This paper focuses on the impact of implementation of intra-party democracy into patterns of political career within socialist party. Since 2004, PASOK has assumed a series of internal modifications in accordance with participatory models. The aim of this paper is to investigate the extent to which these organizational changes have modified the patterns of political career for Greek socialists. Inside representative democracies, the main instruments of political careers are political parties. In fact, the emergence of an autonomous political sphere and the formation of specific political organizations gave birth to modern political staff, characterized by Weber as “professional politicians” (Weber, 2012; Offerlé, 1999). Furthermore, it is well established that different forms of party organization are historically linked with a specific profile of political agents (Duverger, 1976; Daalder, 1966). To better understand that link, our research will study the dimension of internal competition inside political parties, a competition which aims to design central party members, public office candidates and even public office holders. This kind of competition is regulated by internal norms, and it is subject to party organizational structure and distribution of internal power.

These considerations lead us to examine the influence of internal modifications on the profile of PASOK’s political staff. Our argumentation includes three main steps which command the structure of the present paper. In the first section, we present the context and the conditions that fostered the implementation of participatory project inside PASOK. The aim here is to comprehend the change under a double movement, initiated by electoral considerations and internal balance factors (Harmel and Janda, 1994: 262). Returning to these factors provides us a better image of the party’s situation in the mid-2000’s, and it can explain the degree of incorporation of new trends. Traditional patterns and procedures are examined within the second section. First, we present the traditional party’s operations to
better understand the modifications that occurred since 2004. Next, we demonstrate the modifications introduced in candidates’ selection, a key factor to understand patterns of political career and intraparty competition. We expose the available data for a variety of elections during 2004-2007. Thus, with the help of longitudinal data, we proceed to a global evaluation of participatory procedures into career patterns and we propose hypothesis for further examination. We integrate our case in this way to broaden discussion about the changes occurred within parties due to the introduction of participatory and deliberative procedures.

implementing intraparty democracy within PASOK: conditions and challenges

The adoption of deliberative principles and procedures within PASOK is linked to two major factors. The first concerns the party’s strategy to avoid or to reduce electoral defeat in the 2004 national elections, a defeat which seemed to be irreversible at the time in the eyes of party direction (Eleutheriou and Tassis, 2013: 153). Second reasons facilitating the reinforcement of intraparty democracy is linked with the stabilization strategies of the party’s new ruling elite. The major event to the path of participatory models is the adoption of open primaries for the selection of new party leader in 2004. In a highly symbolic move, only a few weeks before national elections, one million members and friends of the party went to the polls and supported G. Papandreou, the unique candidate for the presidency of the party (Spourdalakis and Tassis, 2006: 503). Apart from electoral considerations, the adoption of participatory models coincides with a broader initiative to reform party organization in conformity with the ideals promoted by the new partisan elite around Papandreou, ideals which were codified under the concept of participatory and deliberative intraparty democracy.

These provisory remarks allow us to register PASOK modifications in the larger question of party change. Harmel and Janda have offered a framework to understand change within a party which combines the two basic elements, specifically, external and internal factors by introducing the idea of the pursuit of major goals for each party (Harmel and Janda, 1994: 263-265). Bearing in mind that PASOK’s main objective is to remain or regain power, external factors are commanded by electoral competition and the efforts to reshape the party’s image after 20 years in office. In this framework, changing party
organization is connected to what is described as an initiative to fix party broken links with society and the electoral base, a usual theme recurred in party practice (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2002; Scarrow, 2005). However, the introduced changes validate, to an extent, some channel movements within PASOK. Phenomena like the increased role of political communication while shaping the party’s strategy, the broader influence of communication institutes, experts and public opinion surveys for decision and policymaking were established since the early 90’s with the liberalization of communication markets in Greece and the entry of private communication consortiums. Thus, personal performance and attractiveness of leaders and candidates is articulated aside from ideological debates and diminution of historical cleavages during campaigns. In a way, global characteristics of political competition change and the party system is therefore described as a convergent bipartisan system. In this frame, the participatory project seems to emphasize on the party’s image, rather than party’s political identity, which has been the precedent (Voulgaris, 2013; 275-277).

