyalty to that party. We also control for whether the MP is a *Cabinet Member* (a Minister of the Government), which provides additional prestige and visibility to the MP, as well as opportunities for networking that can be turned into future financial rewards. These positions are usually afforded to individuals who have long-term affiliations with the party. In addition, we control for whether the MP was elected for the first time (*Freshman*) because the tendency to switch parties may be impacted by networks that may be generated through parliamentary experience.

It is possible that the rank of a candidate on the ticket is related to his perceived level of political ambition by the party leadership. We measure the influence of the MP in the Parliament and the extent of the MP's efforts in parliamentary activities. Specifically, we construct a proxy for the MP's influence on the members of his/her party using the number of other MPs who supported a draft of a legislation proposed by that MP. *Influence of the MP* is the average number of other MPs who co-sponsored legislation proposals drafted by the MP. In the

regressions we use the standardized value of this variable. We also measure the extent of the visibility of the MP in the Parliament, captured by the number of speeches on the floor, oral or written questions delivered, motions and proposals submitted in each Parliamentary term by each MP. This variable is titled *Effort of the MP*. In equation (1), we also control for unobserved city, party attributes by including city and party fixed-effects.  $\pi_t$  represent term fixed effects.

The summary statistics and the descriptions of all of the variables are presented in Table 1. The sources of these data are described in Appendix 2.

### *What happens after the Switch?*

We hypothesize that higher uncertainty about re-election prospects under the current party affiliation would prompt the MP to switch to another party and be nominated from that new (destination) party in the next election. In other words, if the MP perceives his/her chances of being re-elected as low with the current party, the propensity to switch to another party is higher. This assumes that, from the point of view of the MP, a condition for the switch is the assurance that the new party would nominate the MP at a district and/or position on the new party's list that would provide *ex-ante* a higher chance of election during the next election in comparison to the election he/she just won.

So, a testable hypothesis is whether those MPs who switched parties are being nominated by their new parties at positions for the following election so that their *ex-ante election probabilities* are higher in comparison to what they have experienced in the preceding election. We test this hypothesis and provide strong support for it. Specifically, we investigate the electoral consequences of party-switching for the MP in the following election, using the specification below:

$$(4) \quad \text{Next Election Outcome}_{mpct+1} = \beta \text{Party Switch}_{mpct} + \mathbf{Party \& District}_{mct} \mathbf{\Omega} + \mathbf{X}_m \mathbf{\Psi} + \lambda_c + \pi_t + \xi_p + \varepsilon_{mpct}$$

where *Next Election Outcome*<sub>mpct+1</sub> stands for the election outcome of the MP (*m*) pertaining to the next parliamentary term in election year (*t*+1). These analyses allow us to investigate how future election outcomes are different between those MPs who switched parties and those who did not. We use several variables for *Next Election Outcome*<sub>mpct+1</sub>, including whether the MP ran for re-election, how favorable the MP is ranked by the new (destination) party in the next election, and whether he/she is actually re-elected in the next election.

#### *Where Do Switchers Switch?*

In order to investigate whether and how party-switchers change their political ideology, we estimate the following regression.

$$(5) \quad \text{End_Ideology}_{mpt+1} = \beta \text{Switcher}_{mpt} + \gamma \text{Begin_Ideology}_{mpt} + \delta \text{Switcher}_{mpt} \times \text{Begin_Ideology}_{mpt} + \mathbf{X}_m \mathbf{\Omega} + \omega_{mpt}$$

In equation (5), *Begin\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub> is the index of the political ideology of the party from which MP<sub>m</sub> was elected to the Parliamentary term (*t*). *End\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub> is the index of the political ideology of party (*p*) to which MP<sub>m</sub> has switched. It signifies the ideology of the party at the end of the Parliamentary term (*t*). For those MPs who stayed with the same party and *did not* change parties during a parliamentary term, *End\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub> = *Begin\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub>. On the other hand, if the MP has switched parties, *End\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub> represents the ideology of the new (destination) party, while *Begin\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub> stands for the ideology of his original party. Thus (*End\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub> - *Begin\_Ideology*<sub>mpt</sub>) is the distance in the ideological outlook of the two parties. The measurement of party ideology is discussed in the Appendix 2. In addition, we

provide the position of parties on political spectrum, from the most left (0) to the most right (10), in Appendix 2-Figure 1.

## **V. Results**

### ***Determinants of Party-Switching***

#### ***The Impact of Election Uncertainty***

The results, obtained from estimating Equation (1) by probit are presented in Table 2. The entries are marginal effects, and standard errors are clustered at the MP level. The outcome variable is *Party Switch*. This variable takes the value of one if the MP has switched to another party after being elected. Regressions include measures of election uncertainty faced by the MP as well as personal attributes of the MP, and characteristics of the MP's party and the district he/she represents in the Parliament. In addition, regressions include party fixed effects, parliamentary term fixed-effects and city fixed-effects.

In column (1) of Table 2, electoral uncertainty faced by the MP is measured by the variable *Rank on the Party Ticket*, which is the rank of the MP on the party's election list. MPs with higher values of *Rank on the Party Ticket* were *ranked lower* on their party's list of candidates. Thus, they had lower chances of being elected, and they faced greater uncertainty in comparison to a candidate from the same party who was ranked higher on the list. Column (1) shows that the MPs who were ranked towards the bottom of their party list are more likely to switch to another political party before the end of the Parliamentary term, in comparison to those who are ranked higher, holding constant all other determinants of party switching constant.

Forty-two percent of the MPs are ranked at the top of their ticket. This means that having been ranked as the second or the third candidate on the ticket is associated with substantial

uncertainty about election prospects. In columns (2) to (4) of Table 2, we use indicator variables instead of the continuous measure of the rank on the ticket. For example, the variable *Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> or Lower* takes the value of one if the MP was ranked second, third or lower on the party ticket. The results show that MPs who were ranked second, third, or lower are more likely to defect from their original party and switch to another party in comparison to the top ranked candidates on their parties' lists. For example, column (3) shows that, second-ranked MPs are 2.2 percentage points more likely to switch parties compared to their counterparts who are ranked first; and that the MPs who got elected as the 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked or lower candidate are 2.8 percentage points more likely to switch.

In the remainder of Table 2, we include alternative measures of election uncertainty in the regressions. The results suggest that electoral uncertainty, regardless of how it is measured, has a positive impact on politicians' propensity to jump ship and switch parties, despite that they won the election. For example, in columns (5) and (6), we include the threshold vote share above which a candidate is definitely elected, and the threshold vote share above which the candidate has non-zero probability of being elected. These variables are calculated as shown in Equations (2) and (3). *Higher* values of these threshold variables signify *greater uncertainty* and tightness of the election the MPs have faced. The coefficient of the variable (*Min %Vote for Election Probability=1*) in column (5) of Table 2 suggests that a 10 percentage point increase in the threshold vote share MP has faced in the election increases the probability of his/her switching parties by 1 percentage point. Similarly, an MP who faced a higher threshold for non-zero election probability is more likely to switch parties (as shown by the coefficient of *Min %Vote for Election Probability>0* in column 6).

In column (7), we measure electoral uncertainty by the *Margin of Victory* (MV) of the MP. As demonstrated in the Panel 4 of Appendix 1-Table 1, MV is the distance between the elected MP's quotient, determined by the d'Hondt formula, and the quotient of the cutoff candidate, who just missed getting elected (see Appendix 1). A larger value of the MV indicates that the MP has won the election comfortably. Consequently, as Table 2 shows, a larger MV reduces the propensity to jump ship and switch parties after the election.

To preserve space, the discussion of the relationship between party-switching and the characteristics of the MP and his/her party is included in Appendix 3. Here we provide a summary of some of these results. Table 2 shows that a rise in MP salaries –relative to the average income of the city which they represent- increases the propensity to switch parties. Age of the MP is negatively associated with party-switching. (Appendix 3-Table 1 additionally shows that election uncertainty triggers party-switching for younger politicians, but not for older ones). Table 2 shows that MP's education level has no significant impact on party-switching. However, the analysis in Appendix 3-Table 2 reveals that the tendency to switch party affiliation due to election risk is driven by less educated politicians, and that the undergraduate college major of the MP, or the graduate-level field of study have no impact on the propensity to switch parties. On the other hand, Appendix 3-Figure 1 shows the increase in the quality (selectiveness) of the MP's alma mater mitigates the impact of electoral uncertainty on party-switching.

Results in Table 2 suggest that if the MP is a member of the governing party, then his/her probability of switching parties is greater. This is likely because such a transfer is more valuable for destination parties (i.e. the opposition parties) as an MP's switch to the opposition would weaken the government. Supporting this hypothesis, Appendix 3-Figure 2 shows that the

propensity of an MP to switch parties is higher if the MP is a member of the governing party, but only if the majority of that party in the Parliament is slim.

In our empirical analyses, we omitted the MPs who remained as independent (rather than joining another party) after resigning from their original party. Results are not sensitive to including these MPs in our regressions. We find that lower ranked MPs are more likely to switch to another party rather than switching to the status of an “independent MP” (Appendix 4-Tables 1 and 2).

### *Are Higher Ranked MPs Different from Lower Ranked MPs?*

The analysis in the previous section suggests that lower-ranked MPs, who face greater election uncertainty, regardless of how election uncertainty is measured, are more likely to switch parties. In these regressions, we implicitly assumed that the rank of an MP is independent of the determinants of party switching. However, this assumption could be violated. For example, a candidate’s rank on the party ticket in a district may reflect that candidate’s attributes such as loyalty and devotion to the party, his/her expected parliamentary productivity and ambition, networking strength within the party, and so on. If the rank of an MP is correlated with such factors, then our estimates in Table 2 could be biased.

In Table 3, we investigate whether lower and higher ranked MPs are similar to one another. Specifically, we compute the means of the observable MP characteristics by the rank of MP, and then we test whether lower ranked MPs are different from higher ranked MPs. The \*’s in Table 3 indicate that the mean of a variable is statistically different from the mean of that same variable for MPs with one higher rank. For example, Panel A of Table 3 shows that the proportion of the 2<sup>nd</sup>-ranked MPs who are older than 50 is 0.40 (Age $\geq$ 50). The \*\*\* indicate that

this mean is statistically different from the mean of the 1<sup>st</sup> ranked MPs with p-value less than 0.01. In the same panel, the proportion of 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked MPs who are older than 50 is 0.38. The lack of \*'s indicates that the mean for the 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked MPs is not statistically different from that of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked MPs.

Panel A of Table 3 presents the results for the whole sample. The 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked MPs seem to be systematically different from the 1<sup>st</sup> ranked MPs who are older, have greater parliamentary experience and have more education compared to 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked MPs. However, the differences tend to disappear for lower ranked MPs. That is, MPs ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> or lower constitute a more homogenous sample, in that, rank of the MPs within this sample are less related to their observable attributes.

We repeat this exercise for the sample of MPs who barely won elections, i.e. with small margins of victory (MV).<sup>4</sup> As demonstrated in Section II and in Appendix 1, MPs with small MVs are at greater risk of losing the election. That is, small changes in the vote distribution may have resulted in the loss of the election for these MPs. Therefore, the rank of MPs are arguably random within this subsample. Panels B and C of Table 3 provide supporting evidence. Specifically, within the sample of MPs who won with  $MV \leq 5$  and with  $MV \leq 3$ , group averages by rank show little-to-no difference. In these subsamples, the observables are more balanced across all ranks.

#### *The Effect of Election Uncertainty: Evidence from more homogenous MP groups*

The analysis in the previous section suggests that MPs who were ranked at the top of the ticket (ranked 1<sup>st</sup>) are different in observable attributes than those who were ranked lower, but

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<sup>4</sup> *Margin of Victory* is the distance between the elected MP's quotient, calculated by the d'Hondt formula and the quotient of the Cutoff candidate (Appendix 1-Table 1). Smaller MVs signify a greater election uncertainty.

those who were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> or lower on the ticket constitute a more homogenous group. The same is true for those who won their election with small margins of victory (of course, MPs in this latter group are by-and-large lower ranked). Thus the rank of the MPs within those groups is unlikely to be related to MP characteristics. Therefore, estimates of the effect of election uncertainty within these subsamples are less likely to be biased.

