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# Dimensions of Political Representation: Ideological and Policy Congruence between the Representative and the Represented in Seven Countries

*Yilmaz Esmer & Bahar Ayça Okçuoğlu\**

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**Abstract:** »Dimensionen der politischen Vertretung: Ideologie- und Politikkongruenz zwischen Abgeordneten und Wählerschaft in sieben Ländern«. Based on the understanding that modern democracies must be representative and that this is not only necessary but also desirable, this paper exploits a unique data set which makes comparisons of citizens and their parliamentary representatives on a number of dimensions possible at two points in time (roughly six years apart). The data allows us to comparatively evaluate three dimensions of congruence: ideology, economic policy, and democratic values. We have found that the levels of congruence for the first two dimensions is remarkably high while the popular demand for democracy is significantly lagging behind. Finally, we have failed to demonstrate a positive correlation between quality of democracy and levels of congruence.

**Keywords:** Political elites, representation, trustee model, imperative mandate, elite-mass congruence, Left-Right ideology.

Political representation is at the core of liberal democracy.<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

Although the study of and particularly empirical research on political representation in modern democracies is, by definition, relatively recent, recognition of the problem by political thinkers goes all the way back to Aristotle. Indeed, what the great philosopher wrote over 23 centuries ago is still pertinent:

A democracy will do well to apply this plan of compulsory attendance to the deliberative assembly. The results of deliberation are better when all deliberate together; when the populace is mixed with the notables and they, in their turn, with the populace. It is also in the interest of democracy that the parts of

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<sup>1</sup> Klingemann, Gancheva and Weßels (2017, 53); also Weßels (2007, 833).

the state should be represented in the deliberative body by an equal number of members, either elected for the purpose or appointed by the use of the lot. (Aristotle 1962 [330 B.C.], 192)

As explained by Barker (1962, note 2)

It is important to notice that Aristotle here suggests a *representative* [emphasis original] organ of deliberation [...]. This shows that the idea of representative institutions was not altogether unknown to the Greeks.

Not only are we introduced here to the notion and prominence of representation in a democracy, but we are also told about the principles and the mechanism of putting together a representative body. So much so that, a bicameral assembly, to use contemporary terminology, is recommended “consisting of the Athenian Council and Assembly, and [...] ‘a synod of representatives from all the other states of the league.’”<sup>2</sup>

Like many of Aristotle’s insightful ideas, the notion of a national representative assembly, even in its rudimentary forms, had to wait for many centuries before becoming a reality.<sup>3</sup> However, those who did not believe a representative political system was cause for celebration were in distinguished company as well. Rousseau, for one, had no appreciation whatsoever for representative government. “Sovereignty cannot be represented” he wrote,

for the same reason that it cannot be alienated. It consists essentially in the general will, and will cannot be represented; will either is, or is not, your own; there is no intermediate possibility. Thus deputies of the people are not, and cannot be, its representatives. (Rousseau 1953 [1762], 103-4)

If we apply Rousseau’s argument to our day, almost all laws of contemporary democracies are illegitimate and invalid since “Any law which the people has not ratified in person is null and void; it is not a law.” To Rousseau, this is no less than an existential question: “as soon as a people gives itself representatives, it is no longer free, and no longer exists.” (Rousseau 1953 [1762], 103-4).

Needless to say, history has not favored Rousseau’s position. Today, a representative legislative body has become almost *sine qua non* of contemporary democracies while direct democracies have all but vanished. Nevertheless, we do not take sides with Rousseau and think that this development is something to lament. Indeed, “[a]ddressing the norms appropriate to a system of representation assumes that representation is, and is normatively intended to be, *something more than a defective substitute for direct democracy*” (Mansbridge 2003, 515; emphasis ours). Undeniably, “the notion of representation occupies a central place in Western thinking about the state” (Achen 1978, 475). We might well add that “the notion of representation occupies a central place” not

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<sup>2</sup> *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. VI, p. 73 quoted in Barker (1962, 192).

