Introduction

As an important result of mass immigration, modern states are strongly characterized by their ethnic diversity. At the same time, ethnic minorities are virtually not present in representative bodies of the political system of Western European countries (Togeby 2008: 325). Concerning Germany, Wüst et al. (2010: 317) for example counts eleven MPs (1.8 percent) with migration background in the Bundestag.¹ At the same time, Germany is one of the most important countries of immigration in Europe. In 2011, almost one fifth of the population has a migration background (19.15% has a migration background amongst them 8.8% are national foreigners). Research on minority representation is very popular in U.S. American social sciences. Focusing in the beginning mainly on the representation of women (Sapiro 1981; Vega/Firestone 1995), the research focus has been enlarged to ethnic minorities (Gay 2002; Mansbridge 1999; Pantoja/Segura 2003). In Europe however research on minority representation is still in an emerging state.

Building on the scholarly debate on minority representation, several factors can be cited in order to explain why an under-representation of important segments of society can be considered as problematic: first, the lack of governmental positions for ethnic minorities can foster political alienation and distrust (Abney/Hutcheson, Jr. 1981: 91). Mansbridge (1999: 641) points out that the presence of members of minority groups in the legislature can “forge bonds of trust [between legislator and constituent] based specifically on the shared experience of subordination”. Further, the under-representation of certain groups can have an impact on the feeling of inclusion and therefore on the democratic legitimacy of the polity (Mansbridge 1999: 641).

Within the scholar community different factors are cited in order to explain the fact that citizens with migration background are virtually not present in most of Western European parliaments: institutional factors such as legal regulations and the electoral rules, the supply of the applicants, the demands of the several gatekeepers (selectors and electorate) and the legislative recruitment process itself - notably the degree of internal democracy within party organizations (Norris: 1). In our paper we will focus on one element that is often mentioned when trying to explain minority under-representation: political parties as crucial factor regarding the access to elected office.

¹ We have to underline that regarding the number of ethnic minority MPs, the results depend strongly on the definition of ethnic minority.
Norris (1997) defines parties as the “main gatekeepers to elected office”. This holds in particular true for Germany where it is almost impossible to enter parliament without affiliation to a political party. Several political scientists point to the relevance of parties and in particular the process of candidate selection regarding the incorporation of ethnic minorities in the political system (e.g. Bird 2005; Caul Kittilson/Tate 2005), but only few analyze this dimension that can be qualified as the “key stage of the recruiting process” (Gallagher, 1988, S. 2) in a detailed manner (e.g. Caul Kittilson/Tate 2005; Fonseca 2011; Soininen 2011). Additionally to this poor state of the art regarding parties’ role in minority representation, candidate selection in general is a rather under-researched topic (Hazan/Rahat 2010: 7), and this holds especially true for Germany (Reiser 2011: 241).²

That is why this paper focuses on ethnic minorities as, first, aspirants and, finally, candidates for legislative office. Our central research question is: can parties be considered as an obstacle regarding minority representation? We will examine this question for the case of Germany. By a detailed media analysis, we analyze, in a first step, all party nomination meetings at the district level (of those parties that have a chance to get a seat in parliament³) for the German legislative elections in autumn 2013. By this analysis we aim to identify the number of ethnic minority aspirants (i.e. also those who have failed to get nominated by their party) and accordingly also the number of ethnic minority candidates. We could assume that if parties are the crucial intervening variable in the process of minority representation, the number of minority aspirants should be higher than the number of minority candidates. By analyzing also the aspirants for the Land lists, we will take into account the mixed nature of the German electoral system for the Bundestag. We will also investigate the external factors that are supposed to have an impact on the selection of candidates with migration background. We will for example take into account the socio-structural characteristics of the constituencies as e.g. the number of people with migration background in the constituency or the degree of urbanization. We will additionally have a look on the fact if the candidate nomination can be considered as an open race or if the incumbent seeks renomination.