Table 4 presents the results obtained from estimating equation (1) over two subsamples: MPs with ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> or lower (columns 1-3) and MPs who were top-ranked on their ticket (columns 4-5). In column 1, we include indicators for the rank of the MPs in the regressions. The left out category is the 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked MPs. The results in column (1) show that the propensity to switch parties is higher for those MPs who are ranked fourth or lower in comparison to those who are ranked second or third. Columns (2) and (3) show that as the difficulty of winning the election goes up (represented by *Min % Vote for Guaranteed Election*, and *Min % Vote for Election Probability* > 0) the probability of switching parties goes up, although the coefficient is not significant at conventional levels in column (3).

Similar results are obtained when we estimate equation (1) for the 1<sup>st</sup> ranked MPs (columns 4-5 in Table 4). These are the MPs who were listed at the top of their party list in their district. These individuals may be listed as the top candidates because they may have stronger ties to the party and they may be perceived as more loyal (less likely to jump ship) by party leaders. Still, even in this group, election uncertainty, represented by an increase in the proportion of votes necessary for election, has a positive impact on the propensity to switch parties.

In Table 5, we re-estimate the models for the probability of switching parties, shown in Table 2 using only the sample of MPs who got elected with  $MV \leq 5$  and with  $MV \leq 3$ . The MPs

who got elected with such *small margins* have experienced *particularly noisy elections* that could have resulted differently. As discussed above, the observable attributes of the MPs within these groups are balanced across ranks of the MPs. The results in Panel A show that having a lower rank on the party ticket increases the propensity to change parties after the election. The impact of rank is larger among this group of MPs, compared to the whole sample analyzed in Table 2.

Panel B of Table 5 re-estimates the same models using the sample of MPs who got elected more comfortably: with margins of victory greater than 3 (Columns 1-3), or with margins of victory greater than 5 (columns 4-6). As Panel B of Table 5 shows, in these samples of MPs the estimated impact of election uncertainty is still positive but much smaller in magnitude and never statistically different from zero, regardless of which measure of uncertainty is used.

### ***Electoral Consequences of Party-Switching***

In this section we investigate the consequences of switching parties in terms of the candidacy and electoral chances of MPs in the *subsequent* elections by estimating Equation (4). Tables 6-7 present the results. In Table 6 the outcome variable in column (1) is *Ran for re-election*, which measures whether the MP ran as a candidate in the next election. The coefficient of *Party Switch* in Table 6 is not statistically different from zero, suggesting no difference between switchers and non-switchers in terms of their propensity for running for re-election.

In columns (2) to (5) of Table 6 the outcome variables are the thresholds votes that the MP has faced in the *next election* based on their rank on the new party's list and the district in which they are nominated by their new party. In these regressions, we use the sample of MPs who ran in subsequent elections. The dependent variable in column (2) is *Min %Vote for Re-*

*election Probability=1*. This variable is calculated based the number of parties that competed in the election in that district and the number of seats available in the district (Equation 2). Larger values of this variable imply a higher threshold for being elected. Thus, lower values of *Min %Vote for Re-election Probability=1* imply more favorable election prospects for the MP. The coefficients of *Party Switch* are negative and significant in regressions reported in columns (2) and (3). This means that after switching parties, *conditional on running, party-switchers are nominated by their new parties at ranks or districts that increased their ex-ante chances of re-election in comparison to the previous election (when they were elected under a different party)*.<sup>5</sup> Similar results are obtained when we use the *Minimum %Votes for Re-election Probability>0* (columns 4-5 of Table 6).

The coefficient of *Party Switch* is about -5 in columns (2) and (3) of Table 6. The interpretation is the following: the advantage gained in the next election (by switching parties between elections) is akin to being nominated as a second-ranked candidate as opposed to being the third-ranked candidate in a district with 19 seats, or equivalent to being nominated as the third-ranked candidate in a district with 13 seats instead of being nominated in a district with 10 seats.

In summary, the results of Table 6 reveal that MPs who switched parties after winning an election are in fact treated favorably by their new parties and they are listed as candidates in the next election in districts and on party ticket ranks that are ex-ante more favorable for their

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<sup>5</sup> Since we can only observe the MPs who ran for re-election, regressions in columns 2-5 of Table 6 are estimated over the MPs who ran for re-election. To guard against the potentially confounding selection effect, we use the inverse-probability-weighting (IPW) procedure (Wooldridge 2002). IPW gives less weight to observations from MPs who are more likely to be in the sample (more likely to run for re-election). The weights are the inverse of the predicted probability of running in the re-election (column 1 of Table 6). Results without IPW are almost identical to those presented in Table 6.

election chances in comparison to the treatment they received by their previous party. That is, the MP's decision to switch parties pays off *ex-ante*.

### ***Voter Behavior: Do Party-Switchers get Re-elected in the Next Election?***

Although party-switchers are nominated by their new parties at positions that are more favorable for their re-election chances, ultimately voters decide whether to elect a candidate. We investigate whether party-switchers are more likely to get re-elected in the next election by estimating Equation (4) using the outcome variable *Re-elected*. This variable is equal to one if the MP is elected in the subsequent election. The results are presented in Table 7. Column (4) shows that party-switchers are more likely to get re-elected, although the magnitude of the impact is small (0.5 percentage points). Columns (2) and (3) show that controlling for *Minimum % Vote for Election Probability=1*, or *Minimum % Vote for Election Probability>0*, party-switching has no direct impact on re-election chances.<sup>6</sup> The results of Table 6 showed that party-switchers receive preferential treatment by their new (destination) parties in terms of their rank on the party ticket. Together these results imply that the positive impact of party-switching on re-election probability is working through its impact on better treatment (being placed on a more favorable rank on the ticket) by the destination party.

In column (1) of Table 7, the dependent variable is whether the party was successful in the election in gathering at least 10% of the nation-wide vote. Recall that if a party cannot fetch at least 10% of nation-wide vote it cannot be represented in the Parliament regardless of the outcome in any particular district. Column (1) shows that party switchers are more likely to

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<sup>6</sup> In these regressions, we use inverse-probability-weighting method. The weights are the inverse of the predicted probabilities estimated in column 1 of Table 7. We also estimated unweighted regressions. The coefficient Their results show that there is no statistically significant difference in re-election probabilities of party-switchers vs. those who did not switch.

switch to smaller parties: those that fail to pass the 10% vote threshold. Thus, the result of column (1) implies that MPs tend to switch to smaller, less popular parties (being a bigger fish in a smaller pond), and that these parties have a lower chance of staying above the national 10% vote threshold. Yet, as shown in column (4), despite this, in the end, the MP has a slightly higher probability of getting elected. Consistent with this result, in a complimentary analysis, in Appendix 5, we show that if the party's ticket contains an MP who is transferred from another party, then the proportion of votes received by that party in that city goes up by about 2 percentage points.

### ***Where Do Switchers Switch?***

We have shown that elected Members of the Parliament (MPs) switch parties when they experienced electoral uncertainty in the last election, and that a number of other factors, such as age, education, and MP salaries influence the decision to change party allegiance. Thus, opportunistic concerns determine the decision to switch parties. In this sub-section we investigate whether and how party-switchers change their political ideology.

We analyze this question by estimating equation (5). The results of estimating Equation (5) are displayed in Table 8. The dependent variable is the ideology index of the political party the MP is affiliated with at the end of the Parliamentary term (see Appendix 2 for measurement of party ideology). In column (1), the coefficient of the ideology of the party at the beginning of the term is 1.012. This confirms that if an MP does not switch parties during a parliamentary term (*Party Switch*=0), then his/her end-of-term party ideology is the same as his beginning-of-term ideology. On the other hand, for those MPs who switched parties, the direction of the ideological shift depends on the ideology of their original party (beginning of term). More

specifically, the impact of party-switching on *end-of-term ideology* is equal to  $3.964 - 0.634 \times (\text{Beginning-of-term Ideology})$ . As an example, if the original party of the MP is center-right with the ideology index of 7, and if the MP switches parties, the *change* in ideology is expected to be  $3.964 - 0.634 \times (7) = -0.474$ . This means that his new (destination) party's ideology index will be 6.526, indicating a movement of the MP from right to left. On the other hand, if the MP's original party was of center-left, for example with an index of 5, and if the MP switches parties, the expected change in ideology is  $3.964 - 0.634 \times (5) = 0.794$ , implying that the new party's level of ideology would be 5.794. These results indicate that party switchers do not change parties randomly; rather they tend to switch parties to move towards the median voter.<sup>7</sup>

## VI. Conclusion and Discussion

One of the main functions of political parties is representation of voters in policymaking and governance of the country. Citizens who have voted for a political party lose their voice in the political system if elected politicians defect and switch to another party during a legislative session. This is particularly true if voters vote for parties and not for individual candidates, and if the ideologies and policy stands of the parties are stable.

We study the party-switching decisions of the elected Members of the Parliament (MPs) after winning a general election in Turkey which has a parliamentary system with proportional representation. In this system voters cast votes for a political party, and not for particular candidates. We show that opportunistic motives determine the behavior of the MPs in terms of switching parties after winning a general election. We utilize detailed information on personal

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<sup>7</sup> The location of parties on political spectrum has not moved over this time period, with one exception. One of the social democratic parties (CHP) has moved slightly to the right (from 3.5 to 5).

attributes of more than 1,500 elected MPs and the votes received by each political party in each district and every election in five consecutive Parliamentary elections in Turkey between 1991 and 2011. We exploit a unique feature of the d'Hondt seat allocation formula used in Parliamentary election systems. In this method, based on proportional representation in the presence of multiple political parties, a small shift in the distribution of votes between parties in an election district has an impact on who gets elected from a party ticket. This feature of the d'Hondt method introduces noise to the process of who gets elected to the Parliament from a given district and who loses by a small margin.

We calculate (in different ways) the extent of electoral uncertainty faced by each MP during the election. We find that politicians are more likely to switch parties after an election (despite the fact that they won a seat in the Parliament) if they faced election uncertainty. That is, those MPs who had a narrow victory in the previous election are more likely to switch parties after the election.

It could be the case that less loyal and more opportunistic politicians are placed by their parties on party-ticket ranks that are associated with more election risk. To address this concern we control for a number of politician attributes that measure loyalty. For example, we control for whether the MP was elected from the same party in a previous election, whether the MP was appointed as a Cabinet Member, and the extent of the effort and visibility of the MP in the Parliament after the election. Importantly, the same results are obtained when we analyze only those politicians who are ranked at the top of the party ticket (those who may be considered as the most loyal by the party), or those who are ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> or lower on the ticket. We also obtain similar results when we analyzed the group of MPs who are elected with a narrow margin of

victory. Within these groups, the observable MP characteristics (such as their age, education and effort) are balanced across the MPs' ranks.

We also find that the tendency to switch parties goes up as it becomes more lucrative to hold the post of MP. A rise in MP salaries -in comparison to the average income of the city from which they are elected- increases the propensity to switch parties. As an extension, we investigated whether the impact of election uncertainty differs in subsamples categorized by various MP attributes. The results in Appendix 3 show that election uncertainty triggers party switching for younger politicians, but not for older ones. In addition, we show that the tendency to switch party affiliation due to election risk is driven by less educated politicians, but the undergraduate college major of the MP, or the graduate-level field of study has no impact on the propensity to switch parties. On the other hand, the increase in the quality (selectiveness) of the university from which the MP has graduated mitigates the impact of electoral uncertainty on party switching.

If the MP is a member of the governing party, then his/her probability of switching parties is greater. This is likely because in this case it is a more attractive proposition for him/her to transfer to another party. Such a transfer is more valuable for destination parties (which are in the opposition in the Parliament) as an MP's switch to the opposition would weaken the government. Supporting this hypothesis, we find that the propensity of an MP to jump ship and transfer to another party is higher if the MP is a member of the governing party, but only if the majority of that party in the Parliament is slim (Appendix 3-Figure 2).

In the second part of the paper we analyze the behavior of the MPs and their new parties during the following election. The results show that politicians switch parties to improve their *ex-ante* re-election probability in the following election. Specifically, we show that the party-

switching politicians are nominated by their new parties in the next election in districts and/or party tickets that are more favorable to their re-election chances.

In the last section of the paper we analyze the election outcomes in future elections. We find that party-switching MPs are more likely to get elected in the next election. We also find that a party's share of votes in an election goes up (in comparison to the previous election) if that party's ticket in that district contains a politician who has served as an MP *for another party* in the immediately preceding Parliamentary term. This result suggests that voters of the destination party *do not* abandon their party to punish a politician who switched to their party. Instead, they reward the party that harvested an MP from another party. It should be kept in mind that the decision about an MP's re-election is made by the supporters of the destination party (to which the MP has switched) in the next election. It is also important to remember that in this electoral system voters cast votes for the entire party ticket with no split-ticket voting. Thus, we cannot test whether voters enjoy moral hazard imposed on their competitors by the party-switching MP, or they do not appreciate having a party-switching politician on their party's ticket but nevertheless vote for their party because their party's election success is important to them.

