Explaining the success of pensioners' parties:

A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of 31 polities

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Introduction

Over the past two decades small pensioners' and retirees' parties have emerged at the margins of political systems both in Western Europe and in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. Such 'grey interest' parties appear, at first examination, a fringe phenomenon of little interest and have usually been passed over as inconsequential by most writers on the politics of old ageing societies because they lack the potential to attract mass electoral support or sharply realign political competition on age- or generational lines (Walker 1998; Goerres 2009: 71-2).

However, like many minor political groupings, grey interest parties merit comparative political science examination. Grey interest parties are more widespread and persistent than other localized, ephemeral minor party phenomena and, in a small number of European states have enjoyed sufficient success to exercise real electoral and political leverage. Most typically, this has taken the form of forcing larger parties to address demands of politicians or constituencies on discontented older and retired people, which they might otherwise ignore. In rarer cases grey interest parties have gained parliamentary and governmental influence in their own right. Moreover, ongoing population ageing in Europe suggests that, all other things being equal, grey interest parties should have some growth potential simply because they can draw on a growing reservoir of elderly target voters.

This chapter maps the emergence and success of pensioners' parties in both established Western European democracies and in the newer post-communist democracies of Central

and Eastern Europe. It then considers potential reasons for the emergence and, in some cases, the relative success this type of party, examining both the 'demand' for pensioners' parties that might be generated by demographic change and patterns of welfare spending and the regulation of their 'supply' by national political opportunity structures. It then compares the fortunes of grey interest parties in contemporary Europe using an application Charles Ragin's Qualitative Comparative Analysis technique to see if any patterns of systematic variation can be identified. The chapter concludes by discussing these results and suggesting further avenues for research.

The emergence of pensioners' parties

In Western Europe pensioners parties emerged as a fringe phenomenon in late 1980s and early 1990s. Following Goerres (2009: 71), I take a pensioners' or 'grey interest' party to be any organization contesting (or planning to contest) elections which signals through its name and/or founding documentation that it seeks mainly to represent the interests of pensioners and older voters. With the exception of Luxembourg's Alternative Democratic Reform (ADR) party, discussed later in the chapter, this enables the relatively unproblematic identification of such parties. As **appendix table 1** shows, the first pensioners' party to emerge in a Western democracy for which firm evidence is available was founded in Israel in 1981 (Iecovich 2002). The first grey party to emerge in Western Europe proper was Italy's *Partito dei Pensionati (PP)* founded in 1987. Shortly afterwards pensioners' parties were formed in Germany, Scandinavia and the Benelux countries. More recently, pensioners' parties have also emerged in the United Kingdom. It appears that only three West European countries in the old (pre-2004) EU saw no

pensioners' parties form: France, Ireland and Iceland. Grey interest groupings also formed widely in post-communist democracies in CEE, the earliest emerging in the early-mid 1990s with others more recently forming in Russia, Ukraine and South East European states such Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and Bulgaria. In post-communist Europe pensioners' parties seem to have been wholly absent only in Albania, Lithuania and Moldova.

In both Western and Eastern Europe pensioners' parties have generally been peripheral and, very often, ephemeral phenomenon. Many, especially in Western Europe, have gained almost no electoral support at national level. Others, especially in certain East European cases (Czech Republic 1992, 1996, 1998; Estonia 1993; Poland 1997) have performed more credibly as niche groupings, gaining 1-3 per cent of the vote in national elections. In a small number of countries including the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Israel, Slovenia and Croatia, however, grey interest parties have exceeded this level of support and gained national parliamentary representation. Several of these have entered government as junior coalition partners: Israel's GIL party, which entered the Knesset in 2006, was a junior partner in the Kadima-led government before exiting parliament in 2009; the Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (DeSUS) has been a partner in governments of left and right for more than a decade, while the United Party of Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS) entered parliament in 2007 on a joint electoral list with the Socialist Party and became a junior partner of the pro-European administration of Prime Minister Mirko Ćetković (Hanley 2010).

In this chapter I compare the relative success of grey interest parties in 31 European democracies: the 15 established (pre-2004) West European members of the European

Union; Switzerland, Norway and Iceland; the ten new Central and East Europe members states, which joined the EU in 2004-7 and Croatia, an advanced EU candidate state likely to join the Union in 2010-11. I additionally include the cases of Israel and Scotland as polities comparable to full EU member states which have seen the development of important grey interest parties.[1] As grey interest parties in Western Europe are essentially a phenomenon of the last two decades and to enhance comparability with Central and Eastern Europe where democratic systems have existed since the fall of communism, I examine relevant parties in the period 1990-2008, focusing on elections to lower houses of national legislatures, which are usually key to the exercise of national political power.[2] To examine the relative success of pensioners' parties, I employ a form of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), a comparative technique, which seeks to formalize the logic of qualitative case-based comparison by identifying relevant configurations of causes (conditions) and effects (outcomes) using the logic of Boolean algebra and set theory (Ragin 1987, 2000; Rihoux and Ragin 2009). Although the comparative analysis of sometimes transient minor party phenomena poses many challenges, QCA is among the best suited approaches to such a task. As well as avoiding the problems of high collinarity sometimes encountered by conventional multivariate analysis, QCA allows the identification of different configurations of factors (causal pathways), which produce similar outcomes and enables the researcher to revisit empirical judgments used to code cases. QCA is thus particularly well suited to an analysis of the emergence of group of minor parties across a diverse range of cases (Redding and Viterna 1999; Veuglers and Magnan 2005).

I initially use the Fuzzy Set form of QCA (fsQCA) which defines cases in terms of degrees of membership in outcomes of interest and causal variables (conditions). Degrees of membership are expressed as a score ranging from 1.0 (full membership) to 0.0 (full non-membership) with a 'crossover value' of maximum ambiguity set at 0.5. Such scoring of fuzzy set memberships is based on the researcher's theoretically-driven understanding of concepts and categories and empirical knowledge of cases. Later in the chapter, an additional form of analysis, I also make use of the original Crisp Set version of QCA (csQCA), which sees causes and outcomes simply as dichotomously present or absent. The process QCA analysis using both forms of the technique is explained more fully in the final part of the chapter.

Defining a 'successful' grey interest party: condition GREYP

There are strong reasons to expect that grey interest parties will *not* emerge as major political actors and *a fortiori*, that they will not bring about any realignment of party systems on age-based lines. In European contexts age and retirement status have never been strong or salient political identities. Like other groups, older and retired voters are, moreover, also differentiated by cross-cutting divisions of class, education, ethnicity or region and their retirement and pension status can differ markedly in consequence of previous employment status. Additionally, older voters may already have established strong political identities and identifications, developed over the greater part of a lifetime.[3] They also retain social and family ties to members other age groups, which will impede the politicization of (supposed) conflicts between the interests of different generations. Emergent grey interest parties are also likely to meet with forceful

competition from established parties and, if they begin to win support, powerful directly targeted counter-responses. The large number of seniors in European electorates gives established parties a strong motivation to target policies at older voters (Goerres 2009: 72) and the (erroneous) notion of a powerful dormant 'grey vote' is already established in the discourse of many European democracies and assimilated by many established politicians (Goerres 2008, 2009; Tepe and Vanhuysse 2009).

The political science literature contains few criteria for defining what success might mean for a minor party.[4] Minor party 'success' has variously been defined in terms of crossing electoral thresholds or polling a certain (mean) vote over a certain period. Drawing on this work (Harmel and Robertson 1985: 511-3; Kitschelt 1989; Redding and Viterna 1998), I therefore take as full members of the set of 'successful' grey interest parties groupings such as Luxembourg's ADR or Slovenia's DeSUS, which have had *sustained minor party success* by polling 4 per cent of the national vote in two or more parliamentary elections (coded as 1.0). However, as interest parties' emergence and success is often episodic I also categorize 'flash' parties, such as GIL or Holland's AOV, which enjoyed some *minor party success* by polling more than 4 per cent on at least one occasion as almost entirely in the set of successful grey interest parties. I code these parties 0.8 or 0.9 depending on whether they substantially exceed 4 per cent. Conversely, cases where pensioners' parties have either *never formed* or *never independently contested any national parliamentary elections* were deemed fully or almost fully out of the set and were coded respectively 0 or 0.1 Pensioners' parties, which have contested parliamentary elections but always received *negligible electoral support* (less than 1 per cent) are coded 0.25 where they had had repeatedly contested elections (Sweden,

Norway, Germany, Finland) and 0.2 where they had not (Belgium). The crossover value (0.5) of *ambiguous minor party success* was set at 2 per cent, although empirically all but cases fell clearly either side of this value. Cases where grey interest parties had come close to success by polling close to 4 per cent on one occasion (Estonia, Holland, Poland) were coded 0.6. There was one distinct case (the Czech Republic) where a grey interest party had polled 3 per cent over three successive parliamentary elections. This I coded 0.8. Of the cases falling somewhat below the crossover point, the Scottish Senior Citizens' Unity Party which polled *low electoral support* 1.4 per cent in successive Scottish election had short-lived parliamentary representation, was coded 0.40 Where rival pensioners' groupings contested an election, I take the combined score for such grey interest groupings. In QCA notation, I term the degree of success of a pensioners' party or parties GREYP.

Explaining the emergence of pensioners' parties

Why have pensioners' parties emerged? And why have some been relatively successful as minor parties while others have remained insignificant fringe groupings? There is a large academic literature on the emergence of new parties in Europe largely inspired by the rise of the Greens and the radical right in Western European party systems in 1970s and 1980s and, more recently, by the emergence of new parties in the more unstable party systems of Central and Eastern Europe (Sikk 2005; Tavits 2007).

Explanations rooted in the experience of Western Europe have generally taken a sociological approach emphasizing the emergence of voter demands for new policies, which result from long-term changes in socio-economic, demographic and family

structures Perhaps the best known examples of such sociologically based explanations of new party development was the hypothesis that a growing left-libertarian constituency of voters with 'post-material' values brought into existence by changes in production, employment and welfare patterns and rising living standards and educational levels had driven the rise of Green parties in Western Europe (Kitschelt 1989; Müller-Rommel 1989).