Therefore, introduced reforms are not without consequences as they promote a redistribution of internal power. Scholars have already established the fact that introduction of deliberative and participatory procedures is not necessarily combined with an amelioration of party members’ place within party activity. On the contrary, international experience has noticed that implementation of inclusiveness can be articulated with a loss of actual power for intermediate party organs and members (Scarrow, 1999; Lefebvre, 2011; Lefebvre and Roger, 2009). PASOK’s case seems to prove this tendency. Greek literature has shown that the participatory project has driven a broader control of party organs by the leader. Available data on PASOK’s case illuminated the fact that the implementation of the participatory project contributes to the redistribution of internal power. This redistribution, without being unidimensional, tends to marginalize party intermediary organs and local branches from party life. Simultaneously, the leader’s control of the party seems to be reinforced in the aftermath of the open primaries experiment. Centralization tendencies are reinforced as the party leader claims to be superior to party organs, since he owns his election to an electorate which surpasses party limits. The leader is no longer institutionally accountable to existing party organs.

The new conception of party has been institutionalized by the 2005 Statutes of PASOK. As far as decision-making procedures concern, the party is designed as an instrument of deliberation by his leader. According to this idea, “(...) democratic deliberation
constitutes a permanent element in the formation of governmental policy of the Movement (article 5.2)”. The introduction of deliberative procedures within party life aims to enhance inclusion and boost recruitment and participation. Within this framework, non-members, designed as ‘friends’ dispose increased prerogatives as they can join party organs and they can also participate in internal elections (article 20).

Deliberation and participation are diffused in all levels of party organization and they are generalized by the use of online platforms for socialist members’ expression of their opinions. However, the deliberative experiment deviates from the traditional partisan structure and the division of labour within the socialist party. Primarily, the outcome of deliberation within party organs has a consulting character who does not engage decisions from party direction. Hence, party organs such as the National Council or even the party’s Congress lose part of their influence concerning decision-making procedures. For instance, the adoption of open primaries for the leader’s election deprives Congress of a key role in the party’s regulation. Furthermore, during congressional activities, the spread of deliberative norms is not accompanied by an improved role of its members. Once again, the leader and ruling team have the last word about party identity and proclaimed policies.

The statutes introduce the deliberative procedures inside a local party. Henceforth, relations between the local party and the party in central office are based on a model of *stratarchy* (Katz and Mair, 1995: 21). This said, we mean that local branches are incited to adopt autonomous activity along with deliberative and inclusive models of membership. Nevertheless, this autonomy regarding the central party is accompanied by a demand of auto-funding. Local committees can choose the fields and the means of their activity, but simultaneously, they have to find their own funding. The end of central financing for the local party signifies the loss of an important resource for ordinary activities and mobilization.

Furthermore, following deliberative procedures, party grassroots do not participate as collective actors in policymaking and in broader discussions within the party. On the contrary, participation in this context is personalized and realized through online platforms. However, it is well known that deliberation supposes the capacity to elaborate and express a structured discourse. But this capacity is generally distributed in an unequal manner, a fact that disadvantages members from lower social classes. Previous researches into other socialist parties have shown the tendencies to set aside members of lower social and educational backgrounds to the profit of members from higher socio-professional categories.
(Lefebvre and Sawicki, 2007). Here, we encounter a long-standing approach to political parties, according to which Michels states that increased labour division and specialization within political organizations tend to privilege members with higher educational and social profile into the central party and reinforce oligarchic tendencies (Michels, 2015). Thus, expertise in specific matters such as economics or previous experience in public office may facilitate the ascent into party offices. In this manner, inclusiveness and participation do not necessarily dissipate within internal mechanisms of promotion as the latter remains linked with social attributes.

