

Popular Support for Direct Democracy

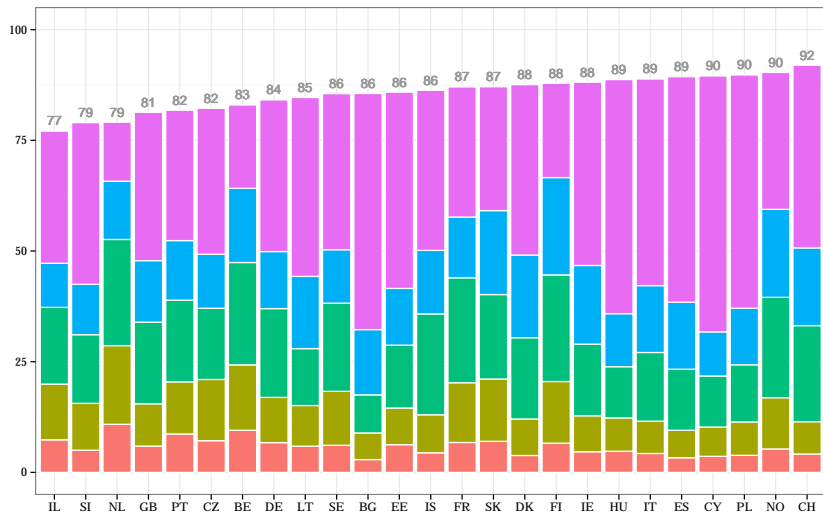
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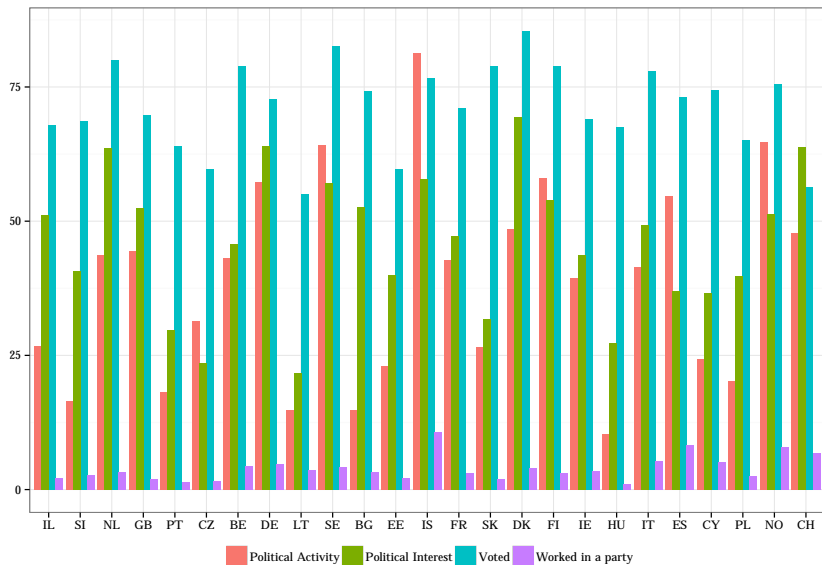
“EPOP 2015 Conference”, 11 – 13 September 2015, Cardiff
University

Support for direct democracy...



Support for Direct Democracy (0 - 10) 6 7 8 9 10

... vs. actual participation



A narrative

- ▶ ‘Citizens demand direct democracy.’
- ▶ Rising usage and institutionalization explained by ‘cognitive mobilization’

- ▶ Cognitive mobilization
- ▶ Political disaffectionation

- ▶ Prior studies find evidence for both
- ▶ Two theories are not contradictory as citizens can be both cognitively mobilized and dissatisfied

“Indeed, some research suggests that the increasing demand for the use of direct democracy stems predominantly from citizens who hold a more critical or sometimes even cynical attitude towards politics while at the same time they remain committed to democratic principles.”
(Schuck and De Vreese 2011, 183)

- ▶ ‘critical citizens’ (Norris 1999) / ‘dissatisfied democrats’ (Klingemann 1999) are drivers of reform

