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Elections and Democracy

Representation and Accountability

Edited by Jacques Thomassen

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Series Editors' Preface

Few topics generate as much interest among observers and practitioners of politics as the quality of the democratic process. The expansion of democracy during the twentieth century, which accelerated rapidly after the collapse of communism in 1990, has meant that a majority of the world's countries are now electoral democracies. But not all democracies can be considered equal; they differ widely in terms of institutional arrangements and practices and in the levels of public support that they attract. It is the public support for democracy that the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project is designed to investigate. This volume series presents the key findings from this major research project that commenced in 1994.

The first CSES volume, edited by Hans-Dieter Klingemann, has documented much of its historical background, the basic principles of data collection, and provided sample chapters showing many of the analytical possibilities of this unique data collection. This volume is based on the first module of survey questions in the CSES, completed in 2001, which examines the interaction of political institutions and political behaviour regarding attitudes towards the democratic regime, the political authorities, and the quality of the political process generally.

As with the first volume, the second one, edited by Russell J. Dalton and Christopher J. Anderson, addresses the fundamental question of whether the institutional structure of elections affects the nature of the public's choices. The first question looks at explanations of turnout, and how institutions structure the likelihood of voting. The second question discusses determinants of individual electoral behaviour and examines the role of institutions in shaping what kinds of political information voters acquire.

The third volume in the series, by Russell J. Dalton, David Farrell, and Ian McAllister, describes and explains the role of political parties in election campaigns, in forming the electoral choice of voters and their role in government and opposition. The theoretical arguments relate to the logic of the responsible parties model. It is the first study that tests these ideas using a comprehensive and comparative design. It demonstrates the importance of the left–right schema to enable political positioning, political communication, and political representation.

between union membership and the vote—apparently a feature more prevalent in older democracies—we found no evidence that this explains variations in structural voting across the board. It has also been suggested that social modernization has decreased structural voting. But again, although this hypothesis may work well in explaining shifts in the strength of structural voting within countries, we found little evidence that it is helpful in accounting for cross-national variation, something that previous studies already suggested (Norris 2004). In sum, that 'electoral behaviour is primarily *political* behaviour that is shaped by the supply side of politics at least as much as by autonomous processes in society' (Thomassen 2005a: 265) is a message that seems to remain true as the scope of cases under analysis is expanded beyond Western European democracies.

Notes

1. See, for example, Inglehart and Rabier (1986) and Inglehart (1997), on the one hand, and Kitschelt (1994) and Kriesi (1998), on the other.
2. An alternative would be using propensity to vote (PTV) questions for each main party (Van der Eijk and Franklin 1996). This approach has been put to good use in a few analyses of structural voting (see, for example, Van der Brug 2010). However, although the CSES surveys, in Modules 1, 2, and 3, contain one set of questions that alluringly approximate a PTV measure, i.e. a set of like–dislike scores vis-à-vis all major parties in the party system, Van der Eijk and Marsh (2007) show that like–dislike scores have much worse properties than PTV scores, especially in what concerns the crucial aspect of the relationship with actual vote choices.
3. In the few surveys where no church attendance question was asked but a religiosity question was ('How religious are you?'), we coded as 1 those who responded 'very religious'.
4. The exception is gender, where 'fractionalization' is basically close to a constant in all countries.

6

Political Institutions, Perceptions of Representation, and the Turnout Decision

André Blais, Shane Singh, and Delia Dumitrescu

6.1 Introduction

The chapter examines the relationship between individuals' perceptions of being represented by a party and the decision to vote or not to vote in national legislative elections. Our focus is on how political institutions influence such perceptions, as well as how closely or loosely these perceptions affect turnout.

We assume that the decision to vote or not to vote can be construed as basically *expressive* (Brennan and Lomasky 1993). We also assume that what people wish to express in an election is their support for a particular *party*. We recognize that some people cast a *personal* vote for either a leader or a local candidate (Wattenberg 1991; Blais et al. 2003; Clarke et al. 2004; Aarts et al. 2011). We would still argue that, for the great majority of people, an election is first and foremost a contest among parties, and so how people feel about the parties is crucial in the turnout decision.