**Traditional modes of selection and patterns of career within the socialist party**

Procedures of candidates’ selection occupy a central position in comprehending the party’s internal operation. We defend the idea that selection logics can clarify the links between the internal party structure and the office holders’ profile. This is explained by the fact that selection of political staff illuminates aspects of internal organization such as the degree of party institutionalization, centralization, and internal power balance (Katz, 2001: 279-280). In this way, the output of selection procedures can clarify valued resources and patterns of internal promotion. Patterns of career in PASOK are influenced by the conditions of initial formation of the party (Panebianco, 1988; Duverger, 1976) and the power exercised over the years (Katz and Mair, 2002). Party membership, inscription in local networks and social anchorage constitute some main characteristics of socialists’ profile. The main reason lies in the fact that candidates for all types of elections, national or local, were issued from party grassroots, preserving strong links with local society. Being an active party member was considered as a condition *sine qua non* in order to obtain a ticket. Thus, internal competition amongst candidates was based on two principal resources, the degree of acquired political capital and their social inscription.

Candidates’ selection procedures change after new party statutes have been adopted. The candidates’ profile plays a crucial role into PASOK’s renewal strategy. Renewing the political staff is a common idea to face electoral challenges. Adjusting the gap between the social profile of political elites and the electoral base seems to be a way to respond to the crisis of representation which is particularly important for PASOK. In this
frame, changes have been orientated into two directions since 2004. They concern the
designation of competent party organs to choose the party candidates, and simultaneously,
we observe the valorisation of social attributes such as feminine identity or youth. To
understand and measure the impact of these new modes of selection, we should make a
rapid return to PASOK’s traditional modes of selection and patterns of career.

Through a longitudinal perspective, official nomination has always been the object of
intervention by three major players, the local branches, local deputies and central
committee. During the first period of party life, local branches had an important role in
candidate selection since these party organs proposed and promoted members on different
tickets. Thus, the newly emerged PASOK was substantially based on massive membership
and on organizational resources to compete with the right-wing party of New Democracy
based on exercised power and multiple state resources (Pappas, 1998). This model of party
structure is far from being a national particularity. Alternatively, it is a common pattern
between parties deprived of resources originated from the state and from notability. The
role of available resources within party formation remains a central variable in the parties’
classification (Offerlé, 2010; 34-47). Within the post-dictatorial context in Greece, active
membership inside the socialist party was highly valuable as it allowed party expansion and
offered opportunities to hold office. Considering that context, local and intermediary party
organs were charged with members’ enrolment and the everyday mobilization. As a result,
they participated actively in the selection and promotion of their members on local and
national tickets.

Progressively, the transformation of PASOK into a ruling party, along with the
multiplication of office holders, modified the internal balance. PASOK has maintained power
Transformations occurred in party structure after electoral victory was a widely discussed
issue within specialized literature (Kirchheimer, 1966; Gunther, Montero and Linz, 2002).
Ascendancy in public office appears to modify internal balance between different party
organs in favour of executive instances. In the case of PASOK, executive instances formed
around the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers seem to be reinforced during
PASOK’s rule, in contrast with the party’s organization which appears to increasingly lose its
central role in policy elaboration and decision-making (Spourdalakis, 1988). In regards to
political staff concerns, occupying central office for several years allowed socialists not only
to multiply office holders but to the successive re-elections of deputies during the years. We notice that the formation of office holders who accumulate political capital over time through their participation in parliament or even through government. Thus, these senior officers gained increasing influence in party life and gradually achieved control of local branches. This internal power is also translated into a decisive role in candidates’ selection inside their electoral district. Globally, the local party seems to increasingly lose its privileged role in proposing candidates for local and national offices.

Despite these long term evolutions, candidates in different kinds of elections always maintained strong links with the local party, a fact attested by the characteristics of elected personnel. Concerning deputies, research in available data, like official CVs, shows that in their large majority, the deputies are long-time members climbing internal hierarchy; they obtain a ticket within the district of their residence and professional exercise, and finally, they have an active role into local associations and institutions (Drettakis, 1991; 2000). The same image is observed in the circumstances of mayors and municipal council members. Social and spatial proximity with the electoral base is a main motif amongst elected socialists; while it constitutes a resource of mutual recognition and prestige in local society and it is also connected with a direct knowledge and interest about local issues. These symbolic resources are largely mobilized during campaign periods where direct contact between candidates and the electorate constitutes the main campaign strategy during the years.