Minority representation: Why candidate selection within parties?

Irrespective of the popular thesis of a declining role of parties in contemporary politics (Daalder 2002: 39), political parties continue to shape politics – and this is particularly the case in countries that can be qualified as “party democracies”. They still perform the function of coordination within government, within society and between the two; they are the major forces in contesting elections by running electoral campaigns and providing most of the candidates (with a real chance of being elected); and they

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² In Germany, there was a debate in the 1960s and 1970s about candidate nomination procedures. Scholarship mainly questioned the principle of internal democracy. But in the last years, we can hardly find scientific studies on candidate selection in Germany (Reiser 2011: 241–242).

³ Due to lack of data, we cannot take into consideration the Free Democratic Party (FDP). This will be done in a further step of my PhD thesis.
recruit and select the political personal. The recruitment function also implies that parties have a great share in integrating new citizens, as for example migrants, into the political system (Katz 2008: 98-301).

Most studies analyzing the under-representation of certain segments of society in parliament focus either on the electorate or on the institutional setting like for example the impact of different electoral systems (e.g. Schmidt 2009; Matland/Studlar 1996). Some studies have found evidence that voters would be favorable voting for minority candidates if there would be some (Brouard/Tiberj 2011: 171). Given the central role of parties in recruiting and selecting candidates for elected office, the demand-side explanation for minority under-representation also points to the relevance of the selectors that choose the candidates and more generally to the process of candidate selection (Norris/Lovenduski 1993: 377). The candidate selectors, and therefore the parties, finally control the access to any political elite (Gallagher 1988: 2) (see for the position of candidate selection in the representational process Graph 1).

Katz (2008) defines selection as “choosing among multiple aspirants” (Katz 2008: 300) compared to recruitment that consists simply in the fact of finding someone willing to do the job. Following (Hazan/Rahat 2010: 4) we can define candidate selection methods as

“the nonstandardized and predominantly unregimented particular party mechanisms by which political parties choose their candidates for general elections. The result of this process is the designation of a candidate, or list of candidates, as the candidate(s) of the party. The party then becomes effectively committed to the candidate(s), and to mobilizing its strength behind the chosen candidate(s)”.

Nevertheless we do not agree on “nonstandardized and predominantly unregimented particular party mechanisms” as an essential criterion when defining candidate selection. Even if candidate selection is

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4 It is mainly the function of representation that seems to lose relevance as other intermediate actors, i.e. groups that can be situated in civil society, attract more and more citizens’ interest.
unregulated by law in most countries, there are some countries where not only the selection process is regulated by law but also the methods, as for example Germany.³

Candidate selection not only consists in selecting the candidates for elected office and therefore also in reproducing the party in public office (Katz 2001: 277). The selected candidates also “play an important role in defining what the party is” (Katz 2001: 278) and therefore how the party looks like (Hazan/Rahat 2010: 6). Changes in the electoral market and here particularly the decline of traditional party loyalties and along with that a growth in the ‘available electorate’ and a decline of the traditional core party clienteles (Mair/Müller/Plasser 2004: 3), force parties to develop strategies in order to attract voters. As migrants represent a growing segment of modern (Western) societies, parties have become aware of the increasing potential of ethnic minorities as potential voters (Bird 2005: 427). As the party’s face can have an impact on the party’s electoral performance, nominating minority candidates can be a party strategy in order to attract minority voters. We can therefore assume that the candidate’s ethnic background can be considered as one selection criterion amongst others (e.g. aspirant’s former electoral performance, aspirant locally rooted, personal characteristics as sympathy, role and function within party, see e.g. (Niedermayer 1993).⁶

But, depending on the potential electorate, nominating minority candidates can be a burden or a chance. If we consider parties as, at least for the most part but not exclusively, rational and “vote-seeking actors” (Strøm 1990: 566), we could assume that ethnic minorities attract the interest of political parties under certain circumstances: first, when they are densely concentrated and therefore represent potential voters; and second, in urban regions where the electorate can be considered as more open-minded than in rural areas.