Combining our data with data from World Values Survey, we analyze the change in political ideology of the MPs who switch party affiliations. We find that the ideologies of the political parties are stable from one election to the next, and that party-switching MPs do not change parties randomly; rather they tend to switch parties to move towards the median voter. Therefore, our results cannot be explained away by the hypothesis of "elected politicians finding a better ideological match for themselves after the election." Under the hypothesis of ideology matching, party switching could occur for any MP, and it would not depend on election uncertainty. Furthermore, if ideology matching were the primary driver of party switching, ex-

ante re-election probability would not be impacted by party switching, and party-switchers would not move towards the median voter.

These results point to the forward-looking opportunistic behavior of politicians regarding their strategy to win future elections, and they indicate that politicians switch parties primarily for career concerns and benefits that are associated with longer tenure in the Parliament. Due to such party-switching, some voters lose their voice in the Parliament, and they are unable to “punish” the defecting MP in the future elections as the election system does not allow voting for individual candidates but rather for the political parties. The results also signify that competition between political parties continues after the election in the form of gaining seats in the Parliament *post-election* by transferring politicians who have won elections as representatives of competing parties. This constitutes another dimension of the political agency problem.

**Table 1**  
**Summary Statistics**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
Party Switch	=1 if MP's initial party affiliation is different from the end-of-term affiliation	0.12	0.32
<i>A-) Election Uncertainty Indicators</i>			
Rank on the Party Ticket	Rank of the MP on their party's ticket	2.56	2.13
Ranked Second	=1 if the MP is ranked second on their party's ticket	0.24	0.43
Ranked Third	=1 if the MP is ranked third on their party's ticket	0.14	0.35
Ranked Fourth or Lower	=1 if the MP is ranked fourth or lower on their party's ticket	0.21	0.41
Min % Vote for Election Probability=1	The threshold vote share in the district over which election of the candidate is guaranteed	26.7	18.25
Min % Vote for Election Probability>0	The threshold vote share in the district over which probability of election of the candidate is non-zero.	11.93	9.17
Margin of Victory (MV)	Difference in quotient of the MP and the largest of the quotients of candidates who are not elected.	8.96	10.24
Elected as the Last Person on the Ticket	=1 if the MP was the last person elected from his party's ticket in that district.	0.42	0.49
<i>B-) Personal Characteristics of the MP</i>			
Member of the Government Party	=1 if the MP is elected as a member of the parties that formed the government.	0.60	0.49
Elected from the Same Party Before	=1 if MP was elected before from his current party.	0.35	0.48
Relative Salary	Ratio of real salary of the MP to the per capita income in the district where MP is elected	1.49	0.94
Cabinet Member	=1 if MP is also a member of the cabinet	0.12	0.32
Influence of the MP	Average number of co-sponsors who signed a draft of a law proposed by the MP. Normalized by subtracting the average of their party and dividing by party standard deviation.	0	0.97
Effort of the MP	Sum of the number of MP's speeches on the floor, oral or written questions delivered, motions and proposals submitted in each parliamentary term. Normalized by subtracting the average of their party and dividing by party standard deviation.	0.02	1.03
Freshman	=1 if MP has never served in the parliament in prior terms	0.59	0.49
Age≥50	=1 if MP is older than 50	0.44	0.5
Female	=1 if MP is female	0.05	0.21

**Table 1 Concluded**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
School Abroad	=1 if MP obtained a degree outside of Turkey	0.08	0.27
MA/PhD	=1 if MP obtained a master's degree or a doctorate	0.31	0.46
<i>C-) Party and District Attributes</i>			
Party's Active Years in Politics	Number of years passed since the establishment of the MP's party as of the beginning of the term.	19.76	25.17
Single Leader Party	=1 if MP's party is run by a single person in the last ten years.	0.43	0.49
Party's Vote Share in the District	Share of votes that MP's party obtained in MP's district	30.14	15.24
Contested Seats in the District	Number of seats MP's district is represented in the parliament	9.65	5.97
<i>D-) Next Election Outcomes</i>			
Ran for Re-election	=1 if the MP ran for office in the next election	0.67	0.47
Min % Vote for Re-election Probability=1	The threshold vote share in the district over which probability of election of the candidate is non-zero in the subsequent election.	23.47	17.25
Min % Vote for Re-election Probability>0	The threshold vote share in the district over which probability of election of the candidate is non-zero in the subsequent election.	9.67	7.44
Re-elected	=1 if MP is re-elected in the next election.	0.37	0.48
>10% Threshold	=1 if MP's party obtained at least 10% of the votes nationally.	0.71	0.45

**Table 2**  
**The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on the Probability of Party Switching**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<i>A-) Election uncertainty indicators</i>							
Rank on the Party Ticket	0.010*						
	(0.005)						
Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup> or Lower		0.024**					
		(0.011)					
Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup>			0.022*	0.022*			
			(0.012)	(0.012)			
Ranked 3 <sup>rd</sup>				0.024*			
				(0.014)			
Ranked 3 <sup>rd</sup> or Lower			0.028**				
			(0.013)				
Ranked 4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower				0.033*			
				(0.017)			
Min % Vote for Election Probability=1					0.001**		
					(0.000)		
Min % Vote for Election Probability>0						0.001*	
						(0.001)	
Margin of Victory (MV)							-0.001*
							(0.001)
<i>B-) Personal Attributes of the MP</i>							
Relative Salary	0.036**	0.032**	0.033**	0.033**	0.035**	0.035**	0.026*
	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Cabinet Member	-0.033**	-0.032**	-0.031**	-0.030**	-0.031**	-0.033**	-0.033**
	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Elected from the Same Party Before	-0.092***	-0.085***	-0.085***	-0.085***	-0.086***	-0.087***	-0.084***
	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.019)
Freshman	-0.121***	-0.112***	-0.113***	-0.114***	-0.113***	-0.112***	-0.110***
	(0.023)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)

**Table 2 Concluded**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Influence of the MP	-0.017** (0.008)	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.013* (0.008)
Effort of the MP	0.008 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.008 (0.005)
Female	0.041* (0.025)	0.042* (0.023)	0.041* (0.023)	0.040* (0.023)	0.040* (0.023)	0.040* (0.023)	0.029 (0.021)
Age ≥ 50	-0.024** (0.011)	-0.022** (0.010)	-0.022** (0.010)	-0.022** (0.010)	-0.023** (0.010)	-0.023** (0.010)	-0.021** (0.010)
School Abroad	-0.046* (0.024)	-0.044* (0.023)	-0.044* (0.023)	-0.043* (0.023)	-0.043* (0.023)	-0.044* (0.023)	-0.042* (0.023)
MA/PhD	-0.004 (0.012)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.011)
<i>C-) Party and District Attributes</i>							
Member of the Government Party	0.082*** (0.018)	0.077*** (0.017)	0.076*** (0.017)	0.076*** (0.017)	0.077*** (0.017)	0.078*** (0.017)	0.083*** (0.018)
Party's Active Years in Politics	0.007** (0.003)	0.006** (0.002)	0.006** (0.002)	0.006*** (0.002)	0.007*** (0.003)	0.007*** (0.003)	0.006** (0.003)
Single Leader Party	-0.040* (0.023)	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.024 (0.023)
Party's Vote Share in the District	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)
Contested Seats in the District	-0.006** (0.003)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.006** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.003)
Observations	2208	2208	2208	2208	2208	2208	2091

The outcome variable is *Party Switch* which takes the value of one if the MP's party affiliation at the beginning of the parliamentary term is different from their affiliation at the end of the term. Table presents probit marginal effects.

**Table 3**  
**Balancing Tests**

**Panel A – The Whole sample**

	Rank			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower
Member of the Government Party	0.53	0.59***	0.64	0.69
Elected from the Same Party Before	0.48	0.31***	0.28	0.24
Relative Salary	1.57	1.51	1.49	1.38
Cabinet Member	0.18	0.11***	0.07*	0.07
Influence of the MP	0.09	-0.03**	-0.02	-0.11*
Effort of the MP	0.06	0.03	-0.01	-0.07
Freshman	0.45	0.63***	0.69*	0.73
Age ≥ 50	0.51	0.40***	0.38	0.30*
Female	0.02	0.01	0.05***	0.10**
School Abroad	0.11	0.06***	0.06	0.05
MA/PhD	0.34	0.28**	0.27	0.26

**Panel B – Margin of Victory ≤ 5**

	Rank			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower
Member of the Government Party	0.38	0.50**	0.54	0.61
Elected from the Same Party Before	0.38	0.22***	0.26	0.21
Relative Salary	1.64	1.53	1.34*	1.25
Cabinet Member	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07
Influence of the MP	-0.06	-0.10	-0.06	-0.16*
Effort of the MP	0.04	0.04	-0.05	-0.06
Freshman	0.56	0.69***	0.71	0.75
Age ≥ 50	0.50	0.39**	0.36	0.31
Female	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.11***
School Abroad	0.08	0.04*	0.05	0.06
MA/PhD	0.28	0.25	0.26	0.24

**Table 3 Concluded**

**Panel C – Margin of Victory  $\leq 3$**

	Rank			
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower
Member of the Government Party	0.36	0.50**	0.54	0.59
Elected from the Same Party Before	0.42	0.23***	0.24	0.21
Relative Salary	1.65	1.48	1.38	1.22
Cabinet Member	0.10	0.07	0.05	0.07
Influence of the MP	-0.07	-0.11	-0.06	-0.17*
Effort of the MP	0.07	0.04	-0.07	-0.05
Freshman	0.55	0.69**	0.73	0.74
Age $\geq 50$	0.52	0.41	0.34	0.32
Female	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.10**
School Abroad	0.09	0.05	0.04	0.04
MA/PhD	0.27	0.24	0.23	0.24

Table presents the sample means of the MP characteristics by the rank of the MPs. Panels A, B and C use the whole sample, the sample with MPs who won with a Margin of Victory less than or equal to 5% and 3%, respectively. \*, \*\* and \*\*\* indicate that the mean of the MPs with the rank listed in the column headers is statistically different from the mean of MPs with one *higher* rank with p-values less than 0.10, 0.05 and 0.01, respectively. For example, \* in a column “Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>” suggest that the mean of the 2<sup>nd</sup>-ranked MPs is different from 1<sup>st</sup>-ranked MPs with p-value less than 0.10.

**Table 4**  
**The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on Party Switching**

	Candidates Ranked 2nd or Lower Subsample			First Ranked Candidates Subsample	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Ranked 3rd	0.019 (0.019)				
Ranked 4th or Lower	0.043** (0.022)				
Min % Vote for Election Probability=1		0.001* (0.000)		0.004*** (0.001)	
Min % vote for Election Probability>0			0.001 (0.001)		0.020*** (0.007)
Observations	1252	1252	1252	824	824

See notes to Table 2.

**Table 5**  
**Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on Party Switching in Tight versus Wide-Margin Elections**  
**Panel A: Tight Elections**

	Margin of Victory $\leq 3$			Margin of Victory $\leq 5$		
	Subsample			Subsample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ranked 2nd or Lower	0.094** (0.042)			0.064** (0.029)		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Ranked		0.093** (0.042)	0.090** (0.043)		0.064** (0.029)	0.064** (0.030)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Ranked			0.099** (0.046)			0.072** (0.032)
Ranked 3 <sup>rd</sup> or Lower		0.101** (0.045)			0.072** (0.032)	
Ranked 4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower			0.084 (0.052)			0.074* (0.040)
Observations	590	590	590	904	904	904

<b>Panel B: Wide Margin Elections</b>						
	Margin of Victory $> 3$			Margin of Victory $> 5$		
	Subsample			Subsample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Ranked 2nd or Lower	0.015 (0.013)			0.019 (0.014)		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Ranked		0.015 (0.014)	0.016 (0.014)		0.018 (0.015)	0.018 (0.015)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Ranked			0.000 (0.021)			0.016 (0.022)
Ranked 3 <sup>rd</sup> or Lower		0.011 (0.019)			0.025 (0.020)	
Ranked 4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower			0.031 (0.027)			0.047 (0.030)
Observations	1410	1410	1410	1051	1051	1051

See notes to Table 2.

