Political Elites and Direct Democracy

Strategic and Normative Determinants of the Support for Direct Democratic Institutions

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Dissertation

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Introduction

The Main Puzzle and Relevance of the Research

Direct democracy lately appears to be the trend favoured by political elites when it comes to making major decisions. Particularly in controversial decisions, political elites are nowadays willing to submit them to a popular vote. At first glance, it seems counter-intuitive that in democratic systems elected representatives would favour referendums since they are elected precisely for deciding on important issues. Furthermore, deciding on issues or making policies is an essential source of power for representatives that helps them to secure popular approval in the next election. Voters are able to judge political elites (and parties) based on the policies they produced in government or proposed and criticized in the opposition. In referendums, political elites lose their policy-making power, as the decision is transferred to voters and political elites are not directly responsible for the outcomes anymore.

This transfer of power to voters has not only disadvantages, as firstly indicated. In some decisions, political elites might be willing to give up their decision-making power to voters in order to avoid the responsibility for important decisions (Björklund, 1982; Morel, 2001). This is a claim often found in case studies on referendums, especially concerning decisions on the European Union (Dur and Mateo, 2011; Morel, 2007). In this regard, researchers often argue that referendums are connected to strategic motivations of political elites. The term strategic refers to covert goals of political elites so that the often proposed intention to give people a say in important decisions through referendums is not the primary objective. Strategic goals are not directly observable - neither in the speeches nor in the overt behaviour of the elites. However, researchers and commentators identify strategic motives looking at the current power constellations of the involved actors.

The shift of decision-making to voters in referendums implies an interference in the traditional power-distribution in representative systems. Direct democratic practices affect particularly the current governing elites that have to subordinate their programs and actions to the decisions in referendums. This can be intentional, e.g. to avoid the blame for a decision as already mentioned, usually governing elites are the initiating actors in such referendums. However, referendums can also be used to challenge governmental policies, in particular if opposition groups initiate this process (Uleri, 2002; Vreese, 2006). In both cases and in other situations described in the theoretical section, direct democratic

practices serve as a strategic instrument in the power competition between political actors. In particular, referendums offer political actors, from governing elites to opposition groups outside parliament, a way to improve their current popularity and influence on policy-making. This is assumed as the primary strategic goal behind the support of direct democratic procedures and will be explicated in more detail in the theoretical section of the thesis.

Though referendums offer a strategic instrument for a range of political actors, they also entail a lot of uncertainty. The outcomes of direct democratic practices are usually unpredictable which makes them a highly risky strategic move. The most important risk is that decisions of voters are not foreseeable and can be contrary to the expectations of political elites. Political elites are not able to control the outcomes of referendums, even though various possibilities of influence arise during referendum campaigns. Because of the risks connected to referendums it is puzzling that political elites are often willing to submit important issues to popular votes and sometimes even demand the institutionalization of direct democratic procedures in the current representative system. This thesis is concerned with this puzzle and asks: What determines political elites' support for direct democracy?

In more detail, I ask how much are political elites influenced by strategic considerations in such uncertain situations? And if not strategic motivations, what else can explain why some political elites favour direct democratic institutions and others do not? In this study, the strategic perspective is contrasted with an alternative explanation based on normative predispositions of political elites. Researchers point out that not only strategic interests matter in the political game, but that general values and ideological inclinations guide political elites' behaviour (Birch et al., 2002; Norris, 2011; Renwick, 2010). This is certainly applicable to questions of institutional choices that can have considerable effects on the democratic regime in a country and at the same time influence the future behaviour of political elites. Consequently, in addition to strategic motivations political elites might be directed by normative principles and democratic ideals when considering new institutions and procedures in the established democratic system. In consequence, the second sub-question of this research is: How much do political elites rely on their normative orientations in their support of direct democratic institutions?

The normative perspective is integrated into a theoretical and empirical debate about the ideal democratic system that arose in the 1960ies and 1970ies and continues until today. This debate is related to the claim that the representative democratic system is in crisis or at least in transition. One major indicator for this transition is a changing political culture in established democracies. This changing culture is evident in peoples' increasing orientations towards postmaterialist values such as freedom and self-determination (Inglehart, 1977), the more critical evaluation of the current representative system (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999) and the demand as well as the practice of new forms of participation or political action (Barnes and Kaase, 1979). This change is also evident in the increasing dealignment from traditional political actors such as parties (Dalton, Russell J., Wattenberg, Martin P., 2002). The underlying message of the described changes is that peoples' attitudes and behaviour do not correspond to the established norms and

procedures of representative democracies and thus require substantial institutional adjustions.

Political elites are partly witnesses of the described political-cultural changes, partly shape them with their behaviour and most importantly can actively influence if and how the current democratic regime changes as a response to these developments. Political elites are the actors that can reform existing institutions or introduce new forms of governance to meet the political-cultural changes observable in the society. Concerning the rise of direct democratic institutions, some authors argue that the introduction of such institutions is a response to the decline in conventional political participation and the disaffection of the public with the current democratic regimes (Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Geissel and Newton, 2012; Scarrow, 1999; Smith, 2009). Hence, political elites are only responding to the perceived public demand for changes in the political system. This can be viewed as a strategic response of elites in order to maintain their power. But the introduction of new institutions such as direct democratic procedures would change the established representative system and entails normative implications. Therefore, political elites' support for direct democracy must also be examined from a normative perspective.

The normative perspective on direct democracy is related to new concepts of democratic governance that emerged in the course of the described political-cultural developments in the society. In particular, the model of participatory democracy arose as a new ideal that revitalized the idea of stronger citizen involvement in everyday politics [1] Participatory democracy is not just an idealistic concept discussed only in academia, but had an impact on debates at the elite level (Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Geissel and Newton, 2012; Smith, 2009). Because the participatory democratic model demands stronger citizen participation in politics and often also endorses direct democratic institutions (see for example Barber, 2003), it can be viewed as a basis for normative support of direct democracy and will be reviewed in more detail in the conceptual part of the thesis. The main assumption of the normative perspective is that political elites are affected by their values and idealistic conceptions of democracy. In this regard they either follow a more participatory ideal of democracy or are very protective of the established representative institutions.

In sum, direct democracy is conceptualized in this thesis in two ways: On the one hand, direct democratic institutions reflect a particular ideal of the democratic system, closely connected to the participatory concept of democracy that demands stronger citizen-involvement in politics. On the other hand, direct democracy is understood as referendums or popular votes on particular issues reflecting concrete measures offered to the public to decide on political issues. Based on the veto player approach (Tsebelis, 2002), I assume that the possibility to have a referendum introduces a hurdle in the decision-making process regardless of the initiating and executing actors behind it. Since the power to decide on issues shifts from governing representatives back to the voters, direct democratic in-

[1] Further conceptual developments included deliberative democratic models or a revival of the so called republican model (Held, 1995). However, I concentrate here on the participatory ideal, as it explicitly stresses direct involvement of citizens in decision-making.

stitutions change the power-distribution between citizens and political elites (Hug and Tsebelis, 2002; Setälä, 2006; Smith, 1976). In this manner, direct democratic institutions reflect a strategic instrument in the political game.

In this thesis I examine what understanding of direct democracy prevails when political elites are confronted with questions around direct democracy. Is the strategic perspective emphasizing power gains and losses of political elites dominant in the explanation of the approval of direct democracy? And how much does a normative perspective reflecting values, norms and idealistic views influence the support for direct democratic procedures? While the strategic perspective is a well established argument in the direct democracy literature based on different case studies, the described normative perspective has not been evaluated or properly discussed so far. The lack of normative consideration in existing studies motivated the research in this thesis. I intend to contribute to the existing debates by developing an additional explanatory perspective for elites' support of direct democracy. Moreover, most arguments focusing on strategic motivations lack concrete empirical proof and can be accused of speculation. This is what this study tries to overcome testing the arguments on concrete empirical indicators and at the same time confronting it with alternative explanations.

In this thesis, I contribute to the ongoing debate about what influences political elites' institutional preferences: Are elites entirely strategic individuals thinking only about their gains in power when they assess changing or introducing institutions? Or are their attitudes and actions more affected by norms, values and ideological views? I test two theoretical perspectives and examine how much they contribute to the explanation of political elites' support for direct democracy without a particular preference for one explanation. Additionally, it is plausible that strategic motivations do not function independently from normative orientations, but co-determine how political elites think and behave. Therefore, this thesis also considers how the strategic and normative explanatory perspectives work together. In this way, the study extends the discussion about elite motivations by further asking whether strategic motivations can be connected with normative orientations.

Support for direct democracy is not a simple political issue, but concerns fundamental decisions in the political system. As a new institution, direct democratic procedures can have a considerable effect on the existing representative institutional setting affecting in particular the decision-making logic dominant in Western democracies so far. Furthermore, this institutional question transcends traditional conflict lines of parties or societal cleavages. The question is fundamental as it is concerned with changes of the political structure, it influences the political process and the actors involved in it and can even affect the policies a system produces. It is not singular in this regard, but can be viewed as an example for similar institutional decisions that interfere in established representative systems. Examples of such institutional questions can be the introduction of directly elected head of states with considerable powers, the devolution towards stronger federal states or fundamental changes of the electoral formula. To examine what determines the support for direct democratic institution can help to understand why other institutional changes occur or are not pursued.

The Research Design

Institutional support can be expressed in different ways: Individuals can think, talk or act in accordance to their institutional preferences. I focus in my research on attitudes as an expression of support. Attitudes are based on mental reflections and thus make visible what an individual thinks. They can be considered as "predispositions to act" (Rockeach, 1968; van Deth, 2003). Attitudes are not equivalent to actual behaviour, as has been demonstrated in numerous studies (for a brief overview see Ajzen, 2005; Rokeach, 1968), but include a tendency for certain actions (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Rokeach, 1968). Actual behaviour is also affected by the concrete context of the situation. Attitudes express more general responses to situations or issues, as they are usually asked outside of a particular context. Therefore, attitudes can be expected to reflect strong deep rooted convictions. They allow to study the influence of more abstract general beliefs that shape the decisions of political elites.

Notwithstanding the strong general character of attitudes, they usually aim at something particular[2] and thus trigger considerations about the concrete situations. Regarding political elites' attitudes, it is plausible to assume that their attitudes are likely to reflect the current political context. Political elites are not in a vacuum, they cannot suppress completely their current position in politics and the implications for the considered issue, but are likely to incorporate certain recent events and situations in their judgement. This might happen after thorough consideration or subconsciously. I expect that particularly the current power position of political elites and their parties will be included in the considerations about direct democracy. The current power position of parties determines to a great extent the actions of political elites. Direct democratic institutions open up new possibilities of political action. It is plausible to expect that the current power position of elites and parties is reflected considering direct democratic procedures.

In this regard, attitudes can extend our existing understanding of behavioural motivations and allow to test existing interpretations of observed actions. This is the most important advantage of attitudinal research in comparison to hermeneutical approaches based on observation. Confronted with questions surrounding direct democracy, political elites will likely consider it from a general perspective reflecting their normative predispositions, but at the same time include aspects of their current political context. Consequently, attitudes are perfect projections of different influences and are useful for the study of what determines political elites' position towards direct democracy and in particular how strategic and normative considerations influence this position.

Moreover, surveys on political elites offer a platform for unfiltered reactions to the presented issues. Though survey research is confronted with various problems and uncertainties[3], they also offer various advantages: First, surveys are anonymous and respondents can be expected to answer the questions truthfully. This is an important aspect for the

[2] Attitudes are considered as more specific expressions of issue positions in comparison to values and beliefs with a more universal character, see section 3.2.1 for a more detailed comparison.

[3] The most important challenges are accessibility and coverage of the studied individuals, priming and (social) desirability of the questions as well as reliability and validity of the given answers. These issues apply to voters in particular, but can be transferred to elite surveys without difficulties.

research on political elites who are likely to behave or answer carefully in order to protect their current position inside a party and their image in public. A second advantage is that survey questions are usually disconnected from specific situations giving political elites the chance to consider an issue in its basic understanding. And even if political elites do not spend much time on a survey, their spontaneous answers are likely to reflect considerate opinions because the respondents have high political awareness and are embedded in the context of the issues per se. Therefore, attitudes of political elites offer an ideal ground to test what determines political elites' positions in institutional questions.

Attitudes of political elites have not been studied comprehensively for a long time and lack a general conceptual basis. The existing research mostly refer to findings from studies conducted in the 1960ies and 1970ies (for an overview see Hoffmann-Lange, 2008; Putnam, 1976). Most recent studies concentrate on specific aspects or topics like voter-elite congruence, representational roles or career paths (Hoffmann-Lange, 2008). What determines political elites' behaviour has not been addressed properly so far, though extensive data on political elites is available. The current study aims at developing two conceptual perspectives for the explanation of political elites' behaviour using the findings and assumptions from existing elite research. It explicitly uses comparative survey data to go beyond singular case studies and thoroughly test the two developed perspectives.

Research so far has concentrated on the explanation of singular referendums and their occurrence (exceptions are Dur and Mateo, 2011; Mendez, Mendez and Triga, 2014) and has examined party behaviour and decisions of single ruling elites. Only a few studies look at the individual attitudes of representatives in institutional questions (Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2002, 2006; Ziemann, 2009). These studies use an explorative y-centred approach that tests different explanations for the support of direct democracy at the elite level. The findings and theoretical assumptions from the mentioned studies have stimulated the research in this thesis. However, my intention is to deepen the y-centred attitudinal analyses that are available through a stronger theoretical groundwork and an extension of the empirical tests.

In particular, I take the following approach: First, I integrate the previous findings and theoretical assumptions into two comprehensive theoretical perspectives, namely a strategic and a normative one. In this regard, I also extensively review the literature on institutional changes which is often concerned with reforms of the electoral system. Second, this study considers three spheres of influence in combination: individual beliefs, influences from the party environment and country contexts. Third, I expand the empirical test to a larger comparative sample of countries for a thorough evaluation of the theoretical expectations. And fourth, the analyses concentrate on the impact of the different factors separately and look additionally on how they interact and what their joint effects are on the support for direct democracy. These features of the research design are explained in detail in the following.

Throughout the thesis I develop two explanatory perspectives that can be used to understand positions of political elites in important institutional questions, as already mentioned above. The first perspective can be summarized as rational-strategic and is

derived from research on institutional reforms, in particular of the electoral system. This research is based on the rational choice paradigm that describes the behaviour of individuals in terms of benefits and costs. In this regard, the literature on electoral reforms often argues that political elites pursue changes of the existing institutions expecting short or long term benefits in the power distribution for their party (Benoit, 2007; Boix, 1999; Colomer, 2005). This argumentation is transferable to the support for direct democracy: Direct democratic institutions introduce new hurdles in the decision-making process and can change the power distribution in a political regime. Consequently, referendums offer a new instrument in the decision-making process that some political elites can use to their advantage, while others bear considerable costs through these processes.

In the rational-strategic perspective, political elites can have three different motivations according to the literature on party behaviour: policy-, office- and vote-seeking (Mueller and Strom, 1999*a*).[4] In terms of policy-seeking, referendums offer a way to influence policy making outside the traditional parliamentary setting, which is of particular relevance for marginalized groups and parties (LeDuc, 2003; Smith, 1976; Uleri, 2002). Moreover, research indicates that referendums create another opportunity for political competition for government and opposition parties, especially during referendum campaigns (Setälä, 2006; Smith, 1976; Vreese, 2006). In this way, direct democracy is also relevant for vote- and office-seeking of political elites.

Policy-, vote- and office-seeking are expressions of the general aim of power-seeking for political elites. Power represents in this regard an abstract notion which can be expressed as dominance over individuals, control over resources or influence in the decision-making. Following the rational choice approach, I argue that support for direct democratic institutions is linked to the current power position of parties based on their electoral success. The overall assumption of the strategic perspective is that political elites in a weak power position are more inclined to support direct democracy, because they expect to improve their or their party's current power position through direct democratic institutions. However, direct democracy implies different costs for parties, which political elites also take into account when considering direct democratic institutions. These considerations outline the strategic perspective on the support for direct democracy of political elites and are extended in the first part of the theoretical frame.

Contrary to the strategic perspective, the normative view on the support for direct democracy emphasizes individual predispositions based on values, idealistic concepts and socialized norms. Value-oriented behaviour differs from strategically-motivated actions in such a sense that societal ideals and principles are seen as more important than personal gains (in power). According to psychological research, values can be seen as overarching principles that strongly influence the behaviour of individuals (Feldman, 2013; van Deth, 2003). Personal values and norms evolve during the socialization process of individuals. In the case of political elites, research has determined a secondary socialization process that political elites go though at the beginning of their career (Almond and Powell, 1978;

[4] In the original concept of Mueller and Strom (1999*a*), the three goals can either be pursued intrinsically as an end in itself or instrumentally referring to a different overall objective. This distinction is reviewed in more detail in the theoretical frame.

Putnam, 1976). Through this secondary process, political elites establish a strong and coherent belief system which guides their actions and decisions.

In the course of their secondary socialization process, political elites develop orientations towards the current institutional process and alternative settings. These orientations establish the normative perspective on the support for direct democracy, which can be based on three pillars: First, ideologies typically contain concepts about the ideal social organization and political system and therefore play a role for approving or rejecting different types of institutions. Second, the socialization in the representative system builds a strong bond between actors and institutions, which affects the attitudes towards alternative institutions. And finally, third, the actual performance of the current democratic system influences institutional preferences, as research on political culture emphasizes. These three aspects are reviewed in detail in the second part of the theoretical frame, that describes the normative perspective on direct democracy.

The two theoretical perspectives are tested looking at the attitudes of political candidates for national parliaments. Candidates are a heterogeneous group that consist of (future) governing representatives as well as opposition actors in and outside parliament. Though candidates have different political power and standing in the system, they all reflect a part of the political elite. I follow the definition of Burton and Higley (2001) who picture political elites as individuals "who hold top positions in large or otherwise powerful organizations and movements and who participate in or directly influence national political decision-making" (Burton and Higley, 2001, 182). This definition emphasizes the potential of individuals to influence political decision-making. Though the biggest influence is of course connected to government offices, it is also undisputable that decisions are also affected through the public discourse. And this discourse can be influenced by a range of individuals in political organizations and in public. Moreover, direct democratic processes allow different individuals to gain importance, no matter what the initial standing in a political system is. This will be explained in detail in the conceptual part (section 3.1.2).

Candidates have a particular standing in public life, especially during an election campaign. First of all, candidates are party members running for a public office and are representing their party in the election campaign. After an election, they either occupy important representative roles in parliament and in their constituencies or continue as party members often holding important offices inside a party or in their local/regional communities. Even if not elected, candidates have the potential to influence important decisions, whether through their party discourse, their official posts or through their individual appearance in public at the local, regional or national level. Therefore, it is reasonable to call candidates political elites even though they differ in their political power and the scope of their influence.

What all candidates have in common is their motivation to represent and to influence decision-making processes. The term representatives usually refers to elected officials, in particular parliamentarians. In this study, I speak of representatives as political elites who have the mission to speak and act for the public, to influence policy-making and to con-

trol important decisions, no matter if they are elected or not. I use this broader concept because direct democracy allows not only elected officials to influence policy-making, but also parties and interest groups outside the parliament. In the following theoretical considerations I refer to both political elites and representatives interchangeably to present general theoretical assumptions about how strategic and normative motivations affect institutional preferences. In the empirical part, however, I use the term candidates because they reflect more accurately the data used for this study.

Next to elites as individuals, parties are at the centre of the empirical analysis in this study. A party is viewed as an organization of individuals who share some general political ideas that they try to accomplish by winning elections together in order to occupy government offices and to shape political decision-making (Mueller and Strom, 1999*b*). Thus, a party is not an abstract concept but stands for individuals operating in it, through it and for it. These individuals create a unity by sharing a common ideological ground and acting in public in a uniform way to reach certain goals, whether to win office or to have influence on policy-making. As already explained, candidates are important party agents since they represent their party during the electoral campaign and afterwards in parliament or in their local/regional communities. In this regard, parties and candidates are inextricably interlinked and influence the public performance and perception of each other.

Despite the strong unitary appearance of parties, there is considerable variation of opinions and beliefs inside each party. From a strategic point of view, it is important for parties to send coordinated and coherent policy signals to the public (Downs, 1957b). This particularly secures the approval of like-minded voters. However, since parties are made up of independent individuals who have often enjoyed extensive political education, they demonstrate a certain heterogeneity of views and political positions. The attitudes and behaviour of each party member can be influenced by individual traits of character, general values and socialized norms acquired before and after their recruitment to the party. The resulting heterogeneity inside each party is an interesting phenomenon often visible in different wings inside one party. This heterogeneity can result in disunity inside each party concerning certain policy positions. As parties have an advantage to appear as unitary actors, I argue that the individual preferences of party members contribute to parties' general policy standing and its possible changes.[5] Therefore, this study is concerned with individual attitudes of party candidates, but takes also into account the strong effect of the aggregate party context.

To test the determinants of support for direct democracy at the elite level, I use the Comparative Candidates Study (CCS 2016) and combine it with data on parties from ParlGov (2018) and on the institutional contexts in the countries from V-Dem (2018). Based on the availability of questions regarding direct democracy and theoretically defined explanatory factors, a maximum of 15 surveys on candidates for parliamentary elections entered the analyses. This dataset offers a variety of political contexts, including coun-

[5]Of course changes in party positions can be regarded as reactions on changes in societal conditions and the public opinion. I assume that party members and in particular candidates for parliamentary offices are important promoters of such changes.

tries where direct democratic institutions are practised quite frequently on the national level (e.g. Ireland, Switzerland), have been used in a few major decisions (e.g. Norway, Finland on accession of the European Union) or are not applied at all so far (e.g. Germany, Belgium). Moreover, the surveyed candidates are embedded in over 100 different party contexts. This enables a comprehensive test of the two explanatory perspectives. I assume that similar associations should be found, when the institutional, cultural and party contexts are controlled in the analyses.

As I distinguish three levels of influences for the support of direct democracy of political elites, the empirical analyses have a hierarchical structure. Therefore, I conduct multilevel analyses with predictors at the individual, the party and country levels. At the country level, I consider the current institutional framework in the country of the candidates, focusing on existing direct democratic measures and their application. At the party level, I consider the electoral performance of the parties, their current legislative status as well as prospects for governing positions. At the individual level, I focus on the personal ideological predispositions of a candidate, her socialization experiences and her current evaluation of the democratic system. And finally, at the country-level, I examine effects of previous experience with direct democracy and the established institutions in the political system.

The thesis is structured into four main parts. In the following chapter I introduce important concepts for the research question. In this regard, I first distinguish different understandings of democracy and important debates surrounding the research question. In particular I review the understanding of democracy as direct rule and contrast it with the liberal concept of democracy dominant in the considered countries today. Additionally, I describe the concept of democratic representation which is connected to the liberal democratic ideal and outlines the political context in which the examined political elites operate. Furthermore, I introduce the concept of participatory democracy that is assumed to be connected to normative support for direct democracy. Participatory democracy emerged as an alternative concept to the currently dominant liberal democratic ideal. It can be viewed as a theoretical response to the debate around a representative crisis starting at the end of the 1960ies in Western democracies. At the end of this conceptual part I review the issues and criticisms connected to this representative crisis.

In the second part of the conceptual chapter I focus on direct democratic institutions and consider their empirical application. First, I describe different forms of direct democratic practices focusing on the perspective of political elites in this regard. Then, I present important developments regarding direct democracy in Western democracies in the last 40 years. Finally, I review the existing research on political elites in connection to direct democracy. This second conceptual part prepares the empirical argumentation of the following theoretical chapter.

In the third chapter, I introduce the theoretical frame of the study. In the first part, I describe the rational-strategic perspective on the support for direct democracy. It is based on the rational choice approach in the study of political actions, which is introduced in the first section of this part. In the following, I describe individual strategic orientations and

then distinguish between vote-, policy- and office-seeking of political parties as dominant rational motivations for political elites' support of direct democracy. Finally, I explain how the existing institutional structure influences political elites' strategic orientations in questions on direct democracy.

The second part of the third chapter introduces the normative perspective on direct democracy. It is based on the assumption that general values and socialized norms guide political elites' behaviour. In the first section, I describe this theoretical basis. In the following sections, I focus on the different normative influences that can be distinguished in the context of political elites. To these influences belong ideological convictions. In particular, I focus on the left-right political dimension, the authoritarian-libertarian divide and populist inclinations as ideological influences. Additionally, I review the influence of socialization experiences and how the evaluation of the current democratic practice can affect positions in institutional questions. The theoretical chapter culminates in considerations of interactions between strategic and normative orientations. The last section gives an overview of all theoretical expectations.

The forth chapter deals with the introduction of data and methods for the analyses. In the first part, I concentrate on the general design of the study. First, I describe how political elites' attitudes can contribute to the study of political elites' support for direct democracy. Then, I outline the different levels of analysis and discuss their advantages in the considered research question. Afterwards I introduce the case selection and give an overview of the selected countries comparing their institutional settings and direct democratic practice. In the second part of the forth chapter, I introduce the data bases that are used in the analyses, present the selected dependent variables and describe the indicators used for the explanation. Finally, in the last part of the forth chapter, I outline the methods used for the analyses - in particular the multi-level regression technique and measures for the explanatory power. In this regard, I also present the formal models and discuss possible limitations.

In the fifth chapter, I describe the results of the analyses. First, I consider models focusing on the normative perspective. Second, I examine models concentrating on the strategic perspective. Then, I also look at the two perspectives in combination. In this regard, I test interactions of the two perspectives and evaluate how much each perspective can contribute to the explanation of political elites' support for direct democracy. In a final section, I present results of robustness analyses and discuss possible outliers and their impact on the results.

In the concluding remarks, I briefly summarize the main results, stress the contribution of my research and point to limitations as well as possible topics for further research.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework and Research Overview: Direct Democracy in Representative Systems

In this chapter I outline important concepts surrounding the direct democracy debate and my research focus on political elites. I do not intend to give a comprehensive overview of democratic concepts (for good overviews see Held, 1995; Sartori, 1987; Schmidt, 2010), nor of current debates, as this is beyond the focus of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to present relevant ideas for the understanding of direct democracy as a normative ideal, which prepares the normative perspective on institutional preferences described in section 3.2. In particular, the conflicting normative ideals of representative decision-making and direct rule of citizens play a decisive role for this explanatory perspective. Additionally, this chapter outlines important concepts and debates for the rational-strategic perspective presented in section 3.1. In particular, I concentrate on the institutional hurdles and possibilities for different political elites in representative democracies and how direct democratic institutions change this context.

In the first part of this chapter, I describe four general concepts relevant for the juxtaposition of representative democracies and direct democratic institutions. First, I consider the ancient Greek meaning of democracy. Second, I introduce the 'liberal' democratic understanding that developed through the Enlightenment period and is dominant until today. Third, I look at the concept of the modern representative government. Fourth, I consider the rebirth of direct democracy in the concepts of participatory democracy which integrates the ancient Greek traditions and the thoughts of Rousseau concerning self-government and the general will. In a final step, I look at the current debate on the crisis of representative democracy. This debate is connected to the discussion of institutional reforms in the last three decades. Direct democratic institutions are frequently proposed as a treatment of the ailing representative systems (Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Geissel and Newton, 2012; Zittel, 2006). Thus, the final section transfers the pre-

viously described historical concepts into the current debate on institutional changes in representative democracies.

In the second part of this conceptual introduction, I concentrate on the empirical application of direct democracy and stress the complex relationship between political elites and direct democratic institutions. First, I differentiate direct democratic institutions according to their impact on the traditional representative decision-making from the perspective of different political elites. Second, based on the differentiation of direct democratic institutions, I review their spread internationally focusing on the last three decades in the European Union.[1] Third, I present a short overview of existing research that examines political elites' motives in direct democratic procedures. This final section presents important theoretical suggestions and empirical results in the scarce research on political elites' approval of direct democracy and in this way prepares the following theoretical framework.

2.1 General Concepts and Debates

For the purpose of this study, I distinguish three important meanings of democracy. These three meanings are only rough summaries of distinct understandings of democracy, though there exist many more different perspectives (see for example Held, 1995; Schmidt, 2010). First, democracy can mean direct rule of the people, as conceptualized and practised in ancient Greece. This concept was later on re-evaluated and re-advocated in its adjusted form by Jean Jacques Rousseau as well as Marxist theorists.[2] This concept will be the focus of subsection 2.1.1

Second, democracy can refer to principles of fair and recurrent elections in connection with substantial rights to participate in politics, often in combination with constitutionalism and the rule of law. This liberal or pluralist concept is a product of different theories from the Enlightenment era as well as historical developments in Western democracies and was later on adapted and re-manufactured for analytical efforts by modern theorists such as Dahl (2000). The liberal concept will be introduced in the subsection 2.1.2. Furthermore, representative elements have widely influenced our understanding of democracy today. Therefore, the concept of representative government and its connection to democracy is reviewed in subsection 2.1.3.

And third, we can distinguish a concept of democracy that emphasizes participative and deliberative processes that incorporate dialogue, compromise and the predominance of reason. This concept is a product of modern theorists such as Carole Pateman or Jürgen Habermas and will be introduced in section 2.1.4. The concept of participatory democracy emerged first in the 1970ies, when increasingly the academic and public debate started to proclaim a crisis of the representative system. This crisis is discussed and elaborated until today and therefore will be examined in subsection 2.1.5.

[1] As most considered cases in the analyses are members of the European Union the considerations are not extended to other parts of the world. Additionally, the described trends are similar in non-European Western democracies.

[2] I exclude the direct rule as conceptualized by Marxists, because it emphasizes the transformation of socio-economic relations (e.g. abolition of classes and property rights) as a precondition to self-government and thus is not only a political concept.

2.1.1 Democracy as Direct Rule

Democracy is a concept that has changed in its meaning throughout the history of political philosophy and is still highly debated by theorists, empiricists and practitioners. As referendums are concerned with democratic structures and are often labelled a "democratic innovation" (Geissel and Newton, 2012; Saward, 2009; Smith, 2009), a short overview of the conceptual development is helpful to classify the current debate on the introduction and use of direct democratic institutions. I concentrate on the ancient Greek meaning of direct democracy and also briefly review Rousseau's "Social Contract" that re-evaluates/re-advocates the ancient Greek conceptions and develops a democratic model that is often connected to direct democratic rule.

Democracy in ancient Greece meant direct rule of the rightful citizens of a city-state or polis[3]. These citizens were male and owned slaves, therefore being able to invest time in the polis' affairs. They gathered in regular assemblies to decide on important matters, which amounted to around 40 times in a year (Held, 1995). The assemblies were organized by a committee of 500 which was headed by fifty chosen rulers, who prepared and oversaw the assembly meetings. Important organizing or executive posts were given for a one-year term, either by election or lot often combined with a rotation principle in the tasks. In general, each citizen could occupy such a post and more importantly had an equal right to participate and decide in the assembly. The aim of the periodic gatherings was to decide and to judge on important matters. The decisions were mostly based on consensus, but also allowed majority rule in contentious issues (Held, 1995).

The main features of ancient Greek democracy are political equality of the rightful citizens, the sovereignty of the assembly and respect for the law and commonly decided justice (Held, 1995; Sartori, 1987). Political equality was embedded in the concept of citizenship which not only implied the right to, but also a duty as a citizen to participate. However, as mentioned above it only extended to male citizens and excluded slaves. Notwithstanding this flaw, the Greek city states were governed directly by all citizens. This is what the sovereignty of the assembly refers to. All important matters were decided in recurrent gatherings and the assembly created laws for the communal life and decisions in foreign relations.

The sovereignty of the assembly meant that the law could be changed every time the assembly of the citizens decided differently to the existent rules and laws. Therefore, the respect for the law and commonly decided justice also emphasizes the dominance of the assembly. No rigid constitution existed; the assembly could easily overrule previous decisions and create new laws. Thus, the ancient Greek concept of democracy does not know a rigid constitution that protects individual rights against the state or others (Sartori, 1987). It is likely that a set of norms and common rules existed that was respected and guarded by the community. In particular, the duties as a citizen and a specific understanding of individual liberty can be viewed as such informal normative agreement.

[3]The term state is not precisely adequate for the Greek polis, as it means more a community, as Sartori (1987, 278-279) remarks.

Liberty was the basis for citizenship in a polis and thus an important precondition to democratic rule. Liberty in ancient Greece does not necessarily imply the freedom to do whatever one likes. The writings of Aristotle point to a meaning of liberty as a fundamental equality of all citizens in political life. Aristotle explains the connection between liberty and democracy as following:

> "One principle of liberty is for all to rule and be ruled in turn, and indeed democratic justice is the application of numerical not proportional equality; whence it follows that the majority must be supreme, and that whatever the majority approve must be the end and the just." (Aristotle, 2001, 61)

In this statement, Aristotle stresses important implications of direct democratic rule. The liberty of citizens in a democratic system makes them equal. This equality is central to the concept of the rule by the many. Only when citizens are equal, they are able to participate directly in government. Equal participation in government leads to majority rule, because all citizens have the same influence on a decision. Therefore, to rule means also to be ruled according to Aristotle, i.e. to accept the majority decision of equal citizens. In sum, civic freedom does not mean that individual rights are protected against others or the state, but that a citizen is obliged to contribute to the common good and to accept and adopt the majority decisions of the assembly, because the citizen takes part in each decision (Lintott, 1992).

However, the majority rule also points to the disadvantages of the democratic rule. In his classifications of governments, Aristotle differentiates between a good and a bad government of the many. He called democracy a deviant form of government because of the danger that private interests of the many prevail. He observed that the necessary equality of all citizens is not present in reality, in particular in economic terms, and therefore feared that the many poor would pursue their private interests instead of the common good. The solution to this problem lies in citizens' education of civic responsibility and in the moderation of interests through a strong and numerous middle class (Aristotle, 2001). This civic education and egalitarianism are important features of the concept of participatory democracy, as will be explained in subsection 2.1.4.

In the ideal government of the many, public and private matters are intertwined and culminate in the principle of civic virtue reflecting a commitment to the common good. In contrast, deviant forms of government arise when rulers orient themselves towards private interests. The emphasis on the common good as a civic virtue is one of the main characteristics of the so called republican democratic model (Terchek and Conte, 2001). In the ideal government of the many, public and private matters are intertwined and culminate in the principle of civic virtue reflecting a commitment to the common good. The emphasis on the common good as a civic virtue is one of the main characteristics of the so called republican democratic model (Terchek and Conte, 2001) that focuses on the output dimension of a system.

The republican democratic model was influenced a lot by the writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who is also often considered as a strong advocate of direct rule. Similarly to Aristotle, Rousseau emphasized the orientation on the common good as an important

principle in a good political system. Though he saw his ideal system in closer connection to the Roman republic, his concept of a city state resembles the concept of the ancient Greek democracy (Held, 1995). Similarly to the ancient Greek concept, Rousseau constructed an ideal that focuses on a small scale society without hierarchies which would lead to an equal distribution of power.

In accordance with Aristotle's concept of democracy, Rousseau considers (political) equality of all society members as an important prerequisite for democratic rule.[4] In the natural state, Rousseau views all citizens as equal and free. To preserve this freedom and equality citizens need to be politically active. Political participation ensures that no individual interests prevail, but decisions are made according to the common good. This common good is an important outcome of Rousseau's famous concept of the "general will". There is no clear definition of the general will, but it can be understood as some sort of overall societal agreement on important structures, issues and moral principles.[5] The following passage demonstrates the connection between equality, participation and the general will:

> "Finally, each man, in giving himself to all, gives himself to nobody; and as there is no associate over which he does not acquire the same right as he yields others over himself, he gains an equivalent for everything he loses, and an increase of force for the preservation of what he has. [...]
> *'Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and in our corporate capacity we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole.'" (Rousseau, 2001, 68)*

According to Rousseau, political equality is the only way how individual interests can be preserved and abuses of power avoided. Equal participation of citizens in the political process creates a sense for the common cause, where citizens recognise that their own well being is interlinked with the common good. Rousseau expects that different positions cancel themselves out in the decision-making process and a general will becomes evident. This general will can only be established when people receive adequate information, deliberate about the matter, but do not organize in factions, thus deciding independently. If unanimity in the decision-making is not possible, majority rule is also acceptable for Rousseau (Held, 1995).

An important point of Rousseau's republican concept is the rejection of political groups or factions. Associations of political interests contradict his idea of the individual conviction to the common good. As soon as people organize, sharing similar goals, inequality is likely to appear, unless all groups have the same strength (Held, 1995; Pateman, 1970). This inequality leads to the domination of one group or even one ruler and thus destroys the liberty of each citizen. Therefore, Rousseau prefers a system where each individual

[4] Rousseau also stressed relative economic equality or independence as beneficial for political equality. He feared that economic inequalities would lead to domination of some groups over others politically (Pateman, 1970).

[5] Rousseau stresses that this general will first appears in the founding moment of a society. It consists of an agreement on certain principles such as civic duties to participate or to respect certain rights. This agreement ensures that all citizens are deliberately willing to subordinate to the general will, even if some decisions do not fulfil each individual preference (Cohen, 1986).

acts independently. Though acting independently every person would depend on the co-operation with others and thus an orientation to overarching principles and the common good develops (Pateman, 1970).

In connection to this rejection of organized interests, the literature often points to Rousseau's criticism of the representative system. However, his disapproval of the representative system is not clearly pronounced in his writings and has been a subject for scientific debate (Cohen, 1986). On the one hand, he definitely demands that each individual decides directly and acts for herself which establishes a personal dedication to the common good and is the only way to create the general will. On the other hand, Rousseau approves of a mandate system where individuals delegate the executive power to a selected government (Rousseau, 2001). This government has to act in accordance to the general will and can be appealed if it does not comply with it. In comparison to ancient Greek models, Rousseau differentiates between the legislative power, which represents the sovereign, and the executive power, which is subordinate to the sovereign and its general will. Furthermore, Rousseau was aware that his ideal political system can only function in small feudal communities and thus large scale societies require other forms of political organization.

Rousseau's and the ancient Greek concepts of direct democratic rule are based on societal structures and socio-economic contexts that do not mirror the development of nation states throughout the 18th and 19th century until today. Thus, these models reflect ideal types of systems and are mostly considered as impossible to realize in modern times. Nonetheless, the core concept of direct decision-making has survived and was adapted to the conditions in mass societies, particularly through the concept of participatory democracy developed in the 1960ies. The theorists of participatory democracy demand citizens' direct involvement in the political process, and similarly to Rousseau, argue that direct involvement leads to the development of civic virtues such as an orientation on the common good (see in particular Pateman, 1970). Section 2.1.4 deals with this democratic concept in detail using the ideas presented in this section on direct rule.

Apart from the participatory democracy model, modern supporters of direct democracy often refer to the core concepts presented in this section when they advocate the introduction of direct democratic institutions. In this regard, direct democracy mostly refers to referendums that allow citizens to directly decide on important issues in a popular vote, which is defined further in section 2.2.1. Referendum supporters praise equality in the political process and the sovereignty of the people in important decisions calling popular votes an original democratic feature from ancient Greece. Referring to the writings of Rousseau, they stress that popular votes are expressions of the general will, as each individual is involved in the decision-making process. The demand for more direct democratic processes is often accompanied by a general criticism on current political systems and representative institutions. The particular debates surrounding this criticism are reviewed in detail in section 2.1.5.

The most critical part of Rousseau's and ancient Greek concepts is their equation of legislative, judicial and executive powers in one sovereign citizen assembly. Apart from the

practicability of this concept in modern mass societies, later philosophers and theorists identified dangers in this concentration of political power. In particular, the thinkers of the Enlightenment considered direct rule of the people as problematic and worried that unrestrained popular will could lead to tyranny - of one ruler, a faction or the majority. Therefore they put emphasis on the protection of individual rights in a constitution, the separation of powers and adequate representation of different interests. The concept of democracy that developed in the course of these thoughts is called 'liberal' in modern debates. The next section describes the historical origins as well as some selected modern understandings of this rival concept of democracy.

2.1.2 Liberal Concept of Democracy

This section aims at describing a type of democracy that is nowadays understood as liberal (Diamond, 1996; Fukuyama, 2012; Plattner, 2009*a*) or called protective democracy (Held, 1995). The liberal model of democracy marks a rival conception to the previously described direct rule regimes from ancient Greece and Rousseau. The liberal understanding of democracy focuses on a rigid regulatory framework and the rule of law to secure individual freedom. It also departs from the ideal of direct decision-making and advocates a representative form of government. Marc F. Plattner summarizes the main ideas of liberalism as follows:

> "Liberalism is essentially a doctrine devoted to protecting the rights of the individual to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness. Government is needed to protect those rights, but it can threaten them as well, so it is also essential to guard against their infringement by government. Thus liberalism entails a government that is limited by a constitution and by the rule of law." (Plattner, 2009*a*, 59)

The liberal concept of democracy consists of more than one concept, as the quote indicates. In particular it refers to liberalist and pluralist ideas combined with constitutionalism, the rule of law and power-balancing structures. The small, and without doubt, selective overview here starts with a historic account of liberal ideas, extends to important additions in the course of revolutions in the 18th century and culminates in an empirical concept of a pluralist democratic system mainly based on the works of Robert Dahl. These different strands of reasoning are important to understand which general model of democracy prevails in public discussions in the Western Hemisphere today. I assume that most political elites are aware of the liberal model of democracy (Higley and Burton, 2006). Furthermore, all considered cases in this study can be viewed as liberal democracies.

The thinkers of the Enlightenment worried that unrestrained political power could lead to despotism and also considered direct rule of the people as problematic. Therefore they put emphasis on the control of majorities and the government through a constitution, separation of powers and the protection of individual rights. Furthermore, nation states developed in this period and directed the theoretical thinking towards the organization and governing of large states. Therefore, the representative form of democracy emerged as a practical form of government, which will be explicated in detail in the next section.

Ideas of fundamental individual rights towards the integrity of life, freedom and property became prominent through the theoretical work of John Locke in the 17th century. His work can be considered as "the beginnings of the constitutionalist tradition" (Held, 1995, 41), as he was one of the first to stress the necessity to protect individual rights against infringements from the state or other individuals. This marked a turning point in the considerations of individual rights and duties. In comparison to the previously described so called republican model, liberalism puts the individual before the society and the orientation on a common good. In the liberal concept, each individual pursues her own interests and the state offers a protective framework to do so as long as the interests of others are respected.

According to Locke, all individuals are equal in the so called natural state, they form a political society agreeing on basic rules and laws as well as the concrete form of government. Locke sees governments as instrumental for the goals of the individuals in a society. Individuals transfer their legislative and executive rights to the state and in return can expect to be protected. The exact rights, rules and regulations are agreed upon during the formation of the political society according to Locke. Afterwards, people give their implicit consent to the current form of government and prevailing legal norms. They can also overthrow their government if it contradicts their expectations. In this sense, Locke's philosophy already contains the concept of accountability, which is considered as one of the main democratic features today (Terchek and Conte, 2001).

Locke does not prescribe a certain form of government. He states that people can agree on different forms of governments including a monarchy or an aristocracy. Locke's ideal form of government is, nevertheless, representative with a powerful legislature and majority decisions (Held, 1995; Terchek and Conte, 2001). Though Locke's philosophy emphasizes a popularly controlled government, it is not clear how the people are able to control their government or overthrow it if it does not comply with their expectations. Yet, an important element of Locke's government conception is the dominance of the legislature over other executive powers. It is the legislature that decides on important matters in a country. According to Locke, the legislature consists of representatives selected by the public.[6] Locke imagines a political body, where the major groups and interests are represented. Thus, Locke introduces the idea of a powerful legislative body as a central representative institution in a political system. In this regard, a new form of government emerges that neither is similar to the monarchies of that time, nor to ancient city states with direct rule described in the previous section.

Furthermore, Locke differentiates the legislature from the executive power that only applies the laws. Besides the protection of individual liberty and property, this is one of the mechanisms against tyrannical government in Locke's philosophy, which already indicates a form of power separation. The insistence on the protection of the individual rights and the differentiation of governmental functions demonstrate that even this early liberal concept of government already entails important elements of the rule of law. However, Locke does

[6]This does not imply a legislature of elected officials or that each individual has a right to vote or decide directly on important issues. Locke imagines that representatives are appointed or chosen, without the notion of universal suffrage or recurrent elections.

not differentiate between the executive and the jurisdiction, but subsumes jurisdictional functions under the executive branch (Held, 1995). The modern understanding of power separation into legislative, executive and jurisdictional functions emerged much later in the writings of Charles-Louis de Secondat Baron de Montesquieu.

Similarly to Locke, Montesquieu stresses the importance of constitutional provisions that restrict the possibilities of government to interfere in the private life of citizens (Held, 1995). In the 11th book in 'The Spirit of Laws' (1748), Montesquieu considers which governmental form is necessary to preserve liberty. He understands liberty as the ability to act as one pleases in a legally defined space without the interference of despotic rulers. Montesquieu expects citizens to abide by the laws in order to preserve liberty. The protection of liberty is only possible through a constitution in combination with an independent jurisdiction which every citizen is able to apply to.

An independent jurisdiction is a prerequisite of moderate governments according to Montesquieu. This moderation, and equally the prevention of despotism, can only be established through a clear distinction of powers and their reciprocal control of each other. The separation of powers became the central element of Montesquieu's work considered today in democratic theory. He clearly defined the functions of executive and legislative powers and separated them from the judiciary. The legislative power concentrates on law-making, the executive on law enforcement and the regulation of foreign relations. Both powers are supposed to check each other with vetoes or the dependence on the approval of certain actions. The judiciary is supposed to be completely independent from the legislative and the executive powers. Its main task consists in settling disputes in accordance to the established laws.

Montesquieu's emphasis of the judiciary as an independent power reflects a modern understanding of the rule of law, an important element in the liberal concept of democracy. Rule of law entails the requirement of a (written) constitution or similar persistent laws, the separation of the judiciary from legislative and executive powers as well as independent (in the sense of impartial) and accessible jurisdiction. In this sense, political power should be restrained with a regulatory framework. In particular, governments are obliged to act in accordance with the constitution and individuals are protected through laws. An important requirement of the democratic rule of law is that everybody is treated equally in front of the law and that everybody has access to jurisdiction. This understanding, however, developed later on in the 20th century when universal suffrage has spread in Western countries.

Rule of law and the focus on individual freedoms are considered here as the two major features of the liberal model of democracy (Plattner, 2009*a*). At the same time, they reflect important differences to direct democratic systems described in the previous section. In direct democratic systems, legislative, judicial and executive powers are often not separated, but united in the sovereignty of the people. In principle, direct rule implies that the sovereign people are able to change laws without any restrictions. Thus, the sovereignty of the people in direct democratic systems is not consistent with the idea of a rigid constitution or an independent judiciary. In comparison to liberal thinking, individual rights are

also not included in the concept of direct rule, which implies that the personal integrity, property or dignity of each individual is not protected. This is the most important criticism of liberal theorists, who concentrated on the development of important protective institutions for individual liberty.

An emphasis on individual liberty is also apparent in the works of James Madison who made a major contribution to the elaboration of the liberal democratic concept. In his writings on the form of government in the Federalist papers (in particular No.10), Madison (1787) advocates interest competition and representative institutions to protect individual liberty and prevent tyrannical governments. He identifies factionalism as a problem threatening individual liberty and the peace in a state. Factionalism describes the formation of different interest groups in a society. Most individuals pursue self-interest and organize in factions to pursue different goals in the political sphere. This is likely to lead to conflicts, especially in a system of direct rule according to Madison. When people are able to decide directly as in an ancient Greek polis, factionalism would create a majority that will impose its will upon a minority of citizens. This 'tyranny of the majority'[7] endangers the liberty of each individual and the peace in a state. Therefore, the state institutions must be designed to curb these conflicts and prevent violent confrontations.

To avoid the tyranny of the majority Madison suggests a representative government, recurrent elections that establish accountability of the representatives and federalism as a form of organization for large states (Held, 1995). Through representative bodies, the interests of different factions would be restrained and balanced. As different groups and individuals compete for political power, their ambitions and goals are moderated to win the support of many individuals. Madison also expects that a stronger orientation on the common good is likely in representative institutions with less decision-makers than the whole population. Furthermore, through electoral competition only the smartest and fittest persons will be encouraged to apply for governmental posts. In this way, representation can be an important control instrument against the predominance of one faction. Moreover, Madison suggests a distribution of state power on regional and a national level, which reflects the concept of federalism. The separation of governing units disperses power and enables different groups and individuals to influence the political process. (Madison, 1787)

Madison is one of the first theorists to elaborate on pluralism of political interests, reflected in the term factionalism, and how it can contribute to balanced and limited governance. At the centre of Madison's argumentation is the idea of competition for political power and representation of interests to restrain individual interests and prevent the domination of one group over the others. In this regard, Madison argues for recurrent elections that would enable different factions to reorganize and win power. Moreover, periodic elections also establish an accountability of representatives and the elected government. These concepts of political competition, representative government and recurrent elections entered the American constitution and are considered as role models in many democratic

[7] Madison was influenced by the work of Alexis de Tocqueville in this regard (Held, 1995).

systems until today. Furthermore, these concepts are essential aspects of modern liberal thinking.

The last development in the liberal model of democracy can be related to the break through of universal suffrage and pluralism as essential principles of democracy in the 20th century. An important concept summarizing these principles is Robert Dahl's polyarchy (Dahl, 2000), a term he uses to describe a political system close to the ideal of democracy[8] Dahl's concept stresses political inclusion and contention as important dimensions of democracy (Dahl, 1971). Contention describes the requirements for political competition, in particular the idea of opposition rights to challenge governments and present alternatives to the people. Inclusion, on the other hand, refers to political participation and implies that all citizens in a state should have the right to participate in the political process, in particular in the election of representatives. The inclusion dimension of democracy reflects the expansion of voting and political rights in the 20th century. Most liberal theorists of previous centuries were either careful to include equal rights of participation into their concepts or constructed their ideal political regimes according to the societal structures of their times.

Dahl considers the equality in the political process and the right to choose representatives as central for democratic systems. He formulates seven criteria for his ideal democratic system that incorporate the principles of contestation and inclusiveness. A central criterion is that individuals are able to control governmental decisions through elected representatives. These representatives are chosen in frequent, fair and free elections. Practically all adults have a right to vote and also to run as candidates in the elections. To participate effectively in the political system, citizens enjoy particular rights such as freedom of speech or have access to diverse information. Moreover, Dahl explicitly includes the right to form and join associations, with the intention to compete in elections, propose alternative policies and challenge existent governments. In this regard, Dahl clearly revives Madison's ideas about factionalism adding important rights to effectively use it to control governmental power.

Though Dahl does not explicitly refer to constitutionalism or the rule of law, the connection to liberalist ideas is obvious through his emphasis on political rights of each individual. These political rights can only be guaranteed when there are constitutional laws and a judiciary that controls their realisation. Dahl's pluralist conception adds universal suffrage, recurrent elections and electoral competition to the liberal thinking of the 16th and 17th century. In combination, the liberal ideas of Locke, Montesquieu and Madison (as well as much more theorists) and Dahl's pluralist democracy constitute what today is regarded as the liberal concept of democracy. This concept is dominant in public debates of Western democracies and often used to judge the democraticness of political systems around the world (see for example Bollen, 2009; Coppedge et al., 2011; Diamond, 1999). The following summary from Diamond (1996) lists the most important elements of this concept:

[8] A democracy is characterized through the perfect responsibility of a government to all citizen. Since this is an unrealistic concept, Dahl prefers the term polyarchy, which only focuses on the rule of the many and points to the divergent interests which compete for the ruling power.

- regular, free, and fair elections
- universal suffrage
- "vertical" accountability of rulers to the ruled and absence of reserved domains for military or certain political groups
- "horizontal" accountability of officeholders to one another
- equality in front of the law, constitutionalism and the rule of law
- extensive provisions for political and civic pluralism: substantial freedom of belief, opinion, discussion, speech, publication, assembly, demonstration, and petition for individuals and groups
- access to alternative information

In conclusion, the liberal concept offers an alternative understanding of democracy in comparison to direct rule regimes of the ancient Greece or Rousseau's ideal of a republic presented in section 2.1.1. Both understandings of democracy are based on the idea of political equality. However, liberal democracy stresses the protection of individual liberty in form of constitutionalism. In pure direct democratic regimes, no rigid constitution or inalienable rights are possible as the people have the sovereignty in decision-making and can change laws whenever they like. Liberalist thinkers often feared that this unrestrained direct rule might lead to the tyranny of the majority where a minority of people has to bear the decisions of the majority. To prevent such developments liberal thinkers proposed institutions to distribute and control governmental power, in particular the independence of the judiciary and the protection of fundamental rights.

Furthermore, the liberal concept incorporates pluralist and representative institutions as controls against the domination of one group or a ruler. The focus on pluralism stresses that the interests of all people should receive a voice. This is often assured through particular political rights such as freedom of speech or assembly and representative institutions where even minorities of the society can raise their concerns. Nowadays, most democracies follow this liberal ideal securing important political and human rights in their constitutions and offering representation in parliament to all adult citizens. In the last 20 years, the liberal model has received harsh criticism regarding these pluralist and representative institutions. The criticism is particularly voiced by the so called populist movement that demands to restore the general will of the majority and argue for more direct decision-making. Populist thinking and further criticism on liberal democracy is described in detail in section 2.1.5.

Despite criticism, supporters of the representative principle argue that such institutions help to aggregate and moderate divergent interests of the people and enable democratic rule in large societies (for example Dahl, 2000; Sartori, 1987). Instead of having to decide on each political matter personally, which seems impossible in mass societies, people are able to transmit their power to a few selected individuals. These selected representatives assume the responsibility for governance and can be controlled through elections. How the concept of representations developed historically and what it means nowadays in connection with democracies is presented in the next section.

2.1.3 The Concept of Democratic Representation

Representation is often associated with democracy, though both concepts existed independently for a long time in history (Alonso, Keane and Merkel, 2011; Pitkin, 2004). While democracy has originated from ancient Greece and firstly implied the direct rule of the people, representation appeared as a political concept in the Middle Ages in the clerical and monarchical systems (Pitkin, 1967). Representatives were appointed by the Pope or the monarch and thus were not connected with popular government or elections. Both concepts changed substantially during the Enlightenment period and formed an alliance when large-scale democracies in national states started to emerge. Most theorists of modern times believe that representation is inevitable in such large-scale democracies (Dahl, 2000; Pitkin, 2004; Sartori, 1987), which explains why today representation is related to democratic rule.

This section introduces the concept of representation and presents how democratic representation is usually understood and applied today. First, I review the different meanings of representation relying on the work of Pitkin (1967). Then, I briefly look at the historical development of the concept. In this regard, I present theoretical ideas of Edmund Burke and J.S. Mill about the ideal representative government. These theorists have been selected to introduce different perceptions and understandings of representatives and their functions in politics that persist until today. After this historical view, I turn to modern conceptions of representation in connection to democratic systems. In particular, I describe the responsible party model and the representative democracy found in the works of Schumpeter and Downs. Finally, I describe important roles of representatives that shape their behaviour. The goal of the considerations is to outline how representation became a central part of democratic systems today and which different understandings are connected with this concept. A detailed discussion of representation, its origins and understandings is offered by Pitkin (1967) or Brito Vieira and Runciman (2008).

Representation has various meanings and applications Hanna Pitkin presents in her seminal theoretical account of representation a definition that connects the different understandings of the concept. According to Pitkin, representation signifies in general "a making present of something absent - but not making it literally present" (Pitkin, 1969, 16). This definition demonstrates that representation is not necessarily associated with elections and voting rights, but can be performed without any connection to democratic methods of selection. Furthermore, the "making present of something absent" happens in different forms, societal spheres or academic fields.

Pitkin (1967) differentiates between four types of representation: First, in orientation on Thomas Hobbes, she defines formalistic representation, which implies having authority to act for others. The core of this form are institutional arrangements that secure the authority to decide or speak for others. Second, she describes a form of representation as "standing for something". This form signifies either to resemble the represented subject as much as possible, the so called descriptive representation, or to be a symbol for something, where the representative object usually does not mirror the represented, the so called symbolic representation. And finally, Pitkin distinguishes substantive representation "as

acting for others". This form of representation stresses the actions of representatives in the interest of the represented.

All forms of representation play a role for politics. However, the formalistic and the substantive ones are the most relevant for the research question here. Formalistic representation reflects the inner sovereignty or the authoritative base in a functioning state implying that some institutions and actors receive the right to act on behalf of others. Formalistic representation is an important prerequisite, but does not indicate a certain mode of representation or how the right to act for others is used. According to Pitkin, substantive representation reflects the most important understanding for politics. She explicates that "representing means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (Pitkin, 1967, 209). Substantive representation establishes a reciprocal relationship between the represented and representatives based on responsiveness.

Responsiveness implies a commitment of representative actors to react to the demands or interests of the represented and the possibility of the represented to control their representatives (Pitkin, 1967). The representative acts as an agent of the represented protecting their positions or goals. In contrast, the represented must be able to form an opinion, to demand it and have the institutional capacities to influence the represented. "A representative government must not merely be in control, not merely promote the public interest, but must also be responsive to the people" as Pitkin (1967, 232) explicates. This implies a constant requirement of state institutions and actors to receive people's demands and put them into practice. Certain institutional arrangements are necessary to establish this responsiveness. Pateman views regular free elections and a collective representative body as such institutions. In this regard, Pitkin connects the political representation with democratic institutions.

Pitkin bases her argumentation on the historical development of the representative concept, which will be briefly reviewed here. Representative principles started to emerge during the Middle Ages. In particular monarchies used representatives to control their areas of influence and levies. For example, English kings started to summon representatives from different parts and groups of the country to collect taxes and sometimes also for an advisory council. The gatherings were often also used for settling legal disputes. Interestingly, this assembly was already called parliament, though it had more similarity to an administration with judicial functions than a legislature. However, it evolved through its function in tax collection. As people paid taxes, they increasingly wanted to have a say in how much they have to contribute and for what it is used.

The English civil wars in the 17th century and in particular the Glorious revolution in 1688 marked a turning point for the development of representative governments. In the course of the civil wars, King Charles I was executed by the insurgents, a Parliament consisting of representatives from the different lands reigned the Kingdom from 1642 to 1651 and a republic with the name Commonwealth of England was established. An important achievement of these developments was that the previously undermined parliament emerged as an important body and the constitutional monarchy was established in England after that period.

A further important development was the royal approval of the Bill of Rights in 1689 in the course of the Glorious Revolution. The Bill of Rights is considered as the beginning of English parliamentarianism, as it sets out important rights of Parliament in front of the monarchy. In particular, it lays out that the crown is governing with the consent of the parliament when amending laws or levying taxes. Moreover, it states that Parliament should meet recurrently, it allows the parliamentarians to speak freely without legal prosecution and it requires that parliamentarians are elected to this body.[9]

The act demonstrates first attempts to secure civil and political liberties that were later on elaborated in other declarations and bills not only in Great Britain. The most important achievements concerning the representative concept are the introduction of recurrent gatherings and the requirement of free elections to parliament. The frequent gatherings emphasize the control of governmental actions, which is strengthened in the provision that no laws should be changed without the consent of parliament. The regulation to elect members of Parliament freely was not specified and did not establish universal suffrage, though the restricted franchise gradually expanded in the following 150 years. Nevertheless, the Bill of Rights defined the form of appointing representatives by election, which succeeded as the legitimate mode in the following centuries throughout the world.

The concept of representation gained even more importance through the American and the French revolutions. The slogan "No taxation without representation" initiated and guided the American revolt between 1765 and 1783. The main criticism of the American colonists was not to be represented in the British parliament and thus not to be able to influence important matters concerning their colonies, though they paid taxes to the British Crown. The results of the Independence War in United States were a departure from the monarchical rule of the British crown and a process of constitution building in the states, particularly the discussions in the Federalist Papers, see previous section for the influential ideas of James Madison. This culminated in the ratification of a national constitution in 1789 that broadened the concept of a representative government set forth already in the British Bill of Rights.

Independent from the Crown, the American States formed a republican government, organized in a federal Union, and adopt a written constitution with a strong democratic focus. Representation played a major role in this development, as rightful citizens had a right to elect their political representatives to legislative and executive bodies of the state. Furthermore, the constitution-making and state-building happened in town-meetings with elected representatives. The constitutions of the States and later of their Union set important political liberties as well as rights that enable the active participation in politics, in particular the selection of representatives. While the British Bill of Rights made already the connection between elections and representation, the American revolution and the established constitution put this connection into practice.

The idea that governing elites are chosen in elections started to spread around European states and reached a peak in the French revolution in 1789. While the voting right in United States was oriented upon the wealth and property of citizens, the French

[9]The Bill of Rights was influenced by the ideas of John Locke, see previous section for details.

revolutionaries stressed political equality of all people and approved the universal right to participate in the election of representatives for government The most important act was the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen that replaced absolute monarchy and the feudal system with political equality, popular sovereignty and representative government. It further introduced basic political rights such as freedom of speech and assembly. The Declaration of Rights is considered as an important document that established the principles of representative government known today, even though the radical changes were not adopted until the second revolution in 1848.

The Declaration of Rights was influenced by the works of Rousseau, who emphasized political equality of individuals and their right to participate in politics, unmistakably reflected in the declaration. However, Rousseau was critical about representative government claiming that political liberty only is possible through self-government and the direct participation of individuals in policy-making. He claimed that the election of representatives cannot guarantee that the interests of the represented are pursued. Therefore, a representative government is likely to become a tyranny, where the general will is disregarded, because people transmit their power to an uncontrollable group of representatives. To avoid this, elected representatives need to reflect perfectly the will of the represented, according to Rousseau. They function as pure delegates of the interests and positions of every individual. Rousseau considered this concept as unrealistic and therefore argued for direct rule.

The debate about how the will of the represented is delegated and safeguarded through representative institutions and actors is present until today. (Pitkin, 1967) refers to it as the "mandate-independence controversy". The general conflict consists in the difficulty to connect the interests and goals of many individuals to a representative. The delegate ideal, which is unachievable according to Rousseau, prescribes representatives to act in accordance with the wishes of the represented, simply reflecting their positions and interests. In contrast, the trustee model requests independent decisions of the representatives based on their intellect, wisdom or moral principles. The advocates of the delegate model accuse the supporters of a trustee model to disregard the interests of the represented, while in reverse the trustee advocates dislike the idea that representatives are only following the unreflective opinions of the masses(Pitkin, 1967).

Edmund Burke, who served as a parliamentarian, was one of the supporters of the trustee model of representation. His ideal government is based on a rigid constitution and aristocratic rule, which is popularly controlled through elected representatives in the legislature. This ideal reflects the English constitutional monarchy of that time. However, Burke insisted that governors and representatives are not mere reflections of local interests, but base their judgement on the national interest, as the following quote illustrates:

> "Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a *deliberative* assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole - where not local purposes, not lo-

cal prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole" (Burke, 1969, 175f)

Burke envisions that parliamentarians are superior to the represented. They are intellectual elites who can differentiate between particularistic interests of their local community and the welfare of the whole nation. Parliament is the place to deliberate how the nation can prosper, not an arena to fight for different interests. The elected trustees are chosen because they suit best the task of formulating and advancing the national interest. In extreme cases, representatives decide freely and do not take into account the interests of their electorate. This position is one extreme in the "mandate-independence controversy" (Pitkin, 1967)

A contrast position on the mode of representation can be found in works of John Stuart Mill, who can be considered as one of the strongest supporters of representative democracy. In his essay "On Representative Government" he establishes that each individual should have a right to be represented in parliament, though this does not imply universal franchise (Mill, 1969). Mills's image of a representative is that of a free agent that represents certain interests and positions in the society. The interests of the whole nation should be reflected in parliament. To achieve the replication of the society, Mill proposes a proportional representation system.[10]

Mill's central requirement for representation is the following: "Every one of the electors would be personally identified with his representative, and the representative with his constituents" (Mill, 1969, 194). Thus, Mill imagines that every representative is directly responsive to her constituents. And every individual, who had a right to choose a candidate, can identify their responsible representative. In this regard, Mill envisions personal representation that will lead to a perfect reflection of all interests in parliament. He argues against the dominance of parties or majoritarian factions and demands that all minorities are reflected in the legislature. He is also against the focus on local interests, as this would represent the majority in a locality and thus undermine the voice of the loosing minority. Therefore, Mill proposes a proportional representation system, where different candidates compete for a seat in parliament in more than one locality or at national level and receive the support according to their share of votes.

Mill's image of a representative reflects the delegate model. In particular, representatives are agents that receive the mandate to act in accordance to the interests of the represented. Each individual should elect the representative that best mirrors her opinion or whose abilities she trust most to make good decisions.[11] Mill expects individuals with higher education and intellect to serve as representatives. Therefore he advocates that all individuals receive the proper education to participate in politics. In this regard, Mill

[10]However, there are confusing remarks in Mill's writing, in particular compared to today's understanding of a proportional legislature. On the one hand, he expects the parliament to reflect the diversity of a nation and wants all minorities to be represented. On the other, he thinks that the votes of more educated and wealthier citizens are more important and thus, should contribute disproportionally to the final composition of parliament.

[11]Mill imagines the intellectual elite to be eligible for political offices in order to make balanced decisions and pursue the common good. In this regard, the trustee model of representation, as apparent in Burke's considerations, is recognizable in his thinking. However, he emphasizes that the legislative body needs to mirror the structures and opinions of a society, which resembles more the delegate model.

argues for the universality of political rights, though he connects certain abilities with the participation in the political system. Citizens need to learn from an early age how to get involved and to make judgements in politics, according to Mill. This idea was later adapted from participatory democracy theorists, see next section for details.

The two representative ideals - the delegate and the trustee - determine political debates and research about representative institutions until today. The two models as presented here with their theoretical origins can be extended with questions about what exactly determines the decisions of trustees - their intellect, their commitment to the common good or moral principles - and similarly which group is the primary influence on the delegate - her constituency in the district or her particular supporters. It is likely that most elected representatives use a combination of these influences in their decision-making. Furthermore, research in the 20th century determined that the mandate-independency controversy (Pitkin, 1967) needs to be complemented with a so called responsible party model. This representation model is based on the idea that parties are the main actors and that individual representatives comply with their party's policy positions (Thomassen, 1995). In modern democracies, voters do not select individuals, but parties with different political programs. In this regard, elected representatives act as delegates of the party, the party on the other hand receives the mandate from voters to act in accordance to its program.

Three conditions need to be fulfilled for this representation model: Voters need to have a choice in party programmes, thus at least two distinctive parties should compete for their votes. Second, voters are assumed as rational citizens that are informed about the different choices and select the party closest to their own preferences (Thomassen, 1994). And finally, parties have to act unitary in parliament in order to implement or block policies. This party discipline enables parties to be responsible to the interests of their voters. The responsible party model creates a direct connection between the represented and representatives through the abstract concept of a party and its program. A party in this regard is a union of individual representatives who agree on certain principles and political ideas.

This party model of representation is based on the democratic theory of Schumpeter (1942) and Downs (1957a). Both authors place the competition of political elites for votes in elections at the centre of democratic systems. Though Schumpeter and Downs do not concentrate on representation as such, their models of democracy clearly reflect representative government as an ideal. They both assume self-interested individuals and a political sphere that resembles an economic marketplace. In the political market, elites or parties compete for the votes of citizens offering them different policy programmes. Elections are the most important form of political participation and at the same time the main arena of political competition between different parties or elites.

Political elites (and parties) are the central actors in the so called economic model of democracy. They are responsible for the political discourse and decision-making. The role of common citizens is to select representatives in periodic elections. In this way, citizens receive a control instrument to vote representatives or the respective parties out

of office for bad performance. Other forms of political participation are not included in the economic model of democracy.[12] Schumpeter (1942) is particularly sceptical about the abilities of most individuals to make reasonable judgements in politics and advocates citizens to remain passive between the elections. In sum, in this democratic model, political participation is reduced to a minimum of voting in elections. Representation, in contrast, plays a major role for the functioning of the democratic system. A contrast model of democracy that evolved as a response to this economic model is presented in the next section.

Representative concepts have been elaborated further and extended to include different roles of representatives beyond the ideals of a delegates or a trustee. Strom (1997) defines parliamentary roles as "routines, driven by reasons (preferences), and constrained by rules." (158). The basic assumption here is that representatives are acting to fulfil certain goals and are confronted with different restrictions of their positions in this regard. This extension of the concept is based on observations of representatives' behaviour, considers the institutional setting for representation and includes the personal goals of representatives.

An important contribution for the definition of representational roles is the classification of Searing (1994). Considering the interplay between the institution of parliament and personal goals, Searing differentiates four roles of representatives: The first one is the "parliament man" who is very keen on a functioning legislature, often has organizational functions or mediates between different factions and members. The second is called the "constituency's member" and reflects Mill's delegate model of representation. The constituency's member feels strongly responsible to the (local) electorate and acts in accordance to its interests.

The third role is the "ministerial aspirant" - an ambitious parliamentarian whose behaviour is guided towards occupying a government office someday. Therefore, she is likely to be very active in committees and debates to advertise herself as a candidate for higher offices. And finally, forth, there is the "policy advocate", who is interested in policy-making. Ideological tendencies, the general urge to solve problems or secure a nation's welfare are assumed as the main motivations of policy-advocates. Burke's trustees resemble policy-advocates, as they strive for policy-making to improve the welfare of their nation.