Research question

1. Who wants direct democracy?
2. Can support for direct democracy be understood as demand for increased participation?

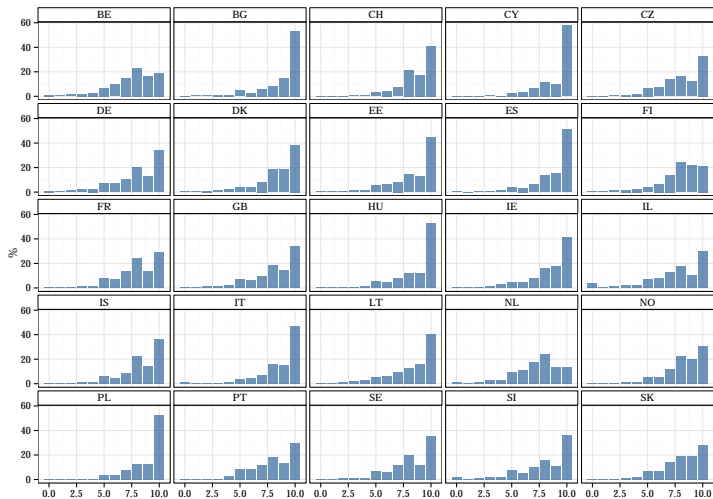
Hypothesis

1. Voters are less supportive of direct democracy than non-voters.
2. 'Dissatisfied democrats' are more supportive of direct democracy than other citizens.

- ▶ ESS Round 6, Module “Europeans’ understandings and evaluations of democracy”
- ▶ 25 countries, excluding 4 non-stable or non-democratic countries

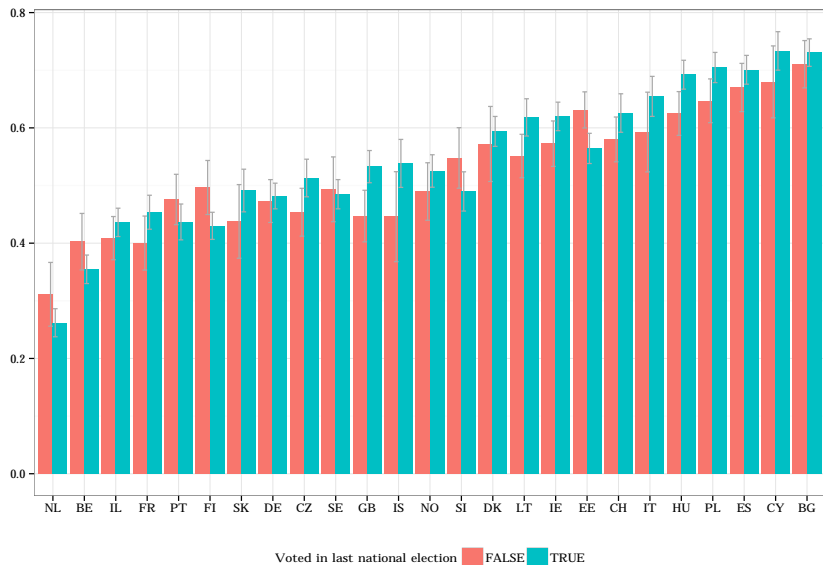
Respondents’ support for direct democracy “*And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums?*” (question E8)

Support for direct democracy

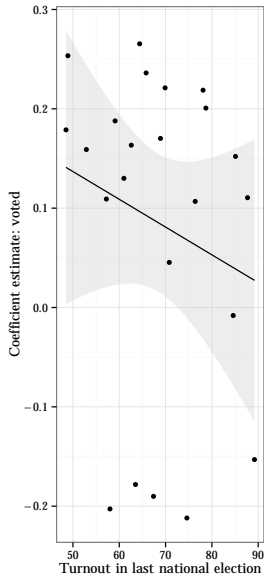
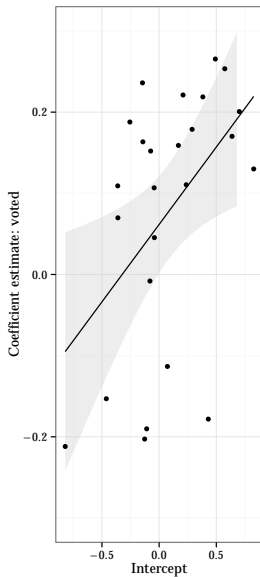
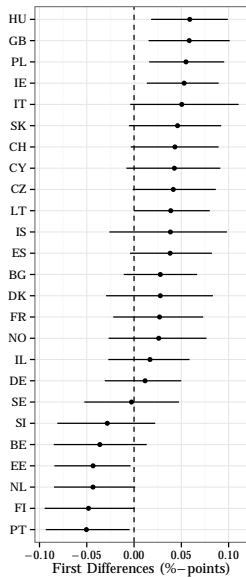