More recent work informed by the experience of Central and East Europe, however, stresses conjunctural and institutional factors such as electoral systems, party system formats, the broader progress of reform or public dissatisfaction with conventional parties as more important drivers of new party development (Sikk 2005, 2006; Tavits 2006, 2007; Pop-Eleches 2010). In this perspective, even when they may appear otherwise, new parties are less expressions of long-term social trends creating new party families, than exercises in successful political entrepreneurship backed by a favourable conjuncture of unrelated interests.[5]

Both literatures broadly agree, however, that three sets of causes and/or conditions are relevant for new party emergence: 1) new or unmet social and electoral demands for representation, stemming from deeply rooted 'social strains'; 2) a favourable set of 'political opportunity structures' presented by patterns of political competition and political institutions (Kitschelt 1989; Redding and Viterna 1999); and 3) the mobilization and effective co-ordination of adequate resources. Given the marked regional split between the historical and political experiences of Western and Eastern Europe – also evident in the preoccupations of the different strands of the literature on new party development - I add an additional regional condition to allow for differences between

West European and East European contexts not covered in the general explanatory conditions discussed. The following sections elaborate how these three broad explanations might be applied to the development of pensioners' parties in contemporary European democracies and operationalized for QCA analysis.

Growing electoral constituencies of inactive 50-plussers: condition RETIRPOP

The most simple socio-structural factor that might explain the emergence of pensioner s' parties is the growing number of older and retired people in all European societies, both absolutely and as a proportion of overall population (see Goerres and Vanhuysse, this volume). A higher number of older and/or retired citizens might generate both greater resource demands and greater demands for participation by older people leading to a more radical 'politics of old age' (Walker 1998). However, it is not always clear to what extent such growing 'grey' constituencies are defined by age, by work (retirement) status and/or by receipt of pension benefits. Much research on 'grey' politics or the 'greying' of democracy takes the proportion of older citizens aged over 60 or 65 as roughly equivalent to levels of retirement. However, in some social contexts, there is only a very slight correlation between demographic ageing and the proportion of retired people in the population. This is markedly the case with post-1989 Eastern Europe, where communist welfare systems set comparatively low formal retirement ages and generous early retirement policies after 1989, intended to facilitate industrial restructuring and pre-empt social discontent, led to an artificial 'pensioner boom' in some states the in early and mid 1990s (Vanhuysse 2006, 2009). Even in many West European states there is considerable divergence between numbers of older people and numbers of retired people (Tepe and

Vanhuysse 2009). It therefore seems best to use an indicator of the size of potential' grey' constituency based on numbers of retirees, rather than numbers of people aged over 60 or 65. This arguably captures processes of demographic ageing *as filtered* through varying political and social context(s) or the specificities of national pension policies.

Systematic comparative cross-national data on numbers of (old age) pensioners in Europe in the past two decades are difficult to obtain. Moreover, the strategic use of sickness and invalidity benefit as a form of compensation for unemployment in many East European countries may mean that, even when formally comparable, figures have very different meanings. To address this issue, I use EU Labour Force Survey data to calculate average percentages of economically inactive citizens aged over 50 in the adult populations of EU member states and Croatia in the period 1990 – 2007. Although this category does not precisely coincide with that of pensioners – as some pensioners will continue to be economically active, while some economically inactive older people may lack pension entitlements - this figure can be taken as a reasonable approximation of relative numbers of retirees and pre-retirees and broadly coincides with the patterns suggested available cross-national data for numbers of retired people in the EU27 (in 2001) compiled by Eurostat (Kubitza 2004).[6] This measure also makes the hypothetical assumption that (some) pre-retirees will behave in politically similar way to retired people – that is to say that, anticipating retired status, some will be attracted to grey interest parties in similar numbers and for similar reasons to those already retired. [7] Obtaining fully comparable data for Israel is problematic. However, available evidence suggests that proportions of retired people, pension beneficiaries and older people in Israel are all low relative to European cases analyzed (Gamliel-Yehoshou and Vanhuysse 2010).

At what level might such differences be consequential for the fortunes of grey interest parties? Available case-based evidence suggests that a well led grey interest party, which has solved resource mobilization and collective action problems, can in practice garner the votes of 10-15 per cent of its target constituency.[8] For the purpose of this chapter I therefore assume that grey interest parties can realistically obtain voters of one in eight of their target constituency.[9] To be confident of gaining 4 per cent of the national vote needed to establish itself as a successful minor party, a grey interest party relying essentially on the support of retired voters would therefore need a total retired population forming around a third of the adult population. Conversely, if pensioners and retirees formed too small a proportion of the adult population, even the best led grey interest party would have little prospect of gaining sufficient support to move beyond fringe party status. For fsQCA purposes I therefore coded states where inactive citizens aged 50 or above were estimated to form at least 35 per cent of the adult population as fully in the set of *states with a politically consequential electoral constituency for grey parties* (1.0) and states where this group formed less than 10 per cent as fully out of this set (0, full non-membership). The latter proportion of pensioners would equate to a vote of less than one per cent even for the most effectively organized grey interest party. I set the crossover point between full membership and full non-membership in the set of *states with a politically consequential constituency for grey parties* at 22.5 per cent of economically inactive 50-plussers in the adult population. In QCA notation I term this condition RETIRPOP.

Greying welfare states and insider interests: condition PENEXP

In industrial and post-industrial societies, the welfare state is a key mechanism shaping socio-political interests and identities (Campbell 2003). In Western Europe from the 1980s, the focus of welfare politics shifted from claims for increased resources and representation in an extensive and expanding welfare state to a 'new politics of welfare' centring on retrenchment programmes in a context of reduced public spending and pressures for structural welfare and pension reforms (Pierson 1996; Tepe and Vanhuysse, this volume; for reviews see Vanhuysse 2001 and Green-Pedersen and Haverland 2002).

This new politics of welfare in West European states been hypothesized as generating anti-(neo-)liberal distributional demands for the retention of post-war social democratic or social market *status quo* (Kitschelt 2004)[10] and as creating - or adding to - generational and sectoral divisions, which crosscut and fragment traditional class groupings. Generationally-based conflicts are said to emerged through the interaction and mutual reinforcement of established welfare and health institutions and a powerful 'grey lobby' able to outcompete other groups (for example, families with children or the working poor) facing so-called New Social Risks stemming from deregulated labour markets, more intermittent employment and greater labour market participation of women. In this perspective, current pensioners' interests in maintaining existing levels and forms of pension and welfare provision might be seen as opposing them to younger groups impacted by New Social Risks who have an interest in reformed welfare states (Bonoli 2004, Tepe and Vanhuysse 2010). [11]

Integrating post-communist welfare states in Central and East Europe into the broader European picture poses significant problems of comparability. Post-communist era welfare states are very distinct institutions shaped by contradictory impulses and crosscut

by multiple legacies (Chandler 2004; Bazant and Schubert 2009; Cerami and Vanhuysse 2009; Inglot 2009). Both communist and post-communist welfare policies varied significantly from those in Western Europe. However, as in Western Europe, post-communist CEE welfare states faced retrenchment and reform in the context of market-oriented liberal reforms (Pop and Vanhuysse 2004, Cerami and Vanhyusse 2009), including debates on restructuring mature pay-as-you-go (PAYG) systems schemes.

The processes (potentially) generating a socio-political constituency of grey 'insiders' in (some) West European states also find certain parallels in post-communist Central and East Europe. As a group with low fixed, state-provided incomes who used public health and welfare services more intensively, pensioners in the region were - or might perceive themselves as - one of the groups potentially most heavily impacted by budgetary pressures and scaling back of public and welfare services. In an echo of sectoral and generational interest conflicts in Western Europe, they thus had an interest in competing for scarce welfare resources against newly emergent constituencies of 'losers' in the process of market reform such as the unemployed, poorer families. As in Western Europe, CEE politicians were aware of population ageing particularly and fearful an electoral backlash from older voters, if their living standards deteriorated. Such dynamics were exaggerated in CEE states, such as Hungary and Poland, which experienced artificial 'pensioner booms' in early-mid 1990s, which reinforced the status of pensioners as an insider group by rapidly making them a sizeable and electorally influential constituency (Vanhuysse 2006).

Despite this, it seems clear that the argument regarding the potential for age-based conflicts of interests rooted in the welfare state rests on the notion of current cohorts of older people and retirees as an 'insider' group defending current entitlements against challenge by policy-makers, current workers and other welfare state client groups, rather than an outsider group making new demands (see also the chapters by Sciubba and by Hering in this volume). Some broad measure of the age-bias or pensioner-bias of current welfare state provision would therefore seem the best means of capturing this condition.[12] As crude measure of such bias,[13] I therefore take the mean proportion of pension spending in total spending on social protection in the period as measure in available Eurostat data.[14] Taking Italy as a paradigmatic case of an elderly-biased welfare state (Lynch 2006), I take states with mean pension spending of 60 per cent of social spending as fully in the set of European *welfare states with a strong bias towards older age groups and current retirees* (1.0). Conversely, I take states where mean pension spending was 25 per cent or less of social spending as fully out of the set (0.0). In the absence of a compelling theoretical argument or a natural break point, the crossover value was set at 42.5 per cent, the mid-point between full membership and non-membership. I then coded cases continuously and termed this condition in QCA notation PENEXP.[15]

Permissiveness of electoral systems: condition THRESH

Research on new party emergence suggests that the most significant formal institutional factor influencing new party success is the electoral system (Tavits 2006; Veuglers and Magnan 2005). Electoral systems affect emergent parties both directly by determining the effective threshold of electoral support needed to gain parliamentary representation and

indirectly by signalling to supporters the level of risk they are running that their votes may go unrepresented. There is less agreement as to how to measure and operationalize where such thresholds lie. Where formal national electoral thresholds for representation exist, as in much of Eastern Europe, these can straightforwardly be taken as the practical threshold faced small emergent parties. Where, as in many West European cases, no formal thresholds exist, I calculate the permissiveness of an electoral system using Taagepera's (2002) formula to estimate the effective national threshold of support an emergent party must approach to be credible.[16] For the purposes of fsQCA I take electoral systems with a practical threshold of 0.5 per cent or less as fully in the set of highly permissive electoral systems and those with a practical threshold of 6 per cent or above as fully out of the set. The crossover value was set a 3.25 per cent. In QCA notation I termed this condition THRESH.[17]