<sup>3</sup> For a historical overview, see Beard and Lewis (1959).

only in Western but in universal thinking as well about liberal democracy. After all,

Representation is about designing appropriate institutional mechanisms of transferring and transforming popular preferences, including grievances, to the upper levels of the political system. (Best, Lengyel and Verzichelli 2012, 9)

We have already noted that for Rousseau (and few remaining advocates of direct democracy) “democracy was direct or it wasn’t. [...] In other words, representative democracy is no democracy at all” (Landemore 2016, 2). We dare to take the diametrically opposite position and claim that, in the highly complex societies of today, it is more like “no meaningful representation, no democracy!” It would be unrealistic to expect modern democracies to fulfill their functions without an elected parliament, and direct democracy is indeed no more than a charming myth (Landemore 2016). As Disch (2011, 104) has put it “[i]t is only through representation that a people comes to be as a political agent, one capable of putting forward a demand.”

To be fair, there are scholars who emphasize the shortcomings of the notion as well as the practice of representation in contemporary democracies but, in our opinion, a radical overhaul of the system is neither possible, nor desirable.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, the line of representation from the citizens to the legislators is no longer direct since contemporary democracies have introduced an intermediary stage on the link between the represented and the representative: the modern political party (Dalton 1985; Klingemann, Gancheva and Wessels 2017; Miller and Stokes 1963; Pettersson 2010).

Although hardly “representative” as we understand the term today, historians trace the birth of national parliaments all the way to the 13th century when the “Parliament of England” was established as the legislative body of the English Kingdom.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, important theoretical questions, with significant practical import as well, concerning the nature of representation in democracies, still remain largely unresolved. There is no consensus in modern political science even on the definition of “political representation” although there is near unanimity in regarding “nationally representative” legislatures as one of the main pillars of modern liberal democracies.<sup>6</sup> The term “political elites” extends far beyond parliamentary elites but a discussion of the myriad definitions of political elites in specific and elites more generally is beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to note that we consider Mills’s classical definition that “the elite are simply those who have the most of what there is to have, which is

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<sup>4</sup> For an excellent review of the critics of representative democracy, see Sabl (2015).

<sup>5</sup> In this context, one can also mention the Cortes in Medieval Spain (Kingdom of Leon and Castile), which some historians refer to as another early form of “parliament.”

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Andeweg (2011); Dalton, Farrell and McAllister (2011); Dumont, Fivaz and Schwartz (2017); Huber and Powell, Jr. (1994); Otero-Felipe and Rodriguez-Zepeda (2010).

generally held to include money, power, and prestige – as well as all the ways of life to which these lead” (Mills 1956, 9) as a valid starting point.

For the purpose of the present paper, we limit our discussion to representation via elected parliamentarians – and the political parties they are affiliated with. From this narrower perspective, one fundamental question seems to constitute the basis of the various approaches to political representation: what is the proper mandate of an (elected) representative? Further theoretical questions will most likely depend on our answer to this basic problematic of trustee vs. delegate model of representation.

At least partially dependent on the preferred model of representation, analysts have to tackle the rather thorny issue of the desirable – if not idealistic – degree of congruence between the representatives and the represented. This question, in turn, is tied to the empirical problem of how to measure congruence and incongruence. But prior to deciding the degree and the method of measuring congruence, one has to know *what* to measure. Granted that “[t]he democratic process [...] depends on an effective and responsive relationship between the representative and the represented,” (Dalton, Farrell and McAllister 2011, 21) does “effective and responsive relationship” refer to major policy decisions, ideology, basic values, or demographic and social background characteristics of legislators, or perhaps a combination of some or all of these?

And where should we be looking at to measure and assess congruence? Put differently, whose values, ideologies, and policy preferences are we to compare to decide there is or there is not a certain degree of congruence? This question is particularly relevant in modern democracies where the electorates’ demands are mediated through political parties. Should we, then, look for agreement between individual political parties and their constituencies (dyadic representation) or should we require the parliament, as a whole, to be “representative” of the whole nation (collective representation)?