- ▶ Support dichotomized as ≥ 9 , following (Kriesi, Saris, and Moncagatta 2014)

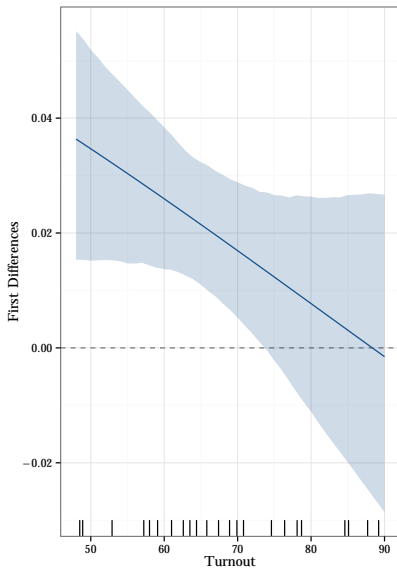
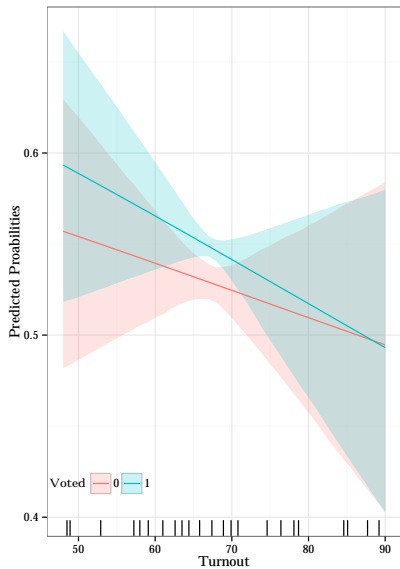
Voters vs. non-voters



Voters vs. non-voters



Voters vs. non-voters

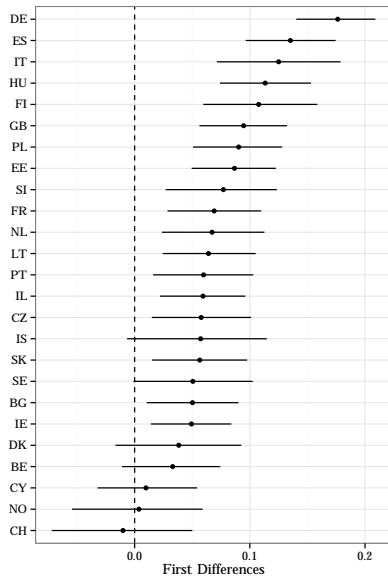
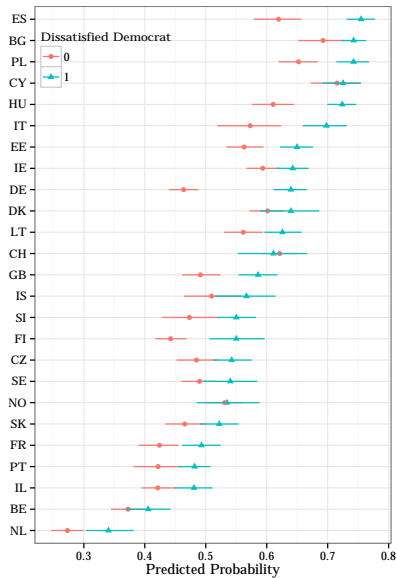


Dissatisfied democrats

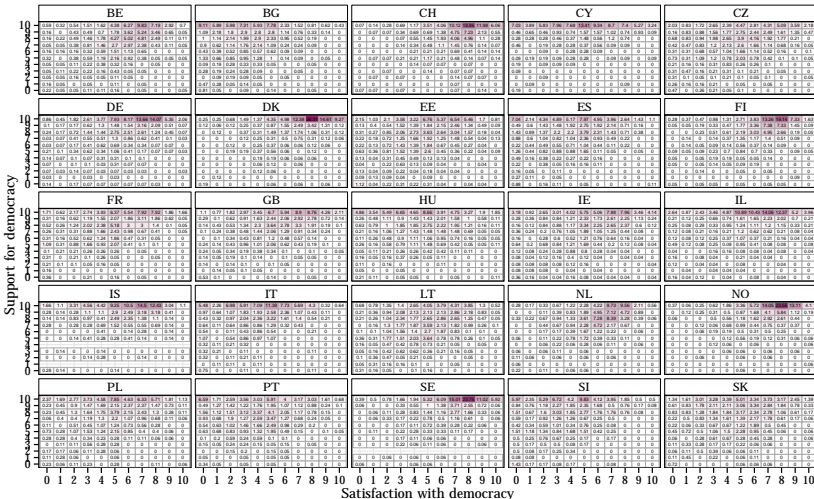
	Dissatisfaction with Democracy	
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
Support for Democracy	<i>High</i> Satisfied Democrat	Dissatisfied Democrat
	<i>Low</i> Satisfied Non-Democrat	Dissatisfied Non-Democrat

