THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES FOR POLITICAL SYSTEM SUPPORT IN ESTABLISHED AND NEW DEMOCRACIES

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Accepted in partial fulfillments of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Although students of democratic politics believe that parties are critical for the functioning of democratic governance, existing research provides us with limited and contradictory evidence about the role of political parties in developing political system legitimacy. Drawing on data collected as part of the *Manifestos Research Group* project, along computer simulations and a number of mass opinion surveys, my dissertation develops and tests the first formulation of how political parties influence citizen support for the political system that is based on a systematic comparison of established and new democracies across Europe. I show that political parties influence system legitimacy through partisanship that facilitates party persuasion of their supporters, policy representation, and party competition for government office. I demonstrate that, at the level of individual citizens, partisanship does not always lead to more positive citizen attitudes towards the political system. Instead, its effect depends on the extent to which parties express satisfaction with the status quo of the political regime. I also show that political parties contribute to system support by producing accurate policy representation. However, an important point is that whereas long-term accuracy fosters positive citizen attitudes towards the political system, short-term distortions do not undermine them in any serious way because they increase the pool of electoral winners. This latter aspect is especially important with respect to emerging democracies because a small number of democratic elections is insufficient to generate long-term accuracy in representation. In newer democracies, winning or losing elections rather than policy representation are the driving force of citizen attitudes towards the political regime.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Can't live with them, can't live without them" is perhaps an apt characterization of political parties in contemporary democracies. On one hand, critics worry that political parties breed social disharmony and undermine national unity. Parties are often blamed for being too "partisan", deepening the divisions that already exist among citizens and eagerly creating new ones in their attempt to get an upper hand against their rivals. At the same time, parties are often despised for getting involved in negotiations with each other and held irresponsible when they compromise some of their programmatic commitments in an attempt to arrive at common policy agreements. It seems that, no matter what political parties do, they make politics seem distasteful, messy, contentious and inefficient (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995).

On the other hand, many students of democratic politics celebrate political parties as political actors that help to organize democratic politics and resolve policy disagreements among citizens. Parties structure political world for many voters because parties articulate and aggregate voters' policy concerns, and present the public with policy alternatives at election time. Parties therefore play an important role in overcoming social choice and coordination problems involved in collective decision-making. What is more, parties mobilize voters and provide them with useful cues

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necessary for dealing with the complexity in the political environment. Finally, parties help to recruit, screen, and hold accountable officials in public office. According to this view, democracies may be indeed unworkable (Aldrich 1995), if not unthinkable, save in terms of parties (Schattschneider 1942).

Tensions between these two perspectives are not irrelevant for those concerned with the legitimacy, stability, and survival of the democratic regimes. If political parties bring more harm than benefit to how citizens view democratic governance, then more thought should be given to reforms designed to regulate parties or provide citizens with more direct means to influence policy decision-making. Alternatively, if parties contribute positively to democratic legitimacy, it would be useful to know by what means and processes they do so to employ them more effectively.

Popular system support has long been viewed as a key attribute of enduring and successful democracies (Lipset 1959; Powell 1982, Linz and Stepan 1996). As David Easton (1965) put it "democracy thrives on popular support and withers in its absence". In established democracies, favorable citizen attitudes towards their political system affect the quality and efficiency of democratic governance (Norris 1999a). A reserve of public confidence in the regime encourages voluntary compliance with the law, enhances government's abilities to implement effective legislation and commit resources without resorting to coercion or the need to obtain the specific approval of citizens for every decision (Mishler and Rose 1999, Hetherington and Globetti 2002). Conversely, prolonged discontent with the political system may reduce citizen participation in politics through established channels and stimulate protest behavior or support for extreme anti-state parties (Belanger and Nadeau 2005, Erber and Lau 1990, Texeira 1992, Muller

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1979, Muller et al. 1982, Craig and Maggiotto 1981). At the elite level, low levels of political trust may deter the best and brightest from entering public service (Norris 1999a), and may make it more difficult for political leaders in office to succeed (Hetherington 1998, Hetherington and Globetti 2002).

Popular support for democratic governance is particularly important in newer democracies (Mishler and Rose 1999, Rose et al. 1998), where not only the quality of democracy but also its persistence and stability are at stake (Norris 1999a, 7). Citizens in new democracies are often not socialized into democratic norms and values (Mishler and Rose 2002). They have no experience with the democratic regime and therefore are not necessarily aware of the benefits that it brings in a long-term perspective. As a consequence, citizens in new democracies are more easily susceptible to opinions about non-democratic alternatives. Particularly when political transformations are coupled with difficult economic changes, ethnic conflicts, or external shocks, it is not surprising that citizens become attracted to non-democratic alternatives of governing, such as strong leader or military rule, instead of new democratic regimes that are often plagued with 'distasteful' contentious party politics or legislative gridlock. In post-communist societies, efforts to mobilize anti-democratic sentiments may come not only from the old communist parties whose political power and policy hegemony has been dismantled in the process of democratic and economic liberalization, but also from the new nationalist and populist parties with anti-Western views (see Crawford and Lijphart 1997).

Popular support for democratic reforms proved to be crucial for bringing about peaceful revolutions and the rise of democracy in many East Central European countries, including the Baltic States, Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic. Popular support for

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democratic governance also proved to be highly influential in creating more fairness and transparency to the democratic and electoral process, as the 2004 presidential elections in Ukraine have demonstrated. What is more, mass attitudes continue to play a crucial role in the consolidation of democratic institutions and the implementation of market reforms (Linz and Stepan 1996). Generally speaking, citizen support for democratic governance helps them to constrain political leaders with undemocratic motivations. Where the public lacks commitment to democracy, countries are more likely to slide back to non-democratic regimes and even deepening authoritarian rule, as it has been recently exemplified by Belarus, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, or Russia.

One major question that motivates this analysis is therefore how new democracies can build their citizen support for democratic governance, and by what means and processes they can do so most effectively. The *World Values Survey* data show that in 1999, that is, ten years after the democratic revolutions in 1989, three quarters of citizens in post-communist societies are not at all or not very satisfied with democracy in their countries compared to only 39 percent in established democracies. What impedes and what contributes to the development of democratic legitimacy is a research question of main interest in this study.

In addressing this question, I focus on the role that political context plays for system legitimacy. In particular, I examine whether and how political parties influence people's attitudes towards the political system in their country. I treat political party as a collection of politicians who sort themselves into political parties on the basis of shared policy preferences and a common goal to participate in electoral competition for public office. In addition to recruitment of politicians to public office, parties perform a number

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of functions that are considered crucial to the operation of modern political systems (Gallagher et al. 2001, ch.10). In particular, parties organize the political world because they are the key actors in the operation of governments and parliaments. Further, parties structure the political sphere for many voters because they provide citizens with useful cues for dealing with the complexity in the political environment (Gallagher et al. 2001, 272). Finally, parties play an important role in policy making of representative democracies because parties articulate and aggregate voters' policy concerns, and present the public with policy alternatives at election time. If the functions parties play are crucial to the operation of modern democracies then it should not be surprising that these functions may have important consequences for system legitimacy.

That citizen attitudes towards their political system are intimately related to political context has been acknowledged already in David Easton's (1965) seminal study on system support. In a system analysis of politics, Easton suggested that citizen political support (or lack thereof) constitutes an input into the political system. This input then allows elites to produce system outputs (policy decisions and implementations), which feed back into citizens' evaluations of, and inputs into, the system.

What is more, Easton made an important contribution to the literature on system support by distinguishing between two types of support: specific support, which refers to immediate citizen reactions to system outputs, and diffuse support, which represents an enduring citizen attachment to a political system or its objects. Whereas specific support is based on short-term evaluations, diffuse support represents an affective element in citizen attitudes towards the political system. As Easton puts it, diffuse support is "a reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate

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outputs to which they are opposed or the effect of which they see as damaging to their wants" (1965, 273). Diffuse and specific support are related because lack of specific support can—in the long run—carry over to more general feelings of dissatisfaction with the political system. Nevertheless, they are conceptually distinct because whereas diffuse support represents an affective political attachment, specific support is purely evaluative and short-term performance based assessment. As a consequence, the two have different political implications: specific support is necessary for the maintenance of a government (or administration) in power; in contrast, diffuse support is needed to uphold a political system as a form of government (Anderson n.d.)

To examine questions of main interest, I employ research method that is broadly comparative. Comparative approach, applied systematically and rigorously, reduces the hazards of arriving at unfounded opinions and flawed conclusions, biased views of reality as well as inappropriate generalizations about what goes on in society (Pennings et al. 1999). I therefore seek to develop a model that is based on theoretical concepts that 'travel' comparatively and test my propositions using a wide range of countries across established and new democracies. What is more, I analyze system legitimacy across a variety of perspectives – countries, parties, and individuals. Including countries with different political, social, and cultural contexts allows me to establish whether the individual- and party-level factors that drive system legitimacy in one country also play a role in other countries. Moreover, this approach permits evaluating whether country level differences in the levels of citizen support for the political system exist having accounted for various individual-, or party-level explanations (see Przeworski and Teune 1970).

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Furthermore, following Weatherford (1992), I seek to integrate a macro perspective emphasizing the importance of system level properties for political legitimacy as well as a micro view that focuses on citizen attitudes and actions. In other words, I seek to establish a connection between individuals and the political environment in which they operate. Recent research on system legitimacy suggests that the model of political legitimacy should include (1) macro-level factors, that is, the kind of country people live, (2) meso-level factors, that is, the kind of political parties people support, and (3) micro-level effects, that is the kind of people they are (Anderson et al. 2005).

Studies that sought to integrate macro and micro level perspective in the study of system legitimacy are few, but they are important. For instance, Miller and Listhaug (1990) found that opportunities to express discontent are related to positive attitudes about government. Citizens are also particularly sensitive to procedural and outcome fairness and use these perceptions in evaluating their political system (Miller and Listhaug 1999, Rose at al. 1998). What is more, to produce political support, institutions need to be not only fair, but also transparent in their policy-making and open to competing views (Tyler 1990, Levi 1997, Levi and Stokes 2000). Finally, people in systems with more durable and less corrupt governments are more supportive of the existing political arrangements (Harmel and Robertson 1986, Anderson and Tverdova 2003, Pharr 1997, della Porta 2000).

Existing research also shows that electoral outcomes influence citizen attitudes towards the political system. Specifically, citizens who support winning parties tend to be more in favor of political system than electoral losers (Anderson et al 2005, Anderson and Guillory 1997). This effect is particularly strong among partisans and citizens with

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extreme policy preferences, as well as in countries where elections involve high stakes (as is often the case in new democracies), or political systems with less inclusive political systems. This is why proportional representation is associated with higher levels of system support (Anderson 1998), although high party fragmentation in parliament and government seems to depress citizen satisfaction with the political system (Weil 1989, Anderson et al. 2005, 132). Similarly, federalism generates more positive among citizens for the democratic governance because it helps to better accommodate the needs to different regions and different groups in the electorate compared to unitary states (Norris 1999b). What is more, federal institutions allow voters to offset a loss at the federal level with being a winner at the provincial level, and vice versa (Anderson et al. 2005, 135).

Taken together, these studies demonstrate that individuals' experiences with their political system have important consequences for system legitimacy. However, research has not ventured far down this path. Although students of democratic governance emphasize the importance of political parties for the democratic governance, we have a very scant knowledge of whether political parties contribute to the legitimacy of contemporary democracies, and, if so, by what means and processes they do so. Given that the public often sees political parties as the cause of unnecessary divisions, messiness, and inefficiency involved in democratic governance, it may seem implausible that parties have anything to do with developing democratic legitimacy. If anything, they may be the cause of breakdown in new democracies, and a force that generates dissatisfaction with the political system in established democracies.

At the same time, however, there is some evidence that, however unpleasant, political parties contribute to positive citizen attitudes towards the political regime. Even

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protest parties in established democracies (Miller and Listhaug 1990), and communist successor parties in new democracies (Mahr and Nagle 1995, Evans and Whitefield 1995) with anti-system sentiments may increase the levels of system support if they provide channels for airing their supporters' dissatisfaction and foster a willingness to play by the rules of party-based democratic governance.

My dissertation seeks to reconcile these contradicting perspectives on the role of political parties for system legitimacy in contemporary democracies. Drawing on data collected as part of the *Manifestos Research Group* (MRG) project, a number of mass opinion surveys, and computer simulations, my dissertation develops and tests the first formulation of whether and how political parties influence citizens' views towards their political regime that systematically compares established and new democracies. My dissertation proceeds as follows: in the subsequent chapter, I examine the role of party identification for citizen support of the political system. Party identification is often viewed as a system-affirming attitude (see, for instance, Dalton 1999, 1996, Holmberg 2003, Anderson 2005, ch.5). This approach assumes that the effect of partisan attachment on system support is essentially uniform across citizens identifying with different political parties. This assumption, however, is unlikely to be met in real life because citizens identifying with protest or extreme parties are likely to have lower levels of system support than partisans of more mainstream parties.

I suggest that partisanship influences system support in two ways. First, drawing on the existing research, I expect that party identification stimulates citizen support for the political system because it signals allegiance to party-based democratic governance. More importantly, I expect that party identification also operates as a mediating link

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between party leaders and party supporters that allows for a more effective communication of party leaders' positions to party supporters. As a consequence, citizens identifying with political parties that take positive positions about the status quo of a political system are likely to develop more support for the political system than citizens aligning with more cynical political parties. I test these expectations with data collected as part of the MRG project and survey data from the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES) 1996-2000 from eight established democracies. I also ask whether party goals influence party positions towards the system and consequently the attitudes of party supporters towards the political system in their country.

I then probe deeper into the connection between political parties and the electorate. Specifically, I examine whether political parties influence public support for the political system by generating accurate policy representation. Demonstrating this relationship implies a two-step analysis: I show that (1) parties play a role in producing accurate policy representation, and (2) that accurate policy representation influences people's attitudes towards the political system. In Chapter 3, I examine the first step of this relationship. I expect that political parties contribute to accurate representation of majority policy preferences, and that they do so by varying party policy positions. Existing theoretical and empirical literature commonly assumes that political parties take stable policy positions. As a consequence, existing research may have underestimated the role that political parties play in producing accurate policy representation. Using computer simulations, I analyze whether political parties contribute to more accurate representation of the median voter relative to political system with fixed party positions.

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I examine accurate representation with respect to three key qualities: long-term bias, responsiveness, and short-term congruence. Existing research focuses mostly on short-term congruence, suggesting that median voter representation is rarely accurate in contemporary democracies, and that it is at best conditional on the institutional configurations. Focusing on short-term congruence presents us with a static picture, where each election is treated independently of each other. Such an approach ignores that some short-term distortions may cancel each other out over the long run. Neither is the median voter position stable over time. It is therefore important to take into account responsiveness in party positions to the movements of the median voter.

Treating party positions as varying over time and representation as an ongoing process gives us a much more realistic picture of how representative democracies operate. This approach is also particularly illuminating with respect to understanding the differences between new and established democracies. By definition, new democracies have short experience with the democratic governance and elections. As a consequence, the only information about the accuracy of policy representation available to citizens is short-term congruence. However, short-term congruence is rarely exact at any one election; it is only in the long run that we can expect the position of policy makers to converge on the median voter. Thus, inaccuracy in policy representation in new democratic regimes is inevitable. What is more, the mismatch between the median voter and policy makers in new democracies are likely to be aggravated by high uncertainty about the position of the median voter and party policy offerings, in addition to low levels of voter political sophistication and voting decisions frequently based on non-policy considerations.

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As a next step, in chapter 4, I ask how important the accurate representation of majority preferences is for system legitimacy in new and established democracies. I explore whether long-term accuracy in policy representation in established democracies—that is, non-bias and responsiveness—increases citizen support for the political system, especially among citizens close to the median voter.

Finally, I explore to what extent the concept of winning and losing is critical for political support. Specifically: I examine the role of winning and losing for building system support in two respects: first, I ask whether occasional incongruence between the median voter and the median party in parliament increases system support because it expands the pool of electoral winners. Second, I examine whether winning and losing is likely to be the primary mechanism that promotes system support in emerging democracies. Short experience with democratic governance and democratic elections in new democracies means that citizens and parties are unlikely to have a clear sense of the median voter position. What is more, there is no record of long-term accuracy in policy representation. Thus, winning and losing, rather than accurate policy representation are likely to be the driving force of citizen support for the political system in their country. I examine these questions using data collected as part of the *Manifestos Research Group* (MRG) project and *Word Values Surveys* (WVS) 1999-2000 in both established and new democracies.

My approach assumes that for the most part citizens have high levels of political sophistication and are attentive to politics. Although party identifiers rely on political parties as informational short cuts, they are assumed to listen to their political parties and follow their positions towards the status quo of the political regime. What is more, I

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assume that voters are policy-oriented, that have sufficient levels of political sophistication to assess the accuracy of policy representation in a country. This means that voters know the location of the median voter and that of policy makers, and that they can evaluate their own policy positions relative to that most consistently represented by policy makers. What is more, voters are assumed to connect this information to their evaluations of political system performance. This assumption might be too demanding for many voters in established democracies, and especially in new democracies. However, for new democracies, the fact that voters possess lower levels of political sophistication than citizens in established democracies is directly inbuilt into my hypotheses: the reason why we are less likely to see the effects of accurate policy representation in new democracies is precisely the fact that citizens there are less informed about the political processes and face high uncertainty in the rapidly transforming political systems. In established democracies, using the assumption of high voter sophistication and political attention provides a conservative test of my hypotheses because it should make it more difficult to find my hypothesized effects.

In studying the role of political parties for system legitimacy my dissertation seeks to integrate macro, meso, and macro levels of analysis. Political parties act as a meso factor because they take different positions towards the political system that influence their supporters' views. Further, political parties also operate on system legitimacy by producing macro-level outcomes. Citizens in political systems with more accurate long-term policy representation are likely to be more satisfied with their political regime than in countries with biased and unresponsive policy representation. Macro-level outcomes can also be related to individual experiences: where long-term representation of

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the median voter preferences is accurate, citizens with policy preferences at or close to the median voter should develop higher support for their political system than citizens further away from the median. Alternatively, in systems that are biased, citizens who benefit from bias should be more satisfied with the political system than citizens whose preferences are further removed from the policy makers' position. Finally, who gets to make policies is decided by democratic elections. Each election therefore produces political winners and losers. Although election outcomes are collectively decided, they produce individual experiences that influence citizens' attitudes towards the political system (Anderson et al. 2005, 3).

In short, my study seeks to contribute to our understanding of what drives system legitimacy and mass political behavior more generally. As such, it seeks to generate insights that are generalizable across individuals and countries, and that go beyond specific historical experiences and political cultures. What is more, by connecting macro, meso, and micro explanations of system legitimacy in one model, my analysis is designed to construct a systematic and comprehensive model of how citizen attitudes are shaped by their political environment and the experiences people have as participants of the political process in established and new democracies.

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CHAPTER 2

THE IMPACT OF PARTISANSHIP ON CITIZEN SUPPORT FOR THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Partisanship has played a central role in studies of public opinion and behavior since the inception of survey-based research. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, party identification has been often considered a major factor in the expression of public support for, and the persistence of, political parties, the party system and political order in which they are embedded. People who identify strongly with a party are generally expected to be more supportive of the political system and political parties as institutions that are necessary for the functioning of democratic governance than non-partisans (Holmberg 2003; Miller and Listhaug 1990). This relationship has been assumed to be of direct relevance to the health of, and the outlook for, a democratic political system (Dennis 1975, Dalton 1996, 1999, Holmberg 2003; Torcal et al. 2002, Miller and Shanks 1996, Budge et al. 1976, Miller and Listhaug 1990). In a recent study, Russell Dalton (1999, 66) argued that the declining strength of party identification across most Western democracies signals not only a weakening of party but also a progressive disengagement from politics amongst electorates. In his view, weakened party attachments might erode beliefs in the need for parties as the major actors in democratic politics and lead to declining support for party-based democracy (see also Holmberg 2003).

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Yet, the existing literature has yet to examine the partisanship-support link in more detail. Instead, scholars routinely and naïvely assume that the effect of partisan attachment on political support is essentially uniform across citizens attached to different political parties. In other words, the existing view implies, for example, that citizens who identify with protest parties are as supportive of the political system as citizens attached to more mainstream parties. Such assumptions, however, are unlikely to be met in real life or, at the very least, are worthy of examination. Thus, this chapter is designed to explore the role of party identification for citizens' views about their political system. Should we assume that partisans have more positive attitudes towards the political system in their country regardless of the type of a political party that they are attached to? Or do partisan views vary in any systematic ways? If so, how can we explain such variation?

This chapter proceeds as follows. I begin by discussing the concept of party identification. I then suggest two causal mechanisms by which party identification can be expected to operate on citizen support for their political system. First, drawing on the existing literature, I hypothesize that attachment to a political party stimulates citizen support for the political system because it signals allegiance to party-based democratic governance. This suggests that party identifiers on average should support their political regime more than citizens without party identification. Further, I expect that party identification also acts as a mediating link between party leaders and party supporters that allows for a more effective communication of party leaders' positions to party supporters. As a consequence, citizens identifying with political parties that take positive positions towards the status quo of a political system are likely to develop more support for the political system in their country than citizens aligning with more cynical political parties.

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In short, I expect that party leaders exercise considerable persuasion on their partisans, and I test this hypothesis by specifying a simultaneous non-recursive model. I use two-stage least squares model to separate persuasion effects from the effects of strategic position taking by political parties. The first stage of the model is designed to generate predicted party positions toward the political system that are then mapped onto citizen support attitudes. In the following section, I present and discuss the results of my empirical analyses, and the final section offers some concluding remarks.

Party Identification

Party identification is one of the most important and widely used theoretical constructs in the study of electoral behavior and public opinion formation. It has often been referred to as an individual's enduring attachment to a political party (Campbell et al. 1960, 1966). Following Campbell et al. (1986), Converse and Pierce (1987), Green and Palmquist (1990), Miller (1991), Blais, Gidengil, Nadeau, and Nevitte (2001), I assume that there are two important elements to party identification. First, partisans are partisan because they think they are partisan. As Campbell and his colleagues put it: "[partisans] are not necessarily partisan because they vote like a partisan, or think like a partisan, or register like a partisan, or because someone else thinks they are partisan. In the strict sense, they are not even partisan because they like one party more than another. Partisanship as party identification is entirely a matter of self-definition." (1986, 100).

The second important characteristic of party identification is that it reflects an enduring orientation. Partisanship as a long-term attachment was documented in *The American Voter* (Cambell et al 1960, 529), the first study that examined the American

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electorate using nation-wide survey data. Early attempts to employ party identification in the European context, however, did not show the same stability. Partisanship in European electorates appeared to be highly correlated with the vote, and sometimes it was found to be even more volatile than the vote (Thomassen 1976, Borre and Katz 1973, Butler and Stokes 1969, LeDuc 1981). Thus, contrary to the U.S. electorate, European party loyalties did not seem to reflect long-term attitudes distinct from the vote. These findings led scholars to question the measurement and applicability of the concept developed in the U.S. to the European electorates, and even doubt the utility of the concept itself, arguing that it may simply be a weak surrogate for citizen habitual voting.

More recent research, however, shows much more stability in party loyalties in the European context. Drawing on the analysis of survey data from Britain, West Germany, and the Netherlands in the 1980s, Richardson (1991) argues that it is important to distinguish between old and new cleavage parties, and that party loyalties are highly stable among supporters or old or traditional cleavage parties. This approach explains, for instance, why we see much more stable party loyalties in the American electorate. American voters have been mostly exposed to bipartisan competition between two very old political parties. Such a political environment facilitates stability in party identification and its transmission via familial ties over a number of generations. In Europe, Richardson similarly found high partisanship stability among citizens who identify with old cleavage parties and much less stability among supporters of non-cleavage parties.

Other studies based on panel surveys confirm that party loyalties are stable across many established democracies (see, for instance, Bartels 2002, Schickler and Green 1997,

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Green and Palmquist 1990, Sears 1975). For instance, using eight panel surveys from Great Britain, Canada, and Germany, Schickler and Green (1997) show that partisanship has been extremely stable in each country, with the exception of Canada due to the recent emergence of new regional parties. The authors argue that estimating the stability of party identification outside the United States requires attention to problems of dimensionality and measurement error. What is more, research suggests that partisanship continues to have a pervasive influence on electoral behavior as well as on citizen perceptions of, and reactions to, the political world (Bartels 2002, Richardson 1991, Sanders 2003). For instance, David Sanders (2003) shows that notwithstanding the decline of strong partisanship in the United Kingdom, party identification has not lost much of its explanatory power in accounting for voter behavior.

Thus, given that partisanship continues to be an important characteristic in the relationship between citizens and political parties, there are strong reasons to suspect that partisanship also plays an important role in shaping people's attitudes towards their political system. I expect that party identification operates on system support essentially in two important ways. First, drawing on the existing literature (e.g. Dalton 1999, Holmberg 2003, Dennis 1966, Anderson et al. 2005, ch.5), I expect that attachment to a political party stimulates citizen support for the political system because it signals allegiance to party-based governance, that is, political system, in which parties operate as key actors. From this perspective, regardless of the nature of a party a citizen identifies with, partisanship should lead to higher levels of democratic support. After all, even protest parties signal some allegiance to a political regime by the very fact that they organize themselves via political parties. In fact, Miller and Listhaug (1990) suggest that

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protest parties can be effectively used also to channel discontent back into the decision-making arena and therefore increase the levels of political trust in a country; in short, party identifiers will generally hold more positive views about the system than non-identifiers. This perspective leads me to my first general hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1:** Citizens with party identification will have higher levels of support for the political system in their country than non-identifiers.

However, partisanship plays a more complex role with respect to public support for the political system. Specifically, I expect that partisanship provides a link or a channel between political parties and their partisans that allows for a more effective communication of party leaders' position about the political system to party supporters. Partisanship has been commonly treated as a construct derived from the social psychology literature, which holds that much of our individual sense of personal identity is derived from groups to which we belong (Miller 1976, 22, Campbell et al 1960, ch.6). Given the complexity of politics and the fact that most political phenomena are far removed from direct personal experience of ordinary citizens, according to Warren Miller, "The existence of the group, with acknowledged leaders who articulate the group's values and interpret the group's interest in the stream of public affairs, is crucial to the group member's ability to relate to the larger world" (1976, 22). In other words, partisans rely on a political party as a reference group, as a source of cues, and as a legitimate source of information as to what should be believed and valued (Miller 1976, Borre and Katz 1973). As a consequence, partisanship plays an important role with respect to persuasion that parties have over their supporters (Jacoby 1988, see also Conover and Feldman 1989).

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It should not be surprising then that, if political parties take different positions towards the status quo of their political system, we are likely to observe divergent attitudes towards the political regime across their supporters. A recent study of the American electorate shows that political elites exercise considerable persuasion over their supporters with respect to their attitudes towards the political regime. Empirical evidence indicates that high levels of political cynicism evident among third party supporters did not precede their support for a third party candidate, but rather were a consequence of their identification with a third party (Koch 2003). More generally, we therefore can expect that, if a political party conveys positive positions towards the system, its supporters are also likely to develop favorable feelings towards their political system. Conversely, political parties that express negative positions towards the political regime are more likely to produce cynicism also among their supporters. Thus, my next hypothesis about the divergent effects of party identification is as follows:

> **Hypothesis 2:** Political parties with positive positions about the political system will produce more support for the political system among their supporters than parties with skeptical positions.

Further, I expect that the positions political parties take concerning the system are shaped by parties' goal oriented behavior. According to Strøm's (1990a) behavioral theory of competitive parties, party leaders often face an important trade-off between office and policy (Strøm 1990a, Müller and Strøm 1999, Erikson and Romero 1990, Adams 2001a, 2001b). To say that politicians act as entrepreneurs and are motivated by the desire to get into office and convert office-benefits into private goods (Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1984; Frohlich et al. 1971; Strøm 1990a, Müller and Strøm 1999), however, is not to say that policy is unimportant to them (Hunt and Laver 1992). After all, only policy-

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oriented individuals are likely to become party leaders in the first place (Laver 1997: 84-85). However, the extent to which party leaders are capable of pursuing office when faced with a trade-off between policy and office is determined by a number of factors, including a party's organizational structure as well as electoral, legislative, and governmental institutions (Strøm 1990a, Müller and Strøm 1999).

Depending on how party leaders resolve this trade-off, parties can be grouped as pursuing primarily policy, office, or a mix of the two (or balancing behavior). I expect office oriented parties to be more satisfied with the system than parties that pursue either policy or a combination of goals because office-seeking parties are more likely to be unencumbered by party activists' preferences (Strøm 1990a), to be flexible and competitive, as well as more successful in getting elected to office. These parties are also more likely to be in control of policy making because they win office more frequently. Finally, parties in government also have more power to shape the rules of the game; they are the establishment parties, and thus be more satisfied with the status quo of a political system.

In contrast, the "purist" approach of policy-seeking parties generally constrains them in competition for office because these parties are less likely to compromise their views in negotiations with other parties. What is more, the very priority given to policy considerations often implies that a party is dissatisfied with the status quo and seeks to mobilize for political change. Further, success of policy implementation is often more difficult to assess than winning or losing in an electoral competition. This suggests that policy-seeking parties will have fewer opportunities to express their satisfaction with the system than office seeking parties.

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Finally, although the responsible party government model (APSA 1950) emphasizes party commitment to their policy offerings, citizens supporting office-seeking parties may not by definition suffer more agency loss than citizens favoring policy-seeking parties. In other words, it is not clear whether office-seeking parties are further away from their supporters' policy preferences than other parties. It is widely known that parties often take positions that are more ideologically extreme than the ones of their supporters (Dalton 2002, 228, Dalton 1985, Miller and Jennings 1986). Party negotiation over government composition may in fact bring parties much closer to the policy preferences of their supporters. Policy-seeking parties unwilling to negotiate are likely to stick with the more extreme preferences of their party activists than the ones of their supporters. In short, I expect that office oriented parties are more likely to take positive positions about the system than policy seeking parties, and these positions are likely to be reflected among party supporters.

Data and Measures

To test my hypotheses, I specify a simultaneous two-stage least squares model that allows for a non-recursive relationship. Specifically, I use this model to exclude the possibility that the effects I refer to as persuasion are actually artifacts of strategic position taking by political parties. What is more, I expect that the views parties express toward their democratic governance are shaped by the goals parties pursue—that is whether they give priority to office, policy, or try to balance between the two. Thus, the first stage of my model predicts party positions towards the system that are then used as

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an instrumental variable to estimate citizens' opinion about the political regime in the second stage.

My individual-level data come from surveys collected as part of the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* (CSES). Countries that provided the most important survey items and that had a sufficient number of cases for multivariate analysis included Australia, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, and the United States. Representing different continents, these established democracies form a sample of countries with very different political, social, and cultural contexts. This cross-country variation is useful for the purpose of my analysis because it allows me to test whether micro- and macro- forces operating on system legitimacy in one country also influence system support in other countries. Party-level indicators were selected from the *Manifestos Research Group* (MRG) data, and Laver and Hunt (1992) expert surveys.

Dependent Variables

I use two dependent variables from the CSES survey data that tap citizen support for the political system—satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy. Given the state of debate about the conceptualization and measurement of system support broadly conceived, I relied on a straightforward definition of political support as satisfaction with democracy. The relevant survey measure asked citizens whether they are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. For the purpose of this chapter, I reversed the original scale: the answer categories range from 1 to 4, with 4 denoting the most satisfied response.

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Satisfaction with democracy measures system support at a low level of generalization (Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svenson 1995, 330, Anderson and Guillory 1997, 70). It does not refer to democracy as a set of norms or democracy and an ideal; instead, it focuses on people's responses to the actual process of democratic governance and their attitudes toward a country's 'constitutional reality' (Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svenson 1995, 328, Anderson et al. 2005, 41, Linde and Ekman 2003).

Neither does the indicator tap diffuse or specific support in the Eastonian sense, but a form of support that was not recognized or adequately conceptualized by Easton (Kuechler 1991, 279, Fuchs and Klingemann 1995, Anderson and Guillory 1997). According to Easton, specific support is based on short-term citizen evaluations of system outputs, whereas diffuse support refers to "a reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate outputs to which they are opposed or the effect of which they see as damaging to their wants" (1965, 273). In other words, diffuse support represents an affective enduring "attachment to a political object for its own sake" (Easton 1965, 274), whereas specific support is based on short-term performance-oriented evaluations. The satisfaction with democracy item is neither of them, because, unlike diffuse support, it measures support for the performance of the political regime (Klingemann 1999, Norris 1999b, Linde and Ekman 2003, Anderson et al. 2005, 41), and therefore captures an evaluative rather than purely affective element of political support. At the same time, the satisfaction with democracy item cannot be equated with specific support because the latter focuses on the immediate system outputs, usually generated by the government (or administration) in power, whereas the former is

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designed to capture respondent's opinion about regime performance that goes beyond specific administration output evaluation.

In a recent paper, Canache, Mondak, and Seligson (2001) challenge the use of satisfaction with democracy measure. However, they do not present a strong case against its validity because they assume wrong causal structure of political support attitudes. The causal structure that they have in mind is based on the desire to observe the attitudinal and behavioral consequences of system support (508, fn.1). Canache, Mondak, and Seligson believe that system support exists and that we can indicate it through a battery of questions about the constitution, political institutions, and electoral formula (508, fn.1). This leads them to the causal construction in which survey responses are expected to be uncorrelated. From this perspective, finding nonzero correlations signals that a common source (i.e. one's system support) has not been taken into account, and, they argue, it prevents us from drawing any well-grounded inferences or making comparisons across nations.

This approach, however, is fundamentally flawed because it is based on the wrong causal structure of political support attitudes. Being more or less "satisfied with the way democracy works or is developing in one's country" is a causal antecedent to system support rather than a consequence of it. As Easton (1975, 445-5) argues, it is a positive experience with the regime that over time accumulates into a reservoir of goodwill. In other words, it is the attitudes that are evaluative in nature that causally lead to affective system support – diffuse support. As mentioned above, survey questions that ask about satisfaction with democracy invite an evaluative rather than purely emotional response (Anderson and Guillory 1997, 70, see also Kuechler 1991), and therefore precede system

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support in a causal structure of political support attitudes. What is more, it should not be surprising that satisfaction with democracy is correlated with other political support attitudes. One would be worried if support for democratic principles or regime performance had nothing to do with citizen's satisfaction with democracy. Within the causal structure of support attitudes one can situate regime performance and support for democracy in principle as the driving forces of satisfaction with democracy, which, in turn, then operate on diffuse system support.

My second dependent variable tapping political support is external efficacy or citizens' assessments of whether the system is responsive to their preferences. Political efficacy is "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, … the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change" (Campbell, Gurin, and Miller 1954, 187). A sense of influence on the political process depends on internal efficacy, that is, whether an individual feels he or she has the means to affect the process, and external efficacy that refers to citizens' beliefs about system openness and responsiveness to their attempts to influence the system (Lane 1959, Balch 1974, Miller and Listhaug 1990, Anderson et al. 2005, 42).

To measure external efficacy, I used an additive index of responses to two CSES survey questions: whether political parties in the respondent's country care what people think, and whether members of parliament know what ordinary people think. I performed a reliability test to measure how well both items tap a single uni-dimensional latent construct. Cronbach's alpha is .62, showing that the two variables are sufficiently highly correlated and therefore can be combined to form a single and reliable scale that ranges

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from 0 to 8.[1] Higher values on this additive index indicate a greater sense of respondent's external efficacy. Using both external efficacy and satisfaction with democracy items allows me to generalize beyond the particular indicators and make more general statements about system support in comparative perspective.

Independent Variables

Party Identification

The measurement of party identification has long been a focus of scholarly disagreement. It has been debated how well the notion of party identification is applicable in countries outside the United States and what survey questions should be used to obtain comparable measures of party identification for cross-national analyses. Both experimental and comparative studies have shown that the best estimates are acquired when respondents are given a clear opportunity to register a "non-identity" (see, for instance, Sanders et al. 2002; Blais et al. 2001). The CSES measure of party identification does just that. It asks, "Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?" I recoded answer categories into a dichotomous variable: 1 if a respondent gave a positive response and 0 for those who answered "No" or "Don't Know."[2] This measure is applicable not only in two-party systems, as in the U.S., but also

[1] I also created an alternative measure of external efficacy that includes four CSES survey items to construct an additive index: whether respondent thinks that 1) political parties care what people think, 2) members of parliament know what ordinary people think, 3) it makes a difference who is in power, and 4) who people vote for makes a difference. A more detailed description of this variable and its 2SLS estimates are listed in the Appendix.

[2] Initially, I constructed a four-category variable used by Holmberg (2003) that not only accounted for the presence or absence of party identification but also for the strength of party identification. Specifically, for those who indicated themselves as being close to a particular political party, I used a follow up question: "Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?" Those who answered "Very close" were classified as strong party identifiers; and those who answered with any response other than

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in multi-party systems and is valid across many countries (Holmberg 1994, 2003, Budge et al. 1976).

Finding no effect of party identification on system attitudes would falsify my argument that party identification generates psychological attachment to a political system and thus higher levels of political support. This would not rule out the possibility, however, that party identification provides a link between party leaders and partisans that facilitates communication of party leaders' views about the political regime, and therefore allows for persuasion by political elites in shaping attitudes of party supporters about the system. Empirical evidence of a positive relationship between party positions in support of the constitutional order and citizens' satisfaction with the democratic governance in their country is my primary focus in order to provide a much more nuanced view of partisanship than the one that has been established in the existing literature on political support.

Party Position Toward the Political System

Party positions toward the political system are my primary suspect in explaining the variations in satisfaction with democracy and political efficacy across supporters of different parties. To measure party views, I use the MRG data collected prior to the CSES

"Very close" were classified as weak party identifiers. In the case of respondents who answered "No" or "Don't know" to the first question, the follow-up question was: "Do you feel yourself a little closer to one of the political parties than the others?" Respondents who answered: "Yes" to this second question were classified as without party identification but with a party preference. Respondents who answered "No" or "Don't know" to both the first and second question were classified as having no identification. Unfortunately, because of the way these survey questions were asked in the Netherlands, I could not differentiate between strong and weak party identifiers. Thus, I had to collapse this four-category party identification strength variable into a dichotomous measure, with one—indicating party identification, and zero—the absence of it. The resulting measure corresponds to the variable based on the first (filter) question asking whether a person is close to any political party. Thus, I used the closeness to a party variable as my measure of party identification.

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survey for each country in my sample. I employ two items: first, 'Constitutionalism: positive', which represents the extent to which a party expresses support for specific aspects of the constitution, and uses constitutionalism as an argument for policy as well as general approval of the constitutional way of doing things; second, 'Constitutionalism: negative', which reflects the opposite from what defines 'Constitution: positive'.[3]

I believe that these items serve as a good proxy for measuring party views towards the status quo of a political system because they reflect party attitudes about the fundamental rules of a political regime in a country. For instance, the UK Conservative Party in their 1997 manifestos emphasized the importance of the existing constitutional order to the nation that is "the product of hundreds of years of knowledge, experience and history". The Australian Labor Party, on the other hand, in its 1996 electoral program offers fundamental changes to the constitution by establishing an Australian Head of State (the President) institution and assigning it important political powers.[4] The Comparative Manifestos data show that many parties express views both in support and criticism of the constitutional order in their political system. Thus, subtracting the percentage of 'Constitutionalism: negative' statements from the percentage of 'Constitutionalism: positive' statements, I created an index in which higher values indicate more positive party outlook towards the political system.

Unfortunately, the MRG data provide measures only for political parties that won 2 or more seats in national elections. Thus, a number of smaller political parties that did not succeed to secure seats in national legislatures could not be coded using this data set.

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[3] In the original MRG coding scheme, 'Constitutional: positive' statements are given a code of 203, and 'Constitutionalism: negative' statements a code of 204.

[4] The author is grateful to Paul Pennings and Andrea Volkens for making the original coded party manifestos available.

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To keep respondents that identify with parties not in the MRG dataset in my analysis, I assigned these parties a value of zero. Given that these parties are likely to be more dissatisfied with the political system, coding them as having a neutral position towards the status quo of the political regime provides a conservative test of my hypothesis because it should make it more difficult to find the effects of party positions on their partisans' support attitudes.

Party Goals

Given that the first stage in my analysis is designed to predict party positions towards the political system, I also take into account the systematic forces that make political parties express more positive or negative attitudes towards the status quo of a political regime. My measure of party goals is based on the Laver and Hunt (1992) expert survey party classification of parties as policy-, office-, or balance-seeking. Specifically, experts were asked to evaluate each party on a twenty-point scale on the basis of the following question: "Forced to make a choice, would party leaders give up policy objectives in order to get into government, or would they sacrifice a place in the government in order to maintain policy objectives?" Laver and Hunt (1992) then classified parties with the score in the range 1.00-8.99 as interested above all in policy, parties within the range of 12.00-19.99 as interested above all in office, and those found in-between (that is, in the range 9.00-11.99) as balancing the two motivations.

Most countries have parties of all three types: parties that focus on office, policy, or that balance between the two goals. The two exceptions are New Zealand and the US, which appear to have only parties that are judged to be interested above all else in office.

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Communist, left-socialist, green and nationalist parties are the most common types that put emphasis on policy as their primary goal. In my sample of countries, Plaid Cymru, the Scottish Nationalist Party in the UK, the Greens in Germany, the Communists, the Political Reformed Party, and the Socialist Party in the Netherlands, the Socialist Left Party in Norway, and the United Left, Herri Batsuna, and the Communist Unity Party in Spain are examples of policy-seeking parties. Social democratic parties are the most frequent type among those balancing office- and policy-seeking motivations. Labour in Britain, the Labor Party (PvdA) in the Netherlands, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in Germany are all parties that fall into this category. However, the National Democratic Party (NPD) in Germany, the Progress Party (FRP), Venstre (V), and the Christian People's Party (KRF) in Norway are also classified as balancing between policy and office goals. Finally, many key parties from all party families seem to fall into the office-seeking category. For instance, the Conservatives in Britain, the Christian Democrats and the Free Democratic Party in Germany, the Conservatives (H) and the Labor Party (A) in Norway, and the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) as well as the Democrats 66 in the Netherlands are viewed by experts as office seeking parties. For the purpose of my analysis, I created three dummy variables for policy-seeking, office-seeking, and balancing parties. In a two-stage non-recursive model, I use party goals to predict party views towards the political system that then are mapped on partisans' system support attitudes.