Party system fluidity: NEWP

Less formalized political institutions such as patterns of party competition and party system format also constitute an important facet of the opportunity structures facing emergent new minor parties. Some researchers on Western Europe have, for example, argued that new small parties find it easier to enter party systems where small parties are routinely required as a coalition partners by larger, established parties (Smith 1991; Mair 1991). More broadly, high levels of party system fragmentation and electoral volatility (lack of party loyalty and identification among voters) should offer a more *permissive environment of party competition*. However, any attempt to assess this on a Europe-wide basis faces a significant difficulty rooted in differences between established West

European party systems and those in newer democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. Conventional benchmarks of party system instability and openness or electoral volatility such as the Pedersen index are problematic to apply to the CEE region, where parties have been subject to frequent splits and mergers, changes of name and shifts in political position. Apparent volatility may thus be as much an elite-driven process as the product of changes in a fluid electorate (Birch 2001; Sikk 2005). In some CEE democracies

Moreover, such measures of volatility and fragmentation do little to distinguish between large voter shifts between established parties and a more open, unstable electorate willing and able to turn to new challengers. Sikk (2005) therefore argues for using support for 'genuinely new parties' is as an alternative measure of party system openness and underlying electoral volatility.[18] This measure is also highly suitable as an approximate measure for gauging the opportunities facing of newly emergent party types which may draw on anti-establishment protest votes in both Western and Eastern. I therefore use levels of new party success as a measure of the openness of party competition in the cases under review. Although in instances pensioners' parties have themselves been new parties contributing to the NEWP scoring, they contribution is too negligible to pose problems of tautology: the vote shares of new grey interest parties make up a mere 2.8 per cent of the combined vote shares for new parties in the relevant period.

I gauge new party success by calculating mean level of electoral support gained at parliamentary elections between 1990 and 2007 by new parties using Tavits' (2007) definitions and calculations data, updated to included parliamentary elections after 2005, which she does not include in her data set (Tavits 2007.).[19] I additionally make calculations or estimations for West European cases and Croatia. I code cases with mean

support of 12 per cent or more for new parties as fully in the set of cases with a *high demand for new parties* (1.0). Although there are instances of new parties emerging *ex nihilo* as major electoral actors (Israel 2006, Italy 1994, several recent elections in the Baltic states) most successful new entrants emerge as minor parties. Mean new party support of 12 per cent, suggesting scope for the emergence of two or three new parties, could therefore be taken as highly favourable for the initial emergence of a small interest based grouping such as a pensioners' party (although, as with other parties, such a fluid political environment might militate against consolidating any initial success). On logical grounds I take (hypothetical) cases with 0 per cent support for new parties as wholly out of the set. I place the crossover point at 6 per cent, a figure which - if voter demand is focused by other factors – could a sufficient general level of new party success to be a make a rising new political contender credible in the eyes of potential voters. In QCA notation I term this condition NEWP.

Resource mobilization and co-ordination: condition SELF

Social demand and institutional opportunities are, however, in themselves insufficient to explain new party emergence without a considering the micro-foundations of party emergence. A political party can be viewed as an organizational solution to a collective action problem, in which participants contribute and exchange a variety of resources (financial, material, technical skills, time, publicity and electoral support) in order to generate political outcomes (public goods) that would not otherwise be achievable acting on an individual or *ad hoc* basis (Aldrich 1995; Hopkin 1996, 1999). This presupposes not only that a new party has access to sufficient money, media and human resources, but

also that it can offer policies for which there is electoral demand , a 'relevant political project' as Lucardie (2000) terms it.

Available case study evidence suggests that there were two broad patterns of grey interest party formation. In the first pensioners' parties were often founded by 'political entrepreneurs' in the purest sense of the term: individuals, often businesspeople or retired professionals, not previously active in party politics using their accumulated skills and financial resources to start up a small political organization. This pattern is illustrated by the foundation of SSCUP in Scotland or the Dutch AOV (van Stipdonk and van Holsteyn 1995; Vincent 2003). However, there is little indication as to how or why the supply of skilled, politically entrepreneurial individuals might vary cross-nationally or how one might conceptualize and measure this, making this a redundant factor for comparative analysis.

In a second pattern, pensioners' parties were formed on the basis of established interest or campaign groups. Such an infrastructure of interest groups provides a potential resource base for pensioner party formation and lowers the costs of collective action and organizational formation. Such interest groups also act as a training ground for individual political entrepreneurs with backgrounds in social activism who can act as the founders of grey interest parties. This pattern seems to be exemplified in the formation of early West European grey interest parties such as Germany's *Die Grauen*, but also underlay the formation of Slovenia's DeSUS in 1990. We might therefore hypothesize that where pensioners' or seniors' associations are well organized and well resourced, successful pensioners' parties will tend to form. At the same time, we should note that although they might represent a *potential* resource base or sponsor for a grey interest party, strong

elderly interest groups may also inhibit grey party success, as they may be sufficiently successful in conventional and group politics as to eliminate demands for a 'grey' voice in the political arena. There is no fully adequate way of cross nationally measuring the organizational and civic resources of civil and public organizations representing and organizing pensioners and older people. For this reason, as an approximate measurement of the scope and strength of such organization, I therefore take the percentage of those over 50 recorded by the 1999 World Values Survey as saying they belonged to an organization providing a social welfare service for elderly people.[20]

The start-up costs and critical mass of organizers required to form an effective new minor party are relatively low. In considering what level of older people's civic self-organization might significantly contribute to the solution of the resource mobilization and collective action problems of a small emergent grey party, I therefore took a relatively low threshold. Let us assume that a minor party in a medium sized European country with a total population of 10 million and a population around of 3.5 million citizens aged over 50 would need 2000 members to function effectively and that one in a hundred older members of elderly support organizations might join or actively support such a party. This being the case, a membership of 6 per cent in elderly support organizations among over 50s might be consequential for the development of an emergent grey interest party. Working on these assumptions, I therefore coded countries where over 6 per cent of citizens aged over 50 reported that they were members of elderly support organizations as fully in the set of countries with *strong self-organization of older and retired people*. I took (hypothetical) cases with no such membership as fully out of the set and set the crossover point as 3 per cent. I additionally coded one case

(Israel) and re-coded two others (Slovenia, Croatia) on the basis of direct case evidence about memberships of older people's interest and welfare organizations in these states (Hinchcliff and Priestly 2001; Helpage International 2007). [21]

Legacies of post-communist transition: TRANS

This chapter seeks to undertake broad pan-European comparison encompassing both pre-2004 EU member states and newer democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. To some extent the conditions identified distinguish these two groups of countries: CEE cases are, for example, clearly distinguished from the states of the 'old' West European EU by higher levels of new party success (party system fluidity) and higher effective national electoral thresholds (stemming from the widespread use of formal thresholds for representation in the region) (Birch 2001; Sikk 2005). The QCA method's ability to distinguish different configurations of causes should, in principle, allow us to pick out patterns of causation distinct particular to each half of the once divided continent, if these exist.

There are, however, a number of additional potentially relevant factors linked to the specific legacies of communism and the transition from communism that may distinguish the CEE and West European cases. Pensioners and older people in the region may form a somewhat more homogenous group in terms of income and lifestyle than those in established Western democracies, reflecting lower levels of differentiation of incomes and pension provision under state socialism and the role of the state as the main pension provider and income maintenance after the fall of communism (Večerník 2006; Vanhuysse 2006). The relative poverty of CEE may produce sharper distributional

conflicts between groups and sectors, aggravated by the upheavals of political and economic transformation. Finally, we should note that the importance and specificity of the temporal process of democratic transition from communism in CEE. Not only did the initial formation of party systems see an initial mushrooming of parties, but the distinction between party and interest organization was often initially blurred, legitimizing and encouraging political interventions by economic interest organizations (Lewis 2000). To take account of these factors, I therefore create an additional condition concerning whether a state has or has not undergone a recent transition from communism.[22] As European states clearly are or are not post-communist polities, this is a dichotomous condition coded either 1.0 or 0. In QCA notation I term this condition TRANS. On balance, this bundle of post-communist specificities should favour the emergence of grey interest parties.

[TABLE 2.1 ABOUT HERE]

QCA analysis

In line with recommended QCA practice, for each set of configurations I carry out three analyses. These vary according to the extent to which they incorporate logically possible but empirically non-observed configurations of conditions ('logical remainders') alongside those found in real world cases: 1) a first analysis which excludes all non-observed cases and thus generates a complex QCA solution; 2) a second analysis which includes all logical remainders alongside empirically observed combinations and thus generates the most parsimonious solution; and 3) an 'intermediate solution' which include some logical remainders are selected by the researcher as 'easy counterfactuals' close to empirically observed cases on the basis of 'simplifying assumptions' (Ragin and

Sonnett 2004). The inclusion in QCA minimization processes of logically possible but empirically non-observed configurations (cases) has been considered problematic by some critics of the method. However, the use of such 'logical remainders' is a self-consciously artificial device intended to produce logically consistent, parsimonious shorthand descriptions of configurations and cases, whose plausibility as explanation requires assessment by the researcher. No QCA solution, whatever its level of parsimony or complexity, in itself qualifies as a superior explanation and none should be regarded as a fully worked-out argument about causation (Rihoux and Ragin 2009: 152-5).[23] All QCA solutions must, moreover, be assessed in terms of both their consistency and case coverage.

