Small Parties in Taiwan’s Party System: Splinters and Alternatives
Paper Overview

- Prospects for Taiwan’s small parties on eve of 2016 elections (projects, resources and political opportunity structure)

- Suggestions on reforms to create more diversity in party system
Why small parties now?

- Revival of small parties since 2011
- Serious campaigns by alternative parties (91-2)
- Historic opportunity for new style of politics
- Potential to bring in greater diversity into party system
Which small parties?

- Splinters: NP, PFP, TSU and MKT
- Alternatives: GPT& SDP and NPP
Political Project (Splinters)

- Continuity in appeals
- NP but limited market
- PFP/MKT: Vague policy, leadership appeals
- TSU: Anti-integration appeal
Political project (Alternatives)

- Environmental issues such as anti-nuclear
- Issues neglected by mainstream parties promoted by civil society:
  - Land justice, gay rights, labour rights, constitutional reforms
- Distinction GPT/SDP vs NPP: Relationship to DPP and NPP more openly located on NI spectrum
Resources

- Financial, human, organizational
Political Opportunity Structure

- Electoral system
- Unpopularity/distrust of mainstream parties
- Positioning of mainstream parties
- Neglect of key alternative issues
- Strength of civil society
- Divisions within alternatives
- Potential of new media
Potential reforms

- Reducing party list threshold
- Expanding the party list seats to 50%
- PR component to local elections
- Campaign spending reforms: deposits and PPB