Searing's four parliamentary roles presents an advancement of the previous normative concepts of representatives. While Burke's and Mill's considerations focused on how representatives ought to behave and what the role of parliament should be in a political system, research today concentrates on how parliament works as a democratic institution and what shapes the behaviour of representatives. In this regard, representation is studied more empirically looking at the representative actors and the functioning of par-

[12](Downs, 1957a) does not explicitly exclude other forms of participation, though also concentrates only on elections. It is possible that Downs views the active membership in parties as another important political action open to every individual. However, political involvement is connected to costs with little benefits from it and thus would not fit the rationality assumption in Down's concept. See section 3.1.1 for details on the rational choice assumptions.

liament. The most important question in this regard is whether the elected spokespersons adequately represent the population (for a quick overview see Weßels, 2009).

This section has shown how representation is associated with democratic rule in a historical perspective and in the understanding today. Representative government today implies the electoral appointment of spokespersons to legislative institutions. This reflects the legal transmission of authority or sovereignty of the people to representative actors and institutions. Nowadays, the electoral appointment of representatives is connected with the principle of political equality resulting in universal suffrage of adults. Additionally, the free and fair competition of different individuals and groups for political power is a guiding principle in representative democracies. This implies that representation requires the provision of important political rights such as freedom of speech, assembly or the press, which have been identified as important features of a liberal democracy described in section 2.1.2.

Moreover, it has been elaborated that a democratic representative government is based on the mechanism of responsiveness expressed as an orientation of the representatives on the interests of the represented. Responsiveness can be secured in recurrent elections which is an important control instrument of citizens in front of the political elite. In periodic elections, citizens are able to determine which individuals should represent them and which political programs should be dominant for the next electoral term. This principle of periodic elections and the right of individuals to select their representatives are the connection between democracy and representation that has been established in the 20th century in the Western Hemisphere.

In comparison to direct rule described in section 2.1.1, representative government implies a more complex process of decision-making and creates different roles for the involved actors. Every individual receives the right to elect a representative who will advocate her interests. According to the economic model of democracy, the only role of citizens in the political process is to select representatives in elections and in this way control the actions of governments from time to time. After elections, the selected representatives receive the decision-making power and thus become the most important political actors. In a representative democracy a clear distinction exists between the representatives and the represented, which is absent in direct democratic systems.

The reduction of citizens' political participation to elections has been criticized in the late 20th century and an alternative model of democracy emerged as an ideal challenging the representative democratic system. This so called participatory democracy partly incorporates direct democratic principles transferring them into the societies of the modern times. The next section will introduce this model of democracy in detail.

2.1.4 Participatory Concept of Democracy

Participatory democracy developed in the 1960ies counter to elite-focused concepts of democracy and the dominance of representative governments in Western democracies (Zittel, 2006). The concept emerged around a time when representative government was perceived to be in crisis, which will be briefly reviewed in the next section. During that

time, research discovered that values and attitudes of citizens were changing towards post-materialism and a more critical view of current democratic institutions (Inglehart, 1977; Inglehart and Klingemann, 1979; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995). The so called critical citizens that emerged in this context demanded more involvement in the political process and increasingly used new forms of participation or protest (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995). Participatory democracy emphasizes the willingness and necessity of masses to participate in the democratic process and thus can be considered as a theoretical foundation of that time.

As a normative ideal, participatory democracy might play a role for the considerations of political elites' institutional preferences. Many political elites who are active today are aware of the above described trend towards a critical and politically more involved public. Many probably were likely to be confronted or take part in different movements or protests of that time. Therefore it is necessary to understand the conception of this normative model of democracy. The goal of this section is to outline this concept of democracy and thus present the possible normative theoretical basis of political elites to judge democratic institutions.

It is noteworthy that the participatory concept is sometimes viewed as rival to representative government. However, most theorists do not exclude representative institutions or functions from their conceptualizations. In fact, mostly participatory democracy is constructed as a complement to existing representative institutions in democracies. The aim is to extend and improve individual political participation which is usually restricted to recurrent elections in representative democracies. The writings of Pateman (1970), Barber (2003) and Bachrach and Botwinick (1992) were particularly influential in this regard and constitute the theoretical base of this chapter. To understand the historical origins of the concept, I also briefly review the theoretical influences from Rousseau and J.S. Mill, which were adapted to modern contexts of the 20th century. Furthermore, I also consider some practical implementations of the concept that define the debate about participatory democracy until today.

Participation is regarded as citizens' active involvement in political processes, especially in decision-making. In this regard, representative processes entail forms of participation such as voting, campaigning, debating and similar actions during elections. However, participatory theorists state that representation is not enough to secure the democraticness of a government. This reflects the scepticism of Rousseau towards representative government and his conception of an ideal citizenry. Political participation cannot signify the delegation of decision-making power to selected representatives and then a passive consumption of politics. Participatory democracy implies that citizens are involved directly and permanently in politics.

Participatory democracy can be considered as a revival of Rousseau's ideas of direct participation and the development of civic virtue. For Rousseau, participation is the core of a democratic government. Only when individuals actively take part in important decisions, they can secure their liberty and protect the common good. Furthermore, an important element in the participatory conception derived from Rousseau's thinking is that

citizens participate as equals in politics.T his goes beyond the liberal concept of formal equality guaranteed through fundamental rights. When individuals are regularly and proportionately involved in decision-making, they practice equality. Thus, the participation process secures the equality of individuals. This is a central assumption of participatory democracy (Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992).

Equal participation is viewed as an important method to assert that no particular interest dominates, but the common good is pursued. The establishment of and compliance with a general will is another element of participatory democracy which mirrors Rousseau's conceptions of the volonté generale. All decisions made in the community have an impact on each individual in the society. Participation creates a natural interdependence of individuals and a sense of collectivity Therefore, in the long run individuals will regard the common good as something that will also improve their own situation. Furthermore, communal decisions carry a special legitimacy. They create an "obedience to a law one prescribes to oneself" (Rousseau in Pateman, 1970, 25). The acceptance of decisions increases when citizens participate in them as equals. This also fosters the solidarity and communality among citizens. Therefore, direct involvement of citizens in the political process creates a shared responsibility for the development of a society(Zittel, 2006). This is an important effect of participation that the concept of participatory democracy assumes.

The identification with the common interest through participation is also apparent in the work of J.S.Mill. Though Mill was focusing on an ideal representative government, some of his ideas were integrated in the participatory democracy concept. Mill expected that the regular interaction in the political sphere curbs egocentric or profit-oriented interests and leads to the awareness of a public interest. Mill focused in this regard more on decisions and actions of representatives. But he also states that political institutions have the fundamental purpose to educate citizens towards civic virtue. Civic virtue consists on the one hand of cognitive abilities to participate in politics and on the other hand implies the moral reorientation of selfish interests towards a common good. Similarly to later participatory theorists, Mill considered it as decisive that every individual has the possibility and the necessary skills to contribute to the representative government.

Following the considerations of Mill, participatory theorists view all citizens as capable and competent to engage in political processes. In comparison to elite-focused democratic concepts, participatory democracy assumes that all individuals have generally the abilities to understand political matters, to deliberate about them and make decisions oriented towards a common good. In fact, participatory theorists demand that all individuals receive the resources and possibilities to fully develop their political participation skills. Bachrach and Botwinick (1992) states in this regard:

> "The key concept in participatory theory, maximum self-development, derives from the proposition that ordinary people have the capacity to develop not only their internal selves but also a potential for expanding their self-interest to encompass an identification with and a commitment to the well-being of others."(Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992, 20f)

Thus, participation has an important educative effect on individuals. The active involvement in political processes teaches individuals important democratic values and procedural norms such as toleration, compromise building or an orientation on the common good (Pateman, 1970) Furthermore, citizens learn that they are able to contribute, that their vote counts or their efforts have an effect on certain decisions. This is what Bachrach and Botwinick (1992) calls self-empowerment or Pateman (1970) refers to as "political efficacy" .

Participatory theorists are aware of the socio-economic differences of individuals such as having different social status, professional prestige, income or property. But they still regard that political involvement enables each individual to develop the necessary skills to actively shape the political process and contribute to the common good. Self-development or -empowerment are intrinsic in each individual, but need to be stimulated and strengthened through participation. In orientation on Mill, participatory theorists demand that the structures of a (political) society offer individuals the possibilities to develop the necessary skills for participation. The best form to learn to participate is to do it and to do it everywhere it is possible. Therefore, participation contributes a great deal to the (political) socialization of each individual (Pateman, 1970).

Rousseau and Mill as early supporters of participation mostly favoured involvement in small localities. Rousseau thought in his ideal conception of small city states and proposed the direct decision-making of all citizens. Mill envisioned that individuals participate in local affairs to learn and practice their political skills which they can then apply at the national level (Pateman, 1970, 30f). This focus on small localities for participatory processes has been adapted in the later conceptualizations proposing citizen assemblies or mini-publics at local level to involve citizens more into the political process.

Furthermore, participatory theorists deepened the idea of communal decision-making and extended participation spheres to the work place, the family and other societal institutions like schools or leisure clubs. The idea is to integrate participation into everyday life, where individuals interact and are confronted with decisions that directly concern them. Participatory theorists want to democratize these fields that are often hierarchically organized. This democratization implies that all involved citizens contribute to the decision-making and share communally the responsibility for it.

Pateman (1970) and Bachrach and Botwinick (1992) particularly focused on participation in the work place as the living conditions of most individuals depend in terms of time, income or social contacts on their work. According to them, the current hierarchical organization of work has negative psychological effects on individuals' political efficacy: They do not develop an interest in their environment and do not try to influence decisions as they do not have the possibilities to do so and thus cannot develop the necessary capabilities. When individuals lack control of their work place, they are also unlikely to be involved in politics. In particular, they do not perceive that they can contribute something, which implies low political efficacy. According to Pateman, they can only develop an urge to actively shape decisions and a sense of responsibility, when they practice it at

their work place. Then, there is a positive spill-over effect to the national political sphere. [13]

The following quote of Pateman (1970) underlines the practical demands of participatory democracy:

> "If individuals are to exercise the maximum amount of control over their own lives and environment then authority structures in these areas must be so organized that they can participate in decision making" (Pateman, 1970, 43)

The general practical goal of participatory democracy is to enhance societal autonomy, self-regulation of different organizations or firms and the empowerment of all individuals. It implies an equal and active involvement in all social affairs in each individual's life. At work, this points to cooperatives or forms of guild organizations. In leisure clubs, members should receive the possibility to shape the organization and development of the club and receive an equal voting power for important decisions. At the local level, citizens are supposed to contribute to important policy projects, debate on them and also decide which one is to be pursued in the municipality.

(Barber, 2003) made the most extensive proposals in his "Strong Democracy" how to integrate more individual political involvement in the current democratic systems. In comparison to Pateman and Bachrach, Barber focuses on the political sphere. He identifies different flaws of liberal democracies, mainly criticizing the focus on self-interest and the restriction of political involvement to elections leaving individuals otherwise passive and alienated from politics. This criticism is directed to representative democracy as described in the previous section. Barber appeals for more autonomy and self-governance in particular at the local level, which would foster more political participation and establish a collective responsibility for important decisions. He explains about the character of strong democracy:

> "Active citizens govern themselves directly here, not necessarily at every level and in every instance, but frequently enough and in particular when basic policies are being decided and when significant power is being deployed." (174 Barber, 2001,)

Thus, Barber's "strong democracy" stresses active involvement in important decisions. The concept of "strong democracy" is not an adversary to current liberal representative systems. Barber recognizes that the liberal focus on the protection of individual liberties and rights is an important securing element of a democratic system and that representative institutions are necessary in mass societies to ensure effective decision-making and accountability. However, the individualistic approach and the delegation of political power to representatives diminishes the democratic capacity of individuals. Similarly to other participatory conceptions, Barber believes that it is possible to teach individuals to be self-determined, collaborative and oriented towards the common good through democratic practice.

[13] Pateman's ideal is a social democracy in orientation on G.D.H. Cole's Guild Socialism (Pateman, 1970).

Barber's proposals to improve the current representative system consists of regular communal decision-making in decentralized, federally structured units with a communicative infrastructure. The small units enable deliberation of important matters which is a prerequisite to decision-making according to Barber. The deliberation and decision-making is supposed to happen in central assembly halls or squares. Additionally, telecommunication systems should facilitate the connection between different commonalities and the discussion of national issues. In particular, Barber proposes institutional reforms in three spheres: First, he wants to enable more democratic debates with deliberation and agenda-setting possibilities. This can be pursued through neighbourhood assemblies, which would not only discuss local matters, but serve to prepare regional or national popular votes on important issues. Second, Barber wants to establish more direct decision-making through national initiatives and referendum processes. And third, he envisions "strong democratic action" based on voluntary communal work as diverse as serving in administrative posts for the organization of town meetings, neighbourhood crime watch or cleaning and improving public places.

The concept of "strong democracy" clearly encourages the introduction of direct democratic institutions. In orientation on ancient Greek conceptions, Barber views small local assemblies as central to political decision-making. Though these units are supposed to enjoy some autonomy, national matters should also be discussed and decided in these units. In this way, Barber transfers the concept of a polis to the national level of a modern society. However, Barber does not only want to introduce more possibilities to decide on important issues, but requests that a long and considerate process of opinion-formation and actions precedes direct decision-making. He imagines that television and electronic voting would enable the different localities to interact and share opinions in the deliberation process. Thus, Barber's concept can be viewed as a modern version of historical concepts of direct rule described in section 2.1.1.

Furthermore, Barber (2003) want to secure the quality of decision-making through a multi choice format on the ballot and a two-stage voting process. In this regard, Barber criticises current referendums which are often elite-based instruments and views the preceding public debates to referendums as too short and receiving not enough deliberation. In order to make popular votes truly democratic and educative, referendum issues need to be reflected profoundly exchanging different arguments and elaborating considerate solutions. It is obvious that Barber's thinking is influenced by the deliberative model of democracy focusing on public discourse, exchange of arguments and reason as guiding principles of decision-making.[14] Deliberative and participatory democratic models have in common to emphasize the political process and the involvement of common citizens in it. In this regard, they present alternative concepts to the representative principle dominant in modern democracies. They developed in the course of a perceived democratic crisis described in detail in section 2.1.5.

The different proposals to establish a more participatory democracy can be divided in three groups according to Zittel (2006): integrative democratisation which means the

[14]For more information on deliberative democracy see the next section and the overviews in Fishkin (2011) or Bohman and Rehg (1997).

extension of democratic processes to other societal spheres; expansive democratisation which implies that citizens receive more institutional possibilities to influence political decision-making at different governmental levels; and efficiency-oriented democratisation focusing on easier access to information or improved mechanisms of participation especially through electronic devices. The integrative democratisation reflects the conceptions of Pateman or Bachrach focusing on the extension of participation to other spheres of life. Efficiency-oriented approaches on the other hand deal with how existing institutions can be improved with new technologies and reflect current debates around the influence of the internet on political participation. This thesis concentrates on expansive democratisation that seeks to intensify political involvement of citizens between the elections.

Expansive democratization is based on the assumption that political influence is an intrinsic goal of each individual and that institutions create incentives to follow this goal. Democratic expansion means offering individuals more opportunities to have an impact on relevant decisions. This reflects the early participatory theory criticism on representative democracies to restrict political participation to the election of representatives. The answer is to be directly involved in decision-making. In practice, expansive democratization points to such processes as popular votes on policies, elections of executives or other important officials as well as their recall. It also refers to the expansion of competences at state or local levels which would reinforce the benefits of individual participation on these political levels. Overall, expansive democratization has the goal to increase the perceived gains of political involvement through newly created possibilities to participate and directly influence decision-making.

The previous considerations point to an important difference between participatory democratic theory and the more representative approaches described in the previous section. Participatory theorists do not consider it as problematic when all citizens take an active part in politics and decision-making. No particular dangers are expected from mass participation in the political process. Through active participation individuals would automatically orient themselves more and more on communal interests and seek general welfare (Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992; Pateman, 1970). The active, regular participation of citizens in the political process makes the current political system more sustainable, according to participatory theorists. The frequent involvement of citizens in politics ensures the acceptance of decisions and enhances the legitimacy of the system (Barber, 2003). These are strong assumptions which respond to the common criticism of direct democratic rule in the 20th century.

The harshest criticism on participatory democracy can be identified in elitist democratic approaches (Sartori, 1987; Schumpeter, 1942, see for example). The experiences with fascist and other totalitarian regimes, that often emerged from previously democratic rule, led to a rejection of too much mass involvement. Masses are considered as mostly anti-democratic, easy to manipulate and having too little political knowledge and abilities to moderately participate in decision-making. Therefore, the preservation of a democratic system depends on (representative) elites. The basic control of elites is estab-

lished through recurrent free elections, which also guarantees political equality and thus ensures the democratic character of the system.

A further criticism is apparent in pluralist approaches in orientation on James Madison. Pluralists point to the impossibility to create a communally interest or see it as a danger to put all citizens under a general will (Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992; Held, 1995). Pluralism emphasizes individualism and the diversity of interests. The competition of diverse interests guarantees that no tyranny of whatever form can emerge and prevents especially that the interests of minorities are disregarded by a dominant majority. Representative government is often favoured in pluralist democratic theory, as elected officials and the deliberation in parliament present an important hurdle for unreflective mass opinions. This is a central difference between supporters of representative and participatory democratic models that is considered as a normative influence in the next chapter.

In sum, participatory democracy envisions self-government in all possible societal spheres, but in particular an extension of the active involvement of citizens in politics. When citizens participate they understand better the common interests and start to identify with it. This leads in turn to responsible decisions in orientation on the common good and strengthens the sense of community and responsibility, according to the participatory ideal. In this regard, participatory institutions have an important function for the socialization and civic education of individuals. The active involvement in decisions ensures that these decisions are executed, accepted and complied with. Supporters of the participatory democratic model expect that participation enhances the legitimacy and strengthens the stability of the democratic system.

However, participatory democracy is a normative ideal that has not been achieved in reality so far. There are various attempts to establish participatory institutions (for a comprehensive overview see Smith, 2009). So far, however, these attempts remain sporadic and are often restricted to the local level. The only exception can be viewed in the increased introduction or application of direct democratic institutions. This trend is described in detail in section 2.2.2. Nevertheless, even if participatory democracy has not been realized in its full manifestation, it is plausible that political elites and other actors in the public discourse are familiar with the participatory ideal. It is likely that the arguments and demands of participatory democracy shape political debates and influence decisions concerning the introduction or reform of political institutions. Therefore, this concept is used as a background for the normative explanation in this thesis described in the next chapter.

Participatory democracy is not intended to replace representative democracies. Most participatory theorists accept the conclusion that democracy in mass societies is only possible through representation based on free, fair and recurrent elections (for example see Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992; Pateman, 1970). However, participatory democratic theory points to limits of representative institutions and in particular lament that individual participation is restricted to recurrent elections and party membership. Thus, it demands to extend the possibilities of political participation in terms of modes and areas. In this regard, participatory democracy can be viewed as a response to the crisis of representative

democracy which emerged in the public debate in the 1960ies and has endured until today. In the next section, I introduce briefly the different criticisms and developments pointing to a crisis of representative democracy.

2.1.5 Current Criticism and Issues of Representative Democracies

Criticism of representative institutions has existed since their slow dissemination in the Western hemisphere, in particular Rousseau was a harsh opponent of representative institutions(Alonso, Keane and Merkel, 2011). According to Rousseau, representation endangers the individual sovereignty of people, as representatives cannot guarantee to truly reflect the will of the represented, this is only possible directly through the people themselves. Following Rousseau's insistence on peoples' sovereignty, modern critics of representation stress that the participation in elections is not sufficient for a full democracy and that citizens need to be actively involved in politics, in particular in important decisions. This is a position of participatory democracy presented in the previous section, but also of populist critics of more recent times.

For the purposes of this study only the issues that directly concern political elites are of utmost interest. Therefore this review will look at the demands from participatory and deliberative theorists, then focus on the arguments of populist thinking and consider further criticism connected to post-democracy. Additionally, I briefly review empirical studies that indicate crisis symptoms of representative democracies based on citizens' behaviour in the last fifty years. The goal of this chapter is to present the context of political elites in public debates, i.e. which criticism they face, what does the public demand and expect as well as which alternative institutions are discussed to improve the current situation. In this way, this chapter contributes to the understanding of institutional reforms and can help to explain why political elites might endorse direct democratic institutions or reject them.

The political student movements of 1968 initiated a debate about the democratic system people want to live in and thus are considered as a starting point of the representative crisis. In the scholarly debate, the writings of Habermas (1973) on the one hand and the study of Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki (1975) on the other hand played an important role at the beginning (for an overview see Merkel, 2014*a*). The two studies present different attacks on representative democracy. On the one hand, representative democracy is not responsive enough to the growing demands and capabilities of citizens. On the other hand, representative institutions are confronted with a more and more individualistic society which leads to polarization and increased political involvement that challenges political authority and impedes effective government. In both cases, the representative system is confronted with increasing demands from the public combined with decreasing trust in the existing institutions and actors (Merkel, 2014*a*). In the following, I discuss first the most important demands and then turn to the trust problematic.

The main normative criticism on representative democracies in modern times comes from participatory and deliberative theory where the core argument consists of a demand for more political involvement of individuals (Barber, 2003; Fishkin, 2011; Pateman,

2012).[15] The representative system offers only little possibilities to directly participate in politics, basically it reduces the political process to elections where only a limited number of citizens is directly involved in the discussion of public issues and solution-finding, according to participatory and deliberative critics. The participatory camp appeals for more self-determination of individuals in their everyday life, which would also enhance their interest and involvement in politics. According to participatory theories, democratic institutions need to be designed in such a way that they foster each individual's political efficacy. Thus, participatory theorists want citizens to actively shape the political process. This in only possible when citizens are directly involved in important processes.

For participatory theory, representative institutions are simply not enough, they cannot guarantee or provide the necessary skills to emancipate citizens. Therefore, more opportunities to participate need to be created, on the one hand in the private sphere, i.e. in family life or in leisure clubs, and on the other hand in local communities, but also at the national level in important decision making processes. This does not imply that the representative system should be replaced completely. Most participatory theorists seek to reform certain institutions and introduce new possibilities of participation. As Barber emphasizes for example, the ultimate goal is self-government in small political units. Participatory theorists want to involve citizens in important matters, mostly of everyday concern, but do not imagine that each and every question needs to be decided through a referendum or after long debates and deliberative processes. In sum, participatory demands for more involvement concentrate on the input side of politics and seek to extend the possibilities to directly influence the political process.

The deliberative camp also endorses more political involvement of citizens, however, the primary goal is finding a consensual decision based on a comprehensive exchange of arguments and positions. This reflects a focus on the process itself as well as on the output of the political system. Deliberation means in this regard a process of broad information on the issue, its discussion from different points of views, the balanced exchange of arguments and the cooperative elaboration of a decision (Fishkin, 2011). Deliberative theorists expect that such a process generates decisions acceptable for everybody and therefore optimal for social cohesion and the pursue of the common good. In this regard, deliberative theorists criticize the emphasis on interest plurality which stresses social disagreement rather than collaborative deliberation and consensual decisions. They demand that the decision-making process is directed more to the elaboration of a commonly accepted solution. And this is possible through the process of deliberation which has been neglected in current representative institutions.

Deliberative theory entails a criticism on the pluralist and minimalist forms of democracy that consider interest aggregation and political competition of representative elites as sufficient elements for democratic government Deliberative theorists disapprove of the focus on competition of interests which creates conditions of a self-interested market where

[15] Deliberative models of democracy are not an explicit subject of this study because they focus more on the quality of the decision-making process than on the actual institutions of decision-making. In this regard, the participatory concept offers a closer link to direct democratic institutions, as has been demonstrated above. Moreover, some participatory theorists like Barber (2003) include deliberative ideas in their conceptions, which are sufficient for the purposes of this study.

representatives are only interested in re-election and not in the enhancement of the public good. This reduces the role of citizens to passive consumers of politics, who only are able to control the current elites through voting (Bohman and Rehg, 1997). Deliberative theorists believe that each and every citizen is able to participate in decision-making processes and should receive the responsibility to do so from time to time. Individuals need to receive comprehensive information, time and other resources to understand even complex matters and form a considerate opinion. Through the exchange of different arguments and positions the participating individuals then can elaborate a solution where in the best case all interest groups agree with.

The deliberative aim is primarily to create conditions that will allow considerate social debates about current matters. There are different suggestions how to reach this goal, but most proposals demand that common people are selected to participate in deliberative processes on single issues. Thus, there is only a small selection of people - usually some kind of random or proportionate sample of the population - that participates and deliberates and decides as representatives of the rest population. In this regard, deliberative theory imagines a form of a representative system, where everybody can be involved in the decision-making process, not only professional political elites as in the current democracies.

Representative democracy is not only criticized from deliberative and participatory theorists, which reflects a normative scholarly criticism, but also in the political practice through the populist movement.[16] The populist camp shares the normative demand for more direct governing and active participation in decision-making, but differs from participatory demands in the expected effect. At the centre of populist thinking is the implementation of the general will of the people rather than the strengthening of each individual's ability to participate in politics.

Populists often claim that representative elites do not pursue the general will of the people (Mudde, 2004; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015). Therefore at the core of populist thinking is the antagonism of the "pure people" and the "corrupt elite" that neglects the interest of the people (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015). Most populists are vague about who the people are, mostly they refer to some kind of mystical heartland from the past (Mudde.2004). However, no matter who the people are, their interests are not adequately implemented through the current institutions and actors, according to populist criticism. Therefore, people need to decide directly on important issues. Or people can delegate their will to capable (populist) leaders that know best what is good for them (Mudde, 2004). In populist thinking, the focus shifts from active involvement in the political process to the demand of certain results in accordance with the will of the people. Cas Mudde explains this idea as following:

[16]By movement I understand the ongoing trend of populist parties, leaders, and other organizations since the 1980ies This does not imply that the movement is coordinated or transnationally organized. However, there are similar, though widely independent, phenomena observable in different countries that share particular ideas like the criticism on representative institutions and elites as well as the demand for direct involvement of citizens in politics. In this regard, I only consider Western democracies, though similar trends are observable in the Southern hemisphere (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015).

> "The heartland of contemporary populism is thus focused primarily on the output and not on the input of democracy. What they[i.e. the populists, OH] demand is responsive government, i.e. a government that implements policies that are in line with their wishes." (Mudde, 2004, 558)

The lacking responsiveness of political elites to the will of the people is what populists criticize in representative democracy most. Assuming a unitary will of the people, populists argue against pluralist ideas that protect the diversity of individual interests. In populist thinking, the general will mostly implies the wishes of the majority of the people, not an abstract ideal of a common good as emphasized by Rousseau or J.S. Mill. Populists think that the majority is always right and minorities have to subordinate to the majority. This emphasis on majority rule implies that the interests of social minorities can be disregarded. In fact, many populist parties or leaders tend to stress the unitary identity of a certain homogeneous and traditionalist native group in front of differing views and social minorities such as immigrants, gays or religious groups (Mudde, 2004; Plattner, 2009*b*). According to populist argumentation, representative actors and institutions in today's liberal democracies occupy themselves too much with minorities and their rights and thus forget in this regard to implement the true will of the majority. This presents an attack on liberal democratic concepts that emphasize the protection of individual interests and in particular those of minorities through a written constitution and the rule of law.

The general demand of populists to give people a stronger voice in decision-making and enable more direct political participation resembles the thinking in the participatory democratic model. However, the focus on the will of a majority marks an important difference of populism to participatory democratic theory. Though participatory theorists argue for an orientation on the common good, they consider it as an effect of broad and reflected political participation, not a primary goal. Participatory theory clearly concentrates on the input in a democratic system and wants to improve the political process demanding active engagement of each citizen in this process. Populist thinking, however, is interested in results of politics, which need to reflect the will of the people. Participatory democratic theory insists that people need to learn how to participate in politics, how to deliberate and decide in community. According to populist thinking, people - or the majority - already know what is best and therefore only need to be given the opportunity to decide or to select the rightful leaders for the implementation of the popular will.

Next to populist criticism, the work of Crouch (2004) influenced the debate around a representative crisis mainly pointing at a hollowing out of democratic institutions and a slow turn towards a hidden aristocratic regime of a politico-economic elite.[17] Crouch diagnoses that Western democracies are increasingly developing into so called "post-democracies". These post-democratic regimes are characterised by formal democratic institutions that lose their impact in decision-making processes and an increased influence of global enterprises on politics instead.[18] (Crouch, 2004) specifically criticizes political

[17]Colin Crouch is not the only critic in this regard, but is used here as an example for the "post-democratic" claim.

[18]This is only a selected description of Crouch's arguments and criticism. The diagnosis of post-democratic developments is much more complex, but is beyond the scope of this study.

elites to be more concerned with connections to business than with the representation of political interests of ordinary people. Elections do not reflect a competition of political programs any more, but are dominated by professional campaigns to win votes, according to Crouch. This is accompanied by a decline of political parties and traditional political participation. As a consequence, citizens become increasingly passive and disaffected in politics.

Crouch does not offer a solution to the described symptoms, but demands a re-orientation on democratic principles such as thorough political information and discussion, broad participation and responsiveness of political elites to the interests of ordinary people. These demands are similar to the previously described participatory, deliberative and populist claims. Most critics of the current representative systems seem to agree that traditional political participation of ordinary people needs to be re-activated and that political debates should be re-directed towards a substantive exchange of arguments and political proposals. These demands are based on observations of a changing political environment and citizens' behaviour that empirical research documents since the 1960ies.

The most important observations that point to a crisis of representative democracy are: Participation in traditional representative institutions, in particular in elections and parties, has been decreasing since the 1960ies (Dalton, Russell J., Wattenberg, Martin P., 2002; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995); at the same time other forms of political involvement focusing on protest activities became more popular (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995). Attitudinal studies further observe declining trust in political actors and institutions (see for example Dalton, 2004; Norris, 1999). In general, citizens have become more disaffected with politics and often critical with the existing democratic regimes (see for example Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999). This contributes to a "growing disconnection between citizens and decision makers" (Smith, 2009, 4). Citizens seem to distance themselves from traditional institutions and actors because they perceive lacking responsiveness of these to their demands.

Some authors view the changing political participation and decreasing trust in institutions as a pressure on political elites to reform the existing representative systems (see for example Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Dalton, Cain and Scarrow, 2003; Geissel and Newton, 2012). The so called "critical" citizens (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999) demand more involvement in the decision-making process and support the introduction of participatory institutions as mentioned above. As empirical evidence demonstrates, political elites in Western democracies indeed show increased willingness to introduce new institutions or changes to the existing practices (Dalton, Cain and Scarrow, 2003; Jacobs and Leyenaar, 2011; Smith, 2009). These institutions often reflect citizens' demands for more inclusion, transparency or accountability, but are seldom radical (Smith, 2009). Thus, most institutional reforms are designed to secure the representative democratic setting.

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that this section had the aim to introduce important (theoretical) criticisms of representative democracy as well as symptoms of a representative crisis in the last fifty years. These criticisms and issues of current representative systems

construct the context of public debates surrounding reforms of the current institutions. Whether there is a representative crisis is debatable (Alonso, Keane and Merkel, 2011; Merkel, 2014*b*) and depends on the definition of the ideal to which representative systems are compared. Nonetheless, the changing political environment is also apparent in political elites' efforts to reform the institutional setting in a way that would respond to public demands, but at the same time to secure the existing institutions and their role in the political system.

Direct democratic institutions are a popular response to the perceived crisis and public demands for more inclusion in decision-making (Saward, 2009; Scarrow, 1999). There is an obvious trend to use direct democratic procedures in the last thirty years, as section 2.2.2 describes in detail. The increased application of direct democratic procedures can be explained referring to a representative crisis. However, it remains unclear whether the introduction is simply a response to public demands and the perception of a democratic crisis or whether there is also a change in the democratic ideals of the responsible decision makers. The simple link between a representative crisis and new democratic institutions also ignores the political context and background of elites. Therefore, the current study concentrates on other explanations than the claim of a public demand or response to a perceived crisis and elaborates two competing explanatory perspectives that take into account the political context as well as the normative background of political elites. Before these theoretical perspectives are introduced I review in the next sections how direct democratic institutions appear in practice and what current research has discovered so far.

2.2 Direct Democracy in Practice

In this section I look at the general trends in direct democracy in the last thirty years, in particular the variation of the institutions around the world, how it has been practised, perceived by the public and finally, how political elites position themselves in this regard based on the existing studies. First, I outline a typology of direct democratic institutions reviewing important classifications and building an own categorization with a focus on the perspective of political elites. I distinguish here in particular how direct democratic institutions can become veto-players in the decision-making process and what consequences this creates for different political elites.

Second, I briefly review how direct democracy has been practised in the last thirty years focusing on major trends identified in the literature. In particular, I compare elite-initiated referendums with bottom-up initiated popular votes. This section builds a contextual frame for the motives of political elites. On the one hand, it illustrates which trends elites possibly perceived or experienced in the last thirty years, on the other hand it also demonstrates the importance of direct democratic practices in the public (and academic) debate.

Third, I briefly look at how direct democratic institutions are perceived in public and relate it to the demand side of democracy, to which elites usually have to respond. Fourth, I examine the current research on the supply side, i.e. how literature discusses

political elites' positions towards direct democracy. This subsection offers a small research overview for the theoretical considerations and later analyses. Additionally, I lay out whom I identify as political elites and focus especially on their role in direct democratic processes. Finally, all important concepts and theoretical bases are briefly summarised in the last subsection.

2.2.1 Direct Democratic Institutions from the Perspective of Representative Elites

In this study, direct democracy is understood as referendums or popular votes on particular issues. These votes can happen on different levels of governance and place voters as decision-makers at the centre of political attention. The literature differentiates various forms of referendums describing in detail such items as requirements, issue restrictions, acceptance quorums etc. (see for example Altman, 2011; Butler and Ramney, 1994; Qvortrup, 2014). The purpose of most studies is to give a good descriptive overview of the direct democratic institutions in representative systems and point to important cross-national trends in the application of popular votes. Another focus in literature is to describe which (normative) effects they have on political participation and the general functioning of democratic systems (see for example Budge, 1996; LeDuc, 2003; Setälä and Schiller, 2009, see for example). Such a detailed overview or discussion of possible consequences is redundant in the course of this study, though some important practices and implications are described in the following. For the purposes of this study, it is more fruitful to distinguish the general types of popular votes and relate them to the behavioural context of political elites. In the focus of this chapter is the question: How do several types of direct democracy change the behavioural outlook of different political elites in representative democracies? In the following passages, I briefly outline how referendums can be differentiated and focus on the role of political elites in the different institutions.

Altman (2011) offers a comprehensive classification of referendums according to four criteria[19]: First, direct democratic institutions can be differentiated according to their status in the constitution or comparable laws. The so called mandatory referendums are usually connected to constitutional changes and are differentiated from so called facultative referendums that are initiated ad hoc for currently relevant issues. The second distinction of direct democratic institutions concerns their impact on the policy output. Popular votes can produce consultative results that serve elected representatives as a guideline in the final decision-making, or they can be binding, thus implying that the will of the majority becomes law without the intervention of elected representatives

A third criterion for the distinction of direct democratic institutions is their impact on the status quo of policies. Referendums can have a proactive character, thus intending to change the current status quo in a certain policy field. They can also have a reactive

[19]These criteria allow a quick and clear categorization of referendums reflecting the most important characteristics. However, not all combinations exist in reality or even make sense. For example, mandatory referendums usually are not initiated by a particular actor, but automatically, and logically should have a binding character. Nonetheless, this categorization helps to understand the full range of direct democratic possibilities without going into detail about institutional provisions and was chosen for the purposes of this study.

character, i.e. they can be initiated to protect the existing status quo and prevent changes. Finally, as a fourth criterion direct democratic institutions are differentiated according to the source of the initiative. Altman (2011) distinguishes roughly between top-down and bottom-up initiatives, where top-down implies all elite-initiated referendums and bottom-up refers to citizen initiatives.

Regarding the behavioural context in representative systems, the described criteria have different effects on political elites. Facultative referendums are more important for the current study, as elites can be actively involved in their initiation. Mandatory referendums directly present a hurdle in the decision-making process and thus also influence political elites behaviour. However, mandatory referendums are a constitutionally guaranteed institution and thus launched automaticity cancelling out political elites in the initiation process.[20] Facultative referendums offer more opportunities, but at the same time carry more risks, as will be described later on.

The distinction between binding and non-binding referendums does not often make a huge difference for elites' behaviour. Even non-binding referendums can be expected to have a strong impact on the decision-making process and often are treated as binding by governing representatives (Setälä, 2006; Tridimas, 2007). Tridimas (2007) convincingly observes that "it may be politically suicidal for parties to ignore the will of voters" (677) and that voters might not care much if a referendum is not treated as binding. Therefore, it is plausible to consider all referendums as effective for the behaviour of political elites.

Regarding the impact of referendums on the status quo of policies, two effects on political elites' behaviour should be differentiated. First, policy proposals which intend to change the status quo of law-making reflect a means to bypass parliamentary decision-making. In particular, the public or organized groups outside the parliament can use proactive referendums to influence policy-making. At the same time, even governing elites might view such referendums as useful to receive popular support for proposals with insufficient parliamentary approval. Second, reactive referendums, often also called abrogative, can be initiated before a policy proposal becomes law[21] through parliamentary decision-making and thus are an important instrument of opposition actors in and outside parliament to protect the constitutional status quo. The differentiation between referendums changing or protecting the status quo is thus relevant for the current study. However, the presented distinction stresses that the responsive political actors are decisive for the effects of direct democratic institutions. In particular, the distinction between governing elites and the opposition in and outside the parliament is of relevance which is now reviewed in detail.

For the purposes of this study, the most important criterion is who initiates the popular vote. The initiative power can change the traditional power distribution in a representative system, in particular if non-governing actors are the initiators. With the initiation of a referendum the different political actors pursue distinct goals. Why different actors are

[20]However, political elites can still play an important role in referendum campaigns. Nonetheless, participation in referendum campaigns is possible in all popular votes and therefore discussed later on in a general manner.

[21]In some cases, an abrogative referendum can be initiated after a law has passed in parliament.

motivated to call a referendum can help to understand why political elites support direct democratic procedures, in particular from a strategic point of view. Therefore, the following considerations concentrate on this criterion leaving the previous three distinctions aside.

I distinguish roughly between top-down and bottom-up initiatives according to Altman (2011). Top-down initiatives are initiatives from political elites that divide into government and opposition actors. Possible top-down initiatives include facultative referendums called by the government, but also such organized by the opposition parties. Bottom up initiatives describe attempts of the public to enforce a referendum on a particular issue. Usually, the public is represented through organized groups of citizens. These groups need to collect a certain amount of signatures to either propose a new policy or in the special case of an abrogative referendum to enforce a vote on a current legislative proposal in parliament. The strongest differentiation is between government initiated referendums and citizen-initiatives, while top-down referendums from the opposition are somewhere in-between

Governments preferable choose issues where the majority of voters is likely to confirm their positions. Thus, referendums initiated by the government are considered as „controlled“ popular votes (Smith, 1976). As governments decide on the time, the wording of the referendum question and other conditions, these top-down referendums are likely to produce results convenient to governmental goals. However, referendums initiated by the government can become „anti-hegemonic“ when the electorate decides contrary to what the government intended. Therefore, referendums always carry a risk for the government. This is described in more detail further below.

In some countries a parliamentary minority and other institutional players such as presidents can initiate a referendum, which also appears to be an initiative from top-down. However, referendums initiated by non-government elites have a different function and reflect different motives than governmental initiatives. For the opposition and other institutional players[22], referendums are instruments to control governmental policies. From a strategic perspective, the opposition can use referendums to challenge and possibly reverse governmental policies (Rahat, 2009). The referendum initiative provides the parliamentary opposition a possibility to influence policy-making outside the traditional legislative process. In this way, the opposition is likely to increase its impact on policy-making and have a strong control instrument in front of government.

In a similar way, citizen-initiated referendums have a monitoring function for governmental policies (Smith, 1976). Depending on the institutional specifications, citizens are able to oppose the current laws of the government or propose their own policies in referendums. This represents a direct intrusion in representative decision-making. Citizen-initiated referendums have a strong "anti-hegemonic" (Smith, 1976) effect because citizens then actively shape policies and interfere with government politics. Hug and Tsebelis (2002) consider them as the strongest veto-players in a system: "If citizens can submit

[22] As the focus of this study are parliamentary democracies I do not consider presidential referendums in this overview.

their own policy proposals and trigger a referendum, they cancel out the powers of existing veto players"(489).

However, an initiative from citizens requires a lot of organization in order to be successful, for example collecting signatures or convincing the public of the policy salience during the referendum campaign. Therefore, organized groups usually are the central actors in citizen-initiated referendums. These can be movements, interest groups or political parties. Research on direct democracy emphasizes that referendums have an empowering effect on organized groups in the electorate or marginalized parties (see for example LeDuc, 2003; Uleri, 2002). Thus, citizen-initiated referendums offer the opposition in and outside the parliament a vehicle to actively shape policy-making and interfere with government politics.

No matter how a referendum is initiated, the power-distribution between citizens and political elites changes in a popular vote. The decision-making power shifts from governing representatives back to the voters (Hug and Tsebelis, 2002; Setälä, 2006; Smith, 1976). This has important implications in the representative system: First, elected representatives and especially the current governing elites lose their privileged position and function in the system. If voters directly decide on political issues, elected representatives become redundant, at least as decision-makers. In this regard, they lose an important power, the power of policy-making. Second, elected representatives might face decisions that they do not agree with and most often cannot change them. If a popular vote is binding, representatives have to accept the decisions and deal with their outcomes.[23] In this regard, representatives are not able to revise a draft or introduce an alternative proposition as in parliamentary decisions. The role of representative institutions, in particular the parliament, is at best restricted and often undermined in referendums.

Third, even if referendums are not practised frequently, they are risky interventions in the traditional decision-making. Overall, there is great uncertainty regarding the outcomes of referendums. The results of popular votes depend in the final stage on the unpredictable choices of voters. It is difficult to foresee who will participate in the vote and if the necessary requirements (participation quorums and approval rates) are fulfilled. Additionally, referendums require a great deal of organization on the side of the state and cause a delay in the decision-making process, as each referendum is accompanied by a campaign to inform and motivate the public to vote.

The biggest risk for elected representatives is, however, the lack of control in the opinion-making process. Elected representatives can try to influence voters' choices during a referendum campaign, but the final result depends on different complex factors: During a referendum campaign the adversary camp mobilizes and the public debate can turn against the position of the initiators. In this regard, elected representatives face more competition in referendums, as more players enter the game, especially in form of well organized interest groups. In sum, referendums bear special risks for elected political elites, which are discussed further in the section on the strategic perspective.

[23]The difficult parliamentary process around the so called Brexit-referendum is a case in point.

Next to the initiation of a popular vote, the referendum campaign plays an important role for political elites' behaviour. During a referendum campaign two positional camps emerge, usually a yes and a no camp in the concrete question. Political elites are unlikely to remain neutral in referendums, especially if the issue at stake is highly debated in public. If political elites want to play a role in future politics, they need to position themselves in the referendum issue. This applies especially to elected representatives, as opinion formation is one of their representative functions. Moreover, referendum campaigns offer elected representatives a good opportunity to improve their public standing and actively shape policy-making. This is especially relevant for opposition elites that normally do not have much impact on the decision-making. Active involvement in the referendum process can lead to more public attention and improve political elites' popularity.

Furthermore, political elites outside the parliament can become influential through referendum campaigns. A referendum is not restricted to elected representatives, but is open to engagement of other political actors. Political elites outside the parliament can improve their public recognizability campaigning in a referendum. At the same time, they receive a means for active policy-shaping outside the parliamentary process. One condition in this regard is that they need financial resources and staff that supports their campaign. Therefore, it is seldom singular individuals, but more often organized groups that actively influence referendum campaigns. As mentioned above, these groups can be existing interest groups, spontaneously formed citizen groups, but also political parties in and outside the parliament. Interest groups might become publicly more visible and are able to pursue their policy goals through referendums. Political parties, moreover, receive an instrument to improve their popularity and chances for future political offices.

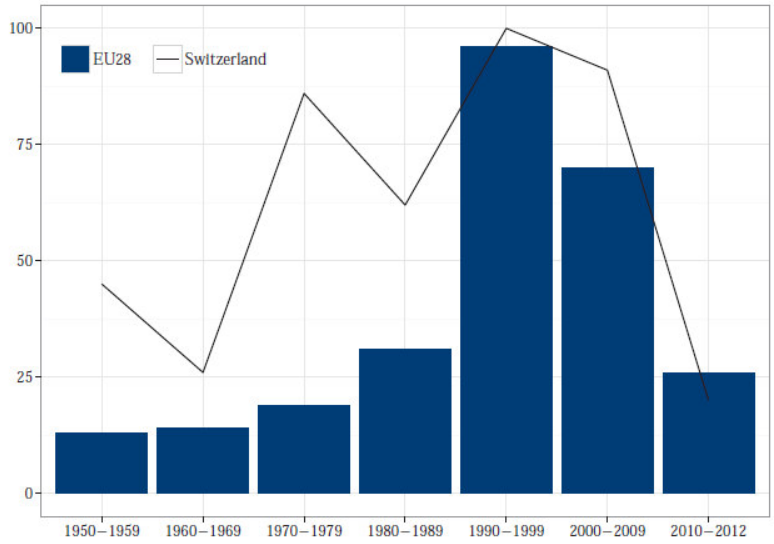
In sum, the referendum process offers political elites a chance to play an active role in politics, no matter in which position they are currently. In comparison to the parliamentary process, even not elected political elites and organized interest groups can actively influence policy-making through referendums. The overview here described the institutional opportunities opening for political elites through referendums. In the next subsection, I briefly review which kind of referendums have been frequently used in the last thirty years to demonstrate how these opportunities have been used so far.

2.2.2 The Boom of Direct Democracy in Western Democracies

The research on direct democracy is clear on one trend in the last three decades of democratic practice: Referendums are increasingly applied, especially in countries that lack a particular direct democratic culture (as for example Switzerland). This section is not primarily concerned with the reasons for these trends, though some suggestions are mentioned. It is directed to describe which kind of institutions have been spreading around Western democracies. In particular, I review whether top-down referendums have increased or more citizen-initiatives were introduced and carried out. This consideration is based on the differentiation presented in the previous section and highlights elite behaviour in established Western democracies.

Most studies state an increase of popular votes in established Western democracies (Altman, 2011; Butler and Ramney, 1994; Leininger, 2015). According to an account of Leininger (2015) the 28 member states of the EU increased their use of national referendums since the 1970ies enormously, especially in the two decades between 1990 and 2009, see figure 2.1 for details. In the 1990ies the number of referendums in EU member states tripled in comparison to the 1980ies with around 90 popular votes and remained high in the 2000s with around 70 popular votes in total. The increase of national referendums in EU member states is also apparent comparing it with Swiss popular votes, also presented in figure 2.1. Switzerland experienced an increase of popular votes starting in the 1970ies, thus preluding the trend in the EU member states. The Swiss account of popular votes is even higher than the one of the 28 EU member states. Nevertheless, while Switzerland looks back at a direct democratic tradition present before this boom, many European countries conducted a referendum in the last thirty years for the first time. Thus, we clearly observe a boom of direct democracy in the last three decades.

Figure 2.1: Number of National Referendums per Decade in the 28 EU Member States and Switzerland



Source: (Leininger, 2015); data based on Centre for Research on Direct Democracy(2014) and Universitaet Bern (2014)

Leininger (2015) provides also an overview of the institutional provisions and experience of the EU member states since the Second World War. This overview demonstrates that the majority of EU member states offers at the national level some form of direct democracy integrated in the constitution; only Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany and the Netherlands lack concrete institutional arrangements. Remarkably, in all 23 cases with direct democratic institutions top down referendums, mostly government initiatives, are established. 14 countries have also automatically triggered referendums on constitutional changes. And only nine EU member states allow citizen-initiatives to propose new legislation, Italy and Luxembourg have an abrogative form that enables citizens to repeal a law. The institutions in each country that entered this study are discussed in chapter 4 in more detail describing the similarity and difference of the cases.

In many countries the required institutions for referendums have been in the constitutions, but were barely used until the recent decades, as comparative research demonstrates (Altman, 2011; Butler and Ramney, 1994; Dalton, Cain and Scarrow, 2003). In this regard, government initiatives, where I also count initiatives of the parliamentary majority, suddenly became very popular throughout Europe. These top-down referendums are the most applied in the last three decades (even overtaking mandatory referendums)(Altman, 2011; Leininger, 2015). In the EU member states, top-down referendums became a popular means to ratify different treaties in the European integration process (for overviews Hobolt, 2009; Hug, 2002; Mendez, Mendez and Triga, 2014). Citizen-initiatives and abrogative referendums are less wide spread which is partly due to the lacking institutional provisions. In the countries with bottom-up referendums, they are frequently used, e.g. in Italy, Ireland and of course Switzerland(Leininger, 2015). In sum, direct democracy has been on the rise, but mostly initiated from above.

The introduction and extension of direct democratic institutions, especially concerning citizen-initiatives, is often debated in national parliaments and public, but seldom results in new institutional provisions. For example, direct democratic institutions have been frequently debated in the German Bundestag since the unification of the Federal Republic, but so far were only rejected due to the resistance of the Christian Democrats. In the coalition agreement of the current German government, the Christian Democrats at least agreed on a commission to examine the possibilities of new participatory institutions including direct democratic procedures (Rutz, 2018). Another example are the Netherlands, where the government introduced in 2015 the possibility of citizen-initiatives for an advisory referendum on legislative proposals following many debates in parliament (Hollander, 2017). As citizens started to use this instrument and the government struggled with the results of two referendums, the new government announced to repeal the advisory citizen referendum in 2018.

The two examples demonstrate that direct democratic procedures are still considered as interesting new institutions, in particular facing the current challenges in the democratic systems described in 2.1.5. The last thirty years in European democracies show that political elites are willing to try popular votes out, especially when they are initiated from above keeping the control on the issues, the timing and the consequences. However, it is also clear that political elites hesitate to establish them permanently and that scepticism is likely to arise following experience with direct democracy. This is not surprising, as political elites face power restrictions through such institutions. This aspect is discussed further in the theoretical chapter on the rational-strategic perspective.

Some authors argue that the trend to introduce more direct democratic institutions was a response to the public demand for more inclusion in the decision-making process and the declining trend in conventional political participation (Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Parkin and Mendelsohn, 2001*b*; Scarrow, 1999). The changing political participation and rise of new institutional demands are closely connected to the emergence of politically more involved and "critical" citizens (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999). These critical citizens demand more direct involvement in the political system and view

the existing representative institutions with scepticism. Studies on citizens' approval of direct democracy show that citizens critical of the current representative systems are the strongest supporters of popular votes (Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Donovan and Karp, 2006; Schuck and Vreese, 2015).[24] Not only the so called critical citizens are supporting direct democracy, an overwhelming majority of citizens in Western democracies - often reaching more than 80 percent - are in favour of direct democratic measures (Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Schuck and Vreese, 2015). This general approval of direct democracy in public might be one reason for political elites to experiment with direct democratic measures. However, popular votes introduce a new veto player in the political game and thus a new hurdle in the decision-making process (Hug and Tsebelis, 2002), a reserved domain of political elites. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that responsiveness to public demands is not the only motivation, but other rationales play a role for political elites' approval of direct democracy. To explore them is the main aim of this study. Which motivations are suggested in the few studies on elites' support for direct democracy is reviewed in the next subsection.

2.2.3 Research on Political Elites' Views of Direct Democracy

Research on direct democracy is rich and diverse, however, only a few authors discuss the active role of political elites in the introduction or application of direct democracy and question their motives (for example Dalton, Cain and Scarrow, 2003; Parkin and Mendelsohn, 2001*a*; Rahat, 2009; Scarrow, 1999; Setälä, 1999). In this regard, the debate around referendums on the ratification of European Union Treaties presented the most fruitful field of observation (for overviews Hobolt, 2009; Hug, 2002; Mendez, Mendez and Triga, 2014; Morel, 2007). Many studies are based on post-hoc observations in a singular or few cases and lack theoretical reasoning to explain political elites' behaviour concerning direct democratic procedures. This is one research gap this study is aiming at. Before presenting a theoretical framework, I review the most important suggestions for political elites' motives in connection with direct democratic procedures. Additionally, I look in this section on three attitudinal studies that examine political elites' motivations to support direct democracy from a general point of view. These studies are used as a starting point for the following theoretical considerations of political elites' support for direct democracy.

As laid out in the previous subsection, the boom of direct democracy is sometimes related to an increased public demand for more direct political involvement. Scarrow (2001) questions the general assertion that political elites introduce direct democratic procedures to satisfy the electorates' participatory demand and argues that direct democratic measures are used by established political elites to secure their power position against uprising new competitors. She identifies a vote-seeking strategy in the proposition of direct democratic reforms and points out that the proposed reforms are mostly "designed to let public officials consult the people only when it suits the power holders"(Scarrow, 2001, 661).

[24]Recent studies discuss increasingly whether these critical citizens are an expression of the cognitive mobilization, thus more affluent and interested in politics, or of disaffection with the political system, often accompanied by populist tendencies and an aversion against representative structures(Schuck and Vreese, 2015). However, this debate is beyond the scope of this study.

Morel (2007) distinguishes three strategic motives for governing elites to call a popular vote: Referendums can help governments to solve internal disputes or to avoid certain issues on the electoral agenda, but also to actually adopt the desired decision which does not encounter the necessary majority in parliament. Similarly, Setälä (2006) detects a blame-avoidance strategy of governing elites: To avoid an electoral punishment for controversial issues, governments are likely to call a referendum and let the people decide. Thus, governing elites have various strategic incentives to be in favour of popular votes, which can be summarized as power-keeping incentives (Closa, 2007; Qvortrup, 2006).

Next to the government, political elites in general can view referendums as an opportunity to improve their power position in policy-making. Dalton, Cain and Scarrow (2003) as well as Parkin and Mendelsohn (2001*a*) emphasize that referendums offer parties a new instrument to make pressure in the decision-making process, no matter whether they are in government or in opposition. As mentioned, governing elites are likely to use referendums to solve internal party disputes or to enforce a certain policy position. Opposition elites, on the other hand, can use referendums to pressure governing elites for concessions in law-making. Furthermore, the comparative study of Dur and Mateo (2011) finds that referendums can be used as instruments in the electoral competition of governing and opposition parties, which the authors show through the comparison of party positions towards a referendum on the Nice Treaty in European countries and their electoral success. In sum, the proposal of direct democratic measures can be viewed as an effective instrument in political competition and particularly allows opposition actors to improve their current power position.

Additionally, some authors emphasize the empowering effect of direct democratic institutions for organized groups in the electorate as well as marginalized parties. Electorally small parties and well organized interest groups are able to set their own agenda, organize more support for their aim and finally influence decision-making through direct democratic measures (LeDuc, 2003; Smith, 1976; Uleri, 2002). These groups receive a strong leverage tool in policy-making through popular votes. Furthermore, Rahat (2009) defines "contradiction" as an incentive for opposition elites in his typology of elites' motives. Referendums enable opposition actors to contradict the majority position in parliament or more concrete government policies. Thus, particularly opposition parties receive a useful tool to challenge the government and have an impact on decision-making where they would usually be excluded.

The described research includes suggestions for elites' motives in referendums based on the political context and observed behaviour in popular votes. These explanations lack a general theoretical base, though most described motives are often termed strategic. What constitutes this strategic behaviour is not clearly elaborated. This is one research gap this study intends to close. Furthermore, instead of looking on post-hoc explanations of referendum occurrence, I develop a theoretical frame that offers a general explanation for the support of direct democratic procedures. Political support can be expressed through political actions - decisions, speeches or campaigns - but also through attitudes. In particular, I regard attitudes as important predispositions to act(van Deth, 2003, 30) that

guide political elites behaviour and thus can explain behaviour not only post-hoc, but also ex-ante. Studies on political elites' attitudes are rare so far, especially dealing with institutional preferences. The next passages review three important research papers that studied elites' support for direct democracy in an explorative way and thus influenced the current study.

Bowler, Donovan and Karp (2002) provided the first comparative study focusing on political elites and direct democratic institutions asking "When Might Institutions Change?". Examining the attitudes of legislative candidates in Canada, New Zealand and the United States, the authors discover that the current power position of the candidates and their parties is one important factor to be in favour or against direct democratic procedures. Candidates from governing parties, with long tenure and current incumbency are less supportive of direct democracy than candidates from the opposition, with less experience in parliament or without a seat in the current legislature. Furthermore, Bowler, Donovan and Karp (2002) test how ideological positions (on the left-right scale) influence the approval of direct democracy and find that Canadian and U.S. candidates are more supportive of direct democracy being on the right of the ideological scale, while in New Zealand leftist candidates are more supportive.

In a later article, Bowler, Donovan and Karp (2006) examine political candidates in Germany, Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand asking which impact have self-interest, values and ideology on the support for different electoral institutions including the referendum and initiative. The results concerning direct democracy again show that the current power position of political elites plays a role: Losers of the electoral system - particularly candidates without a parliamentary seat or from small parties - are more likely to support the introduction of popular votes. The authors find an even stronger effect of ideology: Leftist candidates show more support for direct democracy than rightist in the four considered countries. The conceptualized values reflected in satisfaction with the current democratic regime do not show a significant effect on the support of direct democracy, but on other proposals like term limits or compulsory voting.

A similar approach is used in the study of Zittel and Herzog (2014) on parliamentary candidates in two German states. In particular, the authors test whether electoral loss influences institutional attitudes following the assumptions from the so called "loser's consent" literature (Anderson et al., 2005*b*). Different studies in the research on electoral losers (e.g. Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Smith, Tolbert and Keller, 2010) stress that electoral loss affects democratic attitudes of voters, in particular towards alternative institutions and democratic reforms. This is also demonstrated in the study of Zittel and Herzog (2014): Electoral loss - individual as well as collective in the party, has a negative impact on candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime or the electoral process; dissatisfaction, on the other hand, influences positively the support for different institutional reforms such as the introduction or extension of direct democratic measures. Interestingly, the direct effects of electoral loss are absorbed through the dissatisfaction with the current democratic institutions. Zittel and Herzog (2014) also find that ideology,

used as a control variable, has an impact on the support for reforms; in particular leftist candidates are more inclined to approve direct democratic institutions.

Further evidence for the importance of ideological and value-based factors as well as electoral success is presented in the study of Ziemann (2009) on Dutch Parliamentary Candidates. The author analyses the support for different reforms of the representative system according to the assumptions from the three schools of neo-institutionalism. She observes an effect of parties' parliamentary weight on the support for direct democratic procedures which underlines strategic motivations in accordance to the rational-choice institutionalism. Equally, Ziemann (2009) finds an influence from ideological predispositions and evaluations of the democratic system as expected in sociological institutionalism that explains reforms through the incongruence of current institutions and individual norms and values. Additionally, Ziemann demonstrates that preferences for institutional reforms change over time in accordance to the idea of "critical junctures" from historical institutionalism. An increase of support for direct democratic measures in 2006 compared to 1990 is connected to the end of the Cold War according to the author.

Taken together, the few studies that concentrate on political elites' attitudes examine different explanations for the support of direct democracy. In particular, the previous studies tested the influence of political actors' electoral success and the resulting position in the political system. This is in accordance to the arguments found in the studies described at the beginning of this subsection. Referendums can be regarded as instruments in the political competition - either to receive more influence on policies, to improve the popular approval and/or to contradict governing elites. I summarize these motivations as attempts to improve the current power position of political elites and parties and call them rational-strategic, which will be explained in more detail in the next chapter.

As further factors for the support of direct democratic institutions the attitudinal studies include ideological influences and expressions of dissatisfaction with the current regime in their analyses. These influences are not considered as explanations for the occurrence of direct democratic procedures in the previously cited case studies and analyses of referendums. However, the results of the attitudinal analyses show that these factors have considerable impact on support for direct democratic institutions. Therefore, it is worth to include them in a general theoretical frame. A common ground of these influences are that they are based on deep rooted values and concepts of an ideal political system. I summarize these value-based influences as normative factors for the support of direct democracy and elaborate a comprehensive theoretical perspective in the second part of the following chapter.

This overview demonstrated that there is still a research gap if we try to explain political elites' support for direct democracy. Though different case studies on referendums point to strategic motives based on post-hoc observations, they lack an explicit theoretical concept for this strategic explanation of political elites' behaviour. The few attitudinal studies are of exploratory character and offer different explanations. However, a coherent and systematic theoretical frame is missing in these studies, which are furthermore restricted to a single or a few countries. The current study uses the design of previous at-

titudinal studies, but extends their empirical scope and theoretical outlook. In particular, this study integrates previous conceptual considerations into a comprehensive theoretical frame with two explanatory perspectives. The next chapter introduces these two perspectives in detail.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework: Two Perspectives on the Support for Direct Democracy

3.1 Rational-Strategic Perspective on Political Elites' Support for Direct Democracy

In this theoretical chapter, I embed the two perspectives on direct democracy, described briefly in the introduction, into a theoretical frame. In this part, I describe the strategic perspective on direct democracy. First, I present the general assumptions of rational behaviour to introduce the theoretical basis of this explanatory perspective. Then, I consider individual strategic orientations. Afterwards, I describe policy-, vote- and office-seeking motivations of political elites' parties. These sections form the core of the rational-strategic perspective. Finally, I also review how the institutional context in a country can influence strategic orientations in connection to direct democratic processes. In the last section of this part I summarize the main assumptions of the rational-strategic perspective.

3.1.1 General Assumptions of Political Elites' Rational Behaviour

This section focuses on the overall assumptions of rational choice concerning the behavioural sphere of political elites and links it to support for direct democracy. In this regard, three different levels of influences needs to be distinguished: First, political elites act as individuals in the political sphere and have strategic motivations connected to the survival in politics and the advancement of their political career. Second, political elites usually do not act alone, but through their party and consequently pursue also strategic interests connected to their party's political survival and performance. Finally and third, individuals and parties are embedded in an institutional framework and have to adapt their behaviour to the particular political structure in their country. The rational-strategic perspective is also connected to the institutional setting and political context in a country, that constitute the macro level of the considerations.

This thesis concentrates on the party level as the main determinant of political elites' strategic behaviour. The goals of political elites and their parties often converge. For analytical clarity, I separate the individual rational motivation from those of the party and concentrate mainly on important motivations for party-behaviour. I argue that the party-oriented strategic motivations affect the individual behaviour of elites because parties are central actors in Western parliamentary democracies. It is through parties that individual elites get the chance to be selected as candidates and win a seat in parliament. Furthermore, parties offer an important platform for publicity and policy-making and are indispensable for a political career (Sieberer and Mueller, 2017). Therefore, the party is the main unit of analysis in the strategic perspective.

Rational Choice Assumptions

The strategic perspective is based on the rational choice assumption of utility-maximizing behaviour of self-interested individuals (Downs, 1957b; Ordeshook, 1999). In this regard, self-interest implies that individuals have some set of personal preferences or goals, which are ranked in order (Ordeshook, 1999). They act in order to maximize the utility connected to their preferences, at the same time minimizing the costs. Costs are often resources that individuals use to reach their goals, e.g. money, time or intellectual efforts. Rational behaviour can also be described in terms of expected gains and risks of decisions, where gains represent the utility of the actions and risks the costs. For political elites acting rationally means to evaluate the risks and gains of certain decisions in connection with their general preferences. This rational behaviour is framed as strategic, because individuals use selected means to reach a certain goal that is not conceptually related to the applied measure. This behaviour needs to be differentiated from value-oriented or normative behaviour, where goals are pursued for their own sake or in connection to an adequate value. The latter behaviour is reviewed in the part on the normative perspective.

According to rational choice, individuals have some set of preferences that guide their behaviour. The set of preferences is debatable and usually assumed to be specific for each individual.[1] Individual preferences are a black box that is not easily uncovered. However, in order to construct an explanation of behaviour, researchers need to assume certain goals and argue how these influence the decisions individuals make. This is necessary to avoid tautologies, i.e. explaining a behaviour with the preference for such behaviour. This approach is also followed in this thesis.

The rational choice approach is arguing from an individual perspective, but is often used to explain the behaviour of groups such as parties. Usually, the assumptions on individual behaviour are aggregated to explain the actions of groups or whole societies, this approach is called methodological individualism. In the research on parties, rational choice assumptions are often connected to party leaders, who are considered as the most important representatives of the party(Mueller and Strom, 1999*b*). I extend these assump-

[1]For example, there is a discussion whether rational behaviour only is based on egoistic interests or whether altruistic goals can also be important preferences that guide rational behaviour.

tions to all members of parties that are actively involved in politics.[2] In the following, I argue with the party as the group of these active party members.

Rational Party Behaviour

The literature on party behaviour distinguishes three competing motivations that guide the rational behaviour of political parties and elites: vote-seeking, office-seeking and policy-seeking (Mueller and Strom, 1999*a*; Strom, 1990). Vote-seeking implies an interest in winning the maximum of votes in elections, which then transfer into parliamentary seats. Office-seeking, on the other hand, represents an interest in the control of government offices. In research, office-seeking predominantly appears in theories on coalition building and reflects an interest in the maximization of controlled offices (Budge and Laver, 1986; Laver and Shepsle, 1996; Strom, 1990). However, office-seeking can be considered as a general goal of political elites, reflecting their ultimate career objective. Policy-seeking, finally, refers to an interest in shaping public policies maximizing the influence on the content of policies.

Which motivation dominates depends on the particular situation. Votes are important to enter parliament and therefore are a necessary precondition to actively shape parliamentary politics (Downs, 1957b; Mayhew, 1974). Policies, on the other hand, are selling points to voters and enable re-election (Downs, 1957b; Strom, 1990). And gaining office is a necessary requirement to make decisions and policies. The three motivations are not put in a ranked order, but are assumed to be equally important for individual and party behaviour.

Policy-, vote- and office-seeking are connected to the overall objective of gaining or maintaining political power. Power represents in this regard an abstract concept which can be expressed as dominance over individuals, influence on decisions or control over resources (Feldman, 2013; Schwartz, 1992). Gaining votes is an expression of power, as it results in the control of resources in terms of parliamentary seats and consequently financial and personnel resources. Gaining office, on the other hand, results in the dominance or authority over individuals and the control of the state budget. And making policies points to the influence aspect of power, as political actors draft policies according to their ideas and adopt laws that they are convinced of. Though the three motivations reflect different stages of politics, they all contribute to the ultimate objective of power. Therefore, from the rational-strategic perspective, I assume that political elites' most important preference is power. Elites act rationally when they strive for power through vote-, office- or policy-seeking.

All three motivations can have an instrumental or intrinsic value for the actors: Intrinsically, a goal is an end in itself[3], while instrumentally it only serves to reach a different objective (Mueller and Strom, 1999*a*). The instrumentality of the three motivations appears frequently in the discussions of political behaviour: For example, vote-seeking is necessary

[2] This is an approach suggested by Mueller and Strom (1999*a*). Though they focus on party leaders in their seminal book, they also state that the described goals and strategies are applicable more generally.

[3] The intrinsic understanding of policy-seeking will be discussed in this next chapter in connection with normative orientations towards direct democracy.

to arrive at office or to influence policies (Downs, 1957b; Strom, 1990); office-seeking is important to be able to make policies (Budge and Laver, 1986); and policy-seeking serves to improve the chances of re-election and to secure governmental positions (Budge and Laver, 1986; Laver and Shepsle, 1996; Mueller and Strom, 1999*b*). It is obvious that these motivations are not exclusionary, rather they are interconnected. Therefore, it is difficult to separate them or to distinguish between their instrumental and intrinsic form (Budge and Laver, 1986; Mueller and Strom, 1999*b*). Nevertheless, the following considerations present an analytical distinction between the three motivations that will be used in this thesis.

Vote-seeking usually only reflects the necessary means to arrive at power (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974; Strom, 1990). It is possible to imagine that vote-seeking has an intrinsic value, in terms of a narcissist satisfaction through winning and receiving fame and honour. For example, in his study on the U.S. congress Fiorina (1989) views re-election - another term for vote-seeking - as the primary goal of parliamentarians, because it offers them financial benefits, prestige and a sense of power. [4] However, gaining parliamentary seats implies also to be part of the legislative process, e.g. to participate in discussions, drafting of laws and decision making. Vote-seeking has important consequences and therefore cannot be only intrinsic, but serves as an instrument for other purposes. In particular, vote-seeking secures the survival of political actors and is a necessary precondition to have chances for offices or to shape policies. In this way, vote-seeking is an important tool for the maximization of power. On the whole, it is reasonable to assume that the instrumental value of vote-seeking dominates, as mostly done in the literature (Downs, 1957a; Fenno, 1978; Strom, 1990).

In contrast, office-seeking has an instrumental character, but could also be an end in itself.[5] For example, Strom (1990) considers party leaders as entrepreneurs and views office-seeking as their primary goal. All other motivations are subordinate to this goal. Political elites can expect the highest rewards for themselves and their party by winning offices. Office-holders control resources, make decisions and exercise authority over other individuals. Office-seeking can be considered as instrumental, when political elites predominantly seek influence in policy-making. However, individuals organize in parties in order to occupy important governmental positions, which differentiates them from other interest-pursuing groups that only strive for certain policies without seeking office. Winning offices enables parties to influence policies, but it is difficult to decide whether this is a primary or secondary goal. Nevertheless, office-seeking reflects in the instrumental form the highest level of power and can be considered as the ultimate objective in the political struggle.