- ▶ High Support = *Importance of living in a democracy* > 5
- ▶ High Dissatisfaction = *Satisfaction with democracy* (inversed) > 5

Dissatisfied democrats

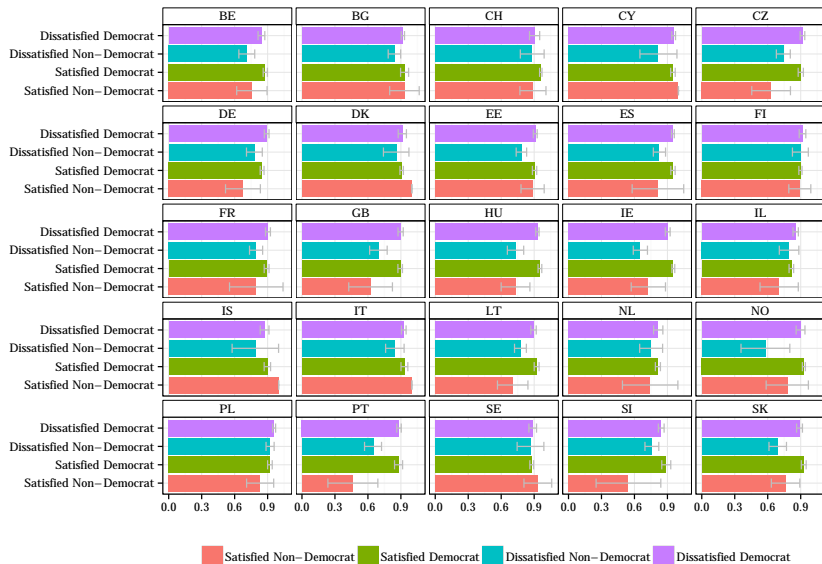


Dissatisfied democrats

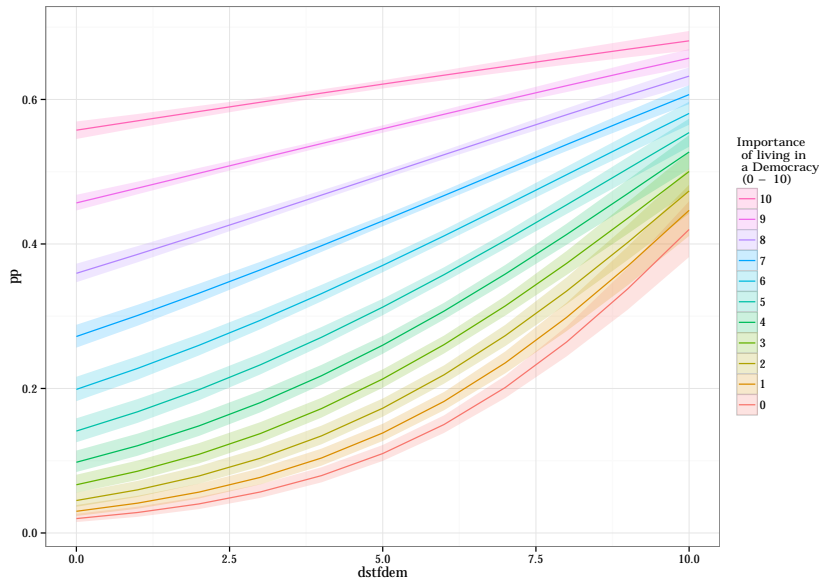


Proportion
0 5 10 15 20 25

Dissatisfied democrats & other (non-)democrats



Dissatisfaction \times Support



Preliminary conclusions

- ▶ Voters are more supportive of direct democracy than non-voters the higher turnout in a country is.
- ▶ As turnout decreases voters and non-voters become more polarized.
- ▶ Non-voters seem to retreat from politics in general rather than just representative/electoral politics.