The simple intuition that we test is that a person votes in a national election if she actively believes that one of the parties represents her views reasonably well. We expect a strong relationship between such a feeling and turnout. The first step of our analysis is to determine whether this prediction holds up. Our expectation is that feeling represented by a party is a sufficient condition for an individual to express her support for that party. The absence of such a feeling does not necessarily lead to abstention, as there may be other non-expressive motivations for voting, especially normative ones such as the belief that voting is a civic duty that the 'good' person ought to fulfil (Blais and Achen 2009), but it does substantially weaken the propensity to vote.

Once we have established that the perception of being represented is a strong predictor of the decision to vote or not to vote, we examine the sources of these perceptions. The focus in this paper is on their macro determinants, and so the questions are: In which countries are perceptions of being represented highest and lowest? Why?

Our initial interest, in this chapter as in the whole book, lies in the potential impact of consensus democracy on voting and on its relationship to feelings of representation. We first determine whether a consensual form of democracy fosters feelings of representation and, indirectly, a higher turnout. We then look more specifically at the role of the electoral system. We make a simple distinction between PR and non-PR systems. Ideally, we would like to make finer distinctions, especially between plurality and majority systems (Blais and Loewen 2009), but the simple PR/non-PR dichotomy appears to be the most crucial distinction to be made. Mixed systems are considered to be PR *if* they are of a compensatory nature (Massicotte and Blais 1999). Proportional representation is generally construed to be a major component of consensus democracy. Our objective is to ascertain whether consensual democracy writ large or more simply a PR electoral system (or neither) is associated with feelings of being represented and a higher turnout.

6.2 Theoretical Background

We start with the simple expectation that basic positive identification of a party representing one's views is a strong predictor of the decision to turn out to vote, even when other attitudinal and socio-economic status predictors are taken into account. Democracy, in theory, should grant citizens a voice, and perceptions of representation and responsiveness are forcefully related to democratic attitudes (Almond and Verba 1963; Abramson and Aldrich 1982). If we conceive of representation in the classical principal–agent model (Mansbridge 2003), then 'principals' (voters) who feel that there is a party ('agent') in the system representing their views should feel particularly empowered to go to vote in order to see their preferred policies put in place. Feeling excluded from the political process, alternatively, can lead to disenchantment with democracy (Anderson et al. 2005: 23–6) and, ultimately, withdrawal from the political process.

The relationship between perceptions of representation and turnout need not be entirely policy driven. Given that most voters are 'cognitive misers' (Fiske and Taylor 1991) who make decisions on the basis of limited information, we would expect few of them to make a judgement call of representation based uniquely on party policies. Rather, we work under the assumption that for most people, expressed perceptions of representation are indicative

of their overall feeling about a party at a given point in time. Compared to the long-standing psychological identification with a party, we expect perceptions of representation to be more 'fluid' (Oakes 2002; Huddy 2002). That is, we expect them to be less stable over time, and more susceptible to be activated by the debates taking place at election time.

Our attention then focuses on the contextual factors that are more susceptible to activate these perceptions. We first examine the potential impact of consensus democracy. As consensual democracy is generally associated with the presence of many parties, one may infer that citizens in this type of democracy find it easier to identify a party that matches their views about what the government should or should not do. At the same time, however, the search for consensus and the depoliticization of disagreements may lead to the perception that no specific party really defends one's particular interests or values. Furthermore, depoliticization may produce boring election campaigns with few mobilization efforts, and this may well contribute to a lower turnout.