[4] The vote-seeking argument dominates the research on U.S. congress (e.g. Fenno, 1978; Fiorina, 1989; Mayhew, 1974) and thus is more applicable in majoritarian systems, i.e. with two parties and a first-past-the-post electoral system (Downs, 1957a). In proportional systems with multiple parties, office- and policy-seeking are considered as more important to explain the behaviour of political parties and their representatives, as research on coalitions demonstrates (Budge and Laver, 1986; Strom, 1990; Swaan, 1973).

[5] There is a philosophical question connected to this: Do politicians strive for certain positions to have power or do they need the power to fulfil their ideal concept of society? Ignoring this philosophical debate, I assume that office is an end in itself, which all politicians implicitly or explicitly strive for.

In the case of policy-seeking, the distinction between instrumental and intrinsic motivations is crucial. Seeking policies can reflect an utterly intrinsic motivation based on particular values and concepts about the ideal world. Programmatic or ideological differences between parties or single representatives demonstrate that indeed there are intrinsic policy orientations which are related to concepts of the ideal society and polity.[6] A pure intrinsic policy motivation would not require any political position, as can be observed in the actions of interest groups and social movements (Schlesinger, 1975). In comparison to parties, interest groups try to shape political processes and decision making through publicly visible demonstrations, petitions or boycotts etc., but not by seeking political offices. Therefore, it is doubtful that political parties and their elites are only intrinsically interested in policy-seeking. Since office-seeking can be considered as the ultimate goal of political elites and policy-seeking can be viewed as an instrument for this goal.

Policy-making is an important mechanism for political elites and parties to secure their current power position or to improve their electoral success (Budge and Laver, 1986; Mueller and Strom, 1999*a*). This applies especially for government representatives, but has a similar implication for opposition actors. In order to survive in the political system from one electoral period to the next, representatives need to produce outputs or in the case of opposition parties alternative policy propositions. Proposing and enacting policies serves to satisfy the electorate and in this way to secure the support of voters for the next election (Downs, 1957a; Fiorina, 1989; Strom, 1990). This connection to vote- and office-seeking emphasizes the instrumental character of policy-seeking, on which I will focus in the rational strategic perspective.

The goals of vote-, office- and policy-seeking are important strategies to win, secure or improve the power in the political sphere. However, pursuing these strategies is not risk free for the involved elites. In particular, vote-seeking incorporates the risk to fail in winning enough votes to enter parliament or to decrease the vote share in comparison to the previous election. Policy-seeking bears the risk that the proposed policies fail to satisfy the electorate which in turn can lead to decreasing popular support, for government parties especially. Furthermore, government parties are usually responsible for policies and are held accountable for the outputs at the end of their term. Therefore, governmental elites are more under observations and face higher risks of failure in comparison to the opposition. To a lesser degree, opposition parties also are confronted with challenges in policy-seeking, because voters could not appreciate the alternatives they propose. The described risks or challenges need to be considered in connection to referendums to fully evaluate how strategic support for direct democracy can emerge.

Since policy-making is an essential source of power for political elites, direct democratic institutions intervene in this power sphere. When voters decide on issues, the power shifts from elected representatives to the electorate. However, letting the people decide can also be a tool in the struggle for power. In terms of office-seeking, governments might use referendums to confirm the current governmental path and in this way assure their popular approval. In terms of vote-seeking, referendums offer government and opposition parties an

[6] I discuss intrinsic policy-seeking in detail in the chapter on normative considerations.

opportunity to compete for political power through active participation in the referendum campaigns (Setälä, 2006; Smith, 1976; Vreese, 2006). In terms of policy-seeking, direct democratic institutions open up new possibilities to influence decision-making, which is particularly relevant for political elites that usually lack this power.

While there are considerable incentives for political elites to use direct democracy for policy-, vote- or office-seeking, there are also costs or risks connected to referendums. These risks are different for government and opposition parties. For example, the government has to deal with the decision of the electorate, no matter if it is in accordance to the governmental position. Hence, governments might face an internal crisis when the final decision is contrary to the position of the government. The opposition, on the other hand, simply returns to its previous role after the vote and does not face high costs even if a referendum turns out to its disadvantage. This has different implications for the support of direct democracy in the two groups. These are only a few examples that will be extended in the following sections.

The Role of Electoral Success for Power-Seeking

Electoral success is the decisive factor in the power distribution in democratic systems. Hence, electoral performance can be regarded as an important criterion in the competition of parties and elites and should influence their issue positions and behaviour. Furthermore, it connects the three main goals that political elites pursue: The allocation of seats in parliament, the chances to form the government and to have a say in policy making are all dependent on success in elections. In fact, these goals can be considered as consequences of the current electoral performance of parties and representatives. Electorally successful parties are more powerful than electoral losers, they can influence their future electoral performance through an influential position in parliament, by occupying government posts and actively shaping policies or simply through more public attention after the election.

Electoral popularity shapes the course and strategies of parties and political elites throughout the whole electoral term. Shortly after elections, electoral success decides which parties get access to governmental offices, whether there is a single party or a coalition government and how it is constructed. In the daily parliamentary work, electoral performance transferred into parliamentary seats determines how much influence a party has on decision-making, which role and posts it receives in accordance with its parliamentary weight and whether it can block governmental proposals in certain processes. Electoral results become most relevant shortly before the next elections, but political elites monitor their electoral popularity during the whole term and assess how different actions affect voters support for their party. Therefore, electoral performance can be used to assess the power position of parties. Hence, from a rational-strategic view political elites should include their current electoral performance in their calculations of costs and benefits in important decisions.

Electoral performance is especially relevant in the case of institutional reforms, where changes in the power distribution can be expected. Studies on electoral reforms point out that electoral performance is a key variable in the evaluation of costs and benefits

from changing institutions (Benoit, 2004; Boix, 1999; Colomer, 2005). The same can be assumed for the introduction or application of direct democratic measures, since they provide an important tool for policy-making outside the parliamentary arena and in this way influence the current power distributions. How the different calculations of political elites are affected by direct democratic procedures is explained in the following considerations.

3.1.2 Individual Strategic Orientations

Political elites are embedded in the party environment and act as their agents in parliamentary democracies. However, political elites also pursue personal goals that need to be separated from party objectives. Personal ambitions of political elites often correspond to party goals such as vote-, office- or policy-seeking.[7] In particular, political elites have an incentive for individual vote-seeking to secure their position in parliament. They can also be interested in occupying government positions and appear as office-seekers. And finally, policy-seeking can be assumed to be an important motivation for individual elites, either instrumentally to improve the chances for re-election or office, or intrinsically to pursue certain societal ideals or ideological convictions.

In this section I assume that advancing the political career is a central goal of most elites, which coincides with vote-, office- and policy-seeking, but also transcends these motivations at the individual level. Whatever the overarching individual goals are - whether this is to reach a powerful position, gain a lot of popularity and prestige or to fight for certain social or political ideals - political elites can only reach them in the parliamentary sphere through a successful and long-lasting career. Therefore, a career orientation of elites also has a strategic character. In this section, I consider how this career orientation of political elites influences the position of political elites towards direct democratic institutions.

A successful career in politics depends on at least four conditions, as Strom (1997) explains reviewing different literature on elite behaviour: reselection to be a candidate for a party, re-election to a parliamentary office, occupying party-offices and parliamentary posts. The importance of the party becomes visible in these conditions. There is an interdependence between individual elites and their party. On the one hand, parties cannot exist without members, thus they only reflect the ideas, strategies and behaviour of individuals. On the other hand, parties are platforms for elites to pursue their political career. The party - mostly a committee or assembly of the party - is responsible for the selection of candidates and often is highly involved in the campaign of candidates for a parliamentary seat.[8] Once in parliament, moving forward on the career ladder also depends

[7] As explained in the previous section, I connect strategic behaviour mainly with party interests such as vote-, policy- and office-seeking. These goals mostly reflect interests of groups or leaders as representatives of groups that act in the parliamentary sphere. I concentrate in this regard on parties, though other groups are also possible. Political elites' behaviour is expected to reflect the interests of the party they belong to.

[8] Of course, the party consists of different levels and important groups. For example, the nomination of candidates is often the task of local party committees or assemblies. In parliament, the national party leaders and in particular faction leaders are very important. I refer to the party as an entity that encompasses all these levels and hierarchical structures. The exact differentiation is not decisive for the considered research question, as it is not primarily concerned with the professional context of each candidate and parliamentarian, but focuses on abstract influences for their behaviour.

on the party, though in hierarchically organized parties it is often a closer dependency on party leaders or small decision-making committees (Sieberer and Mueller, 2017; Strom, 1997). The leadership of a party decides whether a candidate receives a certain influential post inside the party and also in the parliamentary arena, e.g. when committee chairs or speakers in certain domains are appointed. In terms of individual office-seeking, the party plays a crucial role. If a party gains access to governmental posts, their appointment is also decided by the party leadership.

Career oriented elites will be likely to choose actions that improve or manifest their reputation in the eyes of the party leadership (Sieberer and Mueller, 2017). There are different strategies to reach visibility and appreciation in a party. For example, personal involvement in time consuming and often unprofitable party offices is an important effort of each career oriented party member. Furthermore, acting as a loyal and reliable party agent in public also is a fruitful strategy to receive approval of the party. Overall, strong loyalty to the party, in particular in important policy questions, is of utmost importance. Party members can express their loyalty and commitment to the party through campaign activities, media appearances and contact to the electorate. However, public presence is not only an asset for a positive image inside a party, but also helps to build a reputation in the electorate and in this way improve the career opportunities in general. Next to the party activities, the reputation in public or in the electorate can be considered as an important step towards a successful career in politics and is closely connected to the goal of re-election

Re-election is often considered as the main goal of political elites in parliaments (Downs, 1957a; Fenno, 1978; Fiorina, 1989; Mayhew, 1974). In fact, re-election is often viewed as a precondition to other goals (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974), no matter which form they take. To secure re-election, political elites need the support of their party on the one hand, in particular in their political campaign and in terms of access to important parliamentary debates and posts. On the other hand, political elites have their own responsibility to appear in public, to contribute to debates and to build a reputation as well-informed, trustworthy and influential opinion leaders. Most importantly, political elites should keep contact to their constituency and appear in the media from time to time with relevant contributions to secure their public presence and in this way their popularity. Therefore, they also need to build a certain thematic profile, specialize on certain issues in politics and have a resolute opinion in important questions in public debates. In sum, the appearance in public can contribute to secure the electoral success of political elites and reflects an important career strategy.

Direct democratic procedures offer individual elites a useful vehicle for public visibility and popularity. Though parties can participate in direct democratic procedures as unitary actors campaigning for one position, it is also possible that a party is divided in the issue decided upon in a popular vote. No matter whether political elites support or contradict the position of a party in a referendum, they receive a possibility to use the referendum process to their advantage. They can act as important opinion leaders during the campaign and actively support one position. This might lead to conflicts with the party, but first

and foremost it will increase the visibility of this individual party member, inside the party as well as in public. Even in a lost referendum campaign, the individual party member will still be recognized more and is likely to gather support from voters that had the same position in the decided issue. Therefore, parties can expect to benefit through this increased public visibility of a single member, which can translate into improved electoral performance of the whole party. This will most likely result in the promotion of the involved party member to an important post or a promising place on the party list for the next election. In consequence, participation in a referendum campaign can have positive effects on the career development of political elites.

The incentive to actively participate in referendum campaigns is of particular relevance for political elites that were not successful in an election. Political elites that lost an election and did not receive a parliamentary seat have to suspend or give up their career for some time, because they will not occupy positions where they can influence politics in a significant way. Successful candidates start to work in parliament and will automatically have the chance to appear in public and to shape policy-making. Losers of the electoral game, on the other hand, need to find other possibilities to distinguish themselves in public and influence policy-making in order to advance their political career. One such possibility is offered through referendums as described above. Direct democratic processes enable in particular elites that are not part of the current representative institutions to appear in public, gather new supporters and improve the chances for the next election. Therefore, it is plausible to expect that electoral losers will be likely to support direct democratic institutions.

In sum, the career logic of political elites revolves around their visibility and performance inside a party, but also - especially in terms of re-election - on their public reputation and popularity in the constituency (Sieberer and Mueller, 2017). Direct democratic processes open up new possibilities for individual elites to gain more public presence and improve their position inside the party. This applies to successful and unsuccessful candidates for parliamentary offices. However, successful candidates are likely to concentrate on their work in parliament where they have already access to policy-making and public appearance. Furthermore, it seems contradictory for parliamentarians to support alternative policy-making processes that would undermine their own role in the political process and make the institution they struggled to get in expendable.[9] On the contrary, unsuccessful political elites have almost no other possibilities to secure their public presence and influence decision-making. Hence, electoral losers have a stronger demand for direct democratic processes to remain in the political game. Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1 (H1) *Political elites that lost in the current election are more supportive of direct democratic institutions than political elites that won a parliamentary seat.*

[9]Of course, there could be particular situations of disagreement with one's own party or a strong commitment to a policy that could motivate even parliamentarians to use alternative ways of decision-making. However, I consider this as an exception rather than a rule in the everyday parliamentary practice.

Research on the so called "winner-loser gap" demonstrates that individuals that lose in elections - voters as well as elites - are likely to be dissatisfied with the current institutional setting and accordingly more open to changes of these institutions (Anderson et al., 2005*b*; Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Smith, Tolbert and Keller, 2010). This reflects the argument presented above: Losers have usually less influence on politics and policies and are likely to feel frustrated. Frustration can either lead to withdrawal from politics, but this is only likely if losing becomes a permanent situation, or to resistance and the urge to change the conditions that cause frustration (Anderson et al., 2005*a*; Hirschman, 1970; Riker, 1983). This describes another possible reason why unsuccessful political elites might be supportive of direct democratic institutions.[10] Frustration does not necessary contradict the assumption of a strategic reaction, it simply points out the psychological effect of losing.

The goal of re-election described in this section as an important incentive for strategic behaviour is not only restricted to individual elites. In fact, in many political systems - especially with a proportional electoral system and list voting - political elites depend on the success of the party in elections. Therefore, vote-seeking is considered as a central goal of political parties and their representatives (Downs, 1957a; Mueller and Strom, 1999*a*). How party-oriented vote-seeking motivations can influence the position of political elites towards direct democracy is explained in the next section.

3.1.3 Vote-Seeking

Parties and representatives depend on popular approval to survive in the political system and to successfully implement their programs. Therefore, all measures that help to maintain or increase popular approval are important instruments in politics. Referendums can be such instruments because they offer a platform for political competition (Dur and Mateo, 2011; Kriesi, 2007; LeDuc, 2003). Similarly to elections, in referendums political elites compete to win the support of potential voters. In comparison to elections, referendums restrict this competition to single issues that reduce even complex questions to simple yes-no decisions. Though the reduction to a yes-no question can be viewed critically it also facilitates the political involvement of citizens confronting them with a clear choice instead of complicated party programmes and diverse issue positions. Parties and representatives usually take a position in the yes- or no-camp and campaign for this camp. The restriction to one issue in referendums puts the involved elites under "a magnifying glass" (Vreese, 2006, 583) and allows voters to re-evaluate their representatives.

The concentration on one issue in a referendum offers some advantages with regards to vote-seeking motivations. Instead of competing with broad programs for the development of the society as in elections, political elites focus on the promotion of one position. The challenge then is to find convincing arguments for their position and contradict the

[10]Frustration with losing in the electoral game can be expressed in dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime. This could reflect a strategic reaction to the disadvantaged position (Anderson et al., 2005*b*). However, dissatisfaction with the current regime might also reflect a disagreement with the current institutions because of a different concept of democracy individuals have. This association and the connection to electoral losing are reviewed in detail in section 3.2.4.

arguments of the other side. In this way, political elites can demonstrate their competence in problem solving and leadership skills, which can translate into more popular approval. Similarly, parties with a clear position in referendums receive the chance to promote their general vision on the future of society in connection with the referendum issue and also to show their ability to rule. In this way, active participation in a referendum campaign can help to generate more popular support for political elites and parties.

When parties do not have a clear position on the issue in a referendum, they might lose popular support. Internal party disputes on an issue bear a particular risk for the image of the party, as parties usually try to appear as unitary actors and represent a certain group of the society. If a party is divided on an issue, the above mentioned advantages turn into disadvantages. This applies to the party as an entity, not to individual members as explained in the previous section. When a clear signal in the referendum campaign is missing, voters do not perceive a coherent program of the party and could doubt its leadership qualities. Hence, open party disputes are likely to result in decreasing popular support for the party.

Nonetheless, supporting a referendum can help in party disputes. Research shows that political elites, in particular from government parties, sometimes use referendums in controversial issues to avoid disparities inside the party or a coalition (Björklund, 1982; Morel, 2001). Putting an issue in the hands of voters releases governing elites of the responsibility for the final decision and also suppresses internal discussions inside the party or a coalition. Furthermore, allowing the public to decide on important issues demonstrates trust in voters and creates the image that elites are willing to listen to people. If political elites sell it right, even a referendum that is called to restrain party disputes can have a positive effect on vote-seeking.

Vote-seeking in referendums can also be connected with other goals. For example, governments can use referendums to confirm the current governmental course or to avoid popular disapproval for issues that are strongly debated in public; the ratification of EU treaties is a case in point (Closa, 2007; Mendez, Mendez and Triga, 2014; Morel, 2007). Opposition parties, on the other hand, can use referendums to challenge government policies and receive more public attention, which can translate in more popular approval (Björklund, 2009; Uleri, 2002; Vreese, 2006). Though policy-seeking appears to be the dominant motivation in these cases, in a broader sense referendums help government and opposition parties alike to maintain or improve their popularity, and in this way are connected to vote-seeking motivations.

The vote-seeking motivation of political elites tends to grow stronger when they perceive a decline in their popular approval. When elites are confronted with declining support of voters, they perceive a pressure to act and are more willing to introduce changes to the institutional setting (Bowler and Donovan, 2013*b*; Renwick, 2011b; Shugart, 2008). Similarly, changing conditions in the electoral arena such as new competitors or increased voting volatility put pressure on political elites to introduce changes in order to secure their position (Bedock, 2016; Boix, 1999; Pilet and Bol, 2011; Shugart, 2008). Studies on electoral reforms confirm that political elites are likely to respond to these pressures and

offer reforms, in particular when the public is dissatisfied with politics. In the three major electoral reforms in New Zealand (1992), in Italy (1993) and in Japan (1994), governing elites were willing to reform the current system responding to increased public distrust and disaffection with the system due to corruption, government crises and system failure (Katz, 2005; Renwick, 2011b; Sakamoto, 1999).

Apart from electoral reforms, introducing direct democracy offers a simple way to react to public discontent or declining popular approval. Referendums directly involve voters in politics and offer active participation in important decision-making. Proposing referendums sends a signal to the electorate stating that political elites respond to the increased public disaffection with politics. This can calm down popular resentments against political elites and improve popular approval of the involved elites and their parties. Therefore, elites from governing as well as opposition parties have an incentive to endorse direct democracy to avoid losses in popular support or to improve the current approval rates. This incentive is stronger when they perceive public pressure in form of declining popular support for their parties.[11] These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2 (H2) *Political elites are more supportive of direct democratic institutions when popular approval of their parties is in decline.*

As governing elites are typically held to account for current developments, they receive the most pressure to react to public demands or disaffection with current politics (Bowler and Donovan, 2013*a*; Norris, 2011; Shugart, 2008). Government parties usually seek re-election and try to maintain their electoral popularity. Therefore, they observe more carefully their popular approval rates and should be more affected by changes in public opinion than opposition parties. In this context, the vote-seeking intention is instrumentally directed towards office-keeping. As case studies in electoral reforms indicate, governments are indeed more prone to pursue changes in order to maintain their current power position (Renwick, 2011b; Sakamoto, 1999; Shugart, 2008). Hence, it is reasonable to assume that public disapproval influences more governing elites in their support for institutional changes such as direct democracy.

So far the argumentation emphasized what parties and their representatives can win supporting direct democratic procedures. However, referendums bear considerable risks for political elites and their parties in terms of vote-seeking. In particular, participation in referendum campaigns can also negatively affect the popularity of parties, especially government parties. In a case study on Denmark's Euro-referendum in 2000, Vreese (2006) demonstrates that governing elites indeed suffered in popularity, though not massively, after a lost referendum, while opposition elites on the losing side did not. Moreover, the governing Social Democratic Party lost the following elections a couple of months later, which indicates a negative effect of the referendum on its popularity. It seems that the performance of government parties and elites is judged more critically, as they are currently responsible for the outputs of the political system, while the opposition is only perceived

[11] Though I argue from the individual perspective of elites, they usually operate through their party. And even if there are personalized approval rates, political elites in parliamentary democracies depend on the electoral success of their parties.

in its usual role as a controlling authority and is not affected negatively. In sum, there is a considerable risk for governing elites to endorse referendums. The stronger incentive for governments to use referendums for a popularity boost is counterbalanced by a higher risk to decrease their popular approval. Therefore, I expect that governing elites will have approximately the same incentive to endorse direct democratic procedures as opposition elites when their party's approval is in decline.

In general, vote-seeking motivations can be connected to the effects of risk averseness. It is plausible to assume that political elites ignore the risks of defeats in referendums, as parties with declining electoral approval – no matter if in government or in the opposition – are already on the losing side. According to findings from prospect theory, individuals are ready to take risks in situations of sure losses, though they are generally inclined to risk averseness (Tversky and Kahneman, 1981, 1986). In an experimental study with voters, Bowler and Donovan (2007) showed that electoral losers are indeed more likely to support alternative institutions such as referendums. If political elites perceive that they are losing, they might take more risks even considering that they could lose more. Therefore, it is plausible to expect that higher losses in popularity generate a stronger support for new strategies to improve the current standing, as direct democracy can offer to political elites.

This part only described how the support for direct democracy is affected by vote-seeking motivations reflected in the current popular approval of parties. Though vote-seeking is considered as a dominant motivation for political elites or the precondition to other goals, direct democratic procedures are much more closely related to policy-seeking. In fact, referendums offer another possibility for policy-seeking, especially for actors excluded from parliamentary decision-making. Hence, referendums can be considered as instruments for policy-seeking. How direct democratic institutions influence the calculations of political elites concerning policy-seeking, is described in detail in the next section.

3.1.4 Policy-Seeking

Referendums are directly connected to policy-seeking motivations of parties and representatives. In particular, referendums allow non-governing groups to pursue their agenda, especially with issues that are ignored by the government. As mentioned in the conceptual chapter on direct democracy, these groups are mostly opposition parties in and outside the parliament as well as interest groups and movements. Their common characteristic is that they seek influence in policy-making, but lack power in the decision-making. Of course, these groups are able to create public visibility for the issues they are concerned with and organize political protest in form of demonstrations, petitions and the like. However, the impact of such protest actions is limited, as the decision-making power lies in the hands of governing elites.

Direct democracy changes the power distribution between governing elites and the electorate and therefore creates an instrument for oppositional actors to influence policy-making. When voters are allowed to decide on important issues, government elites lose

their power on policy-making.[12] This situation creates a window of opportunity for oppositional actors to affect the final decision. In government-initiated referendums, they can support a certain camp and actively campaign for it. In bottom-up initiatives, they can even shape the policy that is decided on by proposing and drafting it. In this way, direct democracy offers a policy-seeking instrument for opposition parties, which usually are excluded from the decision-making.

Furthermore, referendums offer opposition parties a welcome opportunity to receive more public attention and in this way to improve their popular approval. During referendum campaigns, opposition representatives are more present in the media which they can use to promote their positions and party programs. The increased public attention can result in a stronger perception or recognition of oppositional actors in the future, mobilize new supporters and improve the electoral approval of opposition parties. Active participation in referendum campaigns has a positive effect on vote-seeking motivations, as described in the previous section. Though some costs such as mobilization efforts and campaign expenses arise for the opposition parties, the positive effects of increased public attention and a greater influence in the decision making process clearly demonstrate the attractiveness of referendums for this group (Dur and Mateo, 2011; Uleri, 2002; Vreese, 2006).

For government parties, referendums do not offer any particular advantage in terms of policy-seeking. Most importantly, government parties already possess the decision-making power so that there is no necessity to call referendums. However, there are situations where even governing parties, which usually have a majority of votes in parliament, perceive a necessity to call a referendum to pass a law. This might be connected to a qualified majority in parliament that governing elites are unable to reach.[13] There are also cases documented in the literature where governments feel obliged to call a referendum on particular issues once the electorate was asked on such an issue before (Morel, 2007). Furthermore, we can differentiate the motive of "legitimation" of particular issues that implicitly require popular approval. In this case, either the issue is of such importance that it is perceived obligatory to ask the people, e.g. territorial issues, changes of the constitution and delegation of powers to supranational organizations. Or governing elites are backing up their current course of actions through a referendum (Rahat, 2009). There are a lot of examples on issues of EU-integration that can be interpreted as a legitimation strategy of governments (Hobolt, 2009; Hug and Tsebelis, 2002). In this regard, it is also often argued that referendums can serve to avoid the blame for seemingly unpopular decisions (Morel, 2007; Setälä, 2006). In conclusion, governing parties have also sometimes an incentive to pursue policy-seeking through referendums.

[12] It is clear that many referendums are not binding, but only consultative. However, current examples like the Brexit-vote demonstrate that even in consultative referendums elites feel obliged to follow the majority opinion, even if it is a very thin one. Research also states that there is no big difference between binding and consultative referendums, as political elites fear to lose popular support if they ignore the results of a referendum completely (Setälä, 2006).

[13] For example, if a two-thirds majority is required and the government party only possess a small majority in parliament. This could also be connected to internal dissidents inside governing parties who refuse to support a certain policy unless the electorate agrees with it.

Using referendums to legitimize certain decisions reflects exceptional situations of policy-seeking through referendums, not business as usual for governing parties. In comparison, opposition parties generally have an incentive for policy-seeking through referendums. The difference between policy-seeking of the government and the opposition is connected to the risks the two groups face in referendums. There is a substantial risk for governmental elites when the electorate disagrees in the final decision with their position. The disagreement of the electorate might result in declining popular approval for government parties, as described in the previous section. It could also lead to internal disputes inside the party or coalition over the responsibility for the failed referendum. And finally, government parties have to implement the policy decided on in the referendum and are accountable for the outcomes of this policy at the end of their term. All these consequences imply difficulties for governing parties and unpredictable costs. Therefore, popular votes are risky choices for government parties, even though they sometimes are inevitable or can help to legitimize the current course.

Overall, there are a lot of costs for governing elites connected to referendums. Most importantly, the referendum outcome is often not easily controlled. During the campaign process the opposition mobilizes and the public debate can turn against the position of the government (Dur and Mateo, 2011; Hug, 2002). Moreover, referendums require a great deal of organization on the side of the state and cause a delay in the decision making process.[14] Hence, there are many reasons for governing elites to dislike referendums. In particular, the risks and costs they face are higher than the possible gains. On the contrary, opposition parties should perceive referendums as relatively safe investments. Opposition parties receive the possibility to have more impact on policy-making in comparison to parliamentary processes, can promote their programmatic position vis a vis the governing parties and further can expect positive effects on their popularity. The risks for opposition parties are quite low and the possible gains in this additional opportunity for political competition outweigh the costs. These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3 (H3) *Political elites from opposition parties are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites from governing parties.*

In terms of policy-seeking, I generally expect that the opposition status changes political elites' perception of the possibilities to influence policy-making and leads to strategic support for direct democratic institutions. However, parties differ in their overall impact on the policy-making process based on their electoral success, no matter if they are in government or in opposition. The electoral performance of parties determines their legislative power, i.e. how many seats they receive in parliament and how much they are involved in policy-making. Parties that are able to win a huge share of votes will be likely to form the government or to become the opposition group whose policy positions are most visible in public. These parties usually also receive more possibilities to shape parliamentary policy-making processes, in particular if membership in committees

[14] Additionally, it is highly unpredictable who will participate in the vote and if the necessary requirements such as participation quorums and approval rates are met. These procedural details are not discussed here in detail, as the focus lies on power effects.

or time in parliamentary debates is distributed proportionally according to the number of gained seats. Hence, electorally strong parties can expect to have considerable impact on policy-making. Consequently, it is likely that electorally strong parties view alternative decision-making processes such as referendums as less necessary for policy-seeking.

On the contrary, parties that only gather a small vote share have automatically less influence on policy-making and should consider referendums as a welcome opportunity to improve their legislative power. Electorally less successful parties represent only a minority of voters, have less prospects to participate in government or influence policy debates, whether in public or in parliament.[15] However, in referendums even 'minor' parties have a good chance to influence policy-making (LeDuc, 2003; Lewis, 2013; Setälä, 2006). Referendums are concerned with a single issue on which the public attention concentrates for some time. If small, but well organized groups with a strong thematic focus participate in the referendum campaign, they appear more often in the media and thus their position gains more public visibility. This can result in a disproportionally stronger impact on the concerned policy than their share of votes would allow them in parliament.

To summarize, there are differences in how direct democratic institutions affect the distribution of legislative power: Parties with little electoral approval have a lot to gain through referendums, while electorally strong parties receive already a lot legislative power and do not need extra opportunities to influence policy-making. I expect that minor parties in particular view direct democratic institutions as important power instruments to shape policy-making outside the parliamentary arena. This is assumed in addition to the government and opposition divide and focuses more on the influence in the policy-making process, not the actual decision-making power. Therefore, even electorally weak government parties can perceive a disadvantage in the policy-making process resulting from their small legislative power and be in favour of referendums. The influence of the legislative power is expressed in the second hypothesis connected to policy-seeking:

Hypothesis 4 (H4) *The more legislative power a party has, the less likely it is that political elites from this party support direct democratic institutions.*

Policy-seeking motivations are often related to vote-seeking or at least have effects on the popular approval of parties, as has been explained above. It is difficult to decide whether parties pursue policy-seeking through direct democratic procedures intrinsicly in order to assert a certain political position or whether policy-seeking is only a strategic instrument to improve the overall popularity. On the one hand, the rational strategic explanation is based on the assumption that political elites are interested in power gains. Hence, policy-seeking in referendums would reflect a strategic motivation to improve the

[15]Even in possible coalitions with more powerful parties, 'minor' parties have less impact on decision-making based on their restricted number of seats. This situation changes if we consider minimum winning coalitions, where stronger parties lack the absolute majority and depend on their smaller coalition partners. In such situations, electorally weaker parties develop more potential to pressure their coalition partners for policy concessions, at least in some issues central for such parties. However, based on their electoral success, small coalition partners receive less resorts and are dependent on the bigger coalition partners to participate in government or achieve their central policy goals. Hence, they should accept less influence on policy-making in most issues.

power position of parties, in particular of the opposition. On the other hand even according to the rational choice theory, parties have an incentive to advocate policies that reflect their ideological predispositions (Downs, 1957b). Therefore, they can be expected only to be strongly involved in referendums if the issue at stake is related to their ideological program. Then, it is also plausible to expect a popularity boost of these parties reflecting vote-seeking motivations. It is reasonable that political elites are aware of the mutual influences between policy-seeking and vote-seeking and are likely to be motivated by a mixture of these goals, when it comes to referendums. For analytical purposes, these goals are theoretically separated in this thesis, even though empirically the differentiation is not that clear.

The described vote- and policy-seeking motivations reflect short-term strategies that contain considerable risks for established elites. If they support direct democratic measures only thinking about their immediate gains, they might be confronted with damaging consequences in the long run, as changing institutions are not easily reversed. Once referendums are available, they change the rules of the game and political elites need to expect that the public or organized groups will demand them for important issues. So far, I considered only short-term calculations of political elites, ignoring such long-term expectations.

The short-term orientation of political elites is based on the concept of bounded rationality and points to the restricted capacity of humans to process all information (Jones, 1999; Simon, 1985). The basic argument of bounded rationally is that political elites cannot assess all long-term consequences of policies, in particular institutional changes, as future events always carry an unexpected part (Andrews and Jackman, 2005; Elster, Offe and Preuß, 1998; Simon, 1995). Therefore, they rely on their current assessment of the situation and orient themselves on expected short-term gains. In this regard, they might overestimate their own success and prefer changes with unpredictable consequences.

It is equally reasonable to assume that political elites are forward looking, because in most cases they are interested in a lasting career in politics on the one hand and in securing the success of their party on the other. Institutional settings might be important factors in the career planning of elites. Hence, political elites can be expected to understand that institutional changes like the introduction of direct democracy creates not only possibilities for vote- and policy-seeking, but also restrictions for their behaviour. Therefore, long-term strategic considerations are also relevant determinants of the support for direct democracy. In this case, office-seeking plays an important role, as it reflects a more long-term goal of political parties and elites. However, office-seeking does not have the same value for all parties; it differs according to the probability of a party to arrive at office. This probability reflects future expectations of parties and is connected to a long-term outlook on institutional questions. I argue that political elites have different strategic outlooks on institutional settings based on their chances for office. This is explained in more detail in the next section.

3.1.5 Office-Seeking

To arrive at office, in particular at government positions, is conceived as the maximum expression of power and the ultimate objective of political elites in the political struggle. However, that does not imply that it is higher ranked than other goals such as vote- or policy-seeking. Which motivation predominates depends on the current possibilities of parties and political elites. Political elites in government or with good prospects to enter government mostly are likely to focus on office-seeking and apply vote- as well as policy-seeking strategies to achieve this goal. On the contrary, parties and elites in opposition without chances to enter government usually concentrate on policy- and vote-seeking, which can improve the prospects for office, but is not necessarily the main objective. Office-seeking depends on the chances parties have to become part of the government. I assume that fringe parties are much more likely to be in favour of direct democratic institutions in comparison to potential government parties. In this regard, two extremes can be differentiated: Some parties recurrently participate in government and on the other hand some never have been included in a government coalition, which I will refer to as fringe parties.

In comparison to vote- and policy-seeking, office-seeking is not directly related to direct democratic processes. While referendums can have direct effects on the popularity of a party and affect vote-seeking strategies, the effect on office-seeking is only transmitted from the increased popularity. Likewise, referendums directly influence the policy-seeking strategies of political elites if they are connected to issues that they are concerned with. However, there is no immediate effect on the chances for office through referendum processes. Even if political elites are successful in a referendum, achieving their policy goals and gaining popular approval, they do not automatically win government offices. Therefore, the following argumentation concentrates on the risks of direct democratic institutions from already existing positions of elites. In this regard, the motivations of political elites can be described as office-keeping.

Direct democratic institutions imply a change in the policy-making logic connected to a shift in power from governing elites to the public (Hug and Tsebelis, 2002; Smith, 1976). Governing parties and elites can play an important role initiating referendums, in the following campaign supporting one position, and finally for the implementation of the final decision. However, the decision-making power lies with the voters in referendums. The role of governing elites is reduced to the execution of externally made decisions. At the end of their term, governmental elites are held accountable for the policies and decisions they produced and this is an important factor for their re-election, according to the reward-punishment model of rational choice (Fiorina, 1989). Direct democratic procedures complicate the described accountability logic, as governing elites do not actually decide the referendum issues, but can still be made responsible for the outcomes of the decided policies.

The confusing accountability logic in direct democratic processes makes it difficult for governing parties to secure their next term in government. According to the reward-punishment logic, voters evaluate their governments at the end of their term using their

own experiences with the outputs a government produced. Voters are likely to reward government parties and elites with their votes, if they perceive that the government did its job well. If this is not the case, governing parties are likely to be punished and lose in the next election. Direct democratic decisions can turn this logic upside down. First, governing parties lose an important instrument to secure their re-election, they are not able to claim that the produced policies were their achievement. Second, a referendum outcome that contradicts the government position is likely to lead to decreased popular approval of governing parties and elites, as has been explained in section 3.1.3.. And third, governments can still be punished for decisions they did not make because they are accountable for the development of the country in general. Sometimes governments might like to relocate the responsibility for some unpopular decisions to voters, which is known as a blame-avoidance strategy in literature (Setälä, 2006). However, whether this strategy works out is questionable, as voters - and those that lose in the referendums in particular - still might view the outcome of the referendum as the responsibility of governing elites. In sum, governing parties risk in referendums to be punished for decisions they are not directly responsible for. Therefore, direct democratic processes are not helpful instruments for parties and elites with office-seeking ambitions.

Office-keeping is a goal that requires carefully considered actions and therefore implies risk-averse behaviour of governing parties and elites. According to findings from prospect theory, individuals are generally risk-averse and become even more careful when they are confronted with possible losses (Tversky and Kahneman, 1981, 1986). Institutional changes have generally unpredictable outcomes and bear some risks to lose power for the involved political elites. Parties and representatives in office are generally interested in holding their positions and therefore should be reluctant to change the current institutional setting that secures their power position. Therefore, it is unlikely that governing elites would change the institutional setting where they operate as dominant actors, know the rules of the game and have learned to use them for their advantage.

As research on electoral reforms shows, governing elites are more risk-averse regarding institutional changes and prefer to stick to established rules of the game that brought them to power (Colomer, 2005; Pilet and Bol, 2011; Tsebelis, 1990). Direct democratic institutions definitely imply a power decline for governing parties and elites concerning decision making. Referendums deprive governing parties and elites of an important asset in the political competition for voters' support and consequently jeopardize the chances of re-election to government offices. Therefore, governing parties and elites should be less inclined to support direct democracy.

The reluctance of governing parties and elites towards direct democracy reflects not only a short-term consideration, but also implies at least a mid-term outlook on politics in a country. And this outlook is not exclusively important for the current governing parties and elites, but also for all parties and elites with reasonable prospects to participate in government in the next term. Opposition actors with prospects for government also belong to the group of office-seeking elites. In their opposition role, parties that can reasonably expect to enter government after the next election should also be careful to

support institutions that might present hurdles to their actions once they are in office. Recurrent winners in the electoral game are careful to change institutions which worked for them in the past, as research on electoral reforms demonstrates (Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2002; Colomer, 2005; Pilet and Bol, 2011).

Regarding direct democratic processes, opposition parties with chances to enter government in the next election term could perceive a threat to power in government through referendums similar to the one governing parties face (Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2002). Opposition parties can be expected to use referendum campaigns called by the current government to their advantage, for example to improve their public visibility. However, when elites have to decide about a general institutional change towards more direct democratic institutions, opposition parties with prospects for government will think twice and consider the difficulties they might be confronted with in the government position. Hopeful opposition parties should be aware that direct democratic institutions diminish the role of government in the decision-making process and complicate the struggle for re-election, as described above. Therefore, current opposition groups will differ in their inclination towards direct democracy depending on their prospects for government. Hopeful opposition groups, which have recently been part of government, can be expected to reject direct democracy similarly to the current governing elites.

In contrast, opposition parties that are repeatedly excluded from government participation should be more supportive of direct democracy because it offers them an important power tool (Zittel and Herzog, 2014). In the traditional parliamentary setting, fringe parties have generally no impact on decision-making, their positions and programs are not considered as important and often ignored in public debates. When political elites repeatedly lack influence on policy-making, they should be willing to change the rules of the game to have more impact in this regard. Through referendums fringe parties receive a powerful instrument to influence policy-making outside parliament. In referendum campaigns, fringe parties are likely to attract more public attention, which can transfer in more popular approval, and consequently improve their power position in the political struggle. In consequence, referendums can even improve their chances for office in the long run, if the public perception of fringe parties changes and established parties re-consider them as potential coalition partners. Therefore, opposition parties without prospects for office should be very much in favour of direct democracy. The following hypothesis reflects this line of reasoning:

Hypothesis 5 (H5) *Political elites from parties with prospects for government office are less supportive of direct democratic institutions than political elites from fringe parties.*

Generally, it is plausible to assume that all parties including fringe parties are motivated to form a government, otherwise it is questionable why they enter the political competition for parliamentary seats at all. The party system literature sometimes mentions so called protest parties that are supposed to have only the goal to oppose government policies or the so called established politics without the motivation to form the government or actively influence policy-making. Even if such parties are little interested

in office-seeking,[16] they still can be expected to differ regarding their support for direct democracy. In fact, for protest parties referendums offer a perfect opportunity to contradict governmental policies. This can be considered as a long-term orientation in the political system, similarly to the fringe party strategy described above.

In this section, we learned that strategic support for direct democracy needs to be considered from a short-term and mid-term perspective. Vote-seeking motivations clearly point to short-term effects of support for direct democracy and are similarly relevant for government and opposition groups with declining popular approval. Policy-seeking reflects a short-term orientation of opposition actors that want to influence the current decision-making and challenge the government through referendums. Policy-seeking also depends on the legislative power that parties obtain from election results. In a mid-term perspective, government parties and parties with prospects for government positions in the future can be expected to reject direct democratic institutions as it could endanger their dominant role in decision-making. On the contrary, opposition parties with little chances to enter government and shape policies in the parliamentary arena have an incentive to support direct democracy in the long run, because it offers them recurrent influence on policy-making and can improve their generally weak power position.

The argumentation so far concentrates on general motivations of political elites ignoring the specific institutional contexts in which parties and representatives operate. In many countries throughout the world some direct democratic institutions exist at the national level and popular votes appear frequently(Altman, 2011; Butler and Ramney, 1994). The experience with these institutions can be expected to influence the general support for direct democracy. In particular, over time political elites learn the advantages and disadvantages of direct democratic institutions and can better assess the consequences of these institutions. Therefore, the institutional context and practice are important determinants of long-term orientations towards direct democracy. How the institutional setting and experience with popular votes affects political elites' strategic support for direct democracy is reviewed in the next chapter.

3.1.6 Institutional Context and Experience with Direct Democracy

The rational-strategic perspective also includes effects from the institutional setting and political context. Institutional frameworks give "the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction" (North, 1990, 3). As constraints, institutions define the possibilities, but also the limits of political action. In particular, institutional contexts have different effects on the strategic thinking of political elites. Existing institutions and practices affect how political elites perceive new or alternative institutions. This becomes particularly evident if institutional frameworks in different countries are compared. Therefore, I consider here how the existing institutional structures and practices in countries affect political elites' position on direct democracy.

It is plausible to expect that political elites have a different position on direct democracy if direct democratic institutions are frequently used. Additionally, the general par-

[16] In most cases, these parties are interested in vote-seeking and policy-seeking.

liamentary setting in each country might impact the position on direct democracy, in particular if referendums are viewed as important control instruments of the government. In the following I describe in detail how direct democratic practice and the legislative institutional framework in countries influences the strategic thinking of elites.

Direct Democratic Practice

Direct democratic institutions have spread around the world in the last 40 years (Altman, 2011; Butler and Ramney, 1994; Mendez, Mendez and Triga, 2014). While in some countries popular votes have been used quite frequently, in others the institutional mechanisms exist, but have barely been applied, and only a few countries have never applied such institutions at the national level.[17] Popular votes do seldom represent novelties in the institutional repertoire of political elites. Accordingly, most political elites should be familiar with the possibilities and challenges connected with direct democratic mechanisms. Even political elites from countries with no referendums at the national level might have an idea of referendums based on the experiences in other countries. However, elites that have not experienced a referendum process themselves are likely to have a different perception of direct democracy. On the contrary, when representatives have witnessed direct democratic processes, these experiences should influence their general attitudes towards direct democracy. Therefore it is worthwhile to look at the institutional context and direct democratic practice in each country to understand better why political elites favour direct democracy and how it is related to strategic motivations.

The most important lesson elites learn from the experience with direct democracy is that referendums are generally risky choices. In particular, political elites understand over time that the success of a popular vote is not guaranteed and depends in the final stage on the unpredictable choices of voters (Hug and Tsebelis, 2002). Additionally, it is difficult to foresee who will participate in the vote and if the necessary requirements such as participation quorums and approval rates are met. Furthermore, political elites learn through experience that every referendum is accompanied by a campaign in which the opposite camp mobilizes. There is always the possibility that public opinion and subsequently the majority in the vote turn against the referendum initiators. And finally, referendum outcomes have a determinant character so that political elites have to follow the majority decision whether they support it or not. These uncertainties and risks become only evident, when political elites actually are involved in direct democratic processes. I argue in this subsection that the experience of direct democratic processes contributes to the support or rejection of these institutions.

If political elites lack experience with direct democracy, they are likely to underestimate the consequences of referendums and therefore be more in favour of trying them. In accordance with bounded rationality assumptions, inexperienced political elites are more short-term oriented because they lack important information. I argue that this information can only be gathered through active involvement in direct democratic processes. It is

[17] Belgium and Germany are such examples for lacking direct democratic institutions for general issues at the national level, though both countries have different forms of direct democracy at the state or local levels.

undoubtful that political elites that only heard of referendums in other countries from the media are not as informed as those that were actively participating in referendums. Of course if issues decided upon in a referendum are familiar to the external elites, for example in the many referendums concerning EU-integration, they might be well informed, in particular as such issues are very salient and might even concern other countries. Nevertheless, political elites often lack the full understanding of the political process if they were not involved in it. They cannot reliably assess the effects of referendums on the different parties and elites in these countries.

Moreover, it is an even more complicated intellectual challenge to transfer the experiences in one country to the home country, where the political context - in particular the party system, voters' alignments and preferences as well as general economic and social conditions - is totally different. Therefore, the assumptions of bounded rationality make a lot of sense in connection to elites with no own direct democratic experience. It is plausible then to assume that inexperienced elites tend to underestimate the risks of referendums and focus on short-term effects of direct democratic processes such as vote- and policy-seeking incentives described in the previous sections.

Inexperienced elites might be more short-sighted regarding direct democracy, but this changes as soon as they learn the risks of referendums through active participation. While naive politicians might see the strategic advantages of popular votes as described above, experienced politicians will be more cautious to apply such institutions and weigh more carefully the pros and cons of referendums. They still might be attracted by certain anticipated effects in popular approval or policy-making. Even experienced elites can make risky choices. I argued in the previous sections that strategic motivations of elites depend on the current power position of their party; weak power positions might encourage risky behaviour of political elites. However, the actual experience with direct democratic processes should make political elites more careful and force them to consider the costs and risks of referendums more precisely. When political elites were involved in a campaign, whether already in their role or through voting, and witnessed the outcomes of the popular vote decisions, they gather concrete information and can better weigh the expected gains against the costs of referendums.

It does not matter in this regard, whether the experience with a referendum is generally positive, meaning political elites supported the winning position, or negative. I assume that the experience consists more in the clear realization of the institutional process and its implication to the existing political system than in the perception of a positive or negative result. Political elites are conceived as politically sophisticated individuals based on their education and involvement in the political system. Political elites can be expected to reflect the whole uncertain situation in referendums, in particular the shift of decision-making power from elected representative to voters. They might also not only see their own advantages, but consider different perspectives, especially from the losing side. And ultimately, political elites could reason about the impact on the representative system and their own role in this regard. Therefore, no matter the actual result of a referendum, the simple experience with referendums offers important insights into direct democratic

processes and will make political elites strategically careful in this regard. I further expect that each experience increases the information pool and encourages a thorough reflection process about direct democratic institutions. The more experience with referendums political elites gather the more risk-averse they should become and consequently, the less they might support direct democratic institutions.

In sum, there is a learning effect from experiences with referendums that makes political elites more risk-averse in their strategic support for direct democratic institutions. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect differences in the support for direct democracy depending on the direct democratic context of a country. In this regard, I assume that it is not simply the availability of direct democratic institutions in a country that changes the perception of elites, but their concrete application in the political system. As long as direct democratic institutions are only in the constitution and have never been applied, political elites are not familiar with the possible effects of these institutions. The more often referendums interfere with the traditional decision-making the better political elites can assess the risks connected to direct democratic decisions, as described above. This reasoning leads to the following hypothesis focusing on the comparison of country-contexts:

Hypothesis 6 (H6) *The more frequent direct democracy is practised in a country at the national level, the less supportive are political elites from this country of direct democracy.*

This section concentrated on strategic motivations derived from the experience with direct democratic processes, where possible gains and risks of referendums are considered in accordance with rational choice assumptions. However, the learning effect connected to direct democratic experiences is not only important for strategic orientations, but can have a normative character. In particular, experience with direct democracy could contribute to a stronger protection of existing representative institutions and roles or to a changing ideal of democratic decision-making. How the exact lasting effect of direct democratic practice is, is difficult to assess. It is plausible to assume that with frequent direct democratic processes, political elites get used to them and adopt them as part of the general decision-making process changing previous roles and procedures. To assess whether a political system develops in this particular direction requires a longitudinal study, which is not the focus of this thesis. This study concentrates on cross-sectional assessment of political elites' support for direct democracy in comparative perspective. Therefore, the above explained relationship between direct democratic experience and political elites' support is more useful.

Considering the relatively short and quite rare experience with direct democracy at the national level in most countries, it is likely to expect that political elites develop a resistance towards direct democratic institutions in the first years. This can have a strategic background as described above or it can be connected to strong loyalty towards the existing representative system. Political elites function as important agents of the representative system. They are socialized in representative institutions such as parties and parliament (Almond and Powell, 1978) and actively shape the performance and perception of these institutions through their actions. Therefore, political elites are likely to protect existing representative institutions and roles, as these are part of their own identity and determine

their behaviour.[18] It is noteworthy that political elites' rejection of direct democracy based on experience with it can also have a normative foundation reflecting deep-rooted loyalty towards the representative system. However, even this normative foundation entails strategic motivations: In order to preserve the system that raises and nurtures and makes political elites thrive, they should be more likely to reject all intrusions that could endanger its original structure and functioning. This is why the influence of the direct democratic context is conceived as strategic.

Parliamentary Powers

Experience with direct democracy is not the only contextual influence that can have an impact on the support for direct democracy. There are more institutional characteristics that might make a difference whether direct democracy is endorsed and considered as adaptable to the current institutions or not. In particular, rules and practices in parliament might affect how political elites view direct democracy. In the extreme case, referendums undermine the established form of representative policy-making in parliament. Political elites can be expected to view this sceptically, especially if they have enough possibilities to contribute to policy-making through their legislative work in parliament. In the parliamentary setting, we can differentiate how much influence each individual member and opposition parties have on policy-making, in particular in front of the government.[19] This influence can be conceived as parliamentary powers (Fish and Kroenig, 2009) and reflects for example the right to introduce bills independently from the executive, often elaborated in specialized parliamentary committees, or the possibility to question government officials regularly. These rights can be used as important control instruments that also enable to promote alternative standpoints and gain public visibility. If such rights and possibilities exist, political elites in parliament might be less inclined to demand direct democratic processes because they already have considerable power vis a vis the government.

Direct democracy enables less powerful opposition parties to influence decision-making outside the parliamentary setting and improve their public approval, as has been explained in section 3.1.4 and 3.1.3. However, if the parliamentary institutions provide extensive rights and possibilities to influence policy-making or contribute to public debates, then political elites, even from marginalized parties, might consider direct democratic institutions as avoidable or not useful. In comparison to parliamentary processes, direct democratic procedures are much more time-consuming and costly. Political elites with access to oversight mechanisms, important committees and general resources inside parliament can be expected to concentrate on their focal institution and use it for strategic purposes such as influencing policy-making, improving their popular approval and in a broader sense the chances for office. The structures of parliament are much more convenient in this regard than the unpredictable referendum process. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that if strong parliamentary powers for individual members and opposition groups exist in a

[18] These considerations reflect assumptions of sociological institutionalism and will be reviewed in section 3.2.3 considering the normative perspective on support for direct democracy.

[19] Though governing parties are also in parliament and in parliamentary systems, the majority in parliament reflects the government, the individual members are also of relevance in the considered circumstances.

country political elites from that country are less inclined to support direct democracy in comparison to countries with few or weak parliamentary powers. Consequently, I hypothesize the following second contextual influence on political elites' support for direct democracy:

Hypothesis 7 (H7) *The more parliamentary powers political elites have access to, the less supportive they are of direct democracy.*

Apart from the focus on parliamentary powers, (Lijphart, 2012)'s differentiation between majority and consensus oriented democracies can be viewed as a useful tool to assess contextual effects on direct democratic support. In particular, direct democratic institutions might be more acceptable in majoritarian democratic systems, as the same majority rule is often a dominant principle of referendums. Majoritarian systems often are "exclusive, competitive and adversarial" (Lijphart, 2012, 2) with the goal to produce clear-cut results and efficiency in decision-making. The reduction of complex questions to a yes-no-vote in referendums follows the same logic. In general, referendums, no matter who initiates them, split the public opinion into two positions and enforce a majority decision as a result. These characteristics place referendums closer to majoritarian institutions and processes.[20] Consensus oriented systems "characterized by inclusiveness, bargaining and compromise"(Lijphart, 2012, 2), therefore, might be more hostile to such majoritarian processes that hinder compromise building and can negatively affect minorities. Though the assumed influences from the majoritarian or consensus character of a democratic system are comprehensible, they are rather ambiguous, imply quite demanding expectations on the reasoning of political elites and are only indirectly related to direct democratic institutions. Therefore, I only consider the direct democratic practice and the legislative powers of parliamentarians as possible macro influences on political elites' support for direct democracy.[21]

In this section, I extended the strategic perspective to contextual influences from the institutional framework and the previous experience with direct democracy in a country. Next to vote-, policy- and office-seeking motivations, political elites are likely to include the experience and the current institutional framework in their country into the calculation of benefits and costs. These orientations can be viewed as long-term influences on political elites' support for direct democracy in comparison to the previously described short-term and mid-term strategic considerations. Another long-term influence on political elites' institutional preferences can be identified in normative orientations. These normative predispositions guide political elites in their decisions and reflect support for direct democracy based on general values and concepts about the ideal democratic system. This alternative perspective on the support of direct democracy is described in detail in

[20]Interestingly, Lijphart (2012) considers direct democratic institutions as a hurdle in majoritarian systems and implies that it could be rather a characteristic of consensus oriented democracies. He argues plausibly in this regard that citizen-initiated referendums offer minority groups a veto instrument and force political elites in power to consider minority positions to avoid a referendums. However, Lijphart is also aware that top down initiatives and referendum outcomes based on simple majorities enhance the majoritarian character of a system. I argue here in the latter direction because of the reasons stated above.

[21]In the empirical analysis, the political structure and culture of a country are implicitly included through the country level.

the next part of this chapter. A short summary of the whole rational strategic perspective is offered in the following section.

3.1.7 Summary of the Rational-Strategic Perspective

In a nutshell, the strategic perspective describes how anticipated gains in power and perceived risks of referendums can be expected to influence political elites' support for direct democracy. Those elites that occupy a powerful position in the system, e.g. a party that has substantial support of the electorate and already possesses policy-making power, will be most risk-averse and reject direct democracy. Electorally unsuccessful and disadvantaged parties, however, will likely favour direct democracy, because it offers them more influence on policy-making, which, furthermore, could lead to more popular support. In this regard, the party has been a focal point of the theoretical argumentation. However, the individual strategic orientation that mainly reflects career ambitions of political elites has also been considered. Here, the general expectation is that individual elites differ in their approval of direct democracy based on their current success to win a seat in parliament.

Party-focused and individual strategic orientations mainly reflect short-term strategies that contain considerable risks for established elites. If elites endorse direct democracy short-sightedly only thinking about immediate gains, they might be confronted with damaging mid- or long-term consequences, especially if they have prospects to government offices. Therefore, office-seeking parties are expected to be more careful with regards to direct democracy. They will try to avoid new hurdles in decision-making, because it could harm them when they are in office. On the contrary, disadvantaged groups in and outside parliament perceive a useful instrument through direct democracy in the long run. In particular, it helps them to have more impact on policy-making and in this way to gain more popular approval. Consequently, strategic considerations can have a short- or long-sighted character depending on the power position of the actor in the current system.

Additionally, the existing political context in a country is expected to influence political elites' support for direct democracy in a long-term perspective. In countries with extensive direct democratic practice, elites are more likely to reject direct democracy. Through direct democratic processes political elites learn the risks connected to referendums. The more often referendums appear in a country, the more likely political elites will be sceptical towards direct democracy. A similar scepticism is expected when parliamentary powers of individual political elites and opposition parties are quite extensive allowing them to control government activities thoroughly or independently introduce bills. In political contexts with strong parliamentary powers, political elites have less strategic incentives to endorse direct democratic processes which are comparatively more demanding and less controllable.

The considerations in this chapter mainly focus on the party level. This has several important reasons: First, in parliamentary systems, which are the focus of this study, political elites depend on their party and operate through their party to advance their career. Electoral success, influence in policy-making and gaining office all are managed

through the party. Hence, strategic considerations are of particular relevance for parties. As has been explained, even the individual strategies of elites to advance their career are connected with their reputation in a party. Second, in referendum campaigns seldom single individuals appear as the leading actors. More often, political groups such as parties or interest groups are involved in the campaigning. Furthermore, parties are important information cues for voters, they supply voters with programs and ideological orientations and are responsible for the positioning of voters in different issues. In this regard, it is reasonable to expect that voters would also follow their preferred party in institutional questions. As primary actors in the political game, parties are also those entities that influence the development of a political system. They can introduce institutional changes or at the same time conserve the existing institutional setting.

The strategic perspective reflecting rational calculations of parties and their elites is one way to consider what drives the support for direct democracy. Next, I introduce a different view on the support for direct democratic institutions that focuses on individual predispositions. I argue in the next section that political elites also rely on their normative orientations when they are confronted with institutional preferences. These normative predispositions guide political elites in their decisions and reflect long-term institutional preferences based on general values and concepts about the ideal democratic system.

3.2 Normative Perspective on Political Elites' Support for Direct Democracy

In the second part of the theoretical framework, I describe a normative perspective on the support for direct democracy concentrating on individual ideological predispositions, socialization experiences and the evaluation of the current democratic system. First, I introduce values and beliefs as the theoretical basis of this explanatory perspective. Then, I consider three ideological influences for the positions on direct democracy. These are the left-right dimension, the libertarian and authoritarian dimension and populist inclinations. Afterwards, I describe how political elites' socialization experiences influence their positions on institutions and finally review how the overall evaluation of the current democratic system affects the support for direct democracy. In the last section of this part I summarize the main assumptions of the normative perspective.

3.2.1 Values and Beliefs as Normative Predispositions

Political elites are not just calculating machines that use the two parameters gains and risks in connection with their current power position to make decisions. Research also points to values and normative beliefs as important influences for political elites' behaviour (Birch et al., 2002; Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2006; Norris, 2011; Renwick, 2010). In this section I describe how values and beliefs can impact political behaviour.[22] First, I introduce the concepts of values, (normative) beliefs and attitudes. Then, I briefly review how they develop in an individual with a special emphasis on political elites' socialization. Afterwards, I consider the role of political elites' beliefs for the development of political systems. Finally, I outline which values or normative conceptions are relevant for the issue of direct democratic institutions. This section has the goal to present the most important assumptions and concepts in the normative perspective on the support for direct democracy. The following sections will focus more closely on the different forms of normative influences in political elites' universe and derive hypotheses for the analysis.

Differentiation between Values, Beliefs and Attitudes

According to psychological research, every human being incorporates a system of general values that guides her actions and attitudes (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992; van Deth, 2003). Though there is a continuing debate on which values are the most important, there exist a general agreement that values function as an instructive system for the behaviour of individuals (Ajzen, 2005; Feldman, 2013; van Deth, 2003). Values reflect the behavioural ideals of individuals and can be described as "conceptions of the desirable" (van Deth, 2003, 46). In this regard, they give individuals important principles on how to decide in different situations (Rokeach, 1973). Values are abstract concepts that manifest

[22] Behaviour is understood here as one or more concrete actions with a designated goal and also include specific attitudes pointing to actions or concrete issue positions. Attitudes usually reflect positions on particular questions or decisional situations. Therefore, attitudes signal the possibility of actions, which means that individuals can act differently when confronted with a concrete situation. Nevertheless, they are considered as "predispositions to act" (van Deth, 2003, 30), as will be described below in this chapter.

themselves in concrete actions or attitudinal positions. It is assumed that values are perceptible through concrete actions, but can also be expressed in verbal statements, as they usually are measured in surveys(van Deth, 2003). In sum, in the context of this thesis, values are considered as overarching principles for the behaviour of individuals that are not directly observable, but underlie important positions on political issues.

It is important to differentiate between values, beliefs and attitudes, which all constitute what I mean by the term normative orientations in the further considerations. Values are understood as overarching, latent principles. They are usually considered as stable, as the next passages explain in detail. The stable structure of values serves as a foundation for attitudes and beliefs. Beliefs will be viewed here as manifest expressions of values (van Deth, 2003). Beliefs reflect individual convictions about what is right or wrong or how something should function in society and politics. Once established, general beliefs - as expressions of values - are considered to be fixed. Beliefs can only change when extreme events such as transformations of political systems or severe personal crises appear in the individual's life (Almond and Powell, 1978; Bürklin, 1997; Rohrschneider, 1994).

Attitudes differ from beliefs in their more specific character referring to single issues and closer defined situations, while beliefs refer to general positions in universal matters (Rokeach, 1973).[23] Consequently, attitudes can show a more fluctuating character that depends on the context of the situation and the current available information(Rokeach, 1973). Attitudes and beliefs are both subordinate to values that describe overarching convictions applicable to different situations or thematic fields (Campbell et al., 1960; Rokeach, 1973). In a coherent belief system, beliefs and attitudes directly reflect the central values of an individual.

Research on individual attitudes distinguishes between different kinds of attitudes, in particular between cognitive and normative attitudes. In their pioneering study on political culture of mass publics, Almond and Verba (1963) describe cognitive attitudes as knowledge about particular political objects - input, output, system and self as the main objects. Further, they differentiate evaluative attitudes that reflect value-based judgements and affective attitudes that express emotions towards political objects. These orientations stand in a hierarchy, since a certain consciousness about the objects must first exist in order to form emotions about them and to make judgements.

Regarding elites' belief system, (Putnam, 1971) distinguishes in his "Comparative Study of Political Elites" between cognitive and normative attitudes.[24] Cognitive attitudes imply the knowledge of political elites about the society and political matters, while normative attitudes reflect the desired societal ideals. These normative convictions are

[23]For example, whether the state should be involved in the economy of a country is a very broad and comprehensive question and would stimulate a general position of individuals towards the liberal market and state interventions. Therefore, a question framed like this refers to general values expressed as beliefs. A more concrete question could ask whether the state should subsidise agricultural products and thus narrow the considered subject. The question could be framed even more precisely, e.g specifying whether the state should subsidise sugar cane or combining it with a specific goal as to be competitive on the world market. These more specific questions refer to attitudes of individuals.

[24]Putnam also describes interpersonal attitudes pointing to relationships to other individuals, especially competitors, and stylistic attitudes concerning the strategic behaviour of political elites. These attitude forms can be ignored for the current part of the study.

based on general values and ideas about the good society or the ideal political system and are called in this thesis beliefs. According to Putnam, the differences between elites within a country result precisely from normative attitudes. As quasi-ideological frameworks, they also represent important influences on cognitive orientations, e.g. the assessment of the current social or economic situation in a country, or whether other persons are perceived as companions for the same goals or opponents with different ideas.

Normative orientations play an important role in the everyday interaction of political elites and have an essential function in the political competition. Political programmes, positions on current issues and even the structure of party organizations, all reflect normative beliefs of the involved political actors. In particular, political elites appeal to their potential supporters referring to general values and principles, they equally base their programmatic proposals on normative ideas and use normative orientations in the competition for votes. These normative ideas and principles can be also called ideological stances of parties. Ideological stances help to differentiate between the different parties and candidates. In fact, voters are believed to use ideological positions as shortcuts to decide which party or candidate best represents their interests (Downs, 1957b). Therefore, normative beliefs such as ideological predispositions are important vehicles in the political competition and are supposed to guide the behaviour of parties.

As has been outlined in the previous chapter, strategic motivations often play an important role for political elites' behaviour in competitive situations. Value-oriented behaviour differs from strategically-motivated actions in such a sense that societal ideals and values are seen as more important than (personal) power gains. Interestingly, even rational choice approaches distinguish between intrinsic and instrumental orientations to explain political elites' behaviour. Instrumental orientations are connected to the overarching goal of power-seeking, as described in the previous chapter. Instrumental behaviour implies pursuing a goal as a mean to a different, often selfish aim. Intrinsic orientations are goals in themselves; political elites act intrinsically to achieve the guiding principle or the inherent value of their actions. Normative beliefs reflect exactly this kind of intrinsic orientations and therefore can be viewed as the opposite of strategic motivations.

Belief System Formation During Socialization

In principle, every human being develops a belief system during the socialization process and this system remains constant in the adult life (Almond and Verba, 1963; Easton, 1965; van Deth, 2003). A belief system can be understood "as a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence" (Converse, 2006, 207). Political socialization describes the process of establishing important skills, understandings and ideological convictions in political matters[25]. This process starts during childhood, continues in adolescence and can extend to the first formative years of adulthood.[26] In general, it is assumed that central values

[25]Politics incorporate all "interactions through which values are allocated in a society" (Easton, 1965, 21), whereas values are understood more generally here including for example materialistic goods.

[26]There is no clear agreement in research on how long this process takes and when it can be considered as finished. It is even plausible to assume that socialization is an ongoing process during adulthood.

are established in the early socialisation in the family, the immediate social environment and at school (Almond and Powell, 1978). These values are a stable foundation of an individual's belief system. Political beliefs and specific attitudes are formed on the basis of this value structure with increasing experience in the political system. Of particular importance is the involvement in the political system. The more an individual participates in the political system, the more she is expected to have a coherent and comprehensive attitudinal structure. Therefore, research points out that elites, in comparison to the so called masses, usually establish a coherent, stable and ideologically-sound belief system (Converse, 2006; Hoffmann-Lange, 2008; McClosky, 1964).

Non-elites are assumed to have less consistent attitudes meaning that their issue positions are not necessary in an interdependent structure or do not always reflect their general values and beliefs. In longitudinal studies, researchers observe that voters can change their attitudes and express contradictory opinions on certain issues which implies that they not necessarily base their judgement on a coherent and stable belief system. The instability of voters' attitudes can be related to incomplete information, lack of interest in politics as well as limited political capacities in the broad electorate (Almond and Powell, 1978; Converse, 2006; Dalton, 1987; McClosky, 1964).[27] Most people simply are not able to process the necessary information for the development of a coherent attitudinal system, they usually also do not have time or the necessary resources to deal with certain questions properly. This is different for political elites who have access to more information, are trained in politics and deal with political issues constantly.

Political elites rely on their belief system in their everyday business and therefore show a more consistent attitudinal structure. Elites play an important active role in the political process. Elites also have more access to information about important matters and have a lot of practice in political participation. In particular, elites are often required to position themselves to important issues. A consistent belief system is a necessary tool in this regard, as it gives orientation and increases the efficiency of decision-making. This leads to a coherent attitudinal structure that signals credibility and reliability to the public, especially the more informed supporters and opponents. Consequently, elites can be expected to have a consistent attitudinal system through their deep integration in the political system.

Political elites establish a coherent belief system and attitudinal structure going through a secondary or post-recruitment socialization at the beginning of their career(Almond and Powell, 1978; Putnam, 1976). Two institutions influence elites' belief systems in this secondary socialization: parliament and political organizations such as parties.[28] Elites present a quite homogeneous group concerning their social background, at least in terms of formal education and professional status (Best and Vogel, 2014; Edinger and Searing,

[27] Of course, the electorate is diverse and also includes politically more interested and capable persons. Research often differentiates between a more passive group that restricts its participation to elections, a more informed and politically active group and the elite group with directly involved persons (Putnam, 1976). This difference is not decisive for the current considerations, therefore the comparison is reduced to masses and elites.

[28] This consideration is based on typical parliamentary elites in Western democracies. Therefore I focus on the party as a socialization institution, though many elites have also connections to organized interest organizations or movements.

1967; Putnam, 1976). Political elites often bring an early interest and also deeper knowledge in politics; they often self-recruit themselves to be politically active starting in a party or interest organization and continuing in state offices. Collecting experiences in politics political elites confirm or revise their attitudes on general democratic norms and political issues they learned through their early socialization (Feldman, 2013).

The environment of political organizations helps to intensify normative tendencies of the future elites. In particular, parties strengthen the ideological inclinations of their aspirants for political posts (Almond and Powell, 1978; Putnam, 1971; Searing, 1982). Parties also prepare future elites for the appearance in public politics and in this way foster a coherent ideological belief system (Almond and Powell, 1978; Putnam, 1971). Ideology offers an idealistic picture of how a political system and the society should be organized. In this way, the party ideology gives political elites important criteria for the evaluation of the current system according to an ideal.

However, the idealistic picture is adjusted through the everyday reality in representative systems. In particular, the practical parliamentary work forms concrete conceptions about the political process or corrects previous expectations of decision-making. For example, new members of parliament quickly learn the complexity of law-making, deliberation and consensus building as well as the difficulties to find agreements in and beyond their faction and to adequately respond to the demands of the public. Hence, the experience in parliament teaches political elites the more realistic democratic process, while the party environment presents pursuable ideals of political systems(Almond and Powell, 1978; Pefley and Rohrschneider, 2009; Putnam, 1976).

The Role of Political Elites Beliefs for the Stability of Systems

The belief system of elites is a decisive factor for the overall normative structure of a political system (Burton and Higley, 2001). Elites are the most visible and influential actors in a political system; they often determine public debates and are responsible for important decisions. As representatives, political elites set an example to the electorate of how to view certain processes and whether to accept current developments of the society and the political system. Therefore, their belief systems serve as guiding principles for the electorate and in this way strengthen the normative structure of a system.

Furthermore, political elites are considered as important safeguards of the democratic system (Burton and Higley, 2001). As role models, political elites influence the development of a system with their beliefs and attitudes. If political elites' concepts of democracy are in accordance with the current institutional setting, the system is strengthened and sustained. But if this is not the case, political elites can also influence changes. They can send reform impulses to the public and are the responsible actors to introduce these changes. Though democratic elites depend on the support of the electorate, they also supply voters with different proposals, ideas and concrete policies. Consequently, political elites' belief systems are of particular relevance for the stability or change of a democratic system.