Hypothesis 1: Minority candidates have a bigger chance to be selected in urban regions with high numbers of immigrants or immigrant descendants.

Nevertheless, parties cannot be seen as solely vote-maximizing actors – as “catch-all-parties” without any real ideologies (Daalder 2002: 52). As parties cannot be conceived as unitary actors (Strøm 1990: 569), party leaders are also bounded by the constraints imposed by their organizational environments (Strøm 1990: 566). This implies, first, that different and sometimes even opposing factions within a party can disagree strongly about the strategies the party should adopt. Second, the party’s ideology plays an important role when it comes to candidate nomination. Regarding minority candidates, left-wing parties are supposed to be more open for minorities because, in general, they have a more egalitarian ideology “which stresses access for all political minorities” (Norris 1997: 218).

Hypothesis 2: Minority aspirants are more successful when they seek nomination within a left-wing party (SPD, Greens, Left Party) than within a right-wing party (CDU/CSU).

³ The Electoral Law specifies that candidates for the single-member races as well as when drawing up the Land list has to be selected either by a meeting of the party members of the districts or by a delegate meeting. Furthermore the delegates have to be elected by the party’s members (Electoral Law §21, 1, 3 + §27, 1).

⁶ Unfortunately, there are no studies analyzing the importance party selectors place on ethnicity as a selection criterion.
Candidate selection in Germany

Candidate selection in Germany is, contrary to most other Western European countries, regulated in detail by law. The criteria for the candidate selection process are based on the principle of internal democracy of political parties defined in article 21,1 of the Basic Law (Schüttemeyer/Sturm 2005: 541). Furthermore, the Electoral Law and the Party Law impose strict minimum legal requirements as for example the selection of candidates by secret ballot (paragraph 17). Additionally, the parties’ statutes regulate the modalities of the selection process (Roberts 1988: 98). We can therefore summarize that the process for the selection of candidates for the Bundestag is, at least in formal terms, a very democratic process (Roberts 1988: 95).

The candidate selection process in Germany is mainly characterized by the mixed nature of the electoral system for the Bundestag. In the Bundestag half of the seats are allocated to MPs elected by plurality in single-member districts and half of the seats to MPs from the Land list. According to this mixed electoral system, there are also two different modes of candidate selection that are regulated in detail by law (see Table 1).

Candidates for the single-member races are nominated at the district level either by the party members or by delegates. Theoretically, there is the possibility for the state or national party executive to veto the nomination at the district level. The fact that this occurs in only very rare cases points to the relevance of the party at the local level (Niedermayer 1993: 241; Reiser 2011: 251) and therefore also to the importance of strong local roots of the aspirant.

Regarding the Land lists, it is in general a delegate conference that draws up the Land list or in only very few cases a meeting of all party members of the respective state. In general, the Land party executive proposes a constructed list (Roberts 1988: 102) that already takes into account several criteria as incumbency, regional proportional representation or gender quota. Theoretically, there is the possibility for aspirants to contest each nomination for the list separately. This procedure varies strongly between the parties. Regarding for example the CDU/CSU the proposed lists are mostly accepted by more or less unanimity by the delegates, whereas within the Greens a strong contestation about the positions on the list is the normal case. These observations point to the fact that depending on the party the different party levels (executive board vs. delegates or members) are of different importance for the question who finally selects the candidates.
Data and methodology

In this paper we draw on two kinds of data for the legislatives in autumn 2013: first, we collected data regarding the parties’ nomination meetings7 for all 299 German constituencies as well as for the Land lists of the 16 German Länder. For this purpose we analyzed newspaper articles, the local and national parties’ websites and (if available) in some cases also the minutes of the party meetings. The second kind of data we use is data on the socio-structural characteristics of the 299 German constituencies that was provided by the Federal Elections Office. We will particularly rely on data on the share of foreign nationals in the constituencies and the density of population.

