QOG

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UNDERSTANDING SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS:

Democracy versus Bureaucracy

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ABSTRACT

The present study is focusing on system factors related to the input side of the democratic system, *i.e.* the electoral dimension, as well as factors related to the out-put side, *i.e.* the quality of government. Hence, we will investigate to what extent different election system characteristics as well as degrees of policy representation (in terms of ideological congruence between voters and representatives) and the presence of effective, professional and impartial governmental institutions are related to citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works. We use data from CSES (www.cses.org) on individual voters and party system characteristics together with data on governmental institutions from the QoG-institute (www.qog.pol.gu.se). Overall our results indicate that factors like government effectiveness is of greater importance for citizens´ satisfaction with the way democracy functions, compared to factors like ideological congruence on the input side. Impartial and effective bureaucracies matter more than representational devices.

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Introduction

Most research on how citizens judge democracy or how they judge the functioning of democracy has been focused on micro-level factors or on system factors on the input side of democracy. This is well and good, but it misses the heart of the problem. The proof of a pudding is not in the making; it is in the eating. Consequently, studying political legitimacy or satisfaction with the working of democracy without taking the output side of democracy into consideration is a serious mistake. Representation and electoral systems in all honor, but they are rather impotent without successful policy implementations, high quality of public service provisions and impartial bureaucracies. Except for the pioneering work of Bruce Gilley (2009), this is something that more than often is forgotten when studying citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy.

The present study is focusing on system factors related to the input side of the democratic system, *i.e.* the electoral dimension, as well as factors related to the out-put side, *i.e.* the quality of government. Hence, we will investigate to what extent different election system characteristics as well as degrees of policy representation (in terms of ideological congruence between voters and representatives) and the presence of effective, professional and impartial governmental institutions are related to citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works.

The obvious but rather novel hypothesis is that ideological congruence between citizens and their representatives as well as impartial and effective government will lead to higher degrees of satisfaction with the way democracy works. And we expect this to be true no matter how the election system is set up. Furthermore, we expect our output factor to outperform the traditional input factors in explaining citizens' satisfaction with how democracy works. We believe that output matters more than input, at least in the short run. Thus, we will pit quality of democracy against quality of government. Both are essential but which is most important for how citizens judge how their democratic system works?

We use data from CSES (www.cses.org) on individual voters and party system characteristics together with data on governmental institutions from the QoG-institute (www.qog.pol.gu.se). The data builds on CSES modules 1, 2 and 3, covering 48 445 respondents from 32 democratic countries.

Satisfaction with the way democracy works

Political legitimacy is a multidimensional phenomena consisting of different levels and objects of support. An analytical framework often used in prior research in order to separate between different levels of support is the Eastonian model (Easton 1975; Norris 1999). Easton's model distinguishes between support for the community, the regime and the authorities, where the former - more abstract level - is labeled "diffuse support" while support on the latter - more distinct level - is called "specific support". Consequently, we find support for the political community, such as the nation itself, at the most abstract level followed by support for democratic principles and the performance of the democratic regime. Thereafter follows support for specific institutions, such as parliament and government, and support for political actors themselves. According to prior research, popular support is in general greater the higher up in the Eastonian hierarchy one goes. Support for national communities and principles of democracy are generally large for countries in the Western hemisphere. Support for regime performance, on the other hand, are mixed while specific support for institutions and for actors in general seems to be declining (Norris 1999). At least that was the trend when Norris' book was written in the late 1990s.

Different distinctions are, however, often blurred in practice where notions of trust in politicians and support for democratic values are treated as interchangeable. Nevertheless, citizens in general are most often able to separate between different levels of a regime, for example by giving support to democratic values while at the same time being critical towards how democratic governments work in practice. Citizens do also seem to be able to make clear judgements concerning different institutions within a regime (Norris 1999).

We are here primarily interested in support for the democratic processes rather than support for principles or for the institutions as such, since it has been asserted that legitimacy is heavily influenced, for not to say a function of, the performance of a regime (Klingemann 1999).

However, one of the main obstacles in comparative survey research is to find valid and accurate survey questions that have similar meanings and easily travels between language barriers. The today widely used survey question about individual's satisfaction with the way democracy works is not uncontroversial, especially not from a country comparative perspective. The CSES question reads: "*On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy*

works in [country]?". The main criticism concerns whether the question taps individuals' satisfaction or support for the principles of democracy as such or whether it taps concerns about democratic processes within a country. Most tests have indicated that the latter alternative is the more plausible interpretation. The CSES-question measures most closely degrees of support for the way a democratic regime works in practice (Fuchs, Guidorossi & Svensson 1995; Linde & Ekman 2003). Given our purpose, this conclusion is welcomed since we are interested in citizens' satisfaction with how the democratic processes work in practice. In figure 1 average levels of satisfaction with the working of democracy in the 32 countries covered in this study is depicted.