Research on institutional reforms has shown that political elites' beliefs are decisive for the design of new institutions. Case studies of electoral reforms, especially in new democracies, show that values and normative principles had more impact on the selected institutions than strategic considerations (Birch et al., 2002; Norris, 2011; Renwick, 2010). In fact, in some cases political elites pursued reforms although the outcomes went against their obvious strategic interests. For instance, the dissidents of the former socialist regimes in Hungary and the Czech Republic did not implement majoritarian electoral systems which would have benefited their current power position, but were guided by principles such as power balancing or the representation of societal plurality (Birch et al., 2002; Renwick, 2010). Therefore, studying elites' support for direct democracy requires to include their normative beliefs. In particular, it is necessary to understand what kind of democratic ideal political elites follow.

It is plausible that elites endorse direct democratic institutions because they have a participatory understanding of democracy and desire more citizens' involvement in the political system. Political elites might favour direct democratic institutions as a stronger participatory element or an important corrective instrument towards more responsiveness of the political system to the popular will. In contrast, political elites might be very protective of representative institutions because direct democratic procedures undermine important functions of parliamentary deliberation and consensus building among political elites. Then, direct democracy is viewed as an attack on the well-established representative institutions with which representatives identify and which norms and characteristics they internalized.

Which normative predispositions can be expected and from where they originate is subject of the following chapters. I differentiate three spheres of influence in this normative perspective: First, ideologies typically contain concepts about the ideal social organization and political system and therefore play a role for approving or rejecting different types of institutions. Second, the socialization in representative institutions builds a strong bond between actors and the system's institutions, which affects the attitudes towards alternative institutions. And finally, third, the actual performance of the current democratic system has an influence on institutional preferences. If the current institutions are performing well and reflect the expectations of the involved actors, they will support their maintenance. But if this is not the case, there is an incentive to change them. These normative determinants of the support for direct democracy are reviewed in detail in the next sections starting with ideological predispositions.

3.2.2 Ideological Orientations

After reviewing the general meaning of value-based behaviour I introduce in this chapter ideological predispositions as a central normative influence where important values of political elites are reflected. In the following passages, I will first define ideological predispositions and explain where elites acquire their coherent and stable ideological framework. Then, I explain which central value-conflicts are identified in important ideologies and introduce two ideological dimensions that shape the political space in research and

public debates today. I will therefore briefly review the development of the so called left-right dimension and its different understandings until today. As a more recent advancement, I will describe the libertarian-authoritarian dimension, which became relevant in the course of the postmaterialism debate. Finally, I also review the most recent ideological discussion concerning populism. Populist thinking introduced new aspects in the discussion surrounding the ideological space, though most researchers regard populism a "thin-centred" ideology, which lacks deep-rooted values and ideas for the development of a society (Mudde, 2004). This rather vague character of populism makes it adaptable to different existent ideological orientations such as socialist or conservativist. In this way, populist thinking often transcends the two-dimensional space, but does not introduce a third dimension, it rather adds a particular style or interpretation to existent ideologies. Nevertheless, it incorporates central concepts related to direct democracy and is also considered in this section as an "ideological predisposition". Ideology can be understood as a set of concepts about the ideal society and its organizing principles as well as of means how to pursue these idealistic concepts (Freeden, 2006; Hinich and Munger, 1994; Inglehart and Klingemann, 1979). Ideologies offer a comprehensive framework to understand politics, differentiate between political programs and guide individual actions (Heywood, 2012). In particular political elites are carriers of ideological orientations for the general public and are guided in their political positions by ideological convictions.

Political elites' reasoning is embedded in an ideologically coherent belief system, as previous research demonstrated (Barton and Parsons, 1977; Converse, 2006; Hoffmann-Lange, 2008; McClosky, 1964). Individuals get to know ideologies during their early socialization and are influenced in this regard by parents[29] or teachers, but also actively throughout their socialization as political participants, especially when they start to vote. Political involvement in form of active information and participation influences each individuals' ideological structure (Feldman, 2013). Politically interested individuals are likely to have strong convictions that are in a coherent structure, which include normative beliefs, particular issue attitudes and policy preferences concerning the ideal government and societal development. These individuals are often considered as potential political elites (Putnam, 1976).

When ideologically-primed individuals decide to become politically active beyond voting they usually look for organizations - interest groups or parties - that incorporate their main convictions and policy preferences. I will focus in this consideration on parties which are the main basis for parliamentary elites as the central actors in this study, but similar assumptions are applicable to other forms of political organizations. In parties, individuals encounter a strong ideological structure that strengthens and enhances their own primary convictions.[30] For example, ideological principles are discussed and connected to

[29]Research points to a strong influence of parents' ideological predispositions on the belief systems of children, usually transmitting their own convictions (Jost.2013).

[30]It is clear that parties do not consist of soldiers that follow particular rules, but of individuals with different backgrounds and perspectives. Parties are not ideologically homogeneous and in particular mass parties often have different internal factions with small ideological differences. However, these differences still are compatible with general principles of an ideology, they present different interpretations and solutions to certain issues like economic liberty or social phenomena.

particular policies during the elaboration of party manifestos where most members can usually participate. Additionally, internal party debates about current issues help to better understand the core ideological concepts of the party and its opponents. Furthermore, party members learn to represent the party in public with reliable and ideologically consistent statements. In this way, parties play an important role in the secondary political socialization of elites (Almond and Powell, 1978; Bürklin, 1997; Putnam, 1976).

Through their focus on certain values, ideologies often include a critique of the current conditions and especially proposals of how to change the development of the society. Therefore, ideologies often not only contain concepts on policies, but also on the polity and politics, in particular dealing with the governance of a society. Though ideologies not necessarily prescribe certain forms of government like a constitutional monarchy or proportional parliamentarianism, they nevertheless indicate which forms of government are in accordance with their general principles. In this regard, ideologies construct a framework of how to judge the institutional structure of political systems (Jost, Federico and Napier, 2013). They also set normative standards that stabilize or challenge current institutional settings (McClosky, 1964). If present institutions reflect general principles of an ideology, its partisans or supporters will view the institutions as desirable and maintain them. If general principles of an ideology are not reflected, strong ideologists are likely to pursue changes or even try to overthrow the system. In this regard, an ideology "provides the basis for organized political action, whether this is intended to preserve, modify or overthrow the existing system of power" (Heywood, 2012, 11).

Core Values in Ideologies

Ideologies can be differentiated according to central values and goals they inhabit (Rokeach, 1973). There is usually a core of ideas that focuses on a vision of how a society should be constructed and function. This core of ideas is stable, but can be complemented with peripheral concepts through historical development and differentiation of political groups (Heywood, 2012). Ideologies are not fixed, but permit the inclusion of new developments or the adjustion to new situations. Nevertheless, ideological tendencies can usually be summarized under a certain adjective like liberal or communist reflecting certain central values. Research in particular differentiates between the following core values: liberty, equality, order and security (Bobbio, 1994; Heywood, 2012; Jost, Federico and Napier, 2013). The main ideologies of today differ in their understanding and valence of these concepts: While the socialist ideology places the most emphasis on the equality of all individuals, liberals focus on individual freedom and self-fulfilment (Bobbio, 1994; Heywood, 2012). Conservatives consider neither equality, nor liberty as important objectives; they rather view security and a clear order as important guide lines for a society, often connected with a strong emphasis on traditions (Bobbio, 1994; Heywood, 2012; Jost, Federico and Napier, 2013). Political parties are constructing their central goals according to these core concepts and can be differentiated along central ideological lines.

The above mentioned core values - liberty, equality, security and order - imply different positions towards institutional stability in a polity. These positions are reflected in the

already mentioned central ideological tendencies: At the centre of conservative ideological thinking stands security and order and this leads to a strong urge to preserve existing traditions and institutions (Bobbio, 1994; Feldman, 2013; Heywood, 2012). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that conservative ideologists would strongly reject changes and only become active if established institutions are in danger. Socialist ideologies, on the other hand, are considered as more progressive and change-oriented (Bobbio, 1994; Feldman, 2013; Heywood, 2012), as their main goal is to establish equality, in particular in the economic, but also in the political sphere. Socialist ideological groups often strive for reforms or an overthrow of existing structures and institutions. In fact, historically the socialist groups had often revolutionary approaches and fought for economic and political changes.

Liberal ideological tendencies present a more complex connection to institutions and system preservation. As liberalists put freedom on top of their agenda they can be expected to endorse changes of existent institutional structures as long as these still do not provide the maximum individual freedom and protection of individual rights. However, if such institutions are already established, liberals are likely to protect the existing structures. Their main goal is to strengthen institutions that secure individual freedom and diversity of lifestyles.

Ideological Dimensions

Liberalism, socialism and conservativism reflect general historically based ideologies in the political sphere. Nowadays, many more ideologies can be differentiated (Freeden, 2013; Heywood, 2012, compare for example). However, research indicates that there are two dividing lines that locate ideologies and their supporters in the political space. The first or horizontal line is the so called left-right dimension.[31] Some researchers believe that the political space is one-dimensional and consider the left-right dimension as a generalized schema to understand and classify political positions (Converse, 2006; Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990; Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987; Knutsen, 1995). Others claim that left-right only reflects one dimension in political space and consider a second dimension as necessary to precisely locate ideological positions. For example, Rokeach (1973) claims that there is a vertical axis in the political space based on the value freedom, while the horizontal axis is defined by the importance of the value equality which would reflect the left-right dimension. In a similar way, Bobbio (1994) claims that liberal values transcend the left-right schema and can be viewed as a complementary dimension.

In fact, socialism and conservativism can easily be placed on a left-right scale, but this is more difficult for liberalism. Socialism definitely focuses on equality as a central goal and can be placed on the left side of the scale. Conservativism does not stress equality as a central value, but accepts inequality as natural. According to conservative thinking,

[31] In the anglo-american context, the left-right dimension is often referred to as liberal-conservative. This term points to conceptual discrepancy in Europe and the Anglo-American countries about the meaning of liberalism and the connotations connected to leftist ideologies such as socialism (Laponce, 1981). I prefer in this thesis the more general term left-right. Furthermore, the empirical considerations focus on European countries.

human beings are by nature different and therefore occupy different positions and roles in society. This creates a particular hierarchical order that is functional and desirable. Hence, conservativism belongs on the right side of the left-right scale.

Liberalism concerns aspects that transcend the left-right divide focusing on equality. As has been explained in the conceptual section on liberal democracy, liberalism focuses on the protection of individual freedoms in the political and social sphere. The core idea is that individuals should be free to pursue their happiness according to their talents, efforts and possibilities. This requires the protection from intrusions of the state and other persons. Furthermore, some theorists combine freedom with a demand for equality in politics and society. Only when individuals enjoy the same rights and privileges, thus are treated equally in all social spheres, they can be considered as free. These two core understandings of freedom demonstrate that freedom as a value can be integrated in rightist ideologies focusing then on the rule of law and leftist ideologies emphasizing equal opportunity structures for individuals.

However, freedom is not a central value for ideologies on the left and right and can also be disregarded. For most conservatives, freedom is connected with individual responsibility for one's own well being. The state only provides a regulatory framework to secure this freedom. Therefore, abiding by laws is an expression of freedom, as it ensures a functioning legal system protecting individual freedoms. The emphasis of conservative thinking on law and order can also imply a restriction of individual freedom in order to preserve the existing social structure and stability. In particular, conservative thinking with an authoritarian tendency often disregards individual freedom and subordinates it to order and security as central goals. Similarly, though most leftist ideologies connect the pursue of equality with individual freedom, as described above, they can also regard restrictions to freedom as acceptable as long as it helps to establish or secure more equality. Socialist thinking in the former Eastern Bloc is a case in point. Hence, neither socialist nor conservativist ideologies do provide a consensual and clear understanding of freedom. In fact, we can state that the value freedom transcends the left-right dimension.

The two, admittedly very rough, understandings of freedom and their different application in leftist and rightist thinking demonstrate that one dimension in political space is not sufficient. When freedom is conceptualized as a central value of a second political dimension, political space becomes two-dimensional and offers combinations of high and low emphasis on freedom and equality in different combinations (Rokeach, 1973). At the one end of the second dividing line, all ideologies that regard freedom as a central value like liberalism can be placed. At the other end of this line ideologies that disregard individual freedom like fascism can be located. This dimension of ideology can be framed as libertarian-authoritarian (Evans, Heath and Lalljee, 1996; Flanagan and Lee, 2003), which will be explained as a term further below. Regarding political organization and institutions, authoritarian values usually imply support for strong central power and hierarchical structure of the state, limited political freedoms for citizens combined with concrete rules for behaviour and expected conformity. The libertarian end would emphasize individual freedom, self-determination and active participation in society and politics

Some of these differentiations are reflected in the left-right dimension when it is considered as a generalized idealogical schema, which is now reviewed in detail.

Understandings of Left and Right

The left-right dimension developed in the course of the French revolution where it reflected how political groups were seated around the monarch (Laponce, 1981). The supporters of the monarchy had their position to the right of the king; their political goal was to protect feudalism and the absolutist state. The adversaries of the monarchy that demand more equality and freedom sat on the left side. This seating arrangement defined from this time on how political groups were categorized: Progressive political forces were named leftist and traditionalist were named rightist. (Knutsen, 1995) claims that the conflict between these two blocks in the French revolution resulted in the first understanding of the left-right divide that he calls religious-secular. The religious-secular divide reflects not necessarily a pure religious conflict, but a divide between traditional hierarchical organization and religiously influenced norms and modern egalitarian concepts of society and government(Knutsen, 1997; Laponce, 1981). In most Western democracies, the conflict concerning the right political order can be considered as outdated since equal political and civil rights, universal suffrage and recurrent democratic elections have been established in all systems. Nevertheless, some features of the religious-secular divide still prevail and shape societal conflicts. These are mostly concerned with traditional family structures affecting issues like homosexuality, abortion, divorce and hierarchical organization of certain institutions (such as families, schools) or (authoritarian) upbringing and education. These issues are partly still allocated on the left-right dimension and contribute to the perception of the left-right dimension as universal, as will be explained further below.

The most common understanding of left-right has an economic character focusing on differences in materialist issues. This economic left-right understanding originated historically from the class conflict that became evident during the Industrial Revolution and persists until today(Knutsen, 1997; Laponce, 1981). At the centre of this conflict stands the difference between the working class and the capital owning 'bourgeoisie' or upper classes. The conflict consists of the competition of the classes for the control of production and the redistribution of wealth. The conflict also involves a dispute about how much the government should intervene in this conflict or whether the free market is sufficient to regulate the relationships between the property owning and the working classes (Knutsen, 1997). The left-right scale differentiates between ideas concerning a strong orientation on economic equality and state intervention to reach this on the left end and economic liberty and market regulation on the right end. The following statement summarizes this difference precisely:

> "Right materialism is associated with economic liberalism, emphasizing market competition, personal freedom, a relatively weak state, the rights of private property, resistance against government regulation, and opposition to notions of social and economic equality. Left materialism is centred on active government, designed to achieve economic security, solidarity, equality of income and

living conditions, and social harmony between classes and strata." (van Deth, 2003, 10)

This materialist conflict is considered as present in the societies until today, though the conflict is not as pronounced as it was during the Industrialization. One reason for the declining meaning of the class conflict lies in the decrease of the working class, while at the same time a new class connected to the service sector became more relevant in politics. Furthermore, the creation of welfare state regulations and redistributive tax systems contributed to a diminishing importance of the class conflict. Therefore, some researchers consider the class conflict as obsolete. However, how much redistribution is desirable and how much influence the state should have on the economy, is still a highly debated issue. The economic right demands that the state allows capital accumulation and market regulation with the overall goal of economic growth, while the economic left seeks to protect existing welfare system and improve the redistribution among low and high incomes. This conflict around state involvement in the economy and redistributive policies is roughly what shapes the economic understanding of the left-right divide today.

Postmaterialism and the Liberal-Authoritarian Divide

A third understanding of the left-right dimension is connected to the discovery of so called postmaterialist preferences in the electorates in the 1970ies. Ronald Inglehart (1977) proclaimed a "silent revolution" and demonstrated that there is a value change happening in the Western Hemisphere (Inglehart, 1977, 1971). Inglehart's postmaterialist theory claims that economic issues summarized in the term materialism are becoming less important in societal conflicts and that aspects of personal self-realization and societal interaction as well as quality of life issues are gaining in importance. This postmaterialist divide would slowly transform the left-right scale, according to Inglehart. The new Left is concerned with postmaterialist values that emphasize self-determination and stronger political involvement, environmental protection, openness and tolerance of different lifestyles (Inglehart, 1977). The Right still focuses on materialist values such as economic security, welfare, order and stability. The existence of new orientations in politics has been widely accepted in the scientific community. However, there is a debate that lasts until today in how much the left-right scale was transformed by postmaterialist values or whether postmaterialist values constitute a new dimension.

Inglehart (and others) link the value change to improved socio-economic conditions and technological developments in most Western democracies as well as the accompanying effects of affluence such as increased eduction and literacy, more information through media expansion, and diverse possibilities of self-development (Dalton, Russell J., Wattenberg, Martin P., 2002; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995). Therefore, postmaterialist tendencies are observed in generations born after the second World War, which profited from economic upturn in most countries and grew up in relative economic and physical security (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987). However, the shift from materialist to postmaterialist values is not observable throughout the whole population, but mostly in the better educated and financially secure middle classes(Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987). Many tests at the

individual level revealed that there are only very few pure postmaterialists as well as pure materialists, the majority of citizens inhabits a mixed position between these two extremes (Knutsen, 1995; Rossteutscher, 2004).

At the aggregate level, postmaterialist values were incorporated in the programmes of the New Left. In particular, new social movements for equal civil rights of different minorities and a more sustainable lifestyle reflected the postmaterialist turn in the political landscape. From these movements new parties such as the Greens emerged in different countries, partly splitting from old leftist parties. This also led to a de- and realignment among voters (Dalton, 2004). While more prosperous voters previously supported rightist parties, the value change showed a shifting trend of this group towards leftist postmaterialist parties. On the other hand, the working class realigned with rightist parties, as their preferences and values did not change that much (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987).

Inglehart's proclaimed postmaterialist turn had a strong impact on research and the debate in the 1980ies, but also received a lot of critique (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987; Rossteutscher, 2004, for example). "Inglehart's conceptualisation of materialism versus postmaterialism has been widely viewed as too crude, too superficial and insufficiently complex to grasp the reality of contemporary societies" (Rossteutscher, 2004, 772). The mixed empirical results at the individual level mentioned above led to a re-evaluation of the postmaterialist scale. In particular, Inglehart and Flanagan (1987) criticized that the postmaterialist-materialist division lacks conceptual differentiation summing up economic preferences and individual and societal values in one dimension. Inglehart's materialists show preferences for economic stability and also inhabit authoritarian orientations towards hierarchical order and traditional values, which needs to be conceptually separated according to Flanagan.

In contrast, Flanagan claims that there is a second dimension separating individual values from economic concerns. This dimension is conceptualized as a libertarian-authoritarian. On the libertarian end, this dimension constitutes of similar aspects as postmaterialism such as individual freedom and self-indulgence, tolerance for different lifestyles and a focus on the quality of life. At the opposite, authoritarian end the dimension incorporates moral and societal issues such as "respect for authority, discipline and dutifulness, patriotism and intolerance for minorities, conformity to customs, and support for traditional religious and moral values" (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987, 1305). The authoritarian end excludes economic issues and in this way differs from the materialist extreme of Inglehart's concept.

Research today more and more integrates the libertarian-authoritarian dimension into the considerations of political space, as demanded by Rokeach, Flanagan and others. The independence of the two dividing lines - the materialist left-right and the societal libertarian-authoritarian - can be differentiated not only conceptually, but also empirically, as demonstrated in different studies (Evans, Heath and Lalljee, 1996; Feldman, 2013). However, there is still some controversy about the utility and explanatory power of both dimensions. In particular, some researchers consider the left-right dimension as sufficient to place parties, elites and voters in the ideological space. This makes a lot of

sense considering the different (historical) understandings of left-right. The authoritarian end consists of similar values like the right position in the religious-secular divide; both emphasize authority, traditional moral values and conformity to established rules. On the libertarian end, there is also resemblance to the secular or modern end assumed on the left with values such as inclusion and self-determination. As has been mentioned, the basic issues concerning individual lifestyles and society are still debated today and could also be reflected in the left-right divide.

Nevertheless, the two dimensions are conceptually clearly distinguishable. If the left-right divide is considered in its economic understanding, it is clearly separable from the libertarian-authoritarian dimension focusing on societal issues. It seems unlikely to resolve the dispute surrounding the two dimensions through theoretical considerations. There are plausible reasons to expect an impact of both ideological dimensions on political elites' support for direct democracy, as will be explained in the next sections. Therefore, I will differentiate theoretically both dimensions as important for the considered research question bearing in mind that the understanding of left-right might be overlapping with the libertarian-authoritarian dimension. The empirical test then will demonstrate whether the two dimensions have independent influences or whether one of them absorbes the effect of the other.

Populism as a New Ideological Sphere?

Apart from the two ideological dimensions, I look at populist influences on political elites' support for direct democracy as influences from the ideological sphere. The populist critique and demands reflect a considerable trend in the last 20 years that is not captured in the left-right or the libertarian-authoritarian dimensions. Whether populism is an ideology, a politics style or something totally different is widely debated in the literature (Freeden, 2016; Mudde, 2004; Taggart, 2004). Mudde (2004) considers populism in orientation on Freeden a "thin centred ideology" that can be connected to other ideologies on the left and right. Freeden (2016) doubts that and calls it at best a "phantom ideology", rejecting his own term of a "thin-centred ideology" that Mudde applies. Taggart (2004) points out that populism is extremely adaptable to other ideological tendencies and depends on the current political context where a moral or societal crisis is perceived. Therefore, populist movements are not based on a coherent and complex ideological framework, but have a "limited programmatic scope" (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018, 5).

Despite the limited programmatic scope, there are core aspects of populism identified regardless of the ideological colouration or the political context: anti-elitism, the reference to a so called 'heartland' of a nation and the preference for popular sovereignty. These central aspects incorporate values like monism or traditionalism, which will be explained in the section on populism, and can be considered as normative influences equivalent to ideological convictions. Of particular importance is the populist emphasis on popular sovereignty in contrast to representative institutions and an established elite, which are often blamed for all what is going wrong in a nation. This anti-elitism leads to demands for more direct decision-making to regain true popular sovereignty that is lost through

representative institutions and their actors (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015). Therefore, populist influences are worth considering as normative influences on the support for direct democracy and will also be reviewed in this part of the normative explanation.

To summarize, based on their ideological convictions, political elites can be expected to have different ideas about how society and politics should function. In this light, ideology incorporates guiding principles for the behaviour and issue positions of political actors. As ideology is concerned with the overall organization and governance of a society, it plays an important role for institutional questions. Direct democracy has been one such institutional question present in public debates in the last decades and should be considered through an ideological lense. Direct democratic elements can be connected with a general conception of the democratic government as the government of the people, in which popular involvement is an essential characteristic. This reference can be found in leftist, liberalist and populist concepts, which are reviewed in detail in the following sections.

Left-Right Dimension

"The left-right schema is, very formally, a symbol for the horizontal dimension of space" (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990, 206) and is considered as the main ideological divide.[32] On the one hand it helps individuals to orient themselves in ideological space and on the other hand it has important communication functions in politics (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990; Knutsen, 1995). Hence, it serves voters as well as political elites as an important heuristic in terms of ideological placement. The left-right scale is often used in studies of voting to predict voter's choices (spacial proximity models) or in studies dealing with ideological congruency between parties and their voters. As a generalized mechanism it incorporates different values, as has been explained in the previous section. Empirical tests demonstrated that indeed there are high correlations of the left-right self-placement with religious-secular beliefs, issues of economic class-conflict and finally the postmaterialist-materialist positions (see for example Hellwig, N.d.; Kitschelt and Hellemans, 1990; Knutsen, 1995). In this regard, the left-right scale presents a super-issue that can be used to assess various positions in politics (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987).

It is difficult to ascertain which concrete values of the three conceptual dimensions mentioned above dominate in the individual understandings of left and right. However, no matter which divide or conflict is emphasized, the general inclination towards direct democratic institutions is in all three cases the same: Left leaning individuals can be expected to favour direct democratic practices. This expectation is on the one hand based on the preference for equality as the central value of leftist ideologies and on the other hand has a historical background. As a value, equality can imply quite different practical objectives, especially it can mean equal distribution of wealth, equal treatment

[32] In some contexts like the Anglo-American the scale is constructed as liberal-conservative, though it widely reflects the same ideas and can be considered as a functional equivalent (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990). Liberalism is connected in this regard with a stronger urge for equality that would secure individual freedom as described above, while conservativism directly describes the orientation on traditional values and established structures.

of individuals in front of the law or the absence of social discrimination and subordination. All these understandings have in common that leftist ideologies endorse inclusion and egalitarianism in the societal life. Direct democratic institutions incorporate these goals: Referendums allow the widest inclusion in the political process, they enable adult citizens to have an equal voice in important decisions. Hence, the egalitarian character of leftist ideologies is likely to result in a preference for direct democracy.

The urge for societal inclusion is evident in the history of leftist movements and parties that fought for the extension of political participation to the lower classes in the 19th and 20th centuries. In particular, leftist groups were fighting for the abolishment of the feudal system, the introduction of universal suffrage and democratic structures. In historical terms it is therefore observable that leftist groups are leaning towards the extension of political participation.[33] Direct democracy can be perceived as the next step regarding the extension of political participation and stronger involvement of lower classes in the political process. In fact, there are historical examples that point to the described relationship of leftist groups and direct democracy: For instance, Lawrence, Donovan and Bowler (2009) examined why many federal states of United States adopted direct democracy between 1898 and 1918 and found out that strong popular support for socialist and populist parties as well as the presence of workers' organizations were - among other factors - decisive for the introduction of direct democratic institutions. Coupled with the general egalitarian character of leftist ideologies described above, it is plausible to expect left-leaning individuals to be in favour of direct democracy.

Considering the three different understandings of left-right, there are further arguments to relate direct democracy to leftist ideologies. In terms of the traditionalist-modern divide, which reflects the original religious-secular conflict from the French Revolution, individuals with secular and modern views, i.e. who seek egalitarian structures, are more inclined towards institutions that break hierarchical systems and organizations and enable all citizens to have a say. Direct democratic institutions definitely reflect such an approach to societal organization and political decision-making, as they give each individual an equal voice through the popular vote. In comparison to representative institutions, that also enable an equal vote in the selection of representatives, direct democratic institutions offer a concrete and immediate choice on a particular issue. The influence of each individual in popular votes is literally direct, i.e. unmediated through representatives. This direct involvement in decision-making should make individuals feel more self-determined and powerful in front of traditional authorities and government. Therefore, individuals with modern attitudes towards social and political organization are more likely to endorse direct democratic institutions.

On the other hand, rightist ideologies often advocate traditional life styles and tend to prefer hierarchical social structures and political subordination. In historical terms, this implied to be in favour of the monarchy and the feudal system accepting a god given

[33]Of course, political participation of the numerically dominant lower classes also was an important vehicle to fight for economic rights. Through equal participation of workers and peasants, leftist parties gained a lot of political power. This power enabled them to pursue redistributive reforms and policies for the improvement of the workers' status in society and economy.

authority of one person and the social and economic super-ordination of the nobility. In modern times, individuals with rightist ideologies focusing on traditionalist values can still be expected to accept hierarchically ordered social structures, subordination to authority figures as well as patriarchal family structures or class differences with different roles and power. A hierarchical structure is more in congruence with representative institutions, as individuals transfer their power to a few selected individuals. The selected representatives aggregate the power of the other individuals and appear to be superior to common people in terms of influence, intellect and resources in politics. They have the decision-making power - except in recurrent elections - and consequently reflect authority in the political system. If individuals agree with subordination to the elected authorities, they will not consider egalitarian structures and direct involvement in decision-making as desirable and reject direct democratic institutions.

Next to the traditional-modern divide, the economic conflict reflected in the left-right dimension also can be connected to the support for direct democracy: On the left, individuals seek economic equality or redistribution of wealth to enable citizens to have the same socio-economic position in the system. In order to achieve more redistribution or better living standards for disadvantaged social groups, direct democracy reflects a useful instrument of the majority population. Provided that the lower classes are still the majority of the society, direct democratic processes might help the lower classes to pursue policies that they are not able to enforce through representative institutions. In comparison, rightist economic convictions are likely to reflect opposing positions towards direct democratic institutions, as mass involvement would endanger the power position of small wealthy groups and destroy the logic of a free market. If economically disadvantaged classes are allowed to actively shape politics or even directly decide on important matters, it is likely that the free market regulating the relationships of employees and employers as well as the distribution of wealth is disturbed or even thwarted. State interventions in the economy become very likely if the lower classes have influence in the political process, especially through popular votes. Hence, in economic terms it is also plausible to assume that right-leaning individuals would disapprove direct democratic institutions to preserve the free market logic, while left-leaning individuals should endorse them to establish more economic equality through redistribution.

In light of the proclaimed value change transforming the left-right dimension, it is also possible to relate positions of the new Left with the support for direct democracy. The new Left - or postmaterialist - position explicitly stresses political freedom, more citizen participation and self-determination as important goals of the society. According to Inglehart (1971) postmaterialists should prefer the goal of "Giving the people more say in important political decisions" (Inglehart, 1977, 1971), which is used as an item to measure postmaterialist inclinations. Direct democracy is an institution that enables more political participation and can be considered as a form of political self-determination. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that individuals reflecting the positions of the new Left also endorse direct democratic institutions. By contrast, the materialist position reflects the insistence on the so called Old Politics assumed to be on the right (Inglehart and Flanagan,

1987). Individuals with materialist orientations are more inclined to accept hierarchical structures and authority in exchange for order, security and economic prosperity. Hence, individuals with materialist positions perceive little incentive to pursue direct democratic institutions and should prefer the established representative system.

Previous research confirms the divide between left and right positions in institutional questions. For instance, Searing (1969) showed in his study of British parliamentary elites that they differ in their democratic conceptions: leftist elites - mostly from Labour party - have more inclination to plebiscitary elements while conservatives prefer representative institutions. Additionally, studies on reform willingness of political elites have incorporated ideological positions of political elites using the left-right self-placement (Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2002, 2006; Ziemann, 2009). They assume that leftist ideologies have a more progressivist nature and prefer egalitarian structures, while rightist ideologies place more emphasis on the conservation of the status quo and agree with hierarchical structures. The results of these studies showed that indeed elites with leftist ideological positions are more likely to support changes such as the introduction of direct democratic institutions.

All things considered, equal political rights and the involvement of all citizens in political matters is inherent in leftist ideological thinking, while rightist ideologies like to preserve hierarchical political structures and existing social differences. Direct democratic elements can be connected with a general conception of the democratic government as the government of the people, in which popular involvement is an essential characteristic. Leftist ideologies' focus in different forms on equality, individual autonomy and co-determination of all (adult) individuals. This makes direct democratic institutions more favorable for leftist groups and left-leaning individuals. On the contrary, rightist ideologies see inequalities as natural and useful in terms of social organization and economic production. Their general belief is that individuals have different capabilities and functions in a society. Therefore, equality and mass participation appear as unnecessary and inconsistent with the goal of order and prosperity in a society. In consequence, rightist ideologists would likely resist changes in the current representative structures. These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 8 (H8) *The more leftist political elites' ideological predispositions are, the more likely they are to support direct democratic institutions.*

To summarize, it has been shown that leftist positions are in favour of direct democracy, even if we consider the left-right scale as a super-issue that has changed its meaning over time and is understood differently from individual to individual. The left-right scale can be considered "a generalized mechanism for understanding what is going on in the political realm" (Knutsen, 1995, 63). Leftist ideologies are more inclined to change existing institutions seeking more equality and self-determination of all individuals. Rightist ideologies intend to preserve established traditions, social structures and the status quo of a political system. However, as already explained, research points to a second dimension focusing on freedom and authority as contrasting values. This dimension is referred to as libertarian-authoritarian and entails aspects that can also be identified in the left-right scale. Regardless the possible overlapping of the two dimensions in their meaning, it is

worthwhile to consider the libertarian-authoritarian scale separately to have a clear conceptual differentiation and empirical test of ideological influences. In the next section, I describe in detail how the libertarian-authoritarian scale is related to direct democracy.

Libertarian-Authoritarian Dimension

The libertarian-authoritarian dimension developed as a response to the assumption that the political space is unidimensional and that all issue positions are representable on the left-right scale. This assumption has been particularly criticized by Rokeach (1973) and Inglehart and Flanagan (1987). The critics of the left-right scale separate positions related to society and the individual from economic issues and consider them as belonging to independent ideological dimensions. According to this critique, the left-right scale reflects mostly economic issues, while an own dimension is necessary to grasp aspects of freedom (Bobbio, 1994; Rokeach, 1973) and define ideological divides in societal issues and the focus on the individual in the society (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987). This second ideological dimension is framed as libertarian-authoritarian and is conceptualized as orthogonal to the left-right scale (Evans and Heath, 1995; Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987; Rokeach, 1973). I consider this conceptualization as theoretically plausible and more precise. Therefore, I assess in this section how the libertarian-authoritarian dimension influences political elites' support for direct democracy.

Libertarian values are closely related to the concept of postmaterialist values and thus should make direct democratic institutions appear attractive. Of particular relevance for the research question on direct democracy is the idea that libertarians desire more political participation (Evans and Heath, 1995; Flanagan and Lee, 2003; Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987). This is related to the general libertarian focus on autonomy of the individual, self-realization and openness to new ideas and life styles. Individuals who like to be independent, especially from traditional societal structures in family and overall society, can be expected to prefer being responsible for important decisions, not to delegate their responsibility to others. As these individuals also tolerate alternative lifestyles and are open for innovations, they are likely to criticise or be dissatisfied with existing institutions, as empirical research of Flanagan and Lee (2003) shows. This constellation of values and goals can easily be connected with direct democratic institutions that seem to perfectly reflect libertarian demands: In direct democratic processes individuals receive a possibility to become politically active without traditional structures of the representative system such as parties, the parliament or petitions.

On the contrary, authoritarian values seem to oppose the idea of direct democracy. Authoritarian values consists of such aspects as "respect for authority, loyalty and dutifulness, obedience and resignation to one's inherited station in life, order and social control" (Flanagan and Lee, 2003, 238). These aspects all point to the acceptance of hierarchical order in a society and a strong resistance to changes. Individuals who strongly respect authorities and obey existing norms and laws are clearly less interested in the establishment of a more self-reliant society where their active political involvement is required. They can also be expected to reject institutions or situations where individuals have the

freedom to do as they like and the outcomes are less predictable and restricted by social control. Furthermore, as individuals with authoritarian values are conceptualized as traditionalist, they are more likely to resist changes that would affect historically manifested structures and institutions. Direct democratic institutions present often a novelty in representative systems. This novelty definitely requires a lot of self-involvement and breaks with established political norms and structures. This is unlikely to attract individuals with authoritarian predispositions.

The debate on value change and Inglehart's claim that the traditional left-right understandings are replaced by the postmaterialist-materialist differentiation (Dalton, 2004; Inglehart, 1997) have influenced the development of the libertarian-authoritarian dimension, as has already been mentioned.[34] Individuals with postmaterialist ideals are pictured as more libertarian; they are concerned with self-determination, express strong tolerance in front of different life-styles and demand more involvement in the political system (Bürklin, 1997; Dalton, 2004; Inglehart, 1997). Individuals with materialist orientations on the other hand focus on law and order as well as economic prosperity and do not consider individual liberties and political participation as important goals of the society (Inglehart, 1977). It is obvious that this distinction shows a strong similarity to the libertarian-authoritarian conceptualization. Nonetheless, I agree with the critique of Inglehart and Flanagan (1987) and others that postmaterialism is a vague concept that summarizes different issue spheres and thus lacks clarity and analytical precision. Therefore, the libertarian-authoritarian differentiation is preferred in this thesis.

It is also plausible to assume that libertarians are sceptical about majoritarian forms of decision making to which direct democratic institutions undoubtedly belong to. As popular votes are usually decided by majority vote, there is likely a minority whose voices are disregarded in the final outcome. Depending on the issue decided upon, this can have important consequences for particular groups with lifestyles diverging from the majorty. Libertarians are believed to value personal freedom and tolerate different lifestyles. On their agenda are often issues such as liberalizing abortion, giving gays the same rights as heterosexual individuals or to enable and preserve religious or cultural freedom (Inglehart and Flanagan, 1987) - all pointing to a strong protection of minorities. Decision-making that would restrict individual freedom or undermine the position of minorities should meet libertarians' resistance and protest. Therefore, it is also possible that individuals with libertarian values dislike direct democratic institutions or are ambiguous in this question.

Nonetheless, most theoretical argumentation is directed towards a positive association between libertarian values and direct democracy. There is not much empirical research

[34]Flanagan and Lee (2003) even talk about a different value change that went from traditional values prevalent in the Middle ages, that incorporated a theistic world view and a strong emphasis of morality, to modern values emerged during Renaissance that are connected with secular society and an orientation on reason, instead of belief, to postmodern values at the end of the 20th century that emphasize individualism, autonomy and relativity in truth. However, this discussion distracts from the main research question in this thesis and thus is not considered.

testing this association.[35] Some studies using measures for postmaterialism point to an influence of libertarian values on dissatisfaction with the functioning of democratic systems and interpret it as probable support for alternative institutions such as direct democracy (Dalton, 2004; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999). Concerning political elites, Bowler, Donovan and Karp (2006) apply postmaterialist items to test what drives the support for political reforms in four countries. Their results demonstrate a weak positive effect of postmaterialist attitudes[36] that is only relevant in Austria and Germany. In orientation on previous research and the dominant argumentation, I hypothesize the following association between libertarian values and direct democracy:

Hypothesis 9 (H9) *Political elites with libertarian orientations are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites with authoritarian orientations.*

Most research concerning individuals with postmaterialists or libertarian values has shown that individuals with libertarian tendencies tend to be more dissatisfied with current institutions or the working of democracy. The section 3.2.4 deals in detail with how dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime - independent from ideological predispositions - affect political elites' support for direct democracy. Additionally, there are other influences that also point to a dissatisfaction with current democratic regimes of particular groups that criticize representative structures and elites. These influences have often a populist character and differ from libertarian inclinations in their opposition to liberal ideals such as diversity of opinions and minority rights. The populist critique on current representative regimes is inherent in their ideology. How populist ideological thinking is related to political elites' support for direct democracy is reviewed in the subsection following the next section. Before considering populist inclinations I lay out how parties' ideological positions can influence political elites' support for direct democracy.

Ideological Positions of Parties

So far the discussion was based on individual ideological convictions. However, in the sphere of political elites, parties play a central role, as has already been mentioned. Political parties are the platform for aspiring elites to enter politics and also the environment where they strengthen and extend their ideological beliefs and issue positions. At the same time, political elites appear as the agents of parties, they represent them to the public and are responsible for the popular approval of parties. One precondition to receive and maintain popular support it to create and preserve a certain image of the party that is based on its general ideology. This enables parties to differentiate from other competitors and to secure the support of ideologically like-minded voters. The preservation of a certain party

[35] To my knowledge there are no studies using libertarian-authoritarian values to explain institutional preferences. Inglehart's postmaterialism index based on four items was integrated in many international surveys, especially in the World Values Survey, and research mostly adapted the scale to test different connections to democratic attitudes and behaviour (Dalton, 2004; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999, see for example).

[36] They operationalized postmaterialist attitudes through a simple measure based on the prioritization of "giving people more say" over "maintaining order" and "protecting freedom of speech" over "fighting rising prices".

image makes it likely that political elites would be influenced by the general ideological tendency of a party, no matter if their own ideological convictions coincide with or deviate from it. Consequently, it is necessary to consider the influence of the ideological party environment for the explanation of elites' support for direct democracy.

Individuals usually join a party because of shared beliefs and ideas about how to best govern the society. However, they will diverge in certain issues based on different dominant values and normative convictions acquired during their life-long socialization. Internally, parties can have quite diverging factions or wings which still operate under the same ideological flag. Nevertheless, ideological clarity and reliable policy positions are important in the competition for votes and political power. From a strategic perspective it is wise for political elites to take issue positions coherent with their party ideology. Therefore, an ideologically uniform environment or an agreed majoritarian position inside a party should affect the positions of individual party members towards direct democracy. This culminates in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 10 (H10) *Political elites' position towards direct democratic institutions is influenced by their party's ideological position towards direct democracy.*

This hypothesis describes a general influence of party ideology on the issue position of their elites, without stating a direction of the influence. The following hypotheses concretizes how the party ideology influences political elites' positions towards direct democratic institutions. Considering the left-right dimension, it is reasonable to expect that leftist parties are more inclined to direct democratic institutions following the same argumentation as in 3.2.2. Leftist parties usually emphasize issues concerning social equality and are associated with the historical fight for the extension of political participation. Direct democratic institutions have an egalitarian effect on the power distribution of citizens. In referendums each voice is counted as one, so that no party, group or person has more influence on the decision. Popular votes can even be considered as a further extension of the equal voting right leftist parties were fighting for. This leftist party ideological propensity should influence political elites' individual positions towards direct democracy, even if their ideological inclinations diverge from the party. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 10.a (H10.a) *The more leftist a party is perceived, the more likely political elites from that party support direct democratic institutions.*

Regarding the libertarian-authoritarian dimension I assume that libertarian parties are more in favour of direct democratic institutions than authoritarian parties, similarly to the effect of the individual ideological tendencies in 3.2.2. Libertarian parties usually strive for greater personal freedom and more individual autonomy and authoritarian parties on the other hand are likely to stress traditional structures and clear authorities in the political sphere. Therefore, it is plausible that direct democratic institutions reflect more libertarian parties' programmes. Political elites from libertarian parties can be expected to adjust their preferences for direct democracy to the ideological image of their party. Therefore I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 10.b (H10.b) *The more libertarian a party is perceived, the more likely political elites from that party support direct democratic institutions.*

Individual ideological positions can differ from the ideological tendencies of parties, as already mentioned. In comparison to individual value-oriented convictions, the ideological environment of a party can be expected to have an additional effect with a strategical twist, especially in the case of divergent positions between the individual and her party. To avoid incongruence with the ideological image of the party in public political elites can be expected to adapt their own position to their party's. In this regard it is plausible to assume vote-seeking motivations of political elites, as a coherent ideological image helps to maintain popular support. Consequently, the influence of party ideology can be interpreted as a strategically ideological determinant of political elites' support for direct democracy. This will be considered in more detail in the results sections.

To study how a possible ideological deviance from the party affects the positions of political elites requires more complex analyses and additional methods. This would extend the scope of this research project too far. The hypotheses described in this section can offer a first insight regarding concurrent influences from individual and party ideology. Considering the main research question it is sufficient to differentiate between the exact source of the ideological influence. Based on the results further research can follow focusing on the exact influence of party ideology on the positions of political elites. In the next section, I review the last ideological influence considered in this thesis, which again focuses on the individual level.

Populist Inclinations

Notwithstanding the general doubt about the ideological consistency and substance of populist ideas, all researchers identify core aspects of populism such as anti-elitism, the focus on peoples' sovereignty and the reference to a historical 'heartland'. In this section, I explain how these aspects of populism are related to support for direct democracy. In particular, I argue that these core aspects entail values such as monism, traditionalism and the preference for procedural democracy that influence populists' positions in institutional questions. Monism is apparent in the focus on peoples' sovereignty and the demand for the 'true' will of the people. Traditionalism is reflected in the populist reference to a historical idealized 'heartland' and in the critique on current societal developments, which often has an anti-pluralist character. How the core aspects and inherent values of populism are related to the support for direct democracy is reviewed in detail in the following.

Populism is based on the core assumption that the people are at the centre of the political process and their popular will needs to be followed (Mudde, 2004; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015). According to populist thinking, the people should be responsible for all important decisions and need to reclaim their sovereignty in current representative systems. Populists often complain that representatives and government officials, though democratically elected, tend to ignore the 'true' will of the people (Mudde, 2004; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015). Hence, populism always entails a critique on representative

institutions and their actors (Taggart, 2004). All researchers identify an anti-elitist approach of populism.[37] Anti-elitism is the first indication that populist ideology is in favour of direct democratic practices. The opposite of the elite are the 'pure' people in populist conceptions. Making the people decide on important issues instead of elected elites clearly corresponds with populist anti-elitism. Therefore, it is plausible to expect populists to favour direct democratic processes.

Apart from anti-elitism, populists often demand that the true will of the people is exercised. The notion of the 'true' or 'general' will reflects a monistic world view in populism. In this view, there exists a "singular and universal political truth" (Taggart, 2004, 279). Populists see the world often as black and white, believe in certain overarching principles and a distinguished world order. If there is universal truth, then it is only a matter of how to discover this truth. The monistic world view leads populists to prefer a political process where either the people decide directly or a strong and wise political authority represents the true will of the people (Mudde, 2004; Taggart, 2004).[38] The goal of such processes is to generate a definite and unambiguous decision. Popular votes are usually offering clear choices to the people in the form of yes and no. A binary question results in a winning majority and losing minority and consequently generates a definite decision which a monistic world view demands.

Populists often regard the majority decision in popular votes as the will of the 'true' people. What this true will contains is not clearly defined, but it often refers to a mystical "heartland"(Mudde, 2004; Taggart, 2004). The concept of the heartland is usually diffuse, but at the same time idealistic and affective. The heartland refers to some nostalgic and romanticized past, where things worked better in the society than they do now (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015, 2018). In this way, populist appeals show a tendency to traditionalism, which varies from society to society, but still reflects a conservative logic. The following quote from Taggart (2004) describes the main idea of the heartland:

> "The heartland is a construction of an ideal world but unlike utopian conceptions, it is constructed retrospectively from the past — it is in essence a past-derived vision projected onto the present as that which has been lost." (Taggart, 2004, 274)

The traditionalist character of populism has similarities to conservative thinking usually attributed to rightist ideologies. However, in comparison to conservatives, populists are not that much interested in the preservation of the current social, economic or political institutions, but criticise the current circumstances and demand to restore some

[37] Interestingly, populists only disregard the established political elites that currently occupy offices.Their own political leaders are excluded from this criticism, as they usually present figures that are newcomers to politics or reflect in their attitudes and behaviour an alternative political approach. Populist leaders are perceived as representatives of the popular will, they know what the people truly want. Therefore, even the preference for a strong leader is compatible with the populist core idea of popular sovereignty.

[38] Populists usually do not imagine a political system where all decisions are made by the people through popular votes. Therefore, they also endorse the idea of strong leaders that govern the country according to the popular will. However, populists demand that referendums are held from time to time to decide on the most important issues (Akkerman, Mudde and Zaslove, 2014; Mudde, 2004).

idealized past conditions. One of the central issues[39] for populists in this regard is their opposition to pluralism and the elites that reflect liberal approaches to politics. Populists perceive all institutions that protect the diversity of the society and rights of particular minorities as threats to the heartland and the true will of the people (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018; Taggart, 2004). Especially representative institutions and actors are harshly attacked by populists as guardians of pluralism and liberal politics (Mudde, 2004; Taggart, 2004). Populists particularly dislike parliamentarian debates and long processes of law making with revisions and adjustions. Furthermore, populists disapprove deliberative processes where different positions coexist and compete with arguments, minority rights are protected and consensual solutions desired. All these mechanisms endanger the enforcement of the true will of the people from the heartland (Taggart, 2004).

Instead of liberal democratic processes, populism supports a procedural form of democracy based on the sovereignty of the people and majority rule (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018). Therefore, populists favour all institutions that guarantee through majority rule that the will of the people is followed. This also puts clear frontiers to liberal concepts of democracy and society expressed in the distribution of diverse lifestyles, protection of minority rights and representative elites (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018). Direct democratic practices can clearly be regarded as majoritarian institutions with a strong focus on popular sovereignty. First, direct democratic procedures re-establish popular sovereignty in decision-making, as people directly decide on important matters. Second, popular votes generate a clear decision with a winning majority, which according to populists should reflect the popular will. And third, popular votes produce clear-cut and definite results that allow to disregard the interests of diverging minorities, which populists consider as not belonging to the heartland. Therefore, direct democratic procedures fit perfectly into the populist concept of democracy and should receive support from elites with populists tendencies. Considering these argumentation, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 11 (H11) *Political elites with populist orientations are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than other political elites.*

The argumentation here is concerned with value-based explanations of political elites' support for direct democracy. However, referendums could also mean a strategic instrument for populist groups (Mudde, 2004). To overcome the power of the established elites, direct decision-making processes are the best way to go. They truly shift the decision-making power from elites to the people. Furthermore, political elites with extreme policy positions - and populist are often regarded as such - can also be expected to favour direct democracy for the following instrumental reasons: Extreme policy positions are usually banned in parliamentary debates and decision-making processes. Direct democratic procedures create a platform to voice such positions without the restrictions of the parliamentary arena or the controls in the mainstream media. Political elites with extreme ideological positions might endorse direct democratic procedures to be able to pursue their institu-

[39] Many populists also consider immigration or globalisation politics as intrusions to the principles and values of the heartland. This often results in anti-immigrant policy proposals and resistance to international integration (Freeden, 2016; Taggart, 2004)

tionally repressed positions. This strategic orientation might also be included in populist inclinations. This needs to be kept in mind for the empirical test.

To summarize: The last ideological influence is reflected in populist orientations of political elites. Of particular relevance are their insistence on the popular will and the criticism of existing institutions and representative actors. Criticism on representative institutions is of particular relevance for political elites, as they are part of the institutional framework and can influence changes in this regard. Political elites occupy important positions and fulfil functional roles in Western democracies and can be regarded as representatives of the current democratic regimes. As such they have a special relationship to the established institutions. This could influence their view on alternative settings such as direct democracy and therefore is the subject of the next section.

3.2.3 Socialization in Representative Institutions

Ideological predispositions present one source of normative orientations that political elites acquire during their secondary socialization in a party or interest organization. However, there is a second source of influence that is connected to the direct involvement of elites in political institutions beyond the party. In particular, the involvement in parliaments and comparable state institutions (e.g. ministerial departments) shape political elites' orientations towards the democratic system (Almond and Powell, 1978; Peffley and Rohrschneider, 2009; Putnam, 1976). Following sociological institutionalism, I argue in this section that active participation in parliament creates a strong bond towards the norms and rules of this institution. This strong bond implies that political elites protect the institution from destabilization and therefore might resist changes that would emerge through new institutions. This also reflects a normative influence on the support for direct democracy, but in a negative sense. I expect that political elites deeply involved in representative institutions disapprove changes that affect these institutions such as the introduction of direct democratic procedures because popular votes would change important processes and norms of behaviour in representative institutions.

The main assumption of the sociological institutionalism has been described as the "logic of social appropriateness" by March and Olsen (1989, 1995), who are the most influential theorists in this field. This logic implies that individuals internalize particular norms and rules during their socialization in institutions. These norms and rules are shared by a social or political community which can range from a small group as in an organization and extend to the whole electorate in a state. The norms and rules can have different aims, depending on the organisation or institution, but mostly they regulate the behaviour of each individual in the considered entity. For example, in a democratic society, a norm could consist of the duty to cast a vote regularly in all elections, although voting is not obligatory. In parliaments, a normative rule could be to give each faction time in the debate to express their opinion on a certain policy. Rules are usually considered to be formalised provisions for individual behaviour, norms on the other hand have an informal character.

Institutional rules and norms incorporate expectations for the roles of each individual and in this way determine behaviour. Usually, the norms and rules of an entity are well known to all members which create anticipations towards the behaviour of all members. The behaviour of individuals is considered appropriate if it is in accordance to the internalized, publicly shared norms and rules of the considered institution, organization or community. This is particularly relevant for political entities, as this statement of March and Olsen (1996) points out:

> "The core notion is that life is organized by sets of shared meanings and practices that come to be taken as given for a long time. Political actors act and organize themselves in accordance with rules and practices which are socially constructed, publicly known, anticipated and accepted." (March and Olsen, 1996, 249).

When individuals apply the internal rules and commit to the norms of an institution, they strengthen the institution from within and secure its survival (Hall and Taylor, 1996; March and Olsen, 1989; Peters, 2005). Complying with the rules of an institution, individuals incorporate the norms and practices of this institution and through this process begin to value them. In other words, individuals fulfil their appropriate roles in an institution and thereby approve the particular rules and norms of this institution. This leads to the development of loyalty towards this institution (March and Olsen, 1995). Loyalty to a particular entity implies that individuals become representatives of this institution and its normative aspects and put their particular interests aside (Peters, 2005; Rokeach, 1973). Of course, individuals are not mere puppets of the institutional rules and norms, but can influence the development of an institution. Furthermore, they constantly evaluate the performance of an institution based on their general values and convictions as well as the internalized norms. If an institution is not working according to the internalized norms or contradicts general values, individuals will be less loyal to the institution. This particular constellation is reviewed in more detail in the next section.

In line with sociological institutionalism, individuals identify more and more with an institution through their active involvement in it (March and Olsen, 1989; Peters, 2005). This connection between actively involved individuals and institutions makes a lot of sense for political elites in the parliamentary arena. As has been mentioned, parliaments and other representative state institutions are very important for the second or post-recruitment socialization of political elites (Almond and Powell, 1978; Peffley and Rohrschneider, 2009; Putnam, 1976). Through their experiences in parliament, young elites gather more information on the political process, learn in particular the difficulties and limits, but also the possibilities and advantages of parliamentary work. In this way, elites adopt the new rules and norms and develop an understanding of their own role in the parliamentary process (Almond and Powell, 1978). Over time, political elites learn to value the often complex and difficult legislative decision-making process. Research confirms that political elites develop an affective and strong connection with the norms and structures of the representative system in which they are active (Jackman, 1972; McClosky, 1964; Peffley and Rohrschneider, 2009; Putnam, 1976). Therefore, it is plausible to expect

that the second socialization of elites in parliament creates a special commitment to this institution.

During the second socialization process, elites are also reviewing their first expectations of democratic governance and put them to a reality test, in particular through their experiences with parliamentary work. They can confirm their previous assumptions about the political process and democracy in general, but are also likely to correct their previously high expectations if they are confronted with unexpected challenges and hurdles. Through this process of adaptation and review, political elites intensify their beliefs and attitudes concerning the democratic process. They are also likely to establish an understanding of their own role in the whole political system and realize that they shape the image of parliament, the political process and the whole democratic system with their own actions. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that political elites will establish a strong bond to the representative institutions they are involved in and protect them in their inner functioning as well as outwardly to the public and political challenges.

Direct democracy can be viewed as one such political challenge to representative institutions. Direct democratic institutions shift the decision-making power from elected representatives to voters. This makes the entire institution parliament and the norms and procedures in the parliamentary setting irrelevant or less meaningful. First, discussions are relocated to the media and public, where only agreement or disagreement with a policy position are debated. Though political elites can actively participate in these debates, parliament as an institution of political debate and decision-making loses its legitimacy. Political elites that are directly involved in parliament can be expected to disapprove this process or at least to oppose that direct democratic procedures become the standard of decision-making. Second, the complexity of policies is reduced to a question of yes or no in popular votes. At the end of the parliamentary process, laws are also adopted by a yes or no vote. However, usually the voting is preceded by several parliamentary debates where different positions on an issue are heard. In popular votes it is not guaranteed that voters inform themselves as profoundly as parliamentarians about different positions on the considered question. In parliamentary settings, political elites are often forced to find compromises and include various groups to pass a law, especially if important constitutional questions are decided. This is not possible in popular votes with two clear positions reduced to yes or no. In sum, direct democratic procedures show important differences to the parliamentary norms and practices and can be considered to rival representative institutions. Political elites with a strong bond to parliament should therefore reject direct democratic institutions.

Political elites develop a strong bond to representative institutions over time, as has been explained above. However, there are different generation of political elites operating at the same time. These generations are in different stages of their post-recruitment socialization. Therefore, political elites differ in the amount of parliamentary practice and can be expected to vary in their relationship to representative institutions. Newcomers in the parliamentary arena can be assumed to view representative institutions in a different light than those who served many years in parliament. Newcomers might not understand

the complexity of the representative system or lack the insight into the bargaining processes inside parliament. Hence, they appear less attached to this institution and might be more open for alternative ways of decision making such as direct democracy. On the contrary, the longer political elites are involved in representative institutions the more familiar they get with them and the more protective they should become of them. This argumentation leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 12 (H12) *The longer political elites are involved in representative institutions, the more likely they are to reject direct democratic institutions.*

As elites are important parts of the representative process, it is unlikely that they would jeopardize an institution they directly depend on. Many elites struggle to become and remain an important part of this process, they have to put a lot of efforts to enter parliament and to be re-elected. Often elites give up their regular professions to become a full time politician. If they strive for a long and successful career, political elites need to professionalize on certain topics and have to remain publicly visible. All these efforts bind political elites to the representative settings, as it reflects an employment sector and an important sphere of life for them. In this way, political elites might protect representative institutions out of self-interest. This is a plausible assumption, which needs to be kept in mind for the search of suitable indicators for the involvement in the political system.

This section described socialization influences on representatives from institutions they are directly involved in. However, the democratic system incorporates more institutions and processes that affect the relationship of representatives to the current institutional setting. For example, the influence of voters in the political system beyond general elections or the involvement of organized interests and lobbying are also relevant processes that affect the approval of the current institutional setting. Therefore, it is worthwhile to look at how political elites perceive the current democratic system in general and whether the evaluation of the democratic system has an impact on the support for alternative institutions such as direct democracy.

3.2.4 Evaluation of the Democratic Regime

Individual democratic concepts play a role for the stability of a political system, as different theoretical considerations (Easton, 1965; Linz and Stepan, 1996), and various empirical studies have shown(Diamond, 1999; Norris, 1999; Rohrschneider, 1994, e.g.). This relationship is the core assumption of political support research focusing on democracies. In general, this research field assumes that the values, norms and behaviour of individuals must correspond to the particular form of democratic system. This congruence of individuals' values and the structures of a political system creates legitimacy of the political system and ensures its stability (Almond and Verba, 1963; Easton, 1965). Consequently, a political system remains stable and has the potential to resist different kinds of crises. Conversely, a system is unstable if the actual institutional setting and process is not in accordance with individuals' general values and normative predispositions. This results in lack of support for this system. Diminishing or absent political support can lead to

reforms or system transformations respectively (Diamond, 1999; Linz and Stepan, 1996). In this section, I describe how political elites' support for the current regime might affect their approval of alternative institutions following the described assumptions of political culture research.

The support for a political system consists of different forms and objects of support. Most researchers use Easton's distinction between diffuse and specific support (Easton, 1965). Diffuse support is based on the approval of the existing values, norms, institutions as well as the processes in a political system. Specific support focuses on the outputs of the political system, thus is derived from the results of the political process. Of particular relevance for this study is the diffuse support of the political regime, which can be understood as the norms and structures of a political system as well as the political process in its abstract form, according to Easton (1965).[40]. The regime represents the institutional core of a political system and at the same time is concerned with its functioning. Therefore, diffuse support of the political regime is on the one hand based on the general values and ideological predispositions of individuals and on the other hand is derived from the personal experience with the political process(Easton, 1965). The latter aspect is central to this section, while the former has been considered in the previous sections.

A regime must reflect the values and normative orientations of its members to receive support. Values and normative orientations can be found in the formal structure of a regime and on the other hand in the actual functioning of the formal institutions and prescribed processes. The practice or performance of a political regime has an impact on the support of its members. Individuals judge the performance of a regime according to their socialized values and normative orientations. The experience with the political regime can strengthen diffuse support for this regime and in this way contribute to the stability of the entire system. On the other hand, if the performance of a political regime is not in accordance to individual values and normative orientations, the support of a regime is not guaranteed and can lead to system destabilization.

Incongruence between general values and normative orientations of a regime's members and its structures and processes can be expressed specifically or in general. Specifically, members could for example criticize the electoral system, which might exclude small parties from entering parliament, or they could dislike the power of a certain position like the president. These specific criticisms could also lead to a general disapproval of the whole regime and a motivation to change it. In this case, members of the regime are dissatisfied with the overall functioning of the system, meaning that the actual institutional setting and process is not in accordance with their core values and normative orientations. Dissatisfaction with the democratic regime creates a window of opportunity for change. In cases in which the current democratic process does not reflect their democratic ideals

[40]Easton (1965) defines three relevant objects of the political system: the political community, the regime and the authorities. Direct democratic institutions are related to the structure and process of a political system, thus it belongs to the regime in Easton's concept. For the considered research question, the political community does not play a relevant role; the authorities, however, are at the centre of the investigation, but they are the behaving subjects, not the object. As I am concerned with the abstract notion of direct democracy, and only indirectly on the actors, I concentrate on the political regime in this thesis.

individuals become more open to alternatives (Anderson et al., 2005*b*; Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2006; Ziemann, 2009). Indeed, studies on voters as well as on elites demonstrate that dissatisfied individuals are more willing to support political system reforms (Anderson et al., 2005*b*; Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2006; Zittel and Herzog, 2014).

Direct democracy offers such an alternative to change current representative regimes in the considered cases. Direct democratic institutions do not transform representative regimes completely, but definitely affect its functioning. Direct democratic institutions promise more legitimacy in decision-making processes and new possibilities for political engagement (Cain, Dalton and Scarrow, 2003; Geissel and Newton, 2012). For example, referendum processes can introduce a new element in the political competition of parties, but also divide parties internally and thereby dissolve the traditional factions and alignments. Citizens receive an important function in this process, they actively can decide on important matters, which offers them another opportunity of participation. In this way, direct democratic institutions can definitely be seen as opportunities for change. Individuals dissatisfied with the political regime can be expected to endorse direct democratic institutions.

The support of political elites for the current regime is of particular importance, as they are directly involved in democratic institutions and at the same time can influence their development. In the literature on democratic elitism, political elites are regarded as guardians of the democratic principles that have a strong impact on the consolidation of democratic regimes, in particular in transforming political systems (Best and Higley, 2010; McClosky, 1964; Peffley and Rohrschneider, 2009). In fact, the previous section described that political elites have usually a strong commitment to the norms and rules of the political regime they were socialized in.

It is also important that political elites are the main actors to shape the political regime. Since political elites are involved in politics everyday, they have a deep insight into the process and can make considerate judgements about the ideal institutional setting and process. Furthermore, they directly influence the political process through their everyday behaviour and can either help maintain support for the whole regime or disintegrate it, if they disapprove of the current institutions. Whether political elites support certain institutions or would consider to change them is directly connected to their assessment of the current functioning of the regime. And the evaluation of the regime is based upon an ideal image of a democratic system.

Political elites can have different concepts of the democratic regime, or how a democracy should actually be established and practiced. In the conceptual sections, I introduced different views on democracy, of which two broad approaches stand out in particular: on the one hand, democratic government can focus on popular sovereignty and thus direct rule and mass participation are its main features, as found in the concept of participatory democracy or Rousseau's republic. On the other hand, democracy can be conceived in liberal-representative terms putting the protection of individual political rights at the forefront and considering the delegation of decision-making power to specialized elites as the best way to govern (Thomassen, 1995). Whether elites prefer the one ideal or the

other partly depends on their ideological preferences, as explained in the section 3.2.2. It can also be influenced through the current experiences with the established democratic regime. Political elites that prefer a liberal-representative system and perceive that the current institutions are working in accordance to this democratic ideal, will continue to support it. But if they find faults in the representative setting and their ideal vision of a democracy is close to the participatory democracy, they will likely prefer the introduction and usage of direct democratic procedures.

To summarize, dissatisfaction with particular institutions makes individuals more receptive for alternatives. This is particularly true when they perceive a divide between their democratic ideals and the current democratic performance. This divide can be expressed as a general dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime. Dissatisfaction is an incentive to change structures and the process, either to reform the old or to try new institutions, as studies on voters have demonstrated (Anderson et al., 2005*b*; Bowler and Donovan, 2007). As has been explained, direct democratic institutions offer such a novelty that would impact the previous representative process in manifold ways. Political elites are the guardians of the current institutions, but also in the best position to initiate changes. Therefore, their dissatisfaction with the current regime is of particular importance for the support of alternatives such as direct democracy. These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 13 (H13) *Political elites who evaluate the current democratic regime negatively are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites who evaluate the current democratic regime positively.*

Dissatisfaction has been framed as incongruence of the individual values of elites with the current performance of a regime. General normative predispositions lead political elites to support or disapprove a political regime and influence elites' stances on alternative institutions. This reflects the approach of most studies of political support. However, it is also plausible to assume that dissatisfaction with a political regime is not normatively based, but results from the strategic disadvantage of certain political actors, parties or single elites. The literature on the so called "winner-loser gap" demonstrates that indeed such constellations are observable (Anderson et al., 2005*b*; Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Smith, Tolbert and Keller, 2010). Therefore, there is also an instrumental incentive for particular elites to be dissatisfied with the political regime. Dissatisfaction should also be evaluated in combination with the current power position to distinguish whether it is a purely normative expression of system criticism or a strategically motivated discontent. In the next section, the normative influences on political elites' support for direct democracy are summarized. The following section will address interactions between normative and strategic reasons and further consider the meaning of dissatisfaction with the political regime. .

3.2.5 Summary of the Normative Perspective

In addition to the strategic perspective, I argued in this section that political elites' support for direct democracy is affected by their ideological tendencies and normative beliefs in what is an ideal institutional setting. Though elites experience similar pressures and restrictions in their behaviour, they differentiate in their ideological and normative predispositions formed during their socialization and post-recruitment experiences. In this regard, elites from the same party might have divergent views on the ideal democratic system. The normative perspective emphasizes individual predispositions for the support of direct democracy. Political elites' normative orientations are influenced by institutions - particularly the party - but have predominantly an individualistic character, because each individual incorporates different socialization experiences.

The differences in normative orientations are particularly connected to ideological positions. In this regard, I distinguish the left-right and the libertarian-authoritarian dimension. While the left-right divide reflects various political conflicts that grew historically into one general dimension for political positions, the libertarian-authoritarian dimension focuses on social conflicts and captures recently discussed ideological conflicts connected to postmaterialism. I assume that leftist oriented elites as well as libertarian elites are more supportive of direct democratic practices, because they strive more for equality as well as mass participation and self-determination and political involvement respectively. Additionally, political elites with populist inclinations are expected to be in favour of direct democracy. This is connected to populist criticism of representative institutions and the emphasis of the popular will.

Next to ideological predispositions, political elites are influenced by values and norms they acquired during their socialization as well as their political practice. In particular, it is plausible to expect a strong affective relation of political elites to representative institutions where they are socialized in. The longer political elites are involved in representative institutions and processes, the more protective they are likely to become of them. A strong bond to representative institutions makes it less likely that political elites support direct democratic institutions, which reflect a competing way of decision-making to representative processes.

Direct democratic institutions might also be viewed as necessary reforms to existing institutional structures. This can be expected if political elites are dissatisfied with the current functioning of the political regime. The dissatisfaction with existing institutions reflects a dis-congruence of the values and democratic ideals political elites inhabit and the current democratic regime. If political elites perceive that the current political structure is inappropriate or the system is malfunctioning they are likely to endorse changes like the introduction of direct democratic practices.

The normative view summarized here challenges the rational-strategic perspective which regards parties' current power position as an important factor for the support of direct democracy. However, the two explanatory perspectives do not contradict one and another but instead could be connected in an interactive manner. In particular, normative

predispositions could be moderated or enhanced by strategic orientations based on power positions, as the next section describes in detail.

3.3 Interactions of Strategic and Normative Orientations

The previous theoretical argumentation showed that in the uncertain and risky situation of introducing new institutions, political elites can rely on two different sets of orientations: strategic power calculations and normative predispositions towards a certain democratic ideal. It has been argued in the rational-strategic view that political elites have a strong motivation to improve or maintain their current power position. In institutional questions, they calculate the relative power gains and costs resulting from institutional changes. Political elites are likely to support institutions that will strengthen their current power position and reject institutions that endanger it.

Despite their common interest in power, political elites differ in their ideological and normative predispositions formed during their socialization and post-recruitment experiences. Their ideological tendencies and normative beliefs concerning the ideal institutional setting are likely to influence political elites' support for institutions. In particular, if political elites' normative predispositions are in congruence with the current political structure they are likely to reject institutional changes. However, if political elites' normative orientations are not reflected in the current institutional setting, they are likely to support institutional changes.

The two explanatory perspectives offer alternative, though not contradictory explanations for political elites' positions and behaviour in institutional questions. Research indicates that both perspectives are relevant to explain political elites' attitudes and behaviour in institutional questions (Bol, 2013; Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2006; Norris, 2011; Ziemann, 2009). However, politics are seldom black and white; more often than not there are different shades of grey in political behaviour. As has been pointed out in previous sections, political elites are confronted with different pressures and behavioural restrictions in the political arena: First of all, political elites need to secure their own political survival as well as the success of their party on which they often depend. In this regard, strategic vote- and policy-seeking dominate as behavioural motivations. Second, political elites are sophisticated political actors with strong ideological predispositions and normative convictions. This ideational background also determines political elites' behaviour. Strategic orientations and normative influences can exercise conflicting pressures on political elites, which is especially possible in institutional questions. On the one hand it might be strategically wise to support direct democratic institutions, in particular from a weak power position. On the other hand, support for direct democracy might contradict the ideological position of parties and political elites. In consequence, strategic orientations and normative convictions should not only be considered separately, but also in combination. Therefore, in this section I consider interactions between selected strategic factors and normative predispositions.