Additionally, we will take into consideration if a constituency can be considered as a stronghold or a diaspora of a party.8 Regarding the Land list we rely, following Hazan and Rahat (2010), on the concept of realistic positions on the Land lists. For this purpose we had a look on, first, the seats won per party by land list in the 2009 legislative elections; second, we took into consideration the double candidates who won a district and were at the same time placed favorably on the list. Drawing these candidates off the list, we can calculate if a position on the list can be considered as realistic or promising or not.

Regarding our object of investigation, we use the term “ethnic minority” in a large sense, i.e. all persons that have a migratory background.9 In Germany, only German citizens have the right to run for office at the national level (BWG §15,1). That is why we have to limit our research object on naturalized German citizens and to German citizens with migration background (more precisely on those who have at least one parent that is born abroad). Second, the term ethnic minority in this paper is allocated only

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7 Parties analyzed are: Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), Christian Democratic Union and Christian Social Union in Bavaria (CDU/CSU), Alliance ’90/The Greens, The Left
8 We qualify a district as a safe district if one party won 4 out of the last 6 one-member district races in the district. If this is not the case for any party, we qualify a constituency a competitive district.
9 Only until recently the term “ethnic minority” was used in German social sciences exclusively to designate indigenous people within Germany as e.g. the Danish minority or the Sorbs. More and more the term is used in a larger sense including also immigrants and people with migration background.
to immigrants or their descendants from non-Western countries. As research has shown there is a difference regarding discrimination and xenophobia and the different groups of immigrants. Mainly those groups that can be identified as ethnic minorities, the visible minorities, face discrimination. In Germany, this is mainly the case for immigrants or their descendants from the last immigration waves (i.e. people with Turkish background).

In order to identify the visible minority aspirants and candidates we rely on the following criteria: name and first name, photographs and if available place of birth and former nationality of the aspirant and his/her parents. We are aware of the vulnerability of this procedure, but by focusing on the visible minorities we try to capture those aspirants and candidates who can be penalized or favored due to their ethnic background.

Results

First, we will give a short overview of the characteristics of the candidate nominations in the districts in general that we consider to impact also on the chances of ethnic minorities to get nominated.

Our data seem to confirm previous analyses at the district level done in the 1970s by Zeuner (1970: 33) and Reiser (2011: 256): In only one quarter of the cases (26.1 percent) the selectorate (delegates or party members) had the possibility to choose between two or more aspirants for the candidature of the single-member races. But we can observe differences between parties: In 31.9 percent of the nomination meetings of the Social Democrats, at least two or more aspirants stood for nomination; whereas this was the case in only 27.6 percent of the nomination meetings of the Christian or Social Democrats (see Table 2). This (small) difference between the two big German parties can be due amongst others to the fact that the CDU/CSU occupies more districts that can be qualified as “safe districts” and “safe seats” than the SPD. Scholarship agrees upon the fact that incumbency and first and foremost incumbency accompanied by a high level of seniority goes along with automatic or almost automatic readoption (Hazan/Rahat 2010: 27; Reiser 2011: 250). Hence, in these types of more or less unwinnable races the incumbent very often runs unopposed. As the nomination races of the Greens and the Left party can mostly be qualified as open-races (incumbent seeks renomination in 20.1% respectively 21.1%), we can assume that these races are more favorable to minority aspirants because they often run as novices.

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10 Zeuner (1970) analyzed the district nominations solely for the two big parties at the time, the SPD and CDU/CSU.

11 Following our definition 47.2% of the districts can be qualified as safe districts of the CDU/CSU, 31.4% of the SPD, 0.7% of the Left Party and only 1 (0.3 percent) of the Greens. Additionally, 13 percent of the districts in Germany are so-called competitive districts. Concerning incumbency, in 67.9% of the races of the CDU/CSU the incumbent seeks nomination, whereas this is the case in only 38.5% of the races of the SPD.
Regarding the small parties with no or only very little chance to win a district race (and here in particular the Left party), the high number of nomination with only one aspirant is not due to a high number of incumbents but rather to the fact that they try to find “someone who do the job” (Katz 2008: 300) rather than performing their selection function.