This internal structure and internal competition gave birth to a frozen profile of the socialist elected personnel. Their main characteristics through the years could be described as the following: promotion through party organs constitutes the major road to political office within the socialist party (Karoulas, 2013). Party organization represents the main resource for entry in the Greek political field. Indeed, the central role of party bureaucracy is not singular to PASOK’s case, but it constitutes the leitmotiv of promotion within all political parties of the Third Hellenic Republic. This fact reflects the centrality of partisan organisations within the Greek political system in the aftermath of the fall of dictatorship and the retreat of other institutions like the army or palace from the political scene. However, quantitative data indicate a decrease of party organs in political promotion since 2000. Since then, party bureaucracy remains the principal resource for about one third of
office holders, but other resources seem to be reinforced like previous experience in the state machine or implication in interest groups.

Previous career in public office consists of a distinctive pattern of political career within PASOK. Indeed, PASOK seems to follow, in this case, pre-dictatorial forms of political domination based on state resources’ appropriation. Staff circulation between the central party, public office and political office indicates the imbrication of the party machine with the state, the porosity of frontiers between them and finally the politicization of the state. Nominations of party members to key posts of public administration are common through the years of politicizing the higher spheres of the state machine (Sotiropoulos, 2001).

The study of the composition of PASOK’s central committee and the National Congress illustrates the strong connections between the party bureaucracy and state apparatus. Employees or office holders within the public sector traditionally constitute the larger social-professional group within members of PASOK’s National Congresses in 1994 and 1996 (Vernardakis, 2011: 270-273). In a total amount of about 4,500 National Congress members, liberal professions represent the second largest group in terms of representation within the central party followed by retreats. This image is similar to the composition of the Central Committee in 2001. The Central Committee is the main executive organ inside PASOK’s bureaucracy which validates the dominant profile of the party elite and traditional patterns of intra-party promotion. Public sector’s officers or employees still occupy the larger place within this organ, followed by liberal and scientific professions, simultaneously proportionate to the significantly reduced number of members issued from labour or peasantry (Vernardakis, 2011: 273).

Furthermore, party leaders used to promote people outside party perimeter into their inner circle. A basic criterion was expertise in specific domains like economics. The constant revalorization of expertise and the resulting managerialisation of office holder’s social profile are attested by the large proportion of liberal professions and ex-public office holders in the larger context of the party’s transformation. The Prime Minister’s personal bureau, the concentration of power within, and its composition through the years reflect this tendency for experts to recruit inside the highest levels of executive power (Sotiropoulos, 2001: 124-132). Thus, we could affirm that PASOK’s ruling experience has been a crucial factor of party change. This experience has shifted party’s original positions and ideology in a more government-centred approach, a common phenomenon of all south
European socialist parties who came into power in early 80’s (Botopoulos, 1994). These transformations affected political staff, party ideology and adopted policies. An increased professionalization has resulted as governmental experience has been a crucial resource into political careers.

In addition, the adoption of European project from PASOK in the early 1990’s has reinforced, even indirectly, the aforementioned phenomena. The adoption of European norms, the quest of Maastricht criteria and the central role of economic adjustment into the national policy have reinforced the attachment of PASOK into neo-liberal orthodoxy, leading PASOK to the road of European social democracy (Katsoulis, 2002). In this framework, managerial and expertise resources have been valued more through the distribution of cabinets. Cadres promoting the modernization of economy and of the party play, henceforth, a central role into socialist governments as they have further legitimization by implementing necessary reforms to succeed the country’s integration into the Eurozone. The death of A. Papandreou and the succession in party’s leadership of the team promoting modernization has validated this shift into PASOK ideology, identity and practice. Furthermore, the above shift has also marked the ideological convergence with New Democracy, the other party forming the traditional bipartisan system. We can see that the marginalisation of partisan resources consists of a thoroughly debated issue for Greek socialists. Therefore, deliberative models seem to validate some already existing patterns and modifications occurring inside the socialist party during last decades.