FIGURE 1. AVERAGE LEVELS OF SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS IN 32 COUNTRIES BETWEEN 1996 AND 2011 (MEAN VALUES AND 95 PERCENTAGES CONFIDENCE INTERVALS).
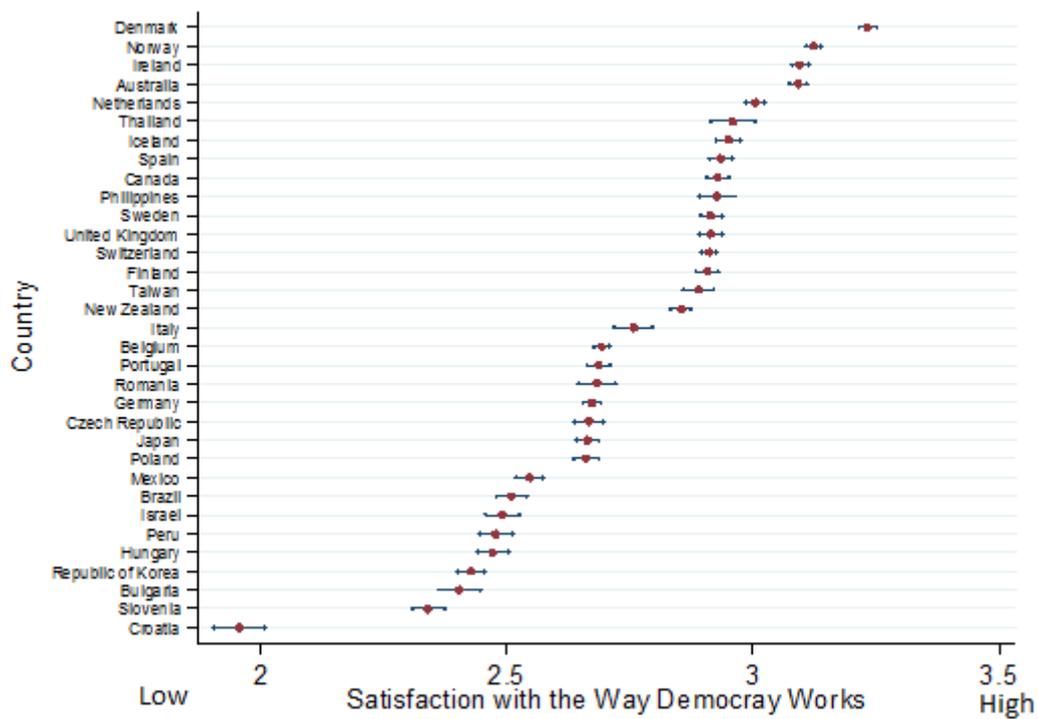
Comment: The results show the average level (with confidence intervals) of support for the way democracy works within each country over all elections studied. The CSES-modules cover up to four elections for each specific country.

Clearly, there is a great between-country variation where we find Denmark, Norway and Ireland at the top and Bulgaria, Slovenia and Croatia at the bottom. The variation within some countries is also noticeable. Among the countries with the biggest within-country variation we find Croatia, Thailand and Italy. With the exception of Italy, a common factor among these countries is that they are all newly democratized regimes.

Prior Research

Citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works has been the subject for exploration in a range of studies. However, the focus of explanations has, as mentioned, so far mainly been on the input side of the democratic system.

Much research has been spent on the impact of institutions, such as on the electoral systems. One major difference between different types of electoral systems is the translation of votes into seats. Proportional systems are supposed to be superior in linking citizens' vote preferences into parliamentary seats. However, according to the findings by Karp & Bowler (2001) and Aarts & Thomassen (2008) when it comes to the relationship between election system design and people's assessment of how their democracy works, the connection seems to be the inverse where proportional systems are related to somewhat lower levels of satisfaction with democracy and majoritarian systems with greater levels. This is an opposite result to earlier findings by Klingemann (1999).[1] The main findings, however, from Karp, Bowler, Aarts', Thomassen's and Klingemann's research is that the relationship between different election system designs and how satisfied citizens are with the working of democracy is very weak.

Nevertheless, one can expect an indirect impact of electoral systems on citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy since proportional systems are expected to produce multiparty systems. Such systems will increase the breadth of alternatives for voters to choose between, something that in turn can be expected to affect the levels of satisfaction with democracy (Lijphart 1999). Furthermore it has been argued that a broader range of parties leads to greater representation of diverse values (Hoffman 2005), minority groups (Lijphart 1999) and women (Norris 2004).

Lijphart's argument is that proportional systems are more consensual and that it is whether a system is performing in a consensual versus a conflict manner that is the crucial mechanism. This assumption was further elaborated in a recent article by Ezrow and Xezonakis (2011), where they tested whether increases in average party policy extremism is related to lower levels of satisfaction

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[1] A plausible explanation to the different results is that levels of satisfaction with the working of democracy depend on the sample of studied countries. Compared to Klingemann's study from 1999, Aarts & Thomassen's more recent study covers several more newly democratized countries in eastern Europe, where most of them have proportional electoral systems at the same time as the levels of satisfaction with the working of democracy are lower (see figure 1 for varying levels of satisfaction with the working of democracy in different countries).

with the working of democracy. The results indicated that this was the case, the more party system centrism in relation to the median voter position, the greater were citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy.

However, vote-seats disparities is not the only factor that affects the extent to which voters are accurately represented in a political system (*i.e.* greater proportionality means lesser degrees of "wasted votes"). Another aspect is the extent to which voters are accurately represented in terms of ideology. One can make a distinction between political representation in terms of votes (that the allocation of seats in the parliament accurately reflect the parties' actual vote shares) and in terms of preferences (that the ideological position of a party's voters is in congruence with the ideological position of the parties representatives (Golder & Stramski 2010)). Since we - following Ezrow and Xezonakis (2011) - know that citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works is greater in less polarized party systems where parties are centered close to the median voter position, we will continue and elaborate this finding by investigate if and to what extent ideological congruence between voters and representatives is related to citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy as well. The contribution of our, slightly different, approach is that we will investigate congruence in terms of the voters' subjective ideological position versus the objective as well as subjective ideological position of the parties they have voted for.

A reasonable assumption is that ideological congruence is closely related to the degree of proportionality of an electoral system. This since more proportional systems, for obvious reasons, usually corresponds to a greater number of political parties; and in multiparty systems it should be easier to achieve congruence between voters and parties. Nevertheless, the degree of ideological congruence between voters and representatives is not necessarily related to specific types of electoral systems (see Holmberg 1999; Golder & Stramski 2010). Instead it seems to be a factor, independent of which type of electoral system that is being used, that affects the extent to which voters are meaningfully represented within a system in terms of ideology and preferences. For this reason, it is plausible to expect congruence to be of importance for citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy, independently of the relationship between electoral systems and citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works.

Conclusively, we expect that the level of satisfaction with the working of democracy will be higher in a) proportional, b) less polarized c) multiparty systems with d) greater degrees of ideological congruence between voters and their representatives.

Turning to the out-put side of political systems, which refers to quality of government and how political authority is exercised, Bruce Gilley (2006) has suggested that good governance, democratic rights and welfare gains are the most reasonable and robust determinants of state legitimacy.