Control Variables

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Recall that the first stage of the model is designed to predict party positions towards the political system. I therefore included a number of variables tapping various aspects of political parties. Ideological extremity is usually associated with lower levels of system support because radical views denote more dissatisfaction with the status quo and a willingness to mobilize for change (Riker 1982). On the individual level, extreme positions also mean stronger commitment to these views and a willingness to promote them (Anderson et al. 2005, ch.5, Anderson and Paskeviciute 2004). We therefore should see a negative relationship between party ideological extremity and their support for the political system. My measure of party ideological extremity represents a squared absolute distance between party left-right median and country left-right median calculated on the basis of party supporters' left-right self-placement in the CSES data. In addition, because the extremity measure is based on the left-right scale, I also control for left-right party positions to ensure that the effects of extremity are not driven by the average left-right party position in a country. Left-right party positions are calculated as the mean value of party supporters' self-placement on the left-right continuum in the CSES survey data.

Further, parties in government can be expected to express more positive views towards the political system because they enjoy office benefits and have a better chance to implement their policy preferences than other parties. To determine which parties were in government at the time of survey in each country of my sample, I relied on the *European Journal of Political Research*. Finally, the first stage of the model also includes a set of party family variables. Using the MRG project data, I created dummy variables for green, agrarian, extreme right, extreme left (communist), Christian democratic

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(religious), social democratic, conservative, liberal, regional (ethnic), and other (special interest) parties.

In the second stage, I control for various individual-level characteristics that have been found to operate on system support in previous research. Specifically, I controlled for whether a person is an electoral winner or loser. Existing research shows that citizens who identify with parties in office are more satisfied with their political system than other citizens (Anderson et al. 2005, Anderson and Guillory 1997, Anderson and LoTempio 2002, Ginsberg and Weissberg 1978, Nadeau and Blais 1993, Norris 1999b, 220). I created this variable using information about which parties were in government at the time the survey was conducted in each country in my sample. I then used this information to create a dichotomous variable, where 1 indicates that an individual identified with a party in government and 0—otherwise.

Further, as in the first stage, I controlled for the ideological extremity of a party that an individual identifies with as well as left-right self-placement. Existing research also shows that, generally speaking, those who have a greater stake in the maintenance of the political system tend to express higher levels support for it. At the level of individual citizens, having a stake in the system has been measured with the help of variables such as income and education, as well as age, gender, and race as proxies for an individual's socio-economic status or political resources (Almond and Verba 1963, Finkel 1985, Anderson and Guillory 1997, Anderson et al. 2005, 20).[5] I therefore included measures of the respondent's age, gender, employment, education, as well as economic performance

[5] More recent research, however, shows that the relationship between education and system support is not straightforward: a new politics approach is that high levels of education can lead to critical attitudes and political dissatisfaction (Dalton 2004).

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evaluation. Finally, I include a vector of country dummies to capture cross-national differences in citizen attitudes towards their political system.

Analysis and Results

Figure 2.1. presents average values of external efficacy and satisfaction with democracy variables by party identifiers for each country. Satisfaction with democracy is the highest in Norway (the mean value is 3.17 on a range from 1 to 4), followed by the United States (3.06) and Australia (3.04), and the lowest in Germany (2.63) and Spain (2.69). Norway is also the leading country with respect to external efficacy: on a range from 0 to 8, its mean value is 4.28, closely followed by the Netherlands (4.12). Australians are the least efficacious among examined nations: the mean value of their external efficacy is 3.16.

Further, Figure 2.1. shows that party identifiers are more satisfied with democracy and have higher levels of external efficacy than non-partisans in all countries examined. The largest difference with respect to external efficacy exists in the United States: on a scale from 0 to 8, nonpartisans are less efficacious than partisans by .81 units. In contrast, the difference between partisans and non-identifiers in the Netherlands is only .14 units. Partisans are also more satisfied with democracy than nonpartisans. The difference is most prominent in Australia and Germany (.244 and .234 units respectively), and the smallest in Norway (.06 units).

[Figure 2.1. About Here]

Although partisan attitudes towards their political system are more positive than those of non-identifiers in all countries, examining the levels of system support across

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partisans of different parties uncovers much greater variation than the difference between all party identifiers combined and non-partisans. What is more, not all party identifiers have more positive attitudes towards their political system than non-identifiers. For instance, supporters of the New Zealand First Party, the Alliance, and especially the Mana Maori in New Zealand, the Progress Party (FRP) in Norway, the United Left (IU) and the United People (HB) in Spain, all have lower levels of satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy than non-identifiers. Supporters of the Democrats in Australia, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the Republikaner, and the People's Union (DVU) in Germany, the Socialist Party (SP) in the Netherlands, Plaid Cymru, and the Scottish Nationalist Party in the United Kingdom, as well as the Red Electoral Alliance (SV) in Norway, all are more dissatisfied with democracy in their country than unaligned citizens. Similarly, partisans of the Reformational Political Federation (RPF), the Socialist Party (SP), the Political Reformed Party (SGP), and the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) in the Netherlands are considerably less externally efficacious than non-identifiers. In the United Kingdom, supporters of the Labour or the Liberal Democrats are about as satisfied with democracy in their country as non-identifiers. In short, visual inspection of citizen attitudes towards their political system suggests that uncovering systematic forces that operate on citizen attitudes towards their political system via political parties might considerably improve our models of system support.

Table 2.3. presents scores on party positions towards the political system and the mean scores of my two dependent variables – their partisans' satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy. Examination of these scores supports my expectation that there is a relationship between the positions of political parties and the views of their supporters.

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For instance, among the four major parties in Australia, the Democratic Party took the most negative position towards the constitutional order in the country. The average system support scores of their partisans were also much lower relative to identifiers of other major parties in Australia. Similarly, supporters of the most negative party in New Zealand, the Alliance, also reported the lowest levels of system support. In contrast, the Conservatives in the United Kingdom took the most positive position about the political regime in 1997 relative to other parties. Their partisans were similarly more optimistic about the political system, as the scores on both satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy indicate. In Germany, the Free Democrats were one of the two most positive parties with respect to their support for the political system in 1998. Their supporters also were most satisfied with democracy, although their feelings of external efficacy are lower than the ones of CDU/CSU identifiers. The relationship is a bit less clear in other countries; however, its true effect might be concealed by other factors that I will account for in a multivariate analysis. As we can see from the table, parties both on the ideological Left and Right, small and big express positive or negative views about their political system, suggesting that persuasion effects might operate independently of party characteristics. As a next step, I thus proceed to multivariate estimations.

[Table 2.3. About Here]

I model citizen's satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy as a simultaneous non-recursive process. A two-stage least squares model is necessary to separate persuasion – the effect of my primary interest – from the strategic position taking by political parties. The first stage of the model is designed to predict party positions using party goals and a number of independent variables except public opinion.

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In the second stage, these predicted party positions, purged of the component that could be caused by electorate opinion, serve as an independent variable in the analysis of citizens' views towards the system.[6] The results are presented in Table 2.4. In the first stage, policy orientation serves as a reference for party goal dummy variables, and Conservative—for party family variables. In the second stage, the U.S. is a base category for country dummies.

[Table 2.4. About Here]

In the first stage we can observe that office oriented parties—and to a slightly lesser degree—balance-seeking parties, take more positive positions towards the system than policy oriented parties. This confirms my expectations that office-seeking parties are generally more in favor of the status quo of the political regime, and thus are able to generate a more positive outlook among their supporters than parties prioritizing policy goals.

In the second stage, the results indicate a positive and statistically significant effect of party support for the system on both identifiers' satisfaction with democracy and their feelings of external efficacy. This suggests that the more positive views parties communicate towards the political system, the higher the levels of their supporters' satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy.

Consistent with the expectations in the existing literature (Holmberg 2003, Dalton 1999), I find that citizens with party identification tend to have more positive views

[6] Ideally, I would use panel data if it were available cross-nationally because a two-stage least squares model does not eliminate a possibility that citizens might develop party identification on the basis of party views towards the system. However, I believe there is a very small chance that my results will be affected by this possibility because party cynicism or endorsement of the status quo of a political system does not seem to be a constant feature of political parties: the MRG data shows that most political parties change their positions towards the political system from one election to the next.

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towards the system than unaligned voters. Thus, my findings confirm the traditional finding that having party identification is better for system support than not having one. However, they also tell a new story since I find variations in system support across supporters of different political parties that are driven by what parties say about governance in their country.

Among the control variables, I find that winner status clearly increases individuals' satisfaction with democracy and external efficacy. Further, identifying with an ideologically extreme party leads to a more negative citizen perspective about the system. Positive economic evaluations improve one's opinion about the political regime, as do education and age. However, gender has no impact, and employment has a statistically significant positive effect only on satisfaction with democracy but not on attitudes about whether politicians know and care about what people think.

To get a better sense of effects, I also calculated the substantive impact of party persuasion on my dependent variables. These calculations (effects and 95% confidence intervals) are displayed graphically in Figure 2.2. The effects are estimated for a Dutch citizen who identifies with an office-seeking social democratic party that is in government and is located at the country left-right median; the respondent is also assumed to be typical with respect to socio-demographic characteristics; that is, a respondent who is female, 47 years old, has an average level of education, is employed, a voter, and believes that the economy stayed the same over the past twelve months. The graphs show that as we move from the most negative party position towards the political system (-.57) to the most positive position (3.229), the level of satisfaction with democracy increases by .41 units from 2.99 to 3.40 (on a range from 1 to 4). Similarly,

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external efficacy increases by .50 units from 4.29 to 4.79 (on a range from 0 to 8). This means that if a political party devotes 9 percent of its programmatic statements in support of the political system, their supporters are likely to change their response from being somewhat satisfied to being very satisfied with the way democracy is developing in their country. Similarly, a one unit movement in external efficacy will require 7.6 percent of party programmatic statements.

[Figure 2.2. About Here]

Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Political parties play an important role in shaping citizens' views about the political system. Existing research emphasizes that politics plays a more important role for system support than social factors, which means that there is limited variation across socio-demographic groups such as age, gender, income, education, or religion (see, for instance, Newton 1999, Newton and Norris 2000, Orren 1997, Listhaug 1995: 265, Borre 2000: 307, Mishler and Rose 1999). Further, evidence for the impact of economy is mixed: for instance, Mcallister (1999) finds that support for democratic institutions is unaffected by objective indicators of economic performance. Similarly, Miller and Listhaug (1999) show that the government deficit, but not inflation or unemployment, influence citizen institutional confidence. In newer democracies, Mishler and Rose (1999) also find that the economy has a limited impact on system support. However, this is not because the economy is irrelevant but rather because positive expectations about future economic performance and negative evaluations of economic performance tend to

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cancel each other out. Others also single out politics as the most important factor in the model of system legitimacy (Pharr and Putnam 2000).

Thus, existing research suggests that we should focus on political factors in our models of system legitimacy. Yet, existing models of system legitimacy remain undeveloped with respect to how political context operates on people's attitudes towards their political system. Attention to the role of political parties is particularly lacking, which is surprising given that they continue to be crucial actors in organizing democratic politics.

The results of this chapter show that political parties influence people's attitudes towards the political system via party identification. Partisanship stimulates citizen attachment to the political system, and it provides a link by which positive party positions towards the constitutional arrangement foster optimism among their supporters. In other words, I find that partisanship allows for party persuasion of the mass publics. The results of a non-recursive two-stage least squares model demonstrated that party positions do influence public support for the political regime, and that this effect is not an artifact produced by strategic position taking by parties. I find that supporters of political parties with more positive positions toward the political system tend to be more satisfied with democracy and have higher levels of external efficacy than supporters of parties with pessimistic attitudes toward the system of governance in their country. In short, the positive role of partisanship for system support is not merely a function of spill over or an extension of party affect to the political system. Partisanship acts also as an important linkage mechanism or a source of cues for party supporters in evaluating the system.

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Thus, my findings support Dalton's concerns that a loosening of the connection between political parties and citizens observed in established democracies may indeed undermine mass support for the democratic governance. However, this is likely to happen not only because the lack of partisanship could weaken citizen attachment to a political system but also because citizens are less likely to be affected by what parties say about the system. This is important because we know from the existing literature that political elites tend to be more supportive of democratic principles than are ordinary citizens (Sullivan et al. 1993, Converse and Pierce 1986).

Finally, perhaps the most intriguing finding is that office-seeking parties are the ones that express the most positive attitudes about the constitutional order in their country and consequently generate the highest levels of support among their partisans compared to policy-seeking or balancing parties. Unlike most accounts of the responsible party government model that emphasize the importance of party commitment to their policy offerings for high quality of democratic governance, these findings shed a positive light on the role of office-seeking parties. Office-seeking parties appear to generate more democratic legitimacy among citizens than any other parties.

This relationship, however, warrants much closer attention. It may be the case that office-seeking parties are more satisfied with the political system because they are in charge of the political system much more frequently. If a party prioritizes the winning of office, it is much more likely to win it. For citizens and elites alike, winning an election means getting a greater share of preferred policies. In the subsequent chapters, I therefore turn to directly examining the role of policy representation and winning vs. losing for system legitimacy in contemporary democracies.

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Appendix

Measures and Coding

Democracy Satisfaction. "On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in (country)?" Not at all satisfied (1), very satisfied (4).

External Efficacy. Additive index of responses to two CSES survey questions: 1) Political parties in [country] care what people think (5); don't care what people think (1). 2) Members of [Congress/Parliament] know what ordinary people think (5); don't know what ordinary people think (1).

Party Identification. Based on the CSES survey question: "Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?" Yes (1), no, don't know (0). Initially, I constructed a four-category variable used by Holmberg (2003) that not only accounted for the presence or absence of party identification but also for the strength of party identification. Specifically, for those who indicated themselves as being close to a particular political party, I used a follow up question: "Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?" Those who answered "Very close" were classified as strong party identifiers; and those who answered with any response other than "Very close" were classified as weak party identifiers. In the case In the case of respondents who answered "No" or "Don't know" to the first question, the follow-up question was: "Do you feel yourself a little closer to one of the political parties than the others?" Respondents who answered: "Yes" to this second question were classified as without party identification but with a party preference. Respondents who answered "No" or "Don't know" to both the first and second question are classified as having no identification. Unfortunately, the way survey questions were asked in the Netherlands, I could not differentiate between strong and weak party identifiers. Thus, I had to collapse this four-category party identification strength variable into a dichotomous measure, with one—indicating party identification, and zero—the absence of it. The resulting measure corresponds to the variable based on the first (filter) question asking whether a person is close to any political party. Thus, I used the closeness to a party variable as my measure of party identification.

Party Position Towards the Political System. Based on two items from the Comparative Manifestos Project data. 1) item 203 – "Constitutionalism: Positive", defined in coding instructions as "support for specific aspects of the constitution; use of constitutionalism as an argument for policy as well as general approval of the constitutional way of doing things". 2) item 204 – "Constitutionalism: Negative," defined as "opposition to the constitution in general or to specific aspects; otherwise as "Constitutionalism: Positive", but negative." Subtracting the percentage of 'Constitutionalism: negative' statements from the percentage of 'Constitutionalism: positive' statements creates an index in which higher values indicate more positive party outlook towards the political system.

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Party goals. Office-seeking, balance-seeking, or policy seeking. Laver and Hunt (1992) expert surveys. Experts were asked to evaluate each party on a twenty-point scale on the basis of the following question: "Forced to make a choice, would party leaders give up policy objectives in order to get into government, or would they sacrifice a place in the government in order to maintain policy objectives?" Laver and Hunt (1992) then classified parties with the score in the range 1.00-8.99 as interested above all in policy, parties within the range of 12.00--19.99 as interested above all in office, and those found in-between (that is, in the range 9.00-11.99) as balancing the two motivations. Using this classification, I created three dummy variables for policy-seeking, office-seeking, and balancing parties. The question remained what to do with some smaller parties that were not evaluated in Laver and Hunt (1992) expert surveys but were named by some party identifiers in the survey. Most of them appeared to be either green or nationalistic parties that, as Laver and Hunt (1992) suggest are usually policy-seeking parties. Thus, I coded them as policy-seeking.

Party in Government. Based on the CSES survey question "Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?" If "Yes," "What party is that?" If party choice matched with a governing party (1), otherwise (0).

Voter. Based on the CSES survey question on whether respondent cast a ballot. Cast a ballot (1), did not cast a ballot (0).

Left-Right Self-placement. "Where would you place yourself on this scale?" Left (0), right (10).

Left-Right Party Position. The mean value of party supporters' location on the left-right self-placement item in the CSES survey data.

Left-Right Party Extremity Position. Squared absolute distance between party left-right median and country left-right median calculated on the basis of party supporters left-right self-placement in the CSES data.

Party Family Variables: Green, Agrarian, Extreme Right, Extreme Left (Communist), Christian Democratic (Religious), Social Democratic, Conservative, Liberal, Regional (Ethnic), Other (Special Interest Parties): dummy variables, based on the *Comparative Manifestos Project* indicators.

Age. Actual age of respondent in years.

Gender. Male (1), female (0).

Education. The highest level of education attained. Respondents were coded on a 1 to 8 scale, where 8 denotes the highest level of education.

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Employment. Employed (=employed full time, part time, less than 15 hours, or helping family member) (1), otherwise (=unemployed, student, retired, housewife, permanently disabled, other) (0).

Economic Performance Evaluation. "Would you say that over the past twelve months, the state of the economy in (country) has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?" Gotten worse (1), gotten better (3).

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Table 2.1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	*Number of cases*	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*	*Minimum*	*Maximum*
Democracy Satisfaction	17177	2.899	.755	1	4
External efficacy	16997	3.685	1.830	0	8
Party position towards the system (Constitutionalism index)	17730	.205	.581	-.570	3.229
Office orientation	17730	.361	.480	0	1
Balance orientation	17730	.088	.283	0	1
Policy orientation	17730	.032	.177	0	1
Party in government	17730	.212	.409	0	1
Left-Right party position	17230	5.167	1.084	0	9
Left-Right party extremity	17151	1.144	2.247	0	25
Green	17730	.006	.075	0	1
Agrarian	17730	.010	.099	0	1
Extreme Right	17730	.002	.042	0	1
Extreme Left	17730	.014	.117	0	1
Christian Democrats	17730	.034	.180	0	1
Social Democrats	17730	.215	.411	0	1
Conservatives	17730	.168	.374	0	1
Liberals	17730	.025	.156	0	1
Regional	17730	.008	.088	0	1
Other	17730	.010	.098	0	1
Voter	17296	.899	.302	0	1
Party Identification	17573	.509	.500	0	1
Age	17566	46.689	16.863	17	98
Male	17709	.478	.500	0	1
Employment	17534	.590	.492	0	1
Education	17503	5.040	1.657	1	8
Left-Right self-placement	15241	5.143	2.251	0	10
Economic performance evaluation	116750	2.146	.718	1	3

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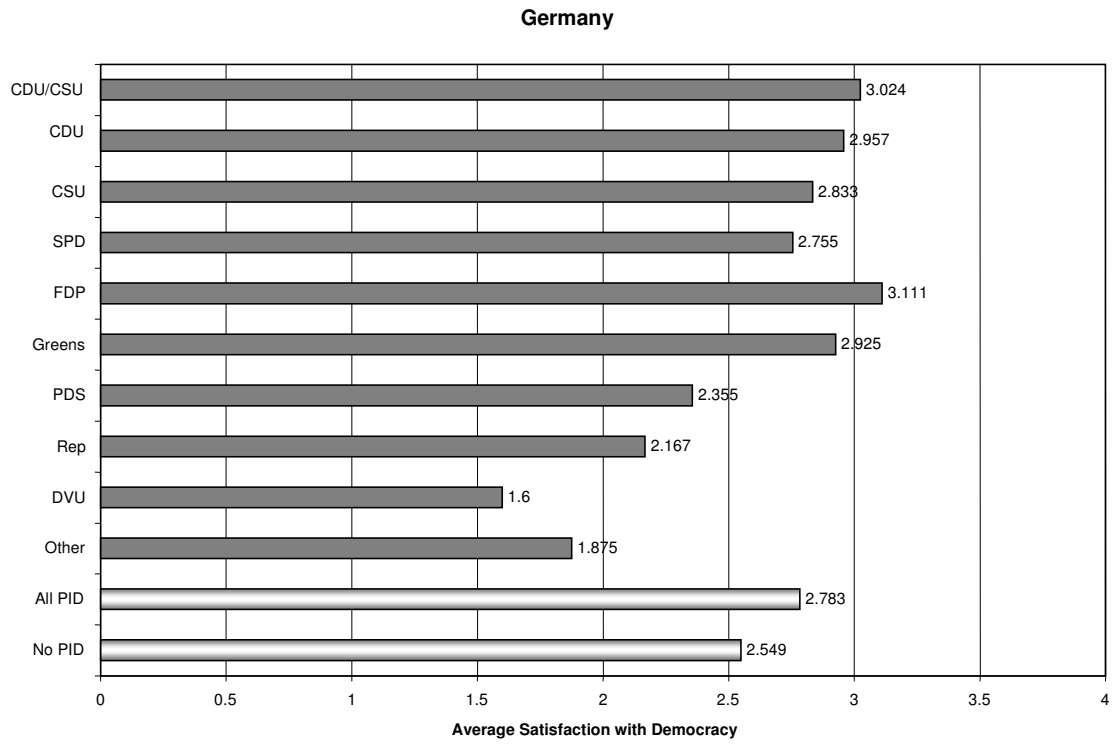
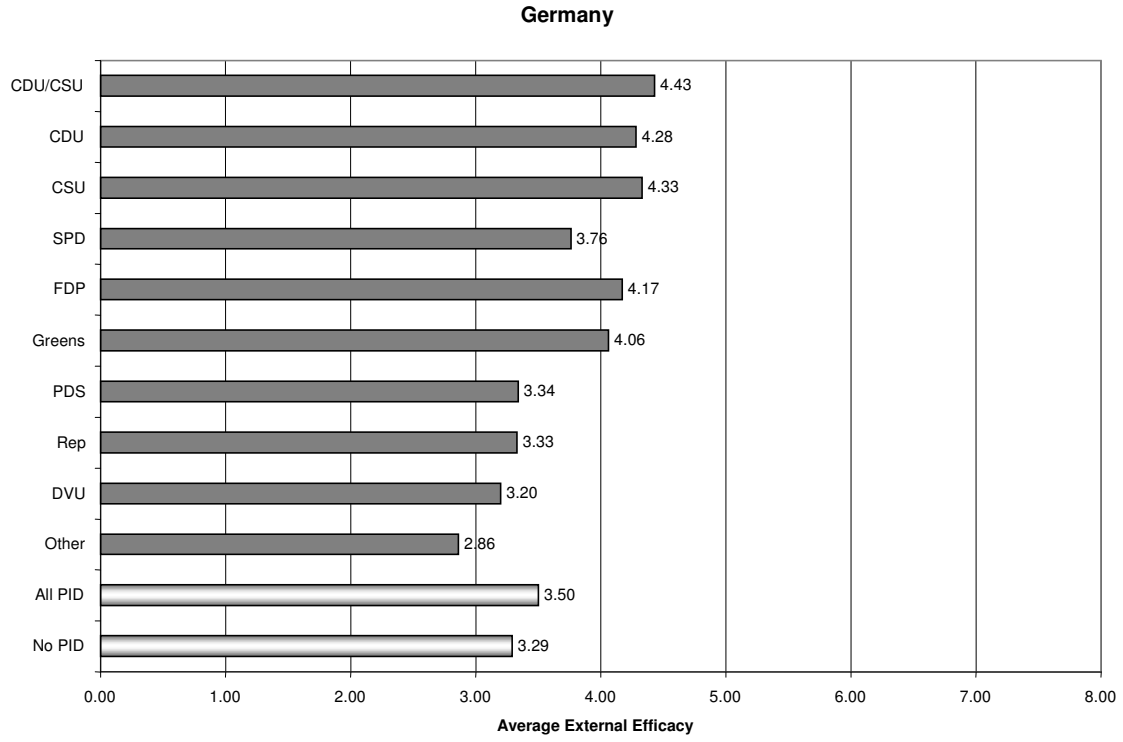
Figure 2.1. Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy by Party Identifiers and Country in Eight Established Democracies.





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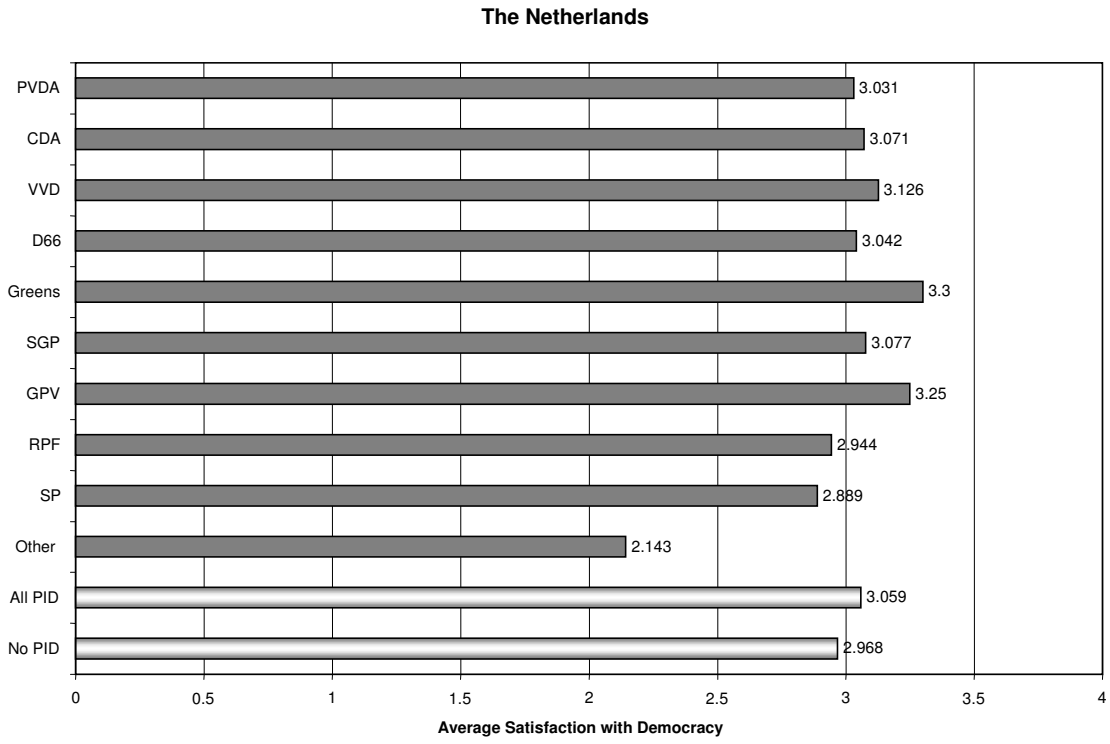

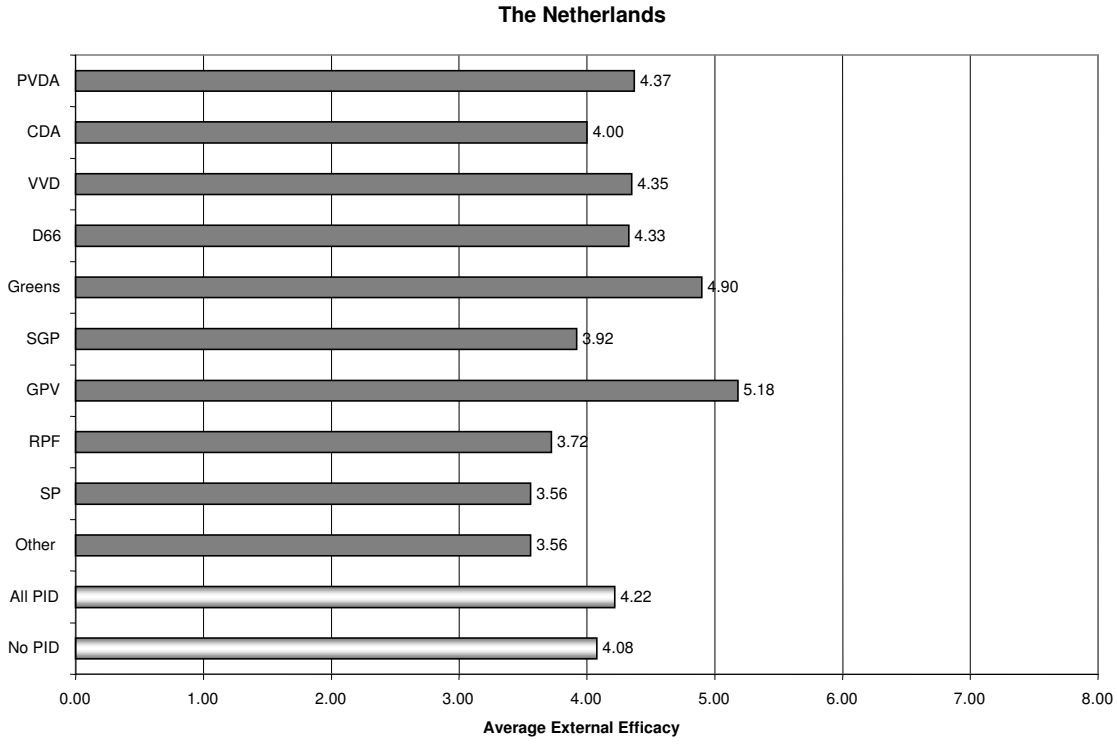

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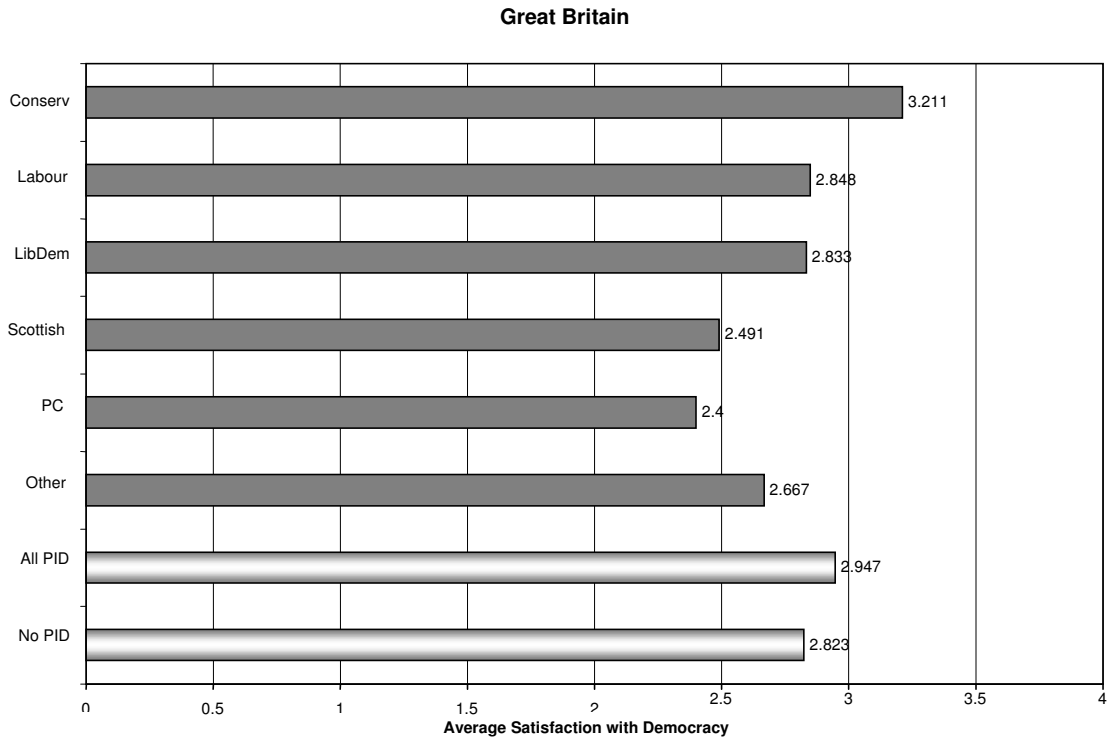

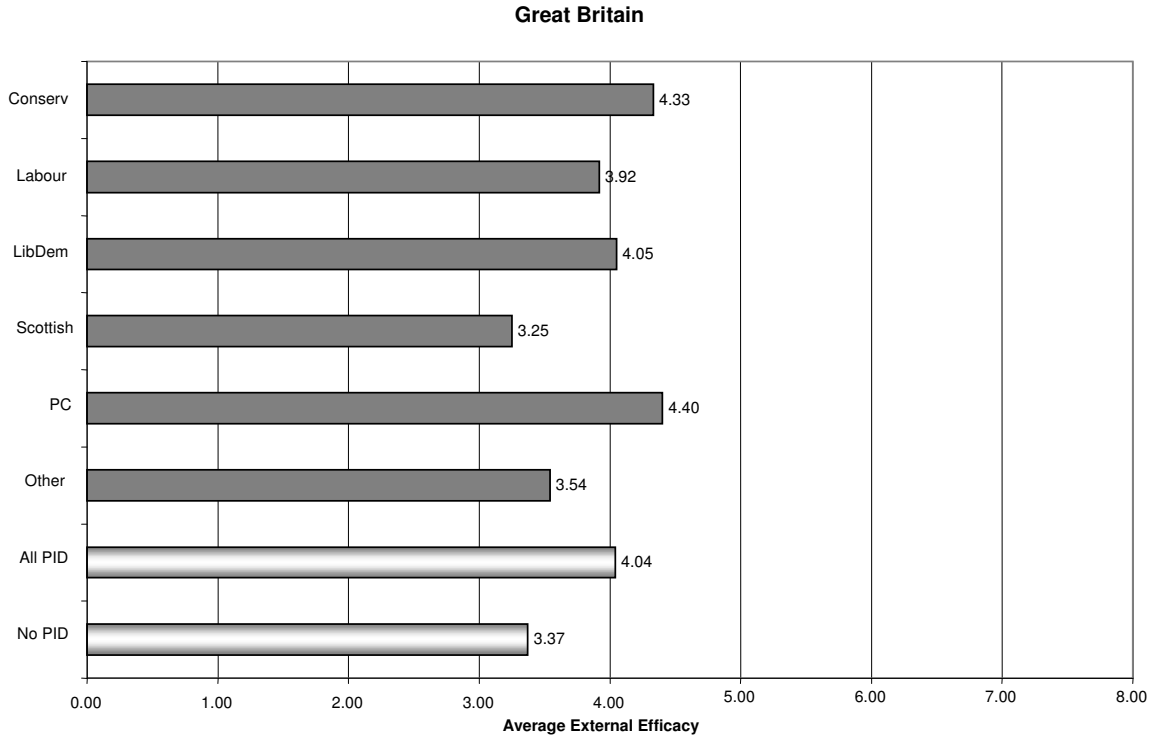

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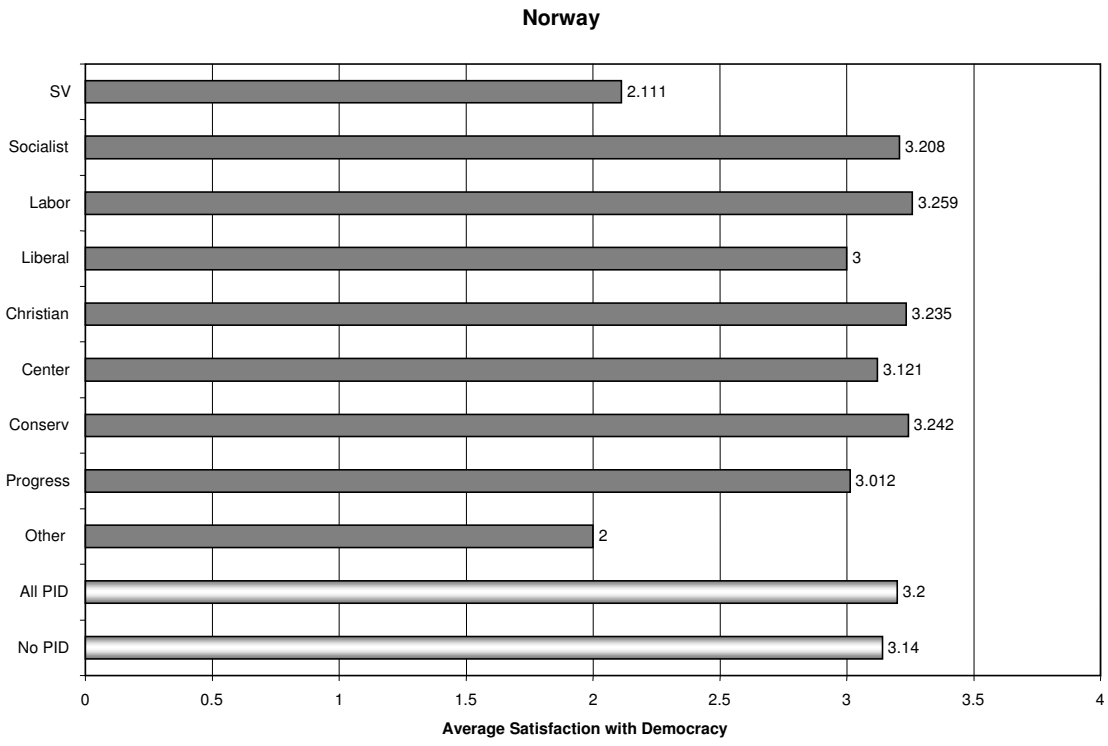

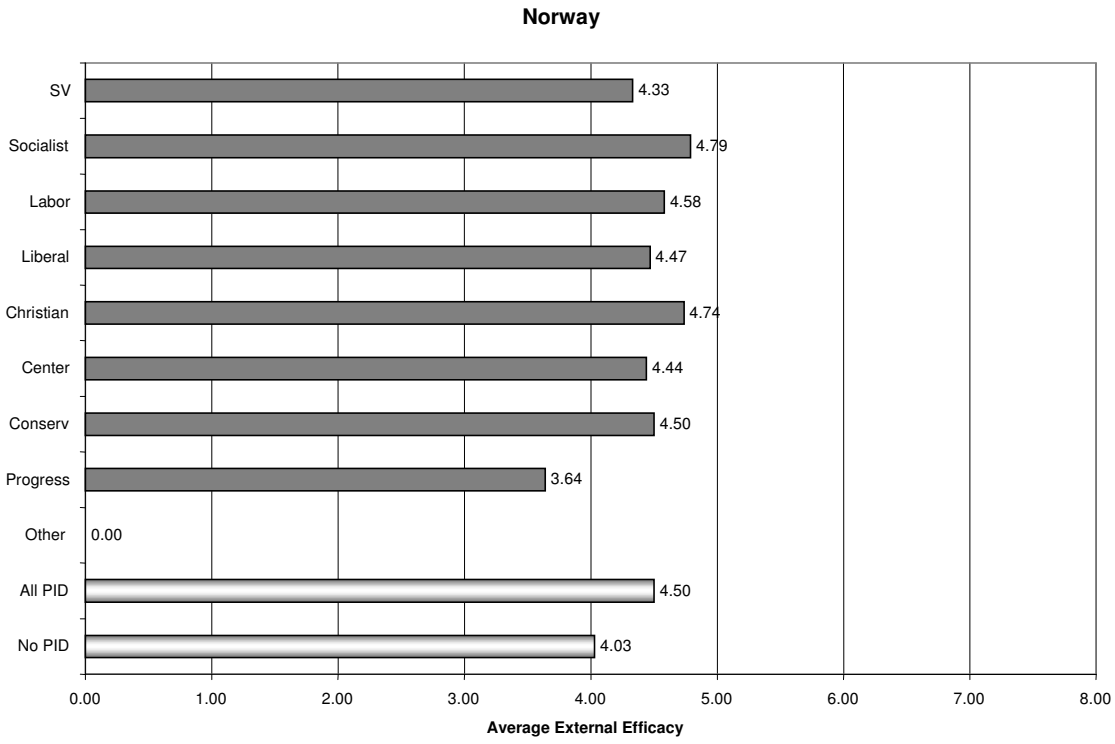

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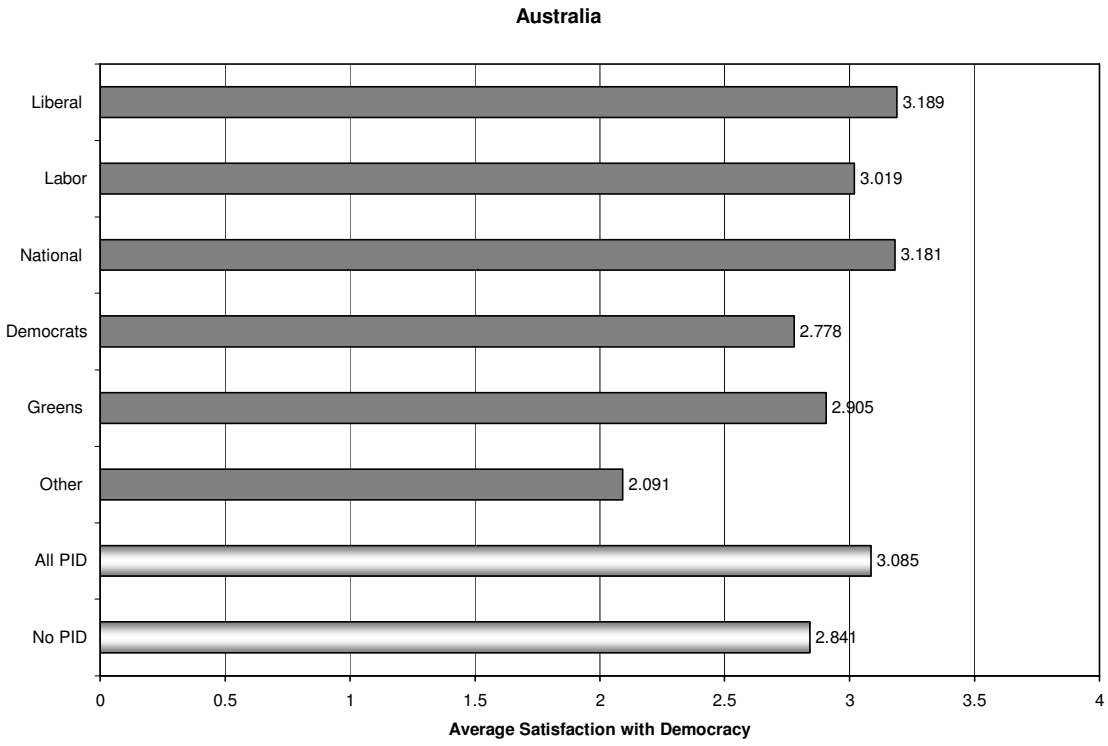