Having scored cases in terms of their degree of membership in the set of states with successful grey interest parties (GREYP) and relevant causal conditions (summarized in **table 2.1**), I began with an initial analysis that made no explicit difference between West and East European cases, excluding the TRANS condition, but including all other relevant factors: relative size of electorally relevant retired population (RETIRPOP), age-bias of welfare spending (PENEXP), practical national electoral threshold (THRESH), demand for new parties (NEWP) and levels of self-organization of older people (SELF). However, initial analysis with logical remainders excluded, produced an essentially unsatisfactory solution in which none of the causal configurations had a consistency level above 0.7, the minimum consistency level normally recommended as acceptable (Rihoux and Ragin 2009). Two configurations, however, had consistency levels of 0.68 and 0.69. If the consistency cut-off was lowered to 0.68, these implied a single solution set. Stated in the Boolean algebra used to express QCA this solutions reads

SELF*NEWP*THRESH*PENEXP → GREYP

Expressed in more natural language, the solution suggests that a combination of higher elderly self-organization; higher demand for new parties; a permissive electoral threshold *and* elderly-oriented welfare spending was required for successful grey interest parties to emerge. In terms of fit to cases, this had coverage of 0.53 and explained only two of eight cases of successful grey party emergence (membership in GREYP > 0.5). Only the Netherlands and Israel had strong (0.5 or above) membership in the solution.[24]

Given the limitations of this solution, I therefore moved to an analysis, which included the TRANS condition distinguishing established democracies from transitional post-communist democracies alongside other relevant factors. A first, 'complex' analysis on this basis – that is one excluding logical remainders - generated 13 causal configurations of which three were acceptably consistent (>0.7) with the set of successful grey interest parties (GREYP). Using Boolean logic these could be reduced to the following two causal paths:

SELF*NEWP*THRESH*PENEXP*trans +
SELF*RETIRPOP*newp*THRESH*PENEXP*TRANS → GREYP

That is to say, grey interest parties have success in non-transitional (that is, West European) states, which combine sufficient levels of elderly self-organization (which all West European cases possess); permissive electoral thresholds; high demand for new parties; *and* elderly-oriented welfare state spending. In transitional (TRANS) Central and East European states, the solution implies, adequate self-organization and an elderly-

oriented welfare state must be combined with a general *lack* of demand for new parties and a high, politically relevant proportion of retired people. This solution implies that across Europe a combination of permissive electoral thresholds, adequate civic self-organization of older people combined with an elderly-oriented welfare state to defend is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for the emergence of success grey interest parties, as can be seen when the solution is factorized and re-expressed:

SELF*PENEXP *THRESH (trans*NEWP + TRANS*RETIRPOP*newp) → GREYP

The solution suggests that in Western Europe pensioners' parties, when they have a degree of success, are linked to the phenomenon of voters' seeking new anti-establishment protest parties. In Central and Eastern Europe, where retired people currently form a more socially homogenous constituency than in Western Europe, the solution suggests, pensioners' parties represent a purer form of interest party. This is an interesting finding given the generally high level of new party occurrence, which in some cases is so high as to imply major restructuring of the party system with each election.

However, the pattern of coverage with this solution is again problematic. The first part of the unreduced solution (SELF*NEWP*THRESH*PENEXP*trans) provides a satisfactory solution for established Western democracies: two of the three cases of relatively successful pensioners' parties (Israel, Netherlands) have high memberships (0.71, 0.6), while all cases with low (<0.5) pensioner party success have low membership in this configuration. In almost all West European cases, low membership in this causal configuration stems from low demand for new parties (low membership in NEWP), suggesting that in most West European cases the potential emergence of grey interest

parties is blocked by voters' tendency to stick with established parties.[25] The only major incongruity is the case of Luxembourg, whose stable party system gives a very low (0.12) membership in the (SELF*NEWP*THRESH*PENEXP *trans configuration, but which is categorized as having a highly successful grey interest party, the Alternative Democratic Reform (ADR) party. The Luxembourg case, however, may need to be excluded because of the specificity of both the ADR and the Grand Duchy itself. The ADR's origins as a Committee For Pensioners Justice seeking to secure better pension provision for private sector workers seem to qualify it, in part ,a sectoral movement of small businesspeople and the self-employed, rather than grey interest party seeking to represent all older and retired people. The ADR has, moreover, subsequently developed into a right-wing populist party. This appears linked with Luxembourg's unusual status as a wealthy micro-state without strong nationalist traditions, factors which may have stabilized its party system and blocked the channels for the formation of a conventional radical right party, allowing the ADR to assume this role (Fehlen 2000)

The second part of the above configuration concerning transitional democracies in Central and Eastern Europe (TRANS cases) is, however, much less satisfactory. The configuration SELF*RETIRPOP*newp*THRESH*PENEXP*TRANS covers only one East European case with a relatively successful grey interest party, Croatia (which has a membership of 0.66 in the configuration), while other cases of relatively successful grey interest party in Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Poland are wholly or largely

The parsimonious solution based on the inclusion of all logical remainders served to highlight key aspects of the complex solution, but did not resolve problems of coverage. The parsimonious solution generated was:

NEWP * trans + TRANS*PENEXP*newp → GREYP

The term NEWP*trans which covers Israel and the Netherlands confirms that successful grey interest parties emerge in West European states with high general incidence of new parties, suggesting the importance of the stability and appeal of established parties in explaining West European cases.

The second term (TRANS*PENEXP*newp implies) again suggests that in Eastern Europe high pension expenditure relative to other welfare spending and an absence of new parties creates a favourable environment for a relatively successful grey interest party to emerge. This could be interpreted as suggesting that in fluid party systems in CEE with very high demand for new parties, broad populist formations rather than minor parties will tend to benefit draw the support of voters seeking a vehicle for anti-establishment parties voters or because that older and retired voters seeking to express their sectional interests at the ballot box may gravitate towards a broad protest party, rather than an interest party. Case knowledge suggests this explanation is intuitively plausible: several CEE cases with strong membership in GREYP (Czech Republic, Slovenia) have party systems which are relatively stable compared to other post-communist cases, although they are relatively fluid and open when viewed in pan-European perspective (Sikk 2005; Mainwaring, España and Gervasoni 2009). However, in both complex and parsimonious fsQCA solutions only Croatia has strong (> 0.5) membership in the second term, leaving most East European cases unexplained. Efforts to formulate a distinct intermediate solution, including some but not all logical, remainders did not resolve these issues.[26]

Do thresholds matter for grey interest parties?

The low membership of some East European states with relatively successful grey interest parties in the solution stems very largely from their low membership in the THRESH condition: put more simply, some relatively successful pensioners' parties emerged in East European states with relatively impermissive formal electoral thresholds of 5 per cent (Estonia, Czech Republic Poland). The relative success of pensioners' parties in some East European states with impermissive formal electoral thresholds raises the possibility that electoral thresholds many not, in fact, be important for the emergence of successful grey interest parties. This, we might hypothesize, is because even a comparatively high formal electoral thresholds of five per cent did not pose a psychological barrier to supporters of minor interest parties, who may be more interested in registering a protest and/or highlighting a neglected interest to exercise leverage on larger parties than gaining representation. Available case study evidence (van Stipdonk 1995; Vincent 2003; Hanley 2010) broadly supports this interpretation.

To address this, I deploy two further strategies: 1) analysis of the data without the inclusion of the THRESH condition; and 2) a Crisp Set QCA analysis (csQCA) of the data dichotomizing outcomes and conditions, rather than using Fuzzy Set memberships. Re-analysing without the THRESH and generates the following complex solution excluding logical remainders:

SELF*RETIRPOP*newp*PENEXP*TRANS +

SELF*retirpop*NEWP*PENEXP*trans → GREYP

which can be factorized to

SELF*PENEXP* (RETIRPOP*TRANS + retirpop*NEWP*trans) → GREYP

This suggests again that the configuration SELF*PENEXP is a necessary but not sufficient causal condition for the emergence of successful grey interest parties. However, the solution suggests, this necessary configuration must be combined with a high incidence of voting for new parties *and* a low proportion of retired people in Western Europe, and with a high proportion of retired people in Eastern Europe. However, this solution set is less satisfactory than the previous one. The absence of the THRESH condition excludes the Netherlands which is a weak member of the solution set (membership 0.25), thus producing a solution for established Western democracies, which covers only the Israeli case. This explains the otherwise puzzling presence of the retirpop condition (lack of a high proportion of retirees) in this term.[27] However, the solution provides no additional coverage of East European cases: again only Croatia has strong (>0.5) membership.

Relaxing the set membership consistency criteria used to define positive outcomes when generating the truth table, a middle stage in fsQCA analysis (Rihoux and Ragin 2009), from 0.7 to 0.69 did produce a solution, which fitted the East European cases better. The complex solution thus produced was:

SELF*PENEXP*(TRANS*RETIRPOP + trans*retirpop*NEWP) → GREYP

As **table 2.2** shows, this solution covered not only Israel (solution set membership of 0.71) and Croatia (0.66), but also Poland (0.68) the Czech Republic (0.57), and Slovenia (0.57), achieving overall coverage of 0.56 with an overall consistency as 0.7.The solution suggests that successful pensioners' parties emerge in East European states, which combine adequate elderly self-organization with higher levels of elderly-oriented social spending, but also that they can emerge in *either* stable or fluid East European party systems (as assessed by the general success of new parties, NEWP). Once again, the combination of adequate self-organization with high elderly-oriented social spending seems to be necessary, but not sufficient condition for successful grey party emergence.

The parsimonious solution, which included all logical remainders was:

SELF*PENEXP*TRANS + retirpop*(NEWP+PENEXP) → GREYP.