In a second step, we look at the effect of the electoral system on representation. As per Powell (2000), there are two broad visions of representation: the majoritarian vision and the proportional vision. In the majoritarian vision, individuals should be allowed to choose the government, thus maximizing responsiveness and accountability, while in the proportional vision voters choose agents to do their bidding, which should lead to policy that represents the largest possible amount of voters. The most critical way in which these two very different visions are institutionalized is via the electoral system, with non-PR systems pushing the majoritarian vision and PR systems promoting the proportional vision. Assuming that an individual's perception of party representation is a function of both policy representation and, more generally, political identity, there is some reason to expect PR systems to be more conducive to stronger individual perceptions of representation.

Wessels and Schmitt (2006) examine the relationship between the characteristics of a country's electoral context and the likelihood of identifying a party perceived as representing one's views. They find that 'where supply structures are meaningful [in the sense that there are a lot of political options available to voters], voters find it easier to identify a party which represents them'. Similarly, McAllister (2005) finds a weak, but significant, negative correlation between the type of electoral system (majoritarian or not) and the percentage of individuals who believe that there is a party representing their views in the system. In the same vein, Banducci et al. (1999) find that attitudes about government responsiveness among individuals in New Zealand became more positive once the country switched from a first-past-the-post to a more proportional mixed-member compensatory system.

There is thus some empirical ground to expect proportional representation to foster stronger feelings of representation. There could be two main reasons for such an effect, corresponding to two mediating factors. The first is simply based on the number of viewpoints likely to be present in the system. PR leads to the presence of more parties running in the election (Lijphart 1994) and this automatically increases the probability of finding a party that one agrees with.

The second reason is that PR produces a more polarized party system. Such polarization means that a greater diversity of highly differentiated viewpoints is presented to the electorate and that it is easier even for cognitive misers to identify at least one party that represents reasonably well their own ideology. In non-PR systems, voters positioned toward or at the extremes of ideological space are less likely to feel represented, as parties tend to converge towards centrist positions, whereas in PR systems parties are more likely to stake out a range of political positions (Downs 1957; Dow 2011), as it is possible to win seats in such systems by cultivating the votes of various subsets of the electorate. Polarization also makes policy differences and party identities more salient at election time, thereby activating fluid political identities even among those generally less strongly attached to a party.

These relationships are far from obvious, however. It is true that proportional representation is likely to foster a more polarized multiparty system. But a multiparty system often implies the formation of coalition governments in which the various parties have to make compromises, which means the abandonment of some prior commitments made in the election campaign, and some supporters may feel betrayed by the parties. Voters may also perceive the electoral contest as being among two or three main 'camps' (left and right, for instance), and they may feel that no specific party really represents them.

Further, under coalition governments voters are less able to discern which party is responsible for policy outcomes (e.g. Powell and Whitten 1993; Anderson 2000; Fisher and Hobolt 2010). Thus, voters may have difficulty determining if any party, whether in government or not, is truly representing their interests. There is evidence that individuals are less satisfied with coalition governments. Listhaug and Wiberg (1995), for example, demonstrate that multiparty coalition governments tend to be viewed negatively, and, connecting attitudes about coalition government to broader attitudes toward institutions, Karp and Bowler (2001) show that negative attitudes toward coalition government led some New Zealanders to be less supportive of that country's PR system.

We will thus ascertain whether PR systems are conducive to more positive perceptions of representation. If there is such a relationship, we will then sort out whether this is due to the tendency for the party system to

become more polarized under PR, to the presence of more parties under PR, or to both factors.

Finally, a number of analyses have found that PR tends to foster higher turnout (Jackman 1987; Blais and Carty 1991; Franklin 1996; Radcliff and Davis 2000. For a more sceptical perspective, see Blais and Aarts 2006; Blais 2006). Given the expected independent effect of the electoral system on perceptions of representation, and the mechanisms linking these to turnout, we theorize that this relationship between the electoral system and turnout should disappear when we take into account feelings of representation.

6.3 The Data

The data come from Module 2 of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). Case selection was based on countries conducting legislative elections in the CSES sample and data availability. We end up with 32 elections across 31 countries,[1] and 35,980 individuals. There are an average of 1,124 individuals per election, with a minimum of 393 and a maximum of 1,916. Figure 6.1 depicts actual turnout in each of the elections we cover. To empirically examine the above theory, we construct a model using the following variables, which are measured at both the individual and election levels.