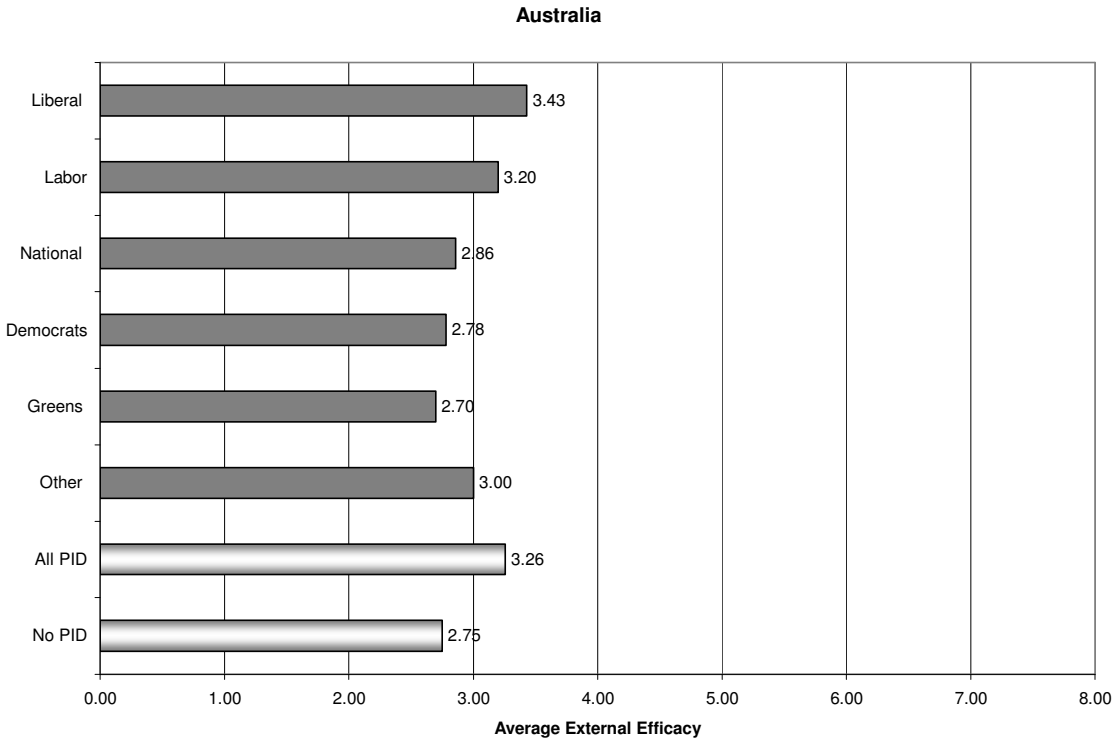

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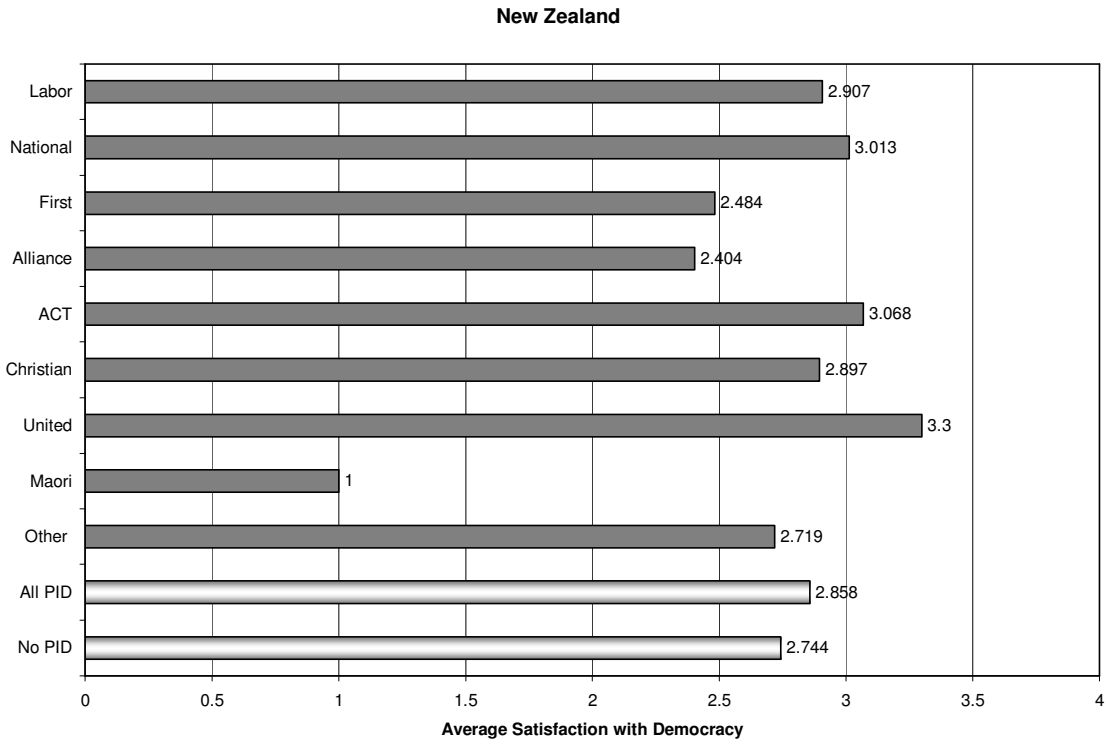

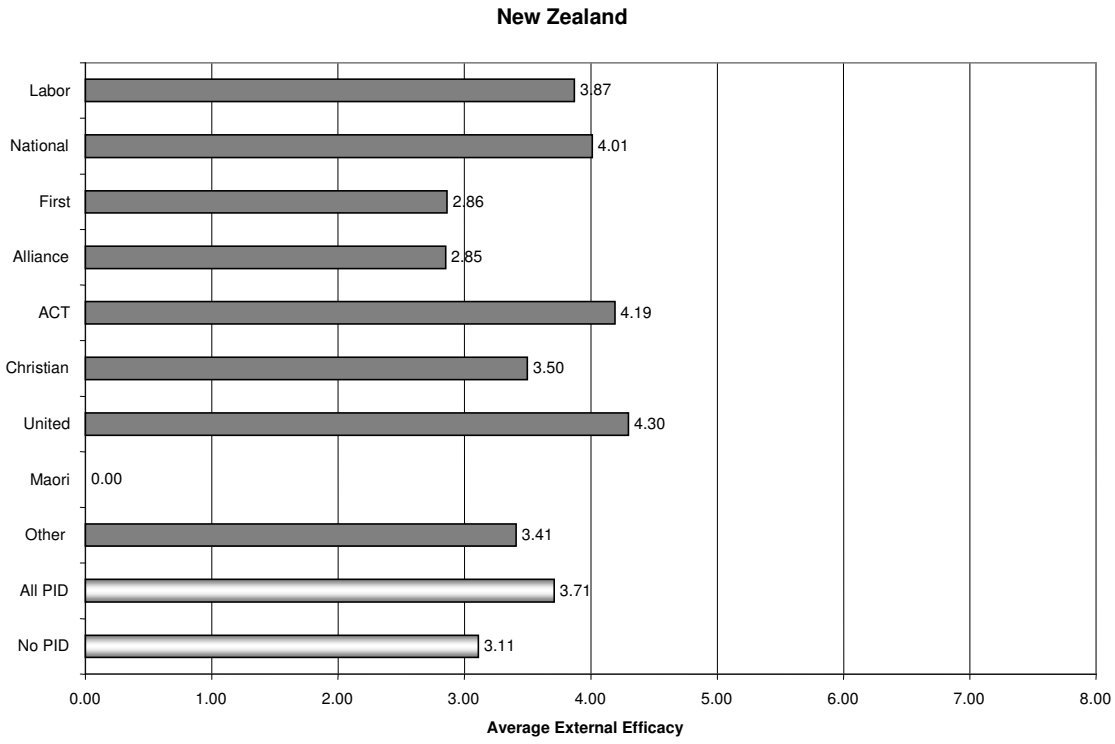

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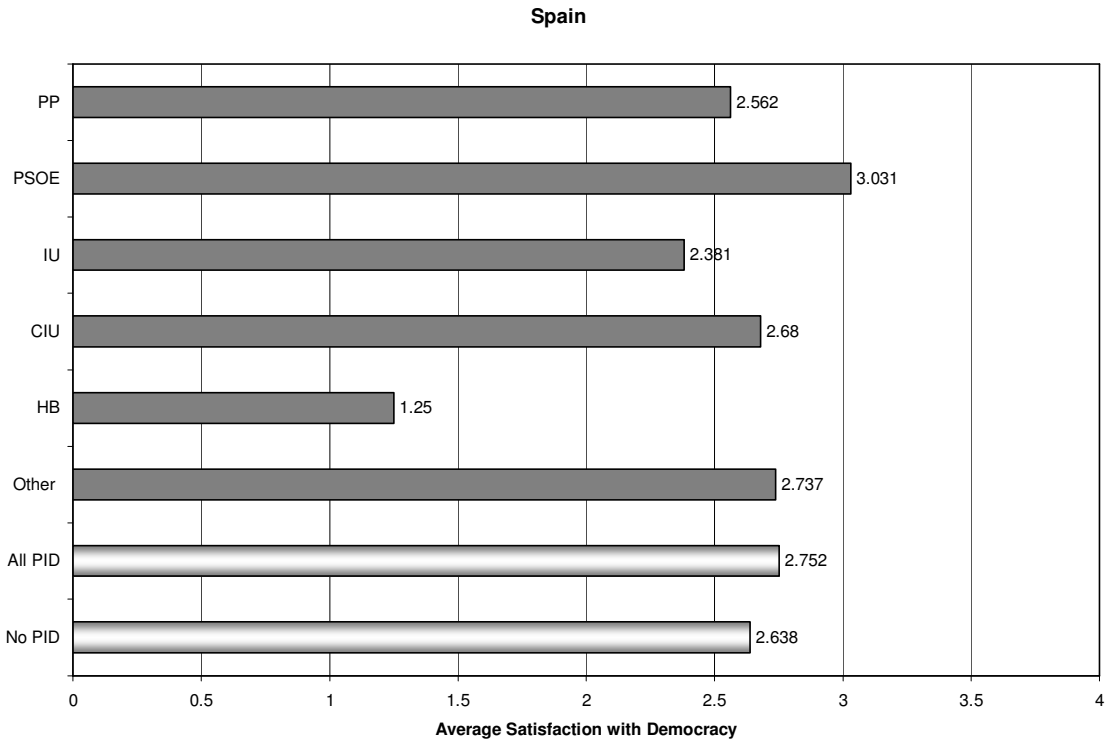

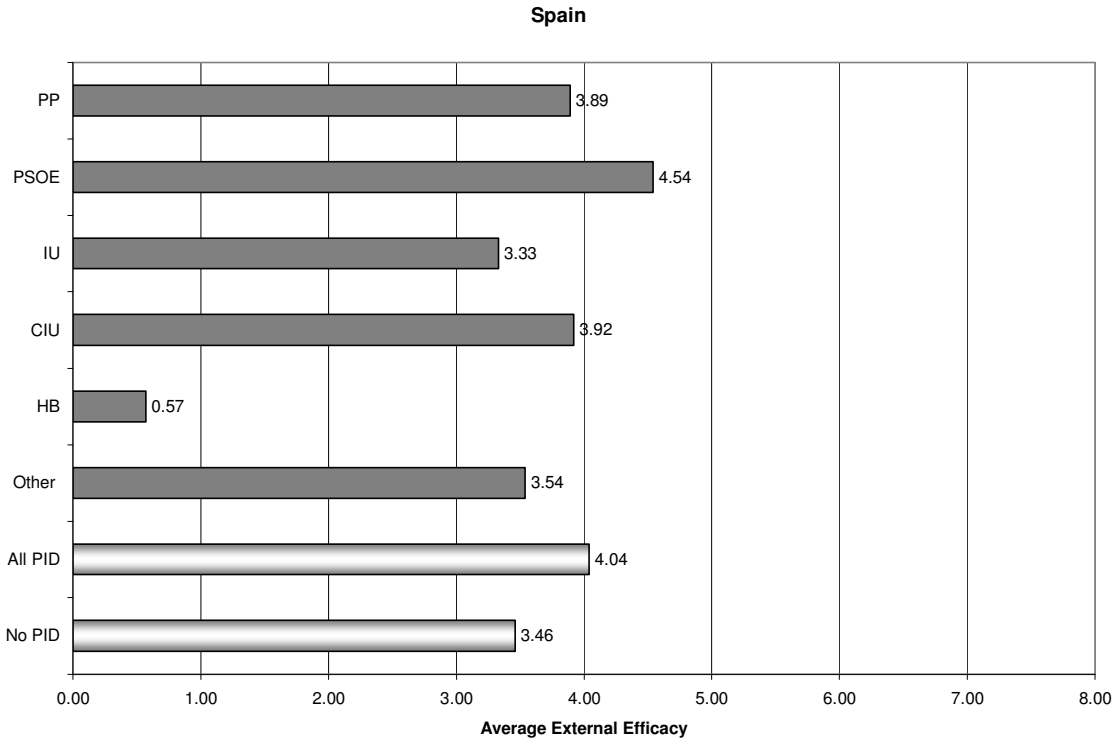

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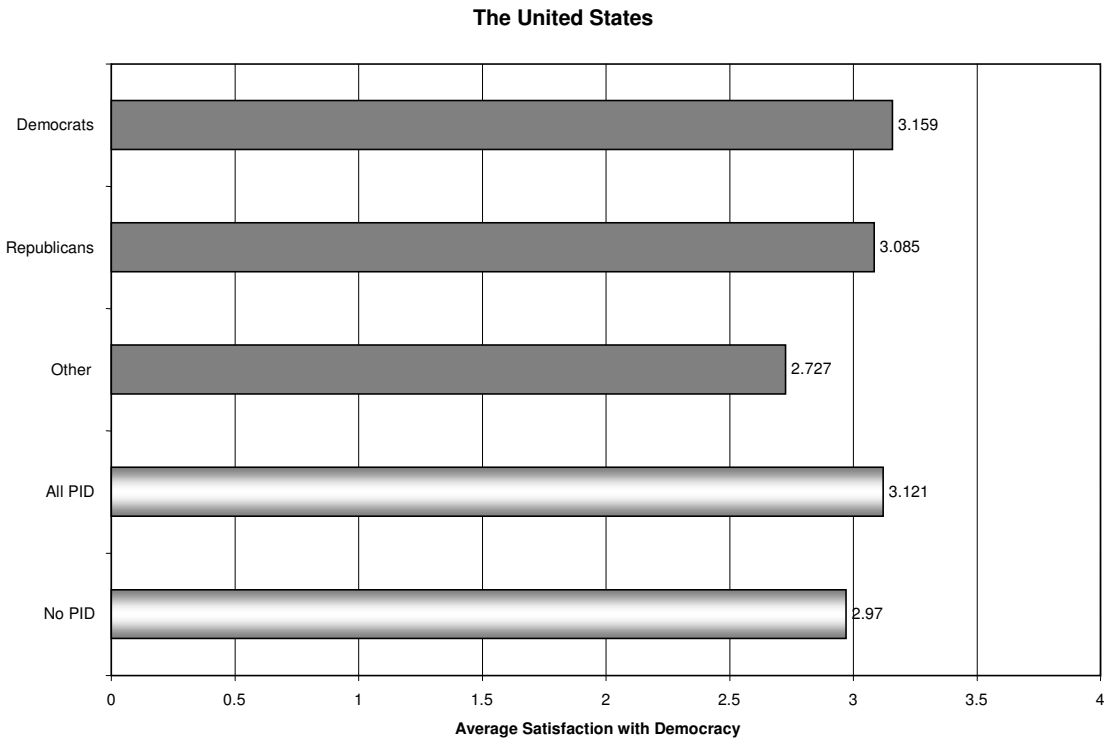

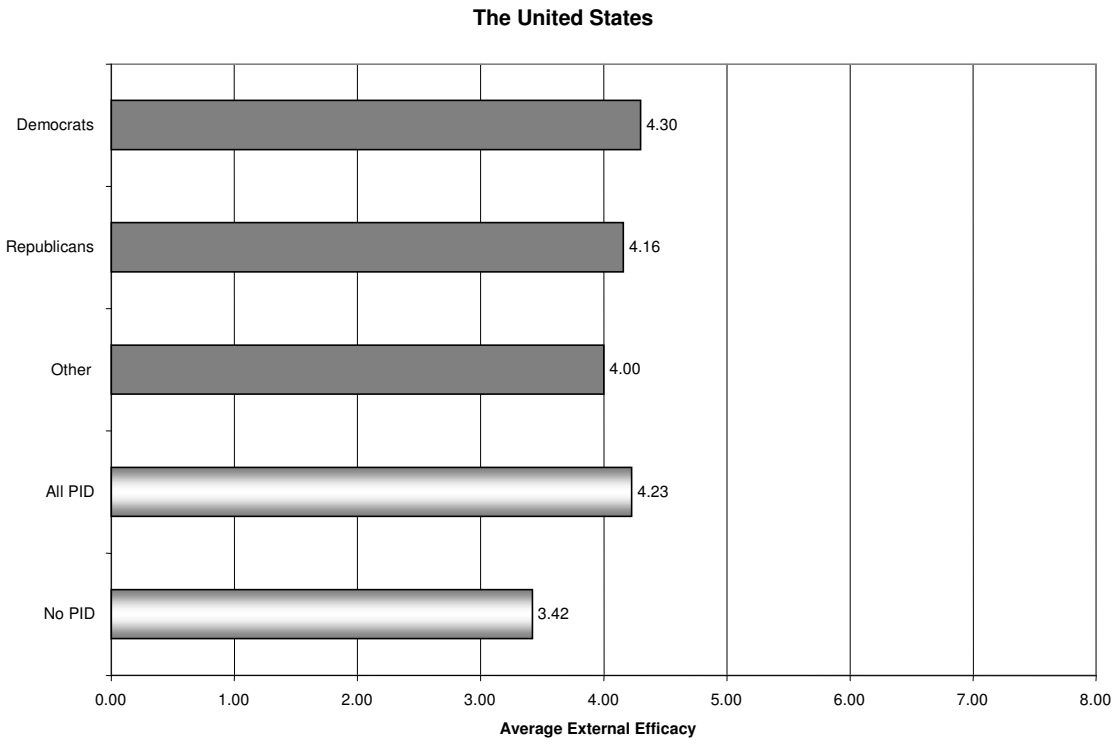

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Table 2.2. Party Support for the Political System, Partisan Satisfaction with Democracy and External Efficacy by Party and Country in Eight Established Democracies.

Parties	*Constitu-tionalism: positive*	*Constitu-tionalism: negative*	*Constitu-tionalism index*	*Satisfaction with Democracy*	*External Efficacy*
Australia (1996)					
Liberals	0	0	0	.730	.429
Labor	.204	.271	-.068	.673	.399
National (Country)	0	0	0	.730	.358
Democrats	0	.570	-.570	.593	.347
Germany (1998)					
CDU	0	0	0	.652	.534
CSU	0	0	0	.611	.542
SPD	.348	0	.348	.585	.470
FDP	.345	0	.345	.704	.521
B90/Gruene	0	0	0	.642	.507
PDS	.225	0	.225	.452	.417
Netherlands (1998)					
PVDA	.099	0	.099	.677	.547
CDA	1.036	.049	.986	.691	.500
VVD	.639	0	.639	.709	.544
D66	1.153	0	1.153	.681	.542
GroenLinks	.937	0	.937	.767	.613
United States (1996)					
Democrats	.338	0	.338	.720	.537
Republicans	1.375	0	1.375	.695	.520
New Zealand (1996)					
Labor	1.075	0	1.075	.636	.484
National	0	0	0	.671	.501
First	0	0	0	.495	.357
Alliance	0	.328	-.328	.468	.356
Norway (1997)					
Socialist Left	0	0	0	.736	.599
Labor	0	0	0	.753	.572
Liberal	.250	0	.250	.667	.559
Christian People's	0	0	0	.745	.592
Center	0	0	0	.707	.554
Conservative	0	0	0	.747	.562
Progress	.562	0	.562	.671	.455

Table 2.2. (Continued)

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United Kingdom (1997)					
Conservative	3.229	0	3.229	.737	.542
Labour	.361	0	.361	.616	.490
Liberal Democrats	.125	0	.125	.611	.507
Spain (1996)					
PP	.913	0	.913	.521	.486
PSOE	.328	.066	-.066	.677	.568
IU	.445	.026	-.026	.460	.416
CiU	.634	0	0	.560	.490
PNV	0	0	0	.583	.500

Note: Estimates for the *Satisfaction with Democracy* and *External Efficacy* represent mean values based on standardized measures (the original variables were rescaled to range from 0 to 1). Constitutionalism index = Constitutionalism: positive – Constitutionalism: negative.

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Table 2.3. Two-Stage Least-Squares Estimates Predicting Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy and External Efficacy with Political Party position Towards the Political System, Party Characteristics, National Context, and Individual Level Controls.

Independent Variables	***Democracy Satisfaction***	***External Efficacy***
First Stage: predicting party positions towards the system		
Party goals [a]		
Office	.602***	.607***
	(.042)	(.042)
Balance	.537***	.545***
	(.043)	(.044)
Party in government	.069***	.069***
	(.012)	(.012)
Left-Right party position	.498***	-.002
	(.008)	(.002)
Left-Right party extremity	-.040***	-.041***
	(.003)	(.003)
Party Family [b]		
Green	1.690***	1.702***
	(.070)	(.070)
Agrarian	.058	.059
	(.038)	(.039)
Extreme Right	-1.090***	-1.078***
	(.095)	(.095)
Extreme Left	2.094***	2.110***
	(.061)	(.062)
Christian Democratic	-.601***	-.602***
	(.024)	(.024)
Social Democratic	.481***	.481***
	(.020)	(.021)
Liberal	-.300***	-.298***
	(.025)	(.025)
Regional	.388***	.394***
	(.055)	(.056)
Other	-.256***	-.256***
	(.049)	(.049)
Constant	-2.754***	-2.769***
	(.051)	(.051)
N	13 896	13 776
R^2	.545	.545

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Table 2.3. (Continued)

Independent Variables	*Democracy Satisfaction*	*External Efficacy*
Second Stage: predicting citizen views about the system		
Party position towards the political system	.109***	.131*
	(.022)	(.058)
Party identification	.042*	.479***
	(.019)	(.045)
Party in government	.106***	.157***
	(.017)	(.042)
Voter	.120***	.263***
	(.022)	(.052)
Left-Right party extremity	-.014***	-.041***
	(.003)	(.008)
Age	.001*	-.005***
	(.000)	(.001)
Male	.019	.043
	(.012)	(.029)
Employment	.032*	-.056
	(.014)	(.034)
Education	.016***	.124***
	(.004)	(.010)
Left-Right self-placement	.018***	.036***
	(.003)	(.008)
Economic performance evaluation	.115***	.368***
	(.033)	(.023)
Country effects [c]		
Australia	.115***	-.570***
	(.033)	(.077)
Germany	-.274***	.077
	(.028)	(.067)
Netherlands	-.030	.383***
	(.026)	(.065)
New Zealand	-.151***	-.188**
	(.026)	(.060)
Norway	.159***	.523***
	(.027)	(.066)
Spain	-.199***	.398***
	(.036)	(.095)
UK	-.135***	.051
	(.026)	(.061)
Constant	2.254***	1.849***
	(.049)	(.118)
N	13 896	13 776
R^2	.098	.10

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate robust standard errors: *p<.05, **p<.01. ***p<.001.
[a] Reference party orientation is Policy.
[b] Reference party family is Conservative.
[c] Reference country dummy is the US.

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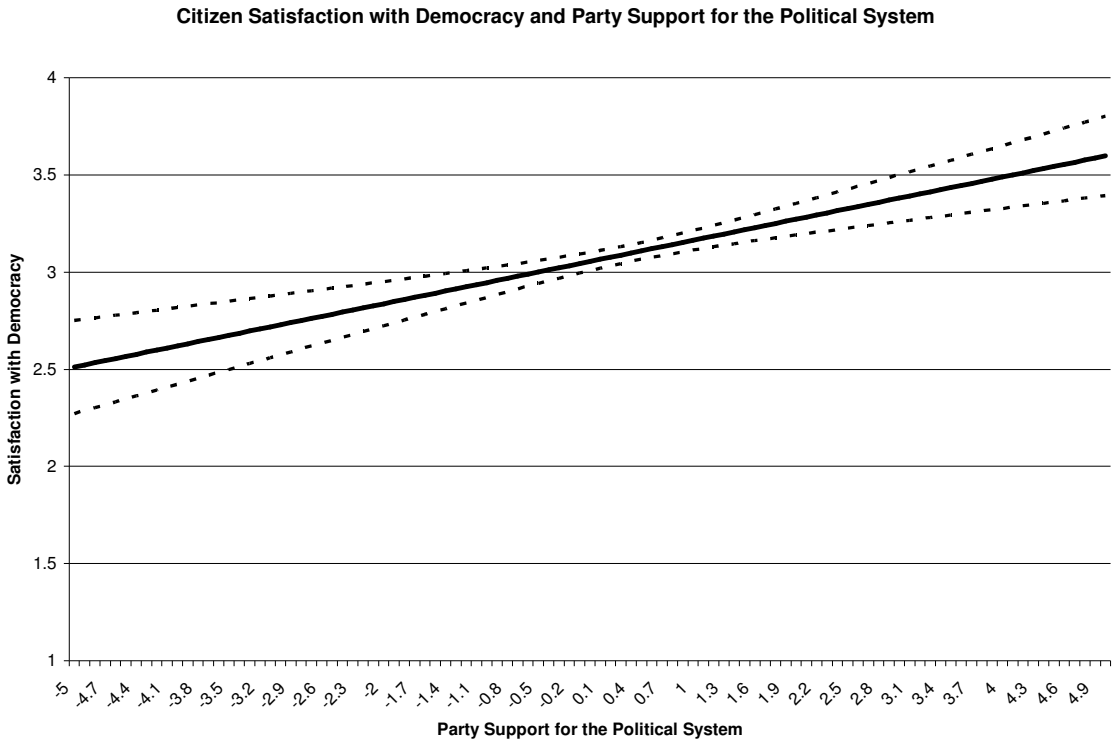
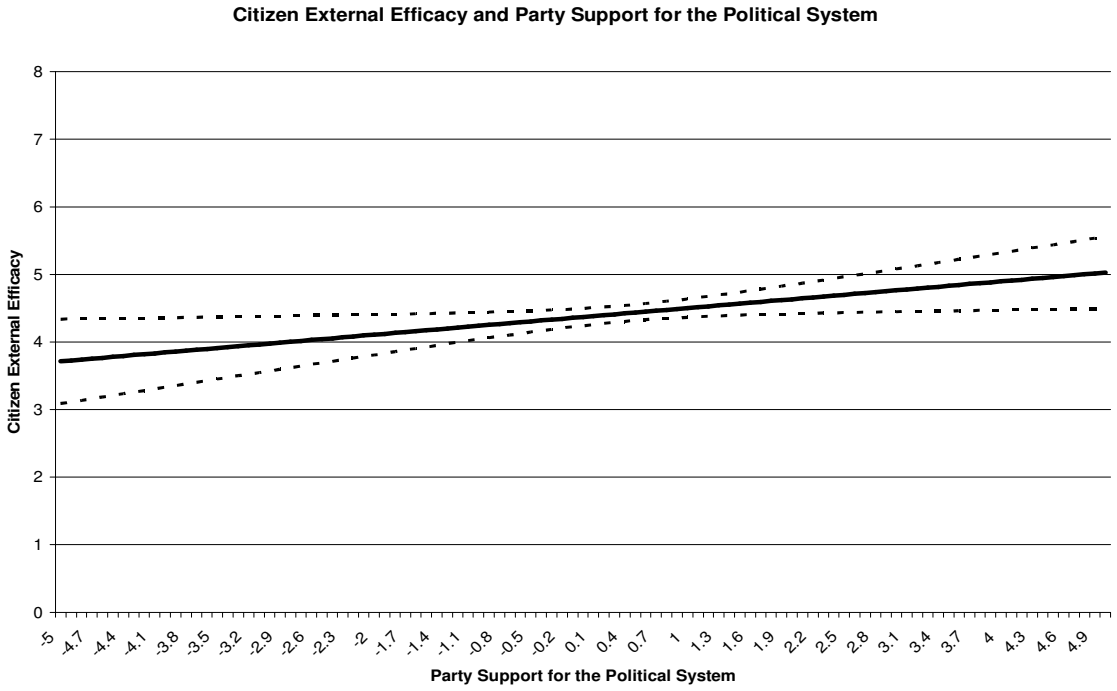
Figure 2.2. Substantive Effects of Party Persuasion on Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy and their External Efficacy.





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Estimates with alternative measure for *External Efficacy*.

External Efficacy (Alternative measure). Additive index of responses to four CSES survey items: 1) Political parties in [country] care what people think (5); don't care what people think (1). 2) Members of [Congress/Parliament] know what ordinary people think (5); don't know what ordinary people think (1). 3) It makes a difference who is in power (5); doesn't make a difference who is in power. 4) Who people vote for makes a difference (5); doesn't make a difference (1). Cronbach's alpha is .51. The scale ranges from 0 to 16.

Table 2.4. Two-Stage Least-Squares Estimates Predicting External Efficacy (Alternative Measure) with Political Party positions Towards the System, Party Characteristics, National Context, and Individual Level Controls.

Independent Variables	***External Efficacy (Alternative Measure)***
Party goals [a]	
Office	.607***
	(.042)
Balance	.546***
	(.044)
Party in government	.068***
	(.012)
Left-Right party position	.501***
	(.008)
Left-Right party extremity	-.041***
	(.003)
Party Family [b]	
Green	1.713***
	(.070)
Agrarian	.061
	(.039)
Extreme Right	-1.074***
	(.097)
Extreme Left	2.124***
	(.062)
Christian Democratic	-.599***
	(.024)
Social Democratic	.484***
	(.021)
Liberal	-.297***
	(.025)
Regional	.397***
	(.056)
Other	-.254***
	(.049)
Constant	-2.776***
	(.052)
N	13696
R^2	.545

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Table 2.4. (Continued)

Independent Variables	*External Efficacy (Alternative Measure)*
Party position towards the political system	.199*
	(.087)
Party identification	1.215***
	(.071)
Party in government	-.060
	(.065)
Left-Right party extremity	-.066***
	(.013)
Age	-.006***
	(.002)
Male	-.014
	(.046)
Employment	-.156**
	(.053)
Education	.191***
	(.015)
Left-Right self-placement	.051***
	(.012)
Economic performance evaluation	.540***
	(.036)
Country effects [c]	
Australia	-.697***
	(.124)
Germany	.274**
	(.107)
Netherlands	-1.685***
	(.095)
New Zealand	.169
	(.093)
Norway	.983***
	(.101)
Spain	1.044***
	(.139)
UK	-.064
	(.094)
Constant	6.163***
	(.183)
N	13 696
R^2	.153

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate robust standard errors: *p<.05, **p<.01. ***p<.001.
[a] Reference party orientation is Policy.
[b] Reference party family is Conservative.
[c] Reference country dummy is the US.

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CHAPTER 3

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN REPRESENTING THE MEDIAN VOTER

Democracy is based on the principle of popular sovereignty. In contemporary democracies, however, citizens do not rule directly. Due to time and competence constraints, as well as social choice and coordination problems involved in collective decision-making, citizens delegate authority to others to act in their name and place (Strøm 2004: 56-8) The quality of the democratic process therefore depends largely on the ability of political actors to produce unbiased and responsive policy representation of the majority policy preferences. The correspondence between citizens' and their representatives' policy preferences signals whether citizens are able to exercise control over policy decision-making and whether the government institutions are fulfilling their representative function as envisioned by democratic theorists.

It is not surprising then that free, fair, and periodic elections are viewed as a central feature of the democratic process. Democratic elections provide an opportunity for citizens to select representatives whose interests are best aligned with their public policy preferences. What is more, democratic elections allow people to punish representatives that deviate too much from their promises or to select better ones if available the next time they go to vote. In short, democratic elections provide an

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important mechanism by which citizens can secure long-term correspondence between government and public policy preferences and ensure majority rule.

Given the importance of the representative process in contemporary democracies, it should not be surprising that the quality of policy representation is likely to have important consequences for system legitimacy in many contemporary democracies. An intriguing finding of the previous chapter was that office-seeking parties produce more support for the political system among their supporters than policy-seeking parties. This result could be due to the fact that office-seeking parties are simply more often in control of policy making and therefore are better able to align their policy preferences with those of their supporters. And where parties do a better job in aligning the preferences of policy makers and majority citizens, we can expect citizens to develop higher levels of support for the political system in their country.

Examining the question of whether political parties influence system legitimacy via policy representation requires a two-step analysis. First, we need to examine the role of political parties in producing accurate representation of citizens' policy preferences. As a next step, we can then focus on whether and how accurate policy representation translates into citizen attitudes towards democratic governance in their country. This chapter focuses on the first step of this analysis. Specifically, I examine the role of political parties in generating accurate representation of the median voter. I begin by discussing why political parties are important actors in the representative process of contemporary democracies. I then proceed to analyzing the role of political parties in producing accurate representation of the policy preferences of the median voter. Existing theoretical and empirical literature commonly assumes that political parties take stable

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policy positions. This assumption, however, overestimates the importance of institutional configurations, such as the presence of single member district and proportional representation electoral systems, and underestimates the role that political parties play in producing accurate policy representation. I argue that volatile party positions contribute to accurate policy representation. I construct a model with volatile parties and, through a series of simulations, explore its consequences for the accuracy of policy representation compared to what stable party positions are expected to produce.

I approach the accuracy of policy representation as a multi-faceted phenomenon that has both long-term and short-term qualities. This distinction is important because political parties in some systems might perform well with respect to long-term aspects, but under-perform with respect to short-term aspects of accurate policy representation, or vice versa. In new democracies, however, only short-term aspects are available. I therefore discuss the implications of my model with volatile party position taking for the role parties play in producing accurate policy representation in these two sets of democracies. What is more, I explore the representational consequences of my model having introduced additional set of assumptions that distinguishes established and new democracies. The concluding section of this chapter discusses the implications of this model and sets the stage for my analysis of system legitimacy in established and new democracies in the next chapter.

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The Role of Parties in Representative Democracies

Contemporary democracies are representative democracies in which citizens delegate authority to political actors to promote their policy preferences. Various reasons underlie the need for citizens to delegate policy decision power to their representatives. Social choice theories reveal, for instance, that even when each individual in a group is fully rational, it may be impossible to generate a transitive preference ordering for the group as a whole. Indeed, the Condorcet paradox shows that collective preference cycles, or the lack of a 'Condorcet winner' (one that can defeat any other option in pairwise majority voting), can occur with as few as three players and three alternatives (Arrow 1951, Riker 1982, Shepsle and Bonchek 1997). The likelihood of collective preference cycles increases with the number of players and with the number of ordered outcomes (Niemi and Weisberg 1968; Riker and Ordeshook 1973).

Political parties help to alleviate these social choice problems because electoral competition forces parties to aggregate and articulate citizen policy preferences, and subsequently package them into coherent policy platforms. In virtually all democratic systems, parties then present their policy platforms at the time of election. Furthermore, once elected, political parties organize and control policy-decision making in parliament and government. Indeed, parties in cabinet, particularly in parliamentary democracies that feature a singular chain of delegation and highly cohesive party organizations, enjoy virtually monopolistic agenda control (Strøm 2004: 70).

In addition to alleviating social choice problems, political parties also reduce the incidence of coordination or collective action problems in society. Collective action

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problems exist when individual members of a group have incentives to behave in ways that lead to collectively sub-optimal (inefficient) outcomes (Olson 1965). In coordination problems, the participants face a choice between multiple efficient equilibria; but to realize any of these favorable outcomes, the group members must behave in mutually consistent ways. Political parties, especially when they are centralized and cohesive, reduce the incidence of collectively self-defeating behaviors. Party caucuses provide a forum for discussing the trade-offs involved in choosing different policies. Seeking to appeal to larger numbers of the electorate, political parties need to devise programmatic offerings that have the most efficient policy configurations.

What is more, political parties are also highly useful to voters because they provide a mechanism of screening candidates for public office. Once elected, parties also ensure that only the most suited members get selected for cabinet positions (Strøm 2004: 63). In short, parties play an important role in the representative process in democracies because they help to align policy preferences between the public and elites and permit citizen control over the policy-making process.

The Role of Parties in Producing Accurate Policy Representation

Many students of democratic politics have noted the importance of political parties. For instance, Giovanni Sartori maintains "citizens in Western democracies are represented *through* and *by* parties. This is inevitable" (1968, 471; italics in original). Similarly, Bryce (1921: 119) also argued "No one has shown how representative government could be worked without political parties" (see also Dalton 2002, 125, Katz

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and Mair 1994, Ziegler 1993). In short, representative democracies might be indeed unworkable (Aldrich 1995, 3) if not unthinkable (Schattschneider 1942) without political parties.

Although there seems to be a consensus among students of democratic politics that political parties are indeed crucial for organizing democratic governance, existing research provides inconclusive and contradictory evidence on whether political parties play any role in producing accurate representation of the median voter. Competitive party theories suggest that parties should converge to the position of the median voter and therefore we should see highly accurate representation of the median voter's preferences at each and every election. Empirical analyses, however, demonstrate that parties do not converge. Assuming that parties take stable policy positions, existing literature provides a grim view of possibilities to represent the median voter and concludes that accurate representation is at best conditional upon institutional settings.

In the subsequent section, I discuss how widespread the assumption of stable party positions is and what consequences it has for our theories of the quality of collective policy representation. I suggest that taking into account that political parties vary their policy positions over time significantly improves our understanding of representational processes in contemporary democracies. In the next section, I therefore construct a model with volatile party positions and demonstrate its representational consequences with a series of simulations. Given that the assumption about party positional stability is particularly damaging for the accuracy of policy representation in two-party systems, I estimate the model separately for two- and three-party systems.

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Further, I explore the representational consequences of the model in new and established democracies. New and established democracies differ not only with respect to the length of democratic experience and therefore the ability of political parties to bring policy preferences of the median voter in line with the one of policy makers. The electorate in new democracies also has lower levels of political sophistication and a higher incidence of vote choices based on non-policy considerations. In estimating the models, I therefore also take into account electorate characteristics that differentiate new and established democracies.

Questioning the Assumption of Stable Party Positions

The assumption of stable party positions is ubiquitous in both theoretical and empirical scholarly work. Theoretical studies on party competition seem to be committed to identifying equilibrium party positions. However, success in constructing cogent reasoning for how, why, and where a party comes to a position divergent from the median voter's so far has been elusive (e.g., Downs, 1957, Robertson 1976; Aldrich 1983; Cox 1990; Kollman, Miller, and Page 1992; Budge 1994; Adams 2001a; 2001b; Snyder and Ting 2002).

Stability is assumed also in empirical work that uses party dummy variables on the right hand side to estimate parties' policy effects (see, e.g. Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson 1995; but see also Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, 256-283). This is also implicitly true for analyses that treat party policy tendencies as indicated by their family affiliation—e.g., social democratic, Christian, liberal, or conservative—or *tendance*—

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e.g., left-right—(see, e.g., Cameron 1978). And, inasmuch as expert placements of parties across a decade's time show small differences (McDonald and Mendes 2001, 100), it is true for analyses that use 'expert' scoring of party positions (e.g., Cusack 1997; Rueda and Pontusson 2000; Huber and Powell 1994; Powell and Vanberg 2000; Powell 2000; Müller and Strøm 2000). But central tendencies are generalizations. They miss an important aspect of reality; parties move around in the policy space.

Diverse coalition theory provides a useful perspective on why political parties move around in the policy space over time. Political parties are collections of individuals with diverse policy preferences. Political candidates sort themselves into parties with general policy tendencies that are most closely aligned with their policy preferences. This is why we often observe parties maintaining their policy-related reputations. Yet any party is likely to face policy disagreements due to diverse candidate positions around a party's central tendency. As candidates within a party vie for party leadership positions, the policy character of a party is likely to shift to reflect the views of the winning coalition (Snyder and Ting 2002: 102-3).

From this perspective, volatility in party policy positions is likely to characterize all political parties where platforms are selected democratically rather than in a dictatorial manner. The *Manifestos Research Group* project data that provides the most thorough record of party positions show indeed substantial movements in party ideological positions (Budge and Klingemann 1990). More in-depth country analyses seem to confirm this pattern (see country specific commentaries in Müller and Strøm 2000b).

Given the reality of party positional volatility, our understanding of the role that political parties play in producing accuracy in collective policy representation specifically

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and electoral democracy more generally might be at best incomplete, if not misleading. It may be this aspect of reality, variability, which plays a major role in producing accurate representation. The remaining sections of this chapter are therefore designed to examine whether and under what conditions party ideological volatility is likely to produce more accurate representation of the median voter.

The Median Position

Perhaps a single, unified, and most relevant standard to assess the quality of party representative performance is the correspondence between voters' expressed preferences and public policy that parties are expected to promote (McDonald, Mendes, and Budge, 2004, Saward 1998). Specifically, the relationship of primary interest is collective representation reflected in the extent to which the median voter policy position matches the one favored by policy makers in parliament.

The median preference has been shown to be a position that is "most preferred" by a collective. In other words, it is the only position that is favored by a majority of individuals, assuming a uni-dimensional space and single-peaked distribution of individual preferences (Black 1948, see also Huber and Powell 1994, 293). Scholars have commonly employed median position as an indicator of majority preferences in the electorate (see Huber and Powell 1994, McDonald, Mendes, and Budge 2004, Black 1963, Powell 2000, Powell and Vanberg 2000).

The median position has also been identified as crucial for the formation of a policy majority in parliament (van Roozendaal 1990, 1992). The median parliamentary party – that is, the party with which the median parliamentarian affiliates – is the party in

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control of policy making. By definition, without the median, a knowable and coherent majority simply cannot be formed. In a two-party system the median parliamentary party is the majority party in parliament that automatically becomes the party in government, and there cannot be much doubt about its control of policy making. In multi-party systems, policy control by a median parliamentary party could be undone by non-policy considerations during negotiations over government formation. However, evidence on governments in multi-party systems reveals that the median parliamentary party is in government about 80% of the time (Laver and Budge 1992; Müller and Strøm 2000a, 564). Where they are not, this is often under minority governments where the median can still exercise control over legislative coalitions (Strøm 1990b). In short, given that the party of the median legislator can be plausibly be assumed to be in the most powerful position with respect to policy decision-making (van Roozendaal 1990, 1992, but see Austen-Smith and Banks 1990) and the median voter as the most preferred position in the electorate, congruence between the two therefore provides an important and primary standard for evaluation of the accuracy of policy representation.