But what defines good government more exactly? According to Rothstein and Teorell, a key concept of quality of government is institutional impartiality (Rothstein and Teorell 2008). Impartiality in this respect does not refer to impartial treatment and political equality on the in-put side but rather to the degree of efficiency and impartiality among political institutions when public policies are being executed (Rothstein 2011). Rothstein and Teorell's definition of impartiality in terms of Quality of Government is: "*When implementing laws and policies, government officials shall not take into consideration anything about the citizen/case that is not beforehand stipulated in the policy or the law*" (Rothstein and Teorell 2008:170). Hence, impartiality is a procedural norm that is not related to the content of specific policies but rather to how policies are being implemented.

According to Rothstein and Teorell (2008) impartiality is superior to many competing concepts of quality of government (QoG). For example, they argue that impartiality by necessity rule out all forms of corruption but also all forms of practices such as nepotism and clientilism (Rothstein and Teorell 2008:171). Impartiality is as well related to meritocratic recruitment in the sense that the latter is an important organizational prerequisite underpinning impartiality (Rothstein and Teorell 2008:182). Rauch and Evans (2000) have also showed that in developing countries, meritocratic principles of recruitment and promotion tend to be strongly correlated to the absence of corruption and to bureaucratic efficiency.

However, in contrast to Rothstein and Teorell (2008) but in line with Gilley (2006), we argue that high levels of impartial policy implementations, carried out as stipulated by the law, together with professional bureaucratic recruitment processes by themselves are not sufficient condition for generating quality of government (QoG). There is at least one more aspect that needs to be considered in order to obtain QoG. That aspect is that government processes need to be both *impartial* and *efficient*. A government official may very well be acting impartial but still be inefficient. For example, impartial decisions may not take forever to be implemented. Impartiality by itself will not necessarily encompass efficiency, even though the concepts may be closely related.

Consequently, we believe that a) impartial, b) professional and c) effective QoG-institutions d) based on rule by law are four important dimensions of QoG that will yield higher degrees of satisfaction with the working of democracy.

Research Strategy

The review of prior research in the field left us with eight variables at the system level, four related to the varieties of democracy and four factors related to the quality of government. Since we are basing our study on either different data or extended data (for example Aarts and Thomassen used data from CSES module 2, while we are using data from CSES module 1, 2 and 3), we will start by reinvestigating prior findings on citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works. Moreover, as stated in the title of this paper, our purpose is ultimately to put the quality of democracy against the quality of government. We will do this in two steps starting with aggregated analyses among the 32 countries in our data. First we regress the electoral and representational variables on our dependent variable and then we do the same for our four QoG variables. Thereafter we keep the electoral/representational and the QoG variables with the greatest impact and put them against each other.

As a second stage, we will continue the analyses on the individual level in order to study the impact of individual characteristics together with system related factors on citizen's satisfaction with the way democracy works. The reason for conducting this two-step approach is mainly practical since prior research on citizen's satisfaction with the way democracy works, together with our hypotheses derived from the QoG-research field leaves us with too many variables related to the political system. The problem is thus purely statistical since we can only include a limited number of variables related to the system level with a restricted n of only 32 countries.

Data and Operationalizations

The analysis is, as mentioned, based on data from the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)* module 1, 2 and 3, which were collected in 1996-2011 in post election surveys in 42 countries covering 91 elections (see www.cses.org).[2] The reason for using CSES data is that it is the only country comparative data on individuals that contains variables on evaluations of regime performance as well as party placements.

It has been argued that a separation between presidential elections and parliamentary elections sometimes is to be preferred since government formation processes in presidential elections are quite distinct from those in parliamentary systems (Clark, Golder & Golder 2009). For this reason we are in this paper focusing on countries with parliamentary elections. Moreover, since we are interested in the effect of the varieties of democracy and the quality of government on citizens' satisfaction with the working of democracy, we are for obvious reasons restricted to countries that truly are democracies. We have therefore also excluded countries that were not classified as "free" according to the Freedom House index at the time when data was collected.[3] This leaves us with 32 countries in total. The countries that are included in the analysis are depicted in figure 1.

Measuring Varieties of Democracy

In order to measure the impact of *electoral systems* we have tested three alternative measures. First we applied the widely used measure of disproportionality, known as Gallagher's least squares (Gallagher 1991). We also used a dichotomous variable to differentiate between proportional systems versus everything else taken from the Worldbank's Database of Political Institutions (Keefer 2009). Finally, we ended up with a trichotomy (coded as 0 - Majoritarian or Preferential-vote 1 - Mixed-member majority or Block vote and 2 - Closed-list-PR) taken from Gerring, Thacker & Moreno (Gerring et al 2005). Based on bivariate analyses the last measure yielded the greatest impact in terms of slope-coefficients and amount of variance explained, and was for that reason chosen over the two former measures.

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[2] The data can be received from CSES Secretariat, www.cses.org, Centre for Political Studies. Institute for Social Research. The University of Michigan. The data can also be downloaded from: www.umich.edu/~cses.
[3] "Freedom in the world. Selected data from freedom house's annual global survey of political rights and civil liberties". www.freedomhouse.org.

The *effective number of parliamentary parties* is taken from Golder (2005) and *polarization* is measured as Dalton's index of polarization (Dalton 2008). The latter measure is comparable to a standard deviation of a distribution of parties, weighted by their percentages of votes, along the left-right scale. It has the value of 0 when all parties occupy the same position on the scale and 10 when all the parties are arrayed between the two extreme points of the scale.

Ideological congruence is, and has been, an important variable in numerous studies. Nevertheless, according to Golder and Stramski (2010) relatively little attention has been paid to how congruence should be conceptualized and measured. There are today a variety of different definitions and operationalizations available but which measure that should be used is of course depending on which questions that is being asked. In the present study, we define congruence in terms of agreement between citizens' subjective ideological self-placement and the, subjective as well as objective, ideological position of the party they have been voting for. Since we are interested in subjective ideological congruence (a party's position as it is being perceived by a citizen) as well as objective ideological congruence (a party's actual position), we are using two different measures of ideological congruence. Our measures of congruence are similar to those constructed by Golder and Stramski (2010).