6.4 Individual-level Variables

Our primary dependent variable is whether somebody voted or not. The variable *voted* is a dichotomous variable that indicates whether an individual reported voting: coded 1 if she voted and 0 otherwise.

Our second key variable is *feel represented*, a variable measured with a question that inquires whether the respondent feels represented by any particular party.[2] The variable is coded 1 for those who feel represented and 0 otherwise.

We control for the following two political variables: *efficacy* (measuring the degree to which the respondent feels that her vote makes a difference, with higher values corresponding to greater efficacy)[3] and *party ID* (coded 1 for those who feel close to a party and 0 otherwise).[4]

We also include the following variables at the individual level: *age* (measured in years), *gender* (coded 1 for females), *income* (measured in quintiles) and *college education* (a dichotomous variable coded 1 for individuals with a college education and 0 otherwise).

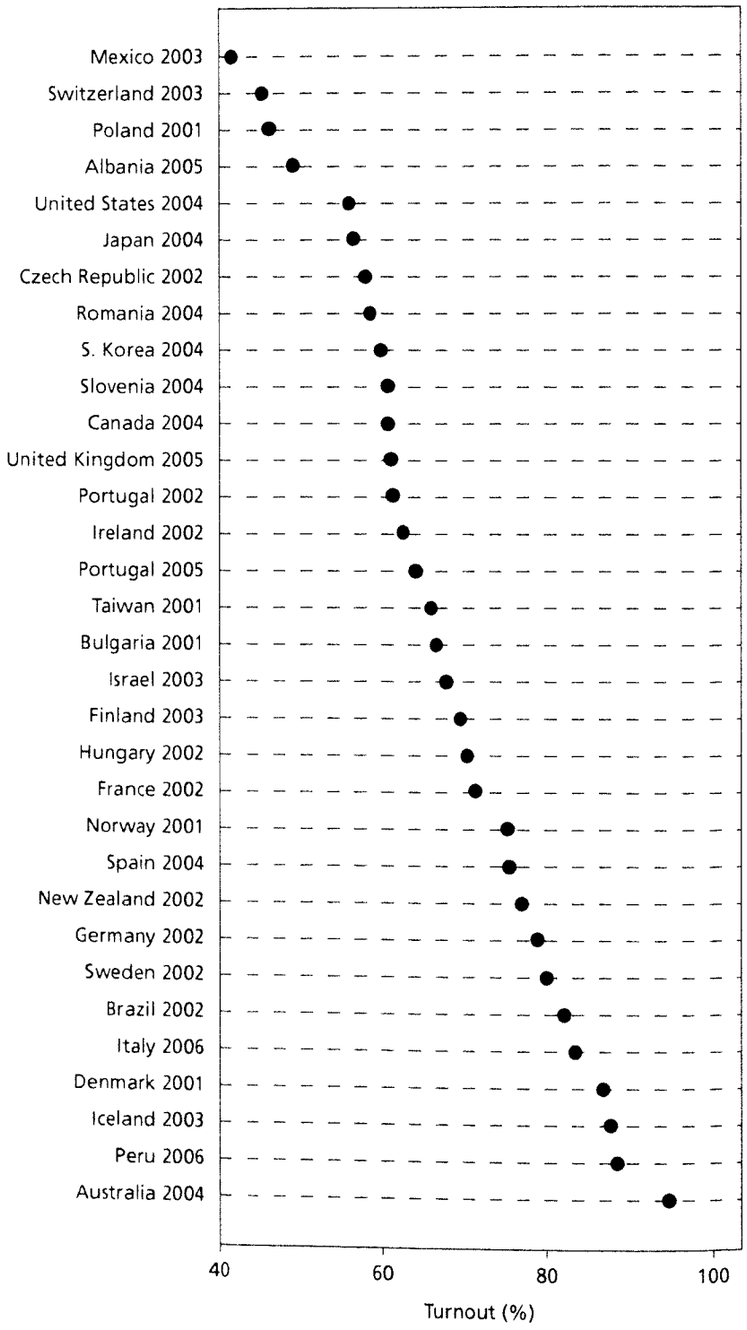

Figure 6.1. Turnout across elections

6.5 Election-level Variables

At the election level there are three key independent variables. Two of them represent primary dimensions of consensus democracy. The first dimension, the *Consensus, executives–parties index*, encompasses the effective number of parties, cabinet type, executive–legislative relations, and electoral disproportionality. The second dimension of consensus democracy, the *Consensus, federal–unitary index*, encompasses federalism, bicameralism, and judicial review. Both variables are discussed at length in Vatter and Bernauer (2010b). Our third key independent variable, *Proportional*, is coded 1 for proportional electoral systems or mixed systems with a compensatory component and 0 for all else.

We also include the following controls: *compulsory* (a dichotomous variable that equals 1 for Australia and Peru,[5] the two countries in our sample with compulsory voting with some enforcement of sanctions (Birch 2009: 36; Singh 2011)), *age of party system* (the average age of political parties in a country, measured in years; based on Kittilson and Anderson (2011)), *polarization* (Dalton's (2008) party polarization index)[6], and the *number of parties* (using Laakso and Taagepera's (1979) effective number of electoral parties index).[7]

Individuals who are more interested in politics (and more prone to vote) are more inclined to participate in political surveys. Furthermore, people sometimes incorrectly report having participated in an election, perhaps due to faulty recollection or social desirability bias (Karp and Brockington 2005). To correct for these biases, we have reweighted the data set so that the reported turnout in each election study corresponds to the official turnout.