When it comes to the minority aspirants, we can identify, all in all, 102 aspirants on the Land list or/and in the districts with a migration background. Amongst these 102 aspirants 73 have a non-Western migration background (3.6% of all aspirants on the Land list or/and in the districts). The majority of these aspirants has a Turkish background (67.1%). Additionally, we find an almost equal distribution of first and second-generation migrants (53.7 vs. 46.3%) and an overrepresentation of male aspirants (69.9% vs. 30.1% women aspirants). In 52.6 percent of the nomination meetings with a minority aspirant, the selectorate could choose between two or more aspirants. This points to a more competitive nature of nomination races where minority aspirants seek nomination than those without.

Looking at the aspirants’ party affiliation, we clearly find more minority aspirants standing for nomination in left-wing parties: only 1.3 percent of the CDU/CSU aspirants can be identified as belonging to an ethnic (non-Western) minority, contrary to 3.9% of the SPD aspirants and 5.1% equally among the Green and Left Party aspirants. The hypothesis that left-wing parties are more open to ethnic minorities (Norris 1997: 218) seems to be confirmed – at least regarding the aspirants. Ethnic minorities in Germany show a particularly high party identification with left-wing parties (especially with the SPD) (Bird/Saalfeld/Wüst 2011: 91). We can therefore hypothesize that, first, the pool of minority aspirants is significantly higher within left-wing parties; and that, second, left-wing parties intentionally encourage minority aspirants to stand for nomination.

Looking at the distribution of minority aspirants by region, we can observe a clear pattern (see Graph 2): except in Berlin, we can’t find any minority aspirant in the eastern states. The highest number of minority aspirants, on the other hand, we identify in North-Rhine Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg. The two states have one of the highest levels of people with migration background (in 2008: 23.4 % and 25.3%[14]). When we take also into consideration the overall number of aspirants per Land and party, Berlin has the highest number of minority aspirants per overall aspirants (8.2%). All in all,

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<th>All parties</th>
<th>SPD</th>
<th>CDU/CSU</th>
<th>Greens</th>
<th>Left party</th>
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<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>68.0</td>
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<td>72.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.5</td>
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<td>≥4</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1049</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>
79.5 percent of the minority aspirants sought nomination in either districts or in a Land with a high level of foreign nationals. Additionally, almost all aspirants (89.0%) stood for nomination in highly populated areas or at least in urban areas. These results confirm our hypothesis about the impact of the socio-structural characteristics of the constituency. But the impact seems to intervene before the official nomination process because in districts or Länder with low level of foreign nationals and rural areas minority aspirants don’t stand for nomination in the first place.

Taking also into account the fact if an aspirant seeks nomination in district or at the Land list, 26 out of 73 minority aspirants (35.6%) stood for nomination only at the district level, 12.3% only on the Land list and finally, half of the minority aspirants (52.0%) sought nomination at the district level and at the same time on the Land list. In a further step, we will analyze if the double candidature also increases the probability of having a realistic chance to get a seat in parliament or if, minority aspirants are nominated above all in unwinnable districts and at the same time on unpromising positions on the Land lists.