Finally, is democracy a “one-way street,” perhaps a “conveyor belt” transmitting demands, preferences, and concerns from the electorate to their representatives or do political elites shape the ideologies and preferences of the masses? If the latter, does that square with the normative desiderata of an ideal (or, perhaps, “idealized”) democracy?

Needless to say, these are not easy questions with simple answers. Hence, we would like to turn our attention, albeit very briefly, to these questions of both theoretical and practical significance before presenting our empirical findings based on data collected in seven countries in 2007 and 2013.

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## 2. Approaches to Democratic Representation

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### 2.1 Trustee vs. Delegate Models of Representation

In representative democracies, members of legislative bodies are elected by the electorate with a mandate but the nature of this mandate is not well-defined. The so-called trustee versus delegate (imperative) models of political representation have been a debate topic from very early on. The core question is whether the representatives, once elected, should be free to use their own judgment and make their decisions which, in their discretion and good conscience, are the best for their constituents or should they be restricted by the will of their electors with whom they are duty-bound to be in constant close contact. This remains to be the core question although different terminologies may be preferred by different authors.<sup>7</sup>

According to the European Commission for Democracy Through Law (more commonly referred to as the Venice Commission), the origins of the imperative mandate goes all the way to Roman Law (Venice Commission 2009). On the other hand, the best known and the most frequently quoted statement on the trustee-delegate controversy is Edmund Burke's condemnation of the instructed delegate model and his passionate defense of the trustee approach. In a speech he delivered to the electors of Bristol in 1774, he spoke with eloquence:

Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion, high respect; their business, unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgement, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

[...] what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion; in which one set of men deliberate; and another decide; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments?

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<sup>7</sup> Some examples are: Imperative mandate vs free mandate (The Venice Commission 2009); imperative mandate vs representational mandate (van der Hulst 2000); trustee vs instructed delegate (Miller and Stokes 1963).

[...] but *authoritative* instructions; *mandates* issued, which the member is bound to blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgement and conscience, – these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land [...]. [italics original]

And, Burke ended his address with the declaration that

Parliament is not a *congress* [italics original] 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 a whole. [italics original]<sup>8</sup>

The two models have rather different implications from the main perspective of the present paper, i.e., the degree of congruence between the electorate and the legislator. The delegate model assumes a much higher fit than the trustee model while the latter allows a considerable degree of flexibility in this respect (Pettersson 2010). Of equal relevance is the warning in a report by the Inter-Parliamentary Union that

In heterogeneous societies, the imperative mandate inevitably leads to increased polarization, while the representational mandate seems to be more conducive to compromise and the search for consensus. (Van der Hulst 2000, 11)

In an era of high levels of polarization in many new as well as consolidated democracies, this warning is worthy of attention.

It is hardly any surprise that while the delegate model has more appeal for the citizens, parliamentarians favor the trustee model. The former group would like their “instructions” to be meticulously carried out and the latter would like as much freedom and flexibility as possible (Pettersson 2010, 122).

In more recent discussions, some additions or modifications have been proposed to the old, and we believe still largely valid, schema. Of these, the so-called “responsible party” model seems especially pertinent for this paper.<sup>9</sup> Initially proposed by Miller and Stokes (1963) the responsible party model

is based on the assumption that representation is achieved through the collective efforts of political parties to aggregate the interests of their followers [...]. In this model, political parties serve as mediators of representation, resulting in shared policy preferences of deputies and voters (Hoffman-Lange 2008, 56).

Although Miller and Stokes warned against ignoring the role of political parties, the US tradition in general – as well as their work in particular – has been criticized for failing to adequately account for the vital function of political parties especially in European parliamentary systems (Weßels 2007, 839).