6.6 Feelings of Representation and Turnout

We first look at the overall relationship between feelings of representation and turnout. As shown in Table 6.1, the propensity to vote is much higher among those who feel represented (78 per cent) than among those who don't (57 per cent). We must revise our prediction that feeling represented is a sufficient condition for voting; as many as one out of five among those who say that a party represents them reasonably well still abstain.

Table 6.1. Voting and feelings of representation

	Respondent does not feel represented	Respondent feels represented
Did not vote	43	22
Voted	57	78

Note: Cell entries are column percentages of respondents reporting having voted or not. Survey weights are used to correct for over-reporting of turnout.

Table 6.2. Voting and feelings of representation; logit estimation

	Model A	
Variable	Coef.	*p*-value
Age	0.188	0.000
Female	–0.043	0.199
Income	0.138	0.000
Education	0.456	0.000
Feel represented	0.519	0.000
Party ID	0.632	0.000
Efficacy	0.227	0.000
Constant	–1.785	0.000
N	35,980	
Prob > F	0.000	

Note: Dependent variable is whether one voted. Survey weights are used to correct for over-reporting of turnout. *P-values* are two-sided.

Table 6.2, which summarizes a regression of turnout on the covariates, shows that feeling represented is a strong predictor of turnout, even after we control for age, gender, education, income, party identification, and political efficacy. All in all, according to the estimation of Model A, the likelihood of voting increases by 10 percentage points when one feels represented.[8]

6.7 Feelings of Representation and Political Institutions

As we have now demonstrated that feeling represented matters, the next hypothesis that we wish to examine is that citizens are more likely to feel that a party represents them in a consensual or PR system. The hypothesis is tested in Table 6.3. We are interested here in aggregate patterns, and so the dependent variable is the percentage of respondents in a given country who indicate that one of the parties represents their views reasonably well.

The main independent variables are first the two major dimensions of consensus democracy as identified by Vatter and Bernauer in Chapter 2, the executive–parties and the federal–unitary factors, and then the simple PR dummy variable. We add as a control variable the age of the party system; it is easier for voters to come to the view that one particular party best corresponds to their interests or values when the set of options remains relatively stable over time.