Furthermore, we should notice that local government organs, trade-unionism and interest groups, in general, constitute further sources of promotion for socialist members. Conditions of party formation and the structure of the political field help us to understand this configuration. PASOK’s active implication within the trade unionist movement since 1974 should be seen as a strategy of social implantation in conformity with initially reduced resources. Trade unionism has been under authoritarian control from right-wing governments during the entire post-war period (Zambarloulou, 1997). Hence, it has proven to be a privileged field of activity for left-wing parties since the establishment of the Third Republic. Since 1974, the party involvement in trade unionism took a singular form. PASOK, as well as the other parties, founded affiliated organizations within trade unions which compete for the control of the Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE). The parties transferred partisan competition within labour organizations without creating separate
confederations. This attempt provided PASOK with extended resources issued from trade unionism and also allowed the shift of careers between trade union and party organization.

A similar image, but to a lower degree of density, is met within other institutions of interest representation where parties make use of the party members activated in different social fields to expand their own influence, and in turn, the electoral base. Finally, the local government elected instances as municipal or region councils are composed of party members due to the direct implication of political parties into local elections. Therefore, previous experience in local councils, compliant with the formation of local political clientele, constitutes a stable pattern of ascendant political career into national office.

*Modification over selection procedures: towards new patterns of political promotion?*

Since the adoption of new party statutes, we observe a combination of procedures which mix traditional and deliberative forms of selection. Nevertheless, the common denominator amongst new procedures is the improved role of the Committee of Electoral Procedures in candidates’ designation. The decisive role of the central party in candidates’ selection surpasses the established office holders and local branches. Henceforth, interested candidates can submit their demand directly to the central party without a previous proposition or validation from the local party. Local committees can participate in decision-making to different degrees, but they are mostly reserved for a consulting role. This said, we should notice that uncertainty prevails over selection procedures during the second half of 2000 decade. Even if official texts promote deliberation amongst the local party and reinforcement of the Committee’s role (Statutes of PASOK 2005), traditional procedures and practises are rather insisted.

The local elections of 2006 illustrate the different modalities of official designation. Still, in the ambiguity of participatory principles, we observed in some municipalities the implementation of direct democracy modalities of selection. In these cases, local party members are called to vote in internal primaries between self-proposed candidates. That kind of selection responds directly to participatory principles, and it constitutes a first-time introduced procedure to party life in Greek politics. Nevertheless, these initiatives were isolated to very few municipalities without being spread into the majority of local party life and were not introduced in the national tickets arrangements in the 2007 elections. In the
overwhelming majority of cases, local tickets remained under the responsibility of local officials and the central party (Rori, 2009: 172).

Furthermore, these kind of participatory initiatives were recalled very quickly by returning to standard procedures since the 2010 municipal elections. According to standard rule, it was the central party (Committee of Electoral Procedures) that decided the distribution of tickets for mayors’ offices throughout the country. This kind of direct intervention was certainly met previously, but it concerned only the biggest and most prestigious municipalities like Athens, where the socialist candidates were selected from the top of partisan hierarchy. In contrast, during the 2006 pre-campaign period, central organs had to choose candidates in most of the cases.

However, henceforth, eventual candidates for both local and national tickets are not obliged to be a part of the local party, a fact that remains the major result of the aforementioned initiatives. All propositions are validated by the Committee of Electoral Procedures which is empowered with a decisive capacity over selection. From now on, the proposition of a local branch is not a necessary condition to obtain a ticket. As a result, we meet through the years, candidates outside the perimeter of party members and activists. In several cases, candidates for the national office do not even maintain any organic link with the party. We should also notice that the centralization of the procedures has another dimension. Since validation from the local party or intermediary organs is no longer required, party direction and the leader himself, in several occasions, design candidacies of their own discretion. Indeed, since the 2004 elections, the party leader decided to recruit personalities outside PASOK ranks to increase the party’s attractiveness. PASOK’s leader does not hesitate to put former politicians of concurrent parties or personalities from art, media or sports (people with popularity and mass media presence) on the party’s candidacies. The aim for an open party is been shaped by the choice of candidates and by the modalities of selection.

