

Dynastic Politics and Electoral Reform in Indonesia

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TEMPO



First direct dynastic succession at the national level

Dynastic politicians exist in the legislative branch

In 2019, 131 dynastic legislators of 575 elected DPR members (22.78%)

Source: Prihatini and Halimatusa'diyah (2022)

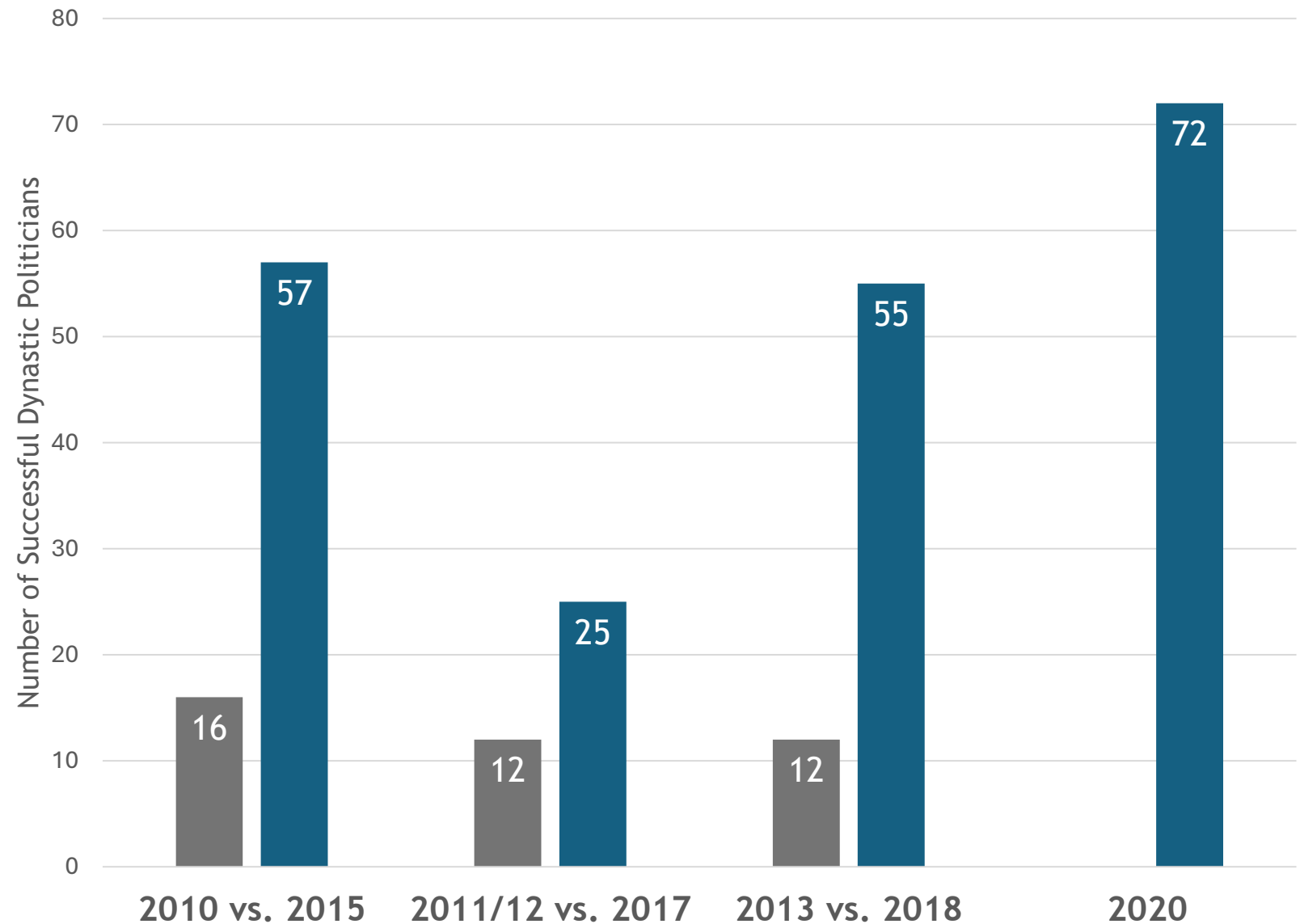
In 2024, 138 dynastic legislators of 580 elected DPR members (23.79%)

Source: CSIS (2024)