Graph 2: Minority aspirants by Land and party (in absolute values)

Having given an overview of the main characteristics of the minority aspirants, we will now examine how many of these aspirants were nominated as candidates for the legislative elections in autumn 2013. Additionally, we analyze if there are differences between the nomination at the district and at the Land level. Research has shown evidence that proportional systems are more favorable to women as well as to ethnic minorities than majoritarian systems. The lists have a variable number of candidates and can thus be more inclusive than the single-member constituency races, where only one candidate runs for each party (Fonseca 2011: 119). The latter are seen as difficult for minority candidates because they have to compete against established parties and personalities (Donovan 2007: 472).
First, we can observe that only 17.8 percent of the minority aspirants who sought nomination finally failed to get nominated by their party. But we have to underscore that this high number of finally nominated minority aspirants is to a large part due to the fact that they are nominated on the Land list (regardless of the position on the list).15 If we look only at the district level, the number of successful minority aspirants slightly declines (82.2% to 76.6%). We can therefore find a very high number of double candidatures (60 percent of the minority candidates run for office at the same time at the district level and are placed on the Land list). This high number of double candidates is symptomatic for the German electoral system. The double candidatures serve as insurance for the candidates to be sure to get a seat in parliament (Roberts 1988: 101).

Taken additionally into consideration the party, we identify the same pattern as we did for the minority aspirants: Greens and Left Party followed by the SPD nominated the highest number of minority candidates (5.4%, 5.0%, 3.7%), whereas the CDU/CSU nominated only 5 minority candidates out of 533 (0.9%). The fact that the CDU/CSU seems to be rather reluctant vis-à-vis minority candidates points also to the position this party attributes to topics like nation or national identity that differs quite strongly from the other parties. The CDU/CSU has rejected for years the recognition of Germany as a country of immigration and hence also the conception that immigrants are a central part of the national community (Demesmay 2009: 199-200). The discourse within this party has changed slightly in recent years, but apparently it continues to have an impact on the selectors’ willingness to nominate minority candidates – and looking at the small number of minority aspirants, also on the minority aspirants’ willingness to seek nomination. The case of a young Muslim woman nominated by the CDU/CSU, Cemile Giousouf, illustrates different positions within this parties regarding minorities. Giousouf succeeded at the district level against a German-born male candidate in his 60s and at the state level against a German-born woman strongly rooted at the local level. What makes this (highly mediatized) case particularly interesting is not only the fact that she succeeded as a Muslim woman against two more typical candidates, but also that the party’s executive board at the state level played an important role in this nomination process and that she was more or less parachuted in the district. These two features are rather uncommon in Germany and illustrate how a party can try to appeal to a certain electorate by nominating one single representative of an ethnic group (in this case also against large parts of the party at the ground) who can serve as a sort of surrogate representative for a whole ethnic group (Mansbridge 2003: 522).

But the fact that the number of minority aspirants is not significantly higher than the number of minority candidates finally nominated suggests that if there are minority aspirants who seek nomination, they have a big chance to get nominated. At first sight, this could support the supply-thesis regarding minority under-representation (Norris/Lovenduski 1993) – the small number of minority MPs is therefore a result of the limited pool of minority aspirants who seek nomination. It could be therefore interesting in further analyses examining the reasons for this lack of minority aspirants. As the mere fact of

15 We find equally high numbers when we examine the success of aspirants in general without differentiating between nomination at district level or on the Land list. Almost every aspirant who seeks nomination on the Land list is finally nominated. But this says nothing about the chances to get elected.
being nominated as a candidate says nothing about the chances to get elected, we will in a next step analyze if the minority aspirants are placed on promising positions on the Land list and/or in safe or winnable districts.