**Table 6**  
**The Effect of Party Switching on *Ex-ante* Re-election Chances in the Next Election**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Whole Sample	Conditional on running in the next election			
	Ran for <i>Re-election</i>	Min % Vote for <i>Re-election</i> Probability=1	Min % Vote for <i>Re-election</i> Probability>0	Min % Vote for <i>Re-election</i> Probability>0	Min % Vote for <i>Re-election</i> Probability>0
Party Switch	-0.049 (0.036)	-4.114*** (1.087)	-4.817*** (1.114)	-1.734*** (0.526)	-1.926*** (0.528)
Min % Vote for Election Probability=1			0.354*** (0.042)		
Min % Vote for Election Probability>0					0.290*** (0.043)
Party's Active Years in Politics	-0.018*** (0.006)	-0.611** (0.270)	-0.226 (0.269)	-0.412*** (0.125)	-0.139 (0.128)
Single Leader Party	-0.032 (0.056)	1.738 (1.915)	0.106 (1.894)	0.982 (0.884)	0.226 (0.889)
Party's Vote Share in the District	0.002* (0.001)	0.291*** (0.047)	0.142*** (0.047)	0.112*** (0.020)	0.064*** (0.020)
Contested Seats in the District	0.013** (0.005)	-0.224 (0.172)	-0.145 (0.168)	0.047 (0.093)	-0.080 (0.093)
Member of the Government Party	-0.092** (0.040)	-1.462 (1.334)	-1.697 (1.323)	-0.239 (0.561)	-0.302 (0.565)
Elected from the Same Party Before	-0.071 (0.050)	1.637 (1.668)	1.708 (1.510)	0.671 (0.764)	0.668 (0.691)
Relative Salary	-0.030 (0.038)	-1.886 (1.270)	-1.076 (1.240)	-1.067** (0.534)	-0.715 (0.522)
Cabinet Member	0.168*** (0.038)	-9.486*** (0.944)	-6.866*** (0.905)	-4.349*** (0.414)	-3.344*** (0.403)
Influence of the MP	0.017 (0.011)	-0.689* (0.362)	-0.500 (0.319)	-0.231 (0.160)	-0.138 (0.150)
Effort of the MP	0.031** (0.012)	-1.016*** (0.330)	-0.860*** (0.323)	-0.444*** (0.155)	-0.398** (0.154)
Freshman	-0.094* (0.049)	5.960*** (1.688)	3.582** (1.547)	2.564*** (0.792)	1.554** (0.736)
Age ≥ 50	-0.133*** (0.022)	-0.769 (0.987)	-0.273 (0.892)	-0.041 (0.444)	0.117 (0.409)
Female	0.061 (0.052)	-1.871 (1.913)	-2.911* (1.681)	-0.994 (0.943)	-1.434* (0.844)
School Abroad	0.010 (0.043)	-3.388** (1.648)	-2.156 (1.501)	-1.526** (0.725)	-0.920 (0.669)
MA/PhD	0.041* (0.025)	-2.468** (1.089)	-1.615* (0.978)	-1.173** (0.485)	-0.915** (0.436)
Observations	2389	1616	1616	1616	1616

The outcome variable in column 1 is an indicator for whether the MP ran for a seat in the parliament in the subsequent election. The outcome variables in columns 2 and 3 (4 and 5) are the threshold vote share for guaranteed

election (threshold for non-zero re-election probability) in the subsequent election. Column 1 presents marginal effects obtained from probit estimated over the whole sample. Columns 2 to 5 are estimated with OLS over the sample of MPs who ran for re-election. Inverse of the predicted probabilities of running for re-election are used as weights in regressions 2 to 5.

**Table 7**  
**Effect of Party Switching on the Probability of Re-Election**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	>10% Threshold	Re-elected	Re-elected	Re-elected
Party Switch	-0.170*** (0.019)	0.003 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)	0.005* (0.003)
Min %Vote for Election Probability=1		-0.000*** (0.000)		
Min %Vote for Election Probability>0			-0.001*** (0.000)	
Party's Active Years in Politics	0.023*** (0.003)	0.001* (0.000)	0.001 (0.000)	0.001** (0.000)
Single Leader Party	-0.016 (0.042)	-0.014*** (0.004)	-0.014*** (0.004)	-0.017*** (0.004)
Party's Vote Share in the District	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Contested Seats in the District	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Member of the Government Party	0.047* (0.025)	-0.005* (0.002)	-0.004 (0.002)	-0.004* (0.002)
Elected from the Same Party Before	0.005 (0.024)	0.002 (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)	0.003 (0.005)
Relative Salary	0.057*** (0.020)	0.004* (0.002)	0.004* (0.002)	0.005** (0.002)
Cabinet member	0.038** (0.015)	0.005** (0.002)	0.005** (0.002)	0.008*** (0.002)
Influence of the MP	0.000 (0.004)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.001)
Effort of the MP	0.009 (0.008)	0.000 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Freshman	-0.004 (0.024)	0.000 (0.005)	-0.000 (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)
Age ≥ 50	-0.025** (0.012)	-0.006*** (0.002)	-0.006*** (0.002)	-0.006*** (0.002)
Female	-0.017 (0.020)	-0.004 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.004)
School Abroad	0.044 (0.027)	0.007 (0.005)	0.005 (0.004)	0.008 (0.005)
MA/PhD	-0.009 (0.012)	0.002 (0.002)	0.002 (0.002)	0.003 (0.002)
Observations	1615	1614	1614	1615

The outcome variable in column 1 is an indicator for whether the MP's party has passed the 10% national election threshold in the subsequent election. The outcome variable in columns 2 to 4 is an indicator for whether the MP is re-elected in the subsequent election. Table presents marginal effects obtained from probit regressions over the sample of MPs who ran for re-election. Inverse of the predicted probabilities of passing the 10% threshold are used as weights in regressions 2 to 4.

**Table 8**  
**The Relationship between Party Switching and Ideological Change**

	(1)	(2)
	Ideology (End-of-term)	
Party Switch	3.964*** (0.485)	4.097*** (0.459)
Ideology (Beginning-of-term)	1.012*** (0.001)	1.033*** (0.008)
Party Switch×Ideology	-0.634*** (0.075)	-0.650*** (0.071)
Party's Active Years in Politics		0.003*** (0.001)
Single Leader Party		0.126*** (0.035)
Party's Vote Share in the District		-0.001 (0.001)
Contested Seats in the District		-0.001 (0.005)
Member of the Government Party		-0.035 (0.029)
Elected from the Same Party Before		0.110 (0.077)
Relative Salary		-0.039 (0.039)
Cabinet Member		-0.022 (0.036)
Influence of the MP		0.001 (0.008)
Effort of the MP		-0.006 (0.011)
Freshman		0.124 (0.078)
Age ≥ 50		0.003 (0.021)
Female		-0.028 (0.056)
School Abroad		-0.015 (0.034)
MA/PhD		0.001 (0.023)
Observations	2369	2358

The outcome variable is the MP's end-of-term party's ideology which ranged between 1 (most left) to 10 (most right). Table presents OLS estimates. The whole set of control variables are included in the regressions (as in Table 2) except indicators for MP's beginning of the term party.

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## Mobile Politicians: Opportunistic Career Moves

### Appendix 1: d'Hondt Example

In this section, we first explain how seats are allocated to political parties in d'Hondt method, and then provide evidence that show small changes in the distribution of votes can impact the number of seats won by each party and MPs with smaller Margins of Victory (MVs) are at the risk of losing their seats if vote distribution in the district changes even slightly. Finally, we demonstrate how we compute the MVs.

In the d'Hondt method, the number of votes obtained by each party in the district is divided by consecutive positive integers up to, and including, the total number of seats in that district. Parties with the largest quotients win seats. Consider the hypothetical example of a district with 100 voters. Assume that there are 7 seats to be allocated and five competing parties: A, B, C, D and E. Suppose that in the election these parties have obtained 10, 13, 19, 25, and 33 votes, respectively. d'Hondt method divides each party's votes by 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Parties with the 7 largest quotients win seats. This is illustrated in Panel 1 of Appendix 1 Table 1. The seven biggest quotients (highlighted in bold) are 33, 25, 19, 16.5, 13, 12.5 and 11. The quotients 33, 16.5 and 11 are associated with party E. Therefore Party E wins 3 of the 7 available seats. The quotients 25 and 12.5 belong to Party D, so Party D wins two seats, and Parties B and C win 1 seat each. As a result, party B's and party C's top ranked candidates are elected as MPs. Party D sends its top 2 candidates to the Parliament, and party E's top 3 candidates are elected as MPs. Party A does not win a seat.

To see how *small changes in the distribution of votes can impact who is elected from a given party*, compare the vote distributions depicted in Panels 1 and 2 of Appendix 1 Table 1. In both cases, there are 100 voters, and in both cases parties B, C and E received the same number

of votes. The only difference between the election results shown in Panels 1 and 2 is that in Panel 2, Party D received 23 votes (instead of 25); and these 2 voters moved from Party D to Party A. The resultant d'Hondt calculation is presented in Panel 2, which shows that the 2% loss suffered by Party D did not impact the number of seats of Party D (party D still qualified for two seats). On the other hand, this 2% vote loss of Party D produced a seat in the Parliament for Party A at the expense of a seat for Party E. More specifically, this slight shift of votes from Party D to Party A cost one MP to Party E, while Party A gained one seat. As a result of these changes, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ranked candidate of Party E is not elected, while the 1<sup>st</sup> ranked candidate of Party A is elected. As shown in Panel 3 of Appendix 1 Table 1, if 2 more individuals had voted for party A instead of D, the election outcome would have been more different yet: In that case, parties A, B, C and D would qualify for one seat each, while party E would have 3 MPs.

The examples demonstrated above suggest that some candidates, especially those who won by a small margin of votes, were at the risk of losing their seats if the vote distribution in the district was slightly different. To identify the MPs who were at high risk of losing the election, we compute the Margin of Victory (MV) for each elected MP for in vote distribution depicted in Panel 1 of Appendix 1 Table 1. Panel 4 of Appendix 1 Table 1 displays these calculations. We define MV as the difference between the quotients of each elected candidate and the candidate who just missed qualifying for the last seat from that district. For example, the person who won the 7<sup>th</sup> and the last seat in this district is candidate E3, and her margin of victory is 1 (the difference between the E3's and A1's quotients). Candidate E1 is the first-ranked candidate of party E; her quotient is 33 and therefore her MV is 23. Notice that the seats won by MPs with small MVs (D2 and E3) could have been easily lost to another candidate, if the vote distribution changed even slightly (as demonstrated in Panels 2 and 3). In our analyses, in addition to using

the whole sample of MPs, we employ the subsample of MPs who won by small margins in order to identify the impact of a candidate's rank on the probability of party switching. In addition, in some specifications, we use the *Margin of Victory* as an (inverse) measure of electoral uncertainty faced by the politician.

**Appendix 1 Table 1**  
**Hypothetical D'Hondt Example of Votes Shares and Seat Allocations**

<b>Panel 1 – Vote Distribution 1</b>							
Parties	Votes/1	Votes/2	Votes/3	Votes/4	Votes/5	Votes/6	Votes/7
A	10.0	5.0	3.3	2.5	2.0	1.7	1.4
B	<b><u>13.0</u></b>	6.5	4.3	3.3	2.6	2.2	1.9
C	<b><u>19.0</u></b>	9.5	6.3	4.8	3.8	3.2	2.7
D	<b><u>25.0</u></b>	<b><u>12.5</u></b>	8.3	6.3	5.0	4.2	3.6
E	<b><u>33.0</u></b>	<b><u>16.5</u></b>	<b><u>11.0</u></b>	8.3	6.6	5.5	4.7
<b>Panel 2 – Vote Distribution 2 (2 individuals vote for A instead of D)</b>							
Parties	Votes/1	Votes/2	Votes/3	Votes/4	Votes/5	Votes/6	Votes/7
A	<b><u>12.0</u></b>	6.0	4.0	3.0	2.4	2.0	1.7
B	<b><u>13.0</u></b>	6.5	4.3	3.3	2.6	2.2	1.9
C	<b><u>19.0</u></b>	9.5	6.3	4.8	3.8	3.2	2.7
D	<b><u>23.0</u></b>	<b><u>11.5</u></b>	7.7	5.8	4.6	3.8	3.3
E	<b><u>33.0</u></b>	<b><u>16.5</u></b>	11.0	8.3	6.6	5.5	4.7
<b>Panel 3 – Vote Distribution 3 (4 individuals vote for A instead of D)</b>							
Parties	Votes/1	Votes/2	Votes/3	Votes/4	Votes/5	Votes/6	Votes/7
A	<b><u>14.0</u></b>	7.0	4.7	3.5	2.8	2.3	2.0
B	<b><u>13.0</u></b>	6.5	4.3	3.3	2.6	2.2	1.9
C	<b><u>19.0</u></b>	9.5	6.3	4.8	3.8	3.2	2.7
D	<b><u>21.0</u></b>	10.5	7.0	5.3	4.2	3.5	3.0
E	<b><u>33.0</u></b>	<b><u>16.5</u></b>	<b><u>11.0</u></b>	8.3	6.6	5.5	4.7

The table presents three examples of how seats in a district with seven seats are allocated to five parties using d'Hondt method. Each panel depicts a separate vote distribution. There are 100 votes cast, so votes = vote shares. The number of votes received by each party is shown in the column (Votes/1) in each panel. d'Hondt method divides each party's votes by consecutive integers up to the number of seats in the district (N). In this example, N=7. The columns "Votes/1", "Votes/2", ..., "Votes/7" in the table present the resultant quotients. The parties with the largest N quotients win the seats. In the examples above, the bold and underlined numbers represent the largest seven quotients. Parties win as many seats as the number of largest quotients they have. For example, under vote distribution 1, parties B and C win one seat, D wins two seats, and E wins 3 seats.