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<sup>8</sup> <<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch13s7.html>> (Accessed April 6, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Additionally, one could mention Mansbridge (2003); Pitkin (1967); Rehfeld (2009). All three authors believe the traditional delegate-trustee classification is not adequate and propose additional or different dimensions or categories.

Indeed, their well-known diagram, frequently referred to as the diamond model of representation (1963, 50), does not include political parties at all.<sup>10</sup>

The responsible party model can be seen as a variation of the delegate model where the deputies are, in a way, delegates of their parties and are never expected to make policy choices that are not in agreement with *their party's program* or centrally drawn up platform. This model is more appropriate for parliamentary systems with disciplined parties.

In discussions of the three approaches to representation that we have briefly reviewed above, it is important to keep in mind that these models are not mutually exclusive (Pettersson 2010).

In Section 3, we attempt to test both the delegate model (representatives are delegates of the whole nation) and the party model (representatives are bound by their parties' instructions) with data from our seven countries.

## 2.2 Level and Measurement of Congruence

We know that complete match between citizens and their representatives is impossible – and it is largely accepted that such “one-to-one model” is not desirable either. However, it is widely agreed upon that democracies are expected to achieve some acceptable level of congruity. Otherwise, the term representation loses its meaning. Indeed “even those adopting a trustee view of representation accept that deviations from constituent preferences should be infrequent and congruence the norm” (Pitkin 1967, 209-10). After all, liberal democracy prides itself in establishing a link between voters and the elected and claiming that it is a regime in which those who govern must pay close attention to the demands and preferences of the governed (Huber and Powell, Jr. 1994; Otero-Felipe and Rodriguez-Zepeda 2010; Rehfeld 2009). It is not unusual that the degree of congruence is taken to be an indicator of the quality of democracy (Achen 1978; Rosema, Aarts and Denters 2011) or, as articulated by Powell, (2013, 9) “[d]emocratic theory assumes that democratic representation will create close ideological congruence between citizens and their governments.”

It is not possible to objectively quantify the acceptable or desirable levels of similarity for different models of representation. In fact, this is a major criticism directed against empirical studies of representational responsiveness (Sabl 2015). Nonetheless, various methods for the quantitative measurement of congruity/incongruity have been proposed. The first measures for comparison that come to mind are the mean and the median for assessing elite-mass congruence and simple percentages for studies of legislators. However, it was rightly pointed out that such comparisons of measures of central tendency, useful as they are, totally ignore dispersion and this, for obvious reasons, could

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<sup>10</sup> For a critical view of the Miller and Stokes (1963) model, see Thomassen (1991).



be misleading. Indeed, it is quite conceivable for the two groups to have equal or nearly equal measures of central tendency with very dissimilar distributions.<sup>11</sup> Hence the need to include some measure of dispersion in the comparison.

Achen's summary of the basic assumptions and the techniques of elite-mass comparison are somewhat old but still largely valid. Based on the postulation that "[t]he representatives' opinions serve as proxies for their behavior," Achen (1978, 490) derives three measures of representativeness. They are: (1) Proximity which addresses the notion of ideological distance between citizens and their representatives; the square or the absolute value of their positions on similar scales are the obvious possible measures of proximity; (2) Centristism takes into account the variance of the indicator in a representative's constituency; and (3) Responsiveness "describes how representatives' views in liberal districts compare with those in conservative districts."

Assuming that the indicator is measured with the same scale (interval) for both parliamentarians and citizens, taking into account dispersion provides more information and a better measure of congruence. For comparison of distributions, some authors (e.g., Pettersson 2010) prefer the cumulative distribution function while others opt for the non-cumulative distribution function (e.g., Andeweg 2011). We will use the latter technique since it easily "lends itself to visual presentation, and it is intuitively more appealing to have a measure ranging from zero [...] to 100" (Andeweg 2011, 43).