The absolute ideological congruence measure is based on the absolute distances between voters self-placement on an eleven point left-right scale and the median placement of the party voted for, made by the approximately 40 percent most educated respondents in each country. The reason for using the placement of parties made by respondents with higher education is that people with lower levels of education tend to make less qualified party placements in that they tend to place parties they are unfamiliar with in the middle of the left-right scale (see Alvarez & Nagler 2004).

The *absolute congruence* measure is constructed as the average absolute distance between the citizens and the position of the party voted for, where N is the number of citizens and C_i is the ideal point of the *i:th* citizen.

$$Absolute\ Congruence = \frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N}|C_i - P|$$

Subjective congruence is measured as the distance between a citizens self-placement on the left-right scale and its subjective placement *Ci* of the party voted for (SP).

$$Subjective\ Congruence = \frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N}|C_i - SP_i|$$

Both measures are then weighted according to the relative size of the parties, in terms of percentages of votes. All measures have also been reversed so that higher scores are indicating greater congruence between citizens and the party voted for.[4]

Measuring Quality of Government

It is often said that all good things are three, for this reason we are using four different measures of QoG as well. The first two are the impartiality and professionalism indices constructed by Rothstein and Teorell (2008), taken from the Quality of Government expert survey.

Impartiality measures to what extent government institutions exercise their power impartial. The impartiality norm is, as earlier mentioned, defined as: "When implementing laws and policies, government officials shall not take into consideration anything about the citizen/case that is not beforehand stipulated in the policy or the law." (see Rothstein and Teorell 2008, p. 170). The index is built on five items from the survey tapping the impartiality norm. Higher values indicate a more impartial public administration. For more detailed information, see Dahlberg (2011).

The index of *professionalism* measures to what extent the public administration is professional rather than politicized. The index taps questions of whether the recruitment of public sector employees is based on merits or not, where higher values indicate a more professionalized public administration. The index is based on four questions from the QoG expert survey (for more detailed information, see Dahlberg (2011)).

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[4] Golder and Stramski (2010) also propose an alternative measure of congruence labeled *relative congruence.* We have also tested this measure but in relation to our dependent variable, satisfaction with the way democracy works, the absolute congruence measure is superior, both in terms of effect and variance explained.

Government effectiveness is taken from the Worldbanks (http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi) Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) and captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies. The index is running from approximately -2.5 to 2.5, with higher values corresponding to better governance. The World Bank's government effectiveness index is a subjective measure for an entire government's performance and draws on data sources that reflect the perceptions of a diverse group of respondents. The data is on the one hand based on elite perceptions of country experts and on the other on surveys carried out by domestic survey houses and cross-country surveys of residents carried out by international organizations and other non-governmental organizations in 212 countries for eight time periods. The World Bank government effectiveness indicator captures the capacity of the state to implement sound policies by measuring the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies (see Kaufmann et.al. 2009).

An advantage of this measure is that it captures the effectiveness of an entire government and not only of a limited number of institutions or aspects of organizations as many other effectiveness measures do. In this respect researchers are often separating between subjective and objective effectiveness indicators, where the former has been criticized for producing biases by its use of informant's recalls and other forms of perception biases. On the other hand, objective effectiveness or performance indicators are seldom available over time and across countries. Moreover, subjective measures have also been asserted to be superior when it comes to measuring more complex dimensions of organizational performance (Lee & Whitford 2009).

The fourth and final QoG variable is *rule of law*, taken from the Freedom House (http://www.freedomhouse. org). The variable measures to what extent law prevails in civil and criminal matters; the existence of direct civil control over the police; the protection from political terror, unjustified imprisonment and the extent to which laws, policies and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population. Countries are graded between 0 (worst) and 16 (best).

Empirical Tests

In terms of varieties of democracy, our hypotheses states that citizens' should be more satisfied in multiparty systems and in systems where parties are less ideologically polarized. These two factors consequently relate to the supply side of democratic inputs. H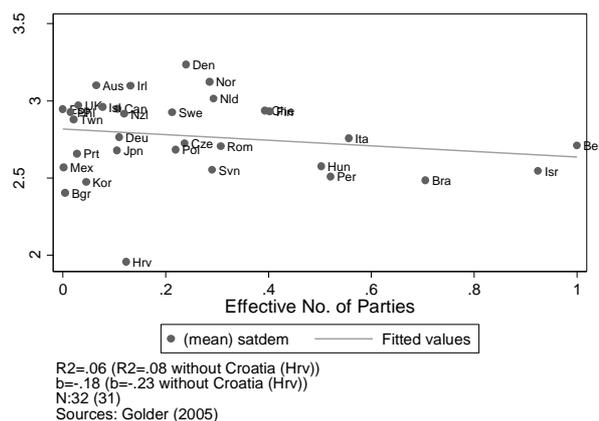owever, elections and representation should also matter in the sense that if they produce some form of congruence between what people want and what decision-makers want and do, people should appreciate the way democracy works more than if people´s wishes are not matched by their elected politicians´ thoughts and deeds. This can either be done by a) producing proportional election results or b) generate ideological issue congruence between voters and their parties. Higher levels of issue congruence between voters and elected representatives are expected to make people more satisfied with the way the democratic system works. Thus, outcomes of democratic inputs like elections and representation should have an effect on how people evaluate the outcome of the entire democratic system.
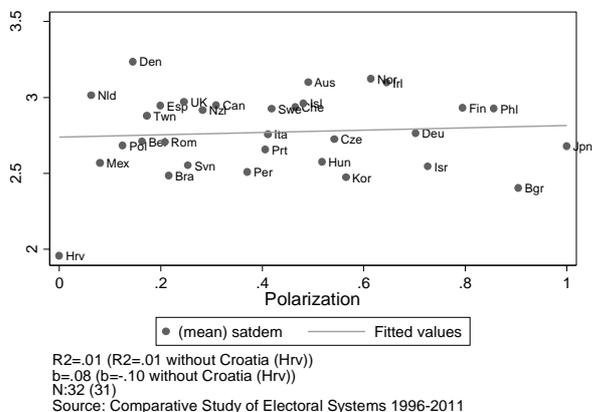
Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Electoral Systems.
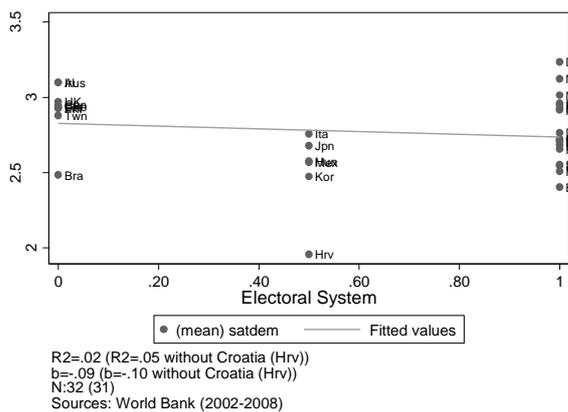
Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Effective Number of Parties.