**Panel 4 – Calculation of the Margin of Victory Based on Vote Distribution 1**

	MPs from the District	Elected Candidate	Q	Margin of Victory
Winners	1	E1	33	33 - 10 = 23
	2	D1	25	25 - 10 = 15
	3	C1	19	19 - 10 = 9
	4	E2	16.5	16.5 - 10 = 6.5
	5	B1	13	13 - 10 = 3
	6	D2	12.5	12.5 - 10 = 2.5
	7	E3	11	11 - 10 = 1
	<b>8</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>10</b>	

Q stands for the quotient of each candidate. They are the entries in the cells in top panel of table, pertaining to the candidates with the highest 8 quotients. For example, candidate E1 is the first-ranked candidate on party E's list. Because there are 7 seats, the candidate with the 8<sup>th</sup> highest quotient is *not* elected (in this example, this candidate is

A1). Such candidates, who barely missed being elected are the *Cutoff Candidates*, and their quotients are the *Cutoff Quotients*. *Margin of Victory* is the difference in quotients between the winning candidates from that district and the quotient of the Cutoff Candidate.

## Appendix 2: Data

Our data set is composed of individuals who are elected as members of the parliament (MPs) in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey in parliamentary terms 19 to 23 (1991-2011). We analyze five consecutive elections for which complete data are available. Our outcome variable *Party Switch* denotes whether an MP's beginning-of-term party is different from their end-of-term party. In our data set, out of 2,428 MP-term observations, there are 295 party switches (12%).<sup>8</sup> The distribution of the number of MPs for each party at the beginning-of-the-term and end-of-the-term parties is presented in Appendix 2 Table 1. The number of MPs who switched parties is presented in Appendix 2 Table 2 for each parliamentary term.

Party switch information is obtained from three sources: 1. Parliamentary Bulletin (Meclis Bulteni) – the official monthly journal of the Turkish Parliament; 2. meclishaber.gov.tr – the official news web site of the Turkish Parliament. For the 23<sup>rd</sup> term (2007-2011), information on whether an MP has switched parties was not available in these sources. For this particular Parliamentary term, we determined MPs' party affiliation using the latest roll-call voting data.

We obtained the rank of each MP as he/she was listed on the party list before an election from the official gazette of the Parliament (Resmi Gazete). Based on this information, we constructed the variable *Rank* which is the rank of an MP on the party's list of candidates in the electoral district. This variable is continuous. We also generated variables that indicate whether

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<sup>8</sup> Some MP-term observations are omitted. Specifically, the MPs who passed away before the end of the term are not in the analysis, so are the MPs who resigned from their party but remained as independent (not affiliated with any party) or who were forced to resign by the constitutional court. An MP's switch to another party is not counted as a party switch if their initial party is shut down by the constitutional court. Some parties changed their names. Such name changes are not considered as party switches either.

the MP is ranked *Second, Third, Second or Lower, Third or Lower* and *Fourth or Lower* on their party list. 42% and 24% of the MPs were ranked as first- and second-highest candidates on their party list, respectively. The remaining 34% were listed as third-ranked or worse.

We augment our data set with MPs' personal characteristics, their party's election results and other party characteristics. Variables *Female*, *Age>50* and *MA/PhD* indicate whether the MP is female, older than 50 years old and has completed a degree beyond college. *School Abroad* indicates whether the MP has obtained a degree from a school outside Turkey. This variable potentially captures both the quality of education an MP has received and personal wealth of the MP, as getting schooling abroad is costlier than going to school in Turkey. *Cabinet Member* denotes whether the MP also served as a minister in the cabinet in the parliamentary term. *Freshman* takes the value of one if the MP has not been elected to the Parliament previously, and zero otherwise. *Effort of the MP* is the sum of MP's Parliamentary activities including speeches on the floor, oral or written questions delivered, motions and proposals submitted in each parliamentary term. *Influence of the MP* measures the number of co-sponsors who signed a draft of a law proposed by the MP. We include standardized values of *Effort of the MP* and *Influence of the MP*. The data source of personal characteristics of the MPs is the profiles of the MPs in Turkish Parliament web site. MP's effort and influence in each Parliamentary term are compiled from personal profiles of the MP and the statistics compiled by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.<sup>9</sup> Election results data are obtained from the official gazette (Resmi Gazete).

*Contested Seats in the District* measures the number of seats contested in the electoral district that the MP is representing. *Party's Vote Share in the District* is the share of votes

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/td\\_v2\\_istatistik.uyeler](https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/td_v2_istatistik.uyeler)

obtained by the party of the MP's electoral district. These variables are obtained using data from Turkish Statistical Institute.

We obtained data from political party websites about party characteristics. *Single Party Leader* indicates whether a party's leader was not changed in the last ten years. Parties where leaders do not change frequently are likely to have more autocratic decision making processes. *Party's Active Years in Politics* is the age of the political party since its establishment. The summary statistics and the descriptions of the variables are presented in Table 1 in the text.

### *Measurement of the Party Ideologies*

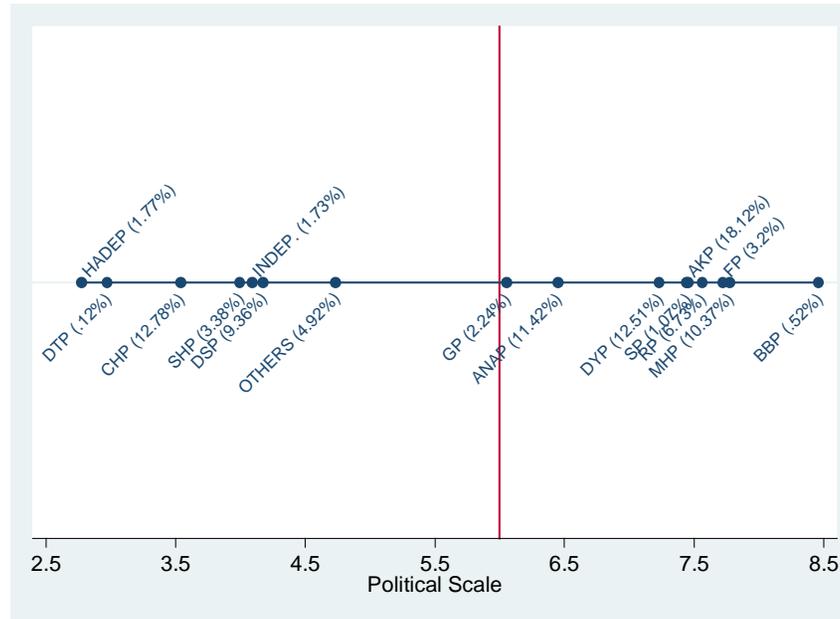
In the text where we investigate to where the switchers switch, we make use of the ideologies of MPs' parties. We measure party ideologies using data on Turkey from World Values Survey (WVS) for the years 1990, 1996, 2001, 2007 and 2011.<sup>10</sup> The participants were asked about the party they support: "*If there were a national election tomorrow, for which party on this list would you vote? (If the response is 'I don't know.')* Which party appeals to you the most?" They also were asked how they would self-position themselves in the political spectrum from left to right: "*In political matters, people talk of 'the left' and 'the right'. Below is a ten-point scale. '1' indicates most left, and '10' is most right. How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?*" The *Political Scale Index* of a party, which we used to construct the ideology variables in eq. (7), is the average of left-to-right positions of that party's voters. Analysis of data from different years shows that parties' average voter's location on the political spectrum does not vary from year to year.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>. World Values Survey is administered to nationally representative samples that range between 1000 and 3400.

Appendix 2 Figure 1 presents the Political Scale Index of each party. A smaller (larger) value of the index represents more left-of-the-center (right-of-the-center) ideology of the party. In the WVS sample, the median voter is located at the index value of 6. This is demonstrated by the vertical line in Appendix 2 Figure 1. The percentages in parentheses are the shares of votes parties received in elections since 1991. The picture is consistent with other researchers' classifications of parties and most people's priors (Carkoglu and Hinich, 2006; Secor, 2001). For example, the social democratic party (CHP), which is known as a left-wing party, has an average rating of 4, while AKP, a right-wing party, has a rating of 7.5

**Appendix 2 Figure 1  
Political Parties on Political Spectrum**



The figure presents the positioning of parties in the political scale that ranges between 1 (most left) and 10 (most right). The value for a party is obtained by averaging the political scale index of the supporters of that party. In parentheses, the vote shares of the party in elections since 1991 are presented. The vertical line represents the median voter (6).

**Appendix 2 Table 1**  
**The Change in Parties' Seats in the Parliament by Parliamentary Term**

	<b>19<sup>th</sup> term 1991- 1995</b>		<b>20<sup>th</sup> term 1995- 1999</b>	
	# Seats at the Beginning of the Term	# Seats at the End of Term	# Seats at the Beginning of the Term	# Seats at the End of Term
ANAP	115 (25.6%)	97 (21.6%)	ANAP	132 (24.0%)
DSP	7 (1.6%)	19 (4.2%)	CHP	49 (8.9%)
DYP	178 (39.6%)	162 (36.0%)	DSP	76 (13.8%)
RP	62 (13.8%)	38 (8.4%)	DYP	135 (24.5%)
SHP	88 (19.6%)	44 (9.8%) *	RP	158 (28.7%)
Other Parties		26 (5.8%)	Other parties	31 (5.6%)
Independent MPs		42 (9.3%)	Independent MPs	34 (6.2%)
Not an MP anymore		22 (4.9%)	Not an MP anymore	7 (1.3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>450<sup>†</sup></b>		<b>550<sup>†</sup></b>	
	<b>21<sup>st</sup> term 1999-2002</b>		<b>22<sup>nd</sup> term 2002-2007</b>	
	# Seats at the Beginning of the Term	# Seats at the End of Term	# Seats at the Beginning of the Term	# Seats at the End of Term
ANAP	86 (15.6%)	75 (13.6%)	AKP	365 (66.4%)
DSP	136 (24.7%)	65 (11.8%)	CHP	177(32.2%)
DYP	85 (15.5%)	85 (15.5%)	Other Parties	22 (4.0%)
FP	111 (20.2%)	84 (15.3%) ***	Independent MPs	8(1.5%)
MHP	129 (23.5%)	123 (22.4%)	Not an MP anymore	7 (1.3%)
Other parties		91 (16.5%)		
Independent MPs	3 (0.5%)	16 (2.9%)		
Not an MP anymore		12 (2.2%)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>550<sup>†</sup></b>		<b>550<sup>†</sup></b>	

**Appendix 2 Table 1 (concluded)**

<b>23<sup>rd</sup> term 2007-2011</b>		
	<b># Seats at the Beginning of the Term</b>	<b># Seats at the End of Term</b>
AKP	341 (62.0%)	333 (60.5%)
CHP	112 (20.4%)	102 (18.5%)
MHP	71 (12.9%)	69 (12.5%)
Other parties		28 (5.1%)
Independent MPs	26 (4.7%)	8 (1.5%)
Not an MP anymore		10 (1.8%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>550<sup>†</sup></b>

“Other Parties” are those that were not represented in the parliament at the beginning of the parliamentary term. “Independent MPs” are not members of any political party. MPs who lost their office because of resignation, expulsion, death, or taking another office such as the head of the state or governor of a city, are listed as “Not an MP anymore”. <sup>†</sup> The number of seats in the Parliament has been increased to 550 in 1995. \* SHP and CHP merged in February 1995 under the name of CHP. 44 MPs remained in CHP as the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> term December 1995. \*\* RP is shut down by the constitutional court in January 1998. Ex-members of RP started and joined a new party, FP. As of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> term in April 1999, FP had 149 seats in the parliament. \*\*\* FP is shut down by the constitutional court in June 2001. Its ex-members started a new party, SP. At the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> term in November 2002, 84 MPs were members of SP.