Model B of Table 6.3 shows that when we relate the percentage of respondents who feel represented by a party in a country to the age of the party system and the two indicators of consensus democracy, the former variable has the expected positive effect, but that there appears to be no association between consensus democracy and perceptions of representation.[9]

Table 6.3. Feelings of representation and political institutions

	Model B		Model C		Model D	
Variable	Coef.	*p*-value	Coef.	*p*-value	Coef.	*p*-value
Consensus, executives–parties	0.027	0.295				
Consensus, federal–unitary	–0.030	0.242				
Proportional			0.131	0.039	0.077	0.223
Age of party system	0.003	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.004	0.000
Polarization					0.069	0.007
Number of parties					–0.006	0.724
Constant	0.471	0.000	0.350	0.000	0.173	0.172
N	30		32		32	
R^2	0.463		0.451		0.607	
Prob > F	0.001		0.000		0.000	

Note: Dependent variable is proportion of respondents that feel represented. *P-values* are two-sided.

In Model C, we substitute the PR dummy variable for the dimensions of consensus democracy. We do find a significant positive correlation between the presence of a PR system and the proportion of people who say that they are represented by a party. Everything else being equal, the percentage of respondents who feel represented is 13 points higher under a PR than a non-PR system. This is a rather substantial difference.

We want to better understand why this is the case. We see two potential reasons. The first is simply that PR produces more parties and that it is thus easier to find a party that suits one's views when there are more of them. The second is that PR produces parties with more distinct platforms, which means more highly differentiated policies and more salient identities at election time, allowing for an easier identification of a party representing one's views. In Model D of Table 6.3 we add these two contextual variables. We see that the direct effect of PR is substantially reduced and that party system polarization has a significant effect on feelings of representation. In short, it seems that the relationship between PR and the feeling of being represented is at least partially mediated by the degree of polarization of the system. The results suggest that the mere *presence* of alternatives in a system (i.e. a greater number of parties) is not necessarily conducive to individuals becoming more prone to say that a party represents their views. Instead, the strong positive coefficient for polarization suggests that, consistent with the view of perceptions of representation as a fluid identity that gets activated by contextual factors, individuals are more likely to harbour these feelings when these alternatives are highly differentiated.

6.8 Turnout, Feelings of Representation, and the Electoral System

In the last stage of our analysis, we investigate how political institutions and feelings of representation combine to affect the decision to vote or not to vote. The individual-level variables are those already considered above: feeling represented, party identification, political efficacy, age, gender, education, and income. The main contextual variables are again consensual democracy and the electoral system, but we control for whether voting is compulsory or not. Because we are now interested in the effects of both individual-level and contextual factors, a multilevel estimation is warranted. We thus fit a random intercept to each election. Due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable, the covariates are mapped to individual turnout with a logistic link function. To estimate the models, we employ *gllamm* (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2005).

The results are presented in Table 6.4. Model E includes socio-economic characteristics and contextual variables, that is, the electoral system and compulsory voting. We can see that those in proportional or compensatory mixed systems do have a higher probability of voting. Post-estimation predictions show that the propensity to vote is two percentage points higher among individuals in our sample living under a PR system.

As mentioned in the introduction, there is the possibility that what matters is not the electoral system as such but a broader political arrangement of which PR is just one component: the consensus model of democracy. We put this alternative possibility to a test in Model F of Table 6.4, in which we replace the PR dummy variable with the two main dimensions of consensus democracy: executives–parties and federal–unitary.[10] As expected, we do not find evidence for the beneficial effect of 'consensualism' on turnout in the same manner that we find for PR. If anything, there is a negative relationship between the federal–unitary consensualism dimension and the likelihood of voting.

We further expect that the relationship between PR and turnout loses its significance when perceptions of representation are taken into account. Model G in Table 6.5 presents a more complete model with the addition of perceptions of representation and the other individual-level variables introduced in Model A.