### 2.3 Dimensions of Congruence

The literature on the topic of congruence/incongruence between masses and elites is considerable and many of these studies are based on empirical findings. According to Higley,

The theory [i.e., the theory of democratic elitism]<sup>12</sup> has made interactions between mass publics and elites an abiding research focus, spawning countless studies that have investigated the degree of concordance between mass and elite opinions. (2007, 249)<sup>13</sup>

We have already noted the near unanimity on the importance of elite-mass congruence as an indicator of the quality of democracy albeit with some qualifications. But this general statement is hardly adequate for purposes of rigorous research which will require the specification of the indicators or dimensions,

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<sup>11</sup> Imagine, for instance, a 10-point Left-Right scale on which one group is heavily concentrated at the extremes while the other peaks around the center. Both distributions will yield equal or nearly equal measures of central tendency. When one considers only the mean or the median, one will miss the high degree of ideological polarization in the former group.

<sup>12</sup> For a classical and succinct source on the theory of democratic elitism, see Bachrach (1967).

<sup>13</sup> Disch (2011) proposes a shift from responsiveness to what she calls "reflexivity."

preferably based on sound theory, of this elite-mass harmony. Put differently, the simple question is: when we evaluate representation, specifically what is it that we are comparing?

Hoffmann-Lange (2007) identifies four substantive areas of elite research. They are, (a) social background studies; (b) analyses of elite careers; (c) activities, values, and attitudes of elites; and (d) access to central political decision-makers. For our purposes, we delineate the areas that figure out prominently in the literature on the measurement of mass-elite congruence.

First, as Hoffmann-Lange points out, there are social background and demographic studies – some only of elites and occasionally from a comparative perspective. From a practical point of view, these are the easiest to conduct since data can readily be put together from albums, yearbooks, and various other public records. Social background studies have been around for at least a century and a half (Hoffmann-Lange 2006).

Second, research on elite values, ideologies, attitudes, and behavior – and their comparison with the general public – had to wait for the development of sophisticated survey methodology. Fortunately, researchers are now in a position of having access to considerable amount of data from elite surveys. Systematic evaluations of elite-mass values, however, are still numbered particularly if we are interested in international comparisons. Support for democratic values is especially relevant from a democratic culture perspective. Welzel and Klingemann (2011, 92) write that “by definition, congruent regimes are in accordance with a population’s prevailing legitimacy beliefs and thus receive more mass support than incongruent ones.”

Third, most political elite studies focus on congruence of policy preferences – and, in the case of policy-makers – on policy-related behavior. Studies of the US Congress are most prominent examples of policy congruence studies. If the researcher focuses on the behavior – rather than ideological preferences – of policy-makers, then no elite surveys will be needed and one need to look no further than roll calls. However, we know that, unless tied to some ideology, policy preferences are not stable over time and that presents a problem for the interpretation of policy congruence studies.

## 2.4 Whose Congruence?

The debate on where (between which groups or individuals) we should seek congruence is of crucial importance. To be more specific, which of the following options is/are more relevant for students of democratic theory and legitimacy? The possibilities are:

1. Congruence between an individual legislator (or government member) and citizens (frequently operationalized as the median voter);
2. Congruence between legislature (or government) as a whole and citizens;

3. Congruence between an individual legislator of a political party and supporters of that party;
4. Congruence between legislators (or leadership) of a political party and supporters of that party;
5. Congruence between an individual legislator and his/her geographical constituency.<sup>14</sup>

The controversy at the root of these possible ways of measuring congruence is the debate over the definition of a political representative: does he/she represent his/her constituency – be it geographic or otherwise – or, once elected, does he/she become a representative of the whole nation?

In this paper, we limit ourselves to options (2) and (4) although the other options, no doubt, have relevance for different research problems.

## 2.5 Direction of Incongruence Resolution

In case of incongruence, do the representatives comply with the wishes of the elected or does the process work in the opposite direction? Or are we perhaps faced with a two-way rather than a one-way street? Or, to make things even more complicated, should we admit that this is not a “one size fits all” situation and factors like political culture, political system, characteristics of leadership (and perhaps some other variables) have to be taken into account?