3.3.1 Ideological Orientations and Power Positions

The first interaction between the two perspectives can be expected between ideological predispositions and the current power position of parties. Ideology is often conceived as a heuristic pattern to process political information (Inglehart and Klingemann, 1979) and an information shortcut for policy or party preferences of voters (Downs, 1957b). In order to attract ideologically like-minded voters and to be distinguishable from other parties and organizations, political elites need to maintain a certain image of their party in public. Therefore, political elites should be careful to promote policies or institutions that conflict with their ideological convictions. Leftist ideologies are in congruence with direct democratic institutions, as direct democracy reflects leftist ideologies' focus on inclusion and extension of political participation. Therefore, leftist parties and elites should be more in favour of direct democracy. Rightist ideologies endorse hierarchical structures and traditions and therefore are opposed to egalitarian changes in the political system. From a strategic perspective, parties should maintain ideologically consistent positions in order to secure their voters' support, regardless of their electoral success, their legislative power and current role in parliament. In general, it is plausible to expect that ideological orientations persist in different power situations.

However, it is also reasonable to expect that ideological positions are intensified or moderated through political elites' strategic motivations. In particular, it matters whether political elites' parties are in weak or strong power positions, e.g. in the government or in the opposition. Government parties carry the responsibility for important decisions and therefore are usually more closely watched by the public. Hence, parties in government carefully choose their policies and only support institutional changes that reflect their ideological positions. In the opposition, strategic motivations might have a stronger impact because parties concentrate on the improvement of their disadvantaged power position and can be expected to be less ideologically restricted or consistent than government parties.

The combined effect of power positions and ideology can be exemplified with the left-right divide, but also applies to other ideological orientations: Political elites with rightist ideology in government should strongly reject direct democratic institutions in order to stay consistent with their ideology, in opposition they might be more inclined to support them in order to improve their party's power position, i.e. be able to shape policies and gather more popular support. Political elites with leftist convictions should generally approve direct democratic institutions and this approval might even be stronger if they are in opposition, because in this situation political elites perceive two motivations in the same direction. Leftist elites in government, on the other hand, can be expected to be less supportive of direct democracy, though still much stronger than rightist elites in general, because in their powerful position they perceive less necessity for alternative forms of decision-making and might take the risks of direct democratic institutions more into account. These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 14 (H14) *Political elites' ideological inclination to support direct democracy is moderated by the effect of their party's power position.*

The hypothesis indicates that strategic orientations have an effect on the impact of ideological positions. Of course it is difficult to decide whether strategic orientations influence ideological predispositions or the reverse. The rational-strategic theorists would argue that ideology only is a means to pursue certain overarching goals. In the normative perspective, ideological convictions are the dominant determinants of behaviour, as they incorporate important values and idealistic concepts guiding individual actions, while strategic orientations are considered subordinated. I regard both perspectives as valuable, but assume that strategic considerations have an impact on the ideological effect. In this regard, I assume that the urge to secure a party's political survival is stronger than the concrete ideological conviction. The exact causal direction is difficult to determine and requires longitudinal observation studies, which are not pursued in this thesis.

3.3.2 Evaluation of the Democratic Regime and Electoral Success

As a second interaction between the strategic and normative explanatory factors I consider which joint effect strategic considerations resulting from electoral success and the normative evaluation of the current democratic regime have on the support for direct democracy. The evaluation of the democratic system might be related to a party's current power position in the political system, as research on the so called winner-loser gap demonstrates (Anderson et al., 2005*b*; Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Smith, Tolbert and Keller, 2010; Zittel and Herzog, 2014). In particular, individuals tend to be less satisfied with the current democratic regime when they are losers and be significantly more positive when they are winners in the recent elections. Furthermore, "[w]hen elections reshuffle the cards of the political game, the new losers - that is, those who used to be the winners - become less content with the political system" (Anderson et al., 2005*b*, 183). Considering this context-based reaction on losing in elections, it is plausible to assume that the effect of dissatisfaction with the current regime on the support for direct democracy is mediated through the current electoral performance of a party or individual elites (Zittel and Herzog, 2014).

If the evaluation of the current democratic regime is related to the disappointment resulting from losing elections it is questionable whether dissatisfaction with democracy presents a normative influence on institutional support as conceptualized in this thesis. I argued in section 3.2.4 that dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy implies that the current performance of the democratic regime is not in congruence with political elites' concepts about the ideal democratic system. Political elites need a conceptual framework to judge the performance of the democratic system. This framework is expected to consist of values and ideological convictions and to reflect normative orientations that shape political elites' behaviour. If these normative orientations do not converge with current institutions, it is not surprising that political elites are dissatisfied with the democratic regime. However, it is also plausible that dissatisfaction with a political regime is not normatively based, but results from the strategic disadvantage of parties or single elites. Being on the losing side is not a desirable state for any individual, but especially not for

political elites. As assumed, their central goal is to win or secure power in politics and the failure to reach this goal could be transferred to the evaluation of the current regime.

Losing political elites might make certain institutions such as electoral rules, campaign regulations or parliamentary structures responsible for their setback and consequently disapprove of the current democratic regime. This disapproval does not imply fundamental criticism on democracy per se, but can reflect a dissatisfaction with the current functioning of democracy and in consequence a desire to change the current institutional setting to their advantage. In this case, political elites dissatisfaction with the democratic regime is not normatively based, but expresses a reaction to losing that is connected to strategic considerations [41]

Losing diminishes power of political elites. Losers of the electoral game are marginalized in the political sphere, they are usually deprived of the chance to shape policy-making and have less access to public debates. This often means that losing political elites must put more resources and efforts to remain in the political game and become winners again. This setback in the political game can transfer to dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime. Therefore, it is plausible that losing elites are more likely to evaluate the current regime more negatively as a strategic reaction to their disadvantaged position.

Considering the interplay between the evaluation of the democratic regime and losing in the current electoral game, the following expectations appear plausible: First, satisfied winners should show the strongest rejection of direct democratic institutions, as they are neither strategically nor normatively motivated to support alternatives to the current regime. Dissatisfied winners are in a comfortable power position, but seem to perceive an incongruence of their general values and ideological predispositions with the current democratic performance, which is reflected in the dissatisfaction. Therefore, dissatisfied winners should be more supportive of alternative institutions such as direct democratic procedures than satisfied winners. Losers, that are satisfied, could perceive a strategic incentive to support direct democratic institutions because of their weak power position, but at the same time should be less inclined to endorse direct democracy because of their satisfaction with the current regime. Dissatisfied losers, on the other hand, should show the strongest support for direct democracy, because they perceive an incentive to support alternative institutions both from strategic power-considerations and from the negative evaluation of the current regime, which might only reflect their strategic disappointment or be normatively motivated.

Whether dissatisfied winners or satisfied losers display more support for direct democratic institutions is not easily theoretically resolved and offers a good test for the assumed mediating effect of losing on dissatisfaction with democracy. In these ambivalent cases, we find cross pressures from strategic incentives and normative evaluations. It is plausible to

[41] This reaction can also be conceived as an emotional way to cope with losing (Zittel and Herzog, 2014). However, which emotions electoral loss triggers exactly and how they affect dissatisfaction with the democratic regime is difficult to estimate theoretically and test empirically. Additionally, emotions are considered as forerunners of cognitive rationalization (Cassino and Lodge, 2007; Lerner and Keltner, 2001; Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen, 2000; Mutz, 2009), they are often based on previous experiences and can also reflect strategic calculations of gains and costs. Therefore, in this thesis I stick to the more comprehensible strategic reactions.

assume that normative predispositions have a stronger impact because of their persistent and deep-rooted character, while strategic incentives depend more on the current context. If normative influences have a greater impact on institutional support, dissatisfied winners should be more supportive of direct democracy than satisfied losers. Consequently, they would support direct democratic institutions as a corrective mechanism for the current performance of the democratic regime, regardless of their power position. if strategic considerations play a more important role, we should observe that satisfied losers are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than dissatisfied winners. In either way, it is plausible that losing and the evaluation of the current democratic regime affect the support for direct democracy in combination, which is expressed in the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 15 (H15) *The effect of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime on political elites' support for direct democratic institutions is mediated through the electoral success of political elites.*

Losing can be expressed in different forms. As the part on strategic orientations showed, losing might be based on a personal defeat, but also on a party setback. Both levels of influence will be considered in the interaction with the evaluation of the democratic performance. The personal experience of losing should definitely lead to a disappointment that is likely to transfer to dissatisfaction with the democratic regime (Zittel and Herzog, 2014). The party loss in elections can also have an effect, as elites depend on the party in their further career and for example only are able to pursue policy- or office-seeking goals if their parties are electorally successful.

There is a difference if parties or elites lose recurrently or only from time to time. In this thesis, I concentrate on short-term effects of losing, which is based on theoretical considerations and on reasons of practicability. The short-term power positions have a stronger relevance for the argumentation in strategic terms. I expect that if the power position of parties and elites changes, they revise their strategies and also their position in institutional questions. The problem with long-term losing is that it is not easy to track, it is possible for parties, but quite unrealistic for individual elites. In terms of long-term effects of losing, I will consider the effects of being recurrently excluded from government as a proxy for marginalization in the political system to control for long-term grievances.

I introduced two important connections between strategic incentives and normative predispositions. There are of course many more interactions imaginable. This section had the aim to reflect important possible interactions that also help to reveal whether the strategic or the normative perspective are stronger in the explanation of political elites' support for direct democracy. In particular, if the effect of dissatisfaction is independent of indicators for strategic reactions through losing it is reasonable to claim that it is a pure normative factor for the support of direct democracy. Furthermore, if the test of these interactions is successful it is worthwhile to consider further interactions with factors that have not been reviewed here, for example whether and how the socialization in the representative system intervenes with stratregic considerations. These are points worth considering in further research.

In a nutshell, this section demonstrated that most political elites can be expected to be neither pure strategist nor pure normativist. In most cases we can expect mixed motivations in institutional preferences that combine normative and strategic orientations. In the next section, I will introduce the research design of this study focusing on the importance of attitudes for research on political elites, reviewing the merits of comparative approaches and introducing the multi-level method applied in the analysis.

3.4 Overview of All Theoretical Expectations

This study focuses on two theoretical perspectives on different levels of analysis, as the summary of the hypotheses in table 3.1 demonstrates. The first seven hypotheses reflect a strategic perspective on political elites' support for direct democratic procedures and refer mainly to the party level, though one individual strategic influence and country-context based influences are also differentiated. The main assumptions of the strategic perspective are that the political elites' current power position affects their behaviour and attitudes towards direct democracy and that electoral success of elites' parties determines this power position in parliamentary systems. Political power can be expressed in parties' and elites' popular approval, policy influence or the chances for government office, which have been conceptualized as the main motivations of political elites and their parties in institutional questions and are reflected in H2 to H5. Additionally, elites' personal career goals are expected to cause strategic reactions to direct democratic institutions, which is incorporated in H1. And finally, existing institutions and their practice at the country level might change the strategic outlook of political elites in questions on direct democratic procedures, as described in H6 and H7.

Next to strategic influences, this study includes a normative perspective on political elites' support for direct democracy. This normative perspective is based on deep rooted values and beliefs, which have a long-standing and stable character in comparison to strategic motivations changing according to contextual conditions. The seven hypotheses of the normative perspective concentrate on the individual level, but also include two party level expectations as controls. As normative influences I consider ideological orientations described in H8 to H11, as well as socialization experiences in the representative system captured in H12 and more generally as evaluation of the democratic regime in H13. At the country level, I do not explicitly conceptualize normative influences, though the included country level factors can be viewed as such. The general experience of direct democracy as well as parliamentary powers of political elites can also be expressions of a country's political culture and thus include a normative component; this is for example the case with direct democratic aspects of the Swiss political system. However, the effects of these country contexts are considered as strategic, mainly because these institutional provisions and practice reflect constraints (and also possibilities) that in most cases can be easily changed by political elites.

The two explanatory perspectives are also combined in the interaction hypotheses H14 and H15. The theoretical expectation in this regard is that the strategic context changes the impact of normative orientations on political elites' support for direct democ-

racy. Normative orientations are conceptualized as deep rooted and long-lasting based on values and beliefs. However, political elites in electorally powerful positions might be interested to keep their privileges and powers and should be careful with the support of direct democracy, even if they are more inclined to support them e.g. based on their ideological orientations. On the other hand, political elites from electorally weak parties can be expected to struggle for political survival and pay less attention to their normative influences which might be in conflict with direct democratic procedures. In a similar way, it is plausible that the evaluation of the current democratic regime conceptualized as a normative influence is connected to the current power position of political elites' parties. Whether there is an interaction of strategic and normative factors and how this translates in the support of direct democratic procedures is discussed in the analyses sections which follow the next chapter.

Table 3.1: Overview of hypotheses

Nr.	Hypothesis	Explanatory Perspective	Level of Consideration
1	Political elites that lost in the current election are more supportive of direct democratic institutions than political elites that won a parliamentary seat.	strategic	individual
2	Political elites are more supportive of direct democratic institutions when the popular approval of their parties is in decline.	strategic	party
3	Political elites from opposition parties are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites from governing parties.	strategic	party
4	The more legislative power a party has, the less likely political elites from this party support direct democratic institutions.	strategic	party
5	Political elites from parties with prospects for government office are less supportive of direct democratic institutions than fringe parties.	strategic	party
6	The more frequent direct democracy is practiced in a country at the national level, the less supportive are political elites from this country of direct democracy.	strategic	country
7	The more parliamentary powers political elites have access to, the less supportive they are of direct democracy.	strategic	country
8	The more leftist political elites' ideological predispositions are, the more likely they are to support direct democratic institutions.	normative	individual
9	Political elites with libertarian orientations are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites with authoritarian orientations.	normative	individual
10.a	The more left a party is perceived, the more likely political elites from that party support direct democratic institutions.	normative	party
10.b	The more libertarian a party is perceived, the more likely political elites from that party support direct democratic institutions.	normative	party
11	Political elites with populist orientations are more likely to support direct democratic procedures than other political elites.	normative	individual
12	The longer political elites are involved in representative institutions, the more likely they are to reject direct democratic institutions.	normative	individual
13	Political elites who evaluate the current democratic regime negatively are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites who evaluate the current democratic regime positively.	normative	individual
14	Political elites' ideological inclination to support direct democracy is moderated by the effect of their party's power position.	interaction	indiv./party
15	The effect of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime on political elites' support for direct democratic institutions is mediated through the electoral success of political elites.	interaction	indiv./party

Chapter 4

Data and Methods: How to analyse political elites' support for direct democratic institutions

4.1 Design of the Study

In this part I introduce the methods applied to evaluate political elites' support for direct democracy and discuss their advantages and disadvantages. In particular, I describe why the study of attitudes is a useful approach for the explanation of support of direct democracy. Then, I present the different levels of analyses the study is confronted with and argue for multilevel modelling as an appropriate method to account for the present data structure. Additionally, I discuss the challenges of comparative research and briefly introduce the case selection. The goal of this section is to outline the overall design of the study.

4.1.1 Attitudes of Political Elites

The present study focuses on political elites' attitudes and taps a widely under-researched field in this regard. While voter's attitudes are a frequently studied object, in particular when it comes to institutional questions (for example Dalton, 2004; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 1999), surveys on political elites are much rarer and therefore the research on political elites' beliefs, particularly in a comparative quantitative way, is little available. Existing studies often concentrate on single countries (e.g. Bürklin and Rebenstorf, 1997; Esaiasson and Holmberg, 1996; Kam, 2001) or on topics related to parliamentary work and parties (e.g. Blomgren and Rozenberg, 2012; Bowler, 1999; Gallagher, Laver and Mair, 2005).Almost no study looks at political elites' attitudes on broad institutional questions in a comparative way (the exception is Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2006). The current study uses comparative attitudinal data to answer a general institutional question and thus aims at closing the described research gap.

Political elites' attitudes can help to understand why certain political systems change or how they are likely to change. Political elites' beliefs and actions are often viewed as

decisive for the stability of a political system and the protection of existing political values and norms (Best and Higley, 2010; Converse, 2006; Katz, 2001). Understanding what shapes political elites' beliefs and actions would contribute to the research on political reforms and transitions. Attitudes are particularly suited in this regard. As already mentioned in the introduction, attitudes can be considered as "predispositions to act" (Rokeach, 1968; van Deth, 2003) and thus are connected to actual behaviour, though not perfectly. Attitudes usually reflect positions on particular questions and in this way demonstrate possibilities of actions.

Furthermore, attitudes make visible what would remain hidden in the thoughts of individuals. This makes attitudes a welcome study object, in particular in the research on political elites. As political elites are confronted with different restrictions in their behaviour, e.g. their strong dependence on popular approval or their embeddedness in institutions and power relations, their actual behaviour might not always reflect their true position in an issue. Political elites' actions might be incongruent with their convictions if they are confronted with a particular situation. Political elites' attitudes, on the other hand, are likely to reflect their genuine position in important questions. Attitudes do not oblige to act, they offer a way to express an opinion without taking responsibility for its realization. This is an important advantage of attitudinal research in comparison to observational studies of behaviour.

Attitudes are expressions of what an individual thinks and thus often reflect an honest and unfiltered reaction to a particular stimulus. Attitudes are specific expressions of general beliefs or values, as has been described in section 3.2.1. Thus, attitudes contain a general position on an issue that reflects deep rooted convictions, but at the same time are likely to incorporate contextual influences that are relevant for the considered question. These characteristics are particularly relevant for institutional questions. As described in the theoretical part it is plausible to assume that institutional questions evoke impressions of a deeply rooted ideal of a political system. At the same time political elites are always embedded in a (power) context that shapes their behaviour. Both aspects are likely to be reflected in attitudes, that are based on general convictions, but can contain contextual influences, as explicated in the introduction. Therefore, attitudes are the best study objects to test the two theoretical perspectives described in this thesis.

Moreover, attitudes are obtained through surveys that offer political elites a platform for unfiltered reactions to the presented issues. Though survey research is confronted with many problems and uncertainties[1], it also has various advantages: First, surveys are anonymous - or at least the identity of respondents is protected. Therefore, respondents can be expected to answer the questions truthfully. This is an important aspect for the research on political elites who might answer more carefully in a public interview in order to protect their current status. A second advantage is that survey questions are usually disconnected from specific situations giving political elites the chance to consider an issue in its general understanding. And even if political elites do not spend much time on

[1]The most important challenges are accessibility and coverage of the studied individuals, priming and (social) desirability of the questions as well as reliability and validity of the given answers. These issues apply to voters in particular, but can be transferred to elite surveys without difficulties.

a survey, their spontaneous answers are likely to reflect considerate opinions. Political elites have high political awareness and are embedded in the context of the issue per se. Therefore, attitudes of political elites offer an ideal ground to test whether political elites are only power-seekers or also have normative motivations in institutional preferences.

In sum, attitudes offer a range of advantages in the considered research question. It is undeniable that attitudes cannot be directly translated into actions and thus are not sufficient to explain actual behaviour. At the core of the research question is the support for direct democracy which can be connected to active campaigning for the introduction or extension of direct democratic institutions, but also to the passive approval of such institutions. And passive support expressed in positive attitudes is an important prerequisite for supportive action towards direct democracy. To explain the determinants of these positive attitudes can help to understand why some political elites become active and propose or demand direct democratic institutions

In line with the available data, the analyses include all surveyed candidates regardless of their individual or party success to enter parliament. Political candidates are a heterogeneous group consisting of successful as well as unsuccessful applicants,[2] established political actors that have been elected to parliament various times, but also newcomers, backbenchers as well as major players in important positions. This heterogeneity reflects the variance of individuals embodied in parties and allows investigating how and why the beliefs of political actors diverge even if they belong to the same party.

4.1.2 Three Different Levels of Analysis

In the political sphere, elites are seldom able to act without institutional or contextual constraints. They are rather embedded in an institutional and cultural framework and thus are confronted with certain norms and regulations that shape their behaviour. In particular, these constraints of behaviour are likely to influence how political elites assess institutional questions such as whether they approve of direct democratic practices. Furthermore, political elites' behaviour depends on their current power status, as has been explicated in section 3.1. Occupying a powerful position in a democratic system opens up more possibilities for actions, but at the same time also exposes political elites more to public scrutiny These contextual influences or the previously described institutional constraints are likely to influence how political elites position themselves in institutional questions and need to be included in an analysis of political elites' attitudes on direct democracy.

For the present research question, two further levels of influence can be differentiated in addition to individual attitudes. In particular, I concentrate on the party environment and the resulting constraints in the political competition as well as on country specific influences such as institutional traditions or the overall political culture. Together with individual influences, the party and country level build a three-level structure where te levels are nested within each other. This multilevel structure enables to account for effects

[2]Unfortunately, some countries do not include variables that would allow to control for this winner-loser gap (see Anderson et. al. 2005, Bowler et al. 2006)

that are not individually caused, but reflect the institutional and contextual influences described above. The multilevel structure is a methodical advantage that is described in detail in section 4.3.1.

The multilevel design is not only methodically preferable, but has also important theoretical implications, as already mentioned in the theoretical part of the thesis. In the following I explicate why the normative explanatory perspective is connected mainly to the individual level and the strategic perspective mainly to the party level. The country level incorporates both perspectives, but in the analysis is used to model a special form of strategic motivations, which is also described below.

Normative influences are conceived as predominantly individualistic for the following reason: Each individual is socialized in different circumstances and thus incorporates a particular set of values in her belief system. As described in section 3.2.1, the early socialization is mainly responsible for the values and beliefs an individual develops and holds throughout her life. Politically interested individuals often enter parties or similar organizations to be more involved in politics and of course are shaped by the party environment. However, they already have important convictions based on their early socialization and strive for certain societal goals before they join a party. This is how politically active persons can be distinguished from the rest of the people. Based on the sequence of events in the forming of political elites, it is reasonable to expect that normative convictions are predominantly individually based.

It is undeniable that the party environment strengthens or re-shapes the attitudes and behaviour of each individual member after her recruitment. In a way, there is a mutual dependency of a party and its members. The party cannot exist without its members, as they constitute the organized group for political action. On the other hand, individual members are mostly insignificant in the political sphere without their party. They depend in their political career on the party and have an incentive to behave in accordance with the party's principles, ideological tendencies and strategic orientations. In this regard, party members create a unity by sharing a common ideological ground and often act in the parliamentary field in a uniform way to secure a party's success. Therefore, I also consider the influence of the normative sphere of the party - which is mostly reflected in the ideological direction - on the individual positions towards direct democracy. However, the primary assumption is that normative orientations are personal reflecting values and norms acquired through the primary socialization.

In contrast, I assume that rational strategic orientations are connected mostly to the power position of parties in which political elites operate. In parliamentary democracies, parties are usually the dominant political actors with important functions. Firstly, parties are responsible for the recruitment of political elites. Secondly, they offer voters concrete choices competing with different programs in elections and reduce in this way information costs for the voting decision. Thirdly, parties organize parliamentary decision-making in factions combining the votes of like-minded elites. These central functions of parties demonstrate that parties are the responsible actors for the political development of a country. This also includes positions on general institutional questions such as the application

of direct democratic procedures. Therefore, it is important to consider party's positions in institutional questions to explain what drives the support of political elites for direct democracy.

Parties can be considered as rational actors with the overall goal of gaining or maintaining political power, compare section 3.1.1. Though parties have also a normative base reflected in their ideology or political program, they have to act rationally in order to be successful in the political game. Only if they gain political power, they can pursue certain normative ideals. Based on this reasoning, I consider rational strategic orientations of political elites in connection with the power status of their party. From the perspective of political elites, parties offer an important platform for personal career development in politics. In the long run, individual elites are better off if they are integrated in a party and organize their actions in accordance to their party's goals and current power position.

The current power position of a party influences the immediate choices of political elites and thus incorporates a contextual effect on the position towards direct democracy. While normative orientations reflect deep-rooted and long-lasting convictions as well as guiding principles, the power position of a party can change and alter the choices of political elites in institutional questions depending on the current context. This is an important differentiation that needs to be kept in mind. Of course, rational strategic consideration can also have a long-term character. Some political actors - such as recurrent government parties or constantly marginalized parties - have more to loose or to gain from institutional reforms, as is considered in section 3.1.5. In general, however, the future political context is unpredictable, new competitors can arise, internal crises and external shocks can occur and the preferences of voters can change. Therefore, it is plausible to assume a short-term orientation in connection with a party's current power position.

Next to the strategic orientation based on the current power position of a party, political elites can also be expected to strive for individual power, especially in terms of their personal image construction, as explained in section 3.1.2. Political elites are not only acting as parties' agents in institutional questions, but could also consider their own power gains and costs resulting from new institutions. Therefore, I also test how much individual strategic considerations influence political elites' support for direct democracy.

Next to the individual and party level, the country level also plays a role in institutional questions. In accordance with the assumptions of historical institutionalism, past development and structures of a political system determine its evolution and change, which is often summarized in the term "path dependency" (Peters, 2005). Thus, the institutional context and the previous events in a country can affect if certain new institutions are adapted or applied and how the responsible elites position themselves towards such changes. For instance, Germany still lacks direct democratic forms of decision-making at the national level, though there was a debate following the unification process to introduce such procedures (Kost, 2008). Looking at the experiences of Germany during the Weimar Republic this is understandable. German political elites until today fear that allowing people to have direct influence on important political decisions might endanger important freedoms and rights or result in authoritarian structures, as happened in the transforma-

tion of the Weimar Republic to the Nazi regime. In conclusion, it is worthwhile to look at the institutional context and experience to understand certain institutional preferences or aversions, especially if comparing different countries.

The effects from the country context can have a normative character or trigger certain strategic considerations. In the normative perspective, the political structures should be stable and resist attempts of changes if we follow the path dependency logic.[3] However, comparing different countries is likely to reveal diverse political environments, i.e. different political cultures, institutions and traditions. The political environment is conceived here as a normative structure of each country reflecting historical experiences, established institutions and norms and can be differentiated from the current political context that consists of the current public opinion on important issues and the different power constellations of the involved actors. The normative structure in each political system should have an indirect effect on the perception of alternative institutions such as referendums and only becomes apparent through the comparison with other countries. These normative differences of the considered countries are not modelled explicitly, because each case is likely to be shaped by different historical or cultural aspects. However, the inclusion of a third level in the analyses accounts for the possible differences in form of varying intercepts, which is explained in more detail in section 4.3.1.

In terms of strategic influences, it is possible to find similar mechanisms at the national level based on the power-orientation universally assumed for political elites. I argue in this regard that the institutional practice, in particular the concrete legislative-executive relations and experience with direct democracy, affect political elites' strategic calculations. For instance, existing strong parliamentary rights might make direct democratic institutions less desirable for political elites, as they would already have enough influence on policy-making in parliamentary processes. Furthermore, in some countries institutional provisions for direct democratic procedures exist and have been used, though not regularly. This might result in a different positions on direct democracy in comparison to inexperienced countries. These country-specific aspects are conceived as long-term influences on strategic considerations, because they reflect steady or accumulated institutional practices and go beyond the current political context that concentrates on the party competition and public debates. The impact of the institutional practice on strategic considerations can be assessed through easily accessible indicators that can be compared across countries. These indicators are included as explanatory factors at the country level in the analysis.

In sum, I demonstrated here that institutional questions do not only depend on individual convictions, but need to be considered at different (analytical) levels. This results in a multilevel structure of this study. From a methodical perspective, the multilevel structure of the dataset needs to be accounted for through specific models, which I describe in section 4.3.1 in more detail. From a theoretical perspective, I explained that normative convictions are located mainly at the individual level and reflect deep-rooted values and

[3] According to historical institutionalism, institutions change only incrementally undergoing an evolutionary process (Peters, 2005). Institutions can change rapidly if so called critical junctures - moments of extreme social, political or economic crises - occur. This is not the case in the considered countries and periods. Therefore, I assume relative stability of the political systems.

norms from the primary socialization. Strategic orientations are mainly related to party power positions that are inescapable in the political game and are predominantly of a short-term character. As a third level of influence, I control for influences from countries' political environment and institutional practice. In the next section, I describe which countries entered the analyses and how they were selected from the data.

4.1.3 Case Selection: Advantages and Disadvantages of Comparative Research

Previous studies used only a few cases to understand in an explorative way what drives the support for direct democratic institutions (Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2002, 2006; Ziemann, 2009; Zittel and Herzog, 2014). This thesis not only integrates the previous assumptions and findings into two clearly structured perspectives, but extends the empirical test to many more countries. I use the Comparative Candidates Study (CCS, 2016*b*)(in further considerations abbreviated as CCS) for this purpose. This dataset offers a variety of political contexts to assess the impact of strategic and normative orientations on political elites' support for direct democracy. This is an important advantage to study the present research question as the following considerations demonstrate. In general, the goal of this thesis is to provide a comprehensive test of strategic and normative orientations towards direct democracy. The comparison of similar contexts that vary in particular aspects is a fruitful strategy in this regard. For comparability, the cases need to resemble each other in central aspects of the political system. The current study focuses on parliamentary democracies. On the one hand, the logic of decision-making in parliament dominates in these democracies and results in similar institutional contexts and political practice. On the other hand, the cases should show variation in central explanatory factors to be able to test the hypothesized relationships and correctly assess the effects. This is also offered in the selected data, as described further below.

The comparative approach used here has important advantages for the test of the two theoretical perspectives. First, the multitude of political contexts allows to simulate experimental variation of treatment and control groups connected to different explanatory factors. In the current study, two characteristics of the political system are of utmost importance for the variation in central explanatory factors: the ideological party spectrum and the current power distributions among parties, in particular which party family is in government and which in opposition. The first advantage of the comparative approach here is an extended variety of important factors for the theoretical test that would otherwise require an experimental or longitudinal design.

The second advantage of the comparative approach in this thesis refers to the generalizability of the results based on the cases that are included in the analyses. The variety of the cases enables a comprehensive test of the theoretical assumptions, as described above. At the same time, the similarity of the cases allows general conclusions transferable to countries with similar characteristics. As already mentioned, parliamentary democracies are the focus of this study. In these political systems, direct democratic institutions traditionally do not play an important role. However, there was an increase in the use of direct

democratic institutions in the last forty years, as described in section 2.2.2. Looking at political elites' attitudes, who were mostly responsible for the initiation of popular votes, can shed some light on this trend. In a comparative sample, it is possible to test various explanations for this trend discussed in the literature for single cases and find answers that are transferable to other cases.

To secure a comparable sample, the selection of the cases followed two logics, a conceptual and a pragmatic one, which I explain further below. In conceptual terms, the case selection is guided by the focus on parliamentary systems where representative decision-making is dominant. I also include countries that are sometimes branded semi-presidential, see the next section for details. These cases however have a clear dominance of parliament in legislative matters and therefore are comparable to pure parliamentary systems. My argumentation concentrates on parliamentary systems where direct democratic procedures cause an intrusion in the dominant parliamentary process. In presidential or strong semi-presidential systems, the head of state often is involved in the policy-making process, especially through veto powers, and has sometimes reserved domains of influence, for instance in foreign relations. Therefore, the decision-making process is more complex in presidential systems and would also imply a different logic in connection with direct democratic institutions.

The most important characteristic of parliamentary systems is the fact that all important decisions are made in parliament. Parliamentarians enjoy special rights in terms of agenda-setting, preparation of laws and debate. The executive or the government might have agenda-setting powers and be involved in the elaboration of laws, but the final decision is always made in parliament. Furthermore, parties are central actors in parliamentary systems in comparison to (semi-)presidential systems where single leaders might also have a strong impact. In particular, governments result from electorally dominant parties or a coalition of parties in parliamentary systems. Therefore, the described strategic perspective that focuses on rational party goals is particularly applicable to parliamentary systems.

As a second conceptual criterium, I consider a sample of countries with diverse direct democratic experiences. In most included countries, direct democratic institutions are no novelty, but have been rarely applied so far, view the next section for details. In almost all selected cases, direct democratic institutions reflect not a regular policy-making mechanism. This innovative character of direct democratic institutions is particularly important for the rational strategic perspective. Based on the assumption of bounded rationality, I argue that political actors lack information on the effects of direct democracy and therefore are ready to gamble expecting strategic power gains in direct democratic processes. Political elites in the selected systems are likely to perceive direct democratic institutions as new instruments of policy-making, as they only have little, if at all, experience with them.

Three cases with frequent use of popular votes - these are Switzerland, Italy and Ireland - are also included in the considered sample. These cases clearly deviate from the above described logic. Elites in these countries are quite familiar with popular votes and thus

might have a different relation to direct democracy. If this is the case, a bias in the results of analyses is possible. The difference of these cases can also be viewed as an asset in the considered research question. The three countries represent contrast cases that add variety to the country sample. Seeking generalisability of the results, it is particularly interesting whether cases with more direct democratic experience are also influenced by the two theoretical perspectives defined in this thesis. Moreover, these cases are necessary to test important effects of the institutional structure and direct democratic practice that are described in hypothesis 6. Nonetheless, these cases are treated with caution and require separate robustness tests, which are performed in section 5.4.

The pragmatic criterion for the case selection concentrates on the extension of the available data, in particular at the country level. A small number of cases at the upper level causes problems for statistical inference in multilevel models, in particular if effects at the upper level are tested (Stegmueller, 2013). At least 30 cases are needed for reliable estimations of country specific effects. This case number is not possible with the selected dataset. Not all countries in the CCS included questions on direct democracy in their candidates' surveys or had important explanatory variables. This reduced the selection to the maximum of 15 cases. The selected countries are presented in the next section. In particular, I describe the institutional composition and practice as well as important contextual influences in the selected countries. This overview is necessarily selective and incomplete, but demonstrates the comparability of the selected countries and helps to identify possible outliers for the following analyses, particularly taking into account effects at the country level.

4.1.4 Overview of the Selected Countries

In this short overview I compare the selected countries according to their institutional provisions. In this regard, I rely on Lijphart's seminal work on consensus and majoritarian systems that offers a comprehensive, yet easily understandable differentiation of institutional structures and practice in Western democracies. Next to this source, I use the data from the Centre for Research on Direct Democracy to compare the direct democratic provisions and practice in each country.

In the following section I focus on four aspects in total: First, I characterize the form of government focusing on the concentration of executive power and the role of the legislature. This is an important institutional aspect that might influence how much parliaments are able to impact decision-making, especially considering whether they are confronted with a strong and independent executive. Second, I look at the differences in the electoral systems concentrating on the divide between proportional and majoritarian electoral rules. This institutional structure might influence how individual candidates perceive their chances to become a member of parliament and in this way affect their position on decision-making processes.

Third, I briefly look at the fragmentation of the party system concentrating on the number of effective parties. This aspect of the political system might matter for strategic considerations in the policy-making arena. It is plausible to expect that the more poten-

tial policy-making players are included in the political game, the more likely alternative institutions are perceived as favourable. Fourth, I outline the existent direct democratic practice in the country. As described in section 3.1.6, more experience with popular votes is likely to result in a different outlook on direct democracy. On the one hand, frequent popular votes might make political elites used to this interruption of the traditional parliamentary decision-making and even consider it as a common feature of the system. On the other hand, the possibility of popular votes changes political elites' strategic considerations in policy-making processes.

Table 4.1 lists the most important institutional characteristics for the considerations. The second column shows the type of democratic system differentiating between parliamentary, semi-presidential and presidential regimes.[4] Most considered countries have a parliamentary system, where all important decisions need to be approved by the parliament and the government is dependent on the support from the legislature. More than half of the countries are constitutional monarchies with kings or queens as head of states, who mostly only have representational functions and do not interfere in the legislative business. Austria, Finland, Iceland, Ireland and Portugal are sometimes considered semi-presidential having a directly elected president with more or less reserved powers (Lijphart, 2012). However, in most cases these presidents fulfil a representative role internationally and do not differ from the other parliamentary systems with presidents that only have ceremonial functions. The only real exception is Portugal where the president has a veto power in the legislative process.

Additionally, Switzerland has an exceptional government system with an executive composed of seven members that are elected by parliament, but normally cannot be dismissed. In this way, the Swiss system differs from the other parliamentary democracies where parliaments can control the prime minister and its government with a vote of no confidence. However, this is not the only speciality of Switzerland, as it is the only system that can be considered semi-direct because of its extensive direct democratic institutions, which are compared further below. To avoid a bias because of differing executive-legislative relations, the analyses will be also performed without Switzerland and Portugal. If relevant deviations arise, they will be reported in section 5.4.

[4] Lijphart (2012) differentiates various hybrid regimes between a parliamentary and presidential system, which are summarized here as semi-presidential, a term he also applies to the respective countries in the table.

Table 4.1: Overview of the Political Institutions in the Selected Countries

Country	**Executive-Legislative Relations**	**Electoral System**	**Party System**	**Direct Democracy**		
			no. effective parties	mandatory	top-down	bottom-up
Australia	parliamentary, const. monarchy	alternative vote	2.19	18	1	-
Austria	semi-presidential, parl.-dominance	proportional, party list	3.23	1	1	0
Belgium	parliamentary, const. monarchy	proportional, party list	6.13	0	0	0
Canada	parliamentary, const. monarchy	simple plurality system	2.66	0	1	0
Denmark	parliamentary, const. monarchy	proportional, party list	4.95	7	2	0
Finland	semi-presidential, parl.-dominance	proportional, party list	5.05	0	1	0
Germany	parliamentary, republic	mixed member proportional	3.30	0	0	0
Greece	parliamentary, republic	proportional, party list	2.32	0	2	0
Iceland	semi-presidential, parl.-dominance	proportional, party list	4.01	0	0	0
Ireland	semi-presidential, parl.-dominance	single transferable vote	2.95	25	0	0
Italy	parliamentary, republic	mixed member proportional	5.36	0	2	64
Netherlands	parliamentary, const. monarchy	proportional, party list	4.86	0	1	0
New Zealand	parliamentary, const. monarchy	mixed member proportional	2.66	8	4	4
Norway	parliamentary, const. monarchy	proportional, party list	4.11	0	2	0
Portugal	semi-presidential, pres. with veto	proportional, party list	2.85	0	3	0
Sweden	parliamentary, const. monarchy	proportional, party list	3.82	0	4	0
Switzerland	parliamentary, executive council	proportional, party list	5.50	128	0	218
United Kingdom	parliamentary, const. monarchy	simple plurality system	2.27	0	2	0

Entries for executive-legislative relations, electoral system and party system are based on Lijphart (2012)

Direct democratic institutions are obtained from the Center for Research on Direct Democracy (Serdült, 2019).

The electoral systems of the selected countries are mostly proportional, though the concrete counting methods differ widely. Germany and Italy have a mixed system in which a part of the legislature is elected under majority rules in voting districts. However, the remaining seats in these cases are distributed proportionally according to a party list vote and thus, these countries also have a proportionally oriented electoral system. A pure majority system is found in United Kingdom. Australia has a majority-based alternative vote system. Candidates from majority-oriented electoral systems might have a different approach to decision-making in comparison to candidates from proportionally oriented systems. The winner-takes-all logic in this regard is more compatible with direct democratic procedures than the logic of proportional representation of divergent interests. Therefore, I will check in robustness tests whether the majority-based systems have substantially different levels of support for direct democracy or skew the results of the analyses.

Looking at the diversity of party systems, the majority of the countries have around four or more effective parties in their political arenas.[5] Five countries have around three parties in their systems and only three countries - UK, Greece and Australia - have less than three effective parties. The more effective parties are in a system the higher its fractionalisation. More effective parties imply more competition for policy-making influence, and thus direct democratic institutions might present a welcome instrument in this regard. To take this into account, I check for robustness whether these countries influence the results of the models considerably.

To compare the direct democratic provisions and practice in each country, I differentiate roughly between constitutionally mandatory, top-down and bottom-up referendums and consider the frequency of their appearance since 1970 until the considered election, see the last three columns in table 4.1 for details.[6] All referendums of mandatory character concern constitutional changes that are proposed by political elites in parliament. Though this is not a strict top-down referendum, political elites must be aware of the requirement to hold a referendum. Therefore, this category can also be attributed to top-down referendums. Referendums have been practised at least once in most countries except Germany, Belgium and Iceland in the considered period. In most cases these referendums were facultative and initiated by elites. In Ireland and Switzerland, no top-down referendums appeared in this period, but in form of mandatory referendums political elites were involved in referendum processes.

Citizen-initiated referendums are quite rare, as in most countries no institutional provisions exist for citizen-initiatives connected to a popular vote. While top-down referendums often have a facultative character and thus are called by elites spontaneously, citizen-initiatives are seldom in the constitution and need to be explicitly introduced as a new institution. Only Italy and Switzerland offer this institution. In Italy, citizen-

[5]This measure is based on Laakso and Taagepera (1979) and considers the parliamentary strength of the parties based on each party's proportion of seats relative to others. The number of effective parties is the number of possible equal-size parties and thus demonstrates the extent of fractionalisation. The higher the number, the more fractionalized the party system.

[6]The year 1970 is selected as a starting point to capture the direct democratic trend described in subsection 2.2.2.

initiatives have an abrogative character, thus citizens can repeal the changing of a law currently passed in parliament. As observable in table 4.1, citizens use these opportunity to influence decision-making quite frequently.

As already mentioned, Switzerland presents the strongest exception with its direct democratic tradition and on average around eight referendums per year. In this regard, Switzerland is sometimes branded as "semi-direct" democracy (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 27.11.2017). The Swiss tradition of popular votes is particularly apparent in the high number of bottom-up initiatives in comparison to zero top-down referendums in the last 50 years. Of the 218 bottom-up referendums, 95 had an abrogative character. This demonstrates that citizen-initiatives are not necessarily harder to organize and carry out. The frequent use is rather connected to the tradition and political culture in a country. This is what makes Switzerland unique and needs to be kept in mind in the upcoming analyses. All models will be tested without Switzerland as an supposedly extreme outlier.

The majority of the countries experienced a referendum in recent time - in the 2000s, so that most political elites have been confronted with the referendum process. Referendums in Austria, Canada, Finland and Norway took place in the 1990ies, so that their elites should have only vague references to direct democratic processes. In Greece and United Kingdom popular votes happened way back in the 1970ies and should be not at all present in the minds of political elites. In this regard, Germany, Belgium and Iceland are interesting deviant cases with no experience at all with direct democracy at the national level in the last 40 years. On the other hand, countries like Ireland, Italy and Switzerland are deviant cases, because their elites are very familiar with popular votes. In-between are cases like Denmark with referendums every now and then and countries with rare experiences restricted to one or two experiments with direct democratic institutions. These differences will be kept in mind and included in the interpretation of the empirical results in section 5.4.

Overall, in terms of the institutional structure the selected countries appear compatible for a unified analysis. Most differences have an unclear effect on political elites' support for direct democracy. The biggest difference consists of direct democratic institutions already applied in the countries. This difference is accounted for in the analyses through indicators at the national level. For the remaining issues, I check the robustness of the results excluding institutionally different cases and report the results if the estimated effects change.

Next to the institutional structure, the current political context might affect how political elites view direct democratic institutions. In particular, this concerns strategic considerations connected to the current power distribution in a system. A detailed review of each country's political landscape is beyond the scope of this study. The most important changes in the political landscape that are theoretically relevant are captured through indicators of strategic influences (view section 4.2.3 for details). The only exception is the global financial crisis in 2008, an extreme event that occurred on a global level and had often a negative impact on the national economies. In the dataset are five countries with surveys during the peak of the financial crisis (2008-2009), see table 4.2 in the next section

for details.[7] This extreme event might influence institutional positions and thus will be controlled in the analyses, see 4.2.3 for details of the operationalization. In the next part of this chapter I introduce the data sets and then present the operationalization of the dependent and independent variables discussing possible limitations in the translation of theoretical assumptions from chapter 3 to empirical variables.

4.2 Operationalization

In this part I introduce the data sets used in the analyses, describe the selection of two dependent variables and finally transform important theoretical assumptions in independent variables. In this regard, I discuss how well the selected indicators reflect the theoretical concepts and point to possible limitations. The goal of this section is to present the empirical implementation of the theoretical arguments from chapter 3.

4.2.1 Introduction of the Data

The analyses are based on individual data from the Comparative Candidates Study (CCS) complemented with party level and country-specific variables. Information at the party level is added from the Parliaments and Governments (ParlGov) database, which contains electoral results and government constellations important for the considered question. Additionally, ParlGov provides comparative measures of party ideology. Concerning country specific variables, the Varieties of Democracies (V-Dem) dataset provides a vast amount of institutional and process-related data for democratic development in countries. For the considered research question I use information on direct democracy and parliamentary powers. The following considerations briefly introduce the used datasets focusing on the considered information and show an overview of the respective data.

The CCS (2016) provides data for parliamentary candidates from 24 countries based on a harmonized survey.[8] Most surveys were carried out on a universal sample including all parties that participated in the election. In some countries only the parties that were successful in the previous elections were considered. In others, the survey was only sent to candidates from parties that received a minimum amount of electoral approval (usually 2%). The candidates were asked to complete the surveys by themselves online or on paper and send them back by mail. The response rates were quite satisfactory ranging from 39 to 67 percent. The detailed information on each survey can be obtained from the codebook and data report (CCS, 2016*a*).

Though the CCS has a core questionnaire that was applied in all countries, not all countries included the issue battery concerning direct democratic institutions. As explained in the section on case selection, I consider all countries from the CCS that are parliamentary democracies and - with the exception of Switzerland - do not use direct democratic processes as regular policy-making mechanisms. From the 24 countries included in the first wave of the CCS, I consider 16 countries that included the relevant

[7] These countries are Austria, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Norway and Portugal.

[8] To secure comparability between candidates from different countries I use the data from the first wave of the CCS.

dependent and independent variables, see table 4.2 for details. Some countries are present with more than one survey in the first wave of the CCS. In such cases, I chose the survey that had all important variables. Table 4.2 also shows the selected electoral periods in the second column.

In the third column of table 4.2 I list the number of parties per country that entered the analyses. The important contextual information at the party level is derived from ParlGov and CMP data bases. ParlGov is an online project that offers collected data on elections and cabinets in most OECD countries starting from 1945. I apply information on electoral performance of parties in the considered and previous electoral terms. Furthermore, ParlGov provides comparative data from other sources such as expert ratings on ideological party positions, for example a left-right measure as well as a liberty-authority scale relevant for this study. Detailed information on the data collection are obtainable from the ParlGov website (Doering and Manow, 2018).

For the consideration of the political environment I rely on the measures offered in the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Dataset (Coppedge, Gerring, Altman, Bernhard, Fish, Hicken, Kroenig, Lindberg, McMann, Paxton, Semetko, Skaaning, Staton and Teorell, 2018). V-Dem considers almost all polities known today and covers a long historical period starting in 1900. This data collection project is particularly useful since it combines different understandings of democracy, such as liberal, deliberative or egalitarian, and offers singular measures of the different democratic dimensions as well as indices. Data in the V-Dem is collected in form of facts, expert ratings based on extensive questionnaire and also includes already available indices and measures on democracy (for further information see Coppedge, Gerring, Lindberg, Skaaning, Teorell, Altmann, Andersson, Bernhard, Fish, Glynn, Hicken, Knutsen, McMann Kelly, Mechkova, Miri, Paxton, Pemstein, Sigman, Staton and Zimmermann, 2018). Of particular relevance for this study is the focus on the participatory democratic dimension that includes expert evaluations in direct democratic institutions and also documents the occurrence of referendums in each considered country since 1990. Furthermore, V-Dem contains detailed information on the legislature - in particular the different rights individual members and the opposition groups have in front of the government. The indices used from the V-Dem data are described in detail in section 4.2.3.

The analyses concentrate on two dependent variables that are introduced in the next section. Due to missing variables, I consider 14 countries for the first dependent variable (DV1) and 15 countries for the second (DV2). The first dependent variable is missing in the Swiss and Italian surveys, the second in the Swedish survey. In the forth and fifth column of table 4.2 I list the number of considered candidates per country and in total. Additionally, in the last column of table 4.2 I display the number of candidates per country that won a parliamentary seat. The individual case number would be reduced enormously if the analyses were restricted to parliamentarians. Considering only parliamentarians would also diminish the number of parties that can be examined. This reduced variance is analytically undesirable and could lead to estimation problems. Why it is also theoretically plausible to consider all candidates is explained further below.

Table 4.2: Overview of the included countries from CCS (2016)

Country	Election Year	N Parties	N Candidates DV1	N Candidates DV2	N MPs
Australia	2007	6	306	302	64
Austria	2008	9	806	799	42
Belgium	2010	12	475	476	74
Denmark	2011	9	266	268	23
Finland	2011	12	669	665	39
Germany	2009	6	705	700	167
Greece	2009	6	248	248	27
Iceland	2009	6	302	299	30
Ireland	2007	6	105	105	34
Italy	2013	10	n.a.	397	90
Netherlands	2006	8	152	152	36
Norway	2009	7	852	849	n.a.
Portugal	2009	5	160	160	n.a.
Sweden	2010	8	1348	n.a.	n.a.
Switzerland	2011	14	n.a.	1191	81
United Kingdom	2010	8	1039	1033	114
Total		132	7433	7644	821

Source: CCS(2016), own calculations after removing individual cases with missing variables

Some country surveys lack certain explanatory variables which reduce the country case number further in the analyses.[9] The missing variables are often related to sensitive data that enables the identification of candidates[10] Where it was possible the data was added with the help of the responsible researchers. If no additional data could be acquired the survey dropped out of the particular analysis. For example, I test whether the personal success of a candidate - operationalized by having a seat in parliament - has an impact on her support for direct democracy, see section 3.1.2 for details. Three countries - Norway, Portugal and Sweden - did not provide this information which is visible in the last column of table 4.2 and were therefore excluded from the regression analyses with this indicator.

The majority of analyses is performed with 7433 candidates for the first and 7644 for the second dependent variable. These candidates all have a party affiliation, independents were excluded. The focus on candidates enables the inclusion of parties that are not in parliament and can only win a small share of votes. It is debatable whether candidates from such parties belong to the political elite or whether their party has any relevance for the political system. Regarding direct democratic procedures, even very small and electorally not significant parties can become relevant for the decision-making process. During a referendum campaign, such actors can play a significant role and influence the decision-making without parliamentary representation. Therefore, it is worthwhile to include also

[9] If too many variables were missing, I excluded the whole survey, as happened with the data for New Zealand, Canada and Malta.

[10] Due to the anonymization of the data variables indicating personal career developments or the current position of the candidate after election were removed in some countries.

parties that are not present in parliament into the analysis. This is the first reason to extend the analyses from parliamentarians to candidates.

The second reason to focus on candidates is the variance of political actors that can be included in the analyses. Political candidates are a heterogeneous group consisting of successful as well as unsuccessful applicants, established political actors that have been elected to parliament various times, but also newcomers, backbenchers or major players in important positions. This diversity allows to investigate not only what determines the support of current decision-makers, but also of those that are likely to become influential. Furthermore, candidates reflect the variance of individuals embodied in parties and help to understand how and why the beliefs of political actors diverge even if they belong to the same party.

Despite the broad approach to include non-parliamentary parties and unsuccessful candidates, I restrict the considerations to parties that received a minimum amount of votes in the current election. In this regard, I apply the same selection logic as the ParlGov data base that only includes information on parties that received at least one percent of the total votes or were able to win at least two seats in parliament (for more detailed requirements see (Doering and Manow, 2018)). In representative terms, one percent of votes is a considerable share of the population. Furthermore, in many countries parties receive financial support if they reach at least one percent of the votes. This leads to more organizational and financial capacities to participate in future campaigns, which includes possible referendum campaigns. Table A.1 in the appendix lists the selected parties in each country, and provides information on their electoral results.

To sum up, the dataset applied in this study consists of a variety of information at the individual, the party and the country level to analyse what determines political elites' support for direct democracy. In particular it offers a diversity of contexts on the party and country level to test the two theoretical perspectives. The diversity concentrates on different cabinet constellations and party power positions, the ideological spectrum of the parties and the institutional framework in each country, briefly described in the country overview on page 141. Before introducing the diverse explanatory framework in detail, the next section describes the two dependent variables used to measure support for direct democracy.

4.2.2 Dependent Variables

The survey of the CCS 2016 offers a variety of questions related to direct democracy. Table 4.3 lists the five questions that explicitly refer to direct democratic procedures in the survey. All questions appear in the same part of the survey labelled "Domain [D]: Democracy and Representation" (CCS, 2016*b*), which is concerned with candidates' beliefs and attitudes towards the functioning of the democratic system and their role in it. Though there are various options to operationalize support for direct democracy in this part, I selected two questions that fit the considered research question the most. It is important to mention that the research question is concerned with a general institutional question. As such, the empirical test concentrates on political elites' principal approval for direct

democratic institutions, not on a situational choice. In this section, I first review the two selected and briefly consider the three remaining questions from the mentioned section in the survey and explain why I restrict the consideration to the two selected questions. Then I introduce the coding of the two dependent variables and briefly discuss the methodical appropriateness of them, in particular focusing on the use of ordinal variables for regression analysis.

Table 4.3: Overview of included countries from CCS (2016)

Variable Nr	**Question wording** (as in Codebook of CCS 2016)	**Included in Analysis?**
D5g	Parliaments, not voters, should make final decisions on law and policy.	yes
D5h	A certain number of citizens should be able to initiate a referendum.	yes
D6a	Referendums enable citizens to get politicians' attention.	no
D6b	Referendums are poorly thought out and make bad law.	no
D6c	Referendums help to stimulate political interest	no

In the first indicator (D5g) in table 4.3, candidates have to position themselves in the question who is supposed to make the final decisions in policy-making - elected parliamentarians or voters. This question is clearly connected to the considered research question as it contrasts parliamentary procedures of decision-making with popular votes in referendums. It is concerned with a general understanding of democracy and reveals whether candidates regard representative institutions as an ideal democratic setting or might be more inclined to popular sovereignty in form of direct decision-making. It is plausible to expect that candidates with a strong preference for representative democracy will approve this question, while those endorsing direct democracy are likely to reject it. In this regard, the question is cleverly formulated and forces the respondents to take a clear position in this supposed antagonism.[11] Based on this reasoning, this question was selected as one of the dependent variables. In table 4.2 it is marked as DV2, thus representing the second dependent variable.

The second indicator (D5h) in table 4.3 is also suitable for the considered research question. The question is concerned with the approval of citizen initiatives for referendums. Direct democratic initiatives from below offer a wide range of actors influence on policy-making and an instrument to control the actions of elected representatives, as described in section 2.2.1. On the one hand, citizen-initiated referendums can be viewed as a strong intrusion in traditional representative decision-making. On the other hand, citizen-initiated referendums encourage the active involvement of people in the decision-making. The whole referendum process only starts through the efforts of citizens usually by gathering signatures. And of course, citizens are the primary decision-makers at the end of the process. In this regard, citizen-initiated referendums are considered as the most far-reaching direct democratic institutions in modern times. Therefore, the selected ques-

[11] There might be a slight bias as the parliamentary decision-making is emphasized in the statement. However, because voters are included as alternative decision-makers, the choice is specific and requires the positions between the two poles popular votes and parliamentary decision-making.

tion offers a suitable measure for direct democratic inclinations and their determinants and is included as an indicator. In table 4.2 it is marked as DV1, thus representing the first dependent variable.

Both selected indicators are useful to examine normative convictions or the inclination to a participatory type of democracy. Citizen-initiated referendums emphasize the active political engagement of citizens, as explained above. This focus on the active role of citizens links the position in this statement to a participatory ideal of democracy. This ideal emphasizes the sovereignty of the people and demands their participation in the everyday politics, as described in section 2.1.4 concerned with participatory democracy. Therefore, candidates that agree with this statement are likely to support direct democracy from a normative standpoint, as a participatory mechanism in the political system. Likewise, the question concerning the final decision-making authority (D5g) has a normative character, but this time emphasizing the importance of parliamentary decision-making in contrast to popular votes. Thus, political elites that approve the statement are more inclined to a representative ideal of democracy, as described in section 2.1.3. A rejection of the statement points to a participatory ideal of democracy similarly to the preference for citizen-initiated referendums.

Additionally, the normative connotation in questions D5g and D5h enables a critical test for strategic motivations. Confronting the two statements with normative and strategic explanatory factors can reveal whether political elites truly endorse direct democracy for its own sake or because of their current disadvantaged power position. From a general strategic perspective, political elites should want to preserve their primary power position and representative function in the political system. Consequently, they should be careful to endorse citizen-initiated referendums and agree with the position that parliament should make the final decision. From a weak power position in the current political context, the general aversion towards direct democratic processes might change, as described in section 3.1. If indicators for weak power positions show an effect on the placement in the two normatively oriented statements we receive clear evidence for strategic motivations, especially contrasted with normative explanatory factors. Therefore, the two indicators offer strong measures to assess the strategic impact on political elites' support for direct democracy.

Both selected indicators for the dependent variable in the empirical test have their advantages and disadvantages. Question D5g appears broader on the one hand, as it refers to the general decision-making process and asks for the position in the rival relationship between representative and direct democratic processes. In this regard, it is much more strict and forces elites to reveal their true democratic ideal.[12] However, it is possible that the statement is perceived as too generalized, unprecise or categorical. On the other hand, the statement in D5g explicitly mentions the parliament as an important institution and thus could generate stronger responses from members of parliament, especially if they are

[12]Interestingly, less candidates in each country answered question D5g in comparison to D5h, see the total numbers in table 4.2, though the share of undecided candidates selecting the middle position is comparable to question D5h. This points to some difficulties taking a position in question D5g.

involved for a long time in this institution. As I also include a control for parliamentarians this should not cause a problem in the general measurement of direct democratic support.

Question D5h is more specific focusing on citizen-initiated referendums as the top of the modern direct democratic institutions. Citizen-initiated referendums do not refer to a particular group of elites, but focus on citizens as an external veto group, and in this way, introduce a considerable hurdle in the policy-making process. As mentioned in the conceptual part, citizen-initiatives are regarded as the most anti-hegemonic direct democratic institution. In this way, the selected question presents a strong indicator for the support of direct democracy. However, the question is only directed towards the initiative of referendums and does not specify the character of the initiatives, in particular whether they are binding or only consultative, to which topics they apply and what hurdles citizens need to overcome to enforce a referendum. In this way, question D5h is rather vague. Political elites might not expect citizen-initiatives to occur frequently or not perceive them as a strong intrusion in the policy-making. Nonetheless, citizen-initiatives offer voters or more precisely organized political groups a strong instrument to influence politics and policies outside the parliamentary arena. This is clearly reflected in the statement and should thus provoke considered reactions of political elites that are traditionally responsible for policy-making.

The approval of citizen-initiated referendums in D5h is quite high: Around 63 percent of candidates from all available countries (14 countries from table 4.2 excluding Italy and Switzerland) agree or strongly agree with the statement that it should be possible for citizens to initiate a referendum. Interestingly, the statement in D5g that parliament, not the voters should be the final decision-makers has a reversed distribution of frequencies: Around 57 percent of the candidates in the considered countries (15 countries from table 4.2 excluding Sweden) agree with the statement. The two selected indicators are modestly associated, they show a correlation of 0.33 (Pearson's R). Additionally, the cross tabulation of the two variables in table 4.4 shows that there is considerable variance in the positioning on the two issues. This will be reviewed in detail after discussing the alternative indicators in table 4.3.

The three remaining questions in table 4.3 are not considered for the test of the theoretical perspectives because they emphasize mainly possible effects of referendums. Thus, the remaining questions are less directed towards a general position on direct democratic institutions, which is the focus of this study. D6a is concerned with the effects of referendums on politicians implying that these are usually not responsive to the wishes of the population. D6b stresses the reduction of decision-making to simple yes-no questions in referendums. And D6c points to a possible effect of referendums on political interest. Though all three questions consider interesting issues regarding direct democracy, they are less able to grasp whether an individual is in favour or against direct democratic institutions.

The three not selected questions appear at first sight as possible explanatory variables, but are not included as such for the following reasons: Firstly, they either do not reflect particular theoretical assumptions or are too vague to be considered as an indicator for

Table 4.4: Cross Tabulation of the Dependent Variables

	Parliaments for final decisions				
Citizen-initiatives	**agreeing**	**undecided**	**disagreeing**	**total**	**N**
agreeing	35.9	10.5	17.1	63.56	3,841
undecided	9.5	2.4	1.2	13.1	791
disagreeing	19.6	1.7	2.0	23.4	1,411
Total	65.1	14.6	20.3	100.00	
N	3,932	883	1,228		6,043

Own calculation based on 13 countries with both DVs (excluding Switzerland, Italy, Sweden)

a particular concept. For example, D6c incorporates one element of the participatory democracy ideal, but the indicator would not be sufficient to fully grasp whether political elites prefer this democratic ideal. Secondly and most importantly, all three questions offer tautological explanations for the support of direct democracy. It is logical that political elites who consider referendums as "poorly thought out" would reject their application. Likewise, seeing positive effects in terms of political interest or more attention of politicians to the popular will should result in a supportive position towards direct democratic institutions.

The two selected questions have five answer categories ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" including a middle category for undecided positions. This middle category is of particular relevance as it reflects that an individual neither approves of direct democracy nor disapproves it strongly. Though this group is not the primary concern of the research question the middle category reflects an important part of the elite population, as table 4.4 shows. There is a considerable share of elites that is not decided on at least one issue; 13 percent in the first DV, around 15 in the second. In consequence, all five categories of the two variables are included in the statistical estimation of the determinants for political elites support of direct democracy.

To consider the distribution for all data, I calculated relative (cell) frequencies for the two dependent variables in a cross table, see table 4.4 for details. This cross-tabulation includes only the 13 countries that provide both variables (excluding Italy, Sweden and Switzerland). I aggregated the two positions that agree or disagree with the presented statements. The results in table 4.4 reveal quite diverse positions on direct democracy: Only 17 percent of all candidates approve citizen-initiated referendums and disagree that parliament, not voters should be the final decision-maker which would reflect a very supportive position on direct democracy. On the other hand, 20 percent of candidates disapprove of citizen-initiated referendums and approve of parliament as the final decision-maker which reflects a strong rejection of direct democracy. Around two percent of the candidates are undecided on both statements. The remaining 61 percent of candidates are split on the two questions, see table 4.4 for details.

Remarkably, the highest share of candidates, around 36 percent, approves of citizen-initiated referendums, but also states that parliament, not voters should make the final decisions. Additionally, around 11 percent of candidates from the 13 countries are undecided regarding popular votes as final decisions while supporting citizen-initiated referendums.

10 percent of candidates agree that parliament should be the final decision-maker and are undecided in regard to citizen-initiated referendums. The rest pairings in the cross table make up only one to two percent of the candidates and are not reviewed in detail, see table 4.4 for more information.

From a theoretical point of view, the mixed positions on the two questions are not contradictory for different reasons. Political elites might support direct democracy for instrumental reasons without the concession to give up all their power. Some elites are also likely to consider citizen views for a general direction of a policy, but prefer to elaborate the details in the parliamentary process. This would result in the approval of citizen-initiated referendums as well as the preference for parliament as final decision-maker, shown in the 37 percent of seemingly inconsistent positions in table 4.4. Likewise, undecided elites might have some doubts because of the definitive and partly unprecise character of the two statements.

For the hypotheses tests in this thesis, however, the diverging positions imply that the two dependent variables measure different concepts and might show different effects of the explanatory factors. Both indicators can offer interesting insights into the research question. Because of their different emphasis, I do not combine them into one index of direct democracy, but use them as separate dependent variables. This way, the theoretical expectations are tested twice, which results in an extra control for the empirical findings regarding the support for direct democracy. The coding of D5g is negatively connected to the support of direct democracy and will be reversed to simplify the interpretation. In future considerations, I refer to the approval of popular decision-making when I consider the variable D5g. For D5h I use the term support for citizen-initiatives.

Both indicators are ordinal variables which require ordered logistic models in the calculation of effects. However, these models are quite complicated in their calculation and interpretation. In particular, ordered logistic regression results in as many models as there are categories in the ordinal variable. Each model can have a different slope and thus the effects from the same explanatory factor are different for each considered category. Even a complete change of the effect direction is possible depending on the concrete ordinal structure of the dependent variable. This can be expected in the two selected variables because there are two categories for agreement and two for disagreement with a middle category in-between. To properly account for these differences, it is necessary to consider all the slopes that result from the model. This is likely to lead to an overload of numerical and graphical information and unnecessary complicates the interpretation. To avoid this, I will use linear regression models and report the general effects of ordinal logistic models in the appendix. The exact proceeding is described in section 4.3.1.

This section has described the selection of the dependent variables and their methodical implication for the analyses. I chose two dependent variables that reflect an institutional question and do not evaluate the effects of this institution. Both indicators are very general and at the same time refer to concrete positions concerning direct democratic procedures. Though both questions have a slightly different focus, the theoretical expectations remain the same as they concentrate on general support for direct democracy. However, it is

possible that both indicators will result in different effects of the explanatory factors, which will be discussed in detail in the results chapter. In the next section I present the independent variables used in the analyses.

4.2.3 Independent Variables

The following section is divided in three parts: First, I introduce the independent variables at the individual level, mainly concerned with the normative explanation for the support of direct democracy. Then, I outline the indicators at the party level that concentrate on the rational-strategic explanation. And finally, I review the construction of country-level factors that account for the institutional context in each country. Due to restricted space I do not review all possible indicators but only present the selected ones and explain why they are appropriate. Additionally, I briefly discuss which problems might arise when using these indicators. The independent variables are listed in table 4.5 according to the level of analysis. As described in the previous section, the independent variables are derived from different sources and were accumulated in one dataset: Individual level variables are from the CCS (2016) as the base dataset, party level variables were added from ParlGov (2018), the country level variables from V-Dem (2018).

Individual Level Predictors

Individual level variables are mainly concerned with normative influences on the support for direct democracy. They include measures for the concepts of ideological predispositions, experience in the representative system and the evaluation of the democratic regime. Concerning ideological predispositions, I use three measures: the self-placement of candidates on the left-right scale as a general measure for ideology, an index for libertarian-authoritarian issues to consider a second ideological dimension that is more specifically concerned with societal issues and the value of freedom, and finally an index for populist inclinations. Furthermore, I review two indicators for socialization experiences in the representative system and a measure for the evaluation of the democratic system. Additionally, I consider the personal electoral success as an indicator for strategic orientations at the individual level. The individual indicators are all derived from CCS (2016) as the base data set. The first part of table 4.5 on page 163 summarizes all the selected individual level indicators described in the following.

Left-Right Placements

In orientation on the standards in research today, left-right positions are determined through the candidates' self-placement on an 11-point scale, ranging from extreme left at the one end to extreme right at the other end. This scale is quite abstract and does not give the survey respondents any clues about the content of this dimension. An alternative to this measurement of left-right would be to create an index of particular issues that capture either the economic or the societal understanding of the left-right divide. However, I consider the general self-placement on the left-right scale for the following reasons: Firstly,

the measure is widely applied in political research and has been proven as a good proxy for ideological positions (similarly used in Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2006; Ziemann, 2009; Zittel and Herzog, 2014). Secondly, political elites can be expected to be familiar with the differentiation between left and right and thus should be able to select a position on the scale without problems. The low number of missings in this question proves the point.

Thirdly, I explained in the introduction of hypothesis 8 that leftist positions are likely to be connected with stronger support for direct democracy, no matter which values and issue positions the respondents associate with left and right. My general assumption is that the left-right scale indicates on the left side the inclination to more equality in different social spheres and openness to more political involvement of each individual and on the right to hierarchical order and conformity to established rules. Therefore leftist candidates are expected to be more likely to lean towards direct democracy. To conclude, despite the ambiguity of the left-right scale, it can serve as a general measure of ideological placement in the political space and is therefore applied in the analyses as an explanatory factor.

Furthermore, I include the quadratic term of the self-placement on the left-right scale to account for a possible curvilinear association. This implies an adjustment of the linear effect assumed in 8 for extreme positions on the left and right. I assume that political elites with extreme ideological positions are likely to be more in favour of direct democracy, no matter if they are on the left or on the right. Popular votes offer ideologically radical elites a way to pursue policies normally banned from public debates in parliament or the media. Direct democratic procedures create a platform to voice radical positions without the restrictions of the parliamentary arena or the controls in the mainstream media. Additionally, candidates might expect more support in popular votes for these positions in comparison to parliamentary decision-making processes. Therefore, it is plausible to expect that candidates with extreme ideological positions might be more likely to endorse direct democratic institutions than candidates with moderate ideological positions.

On the left end of the ideological scale, the adjustment through the quadratic term does not change the general assumption of 8. The more on the left a candidate places herself, the more likely she is to support direct democracy. On the right end, however, it might lead to a slight correction of the linear effect. I assume that candidates placing themselves on the right end are more in favour of direct democracy in comparison to conservative candidates closer to the centre of the scale. This adjustment is only a control and I nevertheless argue that leftist candidates are more likely to favour direct democracy as described in 8.

Libertarian-Authoritarian Tendencies

In contrast to the left-right dimension, the placement in the libertarian-authoritarian dimension is measured through a summary index of different survey items, as is often applied in research. This approach enables a more specific operationalization of the concept, but at the same time has the disadvantage of being restricted to a few issue questions. The part "Domain [C]: Issues and Policies" in the CCS (2016*b*) offers a couple of issue items that fit the concept of a libertarian-authoritarian dimension according to Flanagan and Lee

(2003). The libertarian-authoritarian measure for the analyses is based on the following items:

- C2a: Immigrants should be required to adjust to the customs of [country].
- C2d: Same sex marriages should be prohibited by law.
- C2f: People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences.
- C2k: Women should be free to decide on matters of abortion.