The findings show that even when controlling for contextual effects, feeling represented by a party does increase the propensity to vote. Results also indicate that compulsory voting substantially contributes to a higher turnout, irrespective of one's feeling of representation (and party identification and political efficacy). Everything else being equal, among the individuals in our sample, the average likelihood of voting is 22 percentage points higher in

Table 6.4. Voting and institutions; multilevel logit estimation

	Coefficient estimates and significance levels			
	Model E		Model F	
Variable	Coef.	*p*-value	Coef.	*p*-value
Individual level				
Age	0.026	0.000	0.025	0.000
Female	−0.031	0.415	−0.045	0.267
Income	0.179	0.000	0.173	0.000
Education	0.518	0.000	0.568	0.000
Institutional				
Proportional	0.268	0.000		
Consensus, executives–parties			0.044	0.295
Consensus, federal–unitary			−0.079	0.055
Compulsory	2.354	0.000	2.006	0.000
Constant	−1.101	0.000	−1.015	0.000
	Random Effects Parameters			
	Estimate of variance	Standard error	Estimate of variance	Standard error
Constant	0.175	0.016	0.211	0.034
Number of observations	35,980		32,948	
Number of elections	32		30	
Prob > χ^2	0.000		0.000	

Note: Dependent variable is whether one voted. Survey weights are used to correct for over-reporting of turnout. *P-values* are two-sided.

countries where voting is mandatory and abstention is credibly sanctioned. These same results support the expectation that proportional representation has no direct, independent effect on electoral participation once political attitudes are taken into account.

Finally, Model H in Table 6.5 tests the presence of interaction effects between feelings of representation and our two contextual variables. We find no statistically significant interaction effects, which indicates that feeling represented likely affects turnout in a similar positive manner across institutional contexts.

6.9 Conclusion

Our analysis provides evidence in favour of the importance of feeling represented by a party for the individual decision of turning out to vote. While the issue of representation in democracies has received significant attention over the years (Pitkin 1967; Przeworski, Stokes and Manin 1999; Mansbridge

Table 6.5. Voting, institutions, and feelings of representation; multilevel logit estimation

	Coefficient estimates and significance levels			
	Model G		Model H	
Variable	Coef.	*p*-value	Coef.	*p*-value
Individual level				
Age	0.024	0.000	0.023	0.000
Female	0.005	0.883	–0.004	0.920
Income	0.159	0.000	0.160	0.000
Education	0.412	0.000	0.402	0.000
Feel represented	0.681	0.000	0.490	0.000
Party ID	0.588	0.000	0.617	0.000
Efficacy	0.211	0.000	0.214	0.000
Institutional				
Proportional	0.014	0.837	0.122	0.427
Compulsory	1.643	0.000	1.621	0.000
Interactions				
Feel represented × proportional			0.211	0.210
Feel represented × Compulsory			–0.267	0.187
Constant	–2.317	0.000	–0.244	0.000
	Random Effects Parameters			
	Estimate of variance	Standard error	Estimate of variance	Standard error
Constant	0.194	0.025	0.195	0.025
Number of observations	35,980		35,980	
Number of elections	32		32	
Prob > χ^2	0.000		0.000	

Note: Dependent variable is whether one voted. Survey weights are used to correct for over-reporting of turnout. *P-values* are two-sided.

2003), the focus of the debate has been more on how representation is *achieved*. In this paper we take the voter's perspective and examine the contextual determinants and consequences of how representation is *perceived* using CSES data from 32 elections in 31 countries.

In a nutshell we have found the following. First, the simple fact of perceiving that there exists a party representing one's views is a strong predictor of whether one will turn out to vote or not. This relationship holds even when controlling for other individual-level and contextual variables. Second, PR is generally more conducive to an individual feeling represented by a party. However, this relationship is mediated, as least partly, by the polarization of the party system. Finally, the positive relationship between PR and turnout attenuates sharply when perceptions of being represented are introduced in

the analysis. In other words, the effect of the PR system is mediated by individuals' ability to identify a party representing their views.