This eliminates RETIRPOP from the term covering East European (TRANS) cases, while retaining a similar level of consistency (0.68) and coverage (raw coverage 0.34) and again including the four East European cases as strong members. [28] It suggests that in post-communist cases adequate elderly self-organization combined with higher elderly-oriented welfare spending is a sufficient condition for successful grey party emergence. However, the second term in the solution, covering Western Europe, again only includes Israel as a strong member, but not the Netherlands. However, characteristically for parsimonious solutions, while overall coverage was improved (0.62), consistency was lower (0.61). [29]

[TABLE 2.2 ABOUT HERE]

The second strategy used was to re-analyze the data the original Crisp Set form of QCA which sees outcomes and conditions dichotomously as either present (coded 1) or absent (0). The dichotomization of variables central to csQCA, which sets less exacting standards of consistency than fsQCA, is often regarded as problematic. However, the simplifications required by csQCA were helpful in integrating partially successful East European grey interest parties in states such as Poland, Estonia and the Czech Republic giving a clearer overall picture of the relationship between cases. As shown in **table 2.3, t**or csQCA analysis I dichotomized fuzzy memberships in the outcomes and causal conditions by re-coding them either 1 (strongly present) when they were more in the set (membership of 0.5 or above) or 0 (weak or absent) for memberships of 0.5 or less. Analysis with the TOSMANA program produced a truth table shown in **table 2.4**) with only one contradictory line (configuration) represented: Luxembourg appears in the configuration SELF*RETIR*newp*THRESH*PENEXP*trans, which otherwise includes cases where grey interest parties are very weak or absent. This contradiction was resolved by excluding Luxembourg as a case (given the specific character of the ADR party discussed above) which eliminated contradictions resulting in this line being coded 0.[30] The complex solution obtained by excluding logical remainders is

SELF*NEWP*THRESH*PENEXP*trans+ (Israel, Netherlands)

SELF*RETIRPOP*NEWP*PENEXP*TRANS+ (Slovenia, Poland, Estonia, Czech R)

SELF*RETIRPOP*THRESH*PENEXP*TRANS (Croatia, Slovenia)

→ GREYP

[TABLES 2.3 AND 2.4 ABOUT HERE]

This confirms the earlier findings using fsQCA which suggest that SELF*PENEXP is a necessary but not sufficient causal configuration and that higher proportions of retired people are a relevant condition in Eastern Europe. It also suggests that in West European cases both permissive a electoral system *and* a high incidence of new parties are needed for grey interest parties to have success, whereas in East European cases a high general incidence of new party success combined with the specificities of post-communist transition can offer an alternative causal path. It should be noted, however, that three of the four cases represented on this path (Poland, Estonia, Czech Republic) had relatively weak grey interest parties and that the two of most successful East European grey parties (Croatia and Slovenia) are covered by an alternative path.

With the inclusion of logical remainders to obtain the most parsimonious solution, we obtain the following:

SELF* PENEXP* NEWP + (Israel, Netherlands, Slovenia, Estonia, Czech R, Poland

SELF*PENEXP* TRANS (Croatia, Slovenia, Estonia, Czech R, Poland)

→ GREYP

This parsimonious solution satisfactorily accounts for all cases. It states that the combination of adequate older people's self-organization and elderly-oriented welfare spending with either high incidence of new parties or the specificities of post-communist transition will produce successful minor grey interest parties. Strikingly, all cases except Croatia are covered by a single causal configuration (SELF*PENEXP*NEWP) suggesting that the specificities of the Croatian case might be more pertinent than general facets of transitional post-communist democracies. Moreover, in keeping with the

findings in earlier fsQCA analyses suggesting that electoral thresholds may not be highly relevant, this parsimonious csQCA solution removes electoral thresholds and levels of retired population *per se.* A further csQCA analysis omitting the THRESH condition produced an identical parsimonious solution.[31] The distribution of Crisp Set outcomes and conditions is illustrated in **figure 2.1** in a visualization produced by the TOSMANA program.

[FIGURE 2.1 ABOUT HERE]

Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the development and relative success of pensioners' parties as minor political actors across democracies across Europe and in Israel over the last two decades with the help of Qualitative Comparative Analysis. Its analysis suggests that grey interest parties have had relative (albeit often brief and episodic) success in states that combine adequate levels of self-organization of older people with a high level of welfare state spending oriented towards older and retired people. However, this combination of conditions is a necessary, but not a sufficient cause. In Western Europe, these findings suggests, it must be further combined with high general incidence of (and perhaps demand for) new parties. This suggests that in Western Europe the development of pensioners' parties may, at least partly, need to understood in terms of the adaptation of established parties to socio-economic change and growing electoral demand for anti-establishment, protest parties, rather than simply growth in 'grey interest' politics. It may therefore be necessary to integrate research agendas on the adaption of West European

parties' to structural in welfare states and welfare capitalism (Kitschelt 2004; Rueda 2005) with those on democratic disaffection in advanced democracies (Pharr and Putnam and 2000).

In Central and Eastern Europe, successful pensioners' parties seem to emerge when relatively high-levels of elderly-oriented welfare spending are combined with adequate levels of civic infrastructure for older people. In some of the analyses undertaken here, this was supplemented by the condition of having relatively large proportion of retired (economically inactive) older people in the adult population. Counter-intuitively, however, the general incidence of new parties, which is comparatively high in the region makes little difference. In CEE, therefore, the key obstacles to successful grey interest parties' seems to be the limited mobilizational capacities of older people, rather than the ability of established parties to outcompete new challengers. This is broadly in line with arguments elsewhere in the literature on the region stressing the importance of transition 'losers' limited self-organization abilities in shaping outcomes (Vanhuysse 2006).

The findings in the chapter must, however, be regarded as suggestive rather than conclusive. Many of the fuzzy set solutions proposed are at the margins of acceptable consistency. This highlights both the empirical challenges of comparing minor parties on a broad scale and the continuing difficulties that contemporary Europe, despite its institutional and political convergence, poses for those wish to integrate established and newer European democracies within a common analytical framework. In particular, it may be necessary to pay closer attention the distinct dynamic of political development in Central and Eastern Europe. While CEE is now largely composed of stable liberal democracies, party-electoral competition in the region is subject to distinct temporal

dynamics. Conditions faced by pensioners' parties (and other political actors) in some CEE states might thus be appreciably different in early, more fluid post-transition period than subsequently.

Moreover, initial patterns of post-communist democratization and reform shape are, it seems, feeding into a new, second phase of post-communist politics defined by welfare and fiscal reform and a growing search among frustrated voters for new, non-establishment parties (Vanhuysse 2006; Kitschelt and Bustoková 2009; Pop-Eleches 2010). While echoing similar developments in established Western democracies, processes, this chapter suggests that these trends are running in parallel, rather than signalling East-West convergence around a new politics of generational conflict at the margins of political systems. Further research and refinement of comparative analytical strategies will be needed to address all these issues more fully.[32]

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Tables and figures

Table 2.1: Fuzzy set memberships

Country	GREYP	SELF	RETIRPOP	NEWP	THRESH	PENEXP	TRANS
Austria	0	1	0.92	0.16	0.5	0.77	0
Belgium	0.2	1	1	0.1	0.92	0.43	0
Bulgaria	0	0.22	1	1	0.5	0.44	1
Croatia	1	1	1	0.3	0.9	0.66	1
Czech Republic	0.7	1	0.74	0.6	0.33	0.57	1
Denmark	0	0.68	0.75	0.14	0.8	0.43	0
England &Wales	0.1	1	0.76	0.13	0.1	0.57	0
Estonia	0.6	0.68	0.9	1	0.33	0.5	1
Finland	0.3	1	0.82	0.13	0.95	0.53	0
France	0	1	0.9	0.5	0.1	0.55	0
Germany	0.25	0.78	0.95	0.1	0.33	0.56	0
Greece	0	1	0.99	0.25	0.66	0.57	0
Hungary	0.1	0.47	1	0.25	0.33	0.41	1
Iceland	0	1	0	0.38	0.55	0.26	0
Ireland	0	0.51	0.56	0.1	0.78	0.04	0
Israel	0.8	1	0.25	0.8	0.92	0.71	0
Italy	0.3	1	1	0.46	0.4	1	0
Latvia	0	0.3	0.79	1	0.33	0.86	1
Lithuania	0	0.05	0.71	1	0.33	0.67	1
Luxembourg	1	1	0.9	0.12	0.79	0.67	0
Netherlands	0.7	1	0.75	0.6	1	0.67	0
Norway	0.25	1	0.26	0.1	0.91	0.34	0
Poland	0.6	0.68	0.75	1	0.33	1	1
Portugal	0.3	0.25	0.72	0.1	0.94	0.94	0
Romania	0.1	0.35	0.52	1	0.33	0.11	1
Scotland	0.4	1	0.76	0.25	0.93	0.57	0
Slovakia	0	1	0.66	1	0.33	0.44	1
Slovenia	1	1	0.85	0.8	0.5	0.57	1
Spain	0.1	0.66	0.9	0.1	0.95	0.71	0
Sweden	0.25	1	0.69	0.14	0.5	0.36	0
Switzerland	0	1	0.62	0.1	0.92	0.57	0

Table 2.2: Fuzzy memberships in two possible solution sets

Country	GREYP	SELF*THRESH*PENEXP* (~TRANS*NEWP+TRANS*RETIRPOP)	SELF*PENEXP* (RETIR*TRANS + ~RETIRPOP*NEWP*~TRANS)
Austria	0	0.16	0.16
Belgium	0.2	0.1	0
Bulgaria	0	0.22	0.22
Croatia	1	0.66	0.66
Czech Republic	0.8	0.33	0.57
Denmark	0	0.14	0.14
England & Wales	0.1	0.1	0.13
Estonia	0.6	0.33	0.5
Finland	0.3	0.13	0.13
France	0	0.1	0.1
Germany	0.25	0.1	0.05
Greece	0	0.25	0.01
Hungary	0.1	0.25	0.41
Iceland	0	0.25	0.26
Ireland	0	0.04	0.04
Israel	0.8	0.71	0.71
Italy	0.3	0.4	0
Latvia	0	0.05	0.05
Latvia	0	0.3	0.3
Luxembourg	1	0.12	0.1
Netherlands	0.7	0.6	0.25
Norway	0.25	0.1	0.1
Poland	0.6	0.33	0.68
Portugal	0.3	0.1	0.1
Romania	0.1	0.11	0.11
Scotland	0.4	0.25	0.24
Slovakia	0	0.33	0.44
Slovenia	1	0.5	0.57
Spain	0.1	0.1	0.1
Sweden	0.25	0.14	0.14
Switzerland	0	0.1	0.1

Note: The tilde notation denotes membership of the negation of the set (e.g. the term ~TRANS denotes membership in the set NOT TRANS). This parallels the notation ‘trans’ used to describe causal configurations.