All four selected items refer to a societal issue dimension and are concerned with freedom as an underlying value in contrast to subordination. C2a and C2d deal with the question of personal freedom of minorities in a society. The statement in C2a concerns the subordination of immigrants' culture to the majority culture. Denying the statement reflects tolerance and a preference for freedom of personal lifestyles. Though also concerned with personal lifestyles, C2d deals with legal equality of one particular minority within a society - gay people. The wording in both C2a and C2d incorporates inclinations to traditionality and nationalism connected to authoritarian thinking.

C2k with its focus on women also stresses freedom of a particular group which is usually not a numerical minority, but often treated in many societies as a marginalized or less powerful group. Disapproving the statement implies a commitment to the liberal idea of legal equality and tolerance of lifestyles. C2f finally focuses on the general organization of communal life in a society in the particular conflict of crime sentences. Approving the statement points to authoritarian approaches with focus on discipline and control. According to this understanding, individuals need to be controlled and sanctioned to maintain the established social order and security. This would be denied by libertarians who put personal freedom at the top of their agenda and thus should be less in favour of stiffer sentences. To summarize, the four items clearly reflect libertarian-authoritarian differences, as described by Flanagan and Lee (2003).

The four items have five answer categories ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" including a middle category for undecided positions. Testing the variables in a confirmatory factor[13] analysis reveals that indeed they measure one latent dimension which is considered here as libertarian-authoritarian. For the empirical test, I constructed a summary index of the four positions on these issues which range from -8 for extremely authoritarian to 8 extremely libertarian positions.[14] The coding of C2k was reversed to be adaptable to the other statements that are directed towards authoritarian standings.

With the left-right self-placement and the constructed index for libertarian-authoritarian inclinations, two measures for ideological convictions are included in the analysis that can be differentiated conceptually, but are empirically associated. As already discussed in the theoretical part, the understandings of left and right positions can converge with the

[13]The principal component analysis results in one factor for the four items with factor loadings between -0.63 and 0.75; 49 percent of the variance is explained through this factor. The model fit versus a saturated model has a chi-square of 5420.52 with six degrees of freedom.

[14]Another possibility to construct an index is to use the factor loadings from the factor analysis. The so created index correlates almost perfectly with the summary index. As it is less traceable to work with factor loadings than with concrete values in the selected items, the summary index is preferred.

conceptualization of libertarian-authoritarian dimension (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1990). A big part of this problem is connected with the measurement of the two scales. The libertarian-authoritarian inclinations are measured through issue positions on particular questions and thus create a more precise indicator. In contrast, the left-right dimension is captured through the placement on an abstract 11-point numerical scale that can result in different individual understandings of the left and the right. Left-right is considered as the central heuristic in the ideological space which makes it understandable that individuals often summarize economic and societal issues when placing themself on the left or right of the scale.

Not surprisingly, the left-right placements often correlate with measures for libertarian-authoritarian inclinations. This is also the case with the two selected indicators in this study yielding a Pearson's R higher than 0.5. Such a strong correlation might result in a multicollinearity problem in the analyses. To control for the possible bias I check multicollinearity through the variance inflation factor and consider both measures separately in the analyses to estimate the possibly overlapping effects. If problems arise, the analyses are restricted to one indicator after the test of the respective hypothesis which has more explanatory power. Despite the possible methodical difficulties, it makes sense to keep both indicators for theoretical differentiation. The two presented hypotheses connected with these indicators are theoretically distinguishable and thus are both worth to consider empirically.

Populist Inclinations

As a third ideological influence I consider populist inclinations in connection with political elites' support for direct democracy. The CCS 2016 offers an item battery concerned with democratic performance and the role of elites in this regard, as already mentioned in section 4.2.2 for the dependent variable. Only Canada's survey does not include this issue battery. I construct an index of populist attitudes with the following items that clearly reflect core populist ideas:

- D5a: Citizens have ample opportunity to participate in political decisions.
- D5b: Our democracy is about to lose the trust of the citizens.
- D5c: Legislation represents the interests of the majority of citizens.
- D5e: Special interests have too much influence on law making.

The items were selected theoretically and tested in a confirmatory factor analysis, which shows that they load on one dimension.[15] Out of these items, I created an additive index for populist inclinations. Looking at the selected statements, this populist index can be viewed as a general critique on the representative system, as will be explained further below in section 4.2.3 on the evaluation of the democratic system. Nevertheless

[15]The principal component analysis results in one factor for the four items with factor loadings between -0.59 and 0.75; 52 percent of the variance is explained through this factor. The model fit versus a saturated model has a chi-square of 5969.72 with six degrees of freedom.

the selected items are regarded here as measures for populist inclinations from a theoretical point of view.

Each item incorporates different core criticisms from populist groups: The statement in D5a entails an implicit demand for more popular involvement in decision-making, though the wording points to the opposite that citizens have sufficient possibilities to participate in politics. The statement in D5b reflects a general populist concern with the performance of the existing democratic regime and an increased perception that citizens lack trust in politics. The statement in D5c points to the relevance of the people's will. Populists often criticize that the popular will is disregarded in representative decision-making and thus should disapprove of this statement. And finally, statement D5e has an anti-elitist character concerned with lobbyism. Though the wording focuses on the influence of special interests in politics, it is clear that without elected representatives these special interests could not have any influence on law-making.

The four items have five answer categories ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" including a middle category for undecided positions. Statement D5b and D5e received a reversed coding to point in the same direction as D5a and D5c. I constructed a summary index for populist attitudes out of the four items.[16] The populism inclination index ranges from -8 for anti-populist to 8 for very populist attitudes. It is not significantly correlated with the libertarian-authoritarian index or the left-right self-placement and is therefore measuring a distinct concept.

It could also be possible to consider a measure for populist parties as an explanatory factor. However, since populist parties seldom name themselves with this term and it requires a lot of effort to classify each parties' populist character[17]. I restrict my analyses to the individual measure. The applied indicator for populism offers a good way to grasp the populist tendencies of individuals regardless of their party.

Involvement in Representative Institutions

Apart from ideological predispositions I hypothesized that the individual socialization experience in the representative system has an influence on political elites' support for direct democracy from a normative perspective. In this regard, the involvement of a candidate in the representative system needs to be considered. Involvement could be operationalized as the number and diversity of posts in representative institutions a candidate has held or as the length of participation in the representative system at the elite level. "Domain [A]: Political Background and Activities" in the CCS (2016) deals with the previous experience of candidates in different representative institutions. It includes information on previous candidacies, years served in different representative institutions and government levels and details on the party membership. A detailed consideration of each individual candidate's

[16] Similarly to the libertarian authoritarian index, it would be possible to create an index out of factor loadings from the factor analysis. For practical reasons described before the index is constructed with concrete values in the selected items.

[17] There is no agreement in research how to reliably classify parties as populist, as different researchers emphasize different elements of populism, compare the end of section 3.2.2 for a small overview of the discussion.

socialization experience is not possible with the available data and would go beyond the scope of this research.

Required is a general measure of candidates' experience in representative institutions. Different indicators appear as appropriate for this task: First, the years spend in parliamentary institutions directly refer to the theoretical assumptions in hypothesis 12. The longer a candidate has participated in parliamentary institutions, the more attached she should be to the representative system. The CCS includes questions on the service in local, regional and national parliaments. Unfortunately, many surveys of the selected countries do not provide information for all political levels. In part this is connected to a different federal system in the considered countries. In this regard, the participation in national institutions serves best to compare different countries and political system, no matter if they are centralized or federal. Therefore, I consider question A9g which is concerned with the membership in national parliaments as an indicator for the involvement in representative institutions. The exact question asks about the amount of years served as member of national parliament. Unfortunately, three countries - Iceland, Ireland and Switzerland - did not provide the answers to this question and drop out of the analyses including this predictor.

It is noteworthy that the years served in a national parliament is a restricted measure of experience in the representative system because it reflects only a small part of the possible involvement. Most candidates start at the local level and then continue their career in higher positions. However, the careers of candidates are very diverse, for instance some concentrate on party posts at the beginning, others directly on state offices. It is impossible to account fully for this diversity through the available survey data. It is reasonable to assume that in national politics the cards are reshuffled for candidates and the representative institutions have their own logic to which they need to adapt. Based on these reasons, I consider the years served in national parliament as a good indicators for the attachment to representative institutions.

As a second indicator for the socialization in a representative system I chose the length of party membership. From a theoretical perspective, the length of party membership reflects a good proxy for the overall experience in the representative system in the considered parliamentary democracies. Parties are usually the starting institutions for a political career. The interaction in a party teaches individuals important rules of the game such as behavioural strategies and norms in politics. Through party work, aspirants for parliamentary offices often prepare themselves for their service in parliament, especially by becoming familiar with the law-making process. Therefore, involvement in parties can be regarded as an expression of the overall experience in representative institutions. It is plausible to expect that the longer a candidate is involved in the party, the stronger her bond with the representative system.

An important advantage of the party membership as an indicator is that it is not connected to a political career. Party membership is usually not particularly rewarding or profitable - with the exception of the highest leadership positions. The experience in parliament, on the other hand, could also serve as an indicator for self-interest with

regards to representative institutions, as described at the end of section 3.2.3. Candidates that have been involved in parliament for a long time depend on the institution regarding their income, status and career. The length of party membership appears in this regard a better indicator to measure normative convictions for representative institutions.

The length of party membership is calculated by subtracting the year a candidate entered her current party (question A2) from the current election year (T3). This indicator ranges from 0 to 35 according to the answers of the candidates in the whole dataset. This indicator is available for all considered countries, in contrast to the parliamentary experience, and is therefore regarded as the dominant predictor of socialization experiences.

Evaluation of Democratic System

The last normative indicator at the individual level asks for the overall evaluation of the democratic system. I use question D1 from CCS 2016 asking about the individual satisfaction with the current democratic regime as an indicator for evaluation of the democratic system. This is a traditional measure applied in many studies (Bowler and Donovan, 2007; Dalton, 2004; Norris, 1999). Satisfaction with the current regime is a very broad indicator that has the advantage to grasp the overall assessment of the democratic system. As the focus is on the political regime, it measures not the support for the democratic ideal or values, but for the functioning of the actual democratic system in a country. In this regard, it is concerned with the political institutions in a country and how these institutions work. Political elites are expected to evaluate the current institutions and their working according to their predominant values and democratic ideal, as explained in the theoretical section.

The disadvantage of this general evaluative measure is that it is not clear on what the judgements are based on. The exact sources for candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime are not traceable through question D1. It is not clear which particular institutions they consider as malfunctioning. There is a small section in the questionnaire with more concrete evaluations of the democratic system that partly entered the populist inclinations index, as mentioned above. This populist index is a quite diverse summary of criticisms on the decision-making process, in particular a lack of responsiveness to citizens' demands and the restricted role of citizens in the political process as well as the influence of lobbyist organizations on law-making. This index can also be viewed as an indicator for the evaluation of the current democratic system. However, as explained above it focuses on populist criticisms and will be differentiated as such.

The advantage of the selected generalized indicator is that candidates evaluate the overall functioning of the democratic regime. They can be expected to weigh all the faults and merits of the current democratic system. It is likely that political elites do not point to small criticisms and problems expressing their dissatisfaction, but really view considerable issues in the current regime. Dissatisfaction with the functioning of the democratic regime reflects therefore a strong evaluation of the democratic system. Such an evaluation is likely to result in a demand for changes in the current institutional setting and lead to more support for alternatives such as direct democratic institutions.

The selected question D1 consists of four answer categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It lacks a middle category and has too little values to be regarded as a metric variable. Therefore, I recoded the variable into a dichotomous variable to avoid methodical problems and clearly differentiate between negative and positive evaluations. The value 1 stands for dissatisfaction with the democratic regime in the country and 0 for satisfaction. This reversed coding is in accordance to the formulated H13 that expects a positive effect from negative evaluations of the democratic regime on the support for direct democracy.

Personal Success in the Election

The last individual indicator deals with elites' strategic reaction to personal success in the current election in connection with direct democracy. Question T8 in the CCS 2016 captures in a dichotomous variable whether the candidate won a seat in the current election. This indicator is relevant for H1, which considers the effect of personal electoral success on the support for direct democracy. As has been argued, electoral losers have a stronger incentive to favour direct democratic institutions to improve their disadvantage in the current political context. Through direct democratic institutions even candidates that did not win a seat can influence policy-making, be publicly visible and thus improve their chances for the next election or their general career opportunities in their party and in state offices. Therefore, I expect electoral losers to be more supportive of direct democracy out of strategic considerations.

The selected variable reflects a short-term strategic reaction and differentiates between personal career interests of candidates and strategic motivations resulting from party positions in the political game. In this regard, the personal success in an election is also an important control for the following strategic considerations focusing on vote-, policy- and office-seeking, because it helps to separate the different strategic effects.

Unfortunately, some countries do not provide question T8 in the comparative database because of the sensible character of this information, as already mentioned in section 4.2.1. In total, I am able to consider eleven countries for DV1 and 13 countries for DV2 with this indicator excluding Portugal, Norway and Sweden in the analyses, view last column of table 4.2 for an overview. Though incomplete the smaller data set offers enough variety in countries to test the expected effect of H1. However, I will not consider the variable in the extended analyses that include all explanatory variables in order to avoid a reduction of the data set.

Party Level Predictors

Party level variables are mainly concerned with strategic influences on the support for direct democracy. They include measures for the concepts of vote-, policy- and office-seeking which all reflect the current power status of the parties after the election. Furthermore, I review two indicators for party ideology based on expert ratings. The party level indicators are all derived from ParlGov (2018). The second part of table 4.5 on page 163 summarizes all the selected party level indicators described in the following.

Table 4.5: Overview of independent variables

Theoretical Concept	**Variable Description**	**Coding/Range**
Individual Level (based on CCS 2016)		
left-right ideological dimension	self placement on the left-right scale (C3)	from 0=left to 10=right
authoritarian-libertarian dimension	cumulative index of 3 issue-questions: C2a (immigrant's integration), C2d (same-sex marriages), C2f (stiffer penalty for breaking law)	from -6=authoritarian to 6=libertarian
populist ideological inclination	cumulative index of 4 issue-questions: D5a (citizens' participation opportunities in decisions), D5b (loss of trust in democracy), D5c (representation of majority interests), D5e (special interests' influence on laws)	from -8=not populist to 8=very populist
experience in national parliament	years served in national parliament (A9g)	from 0=no experience to 35 years (max of data)
involvement in representative institutions	length of party membership constructed T3 (year of election) - A2 (year of joining the party)	from 0=recently entered to 49=max years
evaluation of democratic system	satisfaction with current regime (D1), recoded from four categories to a dummy	1=dissatisfied and 0=satisfied
electoral success of candidate	seat in parliament in current election (T8)	0=winner; 1=loser
Party Level (based on ParlGov 2018)		
popular approval	change of vote share from previous to recent election	from -31.6 to 25.6 (percentage points) in data
legislative strength	vote share in considered election	from 0.1% to 43.4% in data
legislative position	government/opposition status (cabinet party)	0=government; 1=opposition
party's prospects for government	government participation in three previous electoral periods before recent one	0=no prospects to 3=high prospects
left-right dimension	left_right index based on expert ratings	0=left to 10=right
libertarian-authoritarian dimension	liberty_authority index based on expert ratings	0=libertarian to 10=authoritarian
Country Level (based on V-Dem 2018)		
experience with direct democracy	popular votes in last 15 years (own calculations based on v2ddnumvot)	from 0 to 130
direct democratic institutions	direct popular vote index (v2xdd_dd)	0=no provisions to 1=full provisions; .01 to .68 in data
legislative powers	legislative constraints on the executive index (v2xlg_legcon)	0=no provisions to 1=full provisions; from 0.83 to 0.98 in data

Change of Parties' Popular Approval

As a first predictor at the party level I use the relative change in votes from the previous election to the recent one measured in percentage points. This measure is an indicator for the current popular approval of candidates' parties. A positive change in the electoral approval indicates that voters evaluate the party favourably; no change in electoral results can be considered as stable voter approval of parties; negative changes on the other hand reflect an increasing disappointment of voters with the party. Based on assumptions from rational choice, I expect that parties are motivated by vote-seeking considerations, thus hoping to improve their electoral prospects every time. A negative change from the previous to the current election should make candidates worry about the power position of their party in the current political context. As has been argued in the introduction to H2, confronted with declining popular approval of their parties, candidates are likely to prefer alternative instruments such as direct democratic institutions to change their party's current weak power position.

The indicator is based on the relative change of electoral approval and thus reflects a short-term strategic incentive for vote-seeking. It does not include the overall electoral strength of parties. The extent of electoral change might be perceived differently depending on parties' starting level of popular approval. For instance, a loss of two percentage points does not impact parties that generally receive over 40 per cent of popular votes as dramatically as parties with an electoral approval of less than 10 percent. The party with approval under 10 percent might fear to become irrelevant, while the party with over 40 percent only experiences a small setback. Nevertheless, despite the different starting levels of parties the signal from the electorate is clear in both cases: The approval of the parties declines. No matter how the general strength of parties is they will perceive an incentive to improve their current popular approval to either preserve or improve their power position. Therefore, I regard this measure for popular approval as adequate to test the vote-seeking motivations of candidates from H2. To also account for the overall electoral strength of parties in a political system I consider their vote share in the current election, but regard it as an indicator of legislative strength, see the next section for details.

The considered measure is calculated by subtracting a party's electoral result in the considered electoral term from the result in the previous election. The measure ranges from -31.6 to 25.6 percentage points for the whole data set. The 132 considered parties show a mean change of -.5 with a standard deviation of 5.8. The majority of parties only experience minor changes in their electoral approval, the overall distribution resembles a normal distribution with only 10 percent of electoral change going below -6.2 percentage points and 10 percent above 4.8. Nevertheless, there is considerable variance in each country.

Legislative Strength of Parties

Next to the relative change in electoral approval I also consider the overall electoral share of parties as an indicator for strategic considerations in terms of policy-seeking. As explained in section 3.1.4 on policy-seeking motivations, political parties have a different weight in

policy-making based on their concrete electoral success. The vote share of a party in comparison to the other parties defines its legislative strength, i.e. how many seats the party receives in parliament and how much it is involved in policy-making. This indicator reflects a short-term, but also a medium-term power position of parties. The extent of legislative strength of parties lasts at least one electoral term. However, most parties do not change their vote share dramatically from one electoral period to the next. Thus, the expected strategic effect of legislative strength can reflect both current policy-seeking motivations and long-term orientations in the policy-making process.

While the actual seat share in parliament can also be used to measure legislative strength, the legislative power does not only consist of the particular influence in parliament - though this reflects a big part of it - but also entails the public visibility and impact on public debates of parties. In particular, democratic systems with majoritarian electoral rules such as the UK have much less parties that are able to win seats in parliament. However, even these extra-parliamentary parties are not necessarily insignificant in public debates, in particular in direct democratic processes. A good example for this influence is the role of the fringe party UKIP in the British referendum on EU membership in 2016. Thus, even parties that do not enter parliament are worth considering and entered the analyses. To measure the legislative strength of such parties, their relative vote share appears to be a better indicator than their seat share, which very often would be zero.

The considered measure simply reflects the percentage share of received votes for each party in relation to the total amount of votes cast. The vote share for the 132 considered parties ranges from 0.1 to 43.4 percent of votes with a mean of 14.8 percent and a standard deviation of 10.7. There is considerable variance of vote shares in each country which offers a suitable test for the policy-seeking hypothesis.

Government/Opposition Status

The second predictor of policy-seeking motivations focuses on the current status of candidates' parties after the elections and after possible coalition negotiations. As described in section 3.1.4, the opposition status of candidates' parties is likely to make them endorse direct democratic institutions to have more influence on policy-making. The opposition status reflects a clear short-term strategic motivation for policy-seeking. In principle, the government and opposition status can change in each electoral term. However, there are parties that have less chances for government and thus are stuck in the opposition status. To differentiate between the chances for government, another indicator is used in connection to office-seeking motivations, as described in the next section.

The clear divide between opposition and government parties in connection with direct democratic instruments is tested through a simple dichotomous measure that indicates government or opposition status after elections. The variable is coded 1 for opposition parties and 0 for government parties in accordance to H3 that postulates an influence from opposition status on the support for direct democracy. This measure has been frequently used as an indicator for strategic orientations (Bowler, Donovan and Karp,

2006; Ziemann, 2009; Zittel and Herzog, 2014) and offers an indicator for parties' current influence on policy-making. A disadvantage of this measure is that it cannot grasp how much influence each party really has on policy-making in parliament or in a coalition. This is particularly problematic for minority governments often practised in Denmark. In this case the governing parties look for changing coalitions with the opposition parties which then can have much more influence on policy-making. For a finer measurement of policy influence I include the relative vote share as described in the previous section.

A second problem with the government-opposition indicator results from long coalition negotiations - as happened in Belgium in the considered period. While in most cases the candidates knew the future government coalition at the time of the survey, in Belgium the coalition building process lasted more than one year and was highly problematic(Rihoux et al., 2011). It is questionable whether Belgian candidates had a clear conception of their party's future role. The unsecure government building situation in Belgium might affect different strategic predictors for the support for direct democracy. Therefore, I will consider the analyses with and without the Belgian candidates to control for possible distortions.

Prospects for Government

Regarding office-seeking orientations in connection to support for direct democracy, I conceptualized a party's prospects for government as a decisive factor. These prospects for government can be based on previous government participation of the parties. In this regard, I consider three electoral periods prior to the most recent one to assess the chances of parties for office. The decision to consider three previous electoral periods is based on the expectation that the last 12 to 15 years are present in the minds of most political elites. It is also reasonable to expect that they either experienced the different government formations in this time period or have studied their development (for younger candidates). The maximum of 15 years also helps to capture the current political context and disregard possible early developments that are now not relevant anymore.

If a party has been part of the government in the last three electoral periods, it is likely to have office-seeking ambitions. Candidates from parties with government prospects are expected to be more sceptical about direct democratic processes, see H5 for details. In contrast, if a party has been excluded from government in the last three electoral periods, it is not primarily concerned with office-seeking, but is likely to strive for other forms of influence in politics. The resulting indicator for the analyses displays the amount of electoral periods a candidate's party was in government. The value zero of this variable indicates no government participation at all in the last three electoral periods, the value three reflects the maximum of electoral periods in government.

In contrast to the government-opposition indicator, previous government participation differentiates opposition parties according to their general appearance in the political system, in particular whether they belong to established parties involved in policy-making or to fringe parties that are usually excluded from the decision-making process. In this

regard, the indicator of government participation enables the differentiation of long-term strategic orientations of parties, see section 3.1.5 for details.

Party Ideology

Next to strategic indicators, I include normative measures for the ideological environment of political elites to test H10.a and H10.b. To consider party ideologies I use parties' positions in the left-right and the libertarian and authoritarian dimensions. I rely on external measures of party ideology to estimate this influence instead of ratings derived from candidates' perceptions available in the CCS (2016). External measures are better to avoid multicollinearity problems, which arise because of high correlations between individual placements and party positions on ideological scales, even more so if the party positions are simply aggregated individual placements. Furthermore, external measures of party ideology reflect more precisely the (publicly) perceived ideology of parties, as mentioned in the two considered hypotheses.

For the left-right positions of parties, I consider an index from ParlGov data that has an 11-point-scale similar to the self-placements of the candidates. This index is based on mean values from different expert surveys (for more details see Doering and Manow, 2018). The most important expert surveys considered are the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (Bakker et al., 2015), that includes ratings for 1999, 2002 and 2006, and the expert survey conducted by Benoit and Laver (2007) in 2002-2003. As a second indicator for ideological positions of parties I include the liberty-authority index from ParlGov data The index ranges from 0 for very liberal to 10 very authoritative and is based on two expert survey ratings consisting of the social dimension from the expert survey of Benoit and Laver (2007) and the so called GALTAN-scores from the Chapel Hill Expert survey (Bakker et al., 2015).

Combining different expert ratings into one scale creates a balanced measure for party positions reflecting a general score for each party. Expert survey ratings are based on judgements of country specialists who have deep insight into the party system and the political context of each country. Therefore, expert ratings very likely reflect ideological positions as the considered political elites and the informed public would understand them (Benoit and Laver, 2007). This is a particular advantage for the considered research project. Furthermore, because of clear rating instructions it is plausible to expect that these measures are suitable for comparisons between countries.

Country-specific Variables

Country level variables are mainly concerned with strategic influences on the support for direct democracy. They include measures for the legislative powers as well as direct democratic practice in the countries. The country level indicators are all derived from V-Dem (2018). The third part of table 4.5 on page 163 summarizes all the selected country level indicators described in the following.

Experience with Direct Democracy

In section 3.1.6 I described that the overall institutional context and practice in a country can affect political elites' position towards direct democracy. In particular it makes a difference whether the considered elites have experience with direct democratic procedures. Direct democratic practice teaches political elites that referendums are risky choices for policy-making, as they are not easy to control and deprive elected officials of their primary power source. Therefore I expect comparing different countries that political elites are less supportive of direct democratic procedures the more practice they have with them.

To test this association I include a measure on the frequency of popular votes in the country in the last 15 years before the current election. The threshold of 15 years reflects approximately three electoral periods before the current election. In this period, it is reasonable to assume that candidates experienced referendums, maybe were even involved in such or actively followed the campaign as citizens. Thus, if there were referendums in the last 15 years, candidates should have relatively fresh memories on the direct democratic process and its perils. The more referendums took place in the last 15 years, the more experience candidates gathered and the better they can assess the risks and uncertainty of such processes.

The frequency of popular votes was calculated adding the number of popular votes at the national level for each year, no matter which type of referendum it was. The so created variable sums up different kinds of referendums, including obligatory referendums, plebiscites from government, and initiatives from the public. Though they definitely differ in their general effect on the representative system as described in section 2.2.1, I only consider the occurrence of popular votes as a proxy for the experience with direct democracy. The more often popular votes occurred the more knowledge political elites gained about the perils and advantages of direct democracy. The overview of referendums in the last 40 years in table 4.2 on page 148 gives an impression of the popular vote frequency in each country, however the numbers are smaller based on the selected period of 15 years.

For the test of the H6 it is of particular importance whether any referendum process took place, not the exact type or the outcome. I assume that political elites reflect the whole process and its perils after a referendum, analysing the effects of the referendum on the whole representative system, not only for their current political situation. This reflection process is likely to occur when referendums happen quite frequently and the referendum results differ for the involved elites each time. Though the perception of a referendum is likely to depend on the actual result for the position elites were supporting, it is reasonable to expect that elites consider not only their own success, but also the implications for representative decision-making in general as well as their role in this process.

As a control for the institutional context, I also consider the possibilities for popular votes in each country summarized through the direct popular vote index in the V-Dem database. The index considers obligatory referendums, plebiscites from government, initiatives from the public as well as abrogative referendums and evaluates if the mentioned institutions exist and how easy they can be initiated and approved (for more informa-

tion see Coppedge, Gerring, Lindberg, Skaaning, Teorell, Altmann, Andersson, Bernhard, Fish, Glynn, Hicken, Knutsen, McMann Kelly, Mechkova, Miri, Paxton, Pemstein, Sigman, Staton and Zimmermann, 2018). The index ranges between 0 and 1. The higher the score, the more possibilities exist and the less hurdles for initiating and passing them.

Legislative Powers in Country

As a final country-specific factor I look at the influence of the legislative powers in parliament on the support for direct democratic procedures. As explained in H7, elites can be expected to endorse direct democratic institutions more if their parliamentary context does not offer them enough influence on policy-making or the control of government actions. To evaluate parliamentary powers vis a vis the government I include the "legislative constraints on the executive index" from the V-Dem dataset(Coppedge, Gerring, Lindberg, Skaaning, Teorell, Altmann, Andersson, Bernhard, Fish, Glynn, Hicken, Knutsen, McMann Kelly, Mechkova, Miri, Paxton, Pemstein, Sigman, Staton and Zimmermann, 2018, see for details). The index ranges between 0 and 1. The higher the score the more different parliamentary groups in a country are "capable of questioning, investigating, and exercising oversight over the executive" (Coppedge, Gerring, Lindberg, Skaaning, Teorell, Altmann, Andersson, Bernhard, Fish, Glynn, Hicken, Knutsen, McMann Kelly, Mechkova, Miri, Paxton, Pemstein, Sigman, Staton and Zimmermann, 2018, 56).

The index grasps the most important legislative control rights that are often used by opposition parties to have an impact on decision-making or publicly scrutinize the current government. With such rights, opposition groups are able to oversee the actions of the government and point to governmental failures in public debates. This can help opposition groups to gain more publicity and create a picture of a caring party, thus making them more attractive for voters. In political systems where strong legislative control instruments exist, the support for direct democratic institutions as extra-parliamentary control instruments should be less pronounced than in systems without such parliamentary powers.

Interactions

In the last part of the analyses I consider interactions between the two explanatory perspectives, as described in section 3.3. First I consider how ideological inclinations interact with the power position of the parties. There are three ideological indicators and four for the power position of parties, which results in twelve possible interactions. The interactions are constructed through simple multiplication of the respective variables. To avoid an overload of results tables, in particular if there are no considerable effects, I only report the interactions that are significant at the 0.5 level.

As a second set of interactions I consider the joint effect of personal dissatisfaction with democracy and electoral success of parties, i.e. whether the party increased its vote share, is part of government, has substantive legislative power or chances for office. All four interactions can give a hint whether evaluation of the democratic system is in fact a normative indicator or also includes a strategic tendency. The interactions are built

by a simple multiplication of the dummy for dissatisfaction with one of the variables for electoral success. Again, only the significant interactions are reported.

Further Control Variables

Most studies control for important demographic variables such as age, gender and education to ensure the validity of the main effects that are tested. In the considered dataset, this test is possible only with 12 countries because some country datasets lack the respective demographic variables to secure the anonymity of the candidates. Restricting the analyses to 12 countries would exclude Sweden and Austria as interesting cases. This appears unnecessary considering the possible effects of demographic variables and their influence on the explanation of the approval of direct democracy. Therefore, in this thesis the analyses are carried out without the standard demographic variables. Instead, at the end of the analyses chapter, I briefly discuss the results of models with demographic variables as part of robustness tests, view section 5.4 for details.

As control variables, I include the candidate's gender and age in the analyses. Education is not considered in this regard, because an overwhelming majority of candidates shares a similar high education status. Regarding gender, no particular association appears plausible. In some studies on voters females show a stronger preference for direct democracy (see for example Bowler and Donovan, 2007). However, the exact casual mechanism behind this effect is unclear and no study has examined this association properly. Therefore, I do not expect any particular influence of gender on the support for direct democracy and will refrain from interpreting possible (significant) effects.

In contrast, age can be expected to affect institutional preferences such as the support for direct democracy. Considering the relative novelty of direct democratic institutions in most countries it is plausible to expect that older candidates have different positions on direct democracy than their younger colleagues. Older candidates might perceive direct democratic institutions as an attack against established political norms and structures and thus support direct democratic institutions less. On the contrary, younger candidates might be more open minded towards innovations and strive for a change in the political system. In this regard, age is also a possible indicator of the socialization in the representative system, though much less precise than the indicators discussed in 4.2.3. The older the candidates the more protective they should be of the existing representative structure.

Previous studies examined generational effects focusing on value change that would implicate a stronger support of younger generations for direct involvement in the political system (Dalton, 1987; Rohrschneider, 1994). To my best knowledge, there are no current elite studies dealing with institutional attitudes and generational effects. It is questionable whether the generational differences are still present, as the older generations have expectedly been replaced by more progressive ones. Therefore, it is possible that age or age cohorts do not have a considerable effect on the support for direct democracy.

A last control that is not included in all analyses is a dummy indicating if a survey happened during the peak of the financial crisis. In five countries, the surveys happened in 2008 or 2009 which is considered as the most severe time of this crisis. These countries are

Austria, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Norway and Portugal, compare table 4.2 for details on the surveys. In times of crises, there is a lot of uncertainty and anxiety, which makes it likely that such an event also affects attitudes towards direct democracy. It is not clear whether such an extreme event would make political elites more open towards alternative decision-making institutions or more reserved in this regard. On the one hand, it is possible that political elites increase their support for popular votes in very important decisions and in this way share the responsibility for the future development of a country in a crisis. On the other hand, it is also likely that in such complex matters as the financial crisis political elites are particularly cautious and distrust the judgement of voters. As this is not a central aspect of the theoretical considerations, the effect of the crisis is only included in a control model presented in the section on robustness checks, view 217 for details. How the analyses are carried out, which models constructed and methods applied is described in the following sections.

4.3 Methods and Empirical Model

After having illustrated the selected data as well as the operationalization of the dependent and independent variables, I describe in this part the appropriate data analysis techniques as well as measures to evaluate the impact of independent variables. The data is of hierarchical nature where individual candidates are clustered in parties and then in countries. To consider this three-level structure of the data appropriately I apply multilevel regression models. All calculations are performed with the statistical program STATA. In the following section I describe the concrete multilevel estimations used in the analyses, differentiating between ordered logistic and linear regressions. Afterwards, I introduce measures to estimate the explanatory power of the predictors and to compare the model fits.

4.3.1 Multilevel Regression

Multilevel regressions have several advantages compared to pooled analysis of comparative datasets with aggregated factors or considerations of separate countries. As a first conceptual advantage, multilevel analyses allow to test the influence of social contexts and consider individual factors at the same time. Accordingly, I am able to consider the influence from the party sphere on individual attitudes of political elites or the influence of different institutional contexts in comparison. Furthermore, multilevel models enable to test interactions between the different levels of analysis (Snijders and Bosker, 2012). In this study it is of particular relevance to analyse the combined influence of the strategic party context resulting from elections and individual normative attitudes of each candidate. In this regard, multilevel models avoid ecological fallacy problems in datasets with aggregated information, as they do not confound information on different levels and facilitate the interpretation of the concrete effects of higher ordered levels (Hox, 2010; Luke, 2010).

In terms of statistical advantages, multilevel regression analyses enable to disentangle variability at the various levels and avoids misspecification or inaccurate inference. In

particular, ignoring the hierarchical structure of the data can lead to erroneous conclusions regarding the significance of the encountered effects. The multilevel calculation prevents violating the assumption of independent residuals and reporting wrong standard errors that are likely in simple pooled analyses with higher level predictors (Gelman and Hill, 2006; Hox, 2010). Additionally, multilevel regression uses all the available data to estimate the effects and accounts for different group sizes (Luke, 2010). In this regard, it helps to balance small sample sizes in some groups. In sum, multilevel analyses are the only adequate method for reliable results considering hierarchical data structures.

Despite the described advantages of multilevel analyses, an important caveat needs to be mentioned in connection to the three levels examined here. At the individual and the party level the case number is sufficient for methodologically correct analyses. However, at the country level I am only able to consider 12 to 15 cases depending on the included dependent and independent variables. This is a very small case number that can cause biases in estimates and confidence intervals with the maximum likelihood method (Maas and Hox, 2005; Stegmueller, 2013). In particular, for explanatory factors at the country level the standard errors are likely to be too small and result in wrong tests of significance. If the country level is only included as a third grouping level without predictors, the estimations of the regression coefficients and the variance components are without bias (Maas and Hox, 2005; Stegmueller, 2013). Thus, for the majority of the models considered here, no particular problem arises. Only when country level predictors are included to test H6 or H7, special techniques are required to receive reliable results. These techniques are described further below.

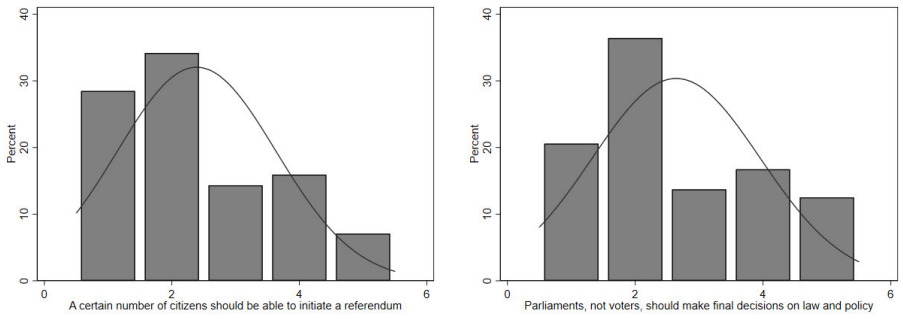
The selected dependent indicators are ordinal variables so that ordered logistic models are the most appropriate technique for their analyses, as already mentioned in section 4.2.2. The general assumption for ordinal response regressions is that the observed ordinal responses are an expression of a latent (unobserved) continuous response in a linear regression. Ordered logistic models are based on similar assumptions as simple logistic regressions and apply the same non-linear function (precisely inverse link or logistic function) of the linear predictor. However, they result in various thresholds according to the number of the categories used. The responses are conditionally distributed with category-specific probabilities, so that the predictions are parallel estimates of the difference in probabilities between thresholds. For more details on the exact function and threshold calculation see for example Hox (2010); Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal (2012). As the dependent variables have five categories, the estimations of the models would result in five slopes that need to be considered for each estimated effect. This can lead to an overload of information and confusing messages, as the slopes for the first and the fifth categories are likely to be reversed because they reflect opposite positions. To avoid the overly detailed and complicated consideration and facilitate interpretation, I will apply linear regression analysis.

The advantage of linear regression is that only one slope is produced and the effects for each included explanatory variable are easy to comprehend. The calculated coefficients give a change of the dependent variable (in its units) if one unit of the independent

variable is added. The calculated effects from linear regressions are also easier to compare than effects from ordered logistic models, the particular methods are explained further below. Though much easier to calculate and interpret, linear regression analyses are only applicable to dependent variables of interval scale because of the normal distribution assumption for error terms and coefficients in the least squares estimation (Gelman and Hill, 2006; Hox, 2010). In social sciences, ordinal variables often are treated as interval, usually requiring at least five ordinal categories and a relatively symmetric distribution (Hox, 2010). Simulation studies show that ordinal variables with at least five categories demonstrate only a small bias in the estimates in such cases (Johnson and Creech James C., 1983, see for example).

The distributions of the dependent variables used in this study are only slightly skewed, as figure 4.1 demonstrates. The first dependent variable focusing on the support for citizen-initiated referendums has a mean of 2.61 and a standard deviation of 1.25 resulting in a skewness of -0.61 and a kurtosis of 2.27.[18] The second dependent variable, asking if parliament should be the final decision-maker (higher values signalling disagreement), yields a mean of 1.64 and a standard deviation of 1.31 resulting in a skewness of 0.47 and a kurtosis of 2.01. Though these measures of dispersion should be taken with caution for discrete variables, they nevertheless indicate that the distribution of the variables is not strongly unbalanced. Therefore, linear regressions seem to be unproblematic in the analyses.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of the Dependent Variables



(a) Support for Citizen Initiatives; N=7,433; 14 countries

(b) Approval of Popular Decision-Making; N=7,644; 15 countries

Linear regressions help to reduce the complexity of the ordinal logistic models in particular comparing the effects of the two explanatory perspectives and their independent variables. In ordinal logistic models, the marginal effects of each explanatory factor can be calculated for each category (resulting in various regression slopes) or an average marginal effect that adjusts the different cuts, while linear regression produces only one marginal effect for each explanatory factor. Nonetheless, I test also marginal effects in ordinal logistic regressions and report if they differ in the direction or significance of the encountered effects. However, for an easier understanding and interpretation of the encountered effects I stick to the results of the linear regressions.

[18]The distributions differ much more per country, see graphs X and X in the appendix for details. As multilevel analyses help to balance out small case numbers, this is not problematic in this analysis.

The analyses presented below proceed as follows: First, I calculate a base model that only includes the country group variable and the party clusters. The three-level model is formulated in accordance to Snijders and Bosker (2012) as

$$Y_{\mathrm{ijk}} = \gamma_{000} + V_{00\mathrm{k}} + U_{0\mathrm{jk}} + R_{\mathrm{ijk}} \tag{4.1}$$

where γ_{000} is the intercept of the model and $V_{00\mathrm{k}}$ is the residual on the country level, $U_{0\mathrm{jk}}$ the residual on the party level and R_{ijk} the remaining individual level residual. The residuals, which are used to estimate the unobserved error terms, are assumed to be normally distributed and have a mean of zero.

Second, I consider fixed effects at the individual level and only control for the party and country level through random intercepts, view the results in section 5.1. The resulting formal model is

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{\mathrm{ijk}} = \gamma_{000} &+ \gamma_{100} x_{1\mathrm{ijk}} + ... + \gamma_{\mathrm{p}00} x_{\mathrm{pijk}} \\ &+ V_{00\mathrm{k}} + U_{0\mathrm{jk}} + R_{\mathrm{ijk}} \end{aligned} \tag{4.2}$$

which follows the same assumptions as above. The coefficients from individual level predictors are displayed as $\gamma_{100} x_{1\mathrm{jk}}$ to $\gamma_{100} x_{1\mathrm{jk}}$.

Third, I include variables at the party level and also estimate fixed effects of party level predictors, view the results in section 5.2. The resulting formal model is

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{\mathrm{ijk}} = \gamma_{000} &+ \gamma_{100} x_{1\mathrm{ijk}} + ... + \gamma_{\mathrm{p}00} x_{\mathrm{pijk}} \\ &+ \gamma_{010} z_{1\mathrm{jk}} + ... + \gamma_{0\mathrm{q}0} z_{\mathrm{qjk}} \\ &+ V_{00\mathrm{k}} + U_{0\mathrm{jk}} + R_{\mathrm{ijk}} \end{aligned} \tag{4.3}$$

which adds party level predictors displayed as $\gamma_{010} z_{1\mathrm{jk}}$ to $\gamma_{010} z_{\mathrm{qjk}}$. Models with varying slopes for party level predictors were also tested, but did not result in a substantial improvement of the model fit. Therefore, I stick to the fixed effects of the predictors. In the models with predictors at two levels, I examine how individual predictors perform with party level predictions. The expectation is that the previously found effects at the individual level remain approximately the same in terms of direction and significance.

Forth, I incorporate predictors at the country level into the previous model, which results in the formula

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{\mathrm{ijk}} = \gamma_{000} &+ \gamma_{100} x_{1\mathrm{ijk}} + ... + \gamma_{\mathrm{p}00} x_{\mathrm{pijk}} \\ &+ \gamma_{010} z_{1\mathrm{jk}} + ... + \gamma_{0\mathrm{q}0} z_{\mathrm{qjk}} \\ &+ \gamma_{001} v_{1\mathrm{k}} + ... + \gamma_{00\mathrm{r}} v_{\mathrm{rk}} \\ &+ V_{00\mathrm{k}} + U_{0\mathrm{jk}} + R_{\mathrm{ijk}} \end{aligned} \tag{4.4}$$

with $\gamma_{001} v_{1\mathrm{k}}$ to $\gamma_{00\mathrm{r}} v_{\mathrm{rk}}$ for country level predictors. Again, I only consider fixed effects of the predictors and the (unexplained) remaining variance at each level.

At the country level, I am only operating with a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 15 groups depending on missing variables. This low number of observations can lead to estimation bias for inferential statistics, as mentioned above. The general recommendation for the inclusion of predictors at higher levels is to base the estimations on at least 30 cases to avoid underestimating the standard errors and thus incorrect inferential results (Bryan and Jenkins, 2016; Luke, 2010; Snijders and Bosker, 2012). Some methodical adjustion can help to control for incorrectly estimated standard errors in sample sizes between 10 and 30 groups, as Elff et al. (2016) describe. In particular, the estimation bias is reduced to an acceptable level using restricted maximum likelihood(RML) and the t-distribution with higher degrees of freedom instead of the standard normal distribution in linear regression (Elff et al., 2016; Maas and Hox, 2005). This method is applied in this study to receive reliable results in models with country predictors testing H6 or H7.[19] Nonetheless, the small number of cases at the country level leads to caution in the interpretation of the results.

In a final model, I include interaction terms between the individual and the party level to the model 4.3, view section 5.3.1 for details. These interaction terms test the joint effects of selected individual and party level predictors and reveal whether the two theoretical perspectives should be viewed independently or are mutually dependent. If interaction effects are present - which is judged by their significance - the next question is how much they contribute to a better model fit and the explanation of variance. This question is also relevant for the two theoretical perspectives and each included predictor. The next section introduces important measures to assess the fit of a model and the explanation of variance.

4.3.2 Model Fit and Explanatory Power Measures

Different measures have been proposed to assess the explanatory power of multilevel models (LaHuis et al., 2014; Lorah, 2018; Snijders and Bosker, 2012) and can be applied for the purposes of this thesis. As a first measure, I use the deviance and the likelihood ratio test to decide whether newly included indicators have an impact on the model fit. The deviance is a measure based on the likelihood of the model and is defined as

$$\text{deviance} = -2 \times ln(\text{likelihood})$$

Deviance values are used to compare models with the same case number, in particular if they are not nested, and indicates how good each model approximates the data (Hox, 2010; Luke, 2010). A reduction of the deviance implies an improvement of the model fit (Hox, 2010; Luke, 2010).

For nested models, the likelihood ratio test helps to decide whether a newly included predictor significantly improves the model fit. The likelihood ratio test is a chi-square test of deviances and reports the significance of the difference between two models(Hox,

[19]Ordered logit models would require a different method due to the logistic function. To my best knowledge, an adequate correction method has not been discussed in the literature and is not available in statistical programs so far, and thus I only rely on linear regressions in this case.

2010). Based on the likelihood ratio test, I select the relevant explanatory variables and reduce the models for each dependent variable to effects that passed the likelihood ratio test. These final models are presented in section 5.3.

Next to the deviance, I also report and compare the Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC) and the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) of the models to decide whether new variables improve the model fit. They are defined as

$$\text{AIC} = -2 \times \ln(\text{likelihood}) + 2 \times g$$

$$\text{BIC} = -2 \times \ln(\text{likelihood}) + \ln(N) \times p$$

with g as number of variables and N as the number of cases. AIC and BIC are both likelihood based criteria similar to the deviance, but penalize the inclusion of estimated parameters (AIC) and in the case of BIC also account for the case number (Luke, 2010). Thus, these model fit measures are stricter than the deviance and are preferred to find considerable model improvements comparing non-nested models. A reduction of the AIC and BIC values shows a strong improvement of the model fit that is not caused by a simple addition of explanatory variables without meaning.

Deviance and the information criteria give an estimation of the total model fit, but do not offer a concrete value to judge the explanatory power of the included indicators. Therefore, a measure of the explained variance is used to compare the impact of each indicator and the two explanatory perspectives in total. In this regard, I use the measure for R^2 proposed by Snijders and Bosker (2012) which indicates the proportional reduction in prediction error at the individual level. [20] The calculation of R^2 according to Snijders and Bosker (2012)(111ff) follows the general formula

$$\begin{aligned} R^2 &= \frac{var(Y_{\mathrm{i}}) - var(Y_{\mathrm{i}} - \sum_{\mathrm{h}} \beta_{\mathrm{h}} X_{\mathrm{hi}})}{var(Y_{\mathrm{i}})} \\ &= 1 - \frac{var(Y_{\mathrm{i}} - \sum_{\mathrm{h}} \beta_{\mathrm{h}} X_{\mathrm{hi}})}{var(Y_{\mathrm{i}})} \end{aligned}$$

where $\text{var}(Y_{\mathrm{i}})$ is the total variance in a base model without predictors and $\text{var}(\sum_{\mathrm{h}} \beta_{\mathrm{h}} X_{\mathrm{hi}})$ the total variance of a model with one or more predictors. For three-level models, the total variance is the sum of the variance components at the three levels (Snijders and Bosker, 2012). In this case, the total variance consists of the country level variance, party level variance and the remaining residual variance at the individual level.

The range of the R^2 is between 0 and 1, where 0 means no reduction of prediction error and 1 would indicate the unlikely case of a perfect prediction. This measure of explained variance can be calculated for the whole model in comparison to a base model. As I am also interested in the contribution of single variables to the explained variances, I use a

[20] For multilevel models, various measures of the explained variance exist, they often are confronted with a problem of negative values resulting from a possible increase of variance through the inclusion of further explaining variables (Snijders and Bosker, 1994, see for details). The R^2 measure designed by Snijders and Bosker (2012) avoids this problem and has been therefore chosen for this thesis.

similar approach to calculate a difference of explained variances of a full and a reduced model excluding the relevant effect.

This difference can be called contribution to the explained variance (CEV). It indicates how the considered effect that is excluded in the reduced model contributes to the explanation of the overall variance in the full model. In other words, the difference of explained variances in the full and a reduced model shows how much the prediction error at the individual level is reduced through the inclusion of the concerned variable based on the explained variance in the full model. This proportion of variance attributed to the inclusion of particular variables is calculated using the formula

$$\text{CEV} = 1 - \frac{var(Y_{\text{full}}) - var(Y_{\text{reduced}})}{var(Y_{\text{full}})}$$

The range of this measure is between 0 and 1, where 0 means no contribution to the explained variance of the full model and 1 would express the highly unlikely case that the singular effect is responsible for the whole explained variance found in the full model. It is important to note that the explained variance cannot be exactly partitioned into contributions from each variable or perspective, as certain variance parts depend on joint effects or only become visible when parts of the variance is controlled for through other factors. Nonetheless, the CEV value is calculated on the same reference model (the full model) and thus offers a good measure for comparison of effects. This approach is used particularly in section 5.3.2 where I compare the contributions of each theoretical perspective and also evaluate which predictors have the strongest impact on the support for direct democracy. The section that compares single effects and the two perspectives is the last part of the results chapter that follows this section.

Chapter 5

Analyses and Results: Normative and Strategic Motivations for Elites' Support of Direct Democracy

5.1 Do Normative Orientations Influence the Support for Direct Democracy?

The following analyses concentrate predominantly on individual level predictors and are concerned with the normative perspective on elite's support for direct democratic institutions. The party and country level are considered in form of varying intercepts in the multi-level structure, thus serving as controls for the party or the country context in the data. Predictors at the party and country level are added in the next sections.[1] The one strategic predictor at the individual level, whether a candidate won a seat in the election, will also be considered in the next section dealing with strategic influences.

To avoid an overload of regression result tables, especially considering two dependent variables, I only present three important models for each dependent variable: First, I consider the baseline model without any predictors, then I include individual predictors that are available for most countries and finally also look at a model with party-level predictors concentrating on normative influences. In a fourth model, I also present the results of the normative perspective in combination with strategic predictors. This model only demonstrates how the detected normative effects behave if strategic control variables are included. The results of the strategic indicators are discussed in detail in the following section. The four models are presented in table 5.1 for the support of citizen-initiatives and in table 5.2 for the approval of popular decision-making.

[1] The only exception are ideological variables at the party level that are concerned with H10 from the normative perspective. These indicators at the party level help to assess how the normative context of candidates is shaped through party ideology.

In the focus of the present analyses are candidates' individual predispositions for direct democracy. The results presented below are based on linear regression models, ordered logistic results are reported in the appendix and discussed briefly in footnotes if relevant differences arise. To conclude this introductory part, I describe the results from the baseline model without any predictors. The effects of the different individual predictors in the extended models are discussed in separate subsections according to the formulated hypotheses from the normative perspective.

The baseline models, which are comparable to simple ANCOVA-models, consist only of the party and country groups, see the second columns of tables 5.1 and 5.2 for details regarding the variance components. To assess how much the party and country level contribute to the variance explanation, I calculated the intraclass correlation (ICC) for this model: The variance over countries accounts for around eight percent of the overall variance, while the party groups are responsible for around 34 percent of the total variance considering the support for citizen-initiatives (DV1).[2]

Regarding the support for popular vs. parliamentary decision-making (DV2), the baseline-model yields an ICC of around 17 percent of overall variance accounted for through the country and 30 percent through the party level.[3] In both cases, the values of the ICC demonstrate that there is considerable variance between the groups based on party or country identification. The variance accounted for through the party level has a stronger impact on the support for direct democracy than the country-specific differences for both dependent variables.[4]

5.1.1 Ideological Predispositions

After the baseline model, I added predictors for the test of ideological influences at the individual level to the models. These predictors consist of the left-right self-placement, the newly-created libertarian-authoritarian index and populist attitudes index. In the following, I first discuss the results for the dependent variable focusing on citizen-initiatives and then for the dependent variable concerning the general approval of popular decision-making. The models presented consider only fixed effects for all predictors, while the slopes based on party and country identifications vary.

[2]The ICC scores for ordered logistic models are very similar with eleven percent for the country and 33 for the party level. The variance of the fixed part is estimated for the calculation of logistic distributions as $\frac{\pi^2}{3}$ and thus can differ in comparison to distributions from linear regression (see for details Snijders and Bosker, 2012).

[3]The ICC for ordered logistic models is lower with 20 percent for the country and 16 percent for the party level. It is likely that the different formula for the calculation of the ICC is responsible for the deviations of the explained variances.

[4]In the ordered logistic models, we observe a stronger calculated intraclass correlation for the country groups when considering the approval of popular decision-making (DV2). This appears as an anomaly, as the linear model does not display this dominance. The higher variance at the country level might be due to the inclusion of Switzerland and Italy, two countries with very strong direct democratic institutions and comparatively frequent use of referendums. Whether this affects the explained variance is discussed in section 5.2.5 and tested in robust models without the two countries.

Table 5.1: Linear Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Focus on the Normative Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Individual Level				
left-right scale		−0.097***	−0.093***	−0.089***
		(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)
quadratic term left-right		0.006**	0.006**	0.006**
		(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index		−0.006	−0.007	−0.006
		(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
populist attitudes		0.001	0.001	0.000
		(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership		−0.004**	−0.004**	−0.003**
		(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy		0.208***	0.208***	0.200***
		(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)
Party Level				
left-right position			−0.024	0.013
			(0.044)	(0.037)
liberty-authority position			−0.011	−0.019
			(0.041)	(0.033)
opposition status				0.124
				(0.140)
change of popular approval				0.008
				(0.009)
legislative strength				−0.010*
				(0.005)
government participation				−0.233**
				(0.078)
constant	2.598***	2.839***	2.998***	3.149***
	(0.117)	(0.120)	(0.177)	(0.205)
variance (country)	0.126***	0.099***	0.098***	0.122***
	(0.072)	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.060)
variance (party)	0.429***	0.354***	0.349***	0.210***
	(0.069)	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.037)
residual variance	1.079***	1.069***	1.069***	1.069***
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
deviance	21990.63	21904.90	21903.41	21861.93
aic	21998.63	21924.89	21927.41	21893.93
bic	22026.28	21994.03	22010.38	22004.55
N (individuals)	7433	7433	7433	7433
N (parties)	107	107	107	107

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

14 Countries included in the analyses: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom

Table 5.2: Linear Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Focus on the Normative Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Individual Level				
left-right scale		-0.091^{***}	-0.088^{***}	-0.086^{***}
		(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
quadratic term left-right		0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}
		(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index		-0.017^{**}	-0.017^{**}	-0.017^{**}
		(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
populist attitudes		0.057^{***}	0.057^{***}	0.056^{***}
		(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership		-0.009^{***}	-0.009^{***}	-0.009^{***}
		(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy		0.143^{***}	0.144^{***}	0.136^{***}
		(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)
Party Level				
left-right position			−0.026	−0.015
			(0.030)	(0.027)
liberty-authority position			0.018	0.016
			(0.028)	(0.024)
opposition status				0.251^{*}
				(0.103)
change of popular approval				0.012^{*}
				(0.006)
legislative strength				−0.006
				(0.004)
government participation				−0.020
				(0.056)
constant	1.540^{***}	1.867^{***}	1.902^{***}	1.809^{***}
	(0.140)	(0.150)	(0.169)	(0.190)
variance (country)	0.261^{***}	0.264^{***}	0.264^{***}	0.260^{***}
	(0.104)	(0.103)	(0.103)	(0.100)
variance (party)	0.210^{***}	0.157^{***}	0.156^{***}	0.109^{***}
	(0.034)	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.020)
residual variance	1.096^{***}	1.074^{***}	1.073^{***}	1.074^{***}
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
deviance	22699.55	22518.87	22518.14	22518.13
aic	22707.55	22538.87	22542.14	22520.48
bic	22735.32	22608.29	22625.44	22631.55
N	7644	7644	7644	7644
rank	123	123	123	123

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

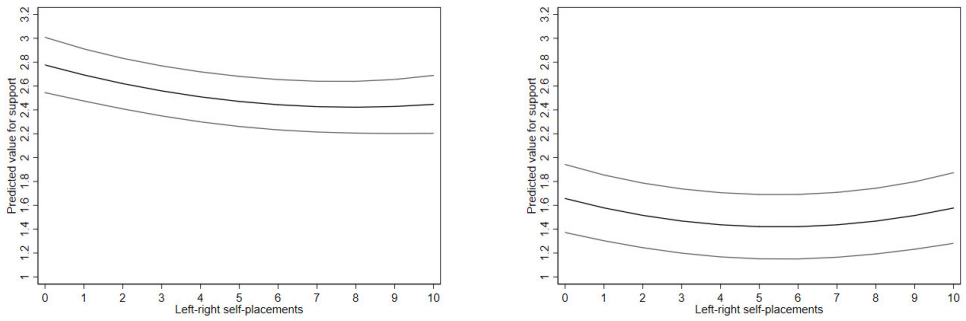
15 Countries included in the analyses: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom

Positions in the Left-Right Dimension

Theoretically, I expect a positive association of support for direct democracy with leftist ideological predispositions, see H8. In fact, we observe a significant negative effect of the ideological positioning on the left-right scale, which is traditionally scaled from lower values for leftist positions to higher for rightist. According to the observed effect, candidates placing themselves on the right are less likely to support direct democracy than candidates placing themselves on the left. This confirms the association assumed in H8. The effect is consistent throughout all models. The effect of the positions on the left-right scale is observable regarding the support for citizen-initiatives (DV1), see table 5.1 for details, as well as regarding the approval of popular decision-making (DV2), see table 5.2 for details.

As expected in subsection 4.2.3, the linear effect is counterbalanced by the quadratic term of the left-right scale. Thus, candidates at the extreme right are more likely to support direct democracy in comparison to candidates closer to the centre of the scale. This is demonstrated in figure 5.1 displaying the effects of left-right positions (including the quadratic term) from the full model (no. 4) in table 5.1 and 5.2 with all other predictors at the mean.[5] Regarding the support for citizen-initiatives, we observe only a slight increase of the score after position 7 on the left-right scale. The extreme position on the right (10) reaches the same score of 2.5 as a moderately leftist position (4), see figure 5.1a for details. In general, the association between leftist ideology and stronger support for direct democracy from H8 is confirmed, even with the curvilinear effect. This looks different for the approval of popular decision-making (vs. parliamentary sovereignty) in figure 5.1b. The difference between extreme leftist and rightist positions is less pronounced due to the curvilinear effect, so that H8 needs to be rejected in this case.

Figure 5.1: Marginal Effects of Left-Right Self-Placement



(a) on Support for Citizen Initiatives (b) on Approval of Popular Decision-Making

The effects of the individual ideological position on the left-right scale remain even if controlling for the party ideological context, as model 3 in table 5.1 and 5.1 demonstrates. Regarding party influences, we observe that ideological placements of parties (based on expert ratings) do not have a considerable effect on support for direct democracy, no matter which dependent variable is in focus. The direction of the effects is in accordance

[5]The effects and graphical representation of them remain the same even if further control variables such as strategic indicators are included. For simpler calculation, I used the reduced normative model in this case.

to the theoretical assumptions, but they are statistically insignificant. The likelihood ratio test indicates only for the individual position on the left-right scale that the inclusion of this ideological predictor improves the fit in comparison to a model without the predictor. The likelihood ratio test for party ideology fails to reach significance. Taken together, the results indicate that it is candidates' individual position in the left-right dimension that helps to explain their support for direct democracy, while the ideological party context seems not to play a considerable role in comparison.

In sum, the support for popular decision-making is related to the ideological divide in the left-right dimension looking at individual positions, which confirms H8, while the party context seems not to play a considerable role leading to the rejection of H10.a. For both dependent variables the inclusion of individual left-right predispositions significantly improves the model fit, as the significant likelihood ratio test shows (not shown in the results). This is not the case when party's position on the left-right scale is included, which again points to the rejection of H10.a. Because of this insignificant association[6] the further analyses do not include party ideological placements on the left-right scale, but stick to ideological self-placements of the candidates.

Positions in the Libertarian-Authoritarian Dimension

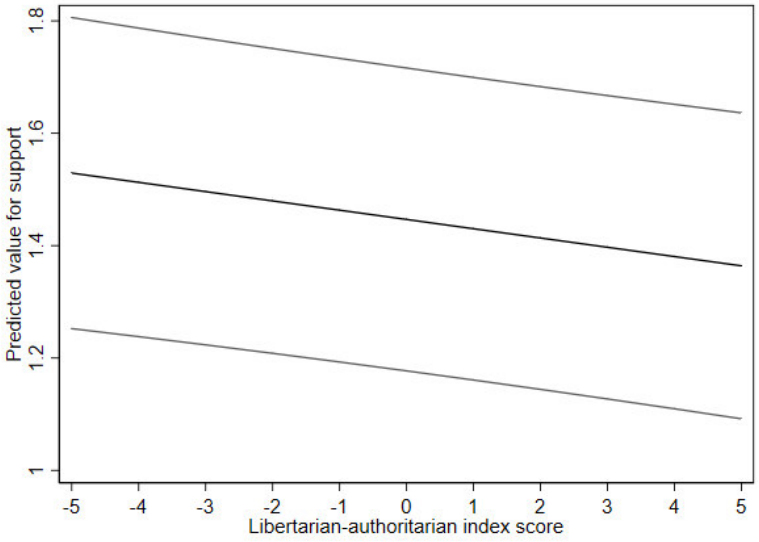
Examining the effects from the libertarian-authoritarian index, we observe no considerable influence on the support for citizen-initiatives, see the second model of table 5.1 for details. The small negative effect indicates that candidates with libertarian predispositions are less likely to support citizen-initiatives, as positive scores on the index indicate more libertarian positions. This contradicts the assumption in H9. However, the effect is insignificant and does not change over the models. Thus, H9 cannot be confirmed for the used dependent variable. The test with party predictors does not reveal considerable effects from the parties' ideological positions in the libertarian-authoritarian dimension. The negative effect points to the theoretical assumptions in H9, but is not significant [7], as the third model in table 5.1 shows. The likelihood ratio test indicates that the inclusion of this ideological predictor does not improve the fit in comparison to a model without the predictor. This leads also to the rejection of H10.b.

In contrast to support for citizen-initiatives, we observe a significant effect from the created authoritarian-libertarian index regarding the approval of popular decision-making, see the second model in table 5.2 for details. However, the effect contradicts the theoretical expectations from H9: Candidates with stronger libertarian attitudes tend to disapprove popular decision-making and prefer that parliament should be the final decision-maker. This effect is pictured in figure 5.2. The effect is relatively small, but remains significant throughout the models. The likelihood ratio test indicates that the inclusion of this ideological predictor improves the fit in comparison to a model without the predictor.

[6] Additionally, it is possible that multicollinearity issues arise, as the ideological self-placement and the party positions are highly correlated.

[7] The coding of the two indicators is reversed: The individual positions are negative for authoritarian inclinations on a scale from -6 to 6, while the party positions receive higher values on an 11-point scale from 0 to 10, see subsection 4.2.3 for details on party positions.

Figure 5.2: Marginal Effects of Authoritarian-Libertarian Index Positioning on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making



The effect is reversed considering parties' positions on the libertarian-authoritarian scale[8], which is in accordance with the theoretical expectations. However, the effect from party positions on the libertarian-authoritarian scale fails to reach statistical significance. The likelihood ratio test for party positions fails to reach significance and thus the model fit is not improved through the inclusion of this variable. In sum, both hypotheses regarding the libertarian-authoritarian dimension, namely H9 and H10.b, need to be rejected.

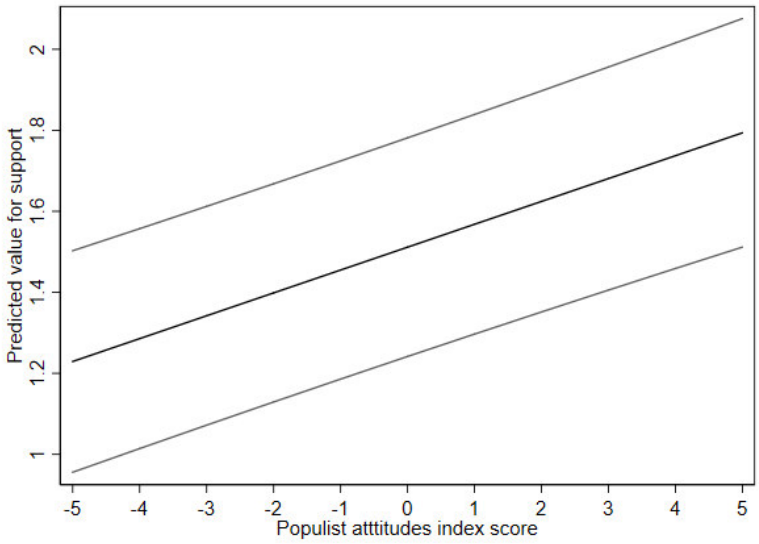
Populist attitudes

Populist orientations also show mixed results considering the two different dependent variables. Regarding candidates' support for citizen-initiatives, the populist attitudes index shows a small and insignificant effect. The direction of the influence is positive and thus in accordance with the assumptions in H11 indicating that candidates with populist attitudes are more likely to support citizen-initiatives. However, the effect is insignificant and remains like that if other influences are controlled for. The likelihood ratio test indicates that the inclusion of this predictor does not improve the model fit in comparison to a model without the predictor. Therefore, H11 cannot be confirmed in case of the support for citizen-initiatives.

For the approval of popular decision-making, we observe a theoretically consistent and significant effect of populist inclinations. Candidates with populist attitudes tend to oppose the statement that parliament should be the final decision-maker and thus to prefer popular decision-making, as the positive effect in table 5.3 demonstrates. This effect remains significant throughout the models. The likelihood ratio test indicates that the inclusion of this predictor improves the fit in comparison to a model without the predictor. In this regard, H11 can be confirmed for the second dependent variable.

[8]Note again that the coding in the two variables is reversed, see table 4.5 for details.

Figure 5.3: Marginal Effects of Populist Attitudes on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making



In sum, these first analyses demonstrate clear ideological influences on the support for direct democracy. Notably, the effects from ideology are based on individual predispositions, not on the party environment. Influences from the left-right dimension and populist orientations are in accordance with the theoretical expectations. On the other hand, the placement in the libertarian-authoritarian dimension either shows no effect (regarding the support for citizen-initiatives) or a theoretically unexpected effect (in the case of popular decision-making). In the summary section for the normative perspective the results are discussed in more detail. In the following, I review the two remaining normative influences - socialization in the representative system and the evaluation of the democratic system.

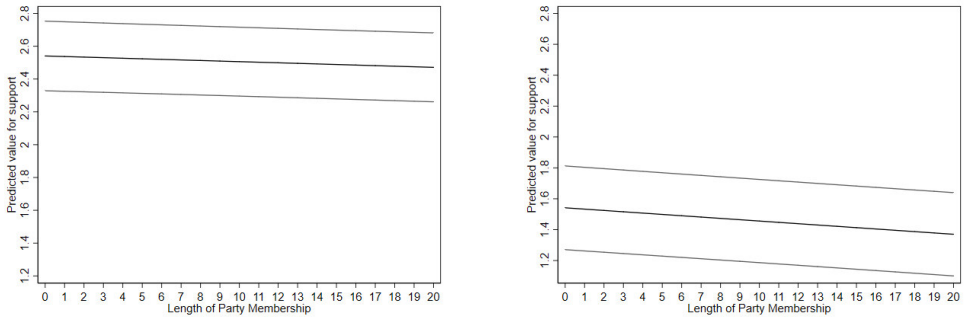
5.1.2 Socialization in Representative Institutions

To test the socialization hypothesis H12 I use two predictors: First I consider the length of party membership and second I also test how candidates' experience in national parliament affects the support for direct democracy. Both indicators can be expected to grasp the involvement in the representative system as theoretically conceptualized in H12. The number of years in parliament focuses on the concrete involvement in the most important public institution for representation, while the party membership is a good proxy for the overall attachment to the representative system.

The length of party membership shows a significant, but relatively small effect, see figure 5.4 for details. With each year of party membership, candidates are indeed less likely to support direct democracy in form of citizen-initiatives (DV1) or to be in favour of popular decision-making (DV2). Figures 5.4a and 5.4b show marginal effects of party membership at means of other variables of the full model (forth models in table 5.1 and 5.2. The impact of party membership appears considerably small resulting in around 0.1 point difference if a short membership of one year is compared to one of 20 years, compare the above mentioned figures. Nevertheless, party membership helps to explain the support

for direct democracy, as the likelihood ratio test, which checks whether the inclusion of a variable improves the model fit, is significant for both dependent variables and implies a considerable indicator in the respective models.