**Appendix 2 Table 2**  
**The Number of MPs and Party Switchers by Parliamentary Term**  
**in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey**

Term	Starts with election on	No. MP Observations*	No. Party Switchers
19	October 20, 1991	386	70 (18.1%)
20	December 24, 1995	509	75 (14.7%)
21	April 18, 1999	522	91 (17.4%)
22	November 3, 2002	523	29 (5.5%)
23	July 22, 2007	532	30 (5.6%)

The table demonstrates the distribution of party switchers across parliamentary terms in our sample. Party switchers are those members of the Parliament (MPs) whose party affiliation at the end of the parliamentary term is different from their affiliation at the start of the term. The 23<sup>rd</sup> term ended with elections on June 12, 2011. MP observations is the number of MPs whose party affiliations are known both at the beginning and the end of the Parliamentary terms. The circumstances in which this may not be true include the cases where the MP has died during the term, the MP is an independent MP (not affiliated with a party), or resigned from the Parliament during the term.

### Appendix 3

#### Discussion of the Estimates of the Control Variables in Table 2 of the Main Text

##### Personal Attributes of the MP

The estimated impact of MP characteristics on the propensity to switch parties is listed in panel B of Table 2 in the main text. The variable, titled “*Relative Salary*” is the ratio of real MP salary to the per capita income in the city from which the MP was elected. MP salaries are periodically adjusted upwards by the Parliament, and there is variation in per capita income between cities. Thus, *Relative Salary* varies both over time and between cities. Table 2 of the main text shows that an increase in MP salaries in comparison to per capita income has a positive impact on the propensity to switch parties, likely because an increase in salary makes the MP’s post more attractive.

Members of the Parliament who are also members of the cabinet are less likely to switch to another party. This is arguably because, *Cabinet Members* have access to government resources, and defecting from their current party may reduce opportunities to obtain governmental pork (Desposato 2006). Those who are elected multiple times from the same party (and have not switched parties) are more likely to be loyal to the party. The coefficient of *Elected from the Same Party Before* is negative and significant in all specifications, but omitting this variable, which captures party loyalty, had no impact on other coefficients. *Freshman* parliamentarians are less likely to switch parties. These MPs are elected to the parliament for the first time, and presumably because of this, they did not have enough time to network and make connections with competing parties to be able to switch their party affiliation.

In Table 2 the coefficient of the variable *Influence of the MP* is about -0.016. This result suggests that a one standard deviation increase in an MP’s influence reduces his/her probability of switching parties by 1.7 percentage points. This is probably because for those MPs with strong

influence on other members of their party, party switching is more costly, in that defection from their party involves giving up their sway over other members. The coefficient of *Effort of the MP* is positive but insignificant in Table 2.

Members of the Parliament who were 50 years of age or older when they were elected, are less likely to switch parties. This could be because it may not pay off to switch parties and start off anew at a different party when time left to retirement is shorter. This finding is consistent with Alesina et al. (2015). In Appendix 3 Table 1, we present a more detailed investigation of the effect of MP's age. Our results suggest that the effect of age on probability of party switching is monotonic. In addition, we find that the effect of election uncertainty has a statistically significant impact on party switching in the sample of younger MPs, while older MPs do not respond to election uncertainty. Female MPs are more likely to switch to another party. Those MPs who have received a college or graduate degree outside Turkey (*School Abroad*) are less likely to switch parties. To receive a college degree abroad could be an indicator of wealth, or superior academic performance in high school. MPs who obtained a degree abroad are more likely to be a member of a wealthy family compared to MPs who went to college in Turkey, because attending school abroad is more expensive compared to obtaining a degree in the country. Alternatively, an MP could obtain a degree abroad with the support of a scholarship thanks to their superior academic performance in school. In either case, wealthy or academically successful MPs have better outside options in the labor market. Having a graduate degree (*MA/PhD*) does not significantly influence probability of party switching. However, our complementary analysis, presented in Appendix 3 Table 2, suggests that MPs who don't hold graduate degrees respond more strongly to election uncertainty. Specifically, election uncertainty faced by the MP has a statistically significant effect on party switching in the sample of MPs

who do not have graduate degrees, but not in the sample of MPs who have MA or PhD degrees. Conditioning on the MPs' area of study or their universities' quality does not change this finding. Quality of MP's university, as measured by the selectiveness of the colleges, reduces probability of party switching in the sample of MPs who do not have a graduate degree. These results are presented in Appendix 3 Table 2. In addition, Appendix 3 Figure 1 shows that the impact of *Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> or Lower* on the probability of party switching is greater when the MP's the quality of the university is smaller.

An interesting result in Table 2 of the main text is the impact of *Member of the Government Party*. This variable takes the value of one if the MP's party is the governing party in the Parliament, either as the majority party or as part of a coalition government. The results show that if MP is the member of the majority (the governing party), then his/her probability of switching parties is seven percentage points larger.<sup>11</sup> This is likely because it is a more attractive proposition for the MP to transfer to another party if he/she is a member of the majority party, because such a move weakens the government, and strengthens the opposition. As an extension, we investigated whether the *impact is larger* when the margin of the majority of the government is *smaller*. Results presented in Appendix 3 Figure 2 supports this idea. Specifically, compared to their counterparts in the opposition parties, members of the parties that formed the government

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<sup>11</sup> The findings in the literature about the impact of being a member of the government party on party switching are mixed. For example, Heller and Mershon (2008) find that being a member of the governing party increased probability of switching in some terms of the Italian Parliament, while it decreased this probability in other terms. McMenamin and Gwiazda (2011) find a similar pattern for the Polish Parliament. On the other hand, Desposato (2006) finds that party switching MPs move to governmental parties in Brazil.

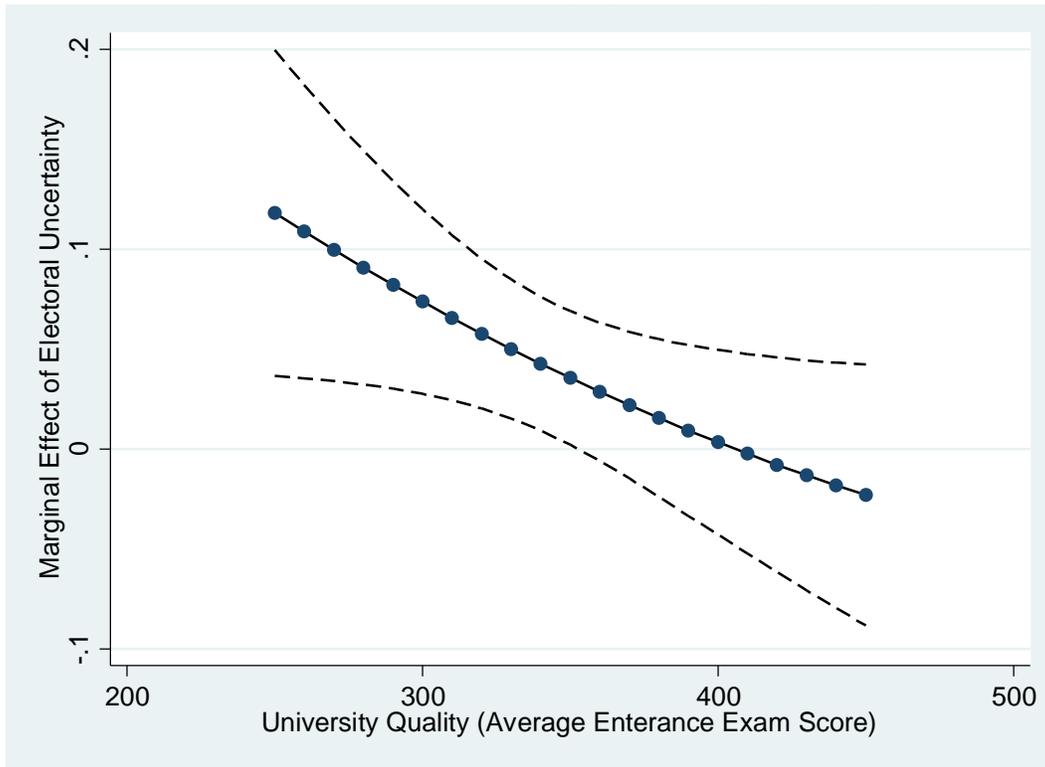
are more likely to switch parties when the majority of the government in the Parliament is smaller.

### *The Impact of Party and District Attributes*

Panel C of Table 2 in the main text shows that, all else the same, MPs are more likely to switch parties after an election if they are members of a party that has a longer existence in politics. On the other hand, if the leader of the party has held that position of leadership for at least 10 consecutive years (*Single Leader Party*=1), this reduces the propensity to switch parties. This could be because in such parties the entire leadership team may be more stable and therefore they may be more attuned to the rank and file of the party, more effective in dealing with grievances, and reacting more promptly to any attempts to defection from the party.

Panel C of Table 2 of the main text shows that the higher the number of *Contested Seats in a District*, the lower the likelihood of party switching of an MP who was elected from that district. This result, which indicates that the MPs who are elected from smaller districts are more likely to switch parties after an election, makes sense to the extent that those seats are more valuable to transfer to another party.

**Appendix 3 Figure 1**  
**Effect of Election Uncertainty by University Quality**



We estimate a probit regression of the form  $P(\text{Party Switch} = 1) = \Phi(\beta_1 \text{Ranked 2nd or Lower} + \beta_2 \text{Quality} + \beta_3 \text{Ranked 2nd or Lower} \times \text{Quality} + \mathbf{X}\beta_4 + \varepsilon)$  where *Quality* is the average university entrance exam score of the MP's university. Greater *Quality* implies more selective university. Solid connected line represents the marginal effect of *Ranked 2nd or Lower* evaluated at various *Quality* levels. Dashed lines are two standard error confidence intervals.

**Appendix 3 Figure 2**  
**The Effect of Being a Member of Governmental Party on Party Switching**  
**(by the Strength of the Government)**

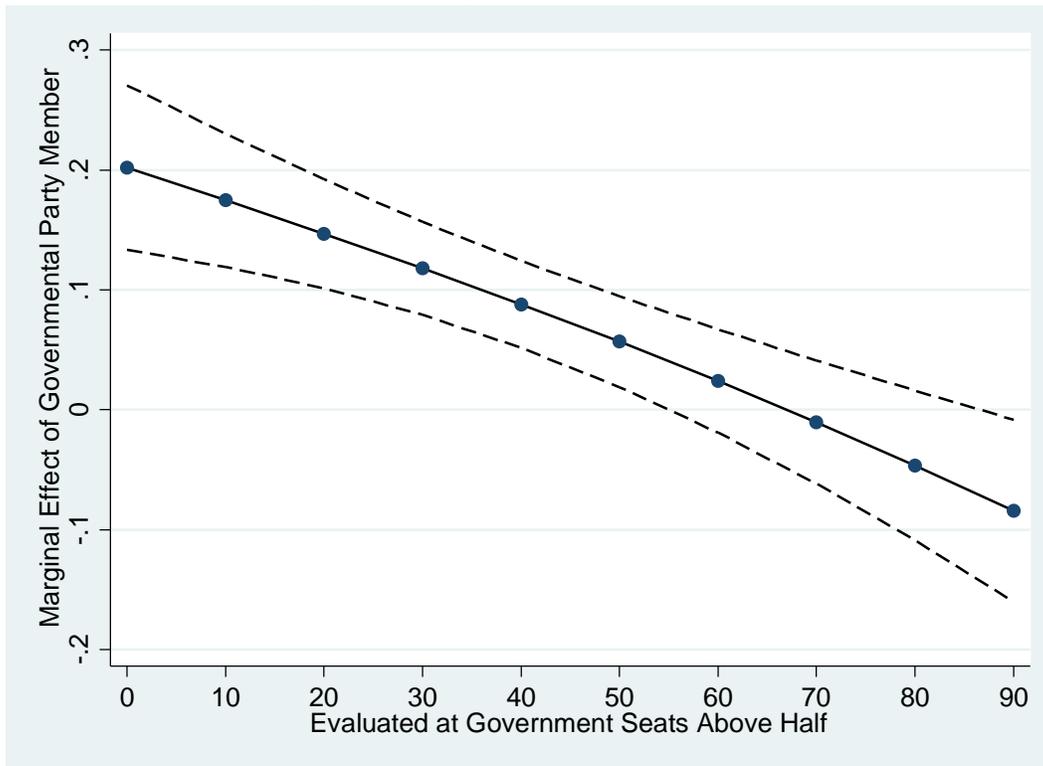


Figure presents effect of variable *Member of the Government Party* on probability of *Party Switch=1*. To obtain these marginal effects, we first run a probit regression same as the specifications in Table 2 in the main text with the following exceptions: 1. Among the controls, we include a new variable *No. Seats above Majority* which constructed by the number of seats the governmental parties have in the Parliament at the beginning of the term minus half of the seats in the Parliament. We also include the interaction of *No. Seats above Majority* with *Member of the Government Party*. 2. We exclude Parliamentary term dummies. The connected line represents the marginal effects of *Member of the Government Party* evaluated at several values of *No. Seats above Majority*. Dashed lines represent two standard deviation confidence intervals. The confidence intervals start to contain zero after *No. Seats above Majority=50*.