Representational Qualities

I examine accurate policy representation with respect to three key qualities: (1) congruence, (2) non-bias, and (3) responsiveness between the median voter and the median parliamentary party. Congruence is a short-run quality, focused as it is on per-election results. Responsiveness and non-bias are longer-run qualities of representation. Congruence refers to the average distance between winning positions and preferences of

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median voter. In operational terms this is the average per election absolute value of the distance between the two. Full congruence, a zero average, implies accuracy in policy representation because it indicates that in each and every election the ideological position of a median parliamentary party matches the preference of the median voter.

Non-bias refers to how well the average ideological positions of winning parties match the typical preferences of median voter. In other words, it records the extent to which short term distortions cumulate or compensate over time. In operational terms, if the median voter average position is zero, bias is indicated by the intercept of the relationship between the median voter and median parliamentary party positions. The absence of bias, a zero intercept, denotes the most accurate outcome for policy representation as it indicates that over the long run average winning positions match the average over time preferences of median voters. A negative bias indicates that the median party in parliament is more left oriented than the median voter. Alternatively, a positive bias suggests a more right leaning policy orientation of policy makers than the median voter.

Finally, responsiveness refers to whether and, if so, how changes in policies espoused by a median parliamentary party relate to changes in median voter preferences. In operational terms this is the slope coefficient of the core relationship. Direct responsiveness, a slope value of 1.0, represents the most accurate outcome as it indicates that changes in winning policy programs have an expected one-to-one correspondence to changes in the expressed preferences of median voters. Slopes greater than 1.0 indicate more polarized outcomes than tracking the median voter would warrant, and slopes less

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than 1.0 indicate a more centrist tendency than varied positions of median voters would warrant.

Most research in the existing literature focuses on short-term congruence between the median voter position and the one of the median legislator (see, for instance, Huber and Powell 1994, Powell 2000, Powell and Vanberg 2000, but see Strøm 2004, 83). This approach, however, overlooks that countries with large short-term distortions do not necessarily have a long-term bias. In other words, the government's ideological position may be incongruent with voters' preferences at the time of any one election. However, over a series of elections the policy incongruities may cancel each other out, leaving the median over-time median parliamentary party close to that of the electorate (McDonald, Mendes, Budge 2004).[7]

An empirical example may help fix ideas. Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 show the trends in the left-right positions of the median voter and the government in two countries: Germany and the United States from 1950 to the mid-990s. These figures show that short-term distortions are much larger in the United States than in Germany. However, both systems produce unbiased policy representation over the long run because short-term distortions tend to cancel each other out. What is more, we see that the median voter position is not static: for instance, in the United States, it has been consistently shifting towards the right of the ideological spectrum and the government position has responded to this shift. Similarly, with the exception of the early 1970s, German government has also been highly responsive to the movements of the median voter.

[Figure 3.1 and 3.2 About Here]

[7] Similarly, a recent study by Kaare Strøm refers to short-term policy divergence as the efficiency of policy representation, and long-term policy divergence as systematic bias in policy representation (see Strøm 2004: 83).

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In short, long-term bias, responsiveness, and short-term distortions are all important aspects of accurate policy representation. By focusing on short-term distortions only, most existing research provides us with a limited view of how well the median voter is represented. Such an approach does not allow us to see whether short-term distortions cumulate or cancel each other out over long periods of time, and therefore provides us with the worst-case scenario with respect to accurate representation of the median voter. Policy representation can be better understood as an ongoing process and a multi-faceted phenomenon.

Assumptions

In order to evaluate the accuracy of collective representation, I simulate 1000 elections for scenarios with different sets of assumptions. The two key ingredients in the core relationship are the policy positions of parties and voters. For party systems, I make assumptions about the number of parties in a system, policy program left-right locations, and volatility. For voters, I specify where they are located along a left-right dimension, how they decide elections, and how they move in ways that create more or less volatility. Please see appendix for the specific STATA commands how to execute these simulations.

Party Positions and Party Systems. I examine two scenarios separately for two- and three-party systems. In one scenario, I assume stable party positions. I then examine the consequences for accurate policy representation for party systems in which party positions vary randomly around their general tendencies. The Left Party is assumed to

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reside in the negative range of scores on the left-right ideological continuum. The Right Party is generally located in the positive range and is equally removed to the right from the zero point as the Left Party is removed from the zero point to the left. The position of the Center Party in a three-party situation is set to the middle. In practical terms, I do so by generating a thousand observations, each of which represents an election, and two or three variables (depending on whether I look at two-party or three-party scenario) measuring party policy positions. The values for each variable are generated randomly so that they form a normal distribution and have a specified mean and variance that I discuss below.

Voters. As a starting point I assume that in static view the preferences of voters are normally distributed around a mean of zero.[8] Given a normal distribution, the mean is the position of the median voter. I assume that citizens are deterministic policy voters. This means that people are expected to vote for the party with the policy position closest to their preference. Finally, movements in the median voter location are set to be random, producing a normal distribution across a series of elections. I examine two scenarios of a more and less volatile electorate. Drawing on existing research, movements of the more volatile electorate are assumed to have a standard deviation that is about one-fifth as large as the distance between the central tendencies of the party of the left and the party of the right. Movements of the less volatile electorate have a standard deviation that is one-thirteenth of the distance between the left and right party central tendencies.

Other Considerations. Representation requires more than aligning citizen preferences and policy choices provided by political parties at election time. Electoral

[8] The average zero position is a matter of convenience. It ensures that we can use the intercept as a numerical statement about representational bias.

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institutions need to translate voter choices into party distributions in parliament. I assume this translation to be accurate in the sense that the median parliamentary party is the one preferred by the median voter. I also assume that parties keep their electoral promises in the sense that they translate their pre-election stances into policies once elected and in charge of policy making.

Conditions

The hypo-theoretical nature of this analysis means that it is based on "what ifs?". To keep the analysis within manageable bounds and to ensure its relevance to politics in the world we know, "what ifs?" are grounded in realistic conditions. Figure 3.3 summarizes a static view of the evidence on the distribution of citizen preferences and party position central tendencies along a left-right dimension. The left-right metric is expressed in two forms, one used in mass and expert surveys and the other employed by the Manifestos Research Group project (see Budge et al. 2001). The two metrics are comparable (Gabel and Huber 2000). I adopt the MRG metric because it conveniently marks the center as zero. Left positions have negative values; right positions have positive values.[9]

[Figure 3.3 About Here]

Electorates. Both parties and voters are assumed to have policy preferences that can be located in a uni-dimensional left-right space.[10] Data from the Eurobarometer and

[9] Linear conversion from the MRG metric to the survey metric is

$$\text{Survey Score} = 5.5 + .115 \text{ MRG Score}.$$

[10] This assumption is important for examining the accuracy in representing the median voter. Spatial modeling literature demonstrates that already in a two-dimensional space, there is no single equilibrium

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similar surveys tell us that when citizens are asked to place themselves on a 1-to-10 left-right scale, their responses form a normal distribution, centered near the scale midpoint of 5.5, with a standard deviation of approximately 2.0 (see, e.g., Powell 2000, 168). As for the left-right positions of parties, citizen and expert respondents tend to agree that major-contender parties on the left and right of the median citizen do not converge. They are seen as standing at left-right positions perhaps a little less than one standard deviation left and right of the median citizen (Castles and Mair 1984; Huber and Inglehart 1995).

Evidence of how the left-right distributions of citizen self-placements change through time is more difficult to come by. Robert Erikson and his colleagues give us one glimpse in when they relate liberal-conservative positions in American party platforms to the liberal-conservative mood of the public. The two major American parties stand about 25 units apart, and movement of the public's liberal-conservative mood stays inside those bounds (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, 265). The standard deviation of mood is 4.45 (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, 219). That is, public opinion moves left and right to an extent slightly less than one-fifth of the distance that separates the parties.

James Adams and his colleagues provide another glimpse when they look at annual Eurobarometer left-right self-placement data for eight European nations (Adams, Clark, Ezrow, and Glasgow n.d.). On a one-to-ten scale, the average within-nation and across-time standard deviation is .22. Given that major parties are typically about three units apart on a one-to-ten scale, a .22 standard deviation is 1/13th to 1/14th of the party distance, which translates to a standard deviation of 2.0 on the MRG metric. I use this evidence to set the variability parameters for more and less volatile electorates; standard

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point that represents the median voter (Arrow 1951, Riker 1982, McGann 1999, Hinich and Munger 1997, chs.3-4) and therefore yield analyses of congruence intractable.

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deviations for the two types of electorates are set to five (more volatile) and two (less volatile).

Parties. On the issues of locations and variability in party position taking there is a thorough record. Based on policy statements in election programs for 25 Western democracies from 1946 through 1998, the MRG has constructed a record of party left-right positions (Budge et al. 2001). Table 3.1 reports left-right means and standard deviations of the major parties in five Anglo-American single member district plurality systems and in four predominantly three-party proportional representation systems. Except for Canada, mean locations of major left and right parties are typically between 25 to 35 units apart. Standard deviations range considerably, from 6 to 26, but mostly are in the range between 10 and 18. It is in the realm of plausibility to set left and right party positions at $\pm$ 13, each with a standard deviation of 13. If we assume the variability in party positions is normally distributed,[11] the probability that the left party leapfrogs the position of the right party is plausibly small (McDonald and Budge, n.d., ch.5).[12] In multiparty systems, a center party might split the difference and on the MRG metric has a central tendency at zero.

[Table 3.1 About Here]

Summary. This study investigates how volatile party position taking relative to stable parties affect the accuracy in policy representation. I examine accuracy of policy

[11] There is a modest tendency for party position distributions to be skewed toward the center. Ten of 17 parties in the Social Democratic family, for example, show a positive skew; six of ten parties in the Conservative family show a negative skew. For only four of those 27 parties is the skew statistically significant, however. Given a predominant tendency of no skew, I proceed with the simpler assumption of a normal distribution.

[12] The area under a normal distribution beyond one standard deviation is .1562. Therefore, a left party has a .1562 probability of taking a position above 0, and a right party has a .1562 probability of taking a position below zero. The joint probability that a left party is above zero and a right party is below zero (i.e., that these parties leapfrog) is .1562 * .1562, or .0244.

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representation in a two-party system where the central tendency of the Left Party is assumed to be at –13, the Right Party at +13, and in a three-party system setting that includes also a Center Party with a mean position at 0 on a left-right scale from –100 to +100. Parties are assumed to take fixed positions marked by their own central tendency or to move around that central tendency with standard deviations of 13. As for electorates, they are assumed to be more and less volatile. The median voter movements of the more volatile electorate have a standard deviation of five, and the median voter movements of the less volatile electorate have a standard deviation of two.

Analyzing Representation

To evaluate the accuracy of collective representation, I simulate 1000 elections for scenarios with different sets of assumptions. Recall that the accuracy of policy representation is treated here in a threefold matter, involving (1) responsiveness, (2) bias, and (3) congruence. Policy representation is most accurate when (1) the left-right positions of party policies are directly responsive to the left-right positions of median voter—i.e., a slope of 1.0, (2) there is no bias—a zero intercept, and (3) congruence is exact—the average distance between policy and median voter positions is zero. I analyse two- and three-party systems, exploring the representational consequences of parties with fixed and variable policy positions over time.

Two-party Systems

Parties at Fixed Positions. The results for parties at fixed positions in two-party systems and a relatively volatile electorate are shown in Figure 3.4. Citizens are assumed

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to be deterministic policy voters – that is, they select a party that is the most proximate to them ideologically. Thus, a median voter to the left of zero elects the Left Party at policy position –13. Likewise, anytime the median voter is to the right of zero, the electorate elects the Right Party at + 13.

Considered in detail, the system with two parties at fixed policy positions produces representation that is unresponsive to any elector movement except that which goes from negative to positive or vice versa. At the transition point of zero, the movement is an overly responsive 26 points. A linear equation that generalizes about party movements across all elections suggests that at the top of the scatter-plot a one-unit movement by the median voter produces, on average, more than a two-unit movement in the policy position of the elected party (b=2.06). In other words, responsiveness is 2.08 to 1.0, and, given the small and statistically insignificant intercept, there is no bias.

Congruence results are shown in the histogram. They average 9.07, meaning that for any given election we can expect the policy position of a median parliamentary party and electorate's median voter will differ by nine units. Median incongruence is 9.67; half the outcomes are above 9.6 and half are below. Furthermore the probability that the two actors are within six units of one another is only .163. In short, the relationship is an overly responsive one, there is no bias, and a typical mismatch is between 9 and 10 units with a low probability that the match is within six units.

[Figure 3.4 About Here]

Parties with Varying Positions. Figure 3.5 shows the relationship and congruence results for a situation when party policy positions vary. The relationship is certainly less

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orderly than when parties stand at fixed positions. Disorder notwithstanding, the quality of representation is mostly enhanced when party positions vary. We see from the associated equation that responsiveness is now close to one-to-one, b = 1.05, and there is no statistically significant bias.

[Figure 3.5 About Here]

Average incongruence is nearly the same as when parties are at fixed positions, but median incongruence is a bit lower than in the situation with stable party policy offerings and is equal to 8.07. One of two important differences in the congruence results is that the probability of close congruence is considerably higher when parties vary their policy offerings. The probability that the policy and median voters are within six units of one another is .382 (compared to .163 for parties with fixed positions). The downside is that varying party positions hold an almost one-in-four chance that incongruence will exceed 13, which never happens in simulations using fixed party positions.[13] These results therefore suggest that while there is a risk of high incongruence when party positions vary, varying versus fixed party positions creates more direct responsiveness, leaves bias at essentially zero, and increases the probability of good congruence.

Three-party Systems

Parties at Fixed Positions. The results of simulations for three-party systems, with fixed party positions and a relatively volatile electorate, are provided in Figure 3.6. They show much improved congruence compared to two-party systems. Mean and median values of incongruence are 3.06 and 3.03 respectively, and the probability of

[13] It could happen, but that would require the electorate to move more than five standard deviations. Such an outcome has about a 3 in 5 million chance.

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being within six units of perfect congruence is very high, .934. What is more, responsiveness is not far from one-to-one, b = .91, though the difference is statistically significant. Bias is essentially at zero. Compared to two-party systems, three-party system offerings, given fixed party positions at the locations specified, are expected to provide just as accurate representation over the intermediate and long runs and much more accurate representation in the short-run.

[Figure 3.6 About Here]

Parties with Varying Positions. Much the same can be said about three-party systems that have parties with varying positions before a relatively volatile electorate. These results are displayed in Figure 3.7. Responsiveness is again close to one-to-one, although a little bit further than in the scenario with fixed party positions in three-party setting: b = .81, and it is highly statistically significant. The system also performs well with respect to long-term accuracy of representation: there is no statically significant bias. Congruence is much improved compared to two-party systems, though it is not quite as good as we could expect from three-party systems with fixed positions. Mean incongruence is 6.03; its median value is 4.79. The probability of being within six units is .584, which is better than two-party systems, varying positions (p = .382), but not as good as with three parties at fixed positions (p = .934).

[Figure 3.7 About Here]

Electorate Volatility

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Does the accuracy of representation change in a less volatile electorate? The results in Table 3.2 (see baseline model results) show that, given variable party policy positions, low volatility in the electorate in both two- and three-party systems reduces direct responsiveness, has no effect on bias, and produces slightly smaller short-term distortions compared to respective scenarios in two- and three-party systems with more volatile electorates.

[Table 3.2 About Here]

Although responsiveness is reduced in both two- and three-party systems, low volatility electorates have divergent effects in the two systems. Whereas in two-party systems, low electorate volatility makes responsiveness more polarized which means that parties take more extreme positions than tracking the median voter would warrant, in three-party systems parties take more centrist positions than is necessary to be directly responsive to the movements of the median voter. Further, although low electoral volatility slightly reduces short-term distortions, it has effect on the probability of short-term distortions being above 13 or below 6 units.

To summarize, simulation results show that all scenarios – that is, parties with fixed and varying positions in both two- and three-party systems and with high and low electorate volatility – produce accurate representation over the intermediate and long runs. Stability in party positions hurts congruence and responsiveness in two party systems but not in three-party systems. However, varying party positions in two-party system produce much more congruent and responsive outcomes than fixed positions in two-party systems. In contrast, parties with stable positions in three-party systems produce more congruence than parties with varying positions.

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In short, the common assumption about party positional stability and focus on short-term distortions in the existing literature clearly presents a worst-case scenario for two-party systems and a best-case scenario for three-party systems with respect to their ability to produce accurate representation of the median voter. Allowing variability in party policy positions in two party systems improves short-term congruence as well as brings responsiveness close to a direct one. In contrast, varying positions in three party systems increases short-term distortions, but has no effect on bias or responsiveness.

What is more, a broader view that treats policy representation as an ongoing process and the empirical reality of varying party positions demonstrates fewer differences between two-party and multi-party systems than is commonly assumed. All party systems, as long as there are free, fair, and periodic elections, can generate unbiased representation of the median voter given a sufficiently long experience with democratic governance, as well as responsiveness and reasonable short-term congruence given variable party policy positions that are much more in line with the empirical reality of contemporary democracies.

Accurate Policy Representation in New and Established Democracies

The distinction between short and long aspects of accurate policy representation is particularly important with respect to new democracies. Without a long experience of democratic governance, short-term accuracy of representation is the only aspect that is available for citizens to evaluate representative performance of their policy makers. People in new democracies do not have a long-term perspective available to observe that

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all democratic systems, both two-party and multi-party, tend to produce accurate representation of majority citizen policy preferences. In the first democratic elections, the mismatch between the median voter and the median parliamentary party is equal to bias. In subsequent elections, the distortion may cancel out. However, it is only over a long series of elections that the position of the median parliamentary party is likely to converge on the median voter. In short, the model suggests that policy representation will be less accurate in new democracies compared to the established ones.

The length of experience with democratic elections is not the only aspect that differentiates new from established democracies. The electorates in new democracies are likely to be less politically sophisticated given their lack of experience with the functioning of the democratic governance (Rose et al, 1998, Mishler and Rose 2002, Kitschelt et al. 1999). What is more, new democracies are often marked by high levels of uncertainty, which means that citizens are less likely to know where political parties are located on the left-right continuum, and therefore make their electoral choices on the basis of approximate rather than exact distance. Further, many accounts of political parties in new democracies, both East Central Europe and Latin America, emphasize a personalistic rather than an ideological nature of political parties (Manzetti and Blake 1996, Rose-Ackerman 1999, 35, Hellman 1998, Vorozheikina 1994, 113-114, Fox 1994, Gibson 1997). The next set of simulations therefore examines what happens to the accuracy of policy representation when (1) the electorates do not have perfect information about party policy positions, and (2) voting decisions sometimes are based on non-policy considerations.

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***Low Information Electorates*.** The simulation results presented above assume that the electorate has perfect information about the left-right location of party platforms. This requirement, however, might be too demanding and unrealistic, especially for the electorates in new democracies, where transitions involve high uncertainty and people have low levels of political sophistication. I therefore estimate to what extent and how the accuracy of policy representation is affected by low levels of information about party policy positions available to voters.

As the results in Table 3.2 indicate, the effect of low information on responsiveness in two-party systems is similar to having fixed party positions (see the slope value in Figure 3.4). Any movement of the median voter to the left leads to selection of the Left Party and likewise for selecting the Right Party after any movement of the median voter to the right. Voters therefore forego selecting a party closer to the median about half the time in favor of one that is typically on their side of the zero-divide, regardless of how extreme a party is. From that half-of-the-time extreme selection, the voter choice tends towards extremism, creating an overly responsive selection that is less congruent than it needs to be. Responsiveness almost doubles compared to the baseline model (system where voter have perfect information) for the more volatile electorate, and it nearly quadruples for the less volatile electorate. In addition, average incongruence is 13 or higher for both more and less volatile electorates, and the probabilities of selecting a party more than 13 units away are greater than .4.

In three party systems, low information voters also affect the accuracy of representation negatively. In contrast to two-party system, however, low information reduces responsiveness in the sense that the movements of the median parliamentary

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party are more centrist than tracking the median voter would warrant. Short-term distortions are also higher compared to the baseline of a three-party system with a perfectly informed electorate, although they are not as high as incongruence in two-party system both for less and more volatile electorates. The mean incongruence is between 10 and 11 and the median is around 9 units compared to the average value between 13 and 14 in two-party systems.

In sum, poorly informed voters significantly hurt the accuracy of policy representation over the short, intermediate, and long term. Given that new democracies have a short-term experience with the electoral process and that low information is particularly detrimental to short-term incongruence, the results suggest that much of what policy representation looks like in new democracies lies in the hands of the electorate rather than merely in the policy offerings and behavior of political parties.

Non-policy Based Choices. Vote choices based on non-policy considerations might also be more widespread in new democracies than established ones. Herbert Kitschelt argues that personal appeals of party leadership and clientelism should also be considered as important linkages between parties and voters beside programmatic party appeals (Kitschelt 2000). Although established democracies are not immune to charismatic or clientelist linkages, these linkages are likely to be more widespread in new democracies. Existing research suggests that most political parties in new democracies of East Central Europe are formed around leaders rather than durable issues (see, for instance, Grofman et al. 2000, Kreuzer and Pettai 2003). In an environment of high uncertainty as well as low levels of political sophistication in the electorate, it may be easier for the electorate to use personal appeals in their voting decisions.

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What is more, economic transitions via privatization have been shown to be fraught with opportunities for corruption and clientelist constituency building in post-communist societies of East Central Europe (Manzetti and Blake 1996, Rose-Ackerman 1999, 35). Old Communists in Russia, for example, seized these opportunities to fuse with new post-Communist clientelist networks (Hellman 1998, Vorozheikina 1994, 113-114). Similarly, market liberalization in Argentina and Mexico offered clientelist opportunities for business constituencies and prompted clientelist compensation packages for the aggrieved core voters of the ruling parties (Fox 1994, Gibson 1997).[14]

It is important therefore to ask what effect electoral choices based on non-policy considerations, such as personal appeals of party leaders, have on the accuracy of policy representation. I assume that ideological party direction is uncorrelated with the likelihood of non-policy considerations. That is, attractive leaders should be equally likely to come from both the Left Party and the Right Party. Similarly, I assume that the Left and the Right Parties are equally capable of creating clientelistic networks. A further assumption is that non-policy considerations are the sole basis of electoral decisions up to half the time. As a result, in two-party systems voters will choose not the most proximate party a quarter of the time – i.e., half of their choices that are 'wrong' in terms of the non-policy basis of their choice will reach the correct policy choice inadvertently.

[14] Although policy interests between patrons and clients might be closely aligned in clientelist networks, the primary means by which patrons appeal to their clients are selective incentives rather than policies that parties promise to pursue if elected to office. Clientelistic linkages undermine the logic of free and fair electoral competition because they involve exploitation and domination in asymmetric but mutually beneficial and open-ended transactions (Roniger 1994, 3). Therefore, citizens who base their vote on clientelistic considerations cannot be considered purely deterministic policy voters.

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Simulation results demonstrate that, unsurprisingly, non-policy considerations produce less responsive policy representation in both two- and three-party systems. For both more and less volatile electorates in two- and three-party systems, such choices, made half the time, reduce responsiveness to just about half of direct responsiveness. In order for the choices to be in the vicinity of direct responsiveness, voters would have to base their decision on non-policy considerations no more than one in four or five elections. With reduced responsiveness, non-policy based choices made by the electorate brings less congruence as well. When voters base their choice on non-policy appeals half the time, average and median congruence are two to three points higher in two-party systems, and almost twice as large as the baseline in three party systems. The effect of non-policy considerations, however, is smaller than the defect of a low-information electorate on short-term congruence. Responsiveness is slightly better with a poorly informed electorate in three party systems, but not in two-party systems, compared to when voters base their decisions on non-policy considerations half the time. In sum, as with having low information about party positions, although non-policy based decisions in the electorate do not produce long-term bias in policy representation, they significantly harm responsiveness and short-term congruence in representing the median voter.

Taken together, these results suggest that the accuracy of policy representation depends not only on political parties in providing distinct policy choices and varying their policy offerings over time but also on the qualities of the voters. Given the policies on offer from the parties, voters have to choose the one that is closest to their policy positions to produce accurate representation of the median voter. To the extent that citizens in new democracies have fewer opportunities and skills to do that, the accuracy

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of representation is likely to be low. Once again, time and extended citizen experience with democratic elections will be an important, if not necessary, condition for generating accurate policy representation. And, as I argued in the previous section, time is crucial for observing the distinction between short and long-term aspects of representation. Given that all systems have more or less incongruence in each and every election, it is only over the long run that citizens can observe democratic governance that produces mostly unbiased policy representation.

Conclusions

Political parties play an important role in producing accurate policy representation in democracies. The assumption of stable policy offerings by political parties and a focus on short-term distortions rather than a long-term perspective on representational processes has led most existing research to underestimate the role that political parties play in aligning policy preferences between citizens and policy-makers. Parties contribute to accurate policy representation by moving around in the ideological space.

Simulation results presented in this chapter suggest that positionally volatile yet responsible parties can generate accurate representation of the median voter over the long and intermediate run. Given party positional volatility, the ability of two-party systems to produce long-term accuracy compared to multi-party systems is not as grim as has been viewed by the existing literature (Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000; Powell and Vanberg 2000). Theoretically, more congruent representation in three-party systems is expected to come from parties with fixed positions. For two-party systems, fixed

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positions as contrasted with varied ones lead to less accurate representation, including a lower probability of high congruence. Therefore, an assumption of fixed positions in two- versus multi-party systems, all else equal, tends to exaggerate between-system differences. The comparison is between a better-case scenario for three-party systems and a worse case scenario for two-party systems.

Treating accurate policy representation as a multi-faceted phenomenon with its long and short-term qualities also sheds light on the difference between new and established democracies. There is no difference between bias and short-term incongruence in new democracies. Given that short-term mismatches characterize all democratic systems, perceptions of inaccuracy in new democratic regimes are almost inevitable. What is more, electorates are likely to aggravate the accuracy of policy representation by their low levels of political sophistication and more common use of non-policy considerations such as personal appeals of party leaders and clientelistic linkages. Simulation results suggest that accurate representation requires not only that parties offer divergent and varied policy programs. It is equally important for voters to select parties that are close to them ideologically. To do so, electorates need to be informed about party policy offerings and vote on the basis of policy considerations.

Taken together, the results suggest that political parties do contribute to accurate policy representation and that they do so by varying their programmatic offerings. Perhaps office-seeking parties are successful in generating positive citizen attitudes towards the political system in their country because they are more flexible in their policy positions and can bring about more accurate representation of the median voter. Just to

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what extent and by what processes accurate policy representation translates into citizen support for the political system is a question to which I turn in the next chapter.

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Appendix

Figure 3.1. Trends in the Left-Right Positions of the Median Voter and the Government in the United States, 1950-1995.

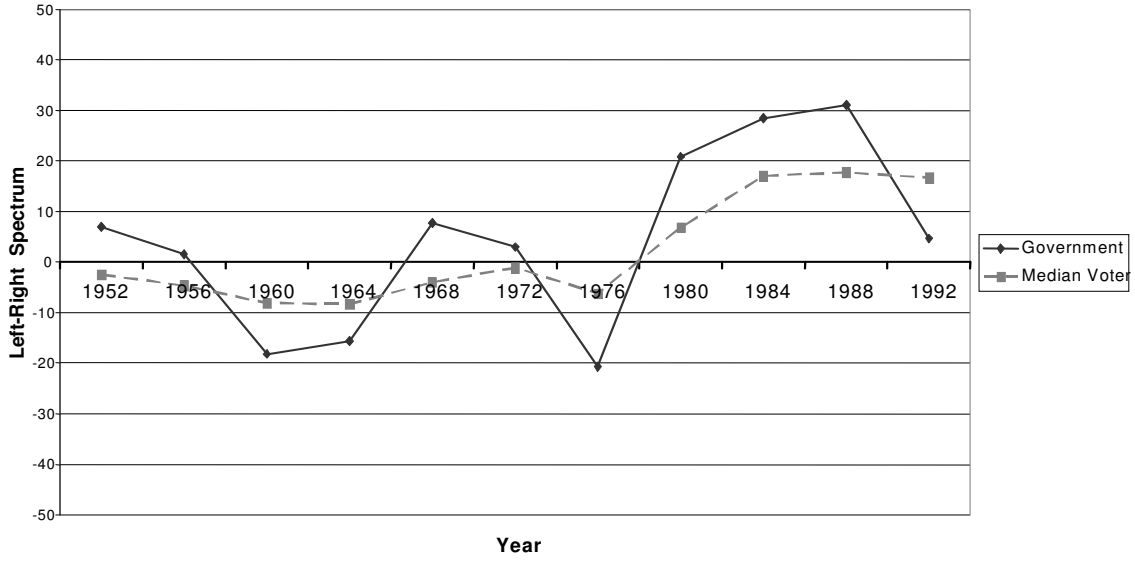
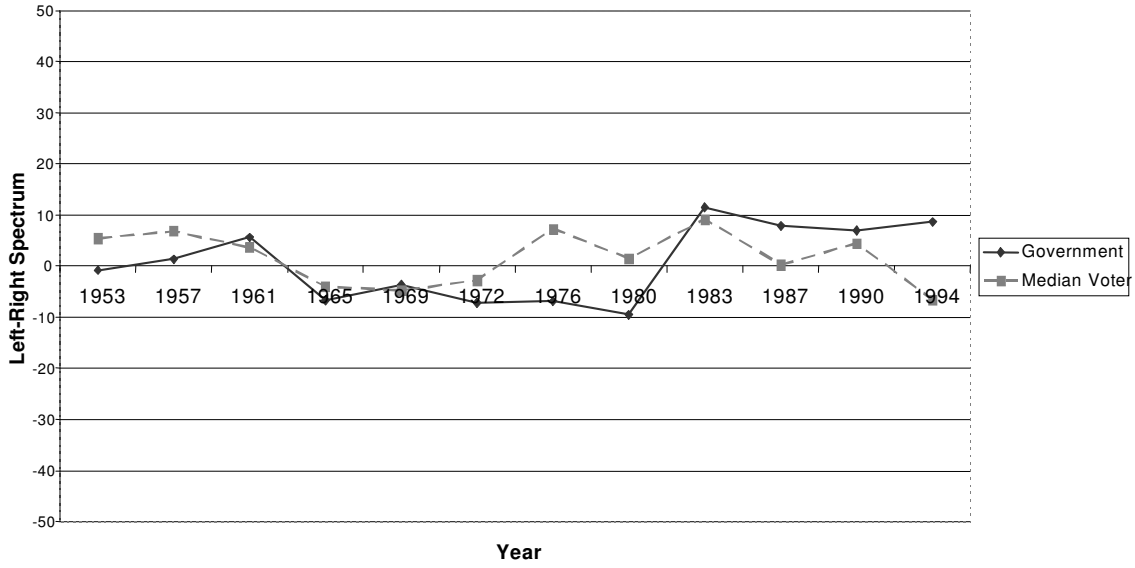


Figure 3.2. Trends in the Left-Right Positions of the Median Voter and the Government in Germany, 1950-1995.



Note: Figure 3.1 and 3.2 are based on Michael D. McDonald and Silvia M. Mendes data set *Governments, 1950-1995* available on the Internet at http://www.binghamton.edu/polsci/research/mcdonalddata.htm. Government left-right position is measured by simple mean using three-election moving average left-right score; median voter position represents moving average, created using adjusted Kim and Fording (1998) approach.

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Table 3.1: Left-Right Post-war Mean party Positions and Standard Deviations in Five SMDP Systems and Four Predominantly Three-Party PR Systems, 1945-1998.

Country	*Party*	*# of Election Programs*	*Mean*	*Std Dev*
Australia	LAB	22	-11.1	16.7
	LIB	22	24.6	18.0
Canada	LIB	17	-2.5	9.5
	PCP	17	4.2	10.8
New Zealand	LAB	18	-24.4	11.1
	NP	18	2.9	13.1
United Kingdom	LAB	15	-25.8	13.8
	LIB	15	-8.4	12.9
	CON	15	7.9	18.8
United States	DEM	13	-12.8	11.5
	REP	13	13.9	14.5
Austria	SPÖ	15	-14.1	14.9
	FPÖ	15	2.5	25.4
	ÖVP	15	16.9	18.1
Germany	SPD	14	-15.1	9.1
	FDP	14	0.4	11.3
	CDU-CSU	14	10.9	18.2
Ireland	LAB	16	-22.1	10.5
	FG	16	11.1	26.2
	FF	16	6.4	22.4
Netherlands	PvdA	16	-25.0	12.0
	CDA	7	-8.5	6.3
	VVD	16	13.4	8.4

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Party Acronyms

Australia
LAB – Australian Labor Party
LIB – Liberal Party of Australia (The Australian Liberal's program scores have been averaged with the Country Party, its permanent partner).

Canada
LIB – Liberal Party of Canada
PCP – Progressive Conservative Party

New Zealand
LAB – Labor Party
NP – National Party

United Kingdom
LAB – Labour Party
LIB – Liberals (1945-87) and Liberal Democrats thereafter
CON – Conservative Party

United States
DEM – Democratic Party
REP – Republican Party

Austria
SPÖ – Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (Austrian Social Democratic Party)
FPÖ – Die Freiheitlichen (Freedom Movement) (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Austrian Freedom Party) until 1995)
ÖVP – Österreichische Volkspartei (Austrian People's Party)

Germany
SPD – Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
FDP – Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
CDU-CSU – Christlich-Demokratische Union/Christlich-Soziale Union (Christian Democratic Union – Christian Social Union)

Ireland
LAB – Labor Party
FG – Fine Gael (Family of the Irish)
FF – Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny)

Netherlands
PvdA – Partij van de Arbeid (Labor Party)
CDA – Christen-Democratisch Appel (Christian Democratic Appeal)
VVD – Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)

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Table 3.2: Responsiveness, Bias, and Congruence in Two- and Three-party Systems with Varying Party Policy Positions and Selected Assumptions about Voters.

	Variation*	*High Volatility Electorate*						*Low Volatility Electorate*					
		Responsiveness	**Bias**	**Incongruence**				**Responsiveness**	**Bias**	**Incongruence**			
				Mean	Median	Pr<6	Pr>13			Mean	Median	Pr<6	Pr>13
Two party system	**Baseline**	**1.05 (.07)**	**-.98 (.37)**	**9.35**	**8.07**	**.382**	**.281**	**1.28 (.18)**	**.39 (.37)**	**9.22**	**7.69**	**.396**	**.268**
	Low info Voters	1.94 (.10)	.01 (.49)	13.11	11.47	.277	.443	5.19 (.24)	.09 (.48)	14.04	12.19	.248	.473
	Electorate Mistake	.44 (.10)	.70 (.50)	12.70	10.59	.295	.423	.62 (.25)	.62 (.49)	12.38	10.57	.310	.406
Three-party system	**Baseline**	**.81 (.05)**	**.06 (.25)**	**6.03**	**4.79**	**.584**	**.100**	**.79 (.12)**	**-.05 (.24)**	**5.89**	**4.71**	**.594**	**.098**
	Low info Voters	.59 (.08)	-.91 (.42)	10.86	9.13	.338	.344	-.41 (.20)	.000 (.41)	10.67	8.94	.332	.341
	Electorate Mistake	.44 (.08)	.62 (.41)	10.03	7.66	.420	.296	.35 (.21)	.32 (.41)	9.76	7.39	.425	.273

Note: Numbers in parentheses for '**Responsiveness**' and '**Bias**' are standard errors; the parenthetical numbers under '**Mean**" are standard deviations. Direct responsiveness is represented by the value of 1.0: values greater than 1.0 indicate more polarized outcomes and values less than 1.0 indicate more centralized outcomes than tracking the median voter would warrant. High values for **Bias** and **Incongruence** and values distant from 1.0 for **Responsiveness** indicate less accurate representation.

***Variation**

Baseline— Left and Right party average positions at ±13; s = 13; deterministic policy voters

Low info Voters— Left and Right party average positions ±13; s = 13; deterministic policy voters but with knowledge only of average party positions

Electorate Mistake— Left and Right party average positions at ±13; s = 13; citizens vote on the basis of on non-policy considerations half the time

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Figure 3.3: Schematic of Hypothetical Electorate and Party Locations

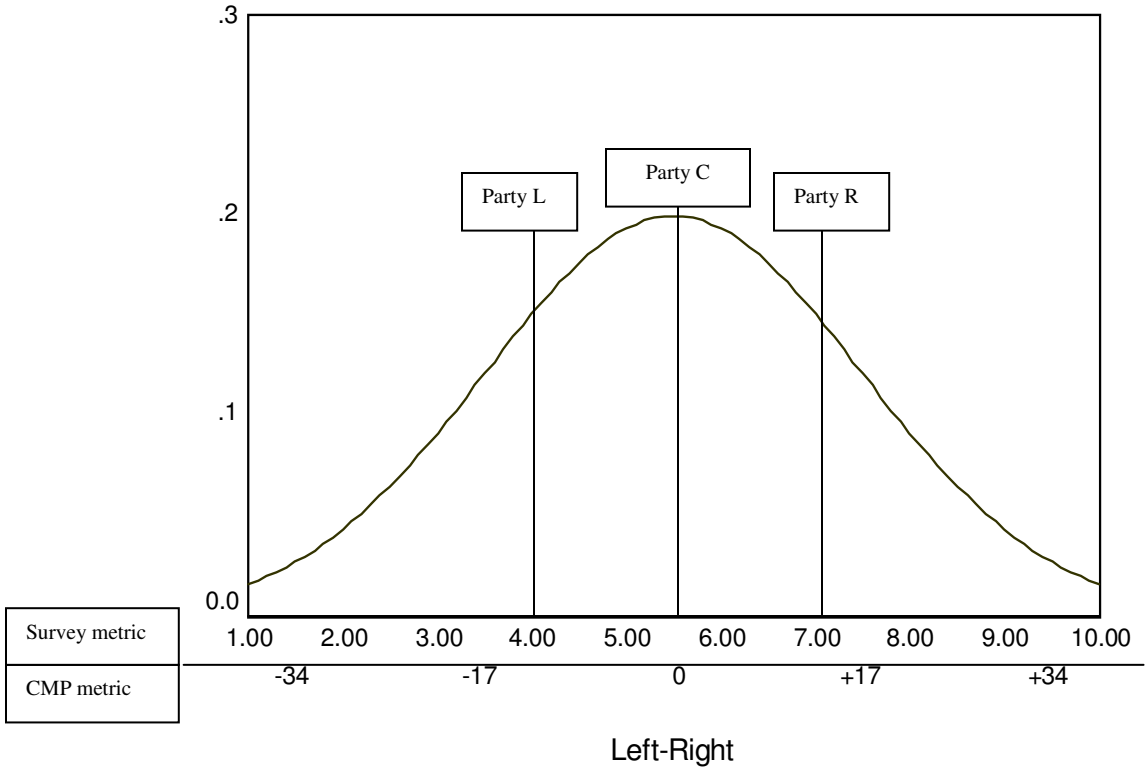

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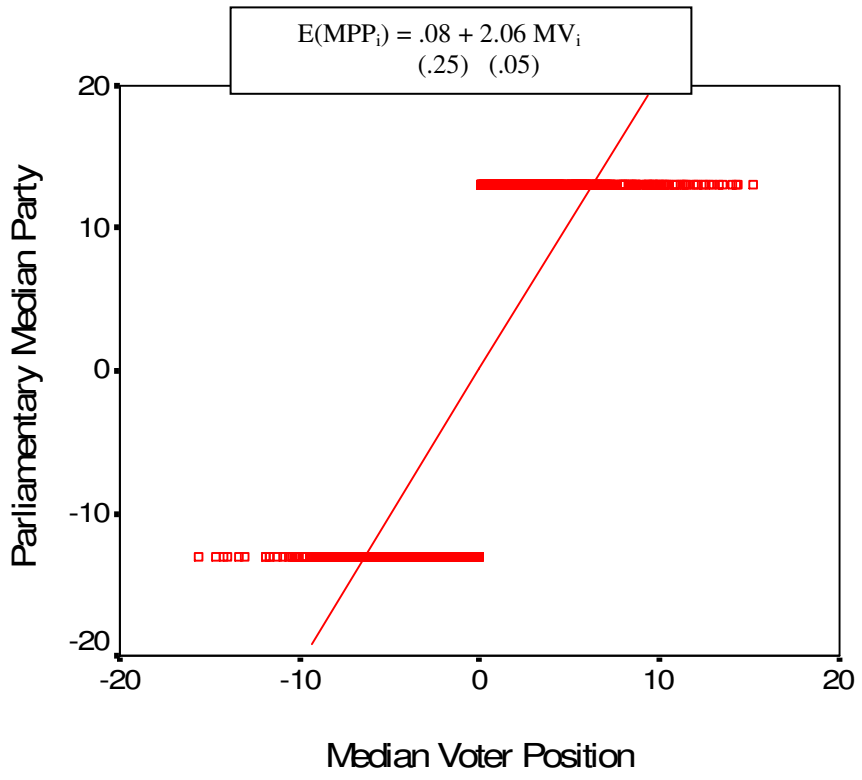
Figure 3.4. Bias, Congruence, and Responsiveness in Two-Party Systems, Given Fixed Party Policy Positions