R2=.02 (R2=.05 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=-.09 (b=-.10 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Sources: World Bank (2002-2008)

R2=.06 (R2=.08 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=-.18 (b=-.23 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Sources: Golder (2005)

Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Polarization.

Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Absolute ideological congruence.
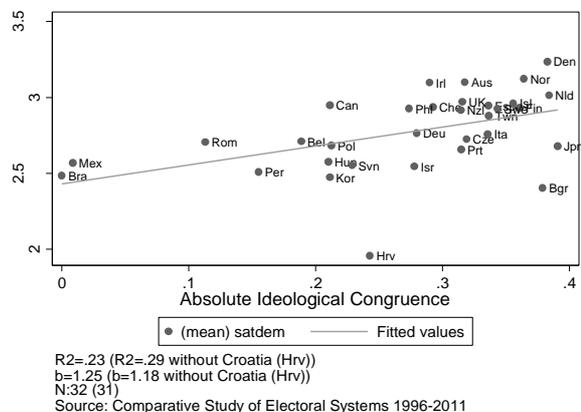
R2=.01 (R2=.01 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=.08 (b=-.10 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Source: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems 1996-2011

R2=.23 (R2=.29 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=1.25 (b=1.18 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Source: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems 1996-2011

Comment: The satisfaction with the working of democracy question is here reversed so that higher numbers corresponds to greater satisfaction. Only parliamentary elections are included in the analysis. The congruence measures are also reversed so that higher values pertain to greater degrees of congruence.

Looking at the results in Figure 2 we find a weak negative relationship of electoral systems. People in PR-systems are less satisfied with how their democracies functions than people in majoritarian

systems.[5] Also for the impact of the effective number of parliamentary parties we find a weak negative relationship. These findings do coincide with earlier results reported by Aarts and Thomassen (2008).

Turning to the third bivariate relationship on the input side we instead find a weak positive relationship between ideological party polarization and satisfaction with the way democracy works. However, if Croatia - being the obvious outlier in all four scatterplots - is removed we find a negative relationship of -.010 instead of .080 as in the former case. This later result coincides with what could be expected according to earlier findings of Ezrow and Xezonakis (2011). Citizens in less polarized systems tend to appreciate the working of democracy most.

Finally, the relatively strong bivariate effect of ideological congruence indicates that we are not wildly astray. On the aggregate level, including 32 different counties, there is a positive relationship between average ideological left-right congruence among citizens and their representatives, and the degree to which citizens are satisfied with the way democracy works. The more congruence, the more citizens do appreciate the way their democracy functions.

However, we are not talking about any impressively strong relationships. Countries are not clustered very tight around the regression lines, as indicated by an R-square of .23 (.29 without Croatia (Hrv)) for the analysis involving the measure for absolute congruence. But even if the relationships are somewhat weak, they withstand some obvious robustness tests, like excluding very visible outliers in the scatterplot like Croatia (Hrv) for instance.

If we see the four regression analyses in Figure 2 as a kind of semifinal on the democratic input side, it is obvious that our absolute congruence measure wins and consequently can move on to the final against the strongest contender on the output side.

In the semifinal on the government output side we also have four participants. The hypotheses say that well developed levels of quality of government - in terms of impartiality, professionalism, effectiveness and rule of law - should lead to people being more appreciative of how their democratic system works. Quality of government should make citizens more satisfied with the way democracy works.

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[5] We have used different measures and operationalizations for electoral systems such as Gallagher's least square index for the degree of disproportionality, but the relationships are highly similar.

FIGURE 3. SCATTERPLOTS OF SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS AND

GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN 32 COUNTRIES.
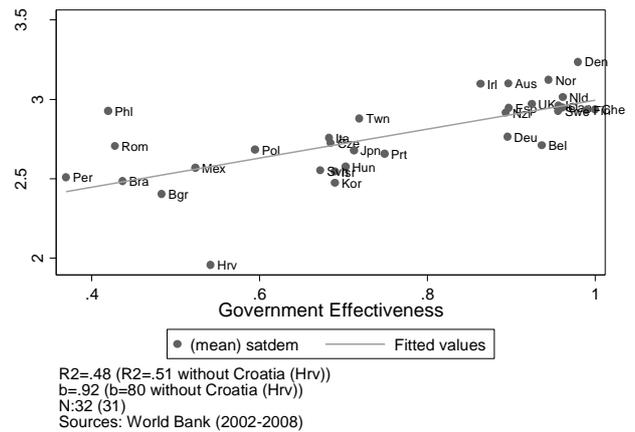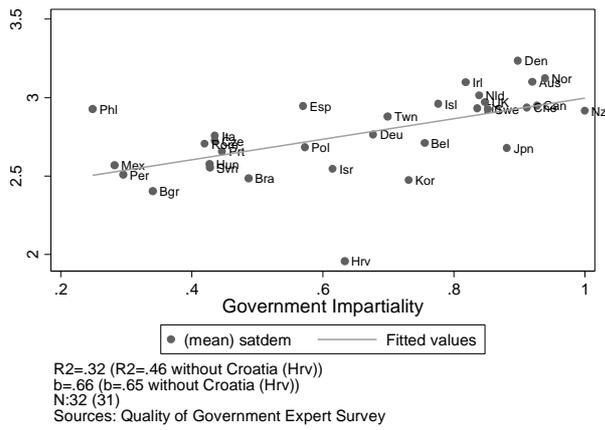
Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Government impartiality.	*Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Government effectiveness.*