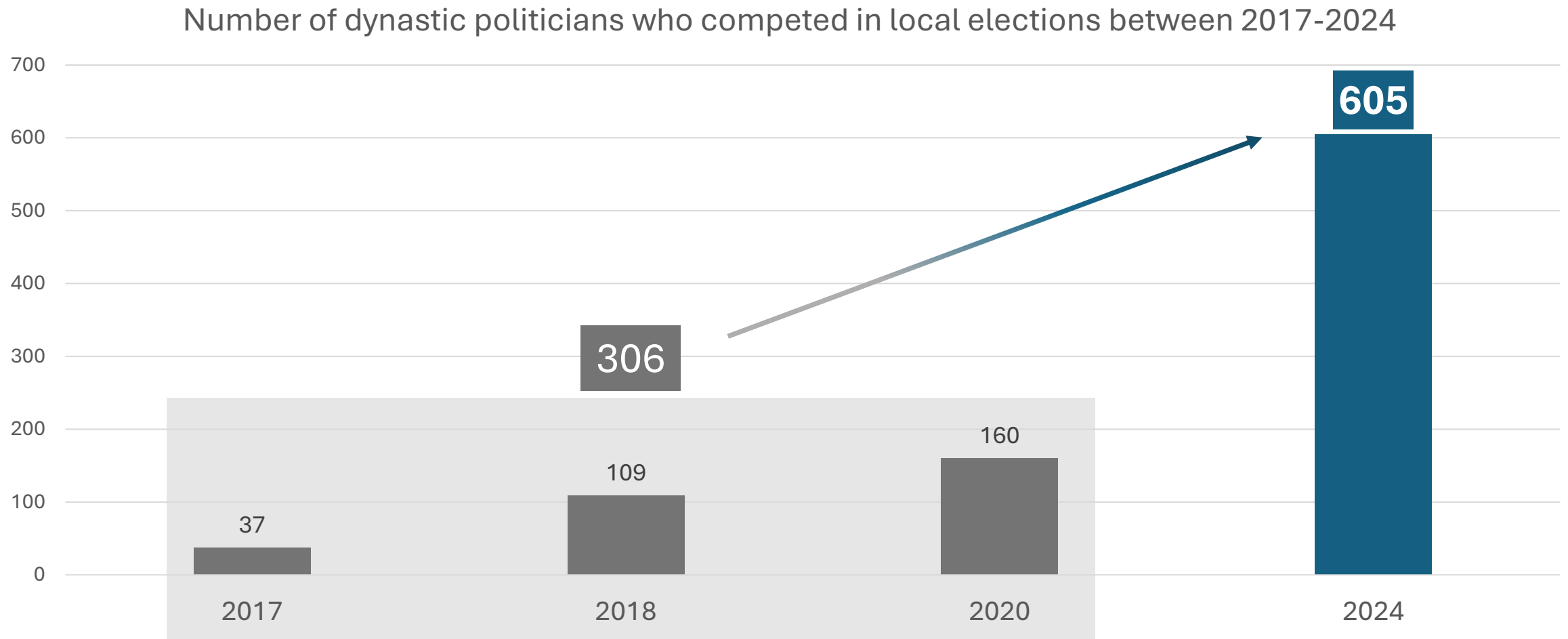
The number of dynastic politicians in the legislature would be much higher if we also observe the DPRD.

More dynastic
politicians
control
subnational
executive
offices

Growth of Political Dynasties in Indonesia
(2010-2020)

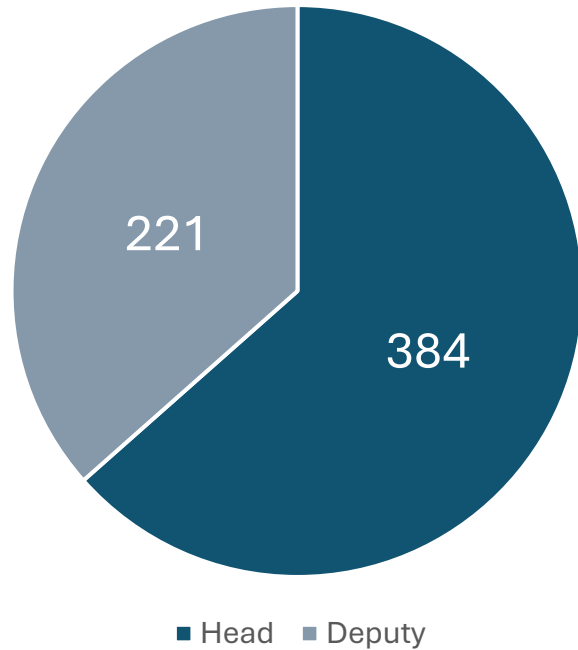


Compared to the previous subnational election waves, dynastic candidates in 2024 *pilkada* have roughly doubled