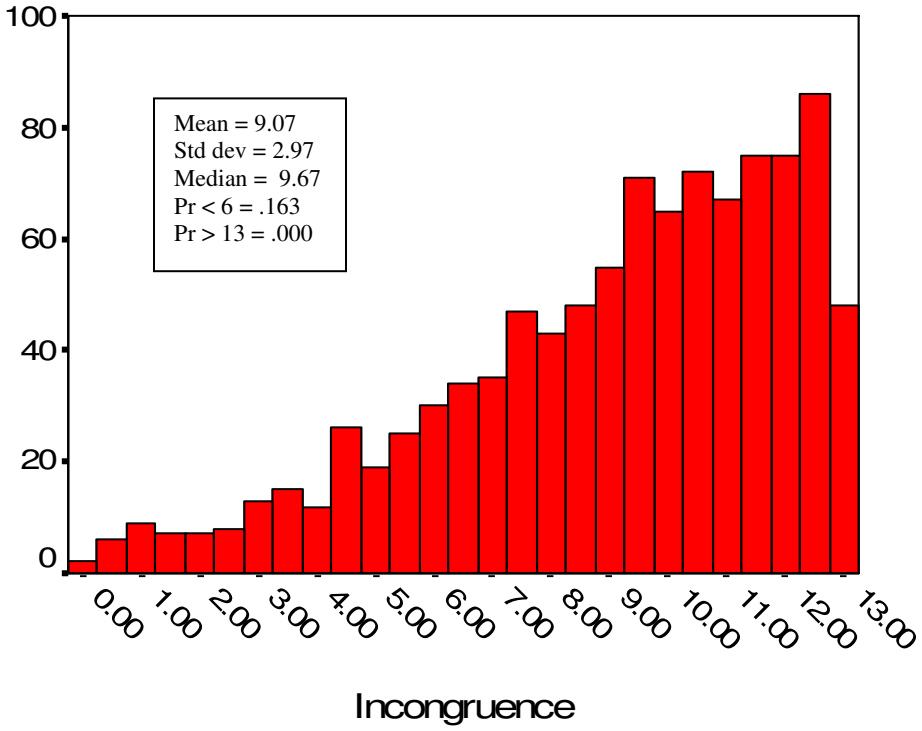


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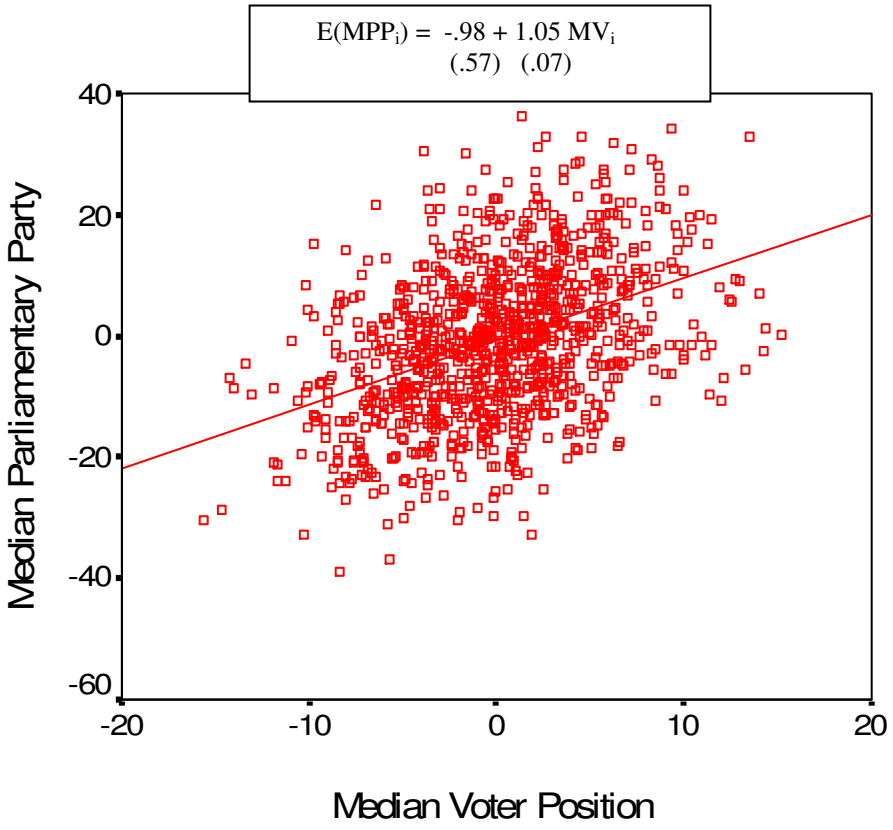
Figure 3.5 Bias, Congruence, and Responsiveness in Two-Party Systems, Given Varying Party Policy Positions



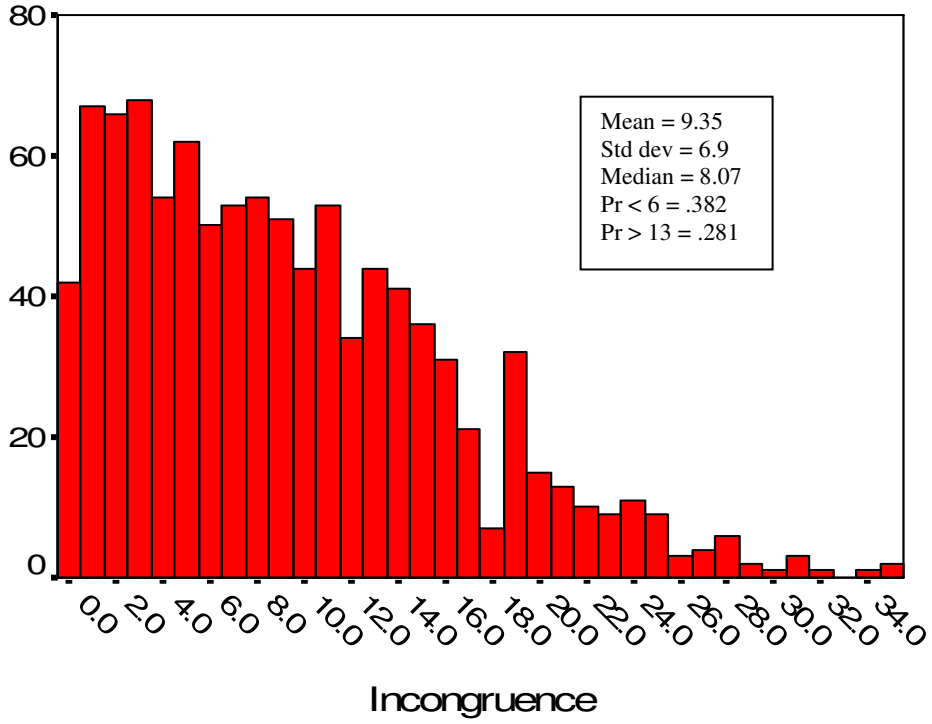


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Figure 3.6. Bias, Congruence, and Responsiveness in Three-Party Systems, Given Fixed Party Policy Positions

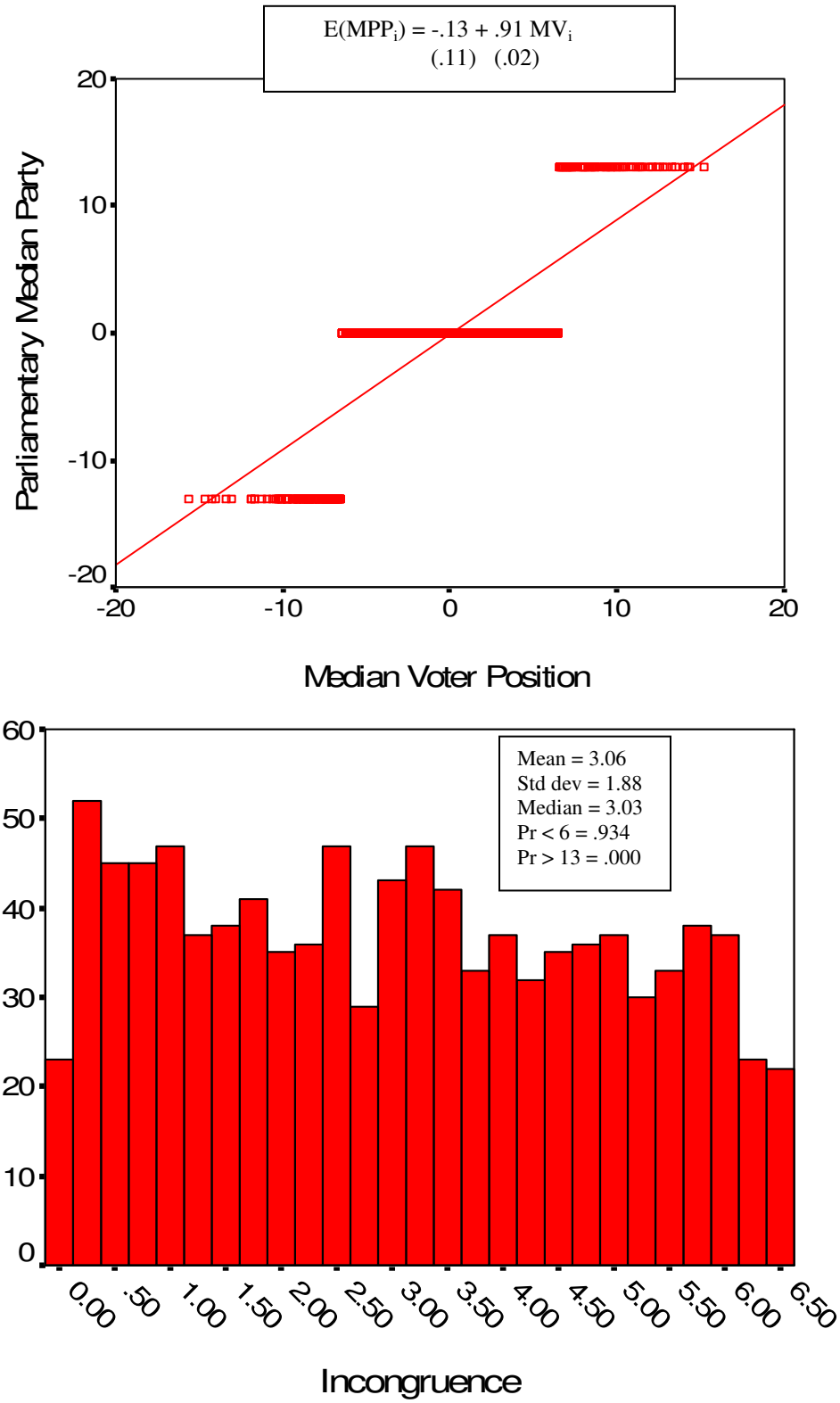

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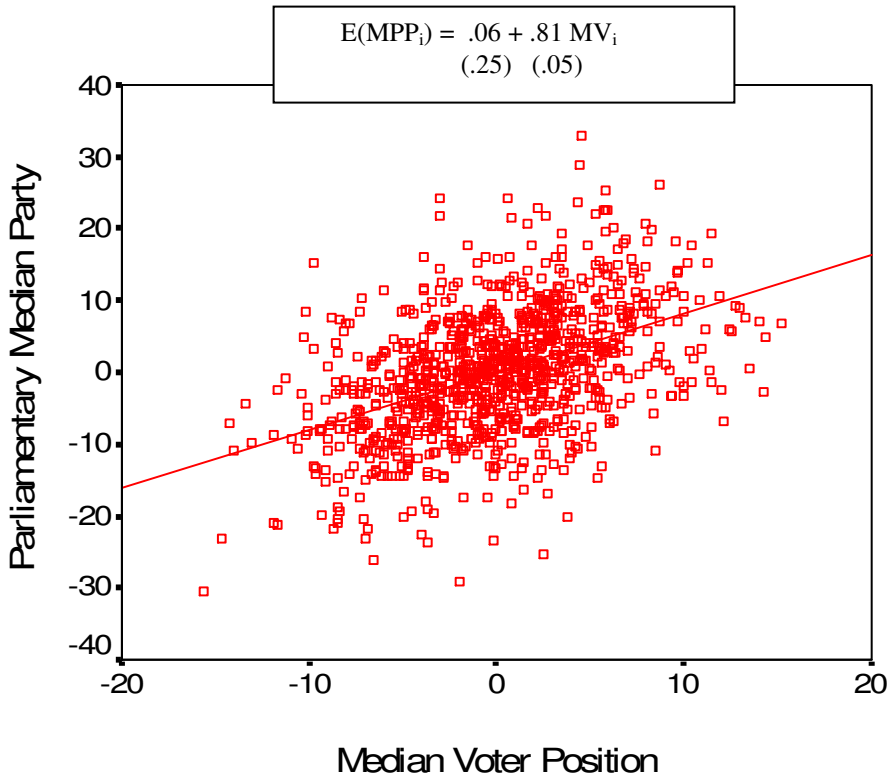
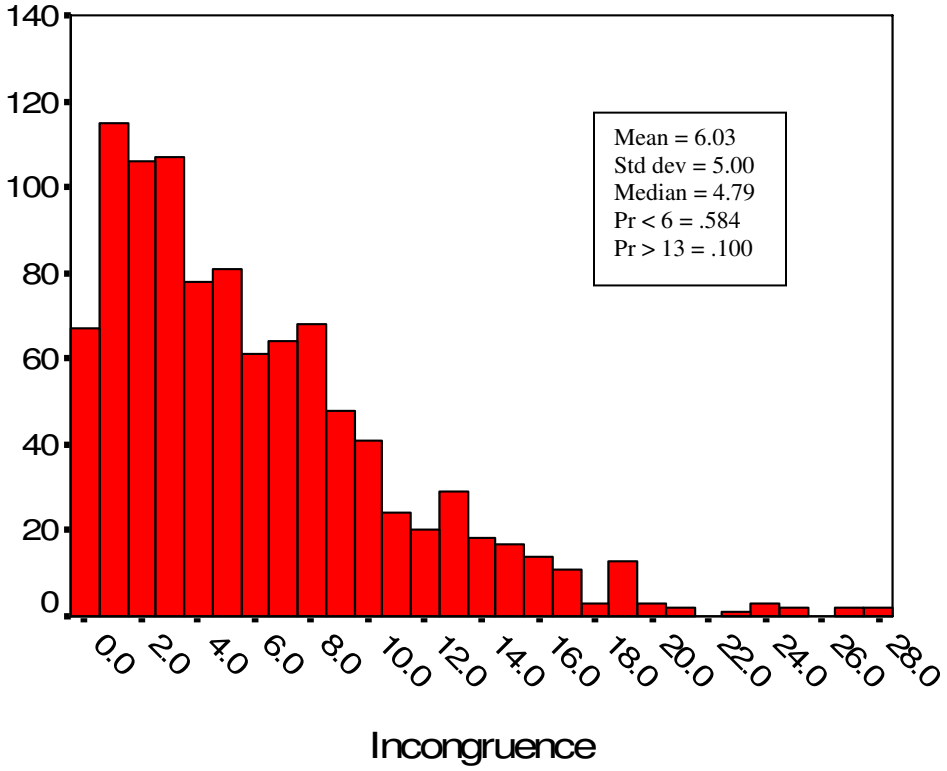
Figure 3.7. Bias, Congruence, and Responsiveness in Three-Party Systems, Given Varying Party Policy Positions





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STATA CODES FOR SIMULATIONS

Two parties with fixed positions and more volatile voters

```
drawnorm voter, n(1000) mean (0) sds(5)
gen zvoter=((voter - "voter mean")/"voter std.dev.)*5
drawnorm leftparty, n(1000) mean (-13) sds(0)
drawnorm rightparty, n(1000) mean(13) sds(0)
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter - leftparty)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - rightparty)
gen selectleft=0
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist
gen selectright=0
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=rightparty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=leftparty if selectleft==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter- partyselect)
gen congr_16=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen cong_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```

Note: z-scores (zvoter, zrpty (z score for right party), zlpty (zscore for leftparty) is calculated to adjust the mean positions and standard deviations so that they converge on the exact values specified for these variables.

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Two parties with varying positions and more volatile voters

```
drawnorm voter, n(1000) mean (0) sds(5)
gen zvoter=((voter - "voter mean")/"voter std.dev.)*5
drawnorm leftparty, n(1000) mean (-13) sds(13)
gen zlpty=(((leftparty - "left party mean")/"left party std.dev")*13)-13
drawnorm rightparty, n(1000) mean(13) sds(13)
gen zrpty=(((rightparty - "right party mean")/"right party std.dev")*13)+13
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter - zlpty)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - zrpty)
gen selectleft=0
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist
gen selectright=0
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter- partyselect)
gen congr_16=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen cong_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```


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Two parties with varying positions and less volatile voters

```
drawnorm voter, n(1000) mean (0) sds(2)
gen zvoter=((voter - "voter mean")/"voter std.dev.)*2
drawnorm leftparty, n(1000) mean (-13) sds(13)
drawnorm rightparty, n(1000) mean(13) sds(13)
gen zlpty=(((leftparty - "left party mean")/"left party std.dev")*13)-13
gen zrpty=(((rightparty - "right party mean")/"right party std.dev")*13)+13
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter - zlpty)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - zrpty)
gen selectleft=0
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist
gen selectright=0
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter- partyselect)
gen congr_16=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen cong_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```


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Three parties with fixed positions and more volatile voters

```
drawnorm voter, n(1000) mean (0) sds(5)
gen zvoter=((voter - "voter mean")/"voter std.dev.)*5
drawnorm leftparty, n(1000) mean (-13) sds(0)
drawnorm rightparty, n(1000) mean(13) sds(0)
drawnorm centparty, n(1000) mean(0) sds(0)
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter - leftparty)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - rightparty)
gen centdist=abs(zvoter - centparty)
gen selectleft=0
gen selectright=0
gen selectcent=0
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist
replace selectcent=1 if centdist<leftdist & centdist<rightdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=rightparty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=leftparty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=centparty if selectcent==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter- partyselect)
gen congr_16=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen cong_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```


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Three parties with varying positions and more volatile voters

```
drawnorm voter, n(1000) mean (0) sds(5)
gen zvoter=((voter - "voter mean")/"voter std.dev.)*5
drawnorm leftparty, n(1000) mean (-13) sds(13)
drawnorm rightparty, n(1000) mean(13) sds(13)
drawnorm centparty, n(1000) mean(0) sds(13)
gen zlpty=(((leftparty - "left party mean")/"left party std.dev")*13)-13
gen zrpty=(((rightparty - "right party mean")/"right party std.dev.")*13)+13
gen zcptry=(((centparty – “center party mean”)/”center party std.dev.”)*13
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter - leftparty)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - rightparty)
gen centdist=abs(zvoter - centparty)
gen selectleft=0
gen selectright=0
gen selectcent=0
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist
replace selectcent=1 if centdist<leftdist & centdist<rightdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=zcpty if selectcent==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter- partyselect)
gen congr_16=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen cong_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```


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Three parties with varying positions and less volatile voters

```
drawnorm voter, n(1000) mean (0) sds(2)
gen zvoter=((voter - "voter mean")/"voter std.dev.)*2
drawnorm leftparty, n(1000) mean (-13) sds(13)
drawnorm rightparty, n(1000) mean(13) sds(13)
drawnorm centparty, n(1000) mean(0) sds(13)
gen zlpty=(((leftparty - "left party mean")/"left party std.dev")*13)-13
gen zrpty=(((rightparty - "right party mean")/"right party std.dev.")*13)+13
gen zcptry=(((centparty – “center party mean”)/”center party std.dev.”)*13
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter - leftparty)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - rightparty)
gen centdist=abs(zvoter - centparty)
gen selectleft=0
gen selectright=0
gen selectcent=0
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist
replace selectcent=1 if centdist<leftdist & centdist<rightdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=zcpty if selectcent==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter- partyselect)
gen congr_16=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen cong_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```


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Two parties with varying positions, more volatile voters with low information

***use dataset of two parties with varying positions and more volatile voters**

```
drop  centdist rightdist leftdist selectleft selectright selectcent partyselect congr congr_l6
congr_m13
gen selectright=0
gen selectleft=0
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter -(-13))
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - 13)
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist ]
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter - partyselect)
gen congr_l6=.
gen congr_m13=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```


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Three parties with varying positions, more volatile voters with low information

```
*use dataset of three parties with varying positions and more volatile voters
drop  centdist rightdist leftdist selectleft selectright selectcent partyselect congr congr_l6
congr_m13
gen selectcent=0
gen selectright=0
gen selectleft=0
gen leftdist=abs(zvoter -(-13))
gen centdist=abs(zvoter - 0)
gen rightdist=abs(zvoter - 13)
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist
replace selectcent=1 if centdist<leftdist & centdist<rightdist
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zcpty if selectcent==1
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
regress partyselect zvoter
gen congr=abs(zvoter - partyselect)
gen congr_l6=.
gen congr_m13=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
```


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Two parties with varying positions, more volatile voters that sometimes make non-policy decisions

```
*Use data set of two parties with varying positions and more volatile voters
drop selectright selectleft partyselect congr congr_l6 congr_m13
gen id=_n
gen selectright=0
gen selectleft=0
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist & id<750
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist & id<750
replace selectright=1 if leftdist<rightdist & id>=750
replace selectleft=1 if rightdist<leftdist & id>=750
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter - partyselect)
gen congr_l6=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen congr_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```

*Note: voters are assumed to make a mistake half of the time; half of this time (that is, one quarter of the total time) they will arrive at correct decision by mistake. Hence the 'true' mistake is done quarter of the total time.

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Three parties with varying positions, more volatile voters that sometimes make non-policy decisions

```
*Use data set of three parties with varying positions and more volatile voters
drop selectright selectleft selectcent partyselect congr congr_l6 congr_m13
gen id=_n
gen selectcent=0
gen selectright=0
gen selectleft=0
replace selectcent=1 if centdist<leftdist & centdist<rightdist & id<665
replace selectleft=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist & id<665
replace selectright=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist & id<665
replace selectcent=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist & id>=665 & id<832
replace selectright=1 if centdist<leftdist & centdist<rightdist & id>=665 & id<832
replace selectleft=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist & id>=665 & id<832
replace selectcent=1 if rightdist<leftdist & rightdist<centdist & id>=832
replace selectright=1 if leftdist<rightdist & leftdist<centdist & id>=832
replace selectleft=1 if centdist<rightdist & centdist<leftdist & id>=832
gen partyselect=.
replace partyselect=zlpty if selectleft==1
replace partyselect=zrpty if selectright==1
replace partyselect=zcpty if selectcent==1
gen congr=abs(zvoter - partyselect)
gen congr_l6=.
replace congr_l6=1 if congr<6
gen congr_m13=.
replace congr_m13=1 if congr>13
regress partyselect zvoter
```

*Note: voters are assumed to make a mistake half of the time; one third of this time they arrive at correct choice by mistake, other third of this time (16.7%) they vote for one 'wrong' party, and another third (16.7%) for the second 'wrong' party.

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CHAPTER 4

ACCURATE POLICY REPRESENTATION AND DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

In the seminal study on system support, David Easton wrote that the legitimacy of democracies is affected by the extent to which citizens trust government to do what is right most of the time (Easton 1965, 1975). The previous chapter showed that, at least with respect to accurate policy representation, political parties help the government "to do what is right most of the time". In both two-party and multiparty systems, political parties produce unbiased and responsive representation of the median voter. What is more, variability in their programmatic offerings helps parties close or reduce the gap between the median voter and the median parliamentary party in all systems, and in two-party settings in particular. The important question then is to what extent and by what processes accurate policy representation translates into more positive citizen attitudes towards their political system.

The distinction between short and long term aspects of accurate policy representation is particularly important with respect to understanding the causes of system legitimacy. Whereas long-term accuracy fosters citizen support for their political system, short-term distortions do not undermine it and for the most part contribute to system legitimacy. Drawing on the data collected as part of the *Manifestos Research*

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Group (MRG) project and *Word Values Surveys* (WVS) 1999-2000 in both established and new democracies, my analysis in this chapter shows that long-term aspects of accurate policy representation—non-bias and responsiveness—indeed contribute to system legitimacy, especially among citizens who are close to the median voter because their policy preferences are most consistently represented by policy makers compared to citizens with more extreme ideological views. Short-term distortions, however, do not undermine system legitimacy in any serious way because they increase the number of electoral winners and citizens who get represented at least once in while. This point is particularly important with respect to newer democracies where a small number of democratic elections is insufficient to generate a sense of the median voter position and to create a long-term record of policy representation. Winning and losing is therefore the driving force of citizens' attitudes towards their new democratic regimes.

Existing Research on Policy Representation and System Support

The importance of policy representation has long been acknowledged in the literature on system support. Policy dissatisfaction as a major determinant of system support was first suggested by Arthur Miller (1974) in his study of the American electorate in the late 1960s. Assuming that party and voter issue positions can be located in a uni-dimensional issue space and that larger distance between individual's own placement and government position indicates more policy disagreement, Miller hypothesized that being further away from a government's position is likely to generate more negative attitudes about the political system among citizens. Miller argued that

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where an individual stands on the ideological or issue continuum matters inasmuch as it is distant from the government position. If an individual takes a centrist position on an issue and perceives the policies of the parties to be in disagreement with his desires and expectations, he is as likely to be distrusting of the government as the individual who prefers a more extreme policy position. Miller finds, however, that those who prefer non-centrist policies are more dissatisfied and therefore are the most alienated from the system. He concludes that political cynicism prevalent in the United States is primarily due to dissatisfaction with the centrist policy alternatives offered by the two major parties.

Miller's study is important for the literature on political support because it introduced the idea of policy distance between citizen and government as a cause for the development of citizen dissatisfaction with their political system. However, Miller's major conclusion that political parties in the United States should pursue more distinct or extremist policies has been questioned in subsequent research. Jack Citrin (1974), for example, accepted Miller's proposition that *policy-related* discontent is a source of political cynicism (1974, 974). In contrast to Miller, however, Citrin argued that, regardless of the ideological orientation of particular policies, people might become more cynical because government officials promise too much and deliver too little. As a consequence, many people have developed "casual and ritualistic negativism" towards the incumbent administration, but not an enduring sense of estrangement towards the political system.

In contrast to Miller's proposition that too little difference between the American parties pursuing centrist policies was the major cause of political cynicism in the public

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in the 1960s, later studies on system support suggest that parties might have become too extreme for Americans' taste. David King (1997), for instance, argued that the ideological gap between the average American and political parties has widened due to increased cohesiveness and polarization of political parties. Similarly, E.J. Dionne, Jr. in his book *Why Americans Hate Politics* (1991) suggests that negative campaigning and a focus on symbolic issues rather than a genuine political debate has created a sense of artificially polarized policy choices for an electorate that is centrist at heart. The public has been frustrated by the choice between "San Francisco Democrats," whom many perceive to be the party of "minorities, gay rights activists, radical feminists, and peaceniks," and "Reagan Republicans," the party of "fundamentalists, bigots, pro-life activists, and chicken-hawks" (Fiorina 1992, 74). Frustration with available policy choices has also been viewed as an important reason of growing split ticket voting, by which the public divides government control between the two undesired extremes. More recent research, however, finds evidence for the frustrated-middle thesis in the U.S. lacking (see Hibbing and Smith 2004). Alesina and Wacziarg (2000) suggest an alternative, arguing that political confidence in the U.S. has declined not because of party polarization, but rather because of a growing heterogeneity of voters' views about issues on public agenda. Despite the differences among these studies, they all seem to agree that policy dissatisfaction, measured by policy distance, is likely to be an important factor in undermining people's support for the political system.

Policy distance, measured by the perceived difference between individual policy position and the policy position of the government, has been fruitfully employed also in some subsequent comparative research on system support. For instance, Miller and

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Listhaug (1990) showed that individual's distance from government policy leads to political distrust in Norway and Sweden. In contrast to Miller, however, they do not find that the lack of distinct policy offerings, as perceived by people, undermines political trust in these countries or the United States. Instead, the strongest correlations with political trust were found with measures of the distance between the respondent's own ideological position and where he or she placed the incumbent party. This finding was supported not only in the analysis of ideological citizen and government positions in Norway, Sweden, the United States (Miller and Listhaug 1990) and Denmark (Borre and Goul Andersen 1997), but also in the analysis of elite and citizen preferences with respect to more specific policies such as foreign policy, race relations, and moral issues in Norway, Sweden, the United States (Miller and Listhaug 1998), or the EU and immigration that were the crucial issues in Denmark in the 1990s (Borre 2000).

In sum, scholars agree that policy distance matters for citizen attitudes towards their political system. Indeed, individual level analyses provide ample support that "policy distance" between an individual and policy makers is important. However, the evidence is inconclusive in the analyses using aggregate level measures of policy distance. I suggest that this might be the case for several reasons. First, existing research treats political party positions as stable. For instance, both arguments about parties that are too centrist or too polarized in the United States assume that parties do not move around. As a consequence, scholars taking such an approach come to a conclusion that parties are too removed from the majority of citizens.

Further, analyses of the role of policy representation on system legitimacy need to treat policy representation as an ongoing process. This means that, although there may be

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a mismatch between the median voter's preference and the policy positions of the party in government, what really matters for collective policy representation is whether these short-term distortions cancel each other out over a series of elections. Thus, the majority of citizens who locate themselves in the center of the ideological continuum may be quite satisfied with the political system because they observe that their policy preferences are represented most consistently over the long run. Finally, existing research remains restricted to a small set of countries, and it is not clear whether their findings generalize to a larger universe. This might be due to the fact that most estimates of policy representation were based on individual-level surveys that only rarely employ measures suitable for estimating policy distance between citizen and policy makers' positions. Drawing on an analysis of 14 established and 11 new democracies of East Central Europe, as well as measures of accurate policy representation constructed from the *Manifestos Research Group* project data that are comparable across nations and over time, this study seeks to close these gaps in the existing literature and construct a theory that is generalizable to a wide range of contemporary democracies.

Accuracy in Collective Policy Representation and System Support

Previous chapter was designed to show that political parties play an important role in producing accurate policy representation. Given a sufficiently long experience with democratic governance and elections, all countries are able to produce unbiased representation of majority policy preferences. Moreover, variability in party positions improves responsiveness and short-term congruence between the median voter and the

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median party in parliament. Empirical evidence supports my simulation results. A recent study by McDonald, Mendes, and Budge (2004) examined the accuracy of policy representation using data from 154 elections in 20 established democracies. They showed that congruence between the median voter and the median parliamentary party is rarely exact in each and every election. However, over a series of elections the policy incongruities tend to cancel each other out, leaving the median over-time government position close to that of the electorate. And although short-term distortions are higher in single member district electoral systems, all countries examined have generally unbiased and highly responsive policy representation. The authors conclude that the representational process across established democracies operates in an orderly and accurate manner, consistent with the median mandate thesis.

If most established democracies produce unbiased and responsive policy representation, then citizens close to the median voter should develop more support for their political system than citizens further away toward the ideological extremes. Citizens at or close to the median observe that their policy preferences are consistently favored and represented by policy makers and see themselves as part of the political majority compared to citizens who embrace minority views. Governments do not usually accommodate the most extreme ideological positions but tend to steer a course on the center-left or center-right. Thus, citizens who locate themselves on the ideological fringes are likely to be more dissatisfied with government policies and therefore develop more negative attitudes because they are likely to be underrepresented most of the time (for a similar approach, see also Dalton 2004: 66, Listhaug 1995).

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The relationship between long-term aspects of policy representation and citizen support for the political system, however, cannot necessarily be expected in newer democracies. By definition, citizens in new democracies do not have a long-term perspective that would allow them to see that democratic systems generally produce unbiased and responsive representation of majority policy preferences. In other words, citizens of newly democratized countries do not have a chance to distinguish between a short-term distortion and a long-term bias. As a consequence, citizens close to the median voter are unlikely to recognize their position as the one most favored by policy makers and have higher levels of system support as a result than citizens further removed from the median voter.

What is more, due to high levels of uncertainty in new democracies, neither citizens nor political parties are likely to know where the median voter is located on the ideological continuum. As a consequence, incongruence is likely to be much larger in new democracies than in established democracies. However, even if both citizens and political parties knew the position of the median voter in new democracies, we know that the correspondence between the median voter and the median party in parliament is rarely exact in each single election in established democracies (McDonald, Mendes, Budge, 2004). It is only in the long-term that short-term distortions tend to cancel each other out and produce unbiased representation. Thus, the lack of long-term positive experience with the representative process is likely to be an important reason for why we see much lower aggregate levels of system legitimacy in emerging democracies as well as no difference in the levels of system support among citizens differently located relative to the median voter.

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This is not to say that where citizens locate themselves on the left-right continuum in new regimes is not in any way related to citizen support for their political system. What distinguishes new democracies from established ones is the agreement about some basic rules and methods for ordering political relationships. In new or developing regimes, as David Easton (1965, 191) notes, "members of the system argue about day-to-day actions and decisions at the same time as they question the fundamental assumptions about the way in which these daily differences are settled." In other words, the distinctive characteristic of new democracies is that, at least in their early stages, support for the new regime constitutes one of the most important political divisions organizing political competition and electoral choices.

Extensive literature on new democracies in East Central Europe demonstrates that citizens who identify with the political right generally tend to support the new democratic reforms, and those who locate themselves on the political left tend to oppose them and endorse Communist successor parties. Policy orientations of citizens on the right are usually in favor of economic liberalism, Western involvement, and the breakup of the former Soviet Union, whereas those on the left take the opposite positions (see, for instance, Whitefield 2002, Whitefield and Evans 1998, Kitschelt 1992, Kitschelt 1995). What is more, supporters of the old Communist parties often represent citizens who were guaranteed to be winners in the old, non-democratic system (Anderson et al 2005, ch.6). Exposure to democratic competition and chances to lose might be particularly unpleasant for citizens who support Communist successor parties. This suggests that, in new democracies of East Central Europe,[15] citizens on the political right should have higher

[15] By using the concept of "new democracies" to refer to the political regimes in East Central Europe, I do not assume that these countries have necessarily achieved a certain level of democracy. My intention here

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levels of political support than citizens placing themselves on the left of the political space. This perspective leads to the first two hypotheses about the positive effects of long-term aspect of policy representation for system legitimacy:

> **Hypothesis 1**. Proximity to the median is positively related to citizen support for the political system in established democracies.
>
> **Hypothesis 2**. Proximity to the median should not have any effect on system support in new democracies. Instead, self-placement of ideological right or left should be directly related to system support.

In short, the test of these hypotheses will show whether the presence of long-term accuracy in policy representation, and therefore the conceptual distinction between long-term and short-term aspects of accurate policy representation, has any leverage in explaining aggregate and individual level differences in system support, especially when we compare established and new democracies. The next section examines whether system legitimacy benefits from high accuracy in all qualities of policy representation, or whether there is a difference in a way that long and short-term aspects of accurate policy representation operate on citizen support for their political system.

Short-term Distortions and Democratic Legitimacy

I have argued so far that long-term aspects of accurate policy representation are likely to increase citizen support for the political system, and will do so especially for citizens who are close to the median policy position. This section focuses on the effect of short-term distortions on system legitimacy. Would citizens develop more support for the

---

is to discuss political regimes that have been going through attempts to democratize regardless of whether these attempts have been successful.

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political system if policy representation were highly accurate also in each and every election? I argue that short-term distortions do not undermine system legitimacy in any serious way because they increase the number of electoral winners and citizens who get represented at least once in a while. This aspect is particularly important with respect to new democracies where winning provides essentially the only standard of assessment of whether citizens have any stake in the new political regime.

Short-term distortions play a positive role in developing system legitimacy because at the heart of democratic processes there is electoral competition that generates both tensions and excitement in the public. Emotions associated with the outcomes of elections have been shown to have important consequences for citizen attitudes towards their political system. Anderson and Guillory (1997), for example, showed that winners, that is, people who endorse parties in government, are more satisfied with the political system in their country compared to losers. A sense of winning leads people to believe that the government is more interested and responsive to their needs; winners perceive the system as a friendlier place (Anderson et al. 2005; Anderson and Guillory 1997; Anderson and LoTempio 2002; Ginsberg and Weissberg 1978; Nadeau and Blais 1993; Norris 1999b, 220).

This aspect of the democratic process is important for system support because high short-term congruence between the median voter and the median party in parliament often signals the presence of permanent winners and permanent losers. The presence of short-term distortions suggests that there is a change of parties in charge of policy making and therefore more citizens have a chance to become electoral winners at least once in a while. At the same time, short-term distortions should not be too disappointing to citizens

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close to the median voter because they know that in the long-run their preferences are most consistently represented by the government. In short, short-term distortions should not undermine system legitimacy in any serious way because the benefit of increasing the number of winners and citizens whose preferences are represented at least some of the time is much higher for system legitimacy than the disappointment that short-term distortions may cause for those at or close to the median voter.

Winning and losing should be particularly important in new democracies. Recall that the positive experience associated with a long-term record of accurate representation does not exist in new democracies that have held only one or two democratic elections. There is high uncertainty and no opportunity for citizens to distinguish between bias and distortions in newly created democratic regimes. Citizens do not know whether policy makers will follow majority policy preferences in their decision-making. As a consequence, citizens are also unsure about how much stake they have in a system given their policy preferences. This suggests that winning and losing is essentially the only standard available to citizens in new democracies to evaluate whether their interests will be addressed and favored by policy makers.

Furthermore, losing must be much more difficult in new democracies because citizens are not yet used to it. In established democracies, the electorate knows that winning and losing is part of democratic competition, and that losing in one election does not necessarily mean being a permanent loser. In other words, people understand that elections are part of the routine in a democratic process, and that their party is likely to compete again and possibly win in subsequent elections. Citizens in new regimes still need to learn this and how to lose gracefully.

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The problem is that political parties are themselves involved in highly conflictual and adversarial competition in post-communist societies (Mair 1997, ch.8) because the outcomes of elections are highly consequential with respect to both the losing party's chances to compete and win in subsequent elections and to influence the direction of political and economic reforms. During the initial phase of transition, winning parties often change electoral rules in favor of those currently in power. They do so to discourage smaller parties from running next time; reforms are also designed to reduce party system fragmentation in order to facilitate and make policy-decision making in parliament more efficient. They also often adopt political or economic changes that are not easily reversible by subsequent governments. This is why it is not surprising that losers are often less willing to accept the outcomes of elections in new democracies. Citizens in new democracies need to learn how to lose without blaming the institutions and principles of democracy. Peaceful change of parties in power from one election to the next and developing "democratic restraint" (Rohrschneider 1999, 17) or "loser's consent" (Anderson et al 2005) to accept the rules of the game is therefore viewed as one of the most difficult yet most important tests of successful democratization. In short, the stakes in new democracies are likely to be much higher than in established democracies, and where the stakes are high, so is the negative effect of losing on system support (Anderson et al. 2005, 136). My next hypothesis, therefore, is the following:

> **Hypothesis 3.** The effect of winning and losing on support for the political system should be stronger in new democracies than in established democracies.

Interactive Effects

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I also expect that established democracies will differ from new ones by the presence of an interaction between winning or losing and the distance from the median policy preferences. This means that losers with policy preferences most distant from the median voter are more likely to be particularly dissatisfied with their political system. In contrast, winners at or close to the median voter will be the most positive about the system. Being a winner and close to the median voter means having everything that the democratic process can provide: it means being favored by policy decision makers and also enjoying the status of being in the political majority. In contrast, losers further removed from the median voter are likely to be in such position on a permanent basis. What is more, individuals on the ideological extremes usually feel much stronger about their beliefs than citizens in the center of the ideological continuum (Miller 1974). As a consequence, they may be even more disillusioned with the political system compared to other political losers with un-represented policy preferences.

Such an interaction effect between losing and distance from the median is unlikely in new democracies. There winning and losing rather than accurate policy representation is likely to be the driving force of citizen support for the political system. And although ideological direction matters for the levels of system support, given the high political uncertainty of the new regime, it is not very clear that losing on the left would be more disappointing than losing on the right. This general perspective leads me to the next two hypotheses:

> **Hypothesis 4.** Citizens who are losers and are further away from the median voter should have particularly low levels of support for their political systems in established democracies, but not in new democracies.

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Data and Measures

I test my hypotheses using individual level data collected as part of the *World Values Surveys* (WVS) 1999-2000 (ICPSR Study No.3975). The analysis is based on data from 14 established Western democracies and 11 new democracies of East Central Europe. Countries that provided the most important survey items, had a sufficient number of cases for multivariate analyses and available measures for gauging accuracy in policy representation are the following established democracies: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Britain, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden. The new democracies of East Central Europe are represented by Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine.

Dependent Variables

I use two dependent variables to measure citizen support for their political system. My first dependent variable is satisfaction with democracy. The relevant survey measure in the *World Value Survey* asked citizens whether they are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in their country. For the purpose of this study, I reversed the original scale: the categories range from 0 to 3, with 3 denoting the most satisfied response. My second dependent variable is citizens' evaluation of their political system. It is measured with the help of the following survey question: "People have different views about the system for governing this

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country. Here is a scale for rating how well things are going: 1 means very bad; 10 means very good."

Figure 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 show average values of my dependent variables by country. They reveal considerable variation both in established and new democracies. The percentage of citizens very or somewhat satisfied with democracy ranges from 83.3 in Luxembourg to 35.9 in Italy in established democracies, and from 43.1 in Poland to 6.9 in Russia in new democracies. Similarly, the percentage of those evaluating their political system above 5 on the scale from 1 to 10 ranges from 76 in the Netherlands to 26 in Italy; the range in East Central Europe is from 40 in Bulgaria to 5.3 in Russia. The satisfaction with democracy variable ranges from 0 to 3; its mean value is 1.6 in established democracies, and 1.0 in new democracies. On a range from 1 to 10, the average value of the political system evaluation scale is 5.4 in established democracies, and 3.7 in new democracies of East Central Europe.

[Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 About Here]

The figures show a clear difference in the levels of system support between established and new democracies. With the exception of Italy, citizens in all established democracies are more satisfied with how democracy works in their country than any of the new democracies in East Central Europe. Italians and the French also rate their political system on average a bit lower than Bulgarians and Estonians. Unsurprisingly, Russia and Ukraine—countries with the least progress in their democratic reforms—have the most pessimistic public with respect to evaluations of democracy in their country. Only 7 percent in Russia are satisfied with their democracy, and only 5 percent rate their

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political system above the value of five. The percentages are twice that in Ukraine, but they are still very low compared to other countries.

Main Independent Variables

I use two variables – Distance from the Median to the Left and Distance from the Median to the Right – to capture the effects of individual location on the ideological scale relative to the median policy preference in a country. The left-right continuum is commonly used to measure a country' policy discourse. It conveniently summarizes the political space by situating a number of policies along a single ideological scale. Left-right placement is a useful indicator also because it measures political orientations at a very general level and in commonly understood and widely accepted terms (Inglehart and Klingemann 1976, Klingemann 1979, Fuchs and Klingemann 1989). Moreover, a number of studies demonstrate that voters have a strong sense of where they and parties stand on the broad contours of policy as indicated by the left-right dimension (Converse and Pierce 1986, Miller et al. 1999). This suggests that the left-right continuum can be fruitfully employed in examining the role of accurate policy representation.

To create distance from the median variables, I relied on a left-right self-placement survey question that codes individuals on a 1-10 category scale, where lower values indicate Left-leaning preferences and higher values Right-leaning orientations. I then used this 1-10 category variable to calculate the median ideological position in each country. To create a variable Distance from the Median to the Left, for those on the Left, I subtracted their left-right self-placement position from their country median, and, to be

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able to include this variable in multivariate analyses, I assigned everyone on the right a value of 0. Similarly, to create a variable Distance from the Median to the Right, for those on the right I subtracted the country median from their left-right self-placement position, and assigned everyone on the Left a value of 0. The two resulting variables range from 0 to 5, with higher values indicating a larger distance from the median in their country.