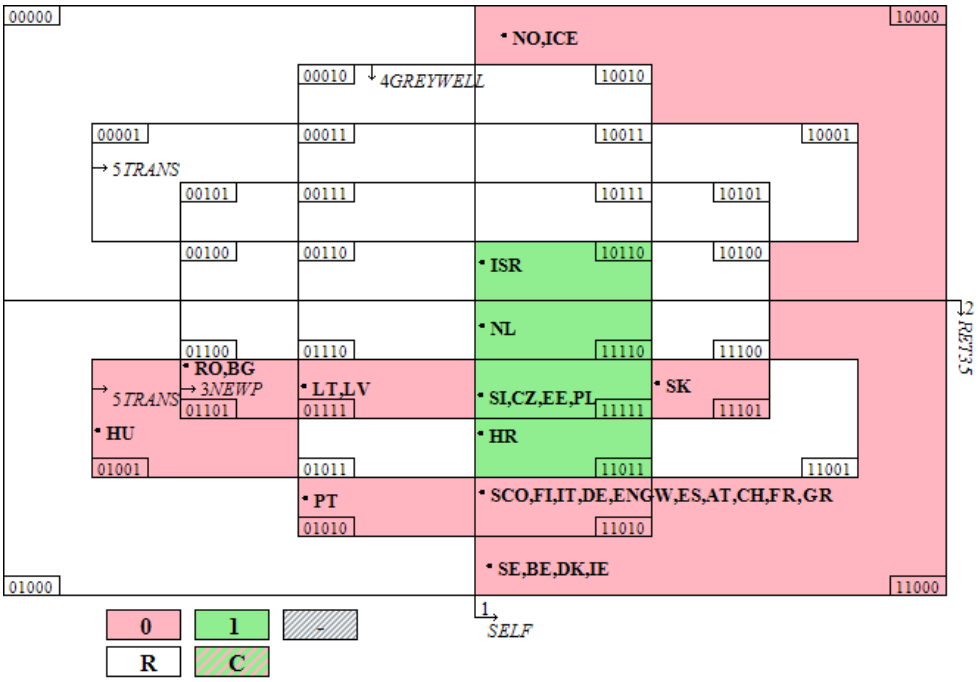
Table 2.3: Dichotomized outcomes and conditions for Crisp Set QCA analysis

Country	SELF	RETIRPOP	NEWP	THRESH	PENEXP	TRANS	GREYP
Austria	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Belgium	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Bulgaria	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
Croatia	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Czech R	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Denmark	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
England & Wales	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Estonia	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Finland	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
France	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Germany	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Greece	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Hungary	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Iceland	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Ireland	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Israel	1	0	1	1	1	0	1
Italy	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Latvia	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Lithuania	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Luxembourg	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Netherlands	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
Norway	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Poland	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Portugal	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Romania	0	1	1	1	0	1	0
Scotland	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Slovakia	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Slovenia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Spain	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Sweden	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Switzerland	1	1	0	1	1	0	0

Table 2.4: Truth table produced by Crisp Set QCA analysis

SELF	RETIRPOP	NEWP	THRESH	PENEXP	TRANS	GREYP	Case(s)
1	1	0	1	1	1	1	Croatia
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Slovenia
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	Czech Republic Estonia Poland
1	0	1	1	1	0	1	Israel
1	1	1	1	1	0	1	Netherlands
1	1	0	1	1	0	C	Scotland Finland Spain Austria Switzerland France Greece Luxembourg
1	1	0	0	1	0	0	Italy Germany Italy England & Wales
0	1	0	1	1	0	0	Portugal
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	Norway Iceland
1	1	0	1	0	0	0	Sweden Belgium Denmark Ireland
0	1	0	0	0	1	0	Hungary
0	1	1	1	0	1	0	Romania Bulgaria
0	1	1	0	1	1	0	Lithuania Latvia
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	Slovakia

Figure 2.1: Tosmana visualization of distribution of Crisp Set outcomes and conditions



Note. Visualization excludes electoral system condition, THRESH, and case of Luxembourg.

Appendices

Table 1: Pensioners parties in Europe

Belgium	1. *Waardig Ouder Worden (WOW)* Founded 1994 European elections 1994 2.14% Flemish parliamentary elections 2004, 0.02% 2. *Algemeenouderbond Vlaanderen* No data 3. *Plus* party (Wallonia) No data
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1. Pensioners' Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Stranka Penzionera Umirovljenika BiH*) Parliamentary elections 2002, 1.4%, 2 (of 140) in parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Croat-Bosnian entity); 1 seat (of 42) in Bosnian parliament (both entities) Parliamentary elections 2006, 1.48%, no representation in parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina or Bosnian parliament

	2. Pensioners' Party of the Republika Srpska (*Penzionerska Stranka Republike Srpske*) Parliamentary elections 2002, 1 seat (of 83) in National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska. Parliamentary elections 2006, 2.49% no seats in National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska.
Bulgaria	Social Solidarity Movement Founded May 2007
Croatia	Croatian Pensioners' Party (HSU - *Hrvatska stranka umirovljenika*) Founded 1996 Parliamentary election 2003 – 4%, 3 seats (of 151) Parliamentary election 2007 - 4.1% 1 seat (of 153) Some sub-national (communal/municipal) representation
Czech Republic	Pensioners for a Secure Life (DŽJ - *Důchodci za životní jistoty*)** Parliamentary election 1992***, 3.77% Parliamentary election 1996, 3.09% Parliamentary election 1998, 3.06%

	Parliamentary election 2002, 0.86% Some sub-national (communal/municipal) representation Merged with Independent Democrats (ND) grouping 2006
Denmark	Active Pensioners Party (*Partiet Aktive Pensionister*) Founded 1997 Contested local elections 2005 Has not contested national elections
Estonia	1. Estonian Pensioners' Union (*Eesti Pensionaride Liit*) Parliamentary elections 1992, 3.71% Some sub-national (communal/municipal) representation 2. Estonian Pensioners and Families Union (Eesti Pensionäride ja Perede Liit) Contested 1995 election as part of Coalition Party and Country People's Alliance (KMÜ). Later renamed the Estonian Pensioners and Families Party (*Eesti Pensionäride ja Perede Erakond EPPE*) . Merged with the Estonia

	People's Party in 1999. 3. Estonian Pensioners Party Formed 2002
Finland	1. Joint Responsibility Party of Pensioners and Greens Parliamentary elections 1991, 0.1% 2. Independent Non-Aligned Pensioners in Finland Parliamentary elections 1991, 0.19% 3. Pensioners for the People (EKA) Parliamentary elections 1995, 0.2% Parliamentary elections 1999 0.2% 4. Finnish Pensioners' Party (*SEP - Suomen eläkeläisten puolue*) 1987, 1.22% Parliamentary elections 1991, 0.39% Parliamentary elections 1995, 0.1% Parliamentary elections 1999, 0.2%
Germany	The Greys – Gray Panthers *Die Grauen – Grauen Panther*) (from 2008 Grey Panther Alliance)

	Founded 1989 (as pressure group 1975). Formally dissolved February 2008. Successor organization founded March 2008. 1990 0.8%% PR lists 1994 0.4% SMD, 0.5% PR lists 1998 0.3% SMD, 0.3% PR lists 2002 0.2% SMD, 0,2 PR lists 2005 0.0 SMD (6340 votes), PR list 0.4% 2004 European elections, 1.2%
Hungary	Pensioners' Party (NYUP - *Nyugdijasok Partja*) Parliamentary elections 1994, 0.02% (SMD) Parliamentary elections 2002, 0.00%**8 (SMD)
Italy	1. Autonomous Party of Pensioners Contested parliamentary elections 1972 2. Pensioners' Party (PP - *Partito Pensionati*) Founded 1987 1999 European elections 0.8%, no seats 2004 European elections, 1.1%, 1 seat

	2006 parliamentary elections, 0.88% Part of centre-left Union grouping
Israel	1. Older Persons and Pensioners Party of Israel (*HaGimlain Vhakshishim BeIsrael*) Founded 1981 1981 parliamentary elections, 0.1% 2. 'Pensioners' (*Gimlaim*) Founded 1988 1988 parliamentary elections, 0.73% 1992 parliamentary elections in coalition with Hand by Hand (Yad beyad) party representing ex-Soviet immigrants, 0.31% 3. Power for Pensioners (*Koah LaGimlaim*), parliamentary elections 1999, 1.1%, no seats 4. Pensioners of Israel to the Knesset (GIL - *Gimla'ey Yisrael LaKnesset* Founded 1996 1996 parliamentary elections, 0.57% 2006 parliamentary elections, 5.92%, 7 seats (of 120

	2009 parliamentary elections 0.52%) Incumbent 2006-9
Luxembourg	1. Alternative Democratic Reform party (ADR)* (*Alternativ Demokratesch Reformpartei/ Parti réformiste d'alternative démocratique/Alternative Demokratische Reformpartei*) Founded 1987 1989 parliamentary elections 7.3%, 4 seats (of 60) 1994 parliamentary elections 9.0%, 5 seats 1999 parliamentary elections 11.3%, 7 seats 1999 European elections 9.0%, no seats 2004 parliamentary elections 9.9% 5 seats 2009 parliamentary elections, 8.1% 4 seats Subnational representation since 1993 Never in national office 2. Party of the Third Age (*Partei vum 3. Alter, Parti du troisième age*) 1999 parliamentary elections 0.1% 2004 parliamentary elections 0.4% in one constituency Now disbanded

Netherlands	1. General Elderly Alliance (*Algemeen Ouderen Verbond* - AOV) Founded 1993 1994 parliamentary election, 3.6% 6 seats (of 150) Did not contest subsequent parliamentary elections Represented at sub-national (provincial) level (provincial elections in 1995-2003). Gained seats in upper chamber 1995-8 on basis on provincial representation 2. *Union 55+* Founded 1992 1994 parliamentary election, 0.8%, 1 seat Sub-national (provincial) representation in coalition with AOV Elderly Union (*Ouderenunie*). Formed 1998 from merger of AOV and Union 55+ 1998 parliamentary election, 0.5% 3. United Seniors Party (VSP - *Verenigde Senioren Partij*) Formed 2001 from merger of Elderly Union and Seniors Party