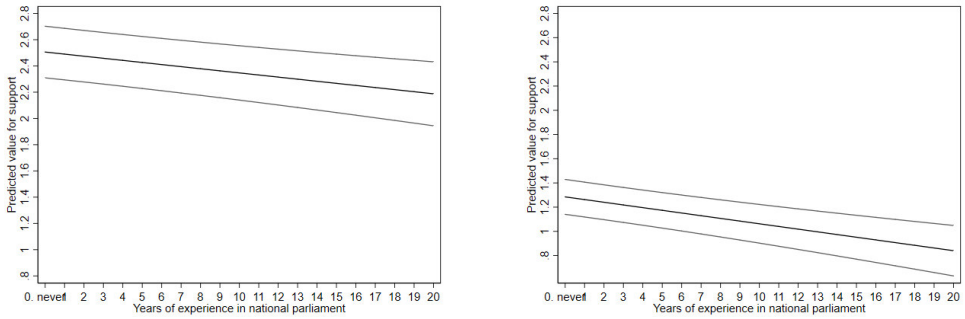
Figure 5.4: Marginal Effects of Party Membership



(a) on Support for Citizen Initiatives (b) on Approval of Popular Decision-Making

An even stronger association is observable considering membership in the national parliament as an indicator for the involvement in representative institutions, which shows a significant and theoretically consistent effect on both dependent variables: The longer candidates were involved in the national parliament the less they support citizen-initiatives or approve of popular decision-making. The effect of parliamentary experience is pictured in figure 5.5a and 5.5b.[9] A newcomer in parliament shows around 0.4 points more support for citizen-initiatives and 0.3 points for popular decision-making in comparison to a candidate with 20 years experience in parliament.

Figure 5.5: Marginal Effects of Parliament Membership



(a) on Support for Citizen Initiatives (b) on Approval of Popular Decision-Making

Both indicators for the socialization in the representative system support the theoretical expectation that longer involvement in representative institutions leads to a stronger rejection of alternative institutions and processes such as direct democracy. Therefore, H12 is confirmed. In both cases, the likelihood ratio-test indicates that the inclusion of socialization indicators improves the model fit. Unfortunately, I am only able to consider a restricted number of countries applying parliamentary experience as a predictor. For

[9]The respective regression tables are presented in the appendix to avoid an overload of regression results. The results for the other variables are comparable to the presented tables 5.1 and 5.2.

both dependent variables the overall number of included countries is twelve with different constellations.[10] Therefore, I will include the length of party membership into the further analyses to account for the involvement in the representative system.

5.1.3 Evaluation of the Democratic System

As a final normative influence I assess how dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime affects the support for direct democracy. The effect in the models, demonstrated in table 5.1 and 5.2, is positive and significant, no matter how the models are specified. This confirms the theoretical expectations in H13: If a candidate is dissatisfied with the current functioning of the democratic system, she indeed is more likely to support direct democratic institutions, whether in form of citizen-initiatives or as popular decision-making in general. In both cases, the likelihood ratio test for the inclusion of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime as a predictor states that the model fit significantly improves. Furthermore, the impact of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime is considerably strong, especially compared to the other normative predictors, see the third columns of tables 5.1 and 5.2 for details. The effects of the predictors are discussed in detail in the next subsection.

As a further indicator for the evaluation of the current democratic system, populist attitudes entail a lot of critique on the current representative settings. As reported in the section on ideological influences, there is also a positive effect of this populist critique on the support for direct democracy, especially when considering the approval of popular decision-making. However, this is only an additional possible indicator which will not be discussed further.

5.1.4 Summary of the Results for the Normative Perspective

These first analyses demonstrate that indeed there are normative influences on the support for direct democracy and these are based on individual predispositions. First of all, there are different ideological influences observable. Candidates' positions on the left-right dimension clearly influence the support of citizen-initiatives as well as the approval of popular decision-making. The influence on direct democracy is in both cases curvilinear implying that candidates with extreme rightist positions endorse direct democracy more than candidates placing themselves in the middle of the scale or modestly right. Concerning citizen-initiatives, the support of leftist candidates is still higher than of rightist so that H8 is confirmed. In terms of the second dependent variable, extreme rightist candidates approve of popular decision-making in the same way as extreme leftist candidates, so that H8 needs to be rejected. Interestingly, leftist ideology only makes a considerable difference at the individual level, while at the party level the effect points into the right direction, but fails to reach significance.

Additionally, we observe in the ideological sphere a theoretically consistent effect of populist inclinations that shows a strong effect on the approval of popular decision-making.

[10] Considering the support for citizen-initiatives, Iceland drops out, while the approval for popular decision-making cannot be assessed for Sweden and Switzerland.

Regarding support for citizen-initiatives, the effect from populist attitudes points into the right direction, but fails to reach significance. This is an interesting difference between the two dependent variables. A possible explanation for the difference in the results are diverse foci in the two dependent variables, as discussed in subsection 4.2.2. The preference for popular decisions in contrast to parliamentary sovereignty in decision-making has a clear populist tendency, as populists demand that the people are asked and decide in important issues. In contrast, the preference for citizen-initiatives entails much more the demand for more popular involvement and participation in politics. According to the analyses, populists seem to relate direct democracy to popular decision-making, but not so much to the actual possibility of people to enforce a referendum.

A somewhat unexpected effect occurs with respect to candidates' position in the libertarian-authoritarian dimension: Libertarian inclinations either show no effect (in terms of the support for citizen-initiatives) or a theoretically contradictory effect (in the case of popular decision-making), which leads to the rejection of H9. The reversed effect of positions in the libertarian-authoritarian dimension might be connected to more scepticism of libertarian elites regarding popular votes. Though the general assumption is that libertarian elites prefer to extend political participation of citizens, it seems that they do not envision it in form of direct democracy. As popular votes produce majoritarian policies, the scepticism of libertarians regarding direct democracy is understandable. The majoritarian character of popular votes might be in conflict with libertarians' strong emphasis on tolerance and the protection of minorities' rights which are at risk in simple yes-not decisions in referendums. On the other hand, elites with authoritarian inclinations might be in favour of popular votes exactly for their majoritarian character and their unmistakable decision. Therefore, though the observed negative effect of libertarian inclinations on the approval of popular decision-making is not consistent with the theoretical expectations in H9, it is not contradictory to the general ideological impact of libertarian views.

Next to ideological influences, the analyses show a theoretically consistent influence of socialization experiences in the representative system, measured through the length of the involvement in the candidate's party or in national parliament. In particular, experience in parliament has a considerable impact on the support for direct democracy: The longer political elites have been part of the national parliament, the less they support direct democratic procedures. The length of party membership only shows a small effect on the support for direct democracy. The different strength of the two socialization influences is not surprising, as the experience in parliament might also point to a strategic interest in the protection of representative institutions, as explained at the end of section 3.2.3. Nonetheless, both indicators demonstrate theoretically consistent effects and confirm H12.

As a final normative influence, these first analyses demonstrate a considerable effect of dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime on the support for direct democracy. This confirms the theoretical expectation from H13. Political elites are more open to alternative institutions such as citizen-initiatives or popular decision-making in general if they are disaffected with the performance of the established institutions. It is possible

that this effect has not only a normative character but is influenced by strategic influences, which will be tested and discussed in section 5.3.1.

Comparing the effects of the predictors, dissatisfaction with the democratic regime has a very strong impact on the support for direct democracy. Even though dissatisfaction is coded as a dummy variable, it is much more powerful in the explanation of support for direct democracy in comparison to the other normative factors considered in the models. In the case of support for citizen-initiatives, the marginal effect of dissatisfaction is 0.21, thus much higher compared to the significant effects of left-right scale amounting to -0.1 or the length of party membership with -0.004.[11]

Regarding the approval of popular decision-making, the marginal effect of dissatisfaction is 0.14 in comparison to effects of -0.09 for the left-right placement, -0.02 at the authoritarian-libertarian scale, 0.06 for populist attitudes and 0.01 for the length of party membership. All normative effects remain significant and in the described direction even if strategic indicators are included, compare the models presented in the last columns of tables 5.1 and 5.2. In the following, I will describe the influence of strategic indicators, starting with the personal electoral success and proceeding to the party-level influences.

5.2 Do Strategic Considerations Influence the Support for Direct Democracy?

In the second set of models, see table 5.3 and 5.4, I focus on indicators for the strategic perspective on direct democracy which are predominantly located at the party level. To avoid an overload of regression result tables, especially considering two dependent variables, I only present three important models for each dependent variable: First, I consider a model with candidates' electoral success as the only strategic indicator at the individual level. This model includes the previously defined party level predictors, but no individual level variables. In a second step, I examine a model where individual level predictors and party level predictors are combined. In a third model, I consider the influence of personal electoral success as an individual level predictor of strategic orientations. This test is only possible for a restricted number of countries, as explained in the operationalization sections. The results are discussed in the summary section of this section.

The goal of this section is to test how strategic factors at the party level affect political elites' preferences for direct democracy and at the same time to compare the results with the already reported normative influences. The country level is only controlled for in form of varying intercepts in the multi-level models, while at the party level I include fixed effects to test H1 to H5. The results presented below are based on linear regression models, ordered logistic results are reported in the appendix and discussed briefly in footnotes if

[11] Of course, it is important to take into account that dissatisfaction with the democratic regime is a dummy and the other variables quasi metric. To reach the same effect as dissatisfaction with the democratic regime, a candidate needs to distance herself 5 positions away from the original placement on the left-right scale, which is highly unlikely. Similarly, there is only a considerable difference of the length of party membership similar to the effect of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime if we look at no party membership in comparison to at least 50 years, which is very rare. Therefore, dissatisfaction with the democratic regime indeed has the strongest impact as a predictor.

relevant differences arise. At the individual level, I keep all predictors examined in the previous section. All results are presented in table 5.3 for the support of citizen-initiatives and in table 5.4 for the approval of popular decision-making.

5.2.1 Individual Electoral Success

To assess how the current success of candidates affects their support for direct democracy, as assumed in H1, I calculated a model with a variable indicating whether a candidate won a seat in parliament in the current election. We observe a clear negative effect: Candidates that won a parliamentary seat in the current election are less supportive of direct democratic institutions than political elites that entered parliament. The effect is significant for the first dependent variable focusing on the support for citizen-initiatives, see model 4 in table 5.3 for details. As unsuccessful candidates do not have access to parliamentary processes, citizen-initiatives become a useful instrument to stay in the political game for individual elites. Unsuccessful candidates can still pursue their political career through an active role in the initiation of referendums or through public appearance during the following campaign.

Considering the approval of popular decision-making, the direction of the effect of personal electoral success is as theoretically expected, but is only significant at the 0.1 level, see model 4 in table 5.4 for details. Candidates that won a seat in parliament are less likely to prefer popular decision-making. This is plausible as they are likely to protect their institutional powers as parliamentarians. The effect of electoral loss is less pronounced in comparison to the support for citizen-initiatives. Additionally, the likelihood ratio test indicates only for the first dependent variable that the inclusion of personal electoral loss improves the fit in comparison to a model without the predictor. The reasons for this difference are discussed in the summary chapter.

In sum, the personal loss in an election seems to make a difference when candidates are asked about alternative institutions such as popular votes. The analyses predominantly confirm H1, as the effects found definitely point into the expected direction. Unfortunately, only a restricted number of countries provided a variable indicating whether the candidate won a seat in parliament. Considering the support for citizen-initiatives, eleven countries entered the analysis, while focusing on the preference for popular decision-making over parliamentary sovereignty thirteen countries could be included in total.[12] For the test of H1 the number of cases is sufficient. To consider a larger sample of countries, the further analyses will not include the variable on personal electoral success.

5.2.2 Vote-Seeking of Parties

The most important strategic motivation of parties is often considered as vote-seeking, because votes secure their political survival. Direct democratic processes offer political parties an opportunity to improve their current popular approval appearing as a strong voice for one position in public. Therefore, I expect in H2 that political elites in parties with declining popularity will be likely to endorse direct democratic procedures. These

[12] Norway, Portugal and Sweden are missing in both cases.

Table 5.3: Linear Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Focus on the Strategic Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Party Level				
left-right position		−0.017	0.013	−0.022
		(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.044)
liberty-authority position		−0.016	−0.019	−0.003
		(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.040)
change of popular approval		0.009	0.008	0.007
		(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.010)
opposition status		0.135	0.124	0.234
		(0.145)	(0.140)	(0.157)
legislative strength		−0.011*	−0.010*	−0.011+
		(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.006)
government participation		−0.264**	−0.233**	−0.184*
		(0.081)	(0.078)	(0.085)
Individual Factors				
left-right scale			−0.089***	−0.073**
			(0.022)	(0.026)
quadratic term left-right			0.006**	0.005+
			(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index			−0.006	0.009
			(0.005)	(0.007)
populist attitudes			0.000	0.003
			(0.007)	(0.008)
length of party membership			−0.003**	−0.004**
			(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy			0.200***	0.152***
			(0.031)	(0.035)
seat in parliament				−0.120*
				(0.047)
constant	2.598***	3.107***	3.149***	3.140***
	(0.117)	(0.211)	(0.205)	(0.234)
variance (country)	0.126***	0.153***	0.122***	0.158***
	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.060)	(0.083)
variance (party)	0.429***	0.226***	0.210***	0.214***
	(0.069)	(0.039)	(0.037)	(0.042)
residual variance	1.079***	1.079***	1.069***	1.022
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.020)
deviance	21990.63	21937.79	21861.93	14686.46
aic	21998.63	21957.79	21893.93	14720.46
bic	22026.28	22026.92	22004.55	14831.45
N (individuals)	7433	7433	7433	5061
N (parties)	107	107	107	87

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

14 Countries in model 1-3: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom; model 4 without Norway, Portugal, Sweden

Table 5.4: Linear Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Focus on the Strategic Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Party Level				
left-right position		−0.021	−0.015	−0.022
		(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.030)
liberty-authority position		0.021	0.016	0.019
		(0.026)	(0.024)	(0.028)
change of popular approval		0.015*	0.012*	0.013*
		(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)
opposition status		0.247*	0.251*	0.278*
		(0.112)	(0.103)	(0.115)
legislative strength		−0.008+	−0.006	−0.008
		(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)
government participation		−0.060	−0.020	0.007
		(0.060)	(0.056)	(0.061)
Individual Factors				
left-right scale			−0.086***	−0.086***
			(0.021)	(0.023)
quadratic term left-right			0.008***	0.008***
			(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index			−0.017**	−0.018**
			(0.005)	(0.006)
populist attitudes			0.056***	0.059***
			(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership			−0.009***	−0.009***
			(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy			0.136***	0.132***
			(0.031)	(0.032)
seat in parliament				−0.083+
				(0.043)
constant	1.540***	1.565***	1.809***	1.881***
	(0.140)	(0.192)	(0.190)	(0.207)
variance (country)	0.261***	0.258***	0.260***	0.265**
	(0.104)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.110)
variance (party)	0.210***	0.133***	0.109***	0.117***
	(0.034)	(0.023)	(0.020)	(0.022)
residual variance	1.096***	1.096***	1.074***	1.091***
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.019)
deviance	−11349.77	−11329.93	−11244.24	−9798.58
aic	22707.55	22679.86	22520.48	19631.17
bic	22735.32	22749.27	22631.55	19746.74
N (individuals)	7644	7644	7644	6623
N (parties)	123	123	123	111

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

15 Countries in model 1-3: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom; model 4 without Norway, Portugal

expectations are not confirmed by the analyses: The results in table 5.3 for the support of citizen-initiatives demonstrate a positive, but insignificant effect of change popular approval (measured as the change in votes from the previous to the recent election).[13] The inclusion of this indicator does not improve the fit of the models considering the support of citizen-initiatives, as the likelihood ratio test in comparison to a model without the predictor demonstrates.

Considering the preference for popular decision-making, the change of popular approval has a significant effect, compare table 5.4. The likelihood ratio test states that the inclusion of this predictor significantly improves the model fit in comparison to a model without this predictor.[14] Consequently, the approval of popular decision-making is considerably influenced by parties' popular approval. However, the direction of the small effect contradicts the theoretical expectations. A possible explanation for this deviation is that candidates from parties that could increase their vote share from the previous election are more inclined to trust voters. As they perceive more electoral support for their parties political elites might believe that voters are likely to follow their line in important decisions.

5.2.3 Policy-Seeking of Parties

Policy-seeking has been identified as the natural companion of direct democracy, as direct democratic procedures are at the core concerned with policies, not political personnel or power distribution. From a strategic perspective, influence on policies is an expression of power and thus, direct democratic institutions are useful in the competition for policy dominance. In H3, I expect that political elites from opposition parties being in a disadvantaged policy position are more likely to support direct democracy. This is indeed the case looking at the positive significant effect of opposition status in table 5.4 concerned with the approval of popular decision-making. The likelihood ratio test confirms that the inclusion of this predictor improves the model fit in comparison to a model without the predictor. Regarding the support of citizen-initiatives, the effect points into the right direction, but is not significant, see table 5.3 for details. Accordingly, the likelihood ratio test reveals no improvement of the model fit through this predictor.

Political elites in opposition seem to prefer popular decision-making as a reaction to their current weakness in parliament. Popular votes enable decisions that bypass the power distribution in parliament and thus are a powerful instrument to undermine the government or the parties involved. This supports the theoretical expectation in H3. For the support of citizen-initiatives, the hypothesis cannot be confirmed, as the opposition status does not display a significant effect.

The difference in the effects appears plausible considering the focus of the two dependent variables: The question on citizen-initiatives implies the permanent introduction of a new institution in the political system. Opposition elites with considerable weight in the

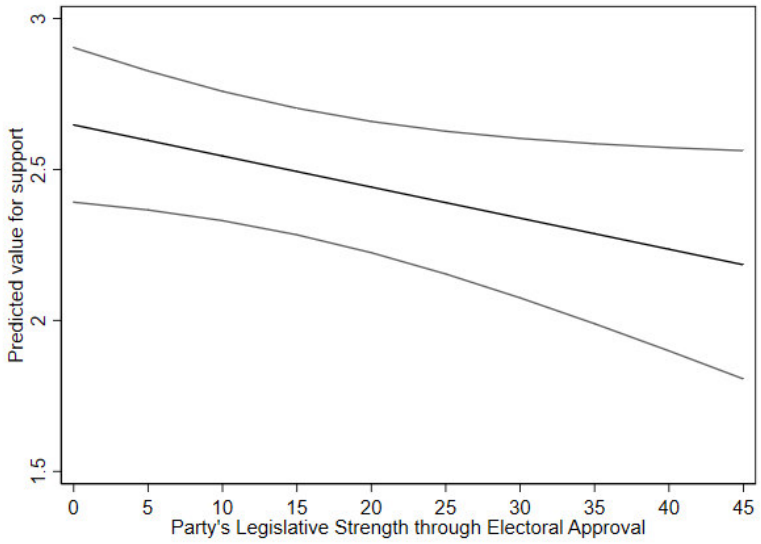
[13] In a model where only electoral performance is included as a strategic predictor, a considerable effect (significant at the 0.05-level) is observable, but it disappears when further indicators are included.

[14] In ordered logistic regression models, the effect is not significant in the full model. It reaches significance when party ideology is excluded from the models. See the tables in the appendix for details.

political system might view this new institution as a hurdle in the overall policy-making process, especially when they win back governing power. In contrast, the question regarding popular decision-making does not imply how the vote is initiated and might be interpreted as a top-down initiative which implies less risks for established political elites.

The group of opposition parties is quite heterogeneous consisting of electorally strong and thus also powerful parties as well as very small fringe parties that do not have access to parliament. This might be a reason why some theoretically expected effects are not significant. To consider the heterogeneity of parties, I also tested whether parties' legislative strength affects political elites' support for direct democracy. Legislative strength describes the possible influence of parties on policy-making and is measured in the analyses through the vote share of parties in the current election. I expected theoretically that more legislative strength of a party would make direct democratic institutions less attractive because political elites would have enough influence on policy-making through traditional channels in parliament and in the pubic discourse. The analyses confirm this expectation displaying a negative effect for increasing legislative strength.

Figure 5.6: Marginal Effects of Parties' Legislative Strength on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives



In particular the support for citizen-initiatives is influenced by the legislative strength of candidates' parties, see table 5.3 for details. Indeed, political elites with lower influence on policies through their small vote share are more likely to support citizen-initiatives. The importance of this predictor is confirmed in the likelihood ratio test on the model fit. Looking at the marginal effects of legislative strength we observe a considerable effect comparing parties with a very small vote share and those exceeding 30 percent of the votes, as displayed in figure 5.6. For the approval of popular decision-making, the effect is significant considering only party-level predictors and disappears in extended models, see table 5.4 for details. The likelihood ratio test shows no improvement of the model fit through the inclusion of this predictor in models on the approval of popular decision-making.

The vote share of a party in the recent election might not grasp the whole range of legislative influence. For example, some small parties might often participate in policy-making, e.g. in minority governments or in small winning governing coalitions. On the other hand, it is possible that a party has a considerable vote share, e.g. over 20 percent of votes, but lacks partners in parliament to build a governing coalition or pass laws. Therefore, the actual legislative strength also requires important inside information about the in- and outsiders of the considered political system. In the next subsection, I consider parties' participation in the last three governments as an indicator for office-seeking motivations. This indicator offers also information on the general influence on policy-making, as described here.

5.2.4 Office-Seeking of Parties

The motivation of office-seeking is generally assumed for all elites, but reasonably only applies to parties with chances for government offices. Parties with realistic office-seeking ambitions need to be differentiated from so called fringe parties that might enjoy considerable popular approval, but are not able to either form the government or to be included in a governing coalition for different reasons.[15] To differentiate the chances for government I created a measure of parties' government participation in the last three electoral periods. It can be considered as a proxy for realistic office-seeking ambitions. Office-seeking motivations are expected to have a negative impact on candidates' support for direct democracy in H5. I assume that parties with chances to enter government view more risks than possible gains connected to referendums.

Considering the effects of government participation in the last three electoral periods we indeed observe that candidates from parties with experience in government are less likely to favour citizen-initiatives. As expected in H5, candidates are more likely to support citizen-initiatives if they lack experience in government. This effect improves the fit of the model according to the likelihood ratio-test without the predictor. To illustrate the impact of office-seeking, I compare the marginal effects for two extreme positions, holding the other predictors at their means: Candidates from parties without government experience are on average with the score of 2,8 very likely to support citizen-initiatives, while candidates from parties that have been part of government in the last three electoral periods have on average the score of 2,1 tending more to be indecisive in this question.

Regarding the approval of popular decision-making a negative effect of government participation is also present, but not significant. The differentiation of government experience is not able to improve the model fit, as the likelihood ratio test reveals. Office-seeking seems not to matter in the more general question on the character of decision-making. The current opposition status of a party has the strongest impact (from the strategic indicators) on the approval of popular decision-making. The current opposition status is related to the experience in government in the last three periods and seems to absorb the effect of

[15] Most often, these fringe parties are considered by other parties as too extreme to form a viable coalition. This is the case with the Leftist Party in Germany. Many fringe parties are also not always able to win seats in parliament, but still influence the public discourse. An example is the United Kingdom Independence Party in Great Britain that played an important role in the so called BREXIT-referendum.

office-seeking.[16] In the question on the final decision-making authority, the current status of a party is more relevant than the long-term perspective for office.

In the previous subsection I also mentioned that participation in government can be used as an indicator for policy-seeking motivations. Political elites from parties with recurrent access to government can be expected to be less attracted by policy-making opportunities through referendums because they have the possibility to pass laws in the traditional parliamentary process. Political elites from parties without chances for government should consider referendums as a useful instrument which gives them a voice in the policy-making process where they are usually excluded from. The effect of government participation clearly confirms this expectation regarding the support for citizen-initiatives. Candidates from parties without chances for office seem clearly to prefer citizen-initiatives more than candidates from parties with office chances. However, they do not necessary support popular votes in general, as the comparatively small and insignificant effect of office participation on the approval of popular decision-making demonstrates. This might be related to the general character of the question and the inclusion of government initiatives in this regard.

5.2.5 Institutional Context in Each Country

In most countries direct democratic institutions imply changes in the traditional representative setting and the decision-making process. Whether political elites view these changes as an opportunity or a new hurdle in the political process not only depends on their primary strategic motivations examined in the previous subsections, but also on the existing institutional framework. The institutional context of a country creates a framework for political activity and thus influences the possibilities and constraints of political elites' actions. This subsection examines how two institutional sets that are closely related to direct democracy affect political elites' support for direct democratic procedures. In this regard, I focus on the established direct democratic practice in each country and on the legislative powers of parliamentarians, as described in section 3.1.6. In the following, I first describe the effects of the direct democratic context and then also the influence of the legislative institutions on political elites' support for direct democracy. I consider each institutional influence separately and in a final model together.

Direct Democratic Practice

Though direct democratic processes are still an exception for policy-making, most countries nevertheless often have institutional arrangements for direct democratic votes and frequently apply them. I expect that political elites' perception of direct democracy differs depending on the existing institutional practice in their country.[17] The main assumption is that political elites lacking experience with direct democracy underestimate the risks connected with popular votes and thus view popular votes as a beneficial new institution

[16] The cross tabulation of both indicators reveals that both variables are related with a significant Chi2-test and a Cramer's V of 0.69 which indicates a high association.

[17] As already explained in the theoretical part, it is more important to consider the actual practice in each country, not the simple institutional arrangements, which might be meaningless if never used.

Table 5.5: Linear Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Focus on Country Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Country Level						
number of popular votes		-0.052^{*}			-0.084^{***}	-0.067^{*}
		(0.026)			(0.024)	(0.034)
direct popular vote index			-3.213^{*}			-1.276
			(1.394)			(1.669)
legislative power index				-2.414	-5.484^{**}	-5.134^{**}
				(2.273)	(1.894)	(1.979)
Party Level						
legislative strength	-0.010^{+}	-0.010^{+}	-0.010^{+}	-0.011^{*}	-0.010^{+}	-0.010^{+}
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
government participation	-0.233^{**}	-0.236^{**}	-0.244^{**}	-0.234^{**}	-0.244^{**}	-0.248^{**}
	(0.079)	(0.079)	(0.079)	(0.079)	(0.078)	(0.078)
Individual Level						
left-right scale	-0.089^{***}	-0.089^{***}	-0.089^{***}	-0.089^{***}	-0.090^{***}	-0.090^{***}
	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.022)
quadratic term left-right	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
length of party membership	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.199^{***}	0.199^{***}	0.199^{***}	0.199^{***}	0.197^{***}	0.196^{***}
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)
constant	3.128^{***}	3.224^{***}	3.384^{***}	5.382^{*}	8.412^{***}	8.155^{***}
	(0.197)	(0.197)	(0.220)	(2.131)	(1.805)	(1.864)
variance (country)	0.135^{***}	0.103^{***}	0.093^{***}	0.133^{***}	0.055^{***}	0.058^{***}
	(0.068)	(0.057)	(0.053)	(0.070)	(0.035)	(0.038)
variance (party)	0.223^{***}	0.223^{***}	0.224^{***}	0.222^{***}	0.221^{***}	0.221^{***}
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)
residual variance	1.070^{***}	1.070^{***}	1.070^{***}	1.070^{***}	1.070^{***}	1.070^{***}
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
aic	21967.23	21970.93	21961.96	21964.62	21962.72	21961.28
bic	22064.02	22074.64	22065.67	22068.33	22073.34	22078.81

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
N(individuals)=7433; N(parties)=107; 14 countries: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom

Table 5.6: Linear Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Focus on Country Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Country Level						
number of popular votes		0.013***			0.013***	0.024***
		(0.002)			(0.002)	(0.005)
direct popular vote index			1.970**			−2.207*
			(0.632)			(0.858)
legislative power index				−3.381	−3.312*	−3.475**
				(3.042)	(1.599)	(1.323)
Party Level						
opposition status	0.247*	0.261*	0.255*	0.246*	0.260*	0.255*
	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.105)
change of popular approval	0.012+	0.012+	0.012+	0.012+	0.012+	0.012+
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
legislative strength	−0.006	−0.005	−0.006	−0.006	−0.005	−0.005
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
government participation	−0.024	−0.025	−0.021	−0.024	−0.024	−0.036
	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.056)
Individual Level						
left-right scale	−0.086***	−0.086***	−0.086***	−0.087***	−0.086***	−0.086***
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
quadratic term left-right	0.008***	0.008***	0.008***	0.008***	0.008***	0.008***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index	−0.017**	−0.017**	−0.017**	−0.017**	−0.016**	−0.016**
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
populist attitudes	0.057***	0.057***	0.057***	0.057***	0.057***	0.057***
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership	−0.009***	−0.009***	−0.009***	−0.009***	−0.009***	−0.009***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.135***	0.138***	0.136***	0.135***	0.137***	0.137***
	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.030)
constant	1.813***	1.623***	1.530***	4.954+	4.706**	5.031***
	(0.188)	(0.151)	(0.189)	(2.833)	(1.499)	(1.251)
variance (country)	0.280**	0.079***	0.165***	0.275**	0.059***	0.033***
	(0.111)	(0.039)	(0.072)	(0.113)	(0.033)	(0.024)
variance (party)	0.117***	0.117***	0.117***	0.117***	0.117***	0.119***
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)
residual variance	1.074***	1.074***	1.074***	1.074***	1.074***	1.074***
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
aic	22596.42	22592.43	22589.85	22593.13	22587.74	22582.66
bic	22693.61	22696.56	22693.98	22697.25	22698.80	22700.67

Standard errors in parentheses;+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

N(individuals)=7644; N(parties)=109; 15 countries: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom

in the political arena. In consequence, I expect to find differences in the support for direct democracy depending on the experience with these institutions in each country: The more often popular votes occurred in a country in the last 15 years[18], the better political elites can assess their consequences, in particular the risks connected to them, and thus, the less supportive political elites should be regarding direct democracy in this country. The strongest difference should appear in comparison to political elites from countries with no referendum experience.

Considering the support for citizen-initiatives, a negative effect of the frequency of popular votes is observable, see table 5.5 for details. The effect is rather small, but significant.[19]. For each referendum in a country the support decreases around 0,1 points. As a control I also check the influence of the direct popular vote index focusing on the easiness to initiate and pass a referendum at the national level. Again, a negative impact is evident: Extensive direct democratic provisions are connected with less support for citizen-initiatives, see the third model in table 5.5 for details. As theoretically expected in H6, the existing direct democratic context influences the support for further direct democratic institutions. Political elites seem to have less strategic incentives to support citizen-initiatives, if they already experienced referendums or have favourable provisions for popular votes.[20]

The approval of popular decision-making is positively related to the direct democratic context in a country, as table 5.6 demonstrates. The effect of referendum occurrence in a country is small, but significant. This contradicts the theoretical expectations in H6. Political elites seem to regard popular decision-making as favourable the more often they occur in their country. However, the effect is driven by Switzerland which is revealed in robustness tests discussed in detail in section 5.4. This is not surprising given the Swiss case is an extreme outlier with over 100 referendums in the last 15 years before the considered election.[21] Without Switzerland, the effect is negative, very small and insignificant. The reversal of the effect reflecting referendum experience points to a divided sample where only in some countries strategic reactions appear. A strategic reaction is more likely with little direct democratic experience, especially if no negative consequences were perceived.[22]

[18] I restrict the consideration of direct democratic practice to the last 15 years before the current term which approximately reflects the last three electoral periods. This time frame is big enough so that most political candidates - no matter which age - can reflect the effects of referendums on the existing political regime and especially the power distribution in it, even if they were not involved.

[19] In models without Ireland where popular votes occurred the most with 16 referendums in the last 15 years in comparison to the other countries in the model, the effect is only significant at the 0.10 level, but still displays a considerable effect.

[20] The popular vote index and the number of popular votes in the last 15 years are correlated for the sample in the models of table 5.5 with a Pearson's r value of 0.65. This might result in multicollinearity problems. Therefore, I include the fifth model in table 5.5 as a reduced model.

[21] In second place regarding referendum experience, Ireland and Italy had 16 and 23 popular votes respectively in the same period.

[22] Considering a model with three categories for experience we observe that there is a difference between the groups of no experience, little experience (up to 3 referendums) and considerable experience. In particular, the difference between a lot of experience and no experience is much smaller than between little experience and no experience indicating that there is indeed an effect of experience, but that referendums are also likely to become a norm if practised frequently. Unfortunately, the effects are not significant in the models (again without Switzerland). However, the differences appear plausible and need to be studied on an extended sample further.

The direct popular vote index, which is used as a control, shows a positive effect on the approval of popular decision-making. It seems that the easier it is to initiate and pass a referendum in a country, the more in favour are political elites of popular decision-making. Again, this effect is only significant in models with Switzerland and thus is only cautiously interpreted. In models without Switzerland the effect is negative, but fails to reach significance. A similar constellation as described above is plausible. It is noteworthy that the political system and direct democratic setting in Switzerland is unique in the whole world. Therefore, it is questionable whether the Swiss case is comparable to the other countries included. Therefore, the results here are not considered as conclusive, they rather give a first impression.

A positive influence of direct democratic practice might indicate that political elites get used to popular votes and adapt it as part of the political process, as is likely to be the case in Switzerland with a long tradition of direct democratic votes. In this regard, the described strategic influence is not applicable. Much more likely is the development towards a political norm. The more often referendums interfere in the traditional decision-making, the more they will be considered as part of the established system and thus included in the policy-making process. The development of a political norm through frequent use of referendums is a topic worth further research, but can not be considered in detail in this thesis. To make reliable conclusions, the extension of the empirical test to more cases is necessary, which is not possible with the available data.

Legislative Powers

Next to the direct democratic context in each country, I also examine the influence of the legislative powers in a country on the support of direct democracy. Legislative powers focus on the possibilities of individual parliamentarians, but also parties and factions, to control the decisions and actions of the executive. If strong legislative powers exist, parliamentary elites are able to influence the political process from inside and would not necessary require referendums as a strategic instrument in the political process. The empirical tests confirm this expectation from H7 for the support of citizen-initiatives. The more constraints exist on the executive in a country - measured through the legislative powers index - the less political elites support citizens initiatives in this country. Interestingly, the effect of legislative powers only becomes significant if the direct democratic context is included, as is visible in table 5.5. This indicates that only through the control of direct democratic context an impact of legislative powers can be distinguished, which supports the conceptual decision to consider these influences as related to the institutional preferences.

Regarding the preference of popular decision-making, again a negative effect of legislative powers is observable, which becomes significant controlling for the direct democratic context, as table 5.6 demonstrates. This effect remains significant even if Switzerland is excluded from the analyses. Therefore, the theoretical expectations of H7 are confirmed for both dependent variables. Political elites from countries with strong legislative powers are less inclined to support popular decision-making or citizen-initiatives.

Given that the described results are based on a limited number of countries, the findings from these models need to be treated with considerable caution. There is a significant improvement of the fit of the models according to the AIC and BIC of the country models compared with models without country level predictors. However, the effects of country variables - in particular of the legislative power index - are quite sizeable and extend the range of the dependent variable scale to impossible values, which cannot be compensated with the other effects. This makes the findings particularly suspicious, even though the models are based on reliable methods that should restrict the bias to a minimum.[23] In conclusion, these analyses and findings should be treated as first indications and require further research. This implicates particularly the extension of the cases to at least 30 countries or longitudinal observation of changes in the institutional setting and its consequences on the support for direct democracy.

5.2.6 Summary of the Results for the Strategic Perspective

This section has shown that strategic motivations are indeed detectable in connection to political elites' support for direct democratic procedures. Moreover, the inclusion of indicators for strategic motivations improves the explanation of political elites' support for direct democracy, as observable through likelihood ratio tests or the comparison of AIC and BIC of the different models. However, the results are rather mixed and demonstrate that strategic motivations depend on the exact form of direct democratic procedures. The two dependent variables are connected to different strategic influences and confirm the expectation described in section 4.2.2 about the perception of the two underlying questions: The question regarding citizen-initiatives is related to a specific institutional reform of the traditional representative system and thus attracts especially the approval of political elites disadvantaged in the existent political system. In contrast, the question concerning the final decision-making power is more general and could be connected to different forms of direct democracy including top-down referendums, this triggers strategic reactions of a bigger circle of elites that are currently in an underprivileged position and seek an instrument to interfere with government outputs and actions.

In detail, the analyses show that individual strategic orientations, office-seeking and in a broader sense also policy-seeking motivations of parties play an important role for the support of citizen-initiatives. Candidates that do not succeed in the electoral game are more likely to support citizen-initiatives, which confirms H1. This might indicate that candidates consider citizen-initiatives as a power instrument outside the parliamentary arena. Regarding the approval of popular decision-making, the effect of personal loss is not that pronounced (significant only at the 0.1-level). This difference in the impact of the effect might be connected to the different focus of the two dependent variables: While loosing candidates view citizen-initiatives as a welcome instrument to improve their disadvantaged power position, they are not likely to trust voters in their concrete decisions. This appears a plausible reaction after a loss in an election. From the perspective of

[23] The models were calculated with REML and Kenny Rogers degrees of freedom, as recommended by Elff et al. (2016).

loosing candidates voters failed to select the right candidate or party and thus appear as less reliable in other decisions.

Citizen-initiatives appear also less attractive to candidates from parties with chances for government. This is observable in the considerable negative effect of their party's government participation in the last three electoral periods. Candidates from parties with government experience are more likely to reject citizen-initiatives. This reaction reflects an office-seeking or -keeping strategy of political elites and confirms H5. Furthermore, the legislative strength of parties has a negative impact on candidates' support for citizen-initiatives. Candidates from parties with more legislative power - based on their vote share - are less supportive of citizen-initiatives, which confirms H4. The other way around, these results indicate that particularly candidates from permanently disadvantaged parties perceive citizen-initiatives as favourable. In strategic terms, less powerful parties receive through citizen-initiatives instruments to improve their influence on policies and their general position in politics.

Regarding the approval of popular decision-making, slightly different strategic motivations become evident. In particular, party's opposition status has an impact on their candidates' approval of popular decisions, which confirms H3 concerned with short-term policy-seeking orientations. Political elites in opposition parties are in a disadvantaged policy position for one electoral term, they probably have no influence on policies at all. Parties in the opposition could have a more active role during a referendum campaign; at the same time popular decisions are likely to challenge governing parties in important policies.[24] Therefore, popular decision-making appears as a desirable strategy for opposition elites in their current situation and reflects a short-term orientation.

Next to the effect of opposition status, the change of parties' popular approval from the previous to the current elections makes a difference whether a candidate regards popular decision-making as desirable. However, contrary to the theoretical expectations, candidates from more successful parties are more supportive of popular decision-making, this contradicts H2 concerned with vote-seeking motivations. Decreasing popular approval is not an incentive to support popular votes in order to reverse the popularity trend. The opposite seems to be the case: Increased popular approval generates more confidence in voters' decisions. Candidates from popular parties might expect that voters would follow their recommendations in popular votes and thus are more likely to trust voters in the decision-making. Candidates from parties with declining approval are disappointed from voters and thus more suspicious of popular decision-making. Though I expected theoretically a different effect of declining popular approval, the influence is considerable and can be regarded as a consequence of vote-seeking motivations.

As a final strategic influence I tested the influence of the institutional context in each country focusing on direct democratic practice and legislative or parliamentary powers. The results in these tests should be treated cautiously as they are based only on a limited number of cases. Nevertheless, some important trends are observable: The support for direct democratic procedures is related to weak parliamentary powers in the political

[24] Next to policy-seeking motivations, vote-seeking plays also a role in this regard, but can be considered as a secondary motivation or a positive side effect.

system, as expected in H7. Thus, citizen initiatives or popular decision-making in general are viewed as a considerable control instrument in front of the government if other institutional possibilities are missing in this regard. Furthermore, experience with popular votes seems to restrain support for citizen-initiatives, while it is not clearly related to the preference of popular decision-making. This indicates that there is a learning effect from experience with direct democracy, as assumed for H6. Experience teaches political elites that referendums are risky choices and undermine their role in the political system. However, this effect seems to be reversed if popular votes become a normality and thus are likely to be considered as part of the decision-making process, as is the case in Switzerland.

In sum, the findings in this section support the idea that strategic motivations influence the approval of direct democratic procedures. Though clear effects are detachable, the relationships of strategic motivations with direct democratic procedures are more complex than theoretically conceptualized and require a thorough consideration of the concrete relations and their intermediaries. In this regard, the two different dependent variables demonstrate that it also depends on the concrete form of direct democratic procedures. Political elites perceive the risks and merits of referendums differently depending on the initiative, the process or the binding character of the outcome. This also triggers divergent strategic reactions. It is obvious that in-depth analyses of each country can offer important insights that are not visible in multivariate analyses. This is beyond the scope of this thesis. In the next section, I look at the joint effects of the strategic and normative perspective asking which perspective is dominant and how they interact.

5.3 Strategic and Normative Perspectives in Combination

After the close up on the two explanatory perspectives in the previous sections I concentrate here on the two perspectives together. In this regard, I ask first, whether the two perspectives have joint effects, and second, which perspective has more impact on the explanation of direct democratic support. In the following, I present the final models that are reduced to the relevant effects for the explanation of the support of direct democratic procedures. Relevant effects are at least significant at the 0.1-level and belong to the factors that have been identified as important in subsections 5.1 or 5.2. This reduced approach helps to avoid an overload of models and irrelevant results.

5.3.1 Joint Effects of Normative and Strategic Factors

This section deals with possible effects of strategic and normative indicators in combination expressed in interaction effects. Strategic influences and normative tendencies are not as sharply divided in reality as has been theoretically differentiated and methodically tested so far. It is plausible to assume that normative tendencies influence strategic outlooks or that strategic motivations change the impact of normative predispositions. Normative motivations are supposed to be deep rooted and long-lasting, while strategic motivations are conceptualized as short-term and flexible inclinations related to the power position of political elites and their parties. In the following I examine how strategic considerations

influence normative orientations and vice versa. The main aim is to test H14 and H15 that assume combined effects of normative inclinations and strategic motivations.

In the following considerations I first review how a candidate's ideological tendencies and the power position of her party influence in combination the support for direct democratic procedures. Then, I describe the combined effects of candidate's dissatisfaction with the democratic regime and the electoral success of her party. In general, I tested all combinations of strategic indicators at the party level with the three defined ideological tendencies as well as with dissatisfaction with the democratic regime at the individual level. However, most effects proved to be irrelevant lacking significance and impact (values close to zero) on the dependent variables. To avoid an overload of models with irrelevant results, I report only the effects that proved to be relevant for the explanation of the support for direct democratic procedures. In the following, I describe first the results for models on the support of citizen-initiatives and then on the approval of popular decision-making and present them separately in tables 5.7 and 5.8 respectively.

Candidates' Support for Citizen-Initiatives

The first assumed interaction deals with individual ideological inclinations and the power position of the candidate's party. I expect that a weak power position of parties moderates the effect of political elites' ideological convictions on the support for direct democratic procedures. In the combined models for the support of citizen-initiatives, the individual placement on the left-right scale proved to be a relevant ideological factor for the explanation of support as well as candidates' dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime. From the strategic perspective, government participation of candidates' party and its legislative weight (as percentage of received votes) showed a considerable impact on the support for citizen-initiatives. For the test of joint effects, I restrict the consideration to the significant factors from the previous analyses with focus at the party and individual levels.[25] These relevant factors are presented in the first model in 5.7 which is considered here as a reference model to assess the impact of interaction effects.

Models with significant interactions are presented in the second to forth model of table 5.7, showing first the tested interactions separately and then in a full model. Based on H14, rightist candidates can be expected to reject direct democratic procedures more when their party is in a powerful position. The interaction effect between left-right self-placement and the government experience of parties is indeed negative and significant, confirming the theoretical expectations. The interaction effect implies that the more to the right a candidate places herself and the more experience her party has in government the less likely she approves of citizen-initiatives.

Figure 5.7 pictures the marginal effects of the factors and their interaction based on the forth model in table 5.7 that accounts for all interactions holding the other factors at means. The significant interaction effect is mainly driven by parties with frequent government experience according to the figure. Candidates from parties with no or singular

[25] I also tested interactions of the other ideological indicators, e.g. authoritarian-libertarian index or opposition status. However, they did not show any considerable effects at all or negligibly small effects.

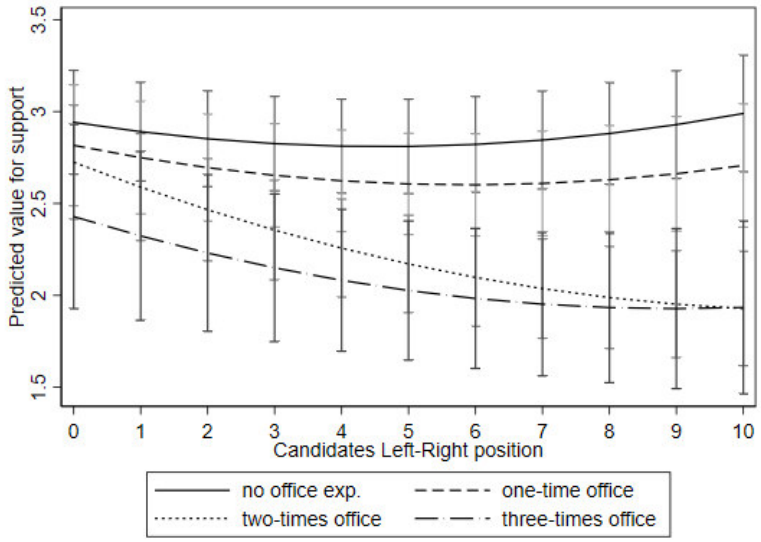
Table 5.7: Linear Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Interaction Models

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Individual Level				
left-right scale	-0.087^{***}	-0.070^{**}	-0.108^{***}	-0.097^{***}
	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.024)
quadratic term left-right	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
length of party membership	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}	-0.004^{**}	-0.004^{**}
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.201^{***}	0.201^{***}	0.202^{***}	0.203^{***}
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)
Party Level				
legislative strength	-0.010^{+}	-0.010^{*}	-0.017^{**}	-0.023^{***}
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)
government participation	-0.293^{***}	-0.191^{**}	-0.288^{***}	-0.126^{+}
	(0.054)	(0.067)	(0.054)	(0.069)
Cross Level Interactions				
left-right scale *		-0.021^{*}		-0.033^{***}
government participation		(0.008)		(0.009)
left-right scale *			0.001^{*}	0.003^{***}
legislative strength			(0.001)	(0.001)
constant	3.238^{***}	3.158^{***}	3.332^{***}	3.276^{***}
	(0.136)	(0.140)	(0.142)	(0.144)
variance (country)	0.125^{***}	0.129^{***}	0.123^{***}	0.128^{***}
	(0.061)	(0.062)	(0.060)	(0.062)
variance (party)	0.213^{***}	0.210^{***}	0.212^{***}	0.206^{***}
	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.036)
residual variance	1.069^{***}	1.068^{***}	1.069^{***}	1.067^{***}
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
deviance	21864.41	21857.88	21860.07	21846.73
aic	21884.41	21879.88	21882.07	21870.73
bic	21953.55	21955.93	21958.12	21953.70
N	7433	7433	7433	7433

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

N(individuals)=7433; N(parties)=107; 14 countries: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom

Figure 5.7: Marginal Effects of Left-Right Self-Placement Interactions with Government Experience on Support for Citizen Initiatives



government participation do not demonstrate less support for citizen-initiatives than candidates on the left.[26] But candidates from parties with a lot of government experience indeed are less in favour of citizen-initiatives the more rightist their position is, as the stronger descending curves of candidates from parties with two or three electoral periods of government participation demonstrate. They significantly differ from candidates of parties without government experience.[27] In sum, the theoretical expectation in H14 are confirmed, but only for the strong difference between parties with no government experience in front of parties with frequent government experience.

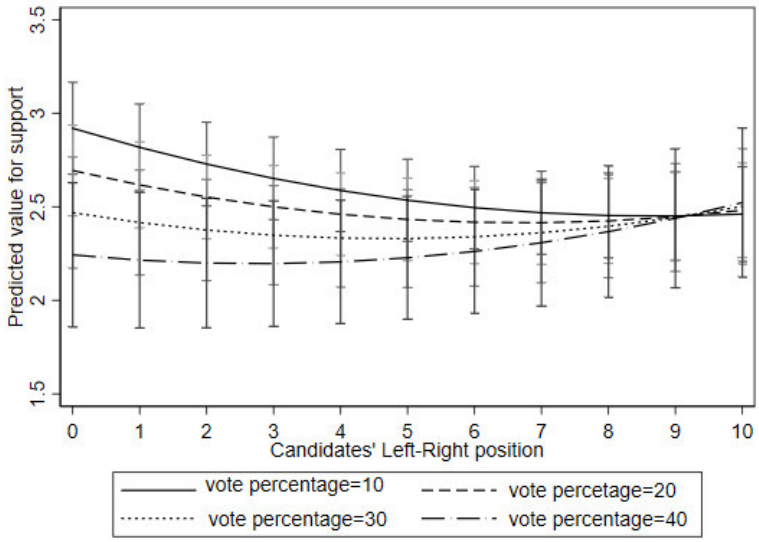
Another significant interaction is revealed in connection with legislative strength of parties and the individual position on the left-right scale. The negative effect of rightist ideology and the legislative strength are slightly positively corrected by their interaction. This is not in accordance to the theoretical expectations. Looking at the marginal effects of the three variables in figure 5.8, we discover that the downward oriented curve of the left-right position turns into an upward oriented curve if candidates' party has considerable legislative power of over 30 percent. This is quite surprising and indicates that rightist candidates from parties with a lot of legislative power are not as reluctant towards citizens' initiatives as theoretically assumed for rightist ideologies.

A possible explanation of this positive interaction is related to policy preferences of extreme rightist candidates from powerful parties. Parties with strong legislative impact are usually in the spotlight of the public opinion. Extreme policy preferences of their candidates might contradict the majority issue positions in public which can be expected to be moderate. Giving voters the chance to initiate referendums in controversial issues makes it easy for candidates from powerful political parties to pursue extreme policy

[26] The curvilinear effect of the left-right scale is based on the correction through the quadratic term of the left-right scale.

[27] The curve for three periods of government participation crosses the one for two periods which indicates that there is no difference between these groups in terms of the position on the left-right scale.

Figure 5.8: Marginal Effects of Left-Right Self-Placement with Parties' Legislative Strength on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives



positions without their party's responsibility for their initiation. The stronger support for citizen-initiatives of rightist candidates in powerful parties might reflect strategies to implement extreme rightist positions without jeopardizing the public image of their parties and thus preserve their party's popular approval or cooperation with other parties.

The second theoretically conceptualized connection between normative and strategic indicators is the interaction between a candidate's evaluation of the democratic regime and the electoral success of the candidate's party, see the explanation for H15 for details. Regarding the support for citizen-initiatives, I tested how candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime as an indicator for the evaluation of democratic system interacts with legislative strength - an indicator for policy-seeking - and government participation of parties - an indicator for office-seeking motivations. Neither the effect of government participation nor of legislative strength significantly changes the positive effect of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime.[28] This indicates an independent effect of the current evaluation of the democratic system and would confirm its normative character: Candidates who are disaffected with current institutions are likely to support alternative institutions such as citizen-initiatives.

In sum, candidates' support for citizen-initiatives is also affected by joint effects of normative and strategic indicators, in particular through the interaction of candidates' left-right ideological placements and government participation or legislative strength of their parties. The model fit improves considerably when these two interaction terms are included, compare the deviance, AIC and BIC of the first and forth model in table 5.7. However, the two effects are contrary to each other and cannot confirm the expectations of H14 reliably. Thus, further extended tests are required to understand how and why

[28] I also performed additional tests with opposition status as an indicator for policy-seeking motivations and with the change of popular approval in combination with candidate's dissatisfaction with the democratic regime. No considerable effects were observable.

strategic and normative indicators work together in this regard. This is a subject for future research.

Candidates' Approval of Popular Decision-Making

Considering the approval of popular decision-making, the previous models revealed that opposition status of parties used as an indicator for policy-seeking motivations and the change of popular approval of candidates' parties used for the measurement of vote-seeking incentives play a considerable role in this regard. From the normative perspective, all ideological tendencies and dissatisfaction with the democratic regime showed considerable effects on candidates position towards popular decision-making. Thus, both interaction hypotheses can be tested with the second dependent variable. [29]

First, I tested how candidates' placement on the left-right scale, their scores in the libertarian-authoritarian and populist inclinations indices interact with the current legislative status of candidates' parties. No significant interaction could be found, therefore no model is reported. Being in an opposition party does not change the impact of ideological inclinations of candidates on the approval of popular decision-making. Thus, ideological tendencies as well as the opposition status affect the position of candidates independently. These influences contribute considerably to the explanation of support for popular decision-making, as the consistent effects throughout all models demonstrate.

Second, I tested how different ideological tendencies and parties' electoral performance - operationalized as the change of electoral approval from the previous to the current election - jointly affect candidates' support for popular decision-making. The only considerable interaction is between candidate's position on the authoritarian-libertarian scale and her party's electoral performance, see the second model in table 5.8 for details. It generates a positive significant effect, which is rather small, but changes the impact of popular approval. The direct effect of popular approval disappears when the interaction is included which means that electoral performance only plays a role in combination with the positions on the libertarian-authoritarian index. The general negative effect of libertarian inclinations on the support for popular votes becomes weaker if popular approval is positive and increases.

Figure 5.9 shows marginal effects of candidates' placement on the authoritarian-libertarian index for different scores of electoral approval - starting from a high loss of 10 percentage points and increasing in intervals of 5 points. The slopes of authoritarian-libertarian index become flatter, the more candidates' parties have increased their popular approval from the previous to the current election. This means that libertarian candidates reject popular decision-making less when their parties have won popular approval and authoritarian candidates are a bit more rejective of popular decision-making when their parties have lost popular approval. This interaction can be explained as following: Candidates from parties with increasing popular approval are likely to trust voters in popular decisions even if their ideological predispositions tell them otherwise, because they can reasonably expect

[29] Additionally, I checked the interactions between the excluded indicators - in particular government participation and legislative strength of candidates' parties - and ideological indicators as well as dissatisfaction with the democratic regime, but no substantial significant results were observable.

Table 5.8: Linear Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Interaction Models

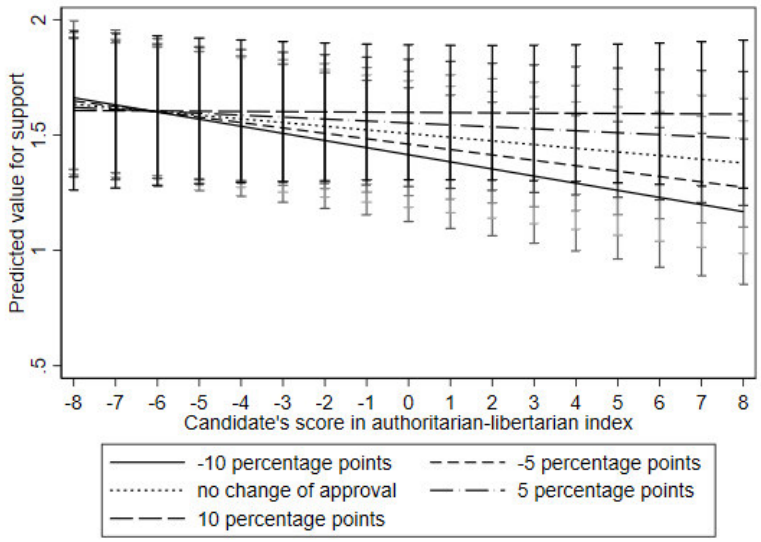
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Individual Level				
left-right scale	-0.088^{***}	-0.087^{***}	-0.086^{***}	-0.085^{***}
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)
quadratic term left-right	0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index	-0.017^{***}	-0.016^{**}	-0.017^{**}	-0.016^{**}
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
populist attitudes	0.057^{***}	0.056^{***}	0.056^{***}	0.056^{***}
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership	-0.009^{***}	-0.009^{***}	-0.009^{***}	-0.009^{***}
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.138^{***}	0.136^{***}	0.032	0.031
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.045)	(0.045)
Party Level				
opposition status	0.340^{***}	0.346^{***}	0.263^{***}	0.269^{***}
	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.077)	(0.076)
change of popular approval	0.012^{*}	0.010^{+}	0.011^{*}	0.009
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Cross Level Interactions				
authoritarian-libertarian index *		0.002^{+}		0.001^{+}
popular approval		(0.001)		(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy *			0.192^{**}	0.190^{**}
opposition status			(0.060)	(0.060)
constant	1.656^{***}	1.647^{***}	1.686^{***}	1.678^{***}
	(0.155)	(0.155)	(0.155)	(0.155)
variance (country)	0.263^{***}	0.263^{***}	0.262^{***}	0.263^{***}
	(0.101)	(0.101)	(0.100)	(0.101)
variance (party)	0.115^{***}	0.113^{***}	0.112^{***}	0.110^{***}
	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)
residual variance	1.074^{***}	1.073^{***}	1.072^{***}	1.072^{***}
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.017)
deviance	22492.43	22489.06	22482.38	22479.14
aic	22516.43	22515.06	22508.38	22507.14
bic	22599.73	22605.30	22598.63	22604.32

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

N(individuals)=7844; N(parties)=123; 15 countries: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom

voters to follow their recommendations in popular decisions. Candidates from parties with decreasing popular approval on the other hand might be less trustful of voters' opinions after their party experienced losses in the election.

Figure 5.9: Marginal Effect of the Interaction of Popular Approval and Authoritarian-Libertarian Index on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making



The connection between the position on the authoritarian-libertarian index and electoral performance is difficult to evaluate in terms of H14, because the two direct effects are not consistent with the primary theoretical expectations. First of all, the effect of electoral performance is opposite to what was expected as an effect of vote-seeking motivations. Likewise, libertarian positions were expected to foster support for direct democratic procedures and the reverse is revealed in the empirical models. The interaction of the two indicators shows that the impact of ideology is moderated through the effect of power, at the same time making the direct strategic effect disappear. This would be in accordance to the theoretical expectations. However, the direction of the effects is not as theoretically assumed. Furthermore, looking at the improvement of fit, the inclusion of the interaction is not very decisive, compare the change of deviance or AIC and BIC in the models with and without the respective interaction. Therefore, H14 cannot be confirmed reliably and should be examined more profoundly in future research.

As a second block of interactions regarding the approval of popular decision-making, I tested H15 that assumes the effect of individual dissatisfaction with the democratic regime to be influenced by the electoral success of candidates' parties. The interaction between the change in popular approval and dissatisfaction does not demonstrate a significant effect, and is not discussed further here. However, there is indeed a considerable interaction between candidates' dissatisfaction with the current democratic regime and the opposition status of their parties. The previously significant effect of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime turns insignificant after the addition of the interaction, compare the first and the third models in table 5.8 for details. This implies that the effect of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime depends on the current legislative status of parties.

Figure 5.10 shows the marginal effects of party's government-opposition status in combination with candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime. Dissatisfaction with the democratic regime has an effect on the approval of popular decision-making if candidate's party is in the opposition. Dissatisfied candidates from government parties do not show significant differences in terms of their approval in comparison to satisfied candidates from government parties. This implies that the current power position of candidates' parties enhances the effect of disaffection with the current regime and confirms the expectations in H15. In this regard, it is questionable whether dissatisfaction with the current regime reflects the discongruence of candidates' normative expectations or is also an expression of the current disadvantaged position in the system. The answer requires further extended tests in future research.

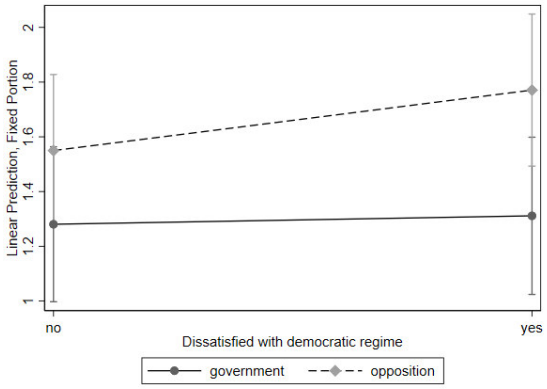


Figure 5.10: Interaction Between Dissatisfaction with Democracy and Opposition Status on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making

In sum, candidates' approval of popular decision-making is also affected by joint effects of normative and strategic indicators, in particular through the interaction of candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime and the legislative status of candidate's party. The model fit improves considerably when this interaction term is included, compare the deviance, AIC and BIC of model 1 and model 5 in table 5.8 for details. The effect confirms the expectation of H14. It appears that the opposition status of parties is the primary driver of candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime which in combination enhances the support for popular decision-making.

Discussion of results

Comparing the models and relevant effects for the two dependent variables, we observe that distinct combinations of strategic and normative influences play a role for their explanation. On the one hand, it is observable that strategic orientations enhance ideological tendencies, which is the case in the interaction between government participation of parties and left-right positions of candidates explaining the support for citizen-initiatives. Remarkably in this constellation is that more long-term oriented responses based on deep rooted beliefs and broad experiences play a role for the question concerning citizen-initiatives. It is plausible that political elites perceive the question as a broad institutional

issue that has lasting implications for the political system and the role of their parties. Therefore, long-term orientations and strategies appear more influential than the current power context.

On the other hand, the question regarding popular decision-making appears to have a more short-term oriented character and candidates' positions are more influenced by current developments than long-term strategic and normative considerations. Candidates seem to take their current disadvantaged position expressed through the effects of their parties' opposition status and of the change in their parties' popular approval more into account than long-term strategic orientations such as the chances of their parties to participate in government or influence policies in parliament. Additionally, the relevant interactions with normative factors point to a more short-term oriented understanding of the question. In particular, the interaction between candidates' dissatisfaction with the current regime and their parties' opposition status implies that candidates' evaluation of the democratic system is only relevant in connection to the current opposition status of their party. General criticism on the democratic regime does not seem to play a role in the question whether popular decisions should be considered as final in front of parliamentary sovereignty. It is likely that the issue of popular decision-making is understood as connected to the current political context, less as a general institutional question considering the explanatory factors of this dependent variable.

These mixed results stress that direct democracy has quite different facets which not only depend on the concrete institutional design and usage. The concrete political context and elites' perception of their possibilities in these institutions in short- and long-term perspective are also relevant for the position towards direct democratic procedures. Unfortunately, it remains unclear whether normative orientations affect strategic considerations or the reverse is true through the test of interactions between strategic and normative factors. Both constellations have been found and discussed in terms of their plausibility. No clear winner is detectable. Rather it depends on the concrete context including the question wording of the considered dependent variable which perspective has more impact. Furthermore, most interaction effects are rather small and improve the fit of the models only slightly. This implies that the direct effects are more important and confirms the assumption of two distinct explanatory perspectives. In the next section, I focus on a final model without interactions and examine which theoretical perspective contributes to a better model fit and which effects have more impact on the explained variance of the full model.

5.3.2 Comparison of the Strategic and Normative Perspectives

In this section, I review the final models for the two dependent variables and compare the contribution of the different effects to the explanation of support for direct democratic procedures. The main goal is to compare the impact of strategic indicators with normative indicators. I differentiate three final models for the comparison: First, I examine how much variance is explained only by individual predictors that concentrate on normative orientations. Second, I review how much variance is explained by party predictors focusing

on the strategic perspective which exclude individual factors. I compare the explanatory power in these models to evaluate which explanatory perspective has more impact on the support for direct democratic procedures differentiated in the two dependent variables. Third, I consider the impact of each independent variable to the full model. The final full models that are used for the effect comparison are presented in the previous section on joint effects, view the first model on page 205 for the final model concerning the support for citizen-initiatives, and the first model on page 209 for the final model regarding the approval of popular decision-making.[30]

Explained Variance Proportion of Candidates' Support for Citizen-Initiatives

Various measures assess the explanatory power of multi-level models, as outlined in subsection 4.3.2. Table 5.9 shows the results of important measures for selected models of the first dependent variable. First, there is a base model with three levels, but without other explanatory predictors. This model is used as a reference to calculate the explained variance of different models. In this regard, I differentiate the following models: A normative model consisting only of significant normative factors at the individual level (third column of table 5.9); a strategic model consisting only of significant strategic indicators at the party level (forth column in table 5.9); a full model with significant normative and strategic factors (fifth column in table 5.9); a model with all considered predictors (sixth column in table 5.9); the full model complemented with country predictors (seventh column of table 5.9); and the full model with interactions (eight column in table 5.9).

As already reported in previous sections, I use deviance, AIC and BIC as measures to decide whether the inclusion of certain factors improves the overall model fit. Comparing the fits of the normative model with the strategic model, view the third and forth columns in table 5.7 shows that the model consisting of individual level predictors has lower values of deviance, AIC and BIC in comparison to the strategic model with party level predictors only. The better fit with individual predictors is understandable as most variance can be found at the individual level looking at the ICCs of the baseline model.[31] Nonetheless, the full model (in the fifth column of table 5.9) with both perspectives perform even better than normative predictors models and demonstrates that both perspectives are relevant for the prediction of candidates' support for direct democratic procedures.

Considering the AIC and BIC in further models in table 5.7 demonstrates that a model with all defined predictors (sixth column) has a worse fit in comparison to the full model (fifth column). This confirms the decision to use a reduced model as a final model for the explanation of support. Country-level predictors (seventh column) and interactions (eight column) also do not improve the model fit considerably. It is noteworthy that in the extended models with more predictors measures that have penalizing mechanisms for

[30]This final model is reduced to predictors that reached significance at the 0.1 level and/or have shown in likelihood ratio-tests to significantly improve the model fit.

[31]In the base model, around 34 percent of the total variance is connected to the party level for candidates' support of citizen-initiatives, eight percent to the country level. Thus, the remaining variance connected to the individual level exceeds 50 percent.

the inclusion of further predictors are more suitable to evaluate the model fit. Thus, AIC and BIC measures are preferred, while the deviance scores are not used in this regard.

Next to the measures of model fit, table 5.9 shows the results of the explained variance calculations. In particular I present the total explained variance in comparison to the base model. It shows the variance part that has been accounted for through the included predictors. Furthermore, I calculated R^2 scores in orientation on Snijders and Bosker (2012). This measure shows the proportion of explained variance in reference to the base model. Additionally, I constructed a measure called "contribution to explained variance" (CEV), which uses the full model as reference and displays which part of the explained variance of the full model can be attributed to the inclusion of certain predictors. In the lower part of table 5.9, I concentrated on this measure to assess the impact of singular predictors calculating models missing the respective predictors. The contribution of each excluded factor is presented in the last row of the table.[32]

Concentrating on the measures for explained variance, we discover that the inclusion of strategic indicators improves the explained variance much more than the inclusion of normative indicators, compare the results for the normative and strategic models in table 5.9. In particular, the model consisting only of strategic predictors has a higher score of R^2 and is responsible for around 78 per cent of the explained variance of the full model. The model consisting only of normative indicators is only responsible for around half of the explained variance of the full model and has a low R^2 of 7 percent.[33] This is an unexpected result, especially reviewing the traditional measures of model fit like deviance, AIC or BIC for the two respective models suggesting that normative factors contribute to a better fit, while strategic factors improve it only slightly, see the respective lines in table X. This result is discussed in detail further below.

Looking at the extended models, the following are results are apparent: Even if more indicators from the normative and strategic perspective not showing a significant effect are added to the model, the explained variance does not increase considerably, compare the model with all predictors with the full model in table 5.9. Equally, models with interaction effects have only a small reduction of prediction error or improvement of explained variance amounting to one percentage point in comparison to the model with significant factors. However, country level predictors do influence the explained variance to a considerable extent; they are able to improve the R^2 with two percentage points and contribute around 17 percent of the full model explained variance.

Considering the contribution of each independent variable to the support for citizen-initiatives, we observe that parties' experience in government shows the strongest contribution to the explained variance in the full model with around 30 percent based on the comparison with a model without this factor. Thus, the effect of party's power position reflecting its office chances has the strongest impact on the support of citizen-initiatives. In second place, candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime is responsible for

[32]This contribution is calculated as a difference of the CEV of the reduced model to 1 which corresponds to the complete explained variance of the full model.

[33]The constructed measure CEV is not precise as it only displays the proportion of explained variance according to the full model explained variance.

16 percent of full model explained variance. In third place, the left-right placement influences the explained variance of the full model with 8 percent. The remaining factors - candidate's length of party membership and the legislative strength of candidates' parties have only a small contribution to the overall explained variance of around 4 percent each.

In sum, the variance of the support for citizen-initiatives seems to be more influenced by strategic outlooks of candidates' parties rather than individual normative orientations. The total impact of normative factors is lower than the contribution of strategic factors. This is unexpected, especially considering the character of the involved issue of citizen-initiatives. As mentioned before, the issue of citizen-initiatives is a general institutional question that is likely to activate thorough considerations and deep-rooted beliefs. Parties' government prospects which has the strongest impact on the explained variance reflects a long-term orientation, however, it is still a strategic factor. This contradicts the theoretical expectation that deep-rooted convictions in form of normative orientations should have more influence on such a general issue question. Two possible explanations for this low impact appear plausible: Either the used normative indicators are not sufficient and different normative predictors should be included that have not been measured. Or indeed normative factors play a less important role for this institutional question. In this case, long-term oriented strategic considerations would simply be more relevant. It is impossible to resolve this riddle with the current approach or data, so that the issue should be addressed in further research.

Explained Variance Proportion of Candidates' Approval of Popular Decision-Making

Table 5.10 shows the results of important variance measures for selected models of the second dependent variable. First, there is a base model with three levels, but without other explanatory predictors. This model is used as a reference to calculate the explained variance of different models. Next to this base model, I differentiate the following models: A normative model consisting of normative factors at the individual level (third column of table 5.9); a strategic model consisting only of significant strategic indicators at the party level (forth column in table 5.9); a full model with significant normative and strategic factors (fifth column in table 5.9); a model with all considered predictors (sixth column in table 5.9); the full model complemented with country predictors (seventh column of table 5.9); and the full model with interactions (eight column in table 5.9).