Following the literature on winners and losers (Anderson et al. 2005, Anderson and Guillory 1997), I created a Loser's variable, which indicates whether a respondent endorsed a party in government.[16] Relying on special issues of the *European Journal of Political Research* that report election results and government composition for a number of democracies, the *Political Handbook of the World*, and *Keesing's Archives*, I first determined which parties were in government at the time that the survey was conducted in each country in my sample. I then used the survey question "If there was a general election tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" to create a dichotomous variable, where 0 indicated that an individual would vote for a party in government, and 1—otherwise.[17] Descriptive statistics in Table 1 suggest that the proportion of losers is larger in new democracies than in established ones: the mean value are .834 and .701 respectively. Higher proportion of losers in new democracies might be due to higher levels of wasted votes. For instance, 35% of votes were wasted in the 1993 parliamentary elections in Poland, and 26% and 27% -- in the 1992 lower house elections in the Czech and the Slovak Republics respectively (Gallagher 2001, ch.15). This might be a

[16] See Anderson et al (2005, ch.3) for a discussion of the measurement of winning and losing.
[17] I use a variable for losers rather than winners to be able to interact it with the distance from the median.

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consequence of uncertainty, high party system fragmentation, and low citizen sophistication about the functioning of electoral systems.

[Table 4.1 About Here]

To examine system level effects of accurate policy representation on political system support, I included measures of long-term bias, responsiveness, and short-term congruence. I created these variables using the median voter and the median parliamentary party left-right positions from the Manifestos Research Group data. The median parliamentary party position is based on vote shares of parties in parliament. I calculated the median voter left-right position using the manifestos data and a formula designed for computing a median from group data. HeeMin Kim and Richard Fording (1998) have applied this grouped median formula to party position data and party vote percentage data and, in that context, present it as:

$$M = L + \{(50 - C)/F\} * W.$$

Where M is the median voter position, L the lower end (left-right score) of the interval containing the median, C the cumulative vote share up to but not including the interval containing the median, F the vote share in the interval containing the median, W the width of the interval containing the median – i.e., the range of midpoints between the party of the median voter and adjacent parties to the left and right. The advantage of this measure of the median voter position is that, unlike left-right measures derived from public opinion surveys, it is comparable across time and across countries. What is more, public opinions survey data are available only for some countries some of the time, and is

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almost non-existent for the periods of more than two or three decades ago. Using vote shares and party scores from the comparative manifestos project data allows us to compute the median voter position and therefore create measures of accurate policy representation for all election years since the late 1940s.

The median voter and the median parliamentary party left-right positions are then used to calculate bias, responsiveness, and short-term distortions in the accuracy of collective policy representation. Both median voter and median parliamentary party positions are weighted by the amount of time between elections so that values from longer or shorter periods of time contribute proportionally to measures of accurate policy representation.

Bias is the average value of the difference between parliamentary median left-right position and the median voter left-right position. In contrast, short-term distortions are captured by the average absolute value of the difference between parliamentary median and median voter position. Finally, responsiveness is evaluated by the linear relationship between the left-right position of the parliamentary median (Y) and the left-right position of the median voter (X).

As descriptive statistics in Table 4.1 indicate, there is almost no difference in the levels of responsiveness between established and new democracies. The important difference, however, is that responsiveness is statistically insignificant in new democracies where only three or four elections had taken place by the time of the survey. As expected and discussed in the previous chapter, the mean value of bias and short-term distortions in new democracies is the same. In contrast, bias is three times smaller than the average value of short-term distortions in established democracies, demonstrating that

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short-term distortions occurring in separate elections indeed tend to cancel each other out over a long period of time.

[Table 4.1 About Here]

Table 4.2 and 4.3 present the values of the median voter and the median parliamentary party in established and new democracies by country. We can see that almost invariably, the positions of both the elites are the public in established democracies are more left leaning than the positions of the elites and citizens in new democracies of East Central Europe. The strong right leaning orientation apparent in post-communist societies is not surprising given that all these countries have focused on more or less substantial democratic reforms and economic liberalization. An interesting finding, however, is that in all countries, with an exception of Croatia, Russia, and Romania, bias is negative. This means that, on average, political elites are more left leaning than the public. Opposition to democratic reforms is focused on the left of the ideological continuum in most new democracies of East Central Europe. It may be that the more left-leaning orientation of the political elites is due to attempts to alleviate the dissatisfaction concentrated on the left and thereby to ensure a smoother and more successful democratization process. In contrast, most established democracies have a slight right-leaning bias indicating that political elites are on average more right wing oriented than the public.

The levels of distortion in East Central Europe are much lower than in established democracies. Croatia has the largest average distortion of 5.66 in the region; however, this is almost three times smaller than the average distortion in France or the U.K. Low levels of distortions might be due to the fact that none of the new democracies have

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adopted pure single member district electoral systems, and instead opted for proportional representation or mixed forms of electing legislators to their national parliaments.

[Table 4.2 and 4.3 About Here]

Favorable bias is a variable designed to capture instances where the presence of bias in policy representation tends to favor citizens located further away from the median voter. It is a dichotomous variable, where the value of one indicates that country bias is to the same direction as respondent's location from the median (e.g., right bias and respondent is to the right from country median). The variable takes into account individual's age because older individuals have longer time horizons than younger ones evaluating representative performance of their political systems. I therefore calculated what the bias would be for different age groups and merged this information with the survey data. In established democracies, for those older than 65 the value of bias is calculated for the period from 1950 to 2000, for citizens 55-64 from 1960 to 2000, for citizens 45-54 for the1970-2000 period, for citizens 35-44 from1980 to 2000, for citizens 25-34 from 1990 to 2000, and for the youngest group of 15-24 only the mismatch between the median voter and the median parliamentary party in the last election is taken into account. In new democracies, the value is the same for all age groups except the youngest one: as in established democracies, the assumption is that the youngest group of respondents will take into account only the last election in assessing system representative performance.

Control Variables

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To assess the effects of the independent variables of main interest in multivariate analyses, I included a number of individual and system level controls. To separate losers from nonvoters or citizens who have no party preference, I created a dichotomous variable where value of 1 indicates that respondent would not vote or that he or she would cast a blank ballot. 10 percent of all respondents in established democracies, and 15 percent in new democracies fall into the category of nonvoters.

Further, given that some citizens might be more satisfied with their political system because they support a larger party in their country, I controlled for party size in parliament. Party size communicates to citizens whether they support political majority or minority in parliament. Given that most citizens care about social recognition and, on average, prefer being part of political majority, party size is likely to be positively related to citizen attitudes towards the political system. I measured party size variable by the percentage of seats that a party holds in a national legislature and ranges from 0 to 63.49 percent in my sample. Information about party size and individual survey respondents were combined using the vote intention question. Although both established and new democracies have parties that reach the size of approximately 63 percent, on average parties in new democracies are smaller than in established ones. The size of a typical party in new democracies is 10.65 percent of parliamentary seats, while it is 14.35 percent in established democracies.

A standard set of demographic variables was also included to control for individual level effects. Existing research shows that people who have a greater stake in the maintenance of the political system tend to express higher levels of support for it. At the micro-level, citizens with higher socio-economic status and political resources are

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assumed to have a greater stake in the political system. These individual characteristics have been measured with the help of variables such as income and education, as well as age, gender, and race (Almond and Verba 1963, Finkel 1985, Anderson and Guillory 1997, Anderson et al. 2005, 20). I therefore included measures of respondent education, income, employment, age, gender, and marital status.

Education and income are measured using a number of dummies to capture possible non-linear effects of these variables. The survey item measuring respondent's income is notorious for high non-response rate. I therefore created a dummy variable to account for these cases as well as to prevent them from dropping out of the analyses. Existing research also suggests that non-linearity might be strongly suspected in the effects of education on system support. Although higher education breeds a better understanding of politics, and therefore more support for the political system (Ginsberg and Weisberg 1978, Joslyn 1998), a more recent new politics argument suggests that high levels of education can lead to critical attitudes and political dissatisfaction (Mcallister 1999, Dalton 2004). Some even argue that familiarity with politics breeds contempt because citizens dislike the messiness and inefficiency inherent in democratic processes (Hibbing and Theis-Morse 1995). Creating a number of dummy variables for various education and income groups allows me to observe these potentially non-linear effects as well as whether there is any difference in the way income and education operates on system support in established and newer democracies.

Research also shows that people who are more attentive to politics and are more involved in the political system—both psychologically and behaviorally—have more positive attitudes towards their political system (Almond and Verba 1963, Weatherford

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1991, Ginsberg and Weisberg 1978, Joslyn 1998). I therefore included a direct measure of citizen attention to politics. Controlling for political attention is also important because people may locate themselves at or close to the median – that is, the political mainstream – because they are not much involved in politics, either psychologically or physically: instead, they simply accept the dominant position without giving it much consideration. As a result, the very lack of interest in political affairs that leads to the acceptance of the mainstream position in society may also be responsible for individuals' low engagement in politics (Anderson and Paskeviciute 2004). Controlling for political attention therefore allows me to separate the 'true' effect of distance from the median from the one of cognitive involvement in the political process on system support.

Further, cultural explanations, notably Inglehart's theory of post-materialism (Inglehart 1999, 1997, 1990), suggest that value change in post-industrial societies has encouraged the development of more critical citizens who question traditional sources of authority, including government. I therefore also controlled for whether a respondent has a materialist, post-materialist, or a mixed outlook towards his or her political system. Furthermore, at the aggregate level, I controlled for the level of a country's economic development, measured by the GDP per capita. Studies have commonly assumed that a substantial level of economic development is a prerequisite to support for democracy (Lipset 1959, Przeworski 2001, Anderson et al. 2005, 148). Others, however, suggest that although, in the short run, economic development tend to bring rising levels of political satisfaction, in the long run, it leads to the emergence of new and more demanding standards by which governmental performance is evaluated, and therefore to lower levels of political trust (Inglehart 1999, Dalton 2004). Finally, a vector of country dummies was

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included to capture the effects of cross-national differences in public attitudes towards their political systems. Variable coding and descriptive statistics are listed in the appendix.

Analysis and Results

This chapter is designed to examine the effect of accurate policy representation on system legitimacy in established and newer democracies. Recall that accurate policy representation is approached as a multifaceted phenomenon, with the expectation that long-term aspects of accurate policy representation in established democracies contribute to system legitimacy, whereas short-term distortions do not undermine it in any significant way because they increase the proportion of citizens who get represented and can identify with electoral winners at least once in a while.

Figures 4.5 – 4.10 show the relationship between the three aspects of accurate policy representation—bias, responsiveness, and short-term distortions—and the average values of system support variables in established and new democracies. These graphs demonstrate that, as expected, there is a negative relationship between bias and system support in established democracies, and this is true for both satisfaction with democracy and political system evaluation.[18] The two outliers are Italy and Belgium: although both systems are generally unbiased, their citizens tend to have relatively low levels of system support. Thus, the negative relationship between bias and system support would be even stronger if Italy and Belgium were excluded from the sample. In contrast, as expected,

[18] The graph plots absolute values of bias, that is, it does not take into account whether there is left or right bias in the system. It only shows whether there is a relationship between any type of bias and system support.

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bias does not seem to have any effect on system support in new democracies: the fitted line is almost flat for both satisfaction with democracy and political system evaluation.

[Figure 4.5 and 4.6 About Here]

Further, short-term distortions operate on system support in a curvilinear pattern: first, as the distortions increase the levels of system support also grow. However, they do so only to a certain limit, after which the relationship becomes negative. This non-linearity is not surprising. Distortions that are too large may signal to citizens that majority policy preferences do not have much control over policy making. This relationship is apparent in both established and new democracies, although most new democracies are clustered on the left side of the curve, showing that for the most part short-term incongruence leads to higher levels of system support. The case of Croatia shows that larger distortions reverse the relationship producing the same non-linear pattern in new democracies that we observe in established democracies. Note that the relationship between bias and satisfaction with democracy closely resembles the one between short-term distortions and system support. This finding reinforces my expectation that there is no difference between short-term incongruence and long-term bias in new democracies. Although their values are not exactly the same in many post-communist societies, bias and distortion operate on citizen satisfaction with democracy essentially the same way following the logic of short-term effects.

[Figures 4.7 and 4.8 About Here]

Responsiveness is positively related to system support in established democracies. The bivariate relationship, however, is substantively weak and not very reliable in statistical terms because countries are widely dispersed around the fitted line. In

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established democracies, however, the result is consistent because graphs for both system support variables exhibit the same positive relationship. This is not the case in new democracies: the relationship between responsiveness and system support variables is very weak and inconsistent: responsiveness has a slightly positive effect on citizen political system evaluation and a slightly negative effect on their satisfaction with democracy. It may also be the case that there is simply too little variation on the values of responsiveness. Most new democracies appear have almost direct responsiveness (the value of 1), yet system support ranges widely from very low in Russia to quite high in Poland.

[Figure 4.9 and 4.10 About Here]

In short, visual examination of bivariate relationships between various qualities of accurate policy representation and public attitudes towards the political system suggests that long-term and short-term aspects have divergent effects on system legitimacy. Whereas long-term qualities—non-bias and responsiveness—lead to more favorable citizen attitudes towards the political system, short-term distortions do not undermine them in any serious way. Short-term incongruence is associated with higher levels of citizen satisfaction with democracy and political system ratings. The non-linearity of the relationship suggests, however, that distortions beyond an acceptable threshold may signal citizens' loss of control over the policy-making process and therefore may reduce support for democratic governance.

In contrast, none of the long-term aspects of accurate policy representation are related to system legitimacy in a consistent manner in new democracies. Only short-term distortions are positively associated with people's support for the political system. And,

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unlike bias or non-responsiveness, they contribute positively to citizen attitudes towards democratic governance in their country. Thus, the figures suggest that long-term aspects of accurate policy representation might not yet be operating in countries that had only a few democratic elections. In the next section, I therefore examine whether these effects are also apparent on the individual level of analysis.

Individual Level Effects of Accurate Policy Representation

Recall that, for the purposes of this analysis, accurate policy representation implies accurate representation of the median voter over long, intermediate, and short periods of time. My simulation results and empirical evidence from previous research demonstrate that, given a sufficient number of democratic elections, all democracies produce accurate representation of the median voter over the long and intermediate term. This implies that citizens whose preferences are located close to the median voter position should develop more satisfaction with their political system because policy makers represent their policy preferences most consistently. Conversely, citizens who have preferences that are further removed from the median voter should develop much lower levels of system support relative to others. In short, I hypothesized that an individual's proximity to the median should be positively related to support for the political system. We should observe this relationship in established democracies but not in new democracies where too few elections have taken place for a median position to be identified as the one most consistently represented by policy makers.

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To examine whether the effects of long-term aspects of accurate policy representation are reflected in public support for the political system on the individual level, I first plotted distributions of satisfaction with democracy and political system evaluation by distance from country median on the left-right continuum and by winners and losers. These are shown in Figures 4.11 – 4.14. The distributions demonstrate that in established democracies citizens close to or at the country median have much higher levels of system support than citizens further away from the country median. One unexpected finding, however, is that citizens on the relatively far right evaluate their political system particularly highly. Some scholars suggest that this pattern might be due to higher levels of patriotism among citizens on the far right (Anderson et al. 2005, 156). However, this may also be the consequence of the fact that most established democracies are slightly biased to the right and have been moving towards the right over the last few decades.

[Figures 4.11 – 4.14 About Here]

We also see that the difference between winners and losers in the levels of satisfaction with democracy is larger among citizens on the extremes of the ideological continuum compared to the difference between winners and losers at or close to country median. This suggests that interaction effects between distance from the median and losing may indeed be operating in established democracies. Finally, we can also see that the levels of system support decline only at the very ends of the ideological scale; there is not much difference among winners or among losers that are exactly at the median or one or two units away from it. My sense is that this is due to the positive effects of short-term distortions because they allow citizens with ideological preferences within one or two

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units from the median voter to get represented and be electoral winners every once in a while.

The results from new democracies of East Central Europe suggest a very different story. First, as expected, the levels of satisfaction with democracy and political system evaluation are much lower and the gap between winners and losers is much larger in new democracies than in established ones. The most satisfied winners in new democracies are approximately at the level of the least satisfied winners in established democracies (around 1.5 on a scale from 0 to 3, which means that on average they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with democracy in their country). Similarly, the most satisfied losers in new democracies are approximately at the level of the most dissatisfied losers in established democracies (around 1.25). As we can see in Figures 4.11 – 4.14, the gap between winners is almost the same regardless how far a respondent stands relative to the median voter. The only exception is the far left in new democracies, where the gap between winners and losers is particularly pronounced. In the new democracies of East Central Europe, citizens on the far left tend to represent supporters of the old Communist parties who were guaranteed to be winners in the old, non-democratic, system. This group of people is therefore referred to as 'big losers" (Anderson et al. 2005, ch.6) because political and economic transformations in post-communist societies have dismantled their leftist policy hegemony and exposed them to democratic competition. Thus, left and right clearly matters for system support in new democracies: citizens on the right are much more satisfied with democracy in their country than citizens on the left. This should not be confused with the distance from the median effects that we

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observe in established democracies. It is being on the right or left rather than distance from the median that directly matters for system support in new democracies.

To examine whether my hypothesized effects hold even when I control for other factors, I proceed to multivariate estimations, the results of which are presented in Table 4.4 for established democracies and Table 4.5 for new democracies. Coefficients represent ordered logit estimates with robust standard errors in parentheses. Model I shows the effects of the individual and system variables of main interest controlling for various macro- and micro-level factors. It includes being an electoral loser and the distance from the median variables as well as country level estimates of bias, responsiveness, and short-term distortions along with its squared term to account for the potential non-linearity of the relationship between short-term incongruence and system support variables. First, as expected, losing elections leads to more negative citizen attitudes towards the political regime. This effect is apparent with respect to both citizen satisfaction with democracy and political system evaluations in both established and new democracies, although the effect is almost three times stronger in new democracies than in established ones.

[Table 4.4 and 4.5 About Here]

Further, the effect of distance from the median varies across the two regions. In established democracies, both distance from the median variables (distance from the median to the left and distance from the median to the right) lead to more pessimistic attitudes. In contrast, whereas distance from the median to the left leads to a more negative outlook towards the political regime, distance to the right in fact fosters optimism about the political system among citizens in new democracies. This suggests

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that if the two variables were combined into a singe distance from the median measure, its effect is unlikely to be statistically or substantively significant. Therefore, what really matters for system support in the new democracies of post-communist Europe is not the distance from the median but self-placement on the right or on the left of the ideological continuum.

Further, the results support my expectations with respect to system-level variables of accurate policy representation. The coefficients of bias, responsiveness, and short-term distortions are in the expected directions and all are statistically significant. Bias produces a negative effect, responsiveness a positive effect, and responsiveness a non-linear effect of an inverted U shape on citizen satisfaction with democracy. Interestingly, the multivariate analyses show that these system level effects are apparent not only in established democracies, but also in new democracies, and they are in the same expected directions. What is more, short-term distortions have a particularly strong positive effect on system support in new democracies.

Long-term experience with democracy should also produce interaction effects between distance from the median and system support. We therefore should see citizens further removed from the median voter and who are losers to be particularly dissatisfied with their political system because they are more likely to be both un-represented and be losers more often than others. Given that new democracies have shorter experience with competitive elections, interaction effects are less likely to appear in post-communist electorates. The results in Model II support my expectations. Both interaction terms are negative and statistically significant for both system support variables in established democracies. In new democracies, the interaction terms are statistically significant only

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for the political system evaluation model; their effects, however, are substantively much smaller in new democracies than in established ones.

Finally, Model III tests the robustness of my findings using country dummies to control for unaccounted system level effects. The losing and interaction terms continue to operate on system support in the same direction at highly statistically significant levels. The coefficients of the variables of main interest remain unaffected, except for a slightly reduced but still strong and highly statistically significant loser's variable in new democracies.

Among the control variables, party size emerges as a consistent and highly reliable predictor of system support in established democracies: citizens supporting larger parties have more positive attitudes towards their regimes than citizens favoring smaller parties. This relationship does not exist in new democracies. Further, nonvoters and citizens who refused to report their ideological preferences have consistently more negative attitudes about the political system in which they live. The proportion of nonvoting and refusals to report ideological position is higher in new democracies than in established ones: nonvoters constitute 15 percent of all respondents in new democracies and 10 percent in established democracies; similarly there were 28 percent of all respondents did not report their left-right position in new democracies, and 17 percent in established democracies. However, the magnitude of the coefficient is approximately the same in the models of both more and less established democracies.

The argument that being attentive to politics leads to more understanding and therefore a more positive outlook towards the system clearly holds in established democracies, but not in new democracies. This is an intriguing finding given that a lot

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more people reported being attentive to politics in new democracies than in established ones. Given the wide scope of post communist transformations and that they affected most people in a more or less direct and personal way, it may be that no extra attention to politics is needed for citizens to evaluate their political regime.

Among the demographic control variables, income matters in both established and new democracies, although it has a stronger and more consistent effect in new democracies. I used four dummy variables to capture the possible non-linearity in the effects of income on system support. Low income is a reference category in all models. The survey item measuring respondent income is notorious for high levels of missing values. I therefore included a dummy variable also for those who did not report their income. The proportion of these people was relatively low: 20 percent in established democracies, and surprisingly even lower in new democracies at 14 percent. The higher willingness of citizens to respond to a question about income may be due to higher levels of income equality in post-communist societies.

The results, however, reveal interesting differences between established and new democracies. Citizens in the upper income categories are invariably more satisfied with democracy in their country in both established and new democracies, but the effect is almost twice as strong in new democracies. Citizens in the middle income category also have more positive attitudes. However, the distinction between low and middle income is less reliable in statistical terms in established democracies. The most interesting finding is that, in established democracies, those who did not report their income resemble those with low income with respect to their satisfaction with democracy. In contrast, citizens who did not report their income in new democracies are even more satisfied with

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democracy than citizens in the upper income category. Although explanations of these patterns are beyond the scope of this analysis, I speculate that in an environment of high uncertainty and a weak rule of law that often characterizes new democracies, citizens with higher incomes may be more careful to report their income, especially if these are acquired by illegitimate means. Nevertheless, a common pattern between established and new democracies is that individual income and satisfaction with democratic governance go hand in hand, and the relationship is even stronger in new democracies of East Central Europe than in established ones. The positive effect of GDP per Capita in both established and new democracies also suggests that higher levels of wealth bring more support for democratic governance.

Age is another variable for which I created three dummy variables to capture a possible non-linear relationship with system support. The age group of 35-54 is used as a reference category. Age is an important predictor of satisfaction with democracy in both established and new democracies, and political system evaluation in new democracies. Young people (age group of 15-34) are consistently more optimistic about their political system than other age groups. The effect of being young is particularly strong in new democracies. This finding is not surprising given that young people in new democracies are usually more flexible in seizing the opportunities brought about by democratic reforms and market liberalization; they have better access to the necessary education and training that other age groups did not have a chance to obtain under the previous regime.

Education has different effects on system support in established compared to new democracies. Whereas higher levels of education foster optimistic attitudes among citizens in established democracies, more educated citizens in new democracies seem to

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be more critical of their political system than those with low levels of education. Interestingly, citizens with the highest levels of education in new democracies are statistically no different from those with low levels of education. However, those with middle levels of education are significantly more pessimistic about the political system in their country than citizens with low levels of education. Although existing survey data do not allow us to explore these relationships in more detail, I speculate that citizens with middle levels of education were the graduates from technical schools, commonly employed in state-owned industries during the Soviet regime. Many soviet factories proved to be inefficient and went out of business in transitional regimes of post-communist societies. Citizens with middle levels of education may have realized that their technical skills were no longer useful and more general skills insufficient to compete and adapt in the new labor market. In contrast, those with low levels of education do not have much to lose with regime change; and those with high levels of education are probably better equipped to adjust in the new environment.

The distinction between materialist, post-materialist, and mixed value orientations is another useful predictor of citizen attitudes towards democratic governance. The reference category in the models is mixed (post-materialist and materialist) orientation. My findings support the expectation that post-materialists are more critical of the status quo of the democratic regime in their countries, and this seems to be true in both established and new democracies. However, the effect of materialist values differs in the two regions: whereas materialists are slightly more satisfied with the political system in established democracies, a materialist orientation leads to more negative outlook towards the political regime in new democracies. Thus, both materialists and post-materialists are

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more prone to negative evaluations compared to the mixed category in new democracies. Finally, there is some support that males have more positive attitudes towards the political system: although there is no gender difference with respect to satisfaction with democracy, men are more likely to evaluate their political system positively than women in established democracies. There is no statistically significant difference between men and women in new democracies, however. Married respondents have more positive political system evaluations in both established and new democracies. The effect is not apparent, however, with respect to satisfaction with democracy.

The relationship between distance from the median and citizen support for the political system in their country is based on the idea that all established democracies have generally unbiased and responsive policy representation, and therefore the policy preferences of the median voter get most consistently represented by policy makers. What happens when the system is slightly biased to the left or to the right of the median voter? At the core of my argument is the idea that policies more proximate to citizen preferences should produce higher levels of their support for the political system. This means that in countries that are slightly biased one direction or the other, citizens whose preferences are being favored by the direction of the bias should be more satisfied with their political system than others.

The results of this test are presented in Table 4.6. I estimated the model separately for two countries—France, the country with the largest right bias, and Sweden, the country with the largest left bias in my sample of established democracies. If my expectations are correct – that is, if long-term accuracy in collective policy representation matters for system legitimacy – we should see two things. First, the levels of system

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support in these two countries should be lower than in countries with unbiased representation of the median voter. Second, the relationship between the distance from the median and system support should be less clear than in other countries. Specifically, in country with a right bias we should see citizens on the right being more positive about their political systems than citizens at the median or those further removed from the median to the left of the ideological continuum. The opposite should be true for a country with a left bias.

The results support my expectations. Indeed, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between distance from the median to the right and satisfaction with democracy in France, and distance from the median to the left and satisfaction with democracy in Sweden. The relationships in the political system evaluations model are not statistically significant. However, they are in the expected direction, and the effect of distance from the median to the left in Sweden is statistically significant at .1 level in a two-tailed test of significance.

[Table 4.6 About Here]

Although citizen attitudes towards the political system are more positive among those whose policy preferences are being favored by the bias in the system, overall the levels of system support tend to be lower in countries in which long term policy representation is less accurate. As Figures 4.1 and 4.3 indicate, the mean score of satisfaction with democracy and political system evaluation in Sweden and France is below the average in my sample of established democracies.

[Figures 4.1 and 4.3 About Here]

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Taken together, the results suggest that accurate policy representation produced by political parties plays an important role in developing citizen support for their political system. Empirical evidence indicates that long term aspects of accurate policy representation leads to favorable citizen attitudes towards the political system in their country, especially among those close to the median voter position. However, short-term distortions do not undermine system support in any serious way because they allow more citizens to get represented and become winners at least once in a while.

This point is particularly important with respect to new democracies where, by definition, too few elections have taken place for citizens to be able to distinguish between short-term distortions and long-term bias. The uncertainty, fluidity, and high stakes involved in the first few elections in new democracies mean that winning and losing are the driving forces of citizen satisfaction with the political system in their country and only winning is likely to provide citizens with a sense of having a stake in the new system.

The fact that winning and losing play such an important role in new democracies relative to the accuracy of policy representation might be interpreted as both bad and good news for those interested in building and developing democratic legitimacy. My findings might be viewed as bad news for new democracies in the sense that it takes time for accurate policy representation to produce positive outcomes for system legitimacy. All established democracies seem to have highly responsive and unbiased policy representation. However, it takes time to observe the positive outcomes of democratic processes and to develop an appreciation for what it brings.

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The good news communicated by these results is that winning might be a saving grace for system legitimacy in new democracies. An important task for new democracies then is designing institutions that maximize the numbers of winners produced by the first democratic elections. Party turnover in government from one election to the next is also crucial to ensure that more citizens develop attachment to the new political regime. Due to divergent effects of short-term and long-term aspects of accurate policy representation, a change of parties in government is important even when it produces short-term distortions between the median voter and median party in government.

Finally, the importance of the party size variable suggests that a lot of responsibility lies in the hands of political parties. Parties need to focus their efforts on developing larger and more viable party organizations that are capable of attracting and mobilizing voters. The development of democratic legitimacy in new democracies therefore depends on the extent of party system fractionalization and the success of consolidating electoral competition in the hands of a few major political parties. This means that two-party systems may hold some advantage compared to multiparty systems with respect to developing system legitimacy. Although two-party systems provide fewer electoral choices to the public, they may compensate by the size of their political parties, provided, of course, that most citizens have an affinity for them. In other words, it is important that citizens are not disaffected by the two available choices and are willing to express their electoral support for one of them. If voters were increasingly less willing to vote and endorse existing parties, the advantage of two-party systems with respect to system legitimacy would be reduced. In short, an important role, once again, falls to political parties, their efforts and ability to organize democratic politics and citizen

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involvement that ensures more legitimate, and therefore more stable and effective functioning of democratic government.

Concluding Remarks

Successful democratic systems are based on popular support, and developing this support for the political system is a primary and most crucial task for democracies. Although aligning policy preferences of citizen with those of political elites has been a central issue for students of democratic politics ever since the rise of modern—that is, representative—democracies, existing research tells us very little about whether, to what extent, and how accurate policy representation contributes to democratic legitimacy. Drawing on data collected as part of the *Word Values Surveys* (WVS) 1999-2000 from across 14 established and 11 newer democracies of East Central Europe, this study was designed to do just that. Building on simulation results presented in the previous chapter and recent comparative research on policy representation, I argued that the distinction between long-term and short-term aspects of accurate policy representation is particularly important for understanding how they affect democratic legitimacy. Long-term characteristics—non-bias and responsiveness—contribute to citizen support for their political system. As a consequence, citizens who are close to the median voter support their political system more because their preferences are most consistently represented by policy makers compared to citizens with more extreme ideological views.

Whereas long-term aspects of accurate policy representation foster democratic legitimacy, short-term distortions do not undermine it in any serious way because they

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increase the number of electoral winners and citizens who get represented at least once in a while. Those at the median have more support for the system given that their policy preferences are most consistently represented in government policies over time. Giving an opportunity for those further away from the median to become electoral winners is likely to boost their system support and thus increase the overall levels of satisfaction with democracy in their country.

This point is particularly important with respect to newer democracies where by definition too few elections have taken place for long-term aspects of policy representation to produce positive effects on system legitimacy. Distance from the median therefore cannot explain citizen support for democratic governance in post-communist societies. Instead, self-placement on the left or the right is directly associated with people's attitudes towards the new democratic regime, with people on the right considerably more in favor of it.

More importantly, it is winning and losing rather than policy representation that drives citizen support for their political system in new democracies. Winning and losing also matters for system legitimacy in established democracies but to a lesser extent. What is more, losing has an interactive effect with distance from the median: losers who are further away from the median are particularly dissatisfied with the political system. Conversely, winners at or close to the median voter are in favor of the status quo the most. The importance of distance from the median in established democracies also means that losers close to the median voter are more satisfied with the system relative to losers with extreme policy preferences. This is a pattern that is not observable in new democracies.

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The findings of this chapter have important theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the results emphasize the significance of distinguishing between various aspects of accurate policy representation. As demonstrated by my analysis, they have divergent effects on democratic legitimacy. Whereas long-term aspects of accurate policy representation lead to more positive citizen attitudes towards their political system, the results shed a positive light on the role of occasional incongruence.

From a more practical point of view, the importance of winning and losing for system legitimacy in new democracies suggests that democratic legitimacy is most likely to be secured in the presence of more inclusive institutions that generate higher numbers of winners and party turnover in government from one election to the next. This does not mean, however, that grand coalitions, for example, provide a solution to this problem. Given that support for larger parties has a consistent positive effect in both established and new democracies it seems that much of the success in producing system support lies in the hands of political parties. It is important for democratic legitimacy and successful democratization that political parties do not succumb to the temptations of fractionalization and volatility in new democracies, but instead seek to attract and mobilize larger number of supporters that then can be turned into electoral winners.

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Appendix

Measures and Coding

Democracy Satisfaction. Based on the WVS question: "On the whole, are you very satisfied, rather satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in our country?" Not at all satisfied (0), very satisfied (3).

Political System Evaluation. Based on the WVS survey question: "People have different views about the system for governing the country. Here is a scale for rating how well things are going: 1 means very bad; 10 means very good."

Loser. Based on the WVS question: "If there was a general election tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" If party choice matched with a governing party (0), otherwise (1).

Distance from the Median to the Left. Based on the WVS question: "In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?" Left (1), Right (10). The values represent the distance between the left-right positions of country median and the respondent's location on the left relative to the median; otherwise (0).

Distance from the Median to the Right. Based on the WVS question: "In political matters, people talk of 'the left' and 'the right.' How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?" Left (1), Right (10). The values represent the distance between the left-right positions of country median and the respondent who locates herself or himself on the right from the median; otherwise (0).

Median Parliamentary Party. Calculated using Comparative Manifestos Research Group data on party left-right positions and vote shares of parties in parliament.

Median Voter. Calculated using the Comparative Manifestos Research Group data and a formula for computing a median from group data. This formula, applied to party position data and party vote percentage data (Kim and Fording 1998), is the following:

$$M = L + \{(50 - C)/F\} * W.$$

Where

M - median voter position
L – the lower end (left-right score) of the interval containing the median
C – the cumulative vote share up to but no including the interval containing the median
F – the vote share in the interval containing the median
W – the width of the interval containing the median – i.e., the range of midpoints between the party of the median voter and adjacent parties to its left and right.

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Both median voter and median parliamentary party positions are weighted by the amount of time between elections so that values from longer or shorter periods of time contribute proportionally to my measures of accurate policy representation.

Bias. The average value of the difference between parliamentary median left-right position and the median voter left-right position.

Incongruence. The average absolute value of the difference between parliamentary median and median voter position.

Responsiveness. The slope in the linear relationship between the left-right position of the parliamentary median (Y) and the left-right position of the median voter (X).

Favorable Bias. Dichotomous variable, where the value of one indicates that country bias is to the same direction as respondent's location from the median (e.g., there is a right bias and respondent is to the right from country median). The variable takes into account individual's lifetime experience In established democracies, for those older than 65 the value of bias is calculated for the period from 1950 to 2000, for citizens 55-64 1960-2000, for citizens 45-54 1970-2000, for citizens 35-44 1980 – 2000, for citizens 25-34 1990-2000, and for the youngest group of 15-24 only the mismatch between the median voter and the median parliamentary party in the last election is taken into account. In new democracies, the value is the same for all age groups except the youngest one: as in established democracies, the assumption is the youngest group of respondents will take into account only the last election in assessing system representativeness.

Party Size. Based on survey question: "If there was a general election tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" The value represents the percentage of parliamentary seats held by a political party of choice at the election preceding the survey.

Nonvoter. Based on vote intention survey question. Nonvoter (=would not vote, or would cast a blank ballot), otherwise (0).

Married. Married (=married or living together as married) (1), otherwise (=single/never married, divorced, separated, widowed) (0).

Education. Three dummy variables: upper, middle, and lower education.

Age. Three dummy variables: age 15-34 years old, 35-54 years old, 55 years old and older.

Income. Four dummy variables: upper income, middle income, lower income, not reported income.

Gender. Male (1), Female (0).

Employment. "Are you yourself employed or not?" Yes (1), no (0).

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Political Attention. "How often do you follow politics in the news on television or on the radio or in the daily papers?" Never (1), every day (5).

Materialist-Post-materialist Values. Three dummy variables: materialist, mixed (reference category), post-materialist.

GDP per capita. In 1,000s of current international $'s, PPP at the time of the survey. Source: World Bank (2003) CD-ROM.

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Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	*Established Democracies*			*New Democracies*			*Variable Range*	
	N	*Mean*	*SD*	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
Satisfaction with democracy	18528	1.600	.713	12912	1.019	.738	0	3
Political System Evaluation	19046	5.440	1.990	13257	3.730	2.040	1	10
Loser	19764	.701	.458	13883	.834	.372	0	1
Distance from the median to the Left	19764	.533	1.035	13883	.503	1.086	0	5
Distance From the median to the Right	19764	.662	1.186	13883	.649	1.302	0	5
Left-Right self-placement not reported	19764	.170	.376	13883	.285	.452	0	1
Party size	19764	14.345	16.959	13883	10.649	15.281	0	63.49
Nonvoter	19764	.095	.294	13883	.153	.360	0	1
Political attention	19764	3.888	1.353	13883	4.190	1.152	1	5
Male	19764	.472	.499	13883	.447	.497	0	1
Married	19764	.567	.496	13883	.590	.492	0	1
Employed	19764	.512	.500	13883	.502	.500	0	1
Upper income	19764	.241	.427	13883	.291	.454	0	1
Middle income	19764	.289	.454	13883	.294	.456	0	1
Lower income	19764	.273	.446	13883	.276	.447	0	1
Income not reported	19764	.197	.398	13883	.138	.345	0	1
Age 15-34	19764	.319	.466	13883	.293	.455	0	1
Age 35-54	19764	.367	.482	13883	.380	.485	0	1
Age 55+	19764	.310	.462	13883	.327	.469	0	1
Upper education	19764	.194	.396	13883	.190	.392	0	1
Middle education	19764	.382	.486	13883	.478	.500	0	1
Lower education	19764	.413	.492	13883	.330	.470	0	1
Materialist	19764	.218	.413	13883	.331	.471	0	1
Mixed	19764	.564	.496	13883	.537	.499	0	1
Post-materialist	19764	.166	.372	13883	.078	.268	0	1
GDP per capita (in 1,000s of $'s)	19764	24.585	5.744	13883	7.739	2.797	3.59	45.22
Favorable bias	19764	.303	.459	13883	.201	.401	0	1
Bias	19764	2.603	2.736	13883	.25	5.66	.1	9.4
Distortion	19764	6.074	4.520	13883	.25	5.66	.25	16.7
Responsiveness	19764	.966	.245	13883	.963	.272	.109	1.57

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Figure 4.1. Satisfaction with Democracy by Country in Established Democracies, 1999-2000.

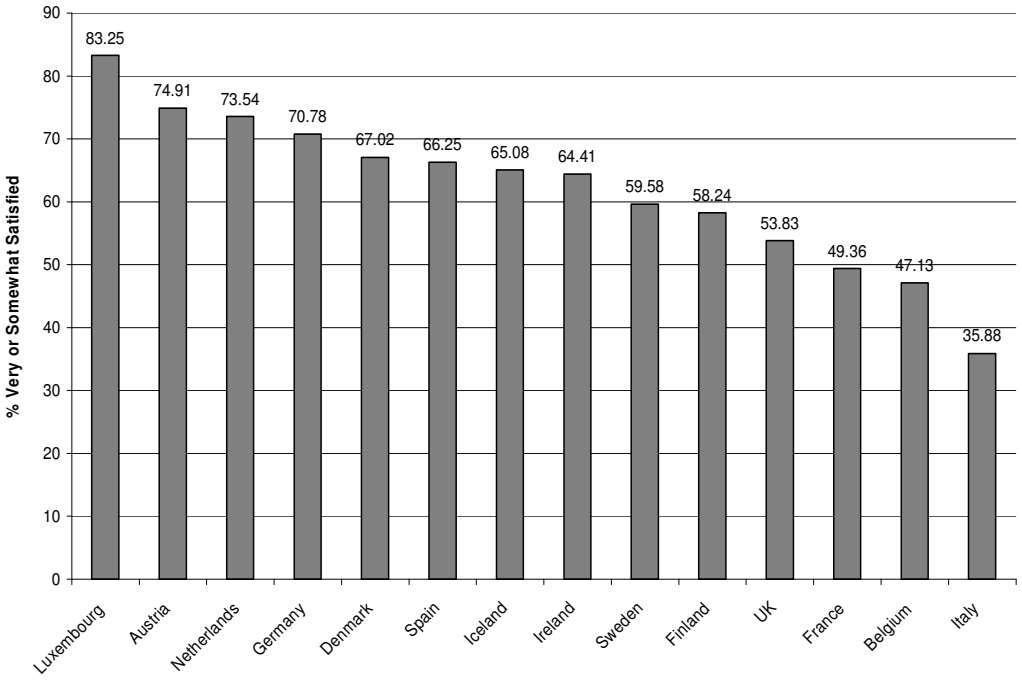

Figure 4.2. Satisfaction with Democracy by Country in New Democracies, 1999-2000.

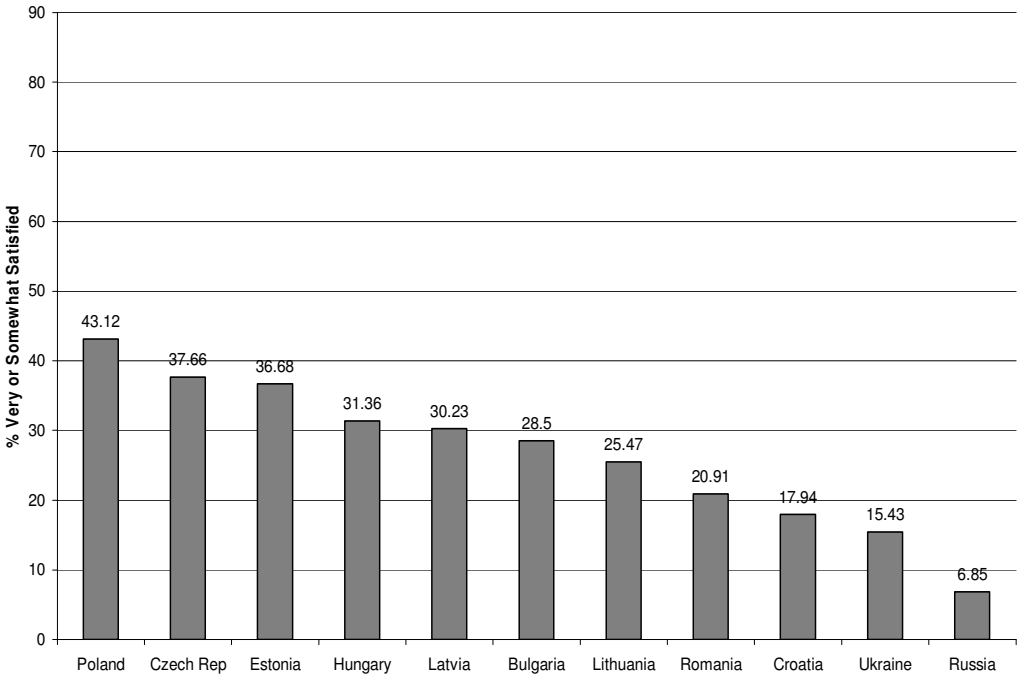

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Figure 4.3. Political System Evaluation by Country in Established Democracies, 1999-2000.