R2=.32 (R2=.46 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=.66 (b=.65 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Sources: Quality of Government Expert Survey

R2=.48 (R2=.51 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=.92 (b=80 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Sources: World Bank (2002-2008)

Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Government Professionalism.	*Satisfaction with the way democracy works vs. Rule of Law.*
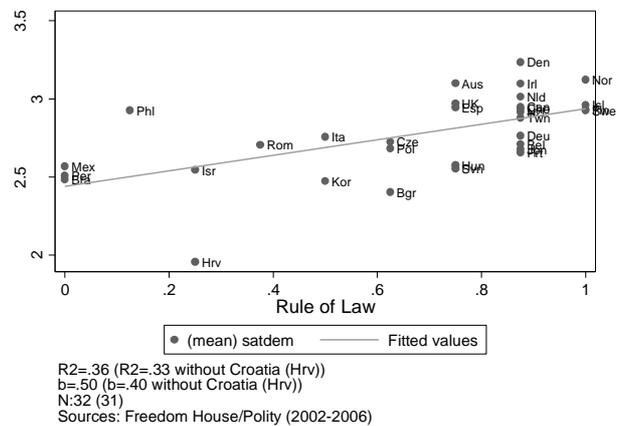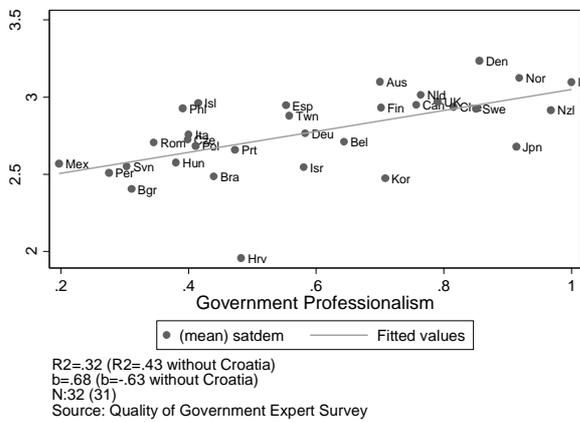
R2=.32 (R2=.43 without Croatia)
b=.68 (b=-.63 without Croatia)
N:32 (31)
Source: Quality of Government Expert Survey

R2=.36 (R2=.33 without Croatia (Hrv))
b=.50 (b=.40 without Croatia (Hrv))
N:32 (31)
Sources: Freedom House/Polity (2002-2006)

Comment: The satisfaction with the working of democracy question is here reversed so that higher numbers corresponds to greater satisfaction. Only parliamentary elections are included in the analysis. The congruence measures are also reversed so that higher values pertain to greater degrees of congruence.

Figure 3 illustrates the bivariate impact of four different dimensions of quality of government on our dependent variable. First, we apply the Rothstein-Teorell impartiality measure followed by the measure of professionalism in the public administration. Both measures are based on data from the QoG Institute´s expert survey covering some 107 countries.

In the third scatterplot, QoG is measured rather conventionally using the World Bank´s very broad government effectiveness index. Fourth, we use the Freedom house measure of rule of law.

The bivariate results in the scatterplots in Figure 3 reveal a very close outcome of the semifinal on the government output side. All four operationalizations of QoG have a fairly strong and positive relationship with the dependent variable – how people judge the working of democracy in their country. The R-squares vary between .32 and .48, with the World Bank´s government effectiveness index scoring highest (.48) and the pure impartiality and professionalism measures scoring lowest (.32). The rule of law index has an R-square that is somewhat higher compared to the two former measures (.36). However, no matter which measure is used, quality of government is clearly related to how satisfied people are with the working of democracy. The better QoG, the more citizens appreciate how their democracy is working.

But there can be only one winner. Consequently, in the final on the government output side the government effectiveness index will be the contender, facing from the democratic input side our measure for absolute ideological congruence. In table 1, the results from four multiple regressions are shown, in the first model the four democracy factors are regressed under control for each other and in the second model, we do the same for the four quality of government factors. The results from these two regressions confirm the results from the bivariate scatter plots – ideological congruence and government effectiveness have the greatest impact on citizen's satisfaction with the way democracy works.

TABLE 1. AGGREGATED REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF SYSTEM RELATED FACTORS ON CITIZENS' SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS (OLS REGRESSION)

	Bivariate	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Quality of Democracy					
Absolute Weighted Congruence	1.247***	1.530***	-	.302	.640
Polarization	.075	-.180	-	-	-
Effective Number of Parties	-.182	.012	-	-	-
Proportional Representation	-.090	-.151*	-	-	-
Quality of Government					
Government Effectiveness	.915***	-	.968**	.828***	.704**
Government Impartiality	.656***	-	-.605	-	-
Government Professionalism	.680***	-	.593	-	-
Rule of Law	.498***	-	.021	-	-
Control variables					
Unemployment (%)	-.030**	-	-	-	-.014
Inflation (%)	-.014	-	-	-	-.010
Interaction term					
Congruence*Government Eff.	-	-	-	-	-
Constant	-	2.936***	2.802***	2.770***	2.832***
R-squared	-	.193	.453	.450	.474
N	-	32	32	32	32

Comment: * p<.10, ** p<.05, *** p<.01. All variables are rescaled into 0-1. All models have also been run with control for life expectancy, Gini-index, life satisfaction and strength of left-right dimension but the inclusion of these variables did not have a significant impact on the results presented above. All regressions have been bootstrapped with 1000 replications. Data comes from the CSES module 1, 2 and 3, collected between 1996-2011. All independent variables are rescaled, stretching from 0-1, showing the total effects on the dependent variable.