	2002 parliamentary elections 0.4% Limited sub-national representation 2006 parliamentary elections 0.13% Active, but did not contest 2010 parliamentary elections. No Dutch pensioners parties ever incumbent
Norway	Pensioners Party (*Pensjonistpartiet*). Founded 1985. 1985 parliamentary election 0.3% 1989 parliamentary election 0.3% 1993 parliamentary election 1.0% 1997 parliamentary election 0.6 2001 parliamentary election 0.7% 2005 parliamentary election 0.5% 2009 parliamentary elections 0.4% Never represented at national level. Some subnational representation. Muncipal election results

	1987 0.2% 1991 1.4%
Poland	1. Legnica Association of Pensioners and Invalids (*Polski Zw. Emerytów, Rencistów i Inw. O/W Legnica*) Parliamentary elections 1991 - 0.04% 2. Disabled, Retired Persons and Pensioners (*"Niepelnosprawni, Emeryci i Rencisci"*) Parliamentary elections 1991 - 0.04% 3. National Party of Pensioners and Retired Persons (*KPEiR - Krajowa Partia Emerytów I Rencistów*) Parliamentary elections 1997 - 2.18% 4. National Alliance of Pensioners and Retired Persons of the Polish Republic (*Krajowe Porozumienia Emerytów i Rencistów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*) Parliamentary elections 1997 - 1.63%
Romania	1. Party of Pensioners of Romania (*PPR - Partidul Pensionarilor din Romani*a) Parliamentary election 2000 – 0.66%

	2. Popular Party for Social Justice
Russia	Pensioners' Party**** (*Partiya pensionerov*) Parliamentary elections 1999, 1.95% (national PR list), 0.71% (SMDs), 1 deputy elected in SMD Alliance of Russian Pensioners' Party (RPP - *Rosiiskaya Partiya Pensionerov*) and Russian Social Justice Party 2003 Parliamentary elections 3.1% (national PR list), 0.5% (SMDs) Merged with Fair Russia bloc in 2006
Slovakia	1. Party of Pensioners and the Socially Dependent (SDSO - *Strana dôchodcov a sociálne odkázaných*) Founded May 1995 Did not contest national election Officially deregistered October 2005 2. Pensioners' Party of Slovakia (SDS - *Strana dôchodcov Slovenska*) Formed October 1995

	Contested 2002 parliamentary elections on electoral list of Real Slovak National Party (PSNS). No deputies Officially deregistered October 2005
Slovenia	Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (DeSUS - *Demokratična stranka upokojencev Slovenije*) Parliamentary elections 1992, contested as part of United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD), 1 seat Parliamentary elections 1996 4.32% 5 seats Parliamentary elections 2000, 5.17%, 4 seats Parliamentary elections 2004, 4.0%, 4 seats Parliamentary elections 2008, 7.47% , 7 seats Incumbent since 2000 2000-4 - coalition with Liberal Democrats (LDS), United Social Democrats (ZSLD) and Slovene People's Party. No ministerial portfolio, deputy speakership of parliament. 2004- date, coalition with Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS), New Slovenia – Christian People's Party (NSi), Slovenian People's Party (SLS). One ministerial portfolio (defence)

Serbia	Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS - *Partija ujedinenich pensionera Srbije*) Founded 2005 2007 parliamentary elections - (in coalition with Social Democratic Party) 3.91%
Spain	Active Pensioners' Party (PDLPEA - *Partido de los Pensionistas en Acción*) 2008 parliamentary elections 0.01%
Sweden	Swedish Senior Citizen Interest Party (*Sveriges Pensionärers Intresseparti*) Founded 1987 1991 parliamentary elections 0.04% 1994 parliamentary elections 0.04% 1998 parliamentary elections 1.0% 2003 parliamentary elections 0.71% 2006 parliamentary elections 0.52%. 2010 parliamentary elections 0.19% Never represented at national level. Some subnational representation

Comment [u1]: Update

Ukraine	Bloc of the Party of Pensioners of Ukraine (BPPU *Blok Partii Pensioneriv Ukrainy*) - coalition of Party of Pensioners of Ukraine and Party of Protection of Pensioners of Ukraine 2007 parliamentary elections 0.14%
UK - *Scotland* - *England and Wales*	Scottish Senior Citizens Unity Party (SSCUP) Founded 2003 2003 Scottish parliamentary elections, 0.1% in SMD, 1.5% of regional list votes, 1 seat 2007 Scottish parliamentary elections, 1.92% of regional list vote, no seats Senior Citizens Party 2005 European elections

*Name since 2006. Previously 'Action Committee – 5/6 Pensions for All' (1987-9), 'Action Committee 5/6' (1989-92), 'Action Committee for Democracy and Pensions Justice'

**Later the Party for a Secure Life (*Strana za životní jistoty*)

*** Figures for election to Czech parliament (Czech National Council)

**** 685 votes (1245 votes in 1994)

Sources:

Parties and Elections website http://www.parties-and-elections.de; Iecovich 2002; Israeli Knesset (http://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_res.htm)

Scotland: *The Times*, 5 May 2007; German Federal Returning Officer http://www.bundeswahlleiter.de; www.electionresources.org

Statistics Norway www.ssb.no; Swedish Election Authority (www.val.se) and personal communication 10 January 2008; Central Electoral Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina http://www.izbori.ba ; Czech Central Election Commission (www.volby.cz); Essex Election Archive (www.essex.ac.uk/elections); Russia Votes website (www.russiavotes.org); Republic of Slovenia Electoral Commission (http://www.dvk.gov.si/); Republic of Serbia Electoral Commission http://www.rik.parlament.sr.gov.yu/index_e.htm; Slovak Ministry of the Interior as http://www.minv.sk/?sekcia-verejnej-spravy ; 'Pensioners' Party Set Up in Bulgaria', Novinite news agency report, 12 May 2007, http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=80585; *Central Europe Review*, 29 November 1999 http://www.ce-review.org/99/23/estonianews23.html

Online were last accessed on 1 September 2010.

Appendix table 2: Summary of raw data

	Mean economically inactive aged 50+ as proportion of population aged 15+ 1990-2007 RETIRPOP	50+ers reporting membership in elderly service organisation in 1999 (%) SELF	Mean support for new parties in parliamentary elections 1990-2008 NEWP	Practical national electoral threshold THRESH	Mean spending on pensions as % of social spending (%) 1990-2006 PENEXP
Austria	28.35	9.1	1.5	*4*	52.2
Belgium	31.43	15.5	1.4	**1.5**	40.1
Bulgaria	30.37	1.3	17.3	*4*	40.4
Croatia	33.03	1.7	3.6	1.6	48.4
Czech Rep	24.85	9.5	7.3	*5*	45.1
Denmark	24.94	4.1	1.7	2.2	36.8
England & Wales	25.53	8.3	1.1	High – see discussion	45.2
Estonia	24.18	4.1	15.3	*5*	42.4
Finland	26.4	14.8	0.96	**1.27**	43.6
France	28.09	8.1	5.9	High – see	44.4

				discussion	
Germany	28.97	4.7	0.9	*5*	44.7
Greece	29.91	8.8	1.8	*3*	44.8
Hungary	30.8	2.8	2.8	*5*	39.4
Iceland	8.86	18.2	4.1	3.66	31.6
Ireland	21.33	3.1	0.8	2.31	26.4
Israel	15	High – see discussion	9.6	*1.5*	50
Italy	31.66	6.4	5.6	*4*	62.4
Latvia	25.8	1.8	20	*5*	55.2
Lithuania	24.17	0.3	25.9	*5*	49.3
Luxembourg	28	13.2	1.1	2.27	48.4
Netherlands	25	17.3	7.3	0.69	48.7
Norway	15.26	15.6	0	1.56	33.6
Poland	25.26	4.1	12.5	5	60.1
Portugal	24.32	1.5	0.5	1.39	47.2
Romania	20.48	2.1	13.1	5	28.9
Scotland	25.53	8.3	2.5	1.4	45.2
Slovakia	23.17	9.8	28.7	5	45.2
Slovenia	27	3.1	9.8	4	44.8
Spain	27.98	4	0.8	1.3	49.7
Sweden	23.78	25.9	1.3	4	37.8
Switzerland	22.42	10.6	0.5	1.5	45

Notes to appendix table 2

RETIRPOP

Calculation based on Eurostat figures 1990-2007 except for: Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland 1995-2007; Bulgaria 2000-2007; Slovenia 1996-2007; Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Romania 1997-2007.

SELF

Over 50s members of elderly service organizations in 1999 or nearest year – World Values Survey www.worldvaluessurvey.org

NEWP

Sources: Tavits 2007 supplemented by data in Essex Election Archive (www.essex.ac.uk/elections); Parties and Elections in Europe (www.parties-and-elections.de) and Psephos – Adam Carr's Election Archive (http://psephos_adam_carr.net) and information from websites of national electoral authorities. Listing of new parties and calculations available on request from author.

THRESH

Italicized figure denotes formal national threshold; figure in bold denotes estimate of effective national threshold derived from lowest vote received by parliamentary party in elections since 1990; all other figures estimated effective national threshold calculated following Taagepera (2002). Data on average district magnitude, numbers of districts were obtained from Birch (2001 and) World Bank Database of Political Institutions 2009

(see Beck, Clarke, Groff, Keefer and Walsh 2001)Taagepera's formula states that effective national threshold is 75% divided by the square root of the total number of districts multiplied by the average district magnitude plus one.

PENEXP

Calculation based on Eurostat figures 1990-2007 except for Belgium:, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovakia, Ireland 1995-2006; Lithuania, Slovenia 1996-2006; Latvia 1997-2006; Germany 1991-2007; Bulgaria 2005-6; Hungary 1996-2006; Greece, Poland, Romania 2000-2006. Data for Israel estimated from National Insurance Institute 2007. Data for Croatia from Jurlina-Albibović, Mastilica, Nestić, Stubbs, Babić and Vončina 2006)

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Endnotes

[1] Israel is a developed, established Western-style democracy at the periphery of the European Economic Area, and Scotland, a sub-state polity with a powerful legislature and distinct national party system. I take England and Wales as a separate case basing my judgments on UK parliamentary elections. I exclude Cyprus and Malta due to lack of case knowledge and Russia, Ukraine, Bosnia, Macedonia, Serbia, Moldova, Albania and Macedonia due to lack of comparable or reliable data.