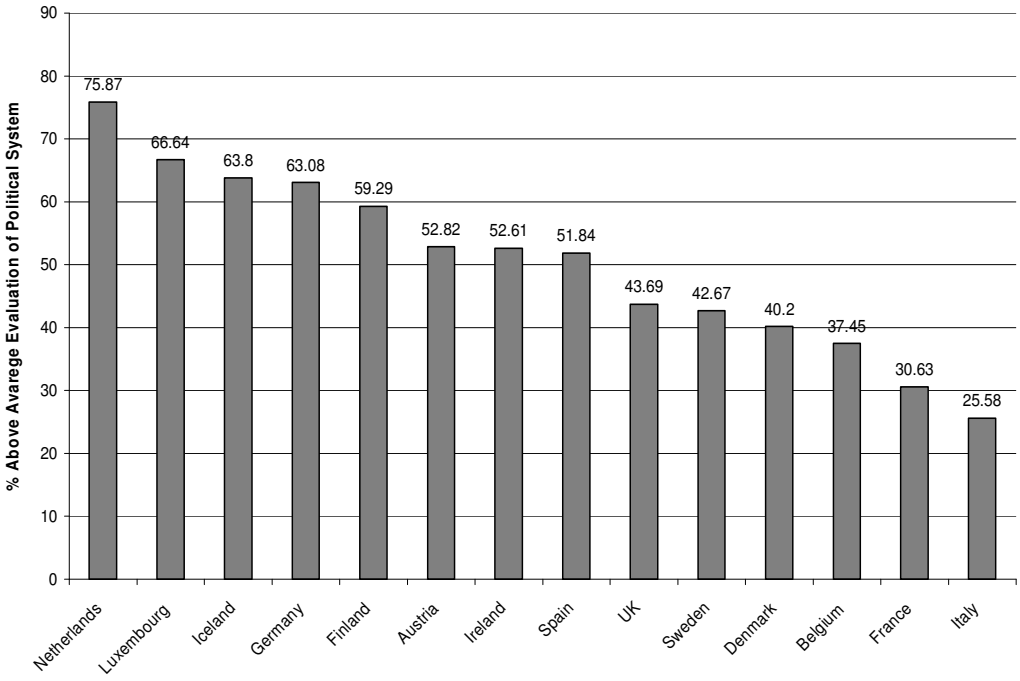

Figure 4.4. Political System Evaluation by Country in New Democracies, 1999-2000.

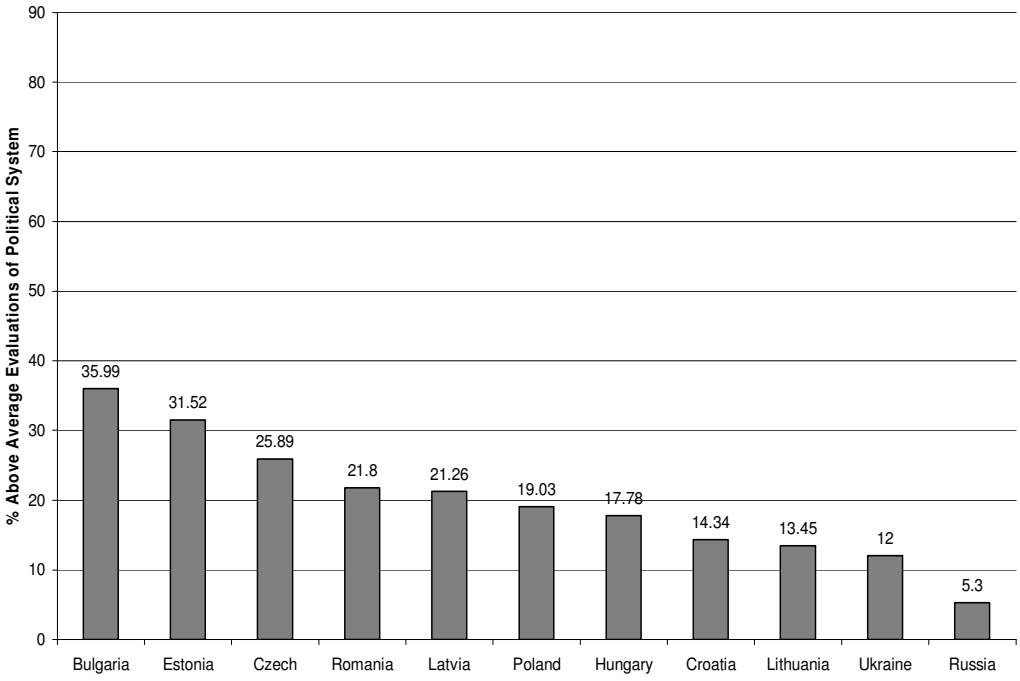

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Table 4.2. Left-Right Positions, Incongruence, Bias, and Responsiveness in Representing the Median Voter by Country in Established Democracies, 1950-1995.

Country	***Number of elections***	***Left-Right Positions*** [a]		***Incongruence*** [a]	***Bias*** [a]	***Responsiveness*** [b]
		Parliamentary Median	Median Voter			
Austria	13	-3.0	-4.1	7.3	1.1	.89
		(13.2)	(11.7)	(1.1)	(2.4)	
Belgium	15	-2.9	-4.0	2.0	1.1	.88
		(7.1)	(7.6)	(0.6)	(0.7)	
Denmark	19	-7.7	-4.8	4.7	-2.9	.83
		(8.7)	(8.4)	(1.0)	(1.3)	
Finland	13	-11.0	-12.7	4.1	1.6	.92
		(14.6)	(14.2)	(1.6)	(1.9)	
France	10	4.0	-5.4	16.7	9.4	.53
		(18.0)	(7.6)	(3.2)	(5.6)	
Germany	12	2.4	1.3	6.0	1.1	1.31
		(16.6)	(11.3)	(1.6)	(2.4)	
Iceland	13	-2.3	-4.9	7.7	2.5	.65
		(13.2)	(11.8)	(2.8)	(3.5)	
Ireland	14	2.8	4.9	10.6	-2.1	.92
		(21.2)	(16.8)	(2.9)	(4.1)	
Italy	11	-4.2	-5.6	2.2	1.4	.88
		(6.7)	(7.5)	(0.7)	(0.9)	
Luxembourg	10	-12.5	-15.6	4.0	3.2	.89
		(8.6)	(8.6)	(0.7)	(1.1)	
Netherlands	13	-4.6	-6.8	2.6	2.2	.95
		(12.0)	(12.6)	(1.0)	(1.1)	
Spain	6	-11.9	-11.9	3.1	0.1	1.18
		(9.9)	(7.9)	(1.0)	(1.7)	
Sweden	15	-21.2	-18.3	4.0	-2.9	.95
		(15.3)	(14.7)	(1.5)	(1.7)	
UK	13	-0.1	-9.1	15.3	9.0	1.57
		(25.4)	(12.6)	(3.4)	(4.9)	

Note: Cell entries are means and standard deviations. All calculations are weighted by time between elections. [a] Source: McDonald and Budge (forthcoming), ch.7. [b] Source: McDonald, Mendes, Budge (2004).

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Table 4.3. Left-Right Positions, Incongruence, Bias, and Responsiveness in Representing the Median Voter by Country in New Democracies of East Central Europe, 1990-2000.

Country	***Number of elections***	***Left-Right Positions***		***Distortion***	***Bias***	***Respon-siveness***
		Parliamentary Median	Median Voter			
Bulgaria	4	11.88	10.38	1.81	-1.50	1.07
		(14.53)	(15.79)	(2.77)	(3.01)	(.14)
Croatia	3	17.28	22.95	5.66	5.66	1.17
		(14.53)	(17.12)	(4.37)	(4.37)	(.25)
Czech Republic	4	7.94	7.65	.70	-.29	.92
		(7.83)	(7.19)	(.28)	(.79)	(.04)
Estonia	3	3.15	.35	2.81	-2.81	1.43
		(4.64)	(6.81)	(2.49)	(2.49)	(.32)
Hungary	3	7.65	5.96	1.83	-1.69	.11
		(2.36)	(1.10)	(2.20)	(2.36)	(.45)
Latvia	3	6.69	6.24	1.87	-.45	1.03
		(3.80)	(4.80)	(1.63)	(2.76)	(.72)
Lithuania	3	12.16	11.2	.88	-.88	1.00
		(17.10)	(17.11)	(.55)	(.55)	(.03)
Poland	3	4.59	2.97	1.62	-1.62	.88
		(12.54)	(11.11)	(2.25)	(2.25)	(.13)
Romania	3	-5.71	-5.17	.55	.55	.99
		(12.75)	(12.62)	(.66)	(.66)	(.05)
Russia	3	26.26	26.92	.69	.67	.98
		(23.43)	(23.02)	(1.05)	(1.08)	(.04)
Ukraine	2	1.20	.96	.25	-.25	1.02
		(2.33)	(2.38)	(.05)	(.05)	(.00)

Note: Cell entries are means and standard deviations. All calculations are weighted by time between elections. Values are computed using data from the Manifestos Research Group (MRG) project data.

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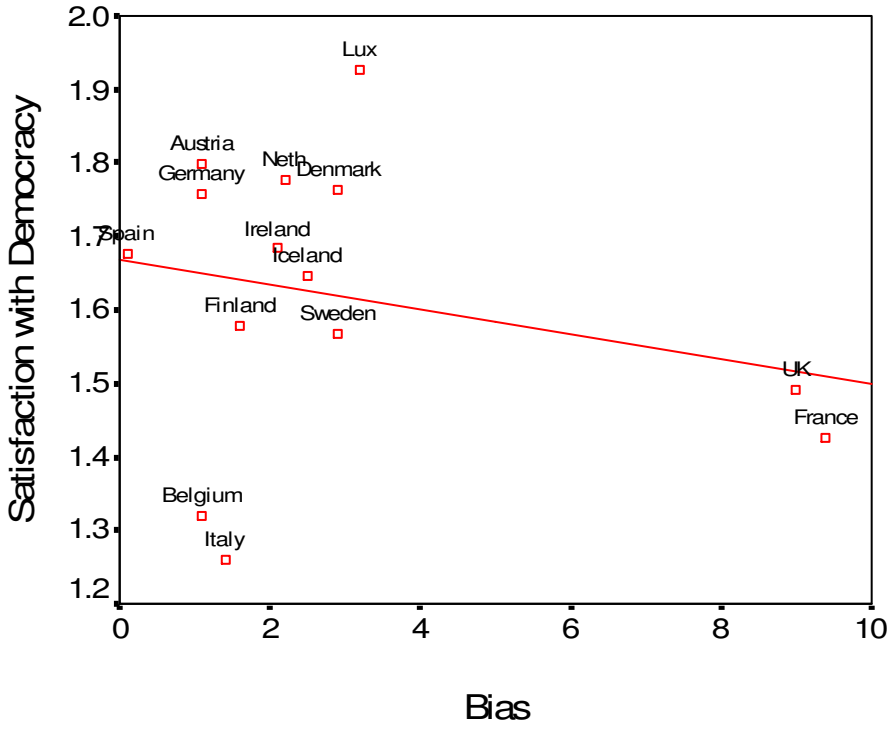
Figure 4.5. Bias and System Support in Established Democracies



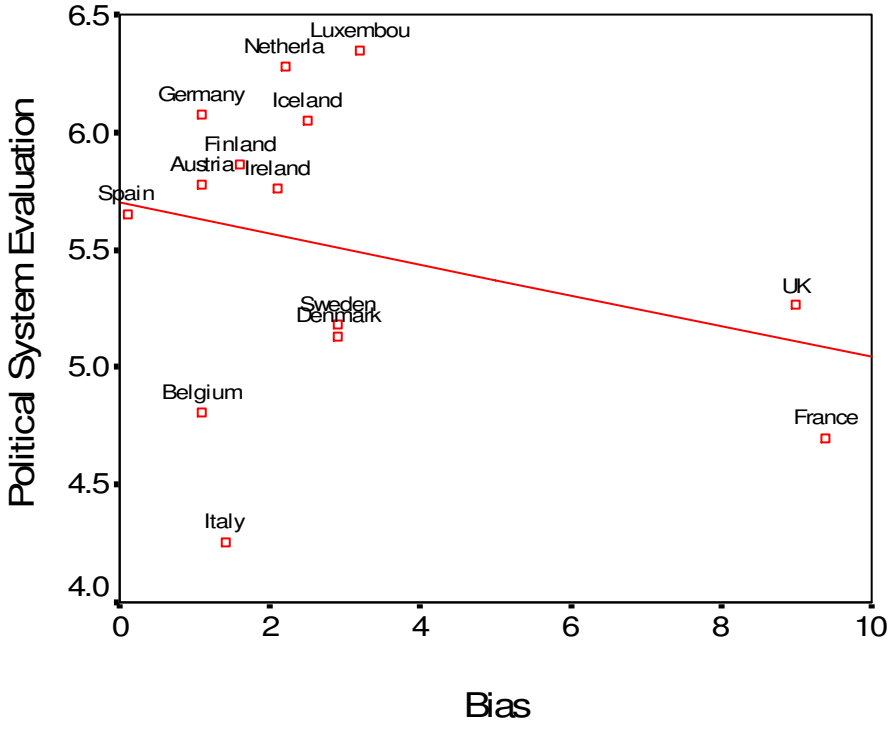


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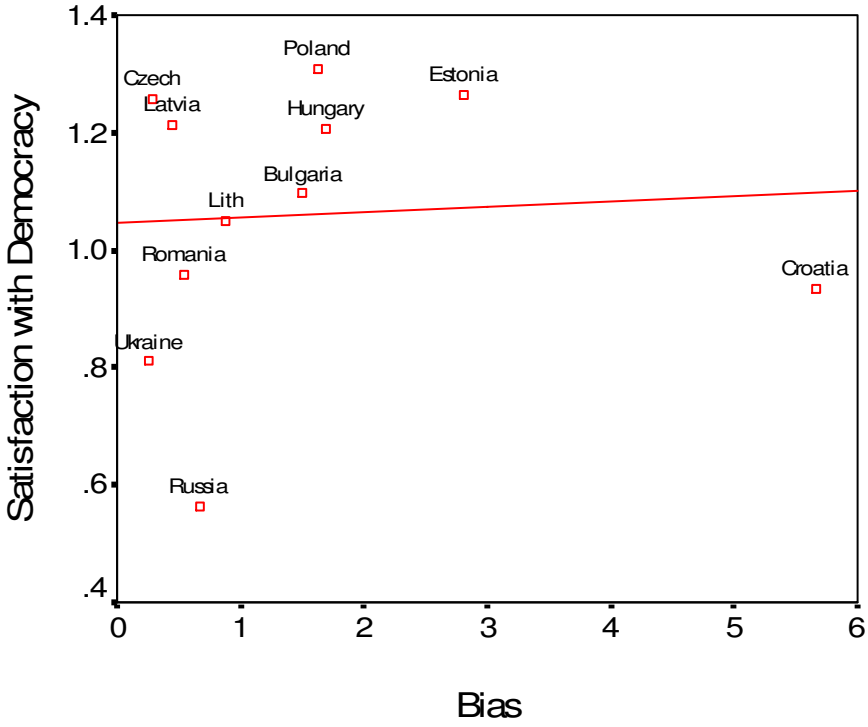
Figure 4.6. Bias and System Support in New Democracies



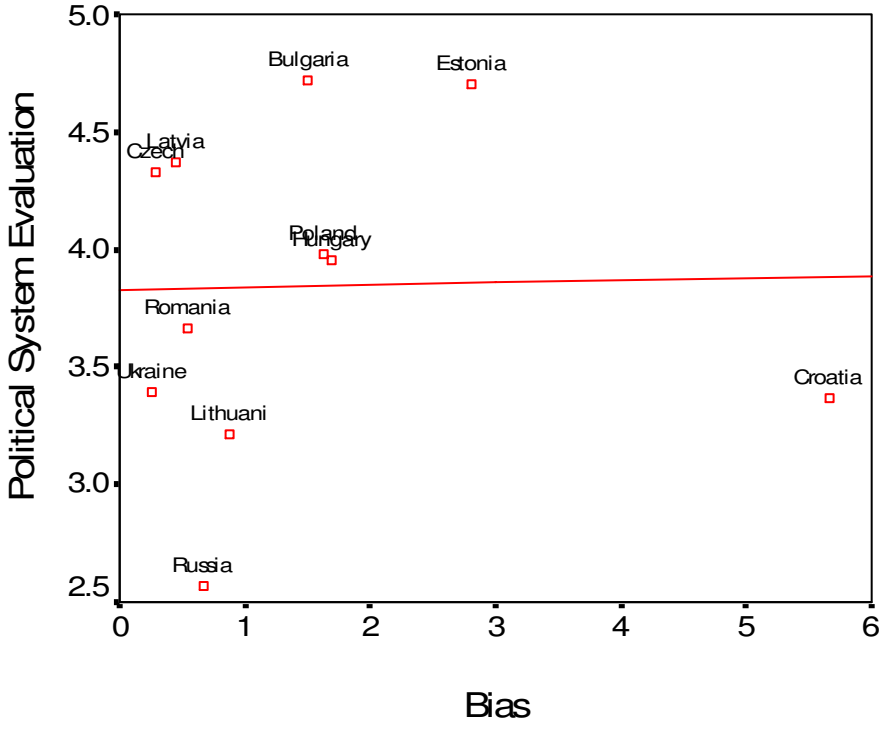


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Figure 4.7. Short-Term Incongruence and System Support in Established Democracies

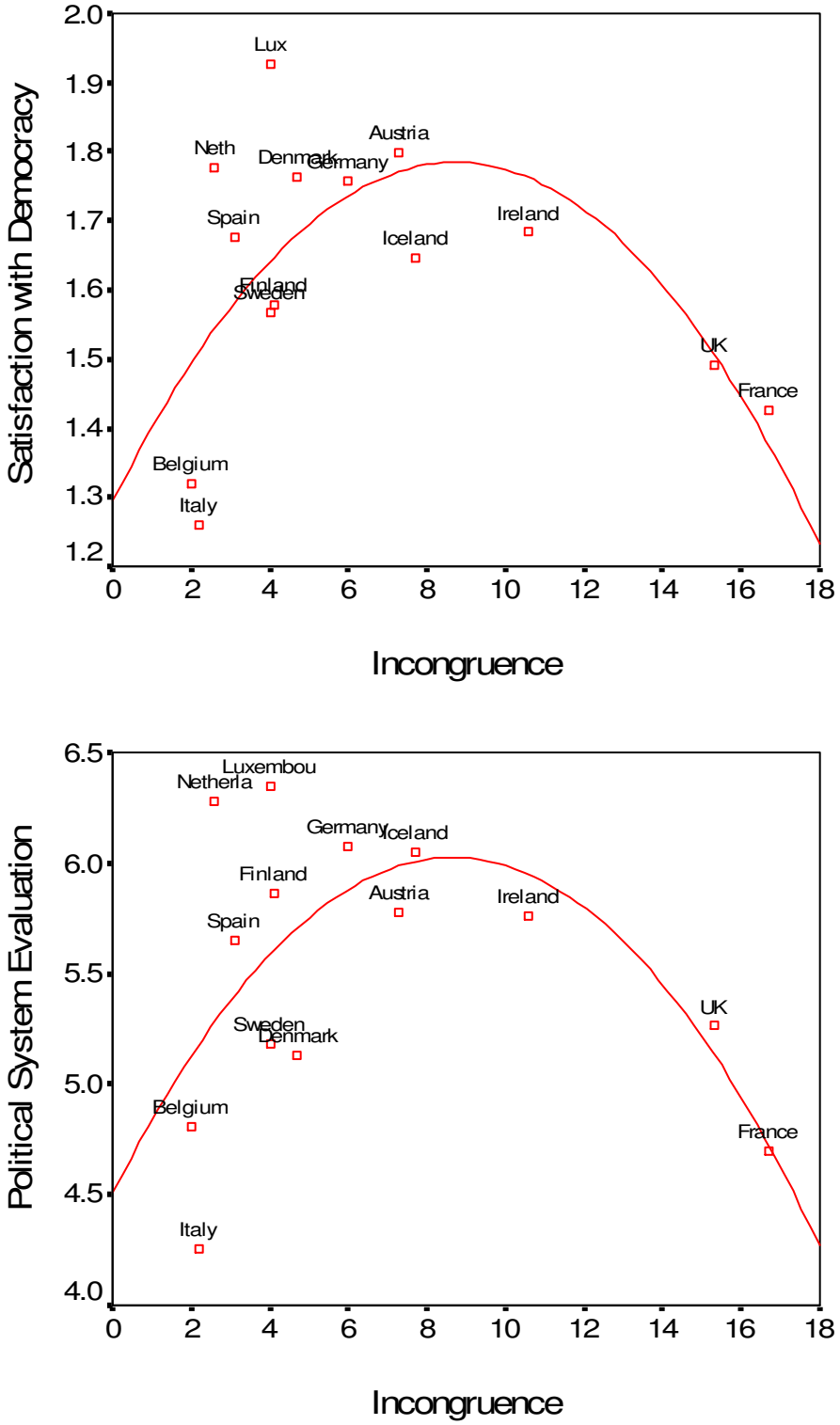

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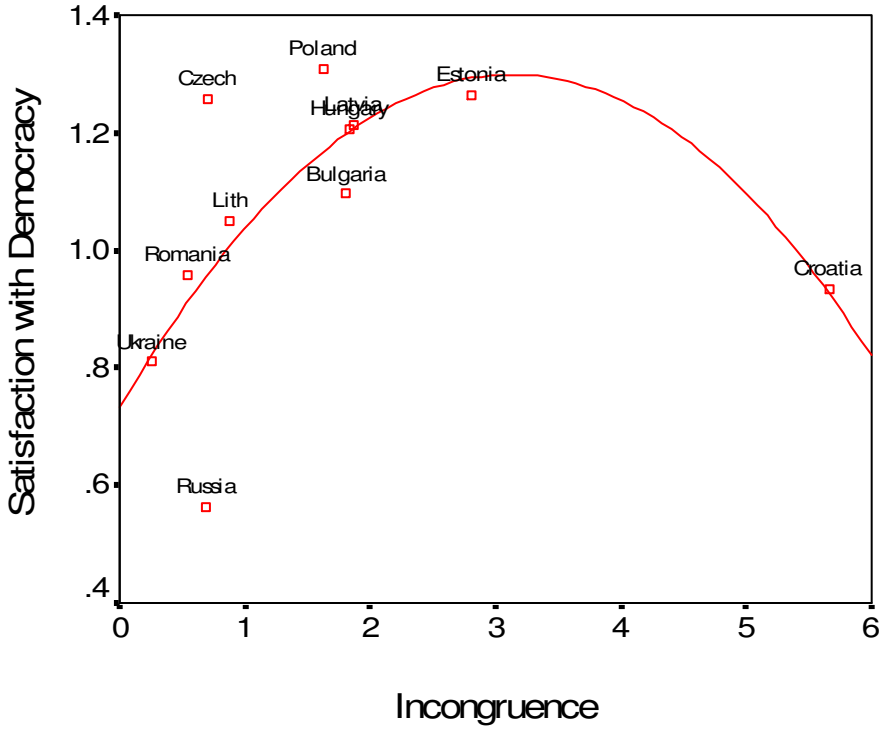
Figure 4.8. Short-Term Incongruence and System Support in New Democracies



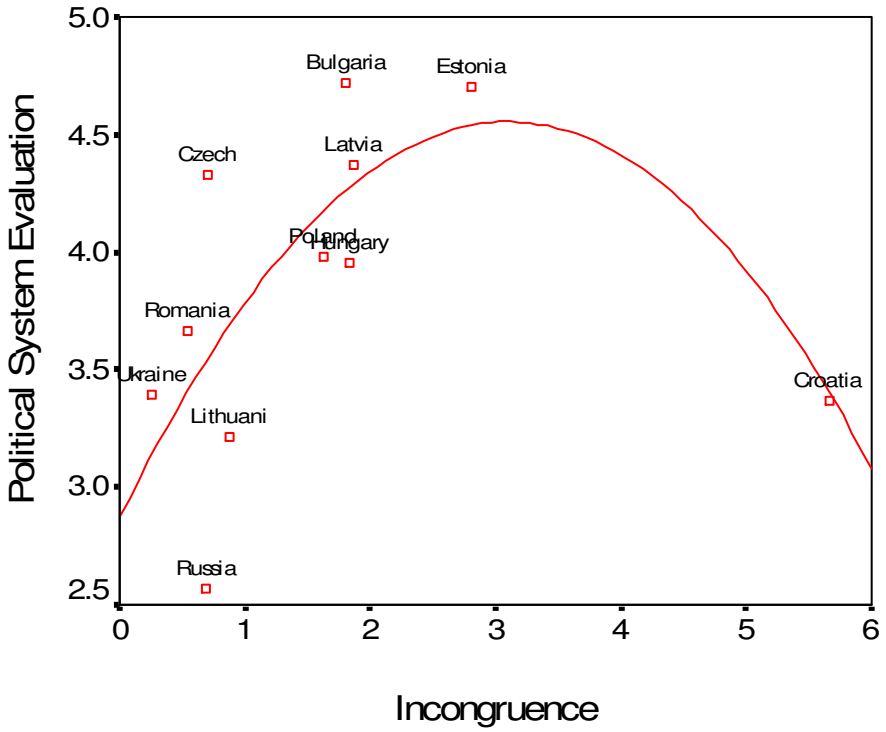


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Figure 4.9. Responsiveness and System Support in Established Democracies

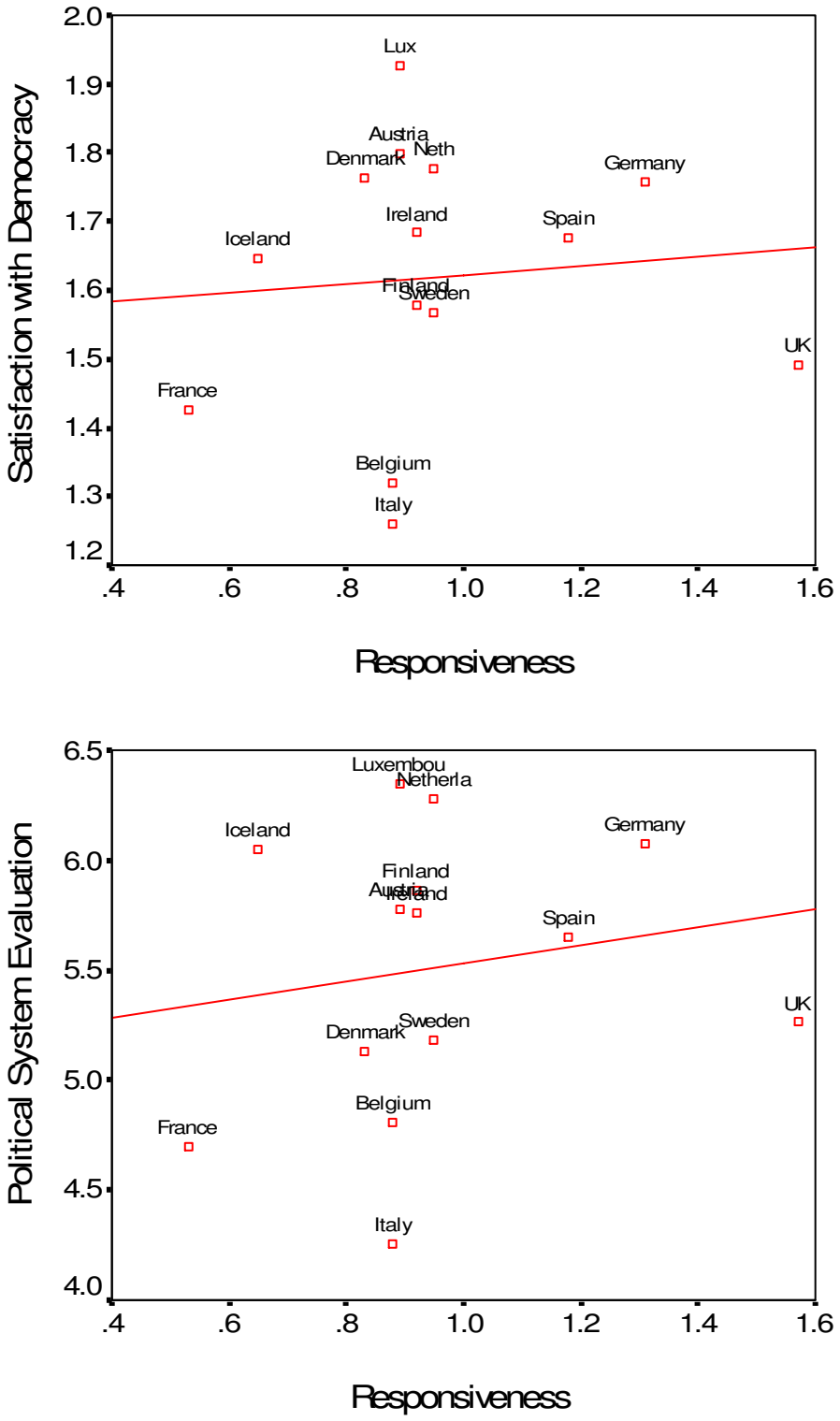

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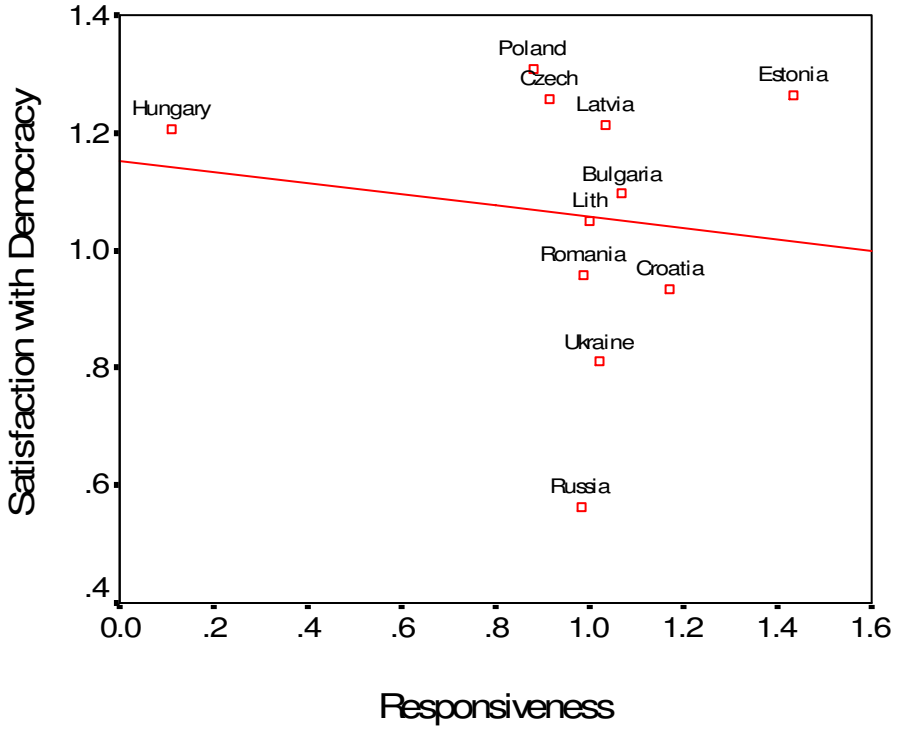
Figure 4.10. Responsiveness and System Support in New Democracies



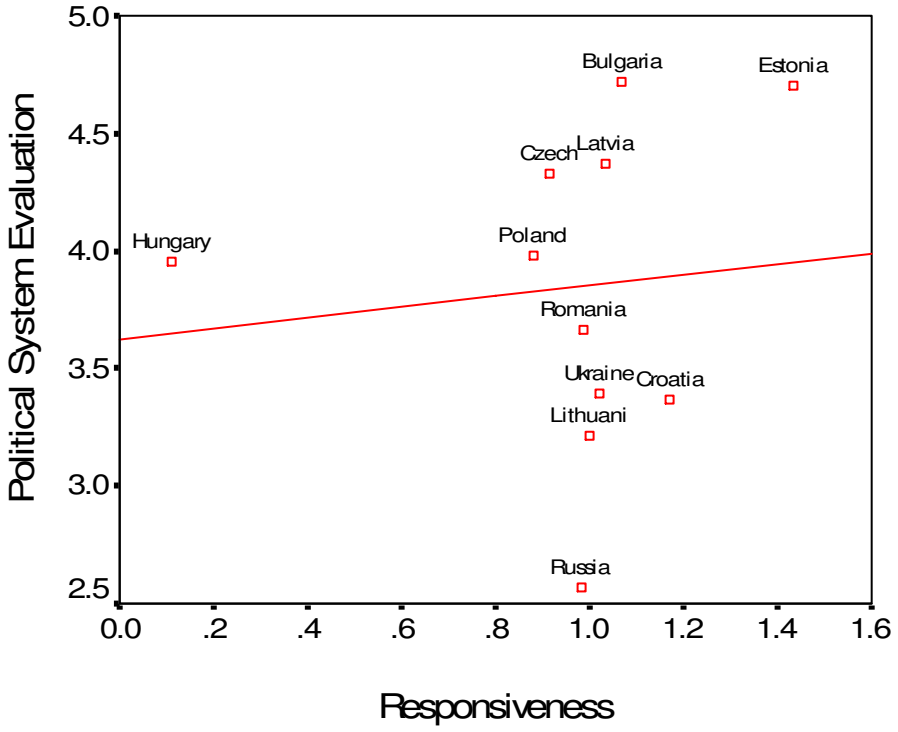


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Figure 4.11. Satisfaction with Democracy by Distance from the Median and by Winners and Losers in Established Democracies, 1999-2000.

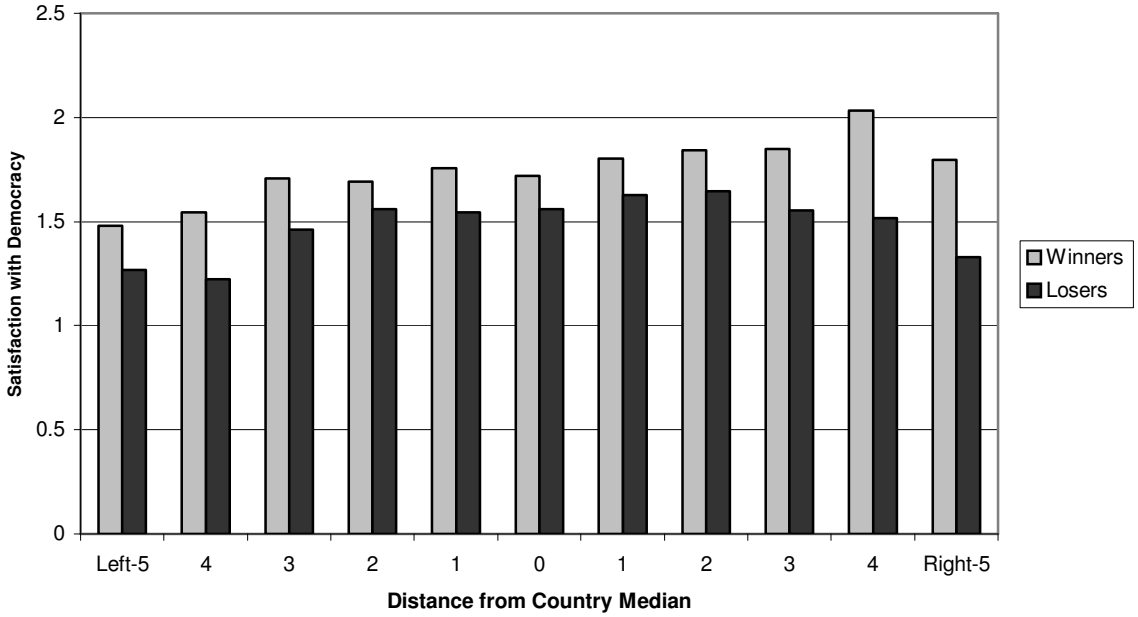

Figure 4.12. Satisfaction with Democracy by Distance from the Median and by Winners and Losers in New Democracies of East Central Europe, 1999-2000.

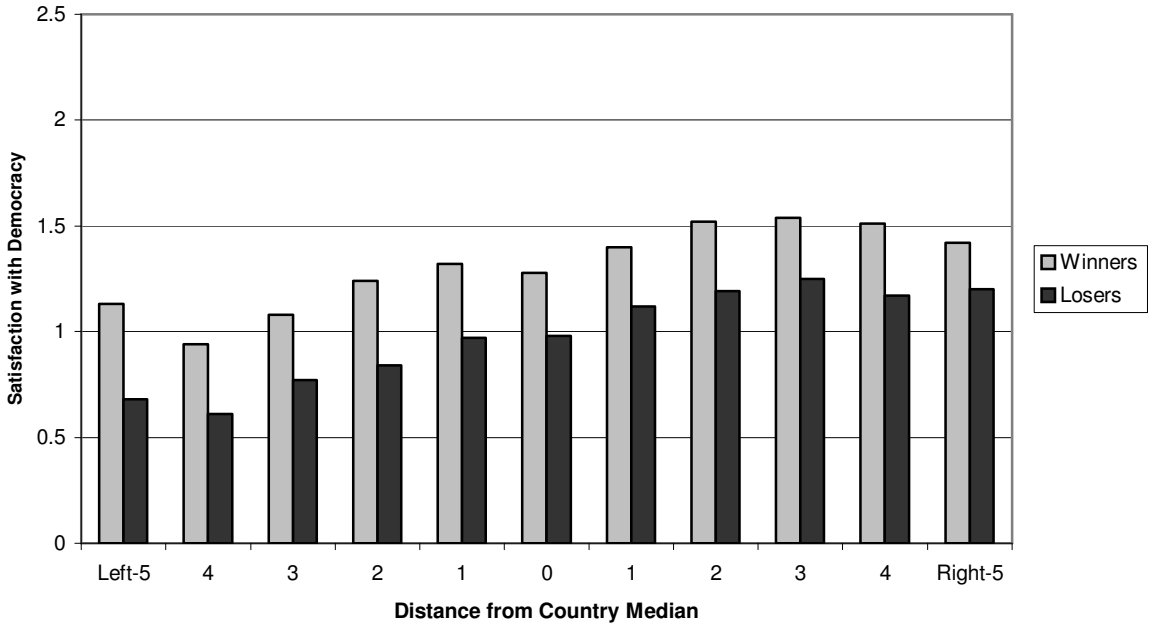

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Figure. 4. 13. Political System Evaluation by Distance from the Median and by Winners and Losers in Established Democracies, 1999-2000.

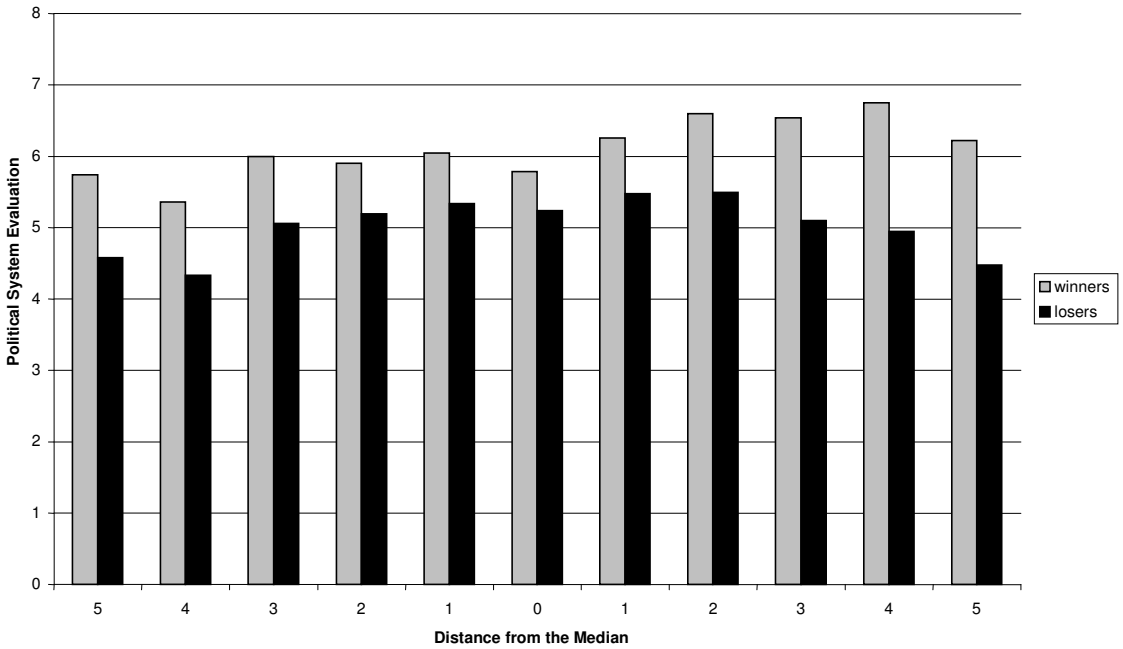

Figure 4.14. Political System Evaluation by Distance from the Median and by Winners and Losers in New Democracies of East Central Europe, 1999-2000.

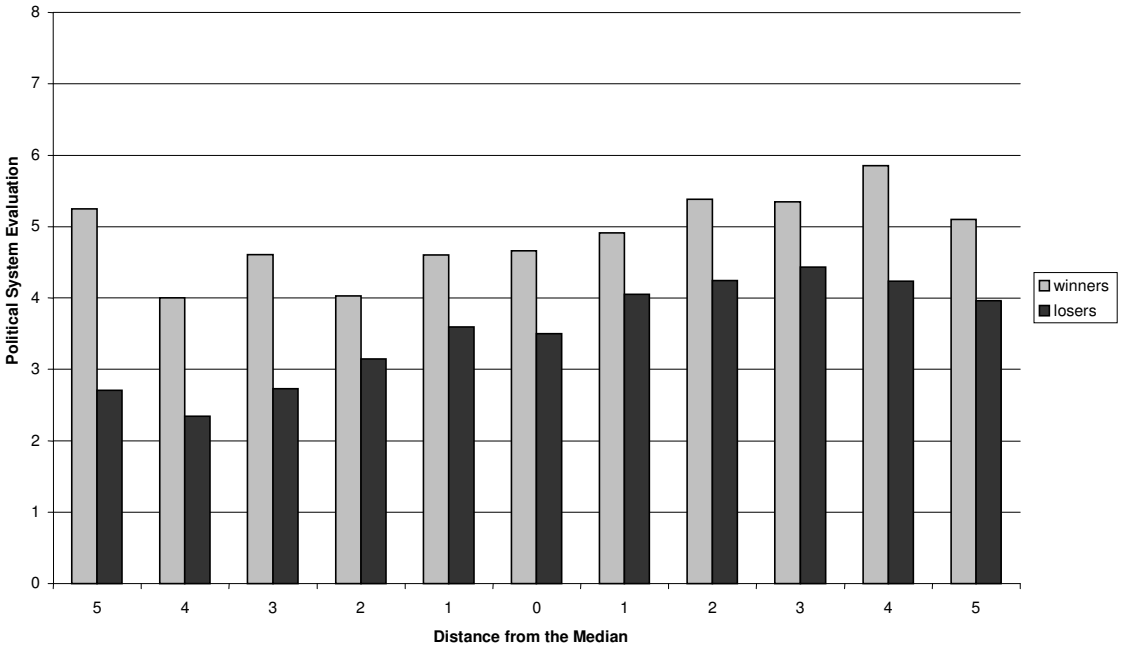

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Table 4.4. Ordered Logit Estimates of Satisfaction with Democracy and Political System Evaluation in Established Democracies, 1999-2000.