Turning to model 3, where we put ideological congruence against government effectiveness, the QoG outcome variable clearly beats the democratic input variable. The effect coefficient for the government effectiveness variable is .828*** and statistically significant compared to an insignificant .302 for the congruence variable. However, from prior research we also know that there is a strong relationship between economic conditions and system support (see Gilley 2006b). However, according to Gilley (2006a), GDP is not a suitable factor to include in analyses of legitimacy, since GDP tend to account for "everything". For this reason we are, following Ezrow and Xezonakis (2011), controlling for inflation and unemployment which are two more specific factors closely related to the economy.

Moreover, according to Aarts and Thomassen (2008), there are substantial differences between the levels of satisfaction with democracy between older and more established democracies compared with more recently democratized countries (which also could be seen in figure 1). Nevertheless, the age of democracies is also closely related to the quality of government and economic performance. By including a variable for old and new democracies; we are thus inducing multicolinearity in the model, which makes the OLS estimations inefficient. For this reason we are not controlling for the age of the democracies.

Nevertheless, even when we control for unemployment and inflation rates as in model 4, the results stay the same. Government effectiveness still outperforms ideological congruence.

No matter how we specify our QoG or our democratic variables the result stay the same. The QoG variables – whether we talk about government effectiveness, impartiality, professionalism or rule of law – always display a stronger effect on the way people judge the working of democracy than the ideological congruence measure. Quality of government factors, like impartial decisions, low corruption and efficiency, matter more than ideological closeness to elected representatives, when citizens evaluate how their democratic system functions. Overall, factors related to the output side of a democratic system is of greater importance for citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works compared to factors related to the input side of democracy.

However to be fair to the democratic variables and to give the QoG factor more of an uphill battle we have to acknowledge that there is not only a rather substantial between-country variation in how citizens evaluate the working of democracy but also a large within-country variation. Individuals in different countries do not necessarily agree on how to judge the way their country´s democracy works. Furthermore, the democratic input variable, ideological congruence, can not only be measured on the aggregate country level. It can as well be measured on the individual level. We have data on each individual´s perception of the ideological left-right distance between her or his ideological position and that of the chosen party´s. Consequently, we can perform an even stronger test for the potential effects of QoG versus democratic factors on the way people assess the working of their democracies.

The results in Table 2 show the outcome of a number of multilevel regression analyses encompassing some 48 445 individuals in 32 countries. The models include individual voter characteristics as well as system level measures on our core variables - ideological congruence and government effec-

tiveness. Added to this we have specified a set of control variables mainly derived from previous research on what causes satisfaction with the working of democracy.[6]

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[6] In country comparative studies on individual voters the individuals are clustered within countries and persons from the same country do often share common experiences, which make them more similar compared to voters from other countries. This leads to an underestimation of standard errors due to an overestimation of the extent of independent information contained in the data. Multilevel models capture this kind of country variation by reparameterizing the intercepts and the coefficients of ordinary regression models into country level equations and will therefore provide more accurate coefficients, standard errors and significance tests (Hox 2002; Snijders and Bosker 1999). For this reason we have let the intercept vary between the countries, a so called random intercept model with fixed coefficients. Also, by controlling for the election waves (i.e. repeated cross section observations for some countries) we do not need to consider the fact that the design of the CSES study implies that some countries are represented up to three times while other countries only are represented once.

TABLE 2. MULTILEVEL REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SYSTEM RELATED FACTORS ON CITIZENS' SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS (MLE).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Individual level variables						
Age	-.054**	-	-.056**	-.055**	-.054**	-.055**
Education	.097***	-	.104***	.097***	.097***	.097***
Gender	.054***	-	.055***	.054***	.054***	.054***
Party identification	.082***	-	.087***	.082***	.082***	.082***
Voting for Governmental Party	.083***	-	.084***	.083***	.083***	.083***
Subjective Left-Right Congruence	.222***	-	-	.221***	.219	.221***
System level variables						
Absolute Weighted Congruence	-	.449	.291	.060	-	.258
Government Effectiveness	-	.874***	.854***	.858***	.865***	.910***
Interaction term						
Subj. Congruence*Govern. Eff.	-	-	-	-	.002	-
Control variables						
Unemployment (%)	-	-	-	-	-	.001
Inflation (%)	-	-	-	-	-	.006
Intercept (grand mean)	2.484***	1.756*	1.777**	1.781**	1.825***	1.549*
Std. Dev. Intercept Lev.3	-1.620***	-1.568***	-3.245	-3.039	-3.054	-3.163
Std. Dev. Intercept Lev. 2	-1.625***	-	-1.538***	-1.538***	-1.537***	-1.535***
Std. Dev. Residuals Lev. 1	-.454***	-.437***	-.453***	-.454***	-.454***	-.454***
N: Countries	32	32	32	32	32	32
N: Individuals	48 445	48 445	48 445	48 445	48 445	48 445

Comment: *p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001. Data comes from the CSES module 1, 2 and 3, collected between 1996-2011. Level 2 in the random part refers to the country units and level 1 to individuals. Since some countries are represented in up to three elections in the data set, dummy variables for the election waves has been included as controls. The data is unweighted since the only weights that should be included in a multi level model is weights for unequal selection probabilities within countries (see Asparouhov and Muthen 2004). The data is weighted for unequal selection probabilities within countries. All independent variables are rescaled, stretching from 0-1, showing the total effects on the dependent variable. The categorization of old vs. new democracies is taken from Aarts and Thomassen (2008). Age is coded as one of 7 intervals such as: (-22, 23-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 71-). Gender is coded as a dichotomous variable where 0 is women and 1 is indicating men. Education is based on the original variable in the CSES-modules and contains eight categories which are labelled as: 1 "none", 2 "incomplete primary", 3 "primary completed", 4 "incomplete secondary", 5 "secondary completed", 6 "post-secondary", 7 "university undergrad incomplete", 8 "university undergrad - completed". Party identification is coded as a dichotomous variable where 1 equals yes and 0 no. The CSES-question read: "*Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?*"

Besides standard individual level control variables like age, gender and education we have included party identification and voting for a governmental party as controls. We know from previously that voters identifying with a party and/or voting for the established government have a tendency to be more satisfied with the working of democracy compared to voters without a party attachment or compared to voters supporting opposition parties (Anderson and Guillory 1997). On the aggregate level, as before, we have included two control variables which are unemployment and inflation rates.