[2] For unicameral systems I take election results for the single national legislative chamber.

[3] However, as Goerres (2010) notes party identification among older age cohorts in Western Europe, while typically stronger than that of subsequent generations, varies markedly with national context and continuity of national party systems.

[4] There is an ongoing debate in the literature about whether the reasons for the *formation* of minor parties are the same as those for their relative success (Harmel and Janda 1985; Kitschelt 1989; Tavits 2006).

[5] This line of argument is advanced, for example, by Sikk and Andersen (2009) in relation to Estonia's Green Party.

[6] I diverge from this coding on this basis in only one case: that of Romania where Eurostat figures indicate a very high proportion of retired people. The reason for this divergence seems to be that an unusually high proportion of older people in Romania continue to be economically active after the age of 70 (Kubitza 2004).

[7] Tepe and Vanhuysse (2009), for example, find that while the Overall Dependency Ratio has a positive, statistically significant effect in increasing macro pension spending as a proportion of GDP, the effect is weakened if elderly population is defined as those aged over 55, rather than those aged over 65. When the dependent variable is recast as pension generosity (pension spending per retiree relative to GDP) both measure of elderly population have a positive effect, although it is weaker when the more inclusive 55+ category is used.

[8] Slovenia's DeSUS, for example, estimated that it gained about 15 per cent support among older and retired voters (DeSUS 2006), while, exit polls suggest that the Czech DŽJ party gained no more than 13 per cent of pensioners' voters during its best national election performance (in 1992) (Večerník 2006: 6)

[9] As a robustness test additional fsQCA analyses were carried assuming that grey interest parties would attract slightly lower and slightly higher proportions of the elderly and retired population (10 per cent and 15 per cent), which has the effect, respectively, of

lowering and raising the overall proportion of such voters in the adult population assumed to facilitate grey party success. These analyses produced near identical solutions to those reported below with near identical coverage and consistency. The only difference found was that the 'complex solution' produced for West European cases additionally incorporated the retirpop term (fewer older people) when grey parties were assumed to win only 10 per cent of older voters' support. However, this disappeared in the more parsimonious 'intermediate' version. The overall robustness of fsQCA results can partly be gauged from the consistency scores reported (Skaaning 2007).

[10] Demands for left distributive policies driven by population ageing, Kitschelt (2004: 6) suggests will partially damp down demands for socially liberal free market policies generated by other social changes, as older voters tend to be socially less liberal and more 'materialist' in outlook.

[11] The sharpness of sectoral and generational divisions has often been seen as varying according to national welfare regimes. For example, conservative corporatist Bismarkian welfare states with generous decentralized, welfare systems have been seen as facing the sharpest divisions between outsiders and insider groups such as older, unionized, male workers who benefit from employment security and unreformed pension systems. Tepe and Vanhuysse (2010) find that the *pro-elderly* spending bias and the pro-*new social risks* spending bias of OECD welfare states are negatively correlated (both in levels and in change over time), indicating trade-offs between spending priorities. However, welfare regime type does not significantly affect the spending bias of countries towards *new social risks*.

[12] The causal relationship between age group related welfare spending and the success of grey interest groups normally raises issues of causal direction: it could be logically plausible that, if associated, successful pensioners' parties might have caused higher levels of welfare spending on older groups by, for example, suggesting to mainstream politicians that there discontented 'grey vote'. Indeed, there might be a pattern of circular causality ('feedback effects') However, relatively successful grey interest parties have so far had too weak and ephemeral a political presence to exercise the type of long-term influence required to significantly to impact pension and welfare spending patterns, which are, in any case in part the path dependent products of decisions taken during early welfare state formation and often highly resistant to political action in the present (Lynch 2006; Inglot 2008).

[13] The crudity of the measure lies in the fact that it also partly captures *numbers* of pensioners. However, the distribution and ranking of countries into cases with higher and lower elderly welfare bias is broadly consistent with more sophisticated measures of age bias in welfare state spending such as such as Lynch's (2006: 24) ENSR index for Western OECD members. The main anomaly is that this crude measure underestimates the elderly age-bias Lynch identifies in the welfare spending in Greece and Portugal.

[14] I include spending for all type of pensions defined in Eurostat statistical compilations as **'**periodic cash benefits under the disability, old-age, survivors and unemployment functions…social benefits: disability pension, early-retirement due to reduced capacity to work, old-age pension, anticipated old-age pension, partial pension, survivors' pension, early-retirement benefit for labour market reasons' (Eurostat 2010).

[15] As a robustness test additional fsQCA analyses were carried out reducing the level of pension expenditure required for full membership of PENEXP to 50 per cent and 40 per cent as a proportion of social spending. These analyses produced near identical solutions to those reported below with near identical coverage although consistency was somewhat lower. The only difference found was that when the THRESH (effective national thresholds) condition was excluded, the solution produced for West European (trans) cases additionally incorporated the retirpop term (lower proportion of older people). This counter-intuitive term appears to reflect the influence on the solution of the Israeli case – one of only three non-East European cases more in than out of GREYP set - once the criteria for full membership in PENEXP are lowered in a way that makes almost all cass full (1.0) members.

[16] Many scholars take the effective threshold for an electoral district of mean magnitude as an indication of a national electoral system's permissiveness. However, as Taagepera (2002) notes the *national* effective threshold may be significantly lower as emergent new parties' support is likely to be higher in some electoral districts than others. I diverged from applying this approach in two cases: France and England and Wales which elect legislators using majoritarian electoral systems Single Member Districts (SMDs), Taagepera's formula suggests an effective national threshold of around 1.5 per cent. However, I judged the degree of vote concentration required to win a seat in such systems was too demanding for an emergent interest-based party to achieve and I therefore coded these cases as having highly impermissive electoral systems. In Scotland empirical evidence suggests a lower effective national threshold operates for the regional PR list seats than that implied by the Taagepera formula. In this case I took the lowest vote

obtained by a parliamentary party (1.4 per cent, Scottish Senior Citizens' Unity Party in 2003) as the effective national threshold.

[17] Electoral systems in both Western and Eastern Europe generally remained stable in the period analyzed (Birch 2001). However, in the three cases (Italy, Bulgaria, Romania) where there were wholesale changes of electoral system type, I based my coding on the electoral system used for most elections across the period. In other cases where there were limited changes to formal national thresholds or to magnitudes of electoral districts, I took averages over the period as the basis of fsQCA coding.

[18] For initial attempts to develop a measure distinguishing these two types of volatility more directly see Mainwaring, España, A. and Gervasoni (2009) and Powell and Tucker (2009).

[19] Tavits (2007); supplementary material is online at http://tavits.wustl.edu/SupplementalMaterial.pdf. Tavits and Sikk use slightly different criteria to assess whether a party is genuinely new and make somewhat different empirical assessments of certain parties, leading to different scorings for some national elections. However, they both follow the same broad principle of counting parties as 'new' when they contest parliamentary elections for the first time. I use Tavits' data as they are easily available online.

[20] 1999 was chosen because it was a point mid-way through the period studied and a year for which data was available for all cases. The WVS figures used as a proxy for elderly self-organization here generally match other WVS items capturing levels of civic engagement and associational membership, both among older people and populations.

[21] The codings here are thus not necessarily inconsistent with findings about CEE pensioners' general lack of protest mobilization (Vanhyusse 2006: 118-9) as it concerns organizational infrastructure. More in-depth empirical study of older people's involvement in contentious politics is arguably required to substantiate and clarify this generalization.

[22] A similar approach is taken to communist legacies by Schneider (2009) in his cross-regional fsQCA study of democratization.

[23] As Rihoux and Ragin (2009: 152-5) argue, by incorporating 'logical remainders', QCA is simply doing explicitly and transparently what most comparative methods including regression analysis do *implicitly*. Any comparison aiming at some degree of generalized explanation will make similar, but implicit assumptions about logically possible but empirically unobserved cases.

[24] Analyzed with the inclusion of logic remainders to produce a parsimonious solution (again with the very low consistency cut-off of 0.68) yielded the causal argument: NEWP*THRESH. This suggested that a combination of permissive practical electoral thresholds and demand for new parties was sufficient to account for the emergence of successful grey interest parties. This had a similar coverage, although one additional case of relatively successful grey party formation (Slovenia) was covered. However, there was an additional incongruity: Bulgaria a country without an electorally successful pensioners' party was also a strong member of this parsimonious solution. Although this solution was consistent with three of the five most successful grey interest parties, its broader lack of consistency and failure to explain all but one the cases of more successful

grey interest parties in Eastern Europe suggested that it was necessary to incorporate post-communist transition as an additional condition.

[25] The exceptions are Ireland and Iceland, whose low memberships in the configuration stem more from their low membership of PENEXP - i.e. the strong absence of elderly-bias in welfare state spending; Italy where the existence of a formal electoral threshold of 4 per cent seems to play a role; and France whose majoritarian electoral system is coded as highly impermissive.

[26] The most plausible set of such assumptions - based on the theoretically-derived expectations outlined earlier paper – simply reproduced the complex solution. The assumptions used were that RETIRPOP, SELF, THRESH and PENEXP would contribute to the outcome when present and that NEWP and TRANS might or might not do so.

[27] The parsimonious and intermediate versions of this solution had similarly limited coverage and are not reported here.

[28] Set memberships in parsimonious solution for the four cases are identical to those reported above for the complex solution.

[29] An intermediate solution incorporating some logical remainders - assuming that PENEXP and SELF would contribute to successful grey interest parties, while other conditions might or might not do so - simply reproduced the complex solution.

[30] An alternative would be to re-code Luxembourg as not having a successful grey interest party, re-classifying the ADR. However, the solution terms obtained would be identical.

[31] The complex solution obtained was PENEXP*SELF* (TRANS*RETIRPOP + trans*NEWP) → GREYP, which parallels the complex solution obtained including

THRESH but allows Croatia to be included in the same configuration as other East European cases.

[32] For example, the use of 'two stage' QCA (Schneider and Wagemann 2003) or Caren and Panofsky's (2005) modification of QCA to incorporate temporality.