Independent Variables	*Satisfaction with Democracy*			*Political System Evaluation*		
	Model I	*Model II*	*Model III*	*Model I*	*Model II*	*Model III*
Loser	-.370***	-.163**	-.198***	-.602***	-.252***	-.261***
	(.043)	(.055)	(.056)	(.038)	(.048)	(.049)
Distance from the Median to the Left	-.122***	-.018	-.004	-.104***	.052*	.041
	(.017)	(.026)	(.026)	(.016)	(.024)	(.025)
Distance from the Median to the Right	-.030	.064*	.059*	-.031*	.159***	.120***
	(.016)	(.027)	(.028)	(.016)	(.025)	(.025)
Loser*Distance from the Median to the Left	-	-.164***	-.199***	-	-.246***	-.272***
		(.032)	(.033)		(.030)	(.031)
Loser*Distance from the Median to the Right	-	-.132***	-.108***	-	-.273***	-.198***
		(.047)	(.032)		(.029)	(.029)
Bias	-.044*	-.040*	-	-.089***	-.080***	-
	(.020)	(.020)		(.017)	(.017)	
Distortion	.243***	.249***	-	.202***	.207***	-
	(.020)	(.020)		(.018)	(.018)	
Distortion squared	-.012***	-.013***	-	-.009***	-.010***	-
	(.002)	(.002)		(.001)	(.001)	
Responsiveness	.501***	.500***	-	.720***	.718***	-
	(.074)	(.073)		(060)	(.060)	
Microlevel controls						
Left-Right self-placement not reported	-.230***	-.259***	-.260***	-.144***	-.192***	-.170***
	(.047)	(.047)	(.048)	(.041)	(.041)	(.042)
Party Size	.007***	.007***	.007***	.004***	.005***	.005***
	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Nonvoter	-.392***	-.407***	-.347***	-.295***	-.324***	-.287***
	(.053)	(.053)	(.054)	(.048)	(.049)	(.049)
Political Attention	.073***	.073***	.049***	.113***	.115***	.120***
	(.012)	(.012)	(.012)	(.011)	(.011)	(.011)
Male	.025	.025	.008	.120***	.112***	.095***
	(.030)	(.030)	(.030)	(.027)	(.027)	(.027)
Married	.057	.055	.070*	.089**	.086**	.106***
	(.032)	(.032)	(.033)	(.029)	(.029)	(.029)
Employed	-.138***	-.138***	-.039	-.036	-.036	.016
	(.034)	(.034)	(.035)	(.030)	(.030)	(.031)
Upper income	.186***	.184***	.178***	.069	.063	.063
	(.045)	(.045)	(.045)	(.040)	(.040)	(.040)
Middle income	.109**	.110**	.062	.00	.004	-.022
	(.040)	(.040)	(.041)	(.036)	(.036)	(.036)
Income not reported	.013	.010	-.035	-.157***	-.160***	-.154***
	(.045)	(.045)	(.046)	(.041)	(.041)	(.042)
Age 15-34	.199***	.202***	.211***	.059	.061	.075*
	(.037)	(.037)	(.037)	(.033)	(.033)	(.033)
Age 55+	.054	.053	.115**	.019	.020	.072*
	(.040)	(.040)	(.041)	(.036)	(.036)	(.036)

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Table 4.4. (Continued)

Upper education	.172***	.173***	.205***	.283***	.281***	.278***
	(.043)	(.043)	(.045)	(.038)	(.037)	(.038)
Middle education	.123***	.122***	.185***	.117***	.117***	.136***
	(.035)	(.035)	(.035)	(.031)	(.031)	(.031)
Materialist	.078*	.076*	.058	.133***	.129***	.076*
	(.037)	(.037)	(.038)	(.033)	(.033)	(.034)
Post-materialist	-.217***	-.215***	-.187***	-.158***	-.151***	-.076*
	(.039)	(.039)	(.040)	(.035)	(.035)	(.036)
Favorable bias	.044	.046	.032	.148***	.145***	.115***
	(.035)	(.035)	(.035)	(.032)	(.032)	(.032)
Macrolevel Controls						
GDP per capita	.044***	.044***	-	.046***	.046***	-
(in 1,000s of $'s)	(.004)	(.004)		(.003)	(.003)	
Austria			.590***	-	-	.404***
	-	-	(.081)			(.080)
Belgium	-	-	-.654***	-	-	-.302***
			(.081)			(.075)
Denmark	-	-	.553***	-	-	-.037
			(.096)			(.087)
Finland	-	-	-.096	-	-	.592***
			(.086)			(.085)
France	-	-	-.415***	-	-	-.463***
			(.081)			(.074)
Germany	-	-	.566***	-	-	.889***
			(.078)			(.078)
UK	-	-	-.397***	-	-	-.026
			(.099)			(.086)
Iceland	-	-	.131	-	-	.753***
			(.087)			(.082)
Ireland	-	-	.222*	-	-	.456***
			(.096)			(.089)
Italy	-	-	-.727***	-	-	-.698***
			(.074)			(.073)
Luxembourg	-	-	1.183***	-	-	1.216***
			(.087)			(083)
Netherlands	-	-	.439***	-	-	.848***
			(.085)			(.075)
Spain	-	-	.424***	-	-	.580***
			(.078)			(.074)
Cut 1	-.312	-.156	-2.374	-.716	-.471	-2.562
	(.133)	(.135)	(.112)	(.121)	(.122)	(.104)
Cut 2	1.919	2.078	-.092	-.114	.132	-1.952
	(.132)	(.134)	(.109)	(.118)	(.120)	(.102)
Cut 3	5.266	5.428	3.314	.760	1.010	-1.060
	(.138)	(.140)	(.112)	(.116)	(.118)	(.100)
Cut 4	-	-	-	1.524	1.777	-.276
				(.116)	(.118)	(.100)
Cut 5	-	-	-	2.544	2.801	.779
				(.117)	(.119)	(.100)
Cut 6	-	-	-	3.323	3.584	1.587
				(.117)	(.119)	(.101)
Cut 7	-	-	-	4.375	4.641	2.664
				(.118)	(.121)	(.103)

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Table 4.4 (Continued)

Cut 8	-	-	-	5.751	6.024	4.052
				(.122)	(.125)	(.108)
Cut 9	-	-	-	6.793	7.068	5.096
				(.131)	(.134)	(.118)
Number of cases	18 466	18 466	18 466	18 983	18 983	18 983
X^2 *(df)*	1557.20	1585.94	2161.12	2379.13	2468.00	3366.92 (35)
	(25)	(27)	(35)	(25)	(27)	
Log Likelihood	-18 682.2	-18 664.0	-18 384.3	-38017.1	-37946.7	-37569.1
Pseudo R^2	.04	.04	.06	.03	.03	.04

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate robust standard errors. *p<.05, **p<.01. ***p<.001.
Reference categories for dummy variables are: age 35-54, low education, low income, mixed (both materialist and post-materialist values), Sweden.

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Table 4.5. Ordered Logit Estimates of Citizen Satisfaction with Democracy and Political System Evaluation in New Democracies of East Central Europe, 1999-2000.

Independent Variables	*Satisfaction with Democracy*			*Political System Evaluation*		
	Model I	*Model II*	*Model III*	*Model I*	*Model II*	*Model III*
Loser	-.653***	-.598***	-.442***	-.790***	-.640***	-.516***
	(.053)	(.065)	(.066)	(.048)	(.059)	(.060)
Distance from the	-.207***	-.133*	-.135*	-.297***	-.141*	-.153**
Median to the Left	(.020)	(.055)	(.057)	(.019)	(.055)	(.056)
Distance from the	.181***	.205***	.183***	.137***	.215***	.210***
Median to the Right	(.016)	(.028)	(.028)	(.015)	(.028)	(.028)
Loser*Distance from	-	-.082	-.095	-	-.173**	-.179**
the Median to the Left		(.056)	(.058)		(.056)	(.057)
Loser*Distance from	-	-.030	-.023	-	-.104***	-.116***
the Median to the Right		(.033)	(.033)		(.033)	(.032)
Bias	-.219***	-.220***	-	-.364***	-.372***	-
	(.047)	(.047)		(.040)	(.041)	
Distortion	1.078***	1.077***	-	1.171***	1.167***	-
	(.055)	(.055)		(.049)	(.049)	
Distortion squared	-.132***	-.132***	-	-.125***	-.123***	-
	(.008)	(.008)		(.007)	(.007)	
Responsiveness	.205**	.204**	-	.539***	.544***	-
	(.068)	(.068)		(.059)	(.059)	
Microlevel controls						
Left-Right self-	-.284***	-.288***	-.285***	-.268***	-.276***	-.273***
placement not reported	(.047)	(.047)	(.047)	(.042)	(.042)	(.043)
Party Size	.001	.001	.002	.002	.002	-.000
	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)	(.001)
Nonvoter	-.381***	-.284***	-.441***	-.310***	-.319***	-.432***
	(.052)	(.052)	(.054)	(.047)	(.047)	(.049)
Political Attention	-.024	-.023)	.013	-.011	-.010	.040**
	(.017)	(.017)	(.017)	(.015)	(.015)	(.016)
Male	.041	.040	050	-.015	-.016	.002
	(.035)	(.035)	(.035)	(.032)	(.032)	(.032)
Married	.037	.036	-.051	.069*	.068*	-.014
	(.035)	(.037)	(.037)	(.034)	(.034)	(.034)
Employed	.009	.008	.051	-.038	-.040	-.023
	(.039)	(.039)	(.040)	(.037)	(.037)	(.037)
Upper income	.233***	.235***	.270***	.179***	.185***	.199***
	(.049)	(.049)	(.049)	(.044)	(.044)	(.045)
Middle income	.116*	.117*	.104*	.112**	.117**	.098*
	(.047)	(.047)	(.047)	(.042)	(.042)	(.042)
Income not reported	.460***	.461***	.173*	.348***	.352***	.135*
	(.060)	(.060)	(.073)	(.058)	(.058)	(.069)
Age 15-34	.288***	.288***	.308***	.173***	.174***	.185***
	(.044)	(.044)	(.044)	(.040)	(.040)	(.040)
Age 55+	-.042	-.043	-.022	.056	.053	.032
	(.047)	(.047)	(.048)	(.043)	(.043)	(.044)
Upper education	.018	.017	.089	-.019	-.021	.029
	(.053)	(.053)	(.053)	(.048)	(.048)	(.048)

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Table 4.5 (Continued)

Middle education	-.122**	-.123**	-.020	-.153***	-.155***	-.069
	(.041)	(.041)	(.042)	(.037)	(.037)	(.038)
Materialist	-.136***	-.136***	-.010	-.108**	-.110***	-.023
	(.038)	(.038)	(.039)	(.034)	(.035)	(.035)
Post-materialist	-.150*	-.150*	-.281***	-.093	-.094	-.229***
	(.065)	(.065)	(.066)	(.060)	(.060)	(.060)
Favorable bias	-.071	-.076	-.099	-.091*	.085	.010
	(.050)	(.050)	(.050)	(.045)	(.045)	(.046)
Macrolevel controls						
GDP per capita (in	.124***	.124***	-	.079***	.081***	-
1,000s of $'s)	(.007)	(.007)		(.006)	(.006)	
Bulgaria			.899***	-	-	1.303***
	-	-	(.094)			(.087)
Croatia	-	-	.530***	-	-	.214**
			(.090)			(.082)
Czech Republic	-	-	1.198***	-	-	.833***
			(.081)			(.070)
Estonia	-	-	1.281***	-	-	1.203***
			(.091)			(.076)
Hungary	-	-	1.150***	-	-	.554***
			(.092)			(.081)
Latvia	-	-	1.083***	-	-	.845***
			(.087)			(.075)
Lithuania	-	-	.652***	-	-	-.272***
			(.093)			(.085)
Poland	-	-	1.486***	-	-	.561***
			(.095)			(.078)
Romania	-	-	.531***	-	-	.281**
			(.107)			(.106)
Russia	-	-	-.625***	-	-	-.706***
			(.077)			(.069)
Cut 1	.092	.137	-.915	-.449	-.316	-1.694
	(.149)	(.153)	(.127)	(.131)	(.135)	(.112)
Cut 2	2.611	2.655	1.683	.229	.363	-.991
	(.151)	(.155)	(.128)	(.131)	(.135)	(.112)
Cut 3	5.919	5.965	5.009	1.106	1.240	-.083
	(.171)	(.174)	(.148)	(.131)	(.135)	(.111)
Cut 4	-	-	-	1.749	1.883	.577
				(.132)	(.136)	(.112)
Cut 5	-	-	-	2.829	2.964	1.678
				(.133)	(.137)	(.112)
Cut 6	-	-	-	3.640	3.777	2.502
				(.135)	(.140)	(.115)
Cut 7	-	-	-	4.630	4.770	3.505
				(.140)	(.145)	(.119)
Cut 8	-	-	-	5.870	6.011	4.756
				(.157)	(.161)	(.137)
Cut 9	-	-	-	6.805	6.947	5.696
				(.184)	(.188)	(.168)

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Table 4.5 (Continued)

Number of Cases	12 862	12 862	12 862	13 202	13 202	13 202
X^2 *(df)*	2 058.83	2 058.23	2536.28	2305.82	2314.51	2891.86
	(25)	(27)	(32)	(25)	(27)	(32)
Log Likelihood	-12 980.64	-12 979.44	-12 726.49	-25183.81	-25174.68	-24866.77
Pseudo R^2	.08	.08	.10	.05	.05	.06

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate robust standard errors. *p<.05, **p<.01. ***p<.001.
Reference categories for dummy variables are: age 35-54, low education, low income, mixed (both materialist and post-materialist values), Ukraine.

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Table 4.6. Ordered Logit Estimates of Satisfaction with Democracy and Political System Evaluation in France (Country with the Largest Right Bias) and Sweden (Country with the Largest Left Bias), 1999-2000.

Independent Variables	*Satisfaction with Democracy*		*Political System Evaluation*	
	France (Right bias)	*Sweden (left bias)*	*France (Right bias)*	*Sweden (Left bias)*
Loser	.425*	-.332	.511***	-.728
	(.178)	(.428)	(.155)	(.114)
Distance from the Median	-.027	**.286***	.009	**.194**
to the Left	(.058)	**(.142)**	(.062)	**(.114)**
Distance from the Median	**.360***	.163	**.125**	-.097
to the Right	**(.180)**	(.263)	**(.137)**	(.237)
Loser*Distance from the	-.129	-.449**	-.279*	-.199
Median to the Left	(.112)	(.164)	(.116)	(.138)
Loser*Distance from the	-.415*	-.124	-.282*	.043
Median to the Right	(.188)	(.273)	(.144)	(.245)
Micro-level Controls				
Left-Right self-placement	-.116	-1.348***	-.434**	-1.266***
not reported	(.166)	(.372)	(.137)	(.316)
Party Size	.020***	-.005	.022***	-.005
	(.004)	(.010)	(.004)	(.009)
Nonvoter	-.536***	-.641*	-.326*	-.688**
	(.159)	(.295)	(.146)	(.219)
Political Attention	.068	-.076	.094*	.066
	(.041)	(.076)	(.037)	(.059)
Male	.137	.029	.266**	.360**
	(.103)	(.137)	(.096)	(.118)
Married	-.046	.268	-.064	.074
	(.111)	(.142)	(.104)	(.124)
Employed	.008	.144	.105	-.105
	(.116)	(.156)	(.107)	(.141)
Upper income	.349*	-.327	.489***	-.047
	(.168)	(.205)	(.151)	(.175)
Middle income	.099	-.056	.186	-.125
	(.141)	(.205)	(.129)	(.176)
Income not reported	.120	-.669***	.220	-.379**
	(.162)	(.174)	(.150)	(.144)
Age 15-34	.096	.172	-.155	.119
	(.129)	(.164)	(.120)	(.153)
Age 55+	.183	.111	.027	.018
	(.143)	(.182)	(.132)	(.160)
Upper education	.304*	.160	.555***	.364*
	(.136)	(.202)	(.129)	(.181)
Middle education	.146	.298	.200	.008
	(.138)	(.154)	(.123)	(.128)
Materialist	-.220	.098	-.050	.017
	(.123)	(.174)	(.106)	(.145)
Post-materialist	-.121	-.150	.279*	-.178
	(.131)	(.174)	(.136)	(.151)

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Table 4.6 (Continued)

Cut 1	-1.235	-3.398	-1.412	-4.059
	(.264)	(.645)	(.244)	(.516)
Cut 2	.964	.912	-.857	-3.044
	(.258)	(.624)	(.237)	(.500)
Cut 3	4.148	3.094	.017	-1.804
	(.290)	(.649)	(.232)	(.492)
Cut 4	-	-	.838	-.950
			(.233)	(.485)
Cut 5	-	-	2.149	-.087
			(.236)	(.481)
Cut 6	-	-	3.064	.644
			(.241)	(.478)
Cut 7	-	-	4.301	1.669
			(.258)	(.486)
Cut 8	-	-	5.991	3.020
			(.339)	(.510)
Cut 9	-	-	7.451	4.026
			(.552)	(.557)
Number of Cases	1489	954	1563	1002
X^2 *(df)*	105.71 (21)	65.84 (21)	197.22 (21)	106.44 (21)
Log Likelihood	-1597.45	-883.90	-2955.84	-2017.89
Pseudo R^2	.03	.04	.03	.02

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate robust standard errors. *p<.1, **p<.05. ***p<.01.
Reference categories for dummy variables are: age 35-54, low education, low income, mixed (both materialist and post-materialist values).

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Many students of democratic politics believe that parties are critical for the functioning of democracy because parties structure the political world for many voters and are the key actors in parliaments and governments. However, existing research on mass opinion and behavior suggests that parties might be a poor instrument for building and developing democratic legitimacy because parties make politics seem divided, messy, and inefficient, full of bickering and unpleasant compromises (see, for instance, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995). At the same time, however, there is some evidence that, however unpleasant, political parties may contribute to positive citizen attitudes towards democratic governance because even protest parties in established democracies (Miller and Listhaug 1990), and communist successor parties in new democracies (Mahr and Nagle 1995, Evans and Whitefield 1995) with anti-system sentiments can increase the levels of system support if they provide channels for airing their supporters' dissatisfaction and foster a willingness to play by the rules of party-based democratic governance.

In order to reconcile these competing perspectives, my dissertation examines the role that political parties play in building and sustaining system legitimacy in contemporary democracies. Drawing on data collected as part of the *Manifestos Research Group* project along a number of mass opinion surveys and computer simulations, my

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study focuses on whether and how party competition for government office, policy representation, and party persuasion influence citizen support for democratic governance. And it does so from a variety of perspectives – across countries, parties, and individuals. This study also examines different aspects of public support for the political system in order to see if some attitudes are more strongly affected by political party behavior than others.

Thus, my analysis paints a picture of democratic legitimacy that portrays parties as critical actors in building and sustaining it. In thinking about party role for system support, I first examine the importance of party identification for citizen attitudes about their political system. My investigation reveals that partisanship, operationalized as individual's self-identification with a political party, operates on mass support for the political regime in two important ways. First, drawing on the existing literature (e.g. Dalton 1999, Holmberg 2003, Dennis 1966, Anderson et al. 2005, ch.5), I theorize that attachment to a political party stimulates citizen support for the political system because it signals allegiance to party-based governance, that is, political system, in which parties operate as key actors. After all, even protest parties signal some allegiance to a political regime by the very fact that they organize themselves via political parties. Protest parties also act as a channel for citizen discontent into the decision-making arena and therefore help to increase the levels of political trust and democratic legitimacy.

My findings confirm that partisanship functions as a system-affirming attitude: the results show that on average citizens identifying with political parties have higher levels of support than citizens unaligned with any political party. However, I also suggest that this approach is simplistic in a sense that it naively assumes uniform effect of

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partisanship on system support across citizens identifying with different political parties. I argue that this assumption is unlikely to be met in real life because citizens identifying with protest or extreme parties have significantly lower levels of system support than partisans of more mainstream parties. In other words, I suggest that treating partisanship solely as a system-affirming attitude provides us with a blunt instrument that has little leverage in understanding variation across citizen views towards the political system.

My analysis therefore suggests that it is important to view partisanship as a link between citizens and party leaders that allows for a more effective communication of party leaders' views to party supporters. Partisans commonly rely on parties as a reference group and as a legitimate source of information as to what should be believed and valued in a complex world of politics. Thus, partisanship plays an important role in terms of facilitating persuasion that parties have over their supporters. In order to separate the effect of persuasion from the one of strategic party position taking, I used a simultaneous non-recursive model to test my expectations. I find that citizens identifying with parties taking positive positions about the status quo of a political system indeed develop more positive outlook about the political system among their supporters compared to non-identifiers or citizens aligning with more cynical parties.

To the extent that partisans express slightly more positive attitudes towards democratic governance, my findings support concerns in the existing literature that a loosening of the connection between political parties and citizens observed in established democracies may indeed undermine mass support for the democratic governance (see, for instance, Dalton 1999, Holmberg 2003). My findings, however, also suggest that this is likely to happen not only because declining partisanship could weaken citizen attachment

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to a political system. Existing research shows that political elites tend to be more supportive of democratic principles than the ordinary citizens in both established and new democracies (see, for instance, Sullivan et al. 1993, Converse and Pierce 1986, Miller, Reisinger, and Hesli 1998). As a consequence, declining partisanship may lead to lower levels of system legitimacy because citizens are less likely to pay attention and therefore be affected by what parties say about the political system.

Furthermore, I find that party goals are systematically related to political party evaluations of democratic governance. The results show that, facing a trade-off between policy and office, parties that prioritise office over policy generally have more reasons to express a positive outlook towards the political system than policy-seeking parties. This is due to the fact that office-seeking parties are more likely to succeed in winning office and, consequently, be in charge of policy decision-making. As a consequence, office-seeking parties have are relatively satisfied with the political system and communicate this information to their supporters. In contrast, the "purist" approach of policy-seeking parties generally constrains them in the competition for office and negotiations with other parties. What is more, policy-oriented behavior often implies dissatisfaction with the status quo and party leaders' desire to mobilize for political change. Policy-seeking party leaders, therefore, may have fewer opportunities and reasons to express satisfaction with the political system than office-seeking parties.

Empirical results show that office-seeking parties indeed have a more positive outlook on the political system and therefore generate more positive attitudes toward the regime among their partisans than policy-seeking parties. Specifically, I find that identifiers with office-seeking parties report more satisfaction with democracy and

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external efficacy. In more substantive terms, I find that, for instance, nine percent of party programmatic statements are sufficient to increase its supporters' satisfaction with democracy by one unit on a one to four unit scale.

Finding that office-seeking parties generate higher levels of support among their partisans compared to other parties may surprise some readers. Unlike most accounts of the responsible party government model that emphasize the importance of party commitment to their policy offerings for high quality of democratic governance, these findings shed a positive light on the role of office-seeking parties. Evidence shows that office-seeking parties generate more democratic legitimacy among citizens than any other parties. As a next step in my analysis, I examine this relationship in more detail. I ask whether office-seeking parties may be more successful in producing citizen support for the political system because their success in competition for office also means being in control of policy decision-making more frequently. What is more, given that office-seeking parties are also more flexible in their policy positions, office-seeking parties may play an important role in producing accurate representation of majority policy preferences. As a next step, I therefore turn to the role of policy representation as a mechanism by which political parties may influence citizen attitudes towards their political system.

Drawing on computer simulations and empirical evidence in existing research, I find that political parties play indeed an important role in producing accurate representation of the median voter. Existing research underestimates the role of parties in the representational process because it commonly assumes fixed party positions. However, political parties vary their policy offerings over time, as documented by the

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Manifestos Research Group project data and more in-depth country analyses. It is this variability party policy positions over a sequence of elections that helps to align party and citizen policy preferences.

In order to take into account the role of party positional variability, I analyze congruence between the median voter and the median party in parliament with respect to three key qualities: two long-term aspects, bias and responsiveness, and short-term congruence. Most existing research focuses on short-term distortions between the median voter and the median party in parliament or government. Although short-term congruence is an important aspect of policy representation, it ignores that many short-term distortions tend to cancel each other out over a sequence of elections producing unbiased and responsive policy representation. What is more, the median voter's position changes over time. Analyses of policy representation therefore should take into account also whether the median parliamentary party position responds to the median voter movements. In short, I argue that policy representation can be better understood as a multi-faceted and on-going phenomenon rather than a uni-dimensional and static feature of democratic processes.

My results suggest that allowing party positions to vary over a sequence of elections enhances the accuracy of policy representation. Specifically, the evidence suggests that while positional party volatility has no effect on bias, it creates more direct responsiveness and increases the probability of good short-term congruence compared to party systems with fixed policy positions. What is more, given party positional volatility, the ability of two-party systems to produce long-term accuracy compared to multi-party systems is not as grim as has been portrayed by the existing literature (see, for instance,

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Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000; Powell and Vanberg 2000). My evidence suggests that given a sufficiently long experience with democratic governance and variable party programmatic offerings, all party systems can generate unbiased, responsive and reasonably congruent representation of the median voter. These findings are consistent with the empirical results in recent study by McDonald, Mendes, and Budge (2004). Drawing on data from 154 elections in 20 established democracies, the authors demonstrate that although congruence between the median voter and the median parliamentary party is rarely exact in each and every election, especially in single member district electoral systems, in a long-run the representational process across established democracies operates in an orderly and accurate manner, consistent with the median mandate thesis.

The distinction between short and long aspects of accurate policy representation is particularly instructive with respect to understanding mass attitudes and behavior in new democracies. Without a sufficiently long experience with democratic governance, short-term accuracy of representation is the only aspect that is available for citizens to evaluate representative performance of their policy makers. Given that only short-term experience is available in new democracies and that the congruence is rarely exact in each and every election even in established democracies, perceptions of inaccuracy in new democratic regimes are almost inevitable.

What is more, low levels of citizen political sophistication and high uncertainty in new democracies suggest that people are less likely to choose parties that are close to them ideologically and more likely to base their votes on non-policy considerations, such as patronage or personal characteristics. Simulation results show that poorly informed

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voters significantly hurt the accuracy of policy representation, especially with respect to short-term congruence between the median voter and the median party in parliament. Moreover, non-policy considerations in the electorate undermine policy representation with respect to both short-term congruence and responsiveness, although its effect is smaller than the one of poorly informed voters.

Taken together, these results suggest that in both two-party and multiparty systems, political parties produce unbiased and responsive representation of the median voter. What is more, variability in party programmatic offerings increases short-term congruence between the median voter and the median party in parliament, especially in two-party systems. However, the accuracy of policy representation depends not only on political parties in providing distinct policy choices and varying their policy offerings over time but also on the qualities of the voters. It is only over time, or, more specifically, over a sequence of democratic elections, that the levels of uncertainty are likely to decline, voters will more clearly identify policy alternatives available to them, and appreciate the long-term accuracy in policy representation that parties generate in democratic polities.

That political parties play an important role in producing accurate policy representation is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to show positive party contribution to democratic legitimacy. As a next step, I therefore examine to what extent and how accurate representation of the median voter translates into citizen support for the political system. I find that the distinction between short- and long-term aspects of accurate policy representation is particularly important with respect to understanding the causes of system legitimacy. Drawing on data collected as part of the *Manifestos*

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Research Group (MRG) project and the *Word Values Surveys* (WVS) 1999-2000 across 14 established and 11 new democracies in Europe, my analysis shows that long-term aspects of accurate policy representation—non-bias and responsiveness—contribute to system legitimacy. What is more, given that most established democracies produce unbiased and responsive policy representation, citizens close to the median voter develop more support for the political system because their policy preferences get represented most consistently.

I also find that where representation is biased in one direction or the other on the ideological left-right continuum, citizens benefiting from the bias develop higher levels of system support. I find that, indeed, in France, the country with a slight right bias, citizens on the right are more satisfied with their political system than citizens at the median or those further removed from the median to the left of the ideological continuum, and this difference is statistically significant. Similarly, left-leaning Swedes support their political system more than others because they benefit from a slight left bias of their median party in parliament. Overall, however, countries with long-term bias on average have lower levels of system support among their citizens than unbiased political systems because the latter fall short of representing their majority policy preferences accurately.

Whereas long-term aspects of policy representation contribute positively to system legitimacy, I find that short-term distortions do not undermine citizen support for the political system in any serious way. Short-term incongruence increases the number of electoral winners and citizens with non-centrist views who get represented at least once in while. In other words, they operate as a mechanism that in a long run increases

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inclusiveness of political process and therefore contributes to the overall levels of system legitimacy. Finally, short-term distortions, as long as they cancel each other from one election to the next, are likely to signal to citizens that elections matter, that they produce changes in policy, and therefore can effectively function to obtain feedback from the electorate further contributing to citizen optimism about the political system.

A positive role of short-term distortions for system legitimacy is an especially important point with respect to newer democracies because the relatively small number of democratic elections held in such countries is insufficient to generate long-term aspects of accurate representation. This means that citizens in new democracies do not have a long-term perspective that would allow them to see that democratic systems generally produce unbiased and responsive representation of majority policy preferences. It is not surprising therefore that newer democracies have lower levels of system support than established democracies.

The lack of long-term perspective in new democracies also means that citizens close to the median voter are unlikely to see their policy preferences as better represented compared to citizens further away from the median. What is more, due to high levels of uncertainty and fluidity in fledgling democracies, neither political parties nor citizens are likely to know where the median voter is located and how accurately majority preferences are represented in their country. As a consequence, I demonstrate that, on the level of individuals, distance from the median has no effect on system legitimacy in new democracies.

This does not mean that where citizens are located on the left-right continuum is unrelated to peoples' support for democratic governance in new democracies. In post-

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communist societies of East Central Europe, being on the right is often associated with citizen support for democratic reforms, market liberalization, and Western integration. In contrast, citizens locating themselves on the left are usually opposed to political and economic reforms, are more in favor of the communist successor parties and the former Soviet Union. It is therefore citizen self-placement on the left or the right rather than distance from the median that is directly related to public support for the political system in new democracies of East Central Europe.

More importantly, I find that winning and losing rather than policy representation is the driving force of citizen attitudes toward their new democratic regimes. In newer democracies, first democratic elections often involve much higher stakes than more routine elections in established democracies. In addition, losing is often more tragic and more difficult for citizens to accept in new democracies because citizens in post-communist societies are yet unaccustomed to electoral competition and do not know how to lose without blaming democratic principles and institutions. Finally, compared to the accuracy in policy representation, winning and losing is a much easier standard for citizens to use in order to evaluate whether then have a stake in the new system. This is because long-term aspects of accurate policy representation are not yet apparent to them and because new democracies are often marked by high uncertainty and low levels of citizen political sophistication.

Winning and losing also matters in established democracies, but its effect is much smaller than in new democracies and interacts with the long-term aspects of policy representation. In particular, I find that citizens further away from the median voter who are also losers are particularly dissatisfied with their political system. Being a winner and

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close to the median voter implies having everything that the democratic process can provide: it means being favored by policy decision makers and also being able to enjoy the status of political majority. In contrast, losers far removed from the median voter are likely to be in such position on a permanent basis. What is more, individuals on the ideological extremes usually feel much stronger about their beliefs than citizens in the center of the ideological continuum, further fueling their dissatisfaction with the political system. Distance from the median and winning vs. losing do not produce interactive effects in newer democracies because short-term experience with democratic elections and high uncertainty about median voter and party positions means that none of the social groups have a clear sense of whether they are likely to be among permanent losers and to what extent they are being represented in the new political system. Instead, winning or losing is the driving force of citizen support for the political system in new democracies.

Among control variables, I also find that party size matters greatly for party supporters' satisfaction with the political system. This implies that parties need to focus their efforts on developing larger and more viable party organizations that are capable of attracting and mobilizing voters in order to contribute positively to system legitimacy. Among individual level characteristics, political inattention is associated with negative attitudes towards the political system, but this effect holds only in established democracies. Similarly, nonvoters and citizens who refused to report their ideological preferences have consistently more cynical attitudes about the political system in which they live. Furthermore, income matters in both established and new democracies, however, its effect is much stronger and more consistent in new democracies. One interesting finding is that in established democracies those who did not report their

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income resemble those with low income with respect to their satisfaction with democracy. In contrast, citizens who did not report their income in new democracies are even more satisfied with democracy than citizens in the upper income category. This intriguing difference between new and established democracies should be examined in future research.

Further, whereas education fosters optimistic attitudes among citizens in established democracies, it generates criticism with the political system in new democracies. Young people are more supportive of their political regimes in new democracies. Further, with respect to value orientation, my findings suggest that post-materialists are more critical of the status quo of their political system, and this seems to be true in both established and new democracies. However, the effect of materialist values differs in the two regions: whereas materialists are slightly more satisfied with the political system in established democracies, they are more critical in new democracies. The effects of gender and marital status on system support are less consistent.

To summarize, I find that political parties play an important role in shaping democratic legitimacy in contemporary democracies. Parties do so via partisanship that fosters citizen attachment to a political system and promotes more effective communication of party views to their supporters. What is more, parties contribute to system legitimacy by producing accurate policy representation. More specifically, parties generate more accurate policy representation by varying their policy positions over time. Long-term aspects of accurate policy representation then generate more support for the political system among citizens. Short-term distortions, however, do not undermine

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system legitimacy in any serious way because they increase the number of winners and citizens with non-centrist preferences who can get represented at least once in a while.

Given that flexibility in party positions contributes to long-term accuracy in policy representation also provides an additional insight why office-seeking parties generate partisans with more positive attitudes towards their political system. Office-seeking parties are often assumed to be more flexible with respect to their policy positions in comparison to other parties. Thus, it is likely fewer constraints for office-seeking parties help them not only to succeed in competition for office but also be in charge of policy-decision making and therefore contribute to more accurate representation of the median voter.

However, the results reported here suggest that variability in policy offerings should not come at a cost of declining party identification or increasing electoral volatility. I find that partisans and citizens who support larger parties are more satisfied with the political system than others. It is therefore equally important that parties attract and mobilize their supporters on a long-term basis. This task is not an easy one in post-communist societies where citizens, freed from a totalitarian control of the Communist Party in the Soviet regime, are skeptical even about the idea of party itself (Gallagher et al 2001, ch.15). The findings also imply that, especially in new democracies, parties need to resist fractionalization, volatility, or fluidity. This is another challenge for parties in post-communist societies where, lacking strong connections to the electorate, party leaders often choose to take actions that split their parties when disagreements arise rather than resolve conflicts internally.

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The importance of party size for system legitimacy also means that two-party systems may hold some advantage compared to multiparty systems. Although two-party systems provide fewer electoral choices to the public, they may compensate by the size of their political parties, provided, of course, that most citizens develop partisan attachment to them. In other words, it is important that citizens are not disaffected by the two available choices and are willing to express their electoral support for one of them. If voters were increasingly less willing to vote and endorse existing parties, the advantage of two-party systems with respect to system legitimacy would be reduced. In short, my evidence suggests that an important role, once again, falls to political parties, their efforts and ability to organize democratic politics and citizen involvement in order to ensure more legitimate and, therefore, more stable and effective functioning of democratic government.

Further, perhaps the most important finding in this study is that winning and losing rather than accurate policy representation is the driving force of system legitimacy in new democracies. Depending on one's perspective, this finding might be interpreted as both bad and good news for those interested in building and developing democratic legitimacy. The bad news is that it takes time for political parties to demonstrate unbiased and responsive policy representation that positively contributes to democratic legitimacy. The good news is that winning might be a saving grace for system legitimacy in new democracies. Thus, in light of the findings reported here it might be a particularly wise strategy to design institutions that maximize the number of winners. In other words, inclusiveness of political institutions should be a higher priority than focusing on the accuracy of policy representation in new democracies. What is more, winners should also

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try to refrain from changing the rules of political competition in such a way that losers may not become winners in the future. Party turnover in government from one election to the next is important to ensure that there are as few losers as possible and that more citizens feel they have a stake in new political system. In the long run and with increasing citizen experience of democratic governance, however, policy representation should also become important in shaping citizen support for the political system.

Furthermore, democratic experience is important not only for observing long-term aspects of policy representation but also for the development of party identification in new democracies. Initial stages of democratization in East Central Europe were marked by the emergence of a wide range of new political parties and very low levels of party identification, focused primarily among supporters of communist successor parties, that usually take more negative positions towards the new democratic system than other parties. Recent research, however, suggests that this pattern is changing fast as new party systems consolidate (Brader and Tucker 2001, Miller and Klobucar 2000, Klobucar, Miller, and Erb 2002, Miller et al. 2000). As citizens develop attachment to the new political parties, partisanship should begin to operate on system support in new democracies in a similar way as in established ones. Future research should explore the role of partisanship and party persuasion across established and new democracies in more detail. Persuasion may be even more effective in new democracies where citizens have low levels of political sophistication. Furthermore, as more reliable time-series data become available, our scholarship would be enriched by an examination of party persuasion effects on their supporters over time.

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Taken together, the results of my analyses confirm that political context matters for understanding citizen attitudes towards their political system and that it matters in a dynamic way. This means that citizen attitudes towards their political system cannot be understood in a vacuum or in a static setting. Specifically, evidence suggests that political parties are not external to voters and how they form opinions about their political system Instead, parties generate macro- and meso-level environments that then become reflected in micro-level processes underlying democratic legitimacy. Furthermore, my analyses show that political parties shape people's attitudes by what parties say and how they operate in contemporary democracies, and this is true in a variety of countries and with regard to different measures of legitimacy. More specifically, the results show that party performance with respect to their competition for government office, policy representation, and position taking towards the status quo of political system carry important implications for understanding citizen support for democratic governance. Future research should therefore seek to incorporate a discussion of political party role more explicitly into models of mass opinion and behavior.

More generally, future research also should devote more attention to analysing the role of political parties that goes beyond explaining electoral outcomes. Most existing studies focus on electoral outcomes as a dependent variable. Specifically, they seek to understand why elections come out the way they do and why citizens make the choices they make. In these studies, people's attitudes are commonly used as independent variables to explain electoral choice or partisanship (Anderson et al. 2005, ch.10). In contrast, my analysis focuses on the consequences of electoral outcomes, that is, how policy representation and winning vs. losing influence people's attitudes. This approach

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treats electoral outcomes as an independent variable, and citizen attitudes as dependent variable. This type of analysis reverses the causal errors traditionally used in the existing research, and provides an avenue to create and test theories that are truly political, inherently dynamic, and that promise leverage for understanding political conflict and its resolution in a wide variety of contexts (for a similar approach, see Anderson et al. 2005, ch.10).

This approach, however, comes with a few important caveats. While analysing the role of electoral outcomes on citizen attitudes, one should be aware that electoral outcomes cannot always be treated as an entirely exogenous factor. In other words, given that party behavior is to some extent conditioned by electoral pressures and voter behavior, the way parties operate and perform their functions in democratic polities is both endogenous and exogenous to citizen political attitudes. One should be concerned with the endogeneity issue if, for instance, a significant proportion of population does not have citizenship rights or does not vote. In these circumstances, the policy preferences of this population segment would not be reflected in the position of the median voter. As a consequence, the median voter is less likely to represent a position that is the most preferred by the public as a whole. Under these conditions, the congruence between the median voter and the median party in parliament would be less useful in explaining citizen attitudes towards the political system.

Further, future research should explore the role of accurate representation with respect to more specific policy issues. Analysis presented here focuses on the accuracy of policy representation based on the left-right ideological continuum, which is commonly viewed as a summary measure of political discourse. We can expect that the accuracy in

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representing citizen views on salient issues plays a similar role in shaping democratic legitimacy. It would be interesting to examine, for instance, what role the discrepancy in attitudes between political elites and ordinary citizens towards the European integration has played in shaping citizen attitudes towards their political systems.

One should be aware, however, that accurate policy representation might not necessarily be desirable with respect to all or any issues. For instance, political elites in both new and established democracies have been found to be more in favor of democratic norms and values than the public (Sullivan et al. 1993, Converse and Pierce 1986, Miller, Reisinger, Hesli 1998). In such circumstances, more accuracy between the median voter and the median party in parliament would generate less democratic outcomes. Further, on some issues, especially more complex and technical ones, the public does not always have clearly formed policy preferences and often seeks opinion leadership from political elites. Examining the role of accurate representation with respect to specific issues for system legitimacy, researchers therefore should be sensitive to issue saliency, complexity, and relevance to the public.

In addition, examining the role of political parties for system legitimacy, I focused on citizen attitudes towards the political system in established and new democracies. After all, these are the political regimes with a meaningful party competition. However, the scope of this analysis could be extended over time and across space, that is, to other new democracies such as those in Latin America and Africa. Further, empirical evidence in my analysis comes from cross-national data. It would be also useful to test the relationships examined here using time-series data.

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Moreover, the accuracy of policy representation may exist also in non-democratic states and play a significant role in securing legitimacy of non-democratic regimes. It is not implausible that leaders of non-democratic countries seek to accommodate median voter preferences, especially if they do not conflict with those of political elites. In the absence of democratic electoral competition, however, it may be difficult for political leaders to uncover citizen preferences. What is more, fear of repression may also prevent citizens from reporting their true preferences.

Finally, future research should combine various aspects of system support into more integrated models. We have accumulated knowledge about the causes of various aspects of system support, such as external efficacy, regime performance evaluations, institutional confidence, and support for democratic principles. However, little has been done so far in an effort to show how these various aspects of system support are related to each other and how each of them can be situated in a broader causal framework of system legitimacy. One could theorize, for instance, that commitment to democratic principles reflects an enduring outlook that forms the basis for an evaluative judgment about whether one is satisfied with democracy as it operates in one's country. In contrast, institutional confidence and political regime evaluations are the reality features that are likely to mediate the translation of the enduring attitude of democratic commitment into citizen satisfaction with democracy. Thus, in order to develop more comprehensive and unified models of democratic legitimacy future research should focus on conceptualizing and testing causal relationships among different aspects of system support as well as take into account political context in which parties continue to play an important and dynamic role in shaping citizen attitudes and behavior.

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