Promotion of non-party members inside the central party represents a broader strategy of Papandreou to support faithful cadres within the party. In this way, proximity with the party leader is conceived as a central resource to obtain tickets or to occupy central party (or even public) office. Frequently, Papandreou did not hesitate to nominate persons of his personal team disconnected to party bureaucracy to the office of Party Secretary. This choice has been in rupture with internal unwritten norms that reserved this post to
prominent, long-time party members and officials. Furthermore, scholars note that the frequent changes of persons occupying the role of central secretary demonstrate the will of the leader to directly control the party and to promote the image of a direct association between him and party members (Eleutheriou and Tassis, 2013: 158).

Since the 2004 elections, specific social attributes have been tentatively valued to modify the profile of socialist candidates and to broaden the electoral base. The need to renew socialist political staff encouraged the entry of women into political office first. In fact, women seemed to be one of the socialists’ target groups during the expansion of candidates’ lists. Promotion of women’s representation has been actualized through the acquisition of tickets, but also, through the distribution of internal, influential posts. The party’s constitution of 2005 foresees a participation of women in party organs a minimum 40% (Article 13). Indeed, Papandreou promoted women to the top seat for European elections and within the central party offices which were traditionally reserved for men. Globally, we can affirm that the initiatives undertaken by PASOK meet a broader strategy implemented by political parties in the time of women’s underrepresentation within politics (Achin and Lévêque, 2006). Therefore, the promotion of women in central office and the feminisation of candidates’ lists should be conceived as a cure against a larger crisis of representation that struck PASOK. This crisis was registered not only by a series of public opinion polls, but also, (and most importantly) at the election polls. Comparatively, the valorisation of youth is also considered a strategy to revise the party image and activate potential voters.

The study of socialist parliamentary groups in 2004 and 2007, namely in the aftermath of the participatory project, can provide us with important data about continuity and breaks occurred within patterns of the political career. Socialist newcomers in office represent 26.5% of parliamentary groups in 2004 and 22.5% in 2007 (Drettakis, 2007: 35). These percentages coincide with general tendencies of deputies’ renewal over the years. In fact, the party’s renewal percentage seems to surpass one third of the total most likely cases of an electoral victory (which is accompanied with the multiplication of available seats). Besides, average age of socialist office holders remains at an average of about 52 years old during all elections in the 2000’s. In contrast, the proportion of women’s representation inside PASOK’s parliamentary group was reinforced and reached 21.6% in 2007 (Drettakis,
2007: 36). We should notice that this was the first time that women proportion surpassed 20% of the socialist parliamentary membership (15.4% in 2004 and 10.8% in 2000).

Concerning office holders’ original profession in both elections, lawyers, doctors and civil engineers represent the half of parliamentary group. The dominant place of these three categories validates the longstanding overrepresentation of liberal professions inside the Greek political field. In parallel, we observe an increase proportion of journalists and economists inside the Greek Socialists party, while the representation of working class members is closer to zero percent (Drettakis, 2007: 43; 2004: 68). It’s interesting to note that 2007 also marks a decrease in deputies who have been previously seated in cabinet as ministers or vice-ministers. Although occupying a cabinet in previous governments multiplies the chances to be re-elected, the percentage of ex-cabinet members falls to 25.5% in 2007 compared to 46.2% in 2004. Similarly, the percentage of deputies who previously served in public office seemed to also decrease: the former General Secretaries affected in different ministries and other nominated officials in public office (like public organisms or enterprises) represented 39.3% of total parliamentary group in 2004 while their representation was 25.5% in 2007. Despite this decrease, PASOK remains the party with the broadest representation of members who served in public office in Greek parliament.

Clearly, next to more structural modifications, we should also consider factors of direct electoral scope. International experience has established that electoral defeat could be a strong stimulus within internal party change (Mair et al., 2004). Our research should not forget that during the studied period, PASOK moving towards defeat. PASOK, a dominating party since 1981, experienced four consecutive defeats between 2004 and 2007: it lost national and European elections in 2004 (overpassed by the New Democracy), it dropped its dominant position during local elections in 2006, and finally, it placed second within national elections in 2007 (Pappas, 2009: 231). In this context, the question of organizational models is, to a large extent, conditioned to electoral considerations.