- ▶ Dissatisfied democrats are more supportive than other type of citizens, however, the main difference in support seems to lie along the satisfaction dimension.
- ▶ For those supportive of democracy dissatisfaction is less relevant for support for direct democracy.
- ▶ As most people consider democracy important dissatisfaction is primary driver of support.

Next steps

1. Considering 'Stealth Democrats'
2. Macro-level determinants of dissatisfied democrat 'effect'
3. 'Effect' of institutions on support

Appendix

Voters vs. non-voters

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
(Intercept)	0.08 (0.10)	0.08 (0.08)	0.55 (0.58)
Age	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Gender (female)	0.07 (0.02) ^{***}	0.07 (0.02) ^{***}	0.05 (0.02) [*]
Education	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00) [*]
Voted	0.07 (0.02) ^{**}	0.08 (0.04)	0.34 (0.14) [*]
Turnout			-0.64 (0.84)
Voted \times Turnout			-0.38 (0.22)
AIC	60131.00	60092.71	55408.75
BIC	60183.29	60162.43	55477.84
Log Likelihood	-30059.50	-30038.35	-27696.37
N_i	45043	45043	41609
N_j	25	25	23
σ_j	0.21	0.16	0.21
σ_i	1.00	1.00	1.00
σ_{ij}		0.03	

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$, $\cdot p < 0.1$

Dissatisfied Democrats

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
(Intercept)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.78 (0.13)***
Age	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Gender (female)	0.06 (0.02)**	0.06 (0.02)**	0.06 (0.02)**
Education	-0.01 (0.00)*	-0.01 (0.00)*	-0.01 (0.00)***
Voted	0.08 (0.02)**	0.08 (0.02)***	0.05 (0.02)*
Dissatisfied Democrat	0.32 (0.02)***	0.29 (0.05)***	1.05 (0.09)***
Satisfied Democrat			0.84 (0.09)***
Dissatisfied Non-Democrat			0.37 (0.09)***
AIC	58549.36	58505.69	58011.68
BIC	58610.20	58583.92	58089.87
Log Likelihood	-29267.68	-29243.84	-28996.84
N_i	44020	44020	43786
N_j	25	25	25
σ_j	0.19	0.19	0.20
σ_i	1.00	1.00	1.00
σ_{ij}		0.04	

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Dissatisfaction \times Support

	Model 1
(Intercept)	-4.01 (0.17) ^{***}
Age	-0.00 (0.00)
Gender (female)	0.06 (0.02) ^{**}
Education	-0.02 (0.00) ^{***}
Voted	-0.01 (0.02)
Dissatisfaction	0.37 (0.02) ^{***}
Support	0.42 (0.01) ^{***}
Dissatisfaction \times Support	-0.03 (0.00) ^{***}
AIC	56534.06
BIC	56612.24
Log Likelihood	-28258.03
N_i	43786
N_j	25
σ_j	0.19
σ_i	1.00

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Institutions

	Model 1	Model 2
(Intercept)	-0.29 (0.15)*	-0.11 (0.10)
Age	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Gender (female)	0.06 (0.02)**	0.06 (0.02)**
Education	-0.01 (0.00)*	-0.01 (0.00)
Voted	0.08 (0.02)**	0.08 (0.02)***
Dissatisfied Democrat	0.30 (0.04)***	0.36 (0.02)***
Direct Democracy	0.35 (0.18)	
Dissatisfied Democrat \times Direct Democracy	0.03 (0.05)	
Referendums		0.01 (0.01)
Dissatisfied Democrats \times Referendums		-0.01 (0.00)**
AIC	58548.99	58542.91
BIC	58627.22	58621.14
Log Likelihood	-29265.50	-29262.45
N_i	44020	44020
N_j	25	25
σ_j	0.17	0.18
σ_i	1.00	1.00

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

References

Klingemann, Hans-Dieter. 1999. "Mapping Political Support in the 1990s: A Global Analysis." In *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, 31–56. Oxford University Press.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Willem Saris, and Paolo Moncagatta. 2014. "The Structure of the Meaning of Democracy: Citizens' Models of Democracy."

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Schuck, Andreas R. T., and Claes H. De Vreese. 2011. "Public Support for Referendums: The Role of the Media." *West European Politics* 34 (2): 181–207.
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