The importance of perceived representation by a party raises theoretical questions about the nature of this perception, requiring further investigation. Given that voters are cognitive misers, we work under the assumption that these perceptions are partly grounded in actual agreement with party policies and partly grounded in more fluid partisan feelings, both of which depend on the amount and clarity of partisan information that individuals can easily access. While perceptions of being represented and partisan identification are not one and the same, theoretical advances in identity theory (e.g. Oakes 2002) suggest that the difference might lie in the role that contextual factors play in their activation. In particular, perceptions of representation might require a polarized context (conducive to clearer information on differentiated alternatives) to be activated. This is consistent with our findings with regard to the mediating role of polarization.

With respect to institutional variables, we have confirmed that PR contributes to a higher turnout, though it should be kept in mind that the effect is quite modest (two percentage points). More importantly, we have shown that the effect takes place, in part, through a more polarized party system. We have also shown that what is at play is a specific institutional rule, the electoral system, rather than a whole conglomeration of approaches to democracy subsumed under the consensual model of democracy.

Finally, our analysis bears certain limitations. As we use individuals' responses to just one question, these results should be taken are preliminary. Further analyses should incorporate a measure of the actual congruence between individuals' policy views and those advocated by parties (e.g. Giger et al. 2009).

Notes

1. Portugal is surveyed twice in Module 2 of the CSES.
2. Question wording: 'Would you say that any of the parties in [country] represents your views reasonably well?'
3. Question wording: 'Some people say that no matter who people vote for, it won't make any difference to what happens. Others say that who people vote for can make a difference to what happens. Using the scale on this card, where would you place yourself?'
4. Question wording: 'Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?'
5. Belgium and Chile, which are included in CSES Module 2, also have credibly sanctioned compulsory voting, but are excluded from our sample due to missing data.

6. $\sqrt{\sum v_i \times \frac{(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{5}}$ where v_i is the proportion of votes for party *i* in a given election, x_i is that party's ideological position, determined by aggregated individual perceptions of the parties, and $\bar{x}$ is the mean party position.
7. $\frac{1}{\sum v_i^2}$ where v_i is the proportion of votes for party *i* in a given election.
8. All predicted probabilities calculated with the covariates held at their means.
9. The number of observations is 30 rather than 32 because data on both consensualism indices are not available for Portugal in 2005 and Taiwan in 2001.
10. The number of observations is 32,948 rather than 35,980 because data on consensualism indices are not available for Portugal in 2005 and Taiwan in 2001.

7

Democratic Structures and Democratic Participation: The Limits of Consensualism Theory

Steven Weldon and Russell Dalton

7.1 Introduction

Democracy requires a politically active citizenry. Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (1972: 3), for example, state that political participation 'is at the heart of the democratic political formula in the United States'. It is through discussion, popular interest, voting, and other political involvement that societal goals should be defined and carried out. Without public involvement in the process, democracy loses both its legitimacy and its guiding force.

Like others in this volume, we are interested in how democratic institutions affect citizen political behaviour. We focus on how institutions shape the patterns of citizen participation, especially beyond voting. Following Arend Lijphart (1999), our starting point is the distinction between consensual and majoritarian systems. Among his claims of the kinder and gentler benefits of consensus democracy, Lijphart (1999: 307) maintained that it stimulates electoral turnout, minority representation, and 'an underlying consensual and commutarian culture'. Consensual institutions presumably incorporate more citizens into the electoral process and lessen political inequality, because they give citizens effective voice and representation (Lijphart 2001).

While the relationship between consensual institutions and voting turnout has been well researched (Lijphart 1999; Norris 2002; Blais 2006; Kittilson and Anderson 2011), only recently have scholars begun to explore their impact on other forms of political engagement (see Karp and Banducci 2008; Van der Meer, Van Deth and Scheepers 2009). This chapter contributes to this research, using evidence from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) to examine how consensual and majoritarian structures affect

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