These successive electoral defeats seem to provide further explanations of the path to the socialist’s renewal. During the first period after the change of leadership in 2004, the new party direction seemed to firmly promote its principles of an open party and deliberation. We observe, in this setting, a series of initiatives to enrol members and to introduce new candidates for local and national tickets. The party tried to promote a renewed image through its new candidates and to respond to complaints that it was a party
of established old-timers, disconnected from citizen preoccupations and corrupt. Contextually, we observe the enrolment of persons who seem to surpass party boundaries and others who tend to be assimilated to the ‘old establishment’.

In contrast to the past where party membership was an asset to the political career, a ‘clear’ past from partisan affiliation becomes more and more popular. Candidates valued and promoted their CVs, during their official discourses, by prioritizing non-party activities and experiences acquired in other domains like the private sector or civil society movements. The origins of this situation should be compared to the increase of mistrust towards public institutions and especially political parties, an occurrence which appears to stabilise by 2000. The theme of representation crisis is largely spread by the integrity of social surveys, both national and European (Poulakis, 2008; Konstantinidis and Tsakatika, 2011). Conversely, we should notice the increasingly important role of mass media and agents of political communication in political affairs. Thus, if surveys disperse the message of distrust, then political parties and political leaders are more than eager to adjust their agenda in conformity with public opinion. In a way, we can understand from PASOK’s case a larger transformation of actual political competition that seems to be increasingly influenced by inputs and outputs of political communication.

However, electoral defeat seems to generate a return to more traditional and safe choices. The party seems to be reluctant to continue organizational experiments when its prior objective is questioned. PASOK, therefore, returns to its routine mode which is accompanied by an increased control of the leader over party decisions. The road to the 2009 elections seems to illustrate this idea. The central party was colonised by veteran politicians, capable, in the eyes of the direction, to assume governmental tasks in the aftermath of an electoral victory. Additionally, the internal labour division began to borrow characteristics of a governmental division of tasks, a fact that is attested by the formation of thematic sectors which constitute a shadow government (Eleutheriou and Tassis, 2013: 164-166). Finally, concerning candidates’ selection, priority is given to the multiplication of chances of election. The lists are expanded at the highest level of party bureaucracy and few margins of experimentation are conducted. This reluctance to confront previous organizational patterns expresses both the focus on an election-based strategy and the small degree of internal appropriation of participatory norms.
Therefore, electoral defeat per se seems to favour previously elected candidates. We observe that the diminution of the socialist parliamentary group in 2004 and 2007 is directly related with a decrease of new entrants in parliament with 26.7% and 22.5%, respectively (Drettakis, 2007: 35). To understand these circumstances, we should note that in a district-based electoral system, the balance of power in each electoral district tends to favour established players when the number of posts is decreased. Indeed, incumbent deputies can mobilize larger material and symbolic resources (such as established patronage networks) than new candidates to be successfully re-elected. Therefore, the diminution of socialists’ office holders corresponds with the reproduction of previously confirmed politicians.

We exposed briefly, within the aforementioned arguments, the appropriation of internal changes varies. In fact, institutional engineering is not always spread to the bottom of party pyramid. Codification and standardisation of daily activities demonstrate that specific capacities correlated to deliberative procedures do not always permit a broader appropriation of new practices. Electoral considerations may reinforce resiliency towards party change. We observe that after a first deployment of deliberative procedures, party bureaucracy returns to routine in the face of electoral losses. This fact leads to conceive the socialist participatory project as an ambiguous process which combines initiatives to increase party enrolment with trends of reproduction of established party elite. A vague balance sheet concerning inputs (legitimate resources of intra-party competition) and outputs (the profile of party candidates and holders of key-positions within party) is observed.

Holistically, the participatory experiment does not seem to profoundly defy the anchorage of established internal norms and practices. Traditional patterns of candidates’ selection, based on party activism and ascendance into party bureaucracy, seem to be challenged by renewing initiatives in an ambiguous way. Organizational changes should be described both as opportunities and obstacles to the ideal political career depending on social attributes and the position of each contender within internal competitions. In a certain way, the 2005 party constitution consolidates some already existing patterns of internal promotion, a fact that is also attested by the reluctance of the party leader face to organizational changes in the long term. Finally, we also observed the trends of new criteria within the composition of the leaders’ internal circle.
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