Since the democratic factor is the underdog going in to the multilevel test we have giving it a special chance by including an interaction term in one of the models. The interaction variable specifies the possibility that ideological congruence and government effectiveness together have an extra effect on how people evaluate the working of democracy. The expectation is that ideological congruence and government quality working in tandem should give citizen satisfaction an added boost.

Looking at the results of the many different multilevel runs in Table 2, lead to four quite robust conclusions. First, no matter how we specify the models, the aggregate QoG factor – government effectiveness – comes out as a significant effect on citizens´ satisfaction with the working of democracy, and as a stronger effect than the one related to the democratic factor – ideological congruence. Secondly, the effect of ideological congruence measured as a subjective individual trait – feeling ideologically close to ones chosen party – proves to be statistically significant as well, although on a less powerful level than government effectiveness. Thirdly, our controls worked as expected and did not succeed in extinguish the direct effects of either the democratic or the governmental factors. Fourthly, as it turned out the interaction term did not prove to have any significant effect on citizens´ satisfaction with the working of democracy. The effects we find related to democratic input and government output tend to be independent of each other and not dependent on any interactive effects.

Conclusion

Overall our results indicate that factors like government effectiveness on the output side is of greater importance for citizens´ satisfaction with the way democracy functions, compared to factors like representational closeness and ideological congruence on the input side. Impartial and effective

bureaucracies matter more than representational devices. Quality of government beats quality of democracy.

A lesson that possibly could be drawn from our results is that state building - including training of an efficient and impartial bureaucracy – maybe is as important as democracy building when aid is given to emerging democratic systems. But, of course, everything is a matter of timing. State building and democracy building have to go hand in hand. However, based on our research, the simple reminder is that in that process bureaucratic quality should not be forgotten.

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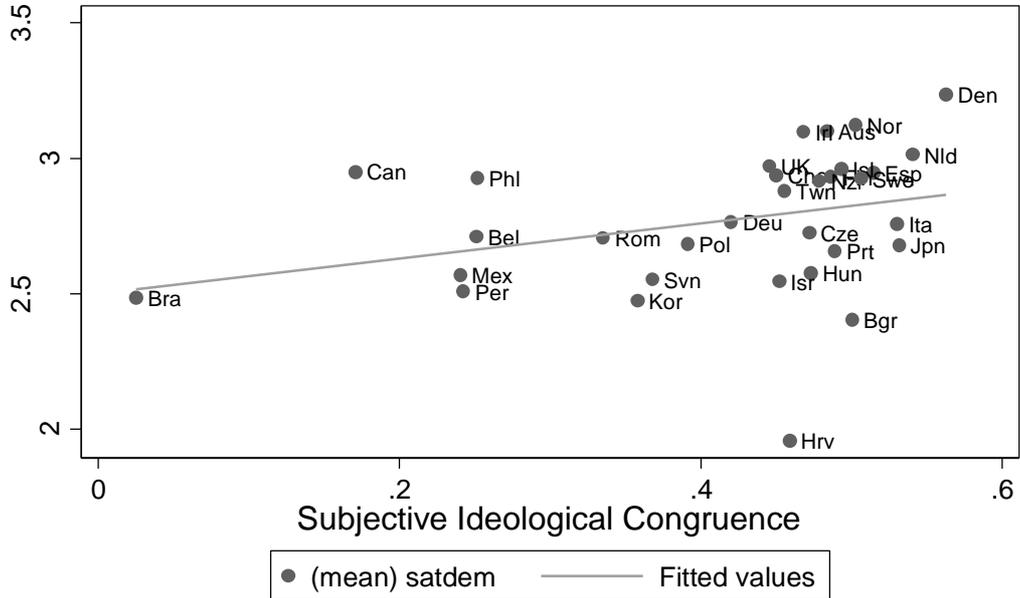
APPENDIX

TABLE 1. CLASSIFICATION OF OLD AND NEW DEMOCRACIES.

New	Semi-New	Old
Mexico (Mex)	Israel (Isr)	Denmark (Den)
Czech Republic (Cze)	Spain (Esp)	Norway (Nor)
Slovenia (Svn)	Japan (Jpn)	Canada (Can)
Taiwan (Twn)	Italy (Ita)	Sweden (Swe)
Republic of Korea (Kor)	Iceland (Isl)	Ireland (Irl)
Bulgaria (Bgr)	Germany (Deu)	Australia (Aus)
Hungary (Hun)	Portugal (Prt)	New Zealand (Nzl)
Brazil (Bra)	-	Belgium (Bel)
Peru (Per)	-	Switzerland (Che)
Poland (Pol)	-	Finland (Fin)
Romania (Rom)	-	United Kingdom (UK)
Philippines (Phl)	-	Netherlands (Nld)
Croatia (Hrv)	-	-

TABLE 2. WITHIN VERSUS BETWEEN VARIATION IN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL VARIABLES. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN USING COUNTRIES AS CLUSTERS VERSUS USING COUNTRY BY ELECTION YEAR AS CLUSTER.

Variable	Country	Country/Year	Diff.
Age	0,24	0,22	-0,02
Education	0,39	0,34	-0,04
Gender	0,06	0,05	0,00
Party identification	0,32	0,26	-0,06
Subjective Left-Right Congruence	0,34	0,29	-0,05
Voting for Governmental Party	0,45	0,35	-0,10

3.5

3

2.5

2

● Den
● Ir Aus
● Nor
● Can
● Phl
● UK
● Nld
● Isl Esp
● Cze Nz Swe
● Twn
● Bel
● Deu
● Rom
● Ita
● Pol
● Cze
● Jpn
● Prt
● Mex
● Svn
● Isr
● Hun
● Per
● Kor
● Bra
● Bgr
● Hrv

0   .2   .4   .6

Subjective Ideological Congruence

● (mean) satdem   ——— Fitted values

R2=.09 (R2=.17 without Croatia)
b=.649 (b=.725 without Croatia)
N:32 (31)
Source: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems 1996-2011