As already described in previous sections, I use deviance, AIC and BIC as measures to decide whether the inclusion of certain factors improves the overall model fit. Comparing the normative model to the strategic model reveals that the model consisting of individual level predictors has lower values of deviance, AIC and BIC in comparison to the strategic model with party level predictors only. The better fit with individual predictors is plausible as most variance can be found at the individual level looking at the ICCs of the baseline model. [34] The full model (in the fifth column of table 5.10) has even a better fit and

[34] In the base model, around 30 percent of variance can be attributed to the party level, 17 percent to the country level, which leaves the remaining over 50 percent of variance connected to the individual level.

underlines the necessity of both perspectives to make reasonable predictions of the approval of popular decision-making.

Considering the AIC and BIC in further models in table 5.8 demonstrates that a model with all defined predictors (sixth column) has a worse fit in comparison to the full model (fifth column). This confirms the decision to use a reduced model as a final model for the explanation of support. Country-level predictors (seventh column) improve the model fit event further, while interactions (eight column) do not contribute to a better model fit. It is noteworthy that AIC and BIC measures are decisive in the extended models with more predictors, because in comparison to the deviance they penalize for the inclusion of further predictors and thus provide a more definite measure for the model fit.

Regarding the explained variance of strategic and normative indicators, table 5.10 demonstrates that the normative predictors contribute more to the overall explained variance of the full model than the strategic predictors. Considering the contribution of each independent variable to candidates' approval of popular decision-making, we observe that the opposition status of parties has the strongest impact on the explained variance with 24 percent based on the comparison of the full model with a model without this factor. The length of party membership comes in second place with around 18 percent. This is an interesting and unexpected result, as the effect of the variable is considerably small in comparison to the other factors, compare and coefficients in table 5.6 and the figure on page 186. Candidates' ideological positions on the left-right scale or on the authoritarian-libertarian index contribute to the explained variance of the full model with 11 and 9 percent respectively. Parties' change of popular approval has an impact of around six percent and candidates' dissatisfaction with the democratic regime of around three percent. The smallest contribution amounts to around one percent and is produced by candidates' populist attitudes.

In total, again the impact of strategic factors on the explained variance in the full model is considerably strong, in particular because there are more normative factors included. While on the normative side five significant predictors are in the final model, the strategic perspective is represented through two significant predictors.[35] The strong impact of strategic indicators is comprehensible considering the character of the issue. Popular decision-making is a strong hurdle for the behaviour of governing elites and offers opposition actors in and outside parliament great possibilities to influence policy-making. Therefore, the question concerning the approval of popular decision-making is likely to be connected to the current political context, in particular from a disadvantaged policy position of candidates' parties. However, the question is also related to the general preference for a certain form of democratic decision-making. This is reflected in the strong impact of normative orientations that surpass the impact of strategic predictors.

In sum, the variance of the approval for popular decision-making is related to candidates' normative orientations as well as strategic outlooks of candidates' parties. Interestingly, the strategic predictors have a short-term character focusing on the current

[35] The inclusion of further strategic indicators improves the explained variance about 6 percentage points for the added strategic indicators government participation of candidate's party and its change in popular approval in comparison to the model with significant indicators only.

legislative position of parties or their current popular approval. These short-term influences of political context are balanced through deep rooted normative convictions. The relative balance of the two perspectives underlines that both perspectives are relevant for the explanation of attitudes concerning popular decision-making. In the next section, I test the reliability of the results in a final step looking at possible limitations of the results based on models with additional control variables or without special cases.

5.4 Robustness Tests

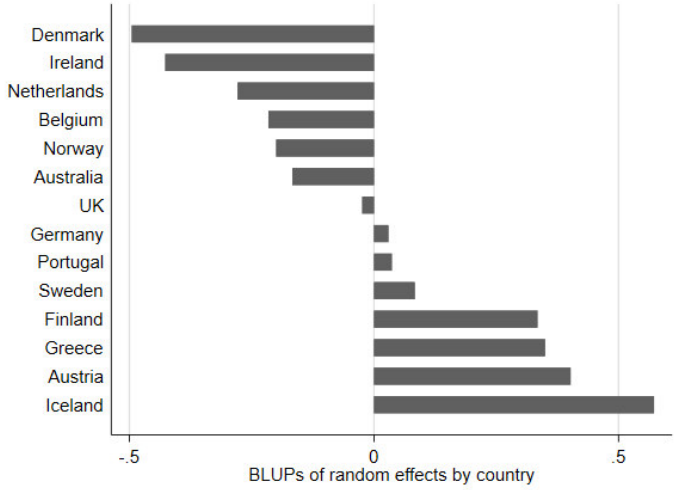
As a final consideration I review in this chapter whether there are strong differences between the included countries and if certain cases influence the results extensively. Additionally, I test whether demographic variables change the previously presented effects. In the following, I discuss first models for both dependent variables with demographic variables. Then I compare the country specific intercepts looking for possible outliers based on different institutional structures and political context discussed in section 4.1.4. In these models, I only consider all predictors at the individual and party level, but for reasons of simplicity do not include interactions. Furthermore, indicators for party ideology are excluded from these models to reduce the complexity of the tables; the results do not change remarkably if party ideology is included. In the final step, I test models without Switzerland, Ireland and Italy as three countries with the biggest direct democratic practice in the sample, view section 4.1.4 for details. In this regard, I also review models with country level predictors.

Table 5.11 shows the results of models with age and gender in comparison to models without these control variables. The models with demographics exclude Sweden and Austria due to missing demographic information. Therefore, the effect sizes are slightly different when we compare the models used in this thesis and the ones with demographics. As observable in the second in comparison to the third column of table 5.11 the results for elites' support of citizen-initiatives do not change considerably in terms of the effect direction or significance.

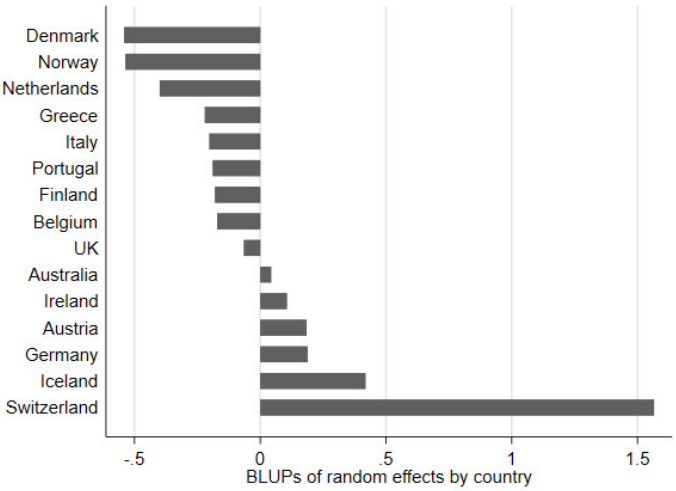
The only exception is the length of party membership used as an indicator for socialization experiences in the representative system. This factor loses its significance. As mentioned in section 4.2.3, age can be considered as a similar indicator. Indeed, the model with demographics shows a significant negative effect similar to the one of party membership. The older a candidate the less likely she is to support citizen-initiatives. This confirms the expectation that older candidates are more likely to protect institutions they are familiar with and reject alternatives to existing representative institutions. The age variable seems to grasp this socialization effect better than the length of party membership.

A similar picture is apparent in the models on the approval of popular decision-making, view the forth and fifth column of table 5.11 for details. All previous effects are also present in a model with demographic controls and show the same direction and significance. This refers even to the length of party membership and thus differs from the model on citizen-initiatives described above. Age shows again a negative significant effect pointing to the age effects already described. Interestingly, in this model a significant effect of the

Figure 5.11: Comparison of Random Effects at the Country Level



(a) Support for Citizen-Iniatives



(b) Approval of Popular Decision-Making

candidate's gender is also observable: Male candidates are less likely to approve popular decision-making in front of parliamentary sovereignty.

At the expense of two countries, the model fit would improve slightly in models with demographics (in comparison to a reduced model without demographics not shown in the table). Considering the aim of this thesis - to test two theoretical perspectives - there is no particular requirement to improve the model fit. Additionally, age and the length of party membership measure a similar phenomenon, so that there is no need to have both variables in the models.[36] The inclusion of more cases on the other hand allows to test the two explanatory perspectives profoundly. Therefore, the analyses in the thesis lack demographics to rely on a bigger sample and focus on theoretically justified effects.

The inclusion of certain cases, however, might lead to biased results because of possible skewed distributions in these cases. In section 4.1.4 I described possible structural and

[36]They are also highly correlated (Pearson's r of more than 0.35) which might lead to collinearity issues.

contextual differences of the countries. A simple way to check for differences is to compare the predicted values of multilevel models at the country level. Using model 1 for each dependent variable from table 5.11, I look at the distribution of random effects at the country level, view 5.11a for the support on citizen-initiatives and figure 5.11b for the approval of popular decision-making. The figures display best linear unbiased predictions (BLUPs) for the intercepts at the country level. These intercepts demonstrate whether there are huge differences between the starting levels for support in each country, which might be attributed to country-specific influences.[37]

Looking at the intercepts based on BLUPs in figure 5.11a, only small deviations become evident regarding the support of citizen initiatives: Denmark and Ireland as two countries with the most direct democratic experience have the lowest starting points, while candidates from Iceland with no experience at this point demonstrate a quite high level of support. However, candidates from Belgium and Germany, two further countries with no experience with direct democracy at the national level, do not display the same affection for citizen-initiatives Regarding other institutional differences described in section 4.1.4, no clear patterns are observable. The intercepts have a small range between -0.5 and 0.5 (with the exception of Iceland), so that the cases can be considered as comparable.

The high level of support in Iceland can be attributed to the political situation in the country in this period. In particular, there was large public discontent in the course of the economic crisis and a debate regarding a referendum about an agreement with the UK and Netherlands (HARDARSON and KRISTINSSON, 2010). A similar situation was present in other countries highly involved in the economic crisis such as Greece, Portugal, Norway or Germany. With the exception of Norway, candidates in the crisis countries have a positive level of support as a starting point which also indicates a mostly positive position towards citizen-initiatives. Controlling for the crisis-phenomenon through a dummy for Austria, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Norway and Portugal as crisis countries results in a positive (significant) effect for the support of citizen-initiatives, not affecting the other variables.[38] This result deserves further research that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Regarding the approval of popular decision-making, a clear deviation of Switzerland is observable in figure 5.11b. It seems that Swiss candidates are in general much more in favour of popular decision-making than the candidates of other countries. This is not surprising as Switzerland is the country with most experience and a downright direct democratic culture. Because of this speciality, I also test models without Switzerland to secure the reliability of the results further below. Two other countries slightly stand out in the question on the final decision-making authority: Denmark and Norway. Candidates from these countries seem to reject popular decision-making the most in comparison to the other countries. No clear explanation is plausible in connection to the factors discussed in section 4.1.4.

[37] Similar comparisons are possible with fitted values of the models for each country consisting of fixed portions of linear predictions and the random contributions. I also checked these results which however appeared less informative in terms of deviations.

[38] As the crisis variable is a dummy at the country level, I calculated models according to the REML-method for small samples.

Next to these descriptive analyses of deviations, I also tested models without countries where the institutional framework differs from the majority of the cases, view section 4.1.4 for details. In particular, I excluded Portugal as a semi-presidential system from the analyses, but this did not change the effects reported so far.

As a final robustness test, I check models without countries with outstanding experience with direct democratic processes to examine whether these cases influence the results of the models extensively. I concentrate on Ireland for the support of citizen-initiatives and on Switzerland for the approval of popular decision-making. In table 5.12, the previous full models are shown without the respective countries in the second and forth column. In the third and fifth columns of the table are the same models with important country level predictors, i.e. legislative power and popular vote indices from V-Dem data.[39] Indeed, the three countries influence the results of country level predictor.

Regarding the support for citizen-initiatives, Ireland is widely responsible for the effect of the experience with popular votes. While in model X? from table 5.5 an effect of the number of popular votes in the last 15 years was observable, it is not significant in the second model in table 5.12. Thus, the result concerning H6 is not robust. It is debatable whether the effect of the number of popular votes is only attributable to Ireland or whether the dataset is limited to test the hypothesis. In particular, the dataset lacks cases with more experience.[40] In any case, the hypothesis test is inconclusive and requires further research.

The same problem is observable regarding the approval of popular decision-making: Here, Switzerland drives the effect of the experience with popular votes.[41]. Excluding Switzerland from the analyses results in an insignificant effect of the number of popular votes. In the dataset for the second dependent variable, two more countries have outstanding direct democratic experience - Italy and Ireland. However, their contribution does not change the results of the model without Switzerland. Therefore, it is likely that H6 should be rejected for the second dependent variable. The mere quantitative experience with direct democratic processes is not decisive for the approval of popular decision-making. This appears plausible, especially because the number of popular votes does not tell anything about the quality of the process, the outcomes or particular winners and losers.

In sum, these last analyses demonstrate that the majority of the results is reliable. Even if we exclude certain important cases or introduce further control variables, the main explanatory factors of the strategic and the normative perspective keep their direction and significance. The only exception are country-level factors. This problem is connected to the small sample size at the country level and has been already discussed in section 5.2.5. This section has shown that not all riddles are solved when examining political elites' attitudes towards direct democracy. In the concluding remarks that follow this section I summarize all results, outline the contributions of my research and discuss further possible research challenges.

[39] I exclude the direct popular vote index which was included as a control in section 5.2.5, as it correlates highly with the number of popular votes and thus causes problems of collinearity

[40] Switzerland and Italy are not included here, as they do not offer this dependent variable.

[41] I also tested models without Italy and Ireland and both in combination with Switzerland, but there are no relevant differences to the models in table 5.12 regarding the approval of popular decision-making.

Table 5.9: Final Models on the Support of Citizen-Initiatives, Effect Comparison

models	base	normative	strategic	full	all pred.	country	interact.
variance (country)	0.126	0.099	0.157	0.125	0.123	0.036	0.125
variance (party)	0.430	0.2128	0.2104	0.2130	0.2629	0.3534	0.2337
residual variance	1.0789	1.0693	1.0667	1.0692	1.0691	1.0689	1.0675
explained variance		0.1123	0.1770	0.2274	0.2311	0.2659	0.2284
R^2 (Snijders&Bosker)		0.0687	0.1083	0.1392	0.1414	0.1627	0.1398
CEV		0.4938	0.7782	1.000	1.016	1.169	1.004
deviance	21990.63	21906.04	21940.91	21864.41	21862.28	21869.40	21852.39
AIC	21998.63	21922.04	21952.91	21884.41	21890.28	21897.40	21884.39
BIC	22026.28	21977.35	21994.39	21953.55	21987.07	21994.19	21995.01

models without	left-right placement	party membership	dissatisfaction with regime	legislative strength	government participation
variance (country)	0.129	0.127	0.148	0.121	0.120
variance (party)	0.223	0.218	0.219	0.226	0.286
residual variance	1.072	1.070	1.075	1.069	1.070
explained variance	0.210	0.219	0.192	0.219	0.159
R^2 (Snijders&Bosker)	0.129	0.134	0.117	0.134	0.098
PEV (of full model)	0.924	0.964	0.843	0.961	0.701
contribution	0.076	0.036	0.157	0.039	0.299

Table 5.10: Final Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Effect Comparison

models	base	normative	strategic	full	all pred.	country	interact.
variance (country)	0.261	0.264	0.260	0.263	0.261	0.039	0.263
variance (party)	0.210	0.157	0.146	0.115	0.110	0.116	0.110
residual variance	1.096	1.074	1.096	1.074	1.074	1.074	1.072
explained variance		0.072	0.065	0.115	0.122	0.338	0.122
R^2 (Snijders&Bosker)		0.046	0.041	0.073	0.078	0.216	0.078
CEV (of full model)		0.626	0.565	1.000	1.061	2.943	1.061
deviance	22699.55	22518.87	22667.50	22492.43	22488.94	22469.48	22479.14
AIC	22707.55	22538.87	22679.50	22516.43	22516.94	22497.48	22507.14
BIC	22735.32	22608.29	22721.15	22599.73	22614.12	22594.66	22604.32
models without	left-right placement	auth.-libert. position	populist attitudes	party membership	dissatisfaction with regime	legislative strength	government participation
variance (country)	0.262	0.269	0.249	0.274	0.260	0.264	0.262
variance (party)	0.128	0.120	0.121	0.118	0.120	0.122	0.144
residual variance	1.075	1.075	1.083	1.081	1.076	1.073	1.074
explained variance	0.102	0.104	0.114	0.095	0.111	0.108	0.087
R^2 (Snijders&Bosker)	0.065	0.067	0.073	0.060	0.071	0.069	0.056
PEV (of full model)	0.889	0.907	0.991	0.823	0.968	0.935	0.760
contribution of variable	0.111	0.093	0.009	0.177	0.032	0.065	0.240

Table 5.11: Linear Regression Models with Demographics

	Citizen-initiatives[a]		Popular decision-making[b]	
	1	2	1	2
Individual Level				
left-right scale	-0.089^{***}	-0.113^{***}	-0.087^{***}	-0.094^{***}
	(0.022)	(0.027)	(0.021)	(0.022)
quadratic term left-right	0.006^{**}	0.008^{**}	0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index	-0.005	0.002	-0.017^{**}	-0.019^{***}
	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.005)
populist attitudes	0.000	0.005	0.057^{***}	0.052^{***}
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership	-0.003^{**}	-0.003	-0.009^{***}	-0.003^{*}
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.200^{***}	0.189^{***}	0.136^{***}	0.080^{*}
	(0.031)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.032)
candidate's age		-0.005^{***}		-0.007^{***}
		(0.001)		(0.001)
male candidate		-0.032		-0.069^{*}
		(0.032)		(0.027)
Party Level				
opposition status	0.125	0.093	0.247^{*}	0.221^{*}
	(0.138)	(0.144)	(0.103)	(0.106)
change of popular approval	0.008	0.005	0.012^{*}	0.012^{+}
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.006)	(0.006)
legislative strength	-0.010^{*}	-0.011^{+}	-0.006	-0.008^{+}
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.004)
government participation	-0.232^{**}	-0.273^{***}	-0.023	-0.052
	(0.077)	(0.080)	(0.055)	(0.057)
constant	3.128^{***}	3.438^{***}	1.815^{***}	2.215^{***}
	(0.191)	(0.216)	(0.183)	(0.200)
variance (country)	0.123^{***}	0.130^{***}	0.261^{***}	0.279^{**}
	(0.060)	(0.069)	(0.100)	(0.111)
variance (party)	0.210^{***}	0.210^{***}	0.110^{***}	0.114^{***}
	(0.037)	(0.040)	(0.020)	(0.021)
residual variance	1.069^{***}	1.116^{***}	1.074^{***}	1.031^{+}
	(0.018)	(0.022)	(0.018)	(0.018)
deviance (-2 x log likelihood)	21862.28	15511.94	22488.94	19615.96
aic	21890.28	15543.94	22516.94	19647.96
bic	21987.07	15648.81	22614.12	19757.05
N (individuals)	7433	5190	7644	6756
N (parties)	107	91	123	115
N (countries)	14	12	15	14

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

a) 14 countries included in the analyses: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom; without Sweden and Austria in the second model.

b) 15 countries included in the analyses: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom; without Austria in the second model

Table 5.12: Linear Regression Models without Ireland and Switzerland

	Citizen-initiatives[a]		Popular decision-making[b]	
	1	2	1	2
Individual Level				
left-right scale	-0.092^{***}	-0.092^{***}	-0.091^{***}	-0.091^{***}
	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.023)	(0.023)
quadratic term left-right	0.006^{**}	0.006^{**}	0.008^{***}	0.008^{***}
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index	-0.006	-0.006	-0.015^{**}	-0.015^{**}
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)
populist attitudes	-0.000	-0.000	0.059^{***}	0.059^{***}
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
length of party membership	-0.003^{**}	-0.003^{**}	-0.009^{***}	-0.009^{***}
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.197^{***}	0.194^{***}	0.168^{***}	0.166^{***}
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.032)
Party Level				
opposition status	0.156	0.140	0.260^{*}	0.253^{*}
	(0.143)	(0.142)	(0.104)	(0.104)
change of popular approval	0.008	0.008	0.009	0.009
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.006)	(0.006)
legislative strength	-0.011^{+}	-0.010^{+}	-0.004	-0.005
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.004)	(0.004)
government participation	-0.226^{**}	-0.242^{**}	-0.075	-0.079
	(0.081)	(0.080)	(0.059)	(0.059)
Country Level				
no. popular votes		-0.155^{+}		-0.008
		(0.080)		(0.010)
legislative power index		-4.947^{*}		-4.015^{**}
		(1.986)		(1.442)
constant	3.160^{***}	7.956^{***}	1.719^{***}	5.488^{***}
	(0.199)	(1.874)	(0.148)	(1.364)
variance (country)	0.122^{***}	0.056^{***}	0.068^{***}	0.041^{***}
	(0.064)	(0.037)	(0.035)	(0.027)
variance (party)	0.220^{***}	0.218^{***}	0.113^{***}	0.114^{***}
	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.022)	(0.022)
residual variance	1.069^{***}	1.068^{***}	1.056^{**}	1.056^{**}
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.019)
deviance (-2 x log likelihood)	21612.50	21603.11	18941.84	18939.89
aic	21640.50	21635.11	18969.84	18971.89
bic	21737.10	21745.50	19064.65	19080.25
N (individuals)	7328	7328	6453	6453
N (parties)	101	101	109	109

Standard errors in parentheses; $^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

a) 13 countries included in the analyses: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom

b) 14 countries included in the analyses: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom

Chapter 6

Conclusions

Direct democratic processes have increased throughout the world and in particular in established Western democracies. Why this institutional trend appeared is a puzzle that has not produced extensive research, even less in comparative perspective. Without doubt there exist many observational studies that argue - often quite comprehensibly - why referendums occurred in a particular situation or how popular votes influenced the politics in a country at a certain time. Some studies also compare singular cases or develop typologies of reasons for the initiation of referendums. These studies offer interesting ideas to deliberate about. What they often lack is a concrete empirical test of their arguments which would extend to other cases. Furthermore, their explanations have often an ad-hoc character describing the political context that led to a referendum. It is often questionable whether the explanations presented in case studies are generalizable or applicable in other circumstances. What is missing is a comprehensive theoretical basis. This situation in research on direct democracy motivated the present study.

The aim of this thesis was to contribute a carefully considered theoretical explanation as well as a thorough comparative test of the theoretical assumptions. I used the described existing research to develop empirically testable theoretical explanations. At the same time I incorporated insights from neighbouring research fields such as the literature on electoral reforms, political culture or sociological institutionalism to give the explanations an elaborated theoretical basis. In this way, I developed in this study two theoretical perspectives to explain the behaviour of political elites. The first perspective widely discussed in literature assumes that political elites pursue strategic motivations in institutional questions. In particular, they try to improve their current power position (or that of their party).

The second perspective I elaborated stresses normative predispositions such as ideological convictions or concepts of an ideal political system. From this perspective, political elites act in accordance to their general values, socialized norms and political ideals. Institutional changes are likely to occur in a country if elites' ideal conceptions of the political system are not in congruence with the existing structures and practices. This normative perspective is widely ignored in the research on political elites and is also not used to explain the occurrence of referendums in the previously mentioned studies. Combining

strategic argumentation and normative explanations gives this study an extraordinary character.

Another important characteristic is the focus on attitudes of political elites. Research so far concentrated on singular government representatives or parties as the central actors responsible for the initiation of direct democratic processes. I extend the range of considered elites in existing studies and combine two analytical levels. Instead of looking at governing elites or parties, I use parliamentary candidates as the primary investigation objects and include their parties as an important influence on their attitudes. The analytical units are attitudes of the candidates. As described, attitudes offer the advantage to consider the general positions of political elites on the topic of direct democracy, but at the same time incorporate the current power context of the elites. Furthermore, attitudes can be viewed as predispositions to act and thus serve as explanations for future actions.

These future actions can be expected from a range of politically involved individuals and thus I chose a broad concept of elites. Prime ministers and party leaders are the tip of the elites' pyramid. Many more individuals, inside and outside parliament, can influence decisions and thus are conceived as relevant elites. This is particularly true for direct democratic processes that enable not elected representatives to have an impact on decisions. In this regard, direct democratic institutions change the traditional power distribution in representative systems and include outsiders into the process of policy-making. Therefore, I consider not only elected representatives, but also candidates that did not win a seat. In this regard, I was able to include in the same empirical test a variety of positions that have differing strategic orientations and normative predispositions. This broad sample of political elites enables a thorough test of the developed theoretical explanations.

Key Findings and Contribution

The previously explained motivation for this study and the selected approach to study attitudes of parliamentary candidates led to the concrete research question: What determines political elites' support for direct democracy? In the first step, I gave a theoretical answer: strategic motives as well as normative convictions. In the second step, I tested the theoretical assumptions empirically using a combined data set that incorporated individual attitudes from the CCS (2016), current power positions of candidates' parties from ParlGov (2018) and institutional structures of the selected countries from V-Dem (2018). This three-level structure is unique in the considered research question and (to my best knowledge) also in the research on institutional changes.

In the analyses, I used multilevel regression models to take account of the data structure as well as the theoretical division of the two explanatory perspectives. I connect strategic motivations primarily with the power positions of candidates' parties, while normative predispositions are mainly individually based. This division is not stringent so that I also tested a strategic motivation at the individual level and ideological influences at the party level. Moreover, the consideration of the country context as a third possible influence incorporates both perspectives: The inclusion of the third level takes into account

possible normative influences resulting from the dominant political culture in a country. Additionally, I considered strategic orientations in this level that arise from institutional restrictions. Table 6.1 lists the tested hypotheses for the two perspectives and summarizes the results.[1]

[1]The interaction hypotheses are not included in this overview, as their results were partly inconclusive. The results were discussed at the end of section 5.3 thoroughly.

Table 6.1: Overview of Results

Nr.	Hypothesis	DV1	DV2
Strategic Perspective			
1	Political elites that lost in the current election are more supportive of direct democratic institutions than political elites that won a parliamentary seat.	+	(+)
2	Political elites are more supportive of direct democratic institutions when the popular approval of their parties is in decline.	-	-
3	Political elites from opposition parties are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites from governing parties.	0	+
4	The more legislative power a party has, the less likely political elites from this party support direct democratic institutions.	+	0
5	Political elites from parties with prospects for government office are less supportive of direct democratic institutions than fringe parties.	+	0
6	The more frequent direct democracy is practised in a country at the national level, the less supportive are political elites from this country of direct democracy.	(+)	(0)
7	The more parliamentary powers political elites have access to, the less supportive they are of direct democracy.	+	+
Normative Perspective			
8	The more leftist political elites' ideological predispositions are, the more likely they are to support direct democratic institutions.	+	(+)
9	Political elites with libertarian orientations are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites with authoritarian orientations.	-	-
10.a	The more left a party is perceived, the more likely political elites from that party support direct democratic institutions.	0	0
10.b	The more libertarian a party is perceived, the more likely political elites from that party support direct democratic institutions.	0	0
11	Political elites with populist orientations are more likely to support direct democratic procedures than other political elites.	0	+
12	The longer political elites are involved in representative institutions, the more likely they are to reject direct democratic institutions.	+	+
13	Political elites who evaluate the current democratic regime negatively are more likely to support direct democratic institutions than political elites who evaluate the current democratic regime positively.	+	+

DV1: Support for citizen-initiatives; DV2: Approval of Popular Decision-Making

+ hypothesis confirmed; - hypothesis rejected; 0 - insignificant effect (but pointing to the right direction)

As described in the conceptual part of this thesis, direct democracy has different meanings. To some it refers to the ancient Greek model of a city state with regular gatherings of all citizens to decide on important issues. To some it refers to a frequently cast vote on a particular issue that was initiated from representative elites. Furthermore, direct democracy is connected to various normative implications, most importantly the demand for more and immediate involvement of citizens in the political system or the implementation of the so called general will through majority based popular votes.

To consider political elites' support for direct democracy I analysed two dependent variables which capture different understandings of direct democratic institutions. The first dependent variable is concerned with the introduction of citizen-initiatives. It stresses citizens' direct involvement in the political system which can be connected to the participatory democratic ideal. At the same time, citizen-initiatives reflect the strongest intrusion in the traditional representative decision-making process and therefore are the institutions connected to the most risks for political elites.

The second dependent variable is concerned with popular decision-making in general and juxtaposes direct democracy with parliamentary processes. It is less concrete than the first dependent variable, in particular it can be related to different forms of direct democratic votes. The question wording is framed as a protective position regarding representative institutions. Parliament, not voters should have the final say.[2] In this regard, the question appears to be connected to current criticisms of representative processes. It can be expected that the answers in the second dependent variable are influenced through current debates about democratic reforms.

The different foci of the two dependent variables are reflected in the results of the analyses: Regarding the support for citizen-initiatives, we observe that long-term strategic orientations play a role for the explanation. Political elites consider the consequences connected with citizen-initiatives for the permanent distribution of power and thus are more concerned with long-term office- and policy-seeking motivations. In particular, political elites' legislative strength and chances for office influence their support for citizen-initiatives.

Regarding the approval of popular decision-making, we observe more short-term oriented strategic influences. Political elites take their current (disadvantaged) position reflected in immediate vote-seeking and policy-seeking motivations - into account when they position themselves in this issue. In particular, the effect of the change of popular approval and of the current opposition status are relevant for the approval of popular decision-making.

In terms of normative influences we observe similar patterns, but also some deviations considering the two dependent variables. The position in the left-right dimension, the experience with representative institutions and the dissatisfaction with the current regime play an important role for both the support of citizen-initiatives and in the approval of popular decision-making. The position in the libertarian-authoritarian dimension and populist inclinations are only relevant for the approval of popular decision-making. This

[2]In the analyses the answers were coded reversed to indicate a clear approval of popular decision-making.

underlines the general character of the second dependent variable on the one hand, and its connection to the current criticisms of the representative system on the other hand. Criticism of representative institutions often appears in libertarian, but also populist thinking.

Citizen-initiatives appear less affected by such criticisms: Political elites with populist inclinations do not necessarily desire the active involvement of citizens in the initiation. Similarly, libertarian elites seem to view not only the advantage of self-determination and direct involvement through citizen-initiatives, but also the dangers connected to minorities in majority based decision-making.[3]

Moreover, the effects of dissatisfaction with the democratic regime have a different impact when considered in combination with strategic indicators. Regarding the support for citizen-initiatives, there is an independent effect of the negative evaluation of the democratic system which demonstrates a clear normative orientation. For the approval of popular decision-making, the dissatisfaction with the regime only plays a role when the candidate's party is in the opposition. Hence, it is more the current disadvantaged position that drives this effect. Political elites relate popular decision-making to the current political context and include their dissatisfaction with their disadvantaged status into the overall evaluation of the regime.

The evidence from this study suggests that political elites' support for direct democratic institutions is related to strategic orientations as well as normative predispositions. Direct democratic institutions create different strategic incentives that can be clearly linked to the current power position of parties. Those elites that occupy a strong position in the system are the most risk-averse and would not jeopardize their position confronted with possible losses through direct democratic processes. Electorally unsuccessful and disadvantaged parties, however, view direct democratic institutions as helpful instruments to have a greater say in politics. Moreover, disadvantaged political elites are less concerned with risks of popular votes as they are already on the losing side.

The results of this study support the idea that political elites are not only guided by strategic motivations but also by normative predispositions. Direct democratic institutions reflect a strong orientation on certain societal or political ideals such as equality, broad political participation or responsiveness of the political system. Political elites with such ideals are open to direct democratic processes. Moreover, political elites who are critical with the current regime support direct democracy as a possible reform of existing institutions. On the contrary, elites with long involvement in the representative system or with strong traditionalist orientations tend to reject direct democratic processes. The empirical test here clearly confirms that political elites' position on direct democracy is influenced by normative orientations.

Taken together, this thesis has demonstrated that political elites rely on two different sets of orientations in institutional questions: Considering their strong interest in political survival political elites calculate their relative power gains and take into account the risks connected to institutional changes. At the same time, though elites experience similar pressures and restrictions in their behaviour, they differentiate in their ideological and

[3]This is also shown in the reversed effect of libertarian orientations considering the approval of popular decision-making.

normative convictions formed during their socialization and post-recruitment experiences. Their ideological tendencies and normative beliefs about the ideal institutional setting equally guide their institutional preferences.

The combination of normative and strategic motivations is an innovation in the considered research field. Most studies concentrate on one particular influence in institutional questions, most often these are rational strategic motivations. Seldom normative influences are discussed and if included then mostly as controls. The present thesis shows that the two explanatory perspectives deserve equal consideration, as both contribute to the explanation of institutional preferences. In fact, the comparison of the relative explanatory power shows that the contributions of the two perspectives are balanced. Consequently, it is important to consider both perspectives examining institutional questions.

In this regard, this study offers important theoretical considerations and empirical findings for the construction of a general belief system and behavioural frame of political elites. A comprehensive approach in this regard was missing so far (Hoffmann-Lange, 2008; Kaina, 2009). The research here contributes to a general debate in the behavioural studies of political elites: Are political elites entirely rational calculating individuals considering only power gains for their parties? Or do norms and ideological views influence more their attitudes and actions? Elites are neither coldly calculating machines or egoistic animals, nor ideological puppets or pure agents of the institutions they are embedded in. There is rather an interplay of different influences in the behavioural systems of political elites. Future research should include this insight in the explanations of political elites' behaviour.

This study shows that not only the actions of political elites are of relevance. The study of attitudes can give interesting insights into the thinking of elites and enables the inclusion of different contextual factors. Next to the individual level with a focus on normative orientations I distinguished a party level with a focus on strategic considerations and a country context that reflects the institutional setting and cultural aspects of political elites behaviour. This inclusion of contextual influences helps to understand profoundly what determines political elites' behaviour. Based on the findings here, future research should embed different contextual influences to explain the behaviour of political elites, especially in comparative perspective.

The findings of this study are also fruitful for the general debate around institutional changes and transferable to other fields concerned with political elites' behaviour. For example, the two elaborated perspectives can also help to understand how political elites deal with new competitors in the political arena and an increased proportion of disaffected voters. From a strategic perspective the containment of new competitors is desirable, from a normative perspective there might be the orientation on inclusiveness and adequate representation of different political interests. At the same time, there might be considerations of how to protect the established (party) system and the own role in existing institutions. My research highlights that it is important to include strategic considerations as well as normative predispositions to explain the behaviour of political elites.

Limitations and Future Challenges

The two explanatory perspectives that have been studied here offer alternative, though not contradictory explanations for political elites' positions on direct democracy. The test of their interactions revealed that normative orientations work also in combination with strategic outlooks. In this regard, it seems that the current power position enhances the effect of ideological tendencies. The concrete associations need to be studied further with other institutional questions and extended indicators. There is clearly a research gap in this regard.

The present study gives some first insights into the complex interactions between strategic and normative orientations of political theory. However, this topic was not the primary object of the study and was not elaborated profoundly. What is noticeable is the lack of a clear theoretical argumentation on when or how the two perspectives jointly affect positions on institutional questions and which perspective moderates the effects of the other. Future research should concentrate on a precise theory of the interaction between strategic and normative orientations. It should be clearly elaborated how the causal mechanism works in the combination of strategic and normative factors and in which situations one perspective dominates and moderates the effect of the other.

Another important task in future research is the focus on the country context. The results of this study indicate that the different institutional and cultural contexts of countries have an impact on the positions of political elites in institutional questions. There is not much comparative research so far in this regard. This is unfortunate, as the country context offers valuable insights into differences of institutional settings and performance. For example, it is easier to understand why citizen-initiatives are not available in most countries if we look at the existing control instruments of parliamentarians, as this study showed. The sample of this study was unfortunately limited to a maximum of 15 cases. To test the effects of the institutional context reliably, the country sample should have at least 30 cases. This would also enable to include further theoretical considerations and control for other institutional differences at the country level.

Future studies should not only focus on the extension of the included cases, but also target a stronger connection between attitudes of individual elites and their actions. In particular, it is interesting to combine the insights of this research with actual activities in parliament or within the party context. In this regard, the study of party programmes and legislative speeches could offer new insights regarding the two theoretical perspectives elaborated in this thesis. Which arguments are used in party manifestos and speeches to justify the position towards direct democracy? Is it possible to detect strategic motivations in this regard? Which values and norms are mentioned or referred to? These questions deserve further research. The findings from this study can serve as starting points for further theoretical considerations and or an extended empirical test.

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Appendix A

Additional Results Overviews

Table A.1: Overview of Included Parties with Ideological Indicators

Party	N (ind.)	vote share (%)	left-right	auth-lib
Australia				
Liberal Party of Australia	60	36.3	7.4	7.0
Australian Labor Party	70	43.4	3.9	3.3
National Party of Australia	8	5.5	7.8	8.5
Australian Democrats	45	0.7	3.7	1.2
Australian Greens	100	7.8	1.5	0.6
Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party	23	0.3	8.2	8.0
Austria				
SPOE	152	29.3	3.7	3.5
OEVP	191	26.0	6.5	7.6
Gruene	184	10.4	2.5	1.4
FPOE	138	17.5	8.3	8.5
BZOE	64	10.7	8.8	8.8
FRITZ	4	1.8	3.3	3.5
KPOE	47	0.8	0.5	3.0
LIF	28	2.1	4.9	1.9
Belgium				
PS	37	13.7	2.9	3.2
MR	38	9.3	6.7	4.2
CDH	36	5.5	5.5	6.6
Ecolo	52	4.8	2.6	1.4
CD&V	60	10.9	5.8	7.2
NVA	70	17.4	6.5	6.1
SPA	51	9.2	3.2	3.1

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Party	N (ind.)	vote share (%)	left-right	auth-lib
VLD	50	8.6	7.0	3.7
VB	28	7.8	9.7	9.5
Groen	65	4.4	2.6	1.0
List Dedecker	7	2.3	6.0	3.5
PP	2	1.3	7.4	6.9
Denmark				
Red/Green Alliance	42	6.6	0.9	1.8
Socialist People_s Party	34	9.1	2.1	2.1
Social Democrats	22	24.5	3.8	4.3
Social Liberals	28	9.4	4.9	2.4
Christian Democrats	31	0.8	5.7	7.0
Liberal Alliance	29	4.9	6.0	3.5
Liberals	26	26.4	7.3	5.0
Conservative People_s Party	25	4.9	7.2	6.5
Danish People_s Party	32	12.2	8.2	7.9
Finland				
National Coalition Party	57	20.4	7.2	5.6
Social democratic party	77	19.1	3.6	4.2
The Finns Party	91	19.1	6.6	8.0
Center Party	78	15.8	5.8	7.2
The Left Alliance	94	8.1	2.2	3.3
Green League	80	7.3	3.6	2.3
Christian Democrats	66	4.0	7.2	8.3
Swedish Peoples Party	38	4.3	6.4	3.8
The Communist Party	49	0.3	1.2	3.0
SuomenSenioripuolue	21	0.5	6.6	8.0
Workers party	12	0.1	3.3	3.5
Communist Workers Party	9	0.1	3.3	3.5
Germany				
SPD	150	23.0	3.6	4.0
CDU	128	27.3	6.3	6.9
CSU	21	6.5	7.3	7.9
FDP	136	14.6	5.9	3.1
Gruene	141	10.7	2.9	1.3
Linke/WASG	131	11.9	1.2	3.2
Greece				
New Democracy	45	29.7	6.7	6.7

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Party	N (ind.)	vote share (%)	left-right	auth-lib
PASOK	90	12.3	4.5	3.6
Syriza	44	26.9	2.9	2.0
Independent Greeks	2	7.5	8.7	8.6
Golden Dawn	1	6.9	8.7	8.6
DIMAR	66	6.3	3.3	3.5
Iceland				
Social Democratic Alliance	61	29.8	4.1	1.0
Progressive Party	56	14.8	5.0	3.9
Independence Party (Cons.)	50	23.7	7.5	4.0
Left Green Movement	57	21.7	1.2	1.7
Liberal Party	19	2.2	6.2	3.0
Civic Movement	59	7.2	6.0	3.5
Ireland				
FF	30	41.6	6.1	7.0
FG	24	27.3	6.4	5.8
Greens	15	4.7	2.4	2.2
Labour	22	10.1	3.6	3.1
Progressive Democrats	6	2.7	8.0	3.7
Sinn Fein	8	6.9	2.8	4.5
Italy				
CENTRO DEMOCRATICO	13	0.5	6.0	3.5
FRATELLI D'ITALIA	24	2.0	7.4	6.9
FORZA ITALIA IL POPOLO DELLA LIBERTA'	51	21.6	7.1	6.6
LEGA NORD	30	4.1	7.8	7.9
MOVIMENTO 5 STELLE BEPPEGRILLO.IT	37	25.6	2.5	1.8
PARTITO DEMOCRATICO	118	25.4	2.6	2.1
RIVOLUZIONE CIVILE	23	2.3	1.2	3.0
SCELTA CIVICA CON MONTI PER L'ITALIA	22	8.3	6.0	3.5
SINISTRA ECOLOGIA LIBERTA'	58	3.2	1.2	3.0
UNIONE DI CENTRO	24	1.8	6.1	7.8
Netherlands				
CDA	29	26.5	5.9	6.7
PvdA	22	21.2	3.6	3.2
SP	24	16.6	1.2	4.2
VVD	26	14.7	7.3	4.4
Groen Links	12	4.6	2.0	1.6
Christen Unie	9	4.0	6.2	8.6

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Party	N (ind.)	vote share (%)	left-right	auth-lib
D66	17	2.0	4.5	1.8
SGP	13	1.6	8.8	9.8
Norway				
SV	140	6.2	1.6	1.5
Ap	131	35.4	3.4	2.7
Sp	129	6.2	4.7	5.8
KrF	122	5.5	5.9	9.2
V	102	3.9	5.1	3.3
Hoyre	106	17.2	7.9	3.6
FrP	124	22.9	8.8	5.5
Portugal				
BE	31	5.4	1.6	1.3
CDS-PP	43	12.2	8.0	9.0
CDU:PCP&PEV	20	8.2	2.2	2.6
PSD	42	40.3	6.3	7.0
PS	24	29.2	4.0	3.5
Sweden				
The Center Party	183	6.6	5.8	6.1
The Liberal Party	142	7.1	6.3	2.9
The Christian Democrats	178	5.6	7.2	8.0
The Green Party	182	7.3	3.4	2.5
The Conservatives	239	30.0	7.9	5.7
The Social Democrats	235	30.7	3.4	4.4
The Sweden Democrats	24	5.7	8.7	8.6
The Left Party	182	5.6	1.5	2.5
Switzerland				
FDP/PRD	158	15.1	6.3	3.4
CVP/PDC	143	12.3	4.7	7.1
SP/PS	226	18.7	1.8	1.2
SVP/UDC	118	26.6	7.4	8.3
EVP/PEP	101	2.0	4.9	7.6
CSP/PCS	11	0.3	6.2	7.2
PdA/PdT	35	0.5	0.5	1.6
GLP/Vert'libéraux	102	5.4	2.5	1.8
MCG	6	0.4	8.7	8.6
GPS/PES	168	8.4	1.7	1.0
SD/DS	21	0.2	9.4	9.0

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Party	N (ind.)	vote share (%)	left-right	auth-lib
EDU/UDF	51	1.3	8.7	9.4
Lega	3	0.8	8.7	8.6
BDP	68	5.4	7.4	6.9
United Kingdom				
Labour Party	211	29.0	4.4	4.3
Conservative Party	137	36.1	7.4	7.2
Liberal Democrats	270	23.0	4.3	2.6
UKIP	184	3.1	7.8	7.9
Green Party	149	1.0	2.6	2.0
Scottisch National Party	21	1.7	3.6	4.0
Plaid Cymru	17	0.6	3.1	3.7
BNP	52	1.9	8.7	8.6

Table A.2: Linear Regression Models with Parliamentary Experience

	DV1	**DV2**
left-right scale	-0.078^{**}	-0.110^{***}
	(0.025)	(0.025)
quadratic term left-right	0.005^{*}	0.009^{***}
	(0.002)	(0.002)
authoritarian-libertarian index	-0.003	-0.014^{*}
	(0.006)	(0.006)
populist attitudes	0.004	0.056^{***}
	(0.008)	(0.008)
length of party membership	-0.004^{**}	-0.007^{***}
	(0.001)	(0.001)
parliamentary experience	-0.012^{**}	-0.015^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.004)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.171^{***}	0.181^{***}
	(0.035)	(0.035)
opposition status	0.118	0.282^{**}
	(0.152)	(0.108)
change of popular approval	0.005	0.009
	(0.010)	(0.006)
legislative strength	-0.010^{+}	-0.003
	(0.006)	(0.004)
government participation	-0.260^{**}	-0.065
	(0.086)	(0.062)
liberty-authority position	-0.026	0.012
	(0.037)	(0.027)
left-right position	0.023	-0.015
	(0.042)	(0.030)
constant	3.139^{***}	1.663^{***}
	(0.219)	(0.160)
variance(country)	0.079^{***}	0.039^{***}
	(0.047)	(0.024)
variance(party)	0.224^{***}	0.103^{***}
	(0.042)	(0.022)
residual(variance)	1.070^{***}	1.053^{**}
	(0.020)	(0.020)
aic	17064.52	15902.76
bic	17177.79	16014.97
N (individuals)	5782	5435
N (parties)	95	97

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

models without Switzerland, Ireland and Iceland

Table A.3: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Focus on the Normative Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)
left-right scale	-0.237^{***}	-0.233^{***}	-0.228^{***}
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.042)
quadratic term left-right	0.016^{***}	0.016^{***}	0.016^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	-0.008	-0.009	-0.007
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
populist attitudes	0.006	0.006	0.005
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
length of party membership	-0.007^{**}	-0.007^{**}	-0.006^{**}
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.380^{***}	0.380^{***}	0.363^{***}
	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.058)
left-right position party		-0.033	0.036
		(0.085)	(0.071)
liberty-authority position party		-0.003	-0.018
		(0.079)	(0.064)
opposition status			0.319
			(0.272)
change of popular approval			0.022
			(0.018)
legislative strength			-0.020^{*}
			(0.010)
government participation			-0.396^{**}
			(0.152)
cut1	-3.775^{***}	-3.941^{***}	-4.157^{***}
	(0.230)	(0.342)	(0.399)
cut2	-2.199^{***}	-2.364^{***}	-2.581^{***}
	(0.227)	(0.340)	(0.397)
cut3	-1.317^{***}	-1.483^{***}	-1.699^{***}
	(0.226)	(0.339)	(0.396)
cut4	0.665^{**}	0.500	0.284
	(0.226)	(0.339)	(0.395)
var(country)	0.343^{+}	0.340^{+}	0.427^{*}
	(0.205)	(0.204)	(0.212)
var(party)	1.324^{***}	1.319^{***}	0.805^{***}
	(0.220)	(0.219)	(0.140)
aic	19364.22	19367.79	19334.44
bic	19447.18	19464.58	19458.89
N	7433	7433	7433

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.4: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Focus on the Normative Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)
left-right scale	−0.153***	−0.149***	−0.145***
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.039)
quadratic term left-right	0.013***	0.013***	0.013***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	−0.030**	−0.030**	−0.029**
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)
populist attitudes	0.105***	0.105***	0.104***
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
length of party membership	−0.017***	−0.017***	−0.016***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.229***	0.230***	0.216***
	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.055)
left-right position party		−0.044	−0.027
		(0.053)	(0.048)
liberty-authority position party		0.037	0.032
		(0.048)	(0.043)
opposition status			0.421*
			(0.183)
change of popular approval			0.017
			(0.011)
legislative strength			−0.009
			(0.007)
government participation			−0.047
			(0.099)
cut1	−2.271***	−2.307***	−2.145***
	(0.265)	(0.299)	(0.337)
cut2	−0.182	−0.219	−0.055
	(0.264)	(0.297)	(0.337)
cut3	0.680*	0.643*	0.807*
	(0.264)	(0.298)	(0.337)
cut4	2.182***	2.145***	2.309***
	(0.266)	(0.299)	(0.338)
var(country)	0.812*	0.809*	0.802**
	(0.317)	(0.316)	(0.309)
var(party)	0.470***	0.467***	0.345***
	(0.082)	(0.082)	(0.063)
aic	20227.25	20230.51	20212.98
bic	20310.55	20327.70	20337.93
N	7644	7644	7644

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.5: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Focus on the Strategic Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)
left-right position party	−0.035	0.036	
	(0.071)	(0.071)	
liberty-authority position party	−0.012	−0.018	
	(0.066)	(0.064)	
change of popular approval	0.026	0.022	0.021
	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.019)
opposition status	0.358	0.319	0.489
	(0.281)	(0.272)	(0.298)
legislative strength	−0.022*	−0.020*	−0.023+
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.012)
government participation	−0.453**	−0.396**	−0.311*
	(0.157)	(0.152)	(0.157)
left-right scale		−0.228***	−0.215***
		(0.042)	(0.049)
quadratic term left-right		0.016***	0.015**
		(0.004)	(0.005)
authoritarian-libertarian index		−0.007	0.020
		(0.010)	(0.012)
populist attitudes		0.005	0.012
		(0.013)	(0.016)
length of party membership		−0.006**	−0.007**
		(0.002)	(0.003)
dissatisfaction with democracy		0.363***	0.271***
		(0.058)	(0.066)
electoral loser			−0.227**
			(0.086)
cut1	−3.984***	−4.157***	−4.120***
	(0.409)	(0.399)	(0.428)
cut2	−2.414***	−2.581***	−2.571***
	(0.406)	(0.397)	(0.424)
cut3	−1.538***	−1.699***	−1.724***
	(0.406)	(0.396)	(0.424)
cut4	0.428	0.284	0.264
	(0.405)	(0.395)	(0.423)
var(country)	0.517*	0.427*	0.547+
	(0.250)	(0.212)	(0.291)
var(party)	0.872***	0.805***	0.812***
	(0.150)	(0.140)	(0.160)
aic	19412.93	19334.44	12712.14
bic	19495.89	19458.89	12823.14
N	7433	7433	5061

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.6: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Focus on the Strategic Perspective

	(1)	(2)	(3)
left-right position party	−0.018	−0.027	
	(0.044)	(0.048)	
liberty-authority position party	0.020	0.032	
	(0.041)	(0.043)	
change of popular approval	0.023*	0.017	0.016
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.013)
opposition status	0.390*	0.421*	0.524*
	(0.184)	(0.183)	(0.223)
legislative strength	−0.012+	−0.009	−0.012
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.009)
government participation	−0.098	−0.047	−0.044
	(0.100)	(0.099)	(0.116)
left-right scale		−0.145***	−0.134***
		(0.039)	(0.040)
quadratic term left-right		0.013***	0.011**
		(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index		−0.029**	−0.033**
		(0.010)	(0.010)
populist attitudes		0.104***	0.113***
		(0.012)	(0.013)
length of party membership		−0.016***	−0.017***
		(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy		0.216***	0.188**
		(0.055)	(0.057)
electoral loser			−0.134+
			(0.077)
cut1	−1.673***	−2.145***	−2.359***
	(0.313)	(0.337)	(0.363)
cut2	0.384	−0.055	−0.234
	(0.313)	(0.337)	(0.362)
cut3	1.210***	0.807*	0.630+
	(0.313)	(0.337)	(0.363)
cut4	2.709***	2.309***	2.121***
	(0.314)	(0.338)	(0.364)
var(country)	0.705**	0.802**	0.784*
	(0.265)	(0.309)	(0.329)
var(party)	0.369***	0.345***	0.471***
	(0.061)	(0.063)	(0.084)
aic	24070.33	20212.98	18113.46
bic	24155.59	20337.93	18229.36
N	8999	7644	6756

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.7: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Country Level Predictors

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
left-right scale	−0.225***	−0.226***	−0.225***	−0.226***	−0.226***
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)
quadratic term left-right	0.016***	0.016***	0.016***	0.016***	0.016***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	−0.008	−0.007	−0.007	−0.008	−0.007
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
populist attitudes	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
length of party membership	−0.006**	−0.006**	−0.006**	−0.006**	−0.006**
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.363***	0.362***	0.363***	0.358***	0.358***
	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.057)
opposition status	0.338	0.333	0.333	0.303	0.300
	(0.269)	(0.269)	(0.269)	(0.266)	(0.266)
change of popular approval	0.023	0.022	0.023	0.024	0.023
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
legislative strength	−0.019+	−0.019+	−0.021*	−0.020*	−0.019+
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
government participation	−0.384**	−0.401**	−0.380*	−0.398**	−0.409**
	(0.148)	(0.149)	(0.148)	(0.146)	(0.147)
number of popular votes	−0.096*			−0.153***	−0.114*
	(0.045)			(0.042)	(0.057)
direct popular vote index		−6.114*			−2.797
		(2.411)			(2.824)
legislative power index			−4.230	−9.814**	−8.988**
			(3.969)	(3.359)	(3.373)
cut1	−4.380***	−4.694***	−8.158*	−13.670***	−13.053***
	(0.368)	(0.405)	(3.727)	(3.208)	(3.187)
cut2	−2.805***	−3.118***	−6.583+	−12.094***	−11.477***
	(0.366)	(0.403)	(3.727)	(3.207)	(3.186)
cut3	−1.923***	−2.236***	−5.701	−11.212***	−10.595***
	(0.365)	(0.402)	(3.726)	(3.207)	(3.186)
cut4	0.061	−0.253	−3.718	−9.229**	−8.611**
	(0.364)	(0.401)	(3.726)	(3.206)	(3.185)
var(country)	0.296+	0.256+	0.383*	0.155	0.141
	(0.160)	(0.144)	(0.195)	(0.095)	(0.089)
var(party)	0.810***	0.812***	0.808***	0.795***	0.795***
	(0.141)	(0.141)	(0.140)	(0.136)	(0.136)
aic	19328.79	19327.31	19331.63	19323.63	19324.67
bic	19446.32	19444.84	19449.16	19448.08	19456.03
N	7433	7433	7433	7433	7433

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.8: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Country Level Predictors

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
left-right scale	−0.145***	−0.145***	−0.146***	−0.145***	−0.143***
	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)
quadratic term left-right	0.013***	0.013***	0.013***	0.013***	0.012**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	−0.030**	−0.030**	−0.030**	−0.030**	−0.030**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
populist attitudes	0.105***	0.104***	0.104***	0.105***	0.105***
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
length of party membership	−0.016***	−0.016***	−0.016***	−0.016***	−0.016***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.222***	0.218***	0.214***	0.220***	0.222***
	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.054)	(0.054)
opposition status	0.440*	0.431*	0.414*	0.441*	0.432*
	(0.183)	(0.183)	(0.182)	(0.183)	(0.183)
change of popular approval	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.015
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
legislative strength	−0.007	−0.008	−0.009	−0.007	−0.005
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)
government participation	−0.053	−0.045	−0.050	−0.050	−0.080
	(0.098)	(0.098)	(0.098)	(0.097)	(0.099)
number of popular votes	0.023***			0.023***	0.042***
	(0.004)			(0.003)	(0.007)
direct popular vote index		3.398**			−3.909**
		(1.047)			(1.286)
legislative power index			−6.546	−6.472*	−6.795***
			(4.943)	(2.546)	(2.012)
cut1	−1.837***	−1.679***	−8.254+	−7.857**	−8.463***
	(0.264)	(0.322)	(4.605)	(2.392)	(1.909)
cut2	0.251	0.410	−6.163	−5.768*	−6.375***
	(0.264)	(0.322)	(4.605)	(2.391)	(1.908)
cut3	1.114***	1.272***	−5.301	−4.906*	−5.512**
	(0.264)	(0.322)	(4.605)	(2.391)	(1.908)
cut4	2.617***	2.775***	−3.800	−3.403	−4.008*
	(0.266)	(0.324)	(4.605)	(2.391)	(1.908)
var(country)	0.224*	0.446*	0.716**	0.137+	0.058
	(0.105)	(0.184)	(0.277)	(0.073)	(0.047)
var(party)	0.349***	0.348***	0.348***	0.351***	0.359***
	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.066)
aic	20195.24	20203.73	20209.90	20191.88	20186.87
bic	20313.25	20321.74	20327.90	20316.83	20318.76
N	7644	7644	7644	7644	7644

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.9: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Interactions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
left-right scale	-0.222^{***}	-0.193^{***}	-0.263^{***}	-0.243^{***}
	(0.041)	(0.043)	(0.045)	(0.046)
quadratic term left-right	0.016^{***}	0.017^{***}	0.016^{***}	0.018^{***}
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
length of party membership	-0.006^{**}	-0.006^{**}	-0.006^{**}	-0.007^{**}
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.366^{***}	0.366^{***}	0.369^{***}	0.371^{***}
	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.058)
legislative strength	-0.018^{+}	-0.019^{+}	-0.031^{**}	-0.040^{***}
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.012)
government participation	-0.550^{***}	-0.377^{**}	-0.540^{***}	-0.269^{*}
	(0.106)	(0.129)	(0.106)	(0.132)
left-right scale x		-0.036^{*}		-0.056^{***}
government participation		(0.015)		(0.017)
left-right scale x			0.003^{*}	0.004^{**}
legislative strength			(0.001)	(0.001)
cut1	-4.527^{***}	-4.385^{***}	-4.711^{***}	-4.603^{***}
	(0.264)	(0.272)	(0.277)	(0.279)
cut2	-2.951^{***}	-2.808^{***}	-3.135^{***}	-3.025^{***}
	(0.261)	(0.269)	(0.274)	(0.276)
cut3	-2.069^{***}	-1.925^{***}	-2.253^{***}	-2.141^{***}
	(0.260)	(0.268)	(0.273)	(0.275)
cut4	-0.086	0.059	-0.269	-0.156
	(0.259)	(0.267)	(0.271)	(0.274)
var(country)	0.431^{*}	0.444^{*}	0.425^{*}	0.443^{*}
	(0.215)	(0.219)	(0.213)	(0.218)
var(party)	0.834^{***}	0.821^{***}	0.832^{***}	0.806^{***}
	(0.144)	(0.143)	(0.144)	(0.140)
aic	19326.00	19322.45	19323.33	19314.07
bic	19408.97	19412.33	19413.21	19410.86
N	7433	7433	7433	7433

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.10: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Interactions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
left-right scale	−0.147***	−0.145***	−0.144***	−0.142***
	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.038)
quadratic term left-right	0.013***	0.012***	0.012**	0.012**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	−0.031**	−0.029**	−0.030**	−0.029**
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.009)
populist attitudes	0.104***	0.104***	0.104***	0.103***
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
length of party membership	−0.016***	−0.016***	−0.016***	−0.016***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.219***	0.215***	0.037	0.034
	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.081)	(0.081)
change of popular approval	0.017+	0.014	0.016	0.012
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
opposition status	0.573***	0.585***	0.442**	0.454***
	(0.131)	(0.130)	(0.137)	(0.136)
auth.-lib. index x		0.003*		0.003+
change of popular approval		(0.001)		(0.001)
dissatisfaction x			0.327**	0.326**
opposition status			(0.108)	(0.108)
cut1	−1.914***	−1.898***	−1.968***	−1.952***
	(0.275)	(0.275)	(0.274)	(0.275)
cut2	0.176	0.193	0.123	0.141
	(0.274)	(0.274)	(0.274)	(0.274)
cut3	1.038***	1.055***	0.986***	1.003***
	(0.274)	(0.275)	(0.274)	(0.274)
cut4	2.540***	2.557***	2.489***	2.506***
	(0.276)	(0.277)	(0.276)	(0.276)
var(country)	0.805**	0.808**	0.803**	0.806**
	(0.310)	(0.311)	(0.309)	(0.310)
var(party)	0.359***	0.354***	0.352***	0.347***
	(0.065)	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.063)
aic	20208.17	20206.25	20200.99	20199.15
bic	20305.35	20310.37	20305.12	20310.22
N	7644	7644	7644	7644

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.11: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Support for Citizen-Initiatives, Robustness Tests

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
left-right scale	−0.256***	−0.260***	−0.221***	−0.222***
	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.041)	(0.041)
quadratic term left-right	0.020***	0.020***	0.015***	0.015***
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	0.011	0.006	−0.009	−0.009
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.010)
populist attitudes	0.015	0.015	0.006	0.006
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.013)
length of party membership	−0.010***	−0.005+	−0.006**	−0.006**
	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.281***	0.285***	0.351***	0.346***
	(0.066)	(0.066)	(0.058)	(0.058)
opposition status	0.285	0.301	0.435	0.411
	(0.279)	(0.283)	(0.284)	(0.281)
change of popular approval	0.011	0.013	0.021	0.020
	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
legislative strength	−0.022*	−0.023*	−0.023*	−0.022*
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)
government participation	−0.496**	−0.509**	−0.423**	−0.457**
	(0.154)	(0.155)	(0.159)	(0.158)
age		−0.009***		
		(0.003)		
male		−0.023		
		(0.056)		
number of popular votes				−0.354*
				(0.155)
legislative power index				−8.084*
				(3.850)
cut1	−4.362***	−4.782***	−4.334***	−12.271***
	(0.401)	(0.422)	(0.392)	(3.637)
cut2	−2.822***	−3.241***	−2.776***	−10.713**
	(0.398)	(0.419)	(0.390)	(3.636)
cut3	−1.999***	−2.418***	−1.892***	−9.829**
	(0.397)	(0.418)	(0.389)	(3.636)
cut4	−0.061	−0.476	0.091	−7.845*
	(0.396)	(0.417)	(0.389)	(3.635)
var(country)	0.491+	0.505*	0.454*	0.204+
	(0.251)	(0.257)	(0.226)	(0.116)
var(party)	0.807***	0.827***	0.884***	0.869***
	(0.152)	(0.156)	(0.154)	(0.149)
aic	13782.66	13773.35	19221.06	19216.42
bic	13887.88	13891.73	19331.78	19340.97
N	5305	5305	7476	7476

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Model 1-2 without Sweden and Austria; 3-4 without Ireland

Table A.12: Ordered Logit Regression Models on the Approval of Popular Decision-Making, Robustness Tests

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
left-right scale	−0.145***	−0.147***	−0.131**	−0.131**
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)
quadratic term left-right	0.012**	0.012**	0.010*	0.010*
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
authoritarian-libertarian index	−0.027**	−0.036***	−0.028**	−0.028**
	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.010)
populist attitudes	0.105***	0.103***	0.117***	0.118***
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
length of party membership	−0.016***	−0.007**	−0.018***	−0.018***
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)
dissatisfaction with democracy	0.098+	0.103+	0.235***	0.235***
	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.057)
opposition status	0.419*	0.424*	0.490*	0.473*
	(0.207)	(0.208)	(0.192)	(0.192)
change of popular approval	0.013	0.015	0.009	0.009
	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.012)
legislative strength	−0.011	−0.013	−0.007	−0.008
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)
government participation	−0.117	−0.136	−0.190+	−0.198+
	(0.111)	(0.112)	(0.109)	(0.109)
age		−0.013***		
		(0.002)		
male		−0.127**		
		(0.049)		
number of popular votes				−0.020
				(0.017)
legislative power index				−7.529**
				(2.424)
cut1	−2.370***	−3.016***	−2.120***	−9.220***
	(0.356)	(0.371)	(0.273)	(2.298)
cut2	−0.235	−0.871*	−0.010	−7.109**
	(0.355)	(0.370)	(0.272)	(2.297)
cut3	0.623+	−0.008	0.866**	−6.233**
	(0.355)	(0.370)	(0.272)	(2.297)
cut4	2.146***	1.518***	2.405***	−4.694*
	(0.356)	(0.371)	(0.275)	(2.297)
var(country)	0.862*	0.872*	0.220*	0.103
	(0.347)	(0.351)	(0.109)	(0.063)
var(party)	0.454***	0.459***	0.396***	0.395***
	(0.080)	(0.081)	(0.074)	(0.073)
aic	17960.72	17922.32	17563.55	17559.91
bic	18070.08	18045.35	17672.23	17682.17
N	6872	6872	6586	6586

Standard errors in parentheses

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Model 1-2 without Sweden and Austria; 3-4 without Switzerland

Appendix B

Summary and Declarations

Political Elites and Direct Democracy

Strategic and Normative Determinants of the Support for Direct Democratic Institutions

Abstract

The increased use of direct democracy throughout Europe is a puzzling phenomenon: Elected representatives are willing to give away their decision-making power to voters, risking defeats through a popular vote. Direct democratic institutions change the logic in the traditional representative decision-making and affect the power-distribution of political actors. This study examines what determines political elites' support for direct democratic institutions.

Two theoretical perspectives are elaborated to explain political elites' support. On the one hand, political elites pursue strategic goals with direct democratic institutions. Based on the rational choice approach, the strategic perspective connects the suport for direct democracy with the current power position of political elites' parties. The weaker the position of the party, the more welcome are direct democratic procedures. On the other hand, political elites incorporate normative predispositions towards a certain type of democracy. In this normative perspective, the support for direct democracy is also dependent on particular values, socialized norms and political ideals. Political elites support direct democracy if it is in congruence with their ideal conception of society and politics.

The two explanatory perspectives are tested with data of the Comparative Candidates Survey (2016). At the centre of the investigation are the attitudes of candidates for national parliaments from 15 Western democracies. The selected countries have different experiences with direct democracy - from frequent use to no application at the national level. Furthermore, the candidates are embedded in diverse party contexts. To take this structure into account, multilevel analyses are performed. The empirical test concentrates on the explanation of the support for the introduction of citizen-initiatives and the general approval of popular votes in contrast to parliamentary sovereignty.

The results show that strategic and normative factors are equally relevant to explain political elites' support for direct democracy. From the normative perspective, ideological convictions, socialization experiences as well as the current evaluation of the democratic system play an important role for the support of direct democracy. From the strategic perspective, the current power position of candidates' parties reflected in its popular approval, chances for government offices and the current legislative strength influence candidates' position on direct democratic institutions.

Politische Eliten and Direkte Demokratie

Strategische and normative Faktoren für die Unterstützung direktdemokratischer Institutionen

Zusammenfassung

Die Verbreitung direktdemokratischer Verfahren in ganz Europa stellt ein Rätsel dar: Gewählte Vertreter sind bereit, ihre Entscheidungsbefugnis an Wähler abzugeben. Dabei riskieren sie Niederlagen durch Volksabstimmungen. Direktdemokratische Verfahren ändern die Logik der traditionellen repräsentativen Entscheidungsfindung und wirken sich auf die Machtverteilugn politischer Akteure aus. Diese Studie untersucht, was die Unterstützung der politischen Eliten für direktdemokratische Institutionen beeinflusst.

Zwei theoretische Perspektiven werden erarbeitet, um die Unterstützung der politischen Eliten zu erklären. Auf der einen Seite verfolgen politische Eliten strategische Ziele mit direkt demokratischen Institutionen. Basierend auf dem Rational Choice Ansatz verbindet die strategische Perspektive die Unterstützung der direkten Demokratie mit der aktuellen Machtposition der Parteien der politischen Eliten. Je schwächer die Position der Partei, desto mehr sind direktdemokratische Verfahren willkommen. Auf der anderen Seite haben politische Eliten normative Prädispositionen für eine bestimmte Art von Demokratie. Aus dieser normativen Perspektive ist die Unterstützung der direkten Demokratie auch von bestimmten Werten, sozialisierten Normen und politischen Idealen abhängig. Politische Eliten unterstützen die direkte Demokratie, wenn sie mit ihrem Idealbild von Gesellschaft und Politik übereinstimmt.

Die beiden erklärenden Perspektiven werden mit den Daten der Comparative Candidates Survey (2016) getestet. Im Mittelpunkt der Untersuchung stehen die Einstellungen von Kandidaten für nationale Parlamente aus 15 westlichen Demokratien. Die ausgewählten Länder haben unterschiedliche Erfahrungen mit der direkten Demokratie - von häufigem Gebrauch bis hin zu keiner Anwendung auf nationaler Ebene. Darüber hinaus sind die Kandidaten in verschiedene Parteikontexte eingebettet. Um dieser Struktur Rechnung zu tragen, werden Mehrebenen-Analysen durchgeführt. Im Fokus steht die Unterstützung der Einführung von Bürgerinitiativen und die allgemeine Zustimmung zu Volksabstimmungen im Gegensatz zur parlamentarischen Souveränität.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass strategische und normative Faktoren gleich relevant sind, um die Unterstützung der politischen Eliten für direkte Demokratie zu erklären. Aus der normativen Perspektive spielen ideologische Überzeugungen, Sozialisationserfahrungen sowie die aktuelle Bewertung des demokratischen Systems spielen eine wichtige Rolle für die Unterstützung der direkten Demokratie. Aus der strategischen Perspektive beeinflusst die aktuelle Machtposition der Parteien, die sich in der Zustimmung der Bevölkerung, den Chancen für Regierungsämter und der aktuellen legislativen Stärke widerspiegelt, die Position der Kandidaten zu direktdemokratischen Institutionen.

Erklärung

Hiermit erkläre ich, ___Olga Herzog_____, dass ich keine kommerzielle Promotionsberatung in Anspruch genommen habe. Die Arbeit wurde nicht schon einmal in einem früheren Promotionsverfahren angenommen oder als ungenügend beurteilt.

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Eidesstattliche Versicherung:

Ich, _____Olga Herzog_____, versichere an Eides statt, dass ich die Dissertation mit dem Titel:

„__Political Elites and Direct Democracy

_____“

selbst und bei einer Zusammenarbeit mit anderen Wissenschaftlerinnen oder Wissenschaftlern gemäß den beigefügten Darlegungen nach § 6 Abs. 6 der Promotionsordnung der Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften vom 18. Januar 2017 verfasst habe. Andere als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel habe ich nicht benutzt.

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