**Appendix 3 Table 1**  
**The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on the Probability of Party Switching by MP's Age**

	Whole Sample			Age < 50	Age ≥ 50
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup> or Lower	0.024** (0.011)	0.022** (0.011)	0.023** (0.011)	0.037** (0.017)	-0.002 (0.015)
Age ≥ 50	-0.022** (0.010)				
Age		-0.002*** (0.001)			
Age 40-49			-0.043*** (0.013)		
Age 50-59			-0.053*** (0.014)		
Age ≥ 60			-0.067*** (0.020)		
Relative Salary	0.032** (0.015)	0.033** (0.015)	0.033** (0.015)	0.059** (0.023)	0.010 (0.021)
Cabinet Member	-0.032** (0.015)	-0.030** (0.015)	-0.030** (0.015)	-0.056** (0.024)	-0.021 (0.019)
Elected from the Same Party Before	-0.085*** (0.019)	-0.085*** (0.019)	-0.086*** (0.019)	-0.110*** (0.039)	-0.061** (0.024)
Freshman	-0.112*** (0.020)	-0.117*** (0.020)	-0.116*** (0.020)	-0.149*** (0.039)	-0.080*** (0.024)
Influence of the MP	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.014* (0.008)	-0.014* (0.008)	-0.023* (0.013)	-0.008 (0.007)
Effort of the MP	0.007 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	0.011 (0.008)	0.005 (0.007)
Female	0.042* (0.023)	0.036 (0.022)	0.035 (0.022)	0.096*** (0.035)	-0.022 (0.029)
School Abroad	-0.044* (0.023)	-0.043* (0.023)	-0.045** (0.023)	-0.041 (0.044)	-0.053** (0.025)
MA/PhD	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.002 (0.011)	-0.029* (0.017)	0.022 (0.015)
Member of the Government Party	0.077*** (0.017)	0.075*** (0.017)	0.075*** (0.017)	0.087*** (0.025)	0.064*** (0.025)
Party's Active Years in Politics	0.006** (0.002)	0.006*** (0.002)	0.006** (0.002)	0.012*** (0.004)	0.001 (0.003)
Single Leader Party	-0.037* (0.022)	-0.035 (0.021)	-0.032 (0.021)	-0.056* (0.031)	0.038 (0.030)
Party's Vote Share in the District	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)
Contested Seats in the District	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.009*** (0.003)	-0.002 (0.003)
Observations	2208	2208	2208	1185	786

Notes: The outcome variable is *Party Switch* which takes the value of one if the MP's party affiliation at the beginning of the parliamentary term is different from their affiliation at the end of the term. Table presents the marginal effects obtained from probit regressions. Columns 1 to 3 present results obtained from the whole sample. The results in columns 4 and 5 pertain to MPs who age younger than 50 years old and older than 50 years old, respectively. The whole set of control variables are included in the regressions (as in Table 2 in the main text). Robust standard errors clustered at the MP level are reported in parentheses. \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate statistical significance at 10%, 5% and 1%, respectively.

**Appendix 3 Table 2**  
**The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on the Probability of Party Switching by MP's Education**  
**Conditional on MP's Area of Study and University Quality**

	Whole Sample			MPs <i>with</i> MA or PhD			MPs <i>without</i> MA or PhD		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup> or Lower	0.024** (0.011)	0.031** (0.015)	0.046*** (0.017)	0.009 (0.023)	0.015 (0.036)	0.074 (0.061)	0.031** (0.014)	0.041** (0.019)	0.049** (0.021)
MA/PhD	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.011 (0.016)	-0.007 (0.018)						
University Quality Score			-0.004** (0.002)			-0.004 (0.007)			-0.005** (0.002)
<i>Area of Study</i>									
Basic Sciences		-0.044 (0.037)	-0.010 (0.041)		0.011 (0.096)	0.129 (0.137)		-0.042 (0.043)	-0.014 (0.048)
Comp Sci, Elect Eng		0.038 (0.042)	0.043 (0.044)		0.052 (0.114)	0.047 (0.226)		0.027 (0.050)	0.043 (0.054)
Other Engineering		-0.015 (0.023)	0.010 (0.028)		-0.047 (0.077)	-0.049 (0.091)		-0.007 (0.027)	0.017 (0.035)
Health Sciences		0.018 (0.026)	0.034 (0.030)		0.041 (0.076)	0.138 (0.091)		0.032 (0.033)	0.043 (0.040)
Education		0.012 (0.029)	0.018 (0.036)		-0.027 (0.105)	-0.836*** (0.220)		0.005 (0.034)	0.008 (0.044)
Economics/Management		0.007 (0.022)	0.027 (0.027)		0.064 (0.072)	0.093 (0.090)		-0.009 (0.025)	0.021 (0.034)
Law		-0.034 (0.023)	-0.021 (0.030)		-0.038 (0.101)	0.073 (0.121)		-0.038 (0.025)	-0.031 (0.035)
Social Sciences		-0.008 (0.027)			0.056 (0.076)			-0.021 (0.036)	
Other		0.006 (0.039)						0.045 (0.047)	

Appendix 3 Table 2 continued

	Whole Sample			MPs with MA or PhD			MPs without MA or PhD		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
<i>Personal Attributes of the MP</i>									
Relative Salary	0.032** (0.015)	0.044** (0.020)	0.058** (0.025)	0.114* (0.065)	0.178** (0.090)	0.373 (0.228)	0.036** (0.017)	0.049** (0.023)	0.055* (0.028)
Cabinet Member	-0.032** (0.015)	-0.040** (0.020)	-0.034 (0.023)	-0.073** (0.032)	-0.122*** (0.039)	-0.132** (0.065)	-0.012 (0.019)	-0.011 (0.025)	-0.021 (0.028)
Elected from the Same Party Before	-0.085*** (0.019)	-0.113*** (0.025)	-0.139*** (0.029)	-0.074 (0.046)	-0.108* (0.062)	-0.204* (0.113)	-0.093*** (0.023)	-0.123*** (0.030)	-0.144*** (0.033)
Freshman	-0.112*** (0.020)	-0.151*** (0.025)	-0.179*** (0.029)	-0.080* (0.045)	-0.127** (0.059)	-0.212** (0.098)	-0.132*** (0.024)	-0.180*** (0.030)	-0.208*** (0.033)
Influence of the MP	-0.016** (0.008)	-0.022** (0.011)	-0.011 (0.012)	-0.000 (0.008)	0.005 (0.011)	0.113*** (0.032)	-0.029** (0.012)	-0.041** (0.017)	-0.030* (0.016)
Effort of the MP	0.007 (0.005)	0.010 (0.007)	0.006 (0.008)	0.008 (0.011)	0.012 (0.016)	-0.075** (0.037)	0.007 (0.006)	0.011 (0.008)	0.008 (0.009)
Female	0.042* (0.023)	0.054* (0.031)	0.063* (0.034)	-0.043 (0.035)	-0.079 (0.049)	-0.057 (0.085)	0.068** (0.030)	0.086** (0.040)	0.095** (0.042)
Age ≥ 50	-0.022** (0.010)	-0.027** (0.013)	-0.031* (0.016)	0.013 (0.019)	0.029 (0.027)	0.034 (0.051)	-0.043*** (0.013)	-0.054*** (0.017)	-0.054*** (0.020)
School Abroad	-0.044* (0.023)	-0.061** (0.030)		-0.037 (0.026)	-0.089** (0.037)				
Member of the Government Party	0.077*** (0.017)	0.102*** (0.022)	0.101*** (0.025)	0.028 (0.032)	0.053 (0.044)	0.036 (0.113)	0.102*** (0.022)	0.137*** (0.029)	0.123*** (0.031)
<i>Party and District Attributes</i>									
Party's Active Years in Politics	0.006** (0.002)	0.009** (0.003)	0.007* (0.004)	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.005 (0.008)	0.113*** (0.024)	0.013*** (0.003)	0.017*** (0.004)	0.012*** (0.005)

**Appendix 3 Table 2 Concluded**

	Whole Sample			MPs <i>with</i> MA or PhD			MPs <i>without</i> MA or PhD		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Single Leader Party	-0.037*	-0.050*	-0.039	0.062	0.078	0.385*	-0.069**	-0.090**	-0.073*
	(0.022)	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.039)	(0.063)	(0.207)	(0.028)	(0.038)	(0.039)
Party's Vote Share in the District	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002*	-0.000	0.000	-0.003	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.004)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Contested Seats in the District	-0.005**	-0.007**	-0.008**	-0.002	-0.003	-0.004	-0.008***	-0.011***	-0.010**
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Observations	2208	2205	1591	462	462	200	1492	1489	1143

Notes: The outcome variable is *Party Switch* which takes the value of one if the MP's party affiliation at the beginning of the parliamentary term is different from their affiliation at the end of the term. Table presents the marginal effects obtained from probit regressions. Columns 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9 present results obtained from the whole sample, the sample of MPs who have graduate degrees (*MA/PhD*=1) and the sample of MPs who have college degrees or less (*MA/PhD*=0), respectively. The whole set of control variables are included in the regressions (as in Table 2 in the main text). Robust standard errors clustered at the MP level are reported in parentheses. \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate statistical significance at 10%, 5% and 1%, respectively.

Areas of Study: **Basic Sciences** – graduates who major in sciences such as chemistry, physics, biology, astronomy, geology. **Comp Sci, Elect Eng** – graduates who major in computer engineering, electric or electronics engineering, and mathematics, statistics **Other Engineering** –engineering in all other fields such as industrial engineering, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, chemical engineering, agricultural engineering, forestry engineering, and architecture. **Health Sciences** – dentistry, medical doctors, pharmaceuticals, veterinarian. **Education** – teachers, foreign languages, Turkish language, physical education majors, graduates of fine arts schools and conservatories. **Economics/Management** – graduates from departments of economics, management, marketing, accounting, finance, banking, trade, tourism management and graduates of related schools. **Law** – graduates of law school. **Social Sciences** – graduates from departments of geography, history, sociology, philosophy, and other social sciences, theology, political science, international relations, public administration, journalism. **Other** – graduates with other majors, undeclared/unknown majors, and graduates of military schools and police academy.

In columns 2 and 8, the omitted category of Area of Study is less than college degree. In columns 3,6 and 9, the omitted category is Social Sciences. In column (5), the omitted category is Other.