Our analyses show that only a small number of minority candidates are placed either on a favorable position on the Land list or in a winnable district: only 18 out of 60 minority candidates have a realistic chance to get a seat in the next German parliament. But nevertheless this is every third minority candidate. Looking at the whole population of candidates (those who cannot be identified as visible minority) this is only the case for every fifth candidate. We can therefore conclude that once nominated candidate, visible minorities have a bigger chance of getting a promising position on the list or, and this is less frequently the case, a winnable district. The 18 minority candidates account for 4.1 percent of all candidates who have a realistic chance. But we can observe big differences between the parties: almost half of the minority candidates within the SPD are placed either favorable on a Land list and/or in a safe or at least contested district. This is the case for every fifth minority candidate within the Greens and 23.5% of the minority candidates within the Left party. Within the CDU/CSU placed only one minority candidate has a realistic chance to get a seat in parliament. Considering the overall number of aspirants, the results change: the two small left-wing parties, Greens and Left Party, have the biggest number of promising minority candidates compared to their overall number of aspirants; followed by the Social Democrats and finally the CDU/CSU. Taking into account the mixed nature of the electoral system, 7 out of 18 minority candidates are nominated in winnable districts and 14 on promising positions on the Land lists. Only 2 out of the 7 candidates running in winnable districts are only candidates for the single-member district race, 5 are also placed on a promising position on the list. All of the candidates who have are placed on a favorable position on the list, run also as district candidates; amongst them the majority (11) in more or less hopeless races (see Table 3). These results point to the importance of the double candidatures mainly for minority candidates. Regarding the distribution of male and women candidates the clear over-representation of male minority aspirants declines when it comes to the allocation of the promising candidatures: 44.4% of the promising candidates are women.

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<th>SPD</th>
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<th>Greens</th>
<th>Left party</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aspirants</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candidates</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4.9%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
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<td>...only district candidate</td>
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<td>...only position list</td>
<td>-16%</td>
<td>-6%</td>
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Table 3: Electoral chances minority candidates (own calculations)

When we finally look at the regional distribution of the promising candidatures, we see these candidatures clustered in the Land of North-Rhine Westphalia followed by Baden-Württemberg, Berlin and Hamburg (see Graph 3). As already mentioned this distribution corresponds with the level population with migration background. In some Länder, as for example in Lower Saxony or Rhineland-Palatinate, the number of minority candidates declines dramatically (or even vanishes completely) when we take into
account if these candidatures can be qualified as promising. We can therefore ask if some of these candidacies serve as symbolic candidacies in order to attract positive media attention and therefore also public attention (Hazan/Rahat 2010: 14).

**Conclusion and implications**

Building on literature on minority representation, we started with the assumption that parties as the real gatekeepers to elected office could act as main obstacle for ethnic minorities to enter parliament. The state of the art on this topic is very poor that is why we tried to give a thick description on this matter for the legislative elections in autumn 2013 in Germany. Our results support most of our assumptions: ethnic minorities seek for nomination and are finally nominated in urban areas with high levels of people with migration background. Beyond that we can find much more minority aspirants among left-wing parties than this is the case for the conservative CDU/CSU. Additionally, those aspirants (who seek nomination in left-wing parties) have also a bigger chance to get a promising position on the Land list or/and are placed in a winnable district. But our results don’t support the assumption that, if parties are the crucial variable regarding minority (under)representation, the number of aspirants has to be much higher than the number of candidates finally nominated. Once standing for nomination minority aspirants have a very high chance to be nominated (60 out of 73) and a high chance to get a seat in parliament (18 out of 60). But we have to underscore that compared to the number of the overall population with
migration background, this number of minority candidates is rather low. Additionally, the more or less nonexistence of minority aspirants and candidates within the conservative CDU/CSU is remarkable. In other countries, as for example Canada, right-wing parties have become aware of the electoral potential of immigrant populations and have already adopted strategies in order to appeal to this electorate (Bird, 2005: 453).

We can summarize that our results highlight the necessity to analyze why so little minority aspirants stand for nomination. Several studies on candidate selection in general point to the importance of the (informal) processes that intervene before the official nomination meeting (Reiser 2011: 256). Does the executive board at the district level intervene before the nomination by supporting and recommending to vote for a particular candidate? By our detailed media analysis we tried to get as much information as possible on the whole process of nomination, but and this is especially true for the smaller parties, sometimes the news coverage was very weak. That is why at this point more material on the circumstances of the nomination is needed by, e.g., conducting interviews with the respective selectorate and party leaders.

**Literaturverzeichnis**