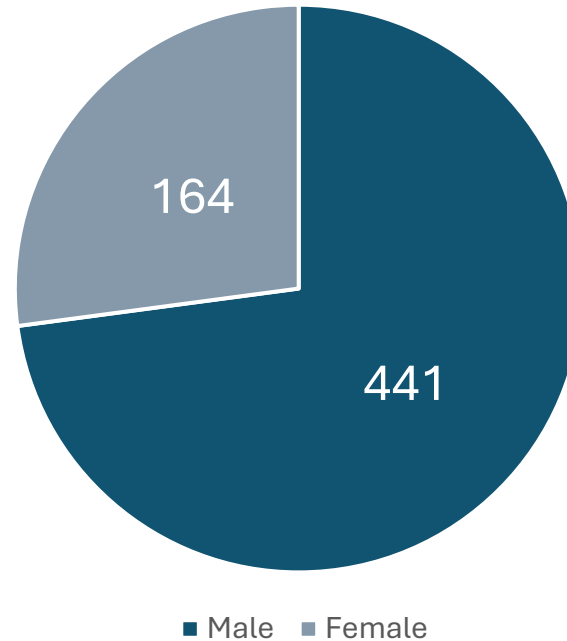


Dynastic politicians mostly ran for executive heads, male-dominated, and competed in more than 65% of subnational units

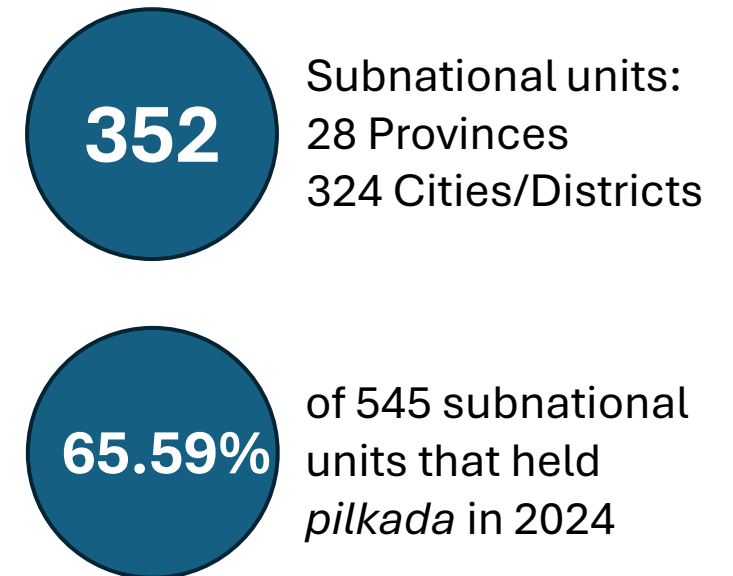
Dynastic candidates as head or deputy



Male and female dynastic candidates



Geographical distribution



3 Causes of the Rise of Political Dynasties

1. Poor party institutionalization

Symbiotic relationship between political parties and dynastic politicians

- Candidacy and decision-making by political parties are **not transparent**; usually **relying on survey results**, **relationship with party officials**, or **financial backing**.
- Dynastic politicians benefit from this situation, e.g., **head start to improve popularity**, **relatives in party's structure**, and **financial support** (legitimate and illegitimate sources)
- Dynastic candidates **undermine incentives for leadership regeneration** and further **weaken party ID**.

3 Causes of the Rise of Political Dynasties

2. High entry barrier to compete in elections

- Candidacy requirements for independent candidates are extremely challenging
 - 6.5% to 10% of total eligible voters
 - Rigorous factual verification processes
- Discourage potential candidates with minimum political and financial capital to run in elections
- Good news: **Constitutional Court's decision No. 60/2024** has **lowered the entry barrier** for candidacy through political parties. Lower candidacy threshold (6.5%-10% of valid votes)

3 Causes of the Rise of Political Dynasties

3. High-cost politics

- The cost of **engaging in money politics** is relatively **affordable for politicians**. Nominally expensive, but relatively cheap compared to its potential “profits”
- The **complexity and difficulty of exposing money politics** **Bawaslu’s limited capacity and authority** in investigating money politics. In some cases, questionable partisanship.
Dynastic politicians can mobilize resources, including state resources, to engage in money politics.

Conclusion and recommendation

Dynastic politics is omnipresent. Dynastic politicians are everywhere, and their number keeps increasing.

- The rise of dynastic politics **is the tip of the iceberg** of structural and institutional problems in Indonesia's electoral system.
- Unfortunately, as of now, **dynastic politicians' candidacy cannot be prevented.** If there is no change, the prevalency of dynastic politics will continue to increase.
- **Direct election system is still the best option** for citizens to replace poorly performing leaders, including dynastic politicians.
- Institutional reform must be **designed to change the incentive structure of dynastic politicians** so that they are also "forced" to prove that they are capable and can deliver their promises and good public services

Conclusion and recommendation

- Requirement must be active as a cadre of a political party (or one of the allied political parties) for at least 5 years before his/her candidacy in the next election
- Incorporate the requirement that nominated candidates must be nominated through an intraparty political party nomination process (modeled on the caucus/primary/convention process in the United States)
- Rules limiting the provision of social assistance by incumbents during the election period.
- Improve the recruitment mechanism for election organizers and supervisors. Enhance Bawaslu's capacity and authority. Simplify the process of reporting and proving electoral fraud.
- Reassess the definition of structured, massive, and systematic violations (Law No. 7/2017)

Thank You

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