## Appendix 4: Sensitivity Checks

**Appendix 4 Table 1**  
**The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on the Probability of Party Switching and Being Independent**  
**Marginal Effects from Multinomial Logit**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)
Rank on the Party Ticket	0.015** (0.006)	-0.008* (0.004)								
Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup> or Lower			0.030** (0.014)	-0.015 (0.009)						
Min % Vote for Election Probability=1					0.001*** (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)				
Min % Vote for Election Probability>0							0.001** (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)		
Margin of Victory (MV)									-0.002 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)
Relative Salary	0.043** (0.019)	-0.005 (0.012)	0.041** (0.019)	-0.004 (0.012)	0.045** (0.019)	-0.005 (0.012)	0.044** (0.019)	-0.005 (0.012)	0.034* (0.020)	-0.010 (0.012)
Cabinet Member	-0.035* (0.018)	-0.005 (0.013)	-0.036** (0.018)	-0.005 (0.013)	-0.035* (0.018)	-0.005 (0.013)	-0.037** (0.018)	-0.005 (0.013)	-0.039** (0.018)	-0.001 (0.013)
Elected from the Same Party Before	-0.090*** (0.022)	-0.041** (0.016)	-0.090*** (0.022)	-0.041*** (0.016)	-0.089*** (0.022)	-0.041** (0.016)	-0.090*** (0.022)	-0.041** (0.016)	-0.094*** (0.021)	-0.030* (0.017)
Freshman	-0.126*** (0.023)	-0.020 (0.015)	-0.124*** (0.022)	-0.022 (0.015)	-0.124*** (0.022)	-0.021 (0.015)	-0.123*** (0.022)	-0.021 (0.015)	-0.129*** (0.021)	-0.010 (0.016)
Influence of the MP	-0.016 (0.013)	-0.018** (0.008)	-0.017 (0.013)	-0.018** (0.008)	-0.016 (0.012)	-0.018** (0.008)	-0.016 (0.012)	-0.018** (0.008)	-0.013 (0.012)	-0.017** (0.007)
Effort of the MP	0.009 (0.007)	-0.013** (0.006)	0.009 (0.008)	-0.013** (0.007)	0.010 (0.007)	-0.013** (0.007)	0.010 (0.007)	-0.013** (0.007)	0.011 (0.007)	-0.016** (0.008)
Female	0.047* (0.029)	-0.018 (0.023)	0.052* (0.028)	-0.021 (0.023)	0.048* (0.028)	-0.020 (0.023)	0.049* (0.028)	-0.019 (0.023)	0.039 (0.026)	-0.019 (0.022)

**Appendix 4 Table 1 Concluded**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)	P(Switch)	P(Indep.)
Age>=50	-0.031** (0.012)	0.003 (0.009)	-0.031** (0.012)	0.003 (0.009)	-0.031** (0.012)	0.004 (0.009)	-0.032** (0.012)	0.004 (0.009)	-0.029** (0.012)	0.001 (0.009)
School Abroad	-0.061** (0.029)	0.028* (0.015)	-0.061** (0.029)	0.028* (0.015)	-0.059** (0.029)	0.028* (0.015)	-0.060** (0.029)	0.028* (0.015)	-0.059* (0.030)	0.024 (0.015)
MA/PhD	-0.003 (0.014)	-0.015 (0.011)	-0.003 (0.014)	-0.015 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.014)	-0.015 (0.011)	-0.004 (0.014)	-0.015 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.014)	-0.012 (0.011)
Member of the Government Party	0.093*** (0.024)	0.021 (0.016)	0.092*** (0.024)	0.021 (0.016)	0.094*** (0.024)	0.019 (0.016)	0.094*** (0.024)	0.019 (0.015)	0.103*** (0.027)	0.015 (0.015)
Party's Active Years in Politics	0.009*** (0.003)	-0.004** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.003)	-0.005** (0.002)	0.010*** (0.004)	-0.005** (0.002)	0.010*** (0.004)	-0.005** (0.002)	0.009** (0.004)	-0.004** (0.002)
Single Leader Party	-0.044 (0.029)	-0.019 (0.025)	-0.041 (0.028)	-0.021 (0.025)	-0.042 (0.029)	-0.020 (0.025)	-0.042 (0.029)	-0.020 (0.025)	-0.034 (0.032)	-0.008 (0.024)
Party's Vote Share in the District	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	-0.000 (0.001)	-0.001 (0.000)
Contested Seats in the District	-0.008*** (0.003)	0.004* (0.002)	-0.007** (0.003)	0.004* (0.002)	-0.006** (0.003)	0.003 (0.002)	-0.007** (0.003)	0.003* (0.002)	-0.008** (0.003)	0.003 (0.002)
Observations	2506	2506	2506	2506	2506	2506	2506	2506	2401	2401

Notes: The table presents marginal effects obtained from estimation of the following equation  $P(\text{Party Switch Status}_{mpct} = i) = f(\beta \text{ Election Uncertainty}_{mpct} + \text{Party \& District}_{mct} \Omega + \mathbf{X}_{mt} \Psi + \lambda_c + \pi_t + \xi_p + \varepsilon_{mpct})$  using multinomial logit. The outcome variable *Party Switch Status* is categorical. It takes the values of 0, 1 and 2 that indicate whether the MP stayed with their beginning-of-term party as of the end of the term, whether the MP switched to another party as of the end of the term, and whether the MP left their original party but remained independent as of the end of the term (unaffiliated with a party). The base outcome is the staying with the original party. P(Switch) stands for the probability of switching to another party. P(Indep.) represents the probability of resigning from the party after the election but remaining independent. Column pairs 1&2, 3&4, 4&6 and so on, present marginal effects obtained from different regressions. In addition to the variables listed, regressions include indicators for MPs' party affiliation at the beginning of the parliamentary term, city fixed effects and parliamentary term dummies. Robust standard errors clustered at the MP level are reported in parentheses. \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate statistical significance at 10%, 5% and 1%, respectively.

**Appendix 4 Table 2**  
**The Effect of Electoral Uncertainty on the Probability of *Remaining Independent***  
**Conditional on Leaving the Original Party after the Election**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Rank on the Party Ticket	-0.060** (0.029)				
Ranked 2 <sup>nd</sup> or Lower		-0.156** (0.075)			
Min % Vote for Election Probability=1			-0.005** (0.002)		
Min % Vote for Election Probability>0				-0.007* (0.004)	
Margin of Victory (MV)					0.005 (0.007)
Relative Salary	-0.107 (0.166)	-0.093 (0.172)	-0.125 (0.175)	-0.127 (0.174)	-0.067 (0.179)
Cabinet Member	-0.017 (0.090)	-0.032 (0.094)	-0.008 (0.093)	-0.002 (0.093)	0.034 (0.097)
Elected from the Same Party Before	-0.028 (0.103)	-0.028 (0.108)	-0.031 (0.109)	-0.030 (0.108)	0.091 (0.115)
Freshman	0.247** (0.101)	0.261** (0.104)	0.250** (0.105)	0.245** (0.105)	0.344*** (0.116)
Influence of the MP	-0.004 (0.054)	-0.010 (0.057)	-0.012 (0.059)	-0.013 (0.059)	-0.061 (0.089)
Effort of the MP	-0.106*** (0.035)	-0.109*** (0.031)	-0.106*** (0.031)	-0.105*** (0.031)	-0.092*** (0.029)
Female	-0.441*** (0.140)	-0.490*** (0.139)	-0.487*** (0.143)	-0.484*** (0.142)	-0.467*** (0.152)
Age>=50	0.174** (0.069)	0.186*** (0.070)	0.190*** (0.069)	0.190*** (0.069)	0.153** (0.072)
School Abroad	0.276** (0.138)	0.290** (0.141)	0.292** (0.142)	0.294** (0.142)	0.225 (0.139)
MA/PhD	-0.042 (0.084)	-0.039 (0.087)	-0.039 (0.087)	-0.039 (0.087)	-0.013 (0.089)
Member of the Government Party	-0.009 (0.123)	0.005 (0.128)	-0.016 (0.128)	-0.015 (0.128)	0.020 (0.133)
Party's Active Years in Politics	-0.125*** (0.021)	-0.131*** (0.019)	-0.142*** (0.019)	-0.145*** (0.019)	-0.119*** (0.019)
Single Leader Party	-0.141 (0.200)	-0.178 (0.207)	-0.170 (0.206)	-0.167 (0.207)	-0.127 (0.211)
Party's Vote Share in the District	0.007* (0.004)	0.007* (0.004)	0.009** (0.004)	0.008* (0.004)	-0.004 (0.005)

<b>Appendix 4 Table 2 Concluded</b>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Contested Seats in the	0.035**	0.037***	0.033**	0.036***	0.028*
District	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.015)
Observations	310	310	310	310	276

Notes: The outcome variable takes the value of one if the MP has resigned from his/her party after the election but has not joined another party (i.e. remained unaffiliated-independent). The sample consists of MPs who left their initial party after the election. The table presents the marginal effects obtained from probit regressions. In addition to the variables listed, regressions include indicators for MPs' party affiliation at the beginning of the parliamentary term, city fixed effects and parliamentary term dummies. Robust standard errors clustered at the MP level are reported in parentheses. \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate statistical significance at 10%, 5% and 1%, respectively.

## Appendix 5

### The Impact of Party Switching on the Electoral Success of the Destination Party

The results of Table 7 of the main text indicate that party switching MPs have slightly higher chances of re-election. While this finding explains why MPs switch parties, it seems to go against the prediction that voters would reprimand dishonest politicians by not re-electing them. It should be remembered, however, that in this electoral system, *voters cast votes for the entire party ticket*. In other words, even if voters are uncomfortable with having a politician on their party's ticket who was elected to the Parliament in the previous election from another party, voters may still cast their votes for their party because the utility of their party sending more MPs to the Parliament may outweigh the disutility of electing the dishonest party-switcher.

To shed more light on this issue, we also analyze how a party's election success in a district is impacted by having on the ticket an MP who was transferred from another party. In these regressions the unit of observation is a city-election-party. Specifically, consider Equation (A1) below

$$(A1) \%Vote\ in\ District_{pct} = \gamma \%National\ Vote_{pt} + \theta Gov't\ Party_{pt} + \lambda_c + \pi_t + \xi_p + u_{pct}$$

where the proportion of votes received by party ( $p$ ) in city ( $c$ ) in election year ( $t$ ) is depicted by  $\%Vote\ in\ District_{pct}$ , which is a function of the nation-wide success of the party ( $\%National\ Vote_{pt}$ ) and whether the party entered the election as the Governing Party ( $Gov't\ Party_{pt}$ ). The political sentiment in the city, which impacts the number of votes received by the party, is captured by city fixed effects  $\lambda_c$ . Election year fixed-effects are captured by  $\pi_t$ , and party fixed-effects are represented  $\xi_p$ .

Writing Equation (A1) for the next election year  $t+1$  and taking the first-differences, we estimate Equation (A2) below

$$(A2) \quad \Delta \%Vote\ in\ District_{pct} = \gamma\Delta\% National\ Vote_{pt} + \theta\Delta Gov't\ Party_{pt} + \varphi MPs\ Gained_{pct} + \delta_t + \mu_c + \tau_p + u_{pct}$$

where  $\Delta$  stands for the change in the relevant variable between the two consecutive elections.<sup>12</sup>

Although district fixed-effects and party fixed-effects drop out from equation (A2), we nevertheless keep them to absorb any unobserved residual variation. In equation (A2) the variable  $MPs\ Gained_{pct}$  stands for the number of MPs who switched to party ( $p$ ) from other parties between the two elections, and are now nominated from party ( $p$ ). Thus, we analyze how the vote share of party ( $p$ ) changes from one election to another and whether this change is impacted by whether or not the party's ticket in that election in that city contains an MP who was transferred from another party.

The results are reported in Appendix 5 Table 1. The key variable is  $MPs\ Gained$ , which stands for the number of MPs who switched to the party from another party during the parliamentary term just ended. The results show that if the party's ticket contains an MP who is transferred from another party, then the proportion of votes received by that party in that city goes up by about 2 percentage points. This means that in a city with 100,000 voters, the party has received 2,000 more votes (in comparison to the previous election) because of the transfer of the MP from another party.

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<sup>12</sup> More accurately, elections take place 4 years apart, and the change in a variable  $Y$  between elections ( $\Delta Y_t$ ) represents  $Y_t - Y_{t-4}$

**Appendix 5 Table 1**  
**The Change in the Proportion of Votes Received by Parties**  
**(in Consecutive Elections)**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
MPs Gained <sub>t</sub>	1.718** (0.698)	1.846** (0.728)	2.073** (0.950)
$\Delta$ National Vote Share <sub>t</sub>	0.827*** (0.024)	0.828*** (0.024)	0.832*** (0.024)
$\Delta$ Government <sub>t</sub>	-0.563** (0.233)	-0.564** (0.235)	-0.592** (0.230)
Observations	3377	3377	3377
Term FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Party FE	Yes	Yes	
City FE		Yes	
Party×City FE			Yes

Notes: Dependent variable is the change in party's city-wide vote share (%) from the previous election. *MPs Gained<sub>t</sub>* is the number of MPs representing city *c* switched to party *p* in the parliamentary term prior to the elections.  *$\Delta$  National Vote Share* is the change in the national vote share of party *p* in elections at *t* from their national vote share in the previous elections at *t* – 1.  *$\Delta$ Government<sub>t</sub>* is the change in an indicator that takes the value of 1 if party *p* was part of the government at the day of elections. Robust standard errors clustered at the city level are reported in parentheses. \*, \*\*, and \*\*\* indicate statistical significance at 10%, 5% and 1%, respectively.