Welzel and Klingemann (2011) assign the priority to the citizens in general. In their words

Congruence theory suggests that institutionalized authority patterns tend to be in accordance with the legitimacy beliefs of most of the population in a country. Thus, people’s authority beliefs should – at any given point in time – be a powerful predictor of the institutionalized authority patterns. (2011, 93)

Holmberg (2011) seems to disagree. To him, most of time, it is the elected representatives who exert more influence on voters and not the other way around. So the process is top-down and even in a democracy, public opinion is mostly “shaped by” the leaders.

We believe the process works both ways. If the regime deserves to be called democratic, the representatives cannot be expected to completely ignore the wishes and demands of their constituents even if they favor the trustee model of representation. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine that public opinion is formed entirely independently of the political (as well as media, business, etc.) elites.

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<sup>14</sup> Golder and Stramski (2010) have a similar but not identical list of possibilities. They review possibilities under two main headings (Many-to-One Relationships and Many-to-Many Relationships) which, in turn, are divided into subcategories.

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### 3. Seven-Nation Study of Citizen-Parliamentarian Concordance, 2007 and 2013

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The following analyses are based on data collected from random samples of members of parliament in Chile, Germany, Poland, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and Turkey in 2007<sup>15</sup> and 2013.<sup>16</sup> Roughly around the same times, the World Values/European Values Surveys were carried out with national representative samples in the same seven countries. Both projects included a number of identical questions. Thus, the resulting data set provides a unique opportunity to measure congruence between members of parliaments and citizens and allows longitudinal comparisons as well. The choice of seven countries is not haphazard but includes all major religious traditions, established as well as new democracies, parliamentary, and presidential systems and the widest possible geographic coverage.<sup>17</sup>

There is no doubt that, in theory, democratic representation means at least some degree of communality in values and policy preferences between the represented and the representative. This is true regardless of one's preferred theory of representation (Pitkin 1967). However, from an empirical viewpoint, the core question is whether or not these are (in our case, the electorate and MPs) valid categories for comparison. Pettersson (2010) has conducted sophisticated tests to test the validity of these comparisons based on 2007 data from our seven countries and has concluded that, at least for values related to democracy, there is a solid basis for analyzing the congruence/incongruence of the two groups. We concur with his conclusions and proceed to present our findings.

We cannot, within the limits of this paper, possibly resolve all the theoretical issues of democratic representation but will at least briefly address some of the most relevant questions to the extent our data will allow. Thus, we will measure citizen-MP congruence in three areas: ideology, policy, and democratic values. Additionally, we shall be comparing (1) parliaments as a whole with all citizens and (2) MPs of major parties with supporters of those parties. Furthermore, we shall have the chance to observe the changes that might have occurred between the two survey rounds.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For an excellent collection of articles based on data from the 2007 survey of MPs, see van Beek (2010).

<sup>16</sup> 2013 surveys of parliamentarians in seven countries were funded by the *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond* of Sweden. The authors gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the Fund without which this research would not have been possible.

<sup>17</sup> For detailed information on both surveys, see Hoffmann-Lange (2018).

<sup>18</sup> We would like to note that the authors of the present paper owe great intellectual debt to Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Ursula Hoffman-Lange, and the late Thorleif Pettersson whose earlier work on the same data sets served as an invaluable source of inspiration. As a matter

### 3.1 Ideological Congruence

Even a casual survey of the literature reveals that, more often than not, political ideology is operationalized by the widely accepted, documented, and analyzed “Left-Right scale” (a 10-point scale in some surveys, e.g., the WVS and an 11-point scale in others, e.g., the ESS). This indicator is treated as a close proxy for or a good predictor of a wide range of variables from voter preferences to policy choices. A majority of studies of political representation use the Left-Right scale, as well, to measure ideological congruence between citizens and their representatives (e.g., Fuchs and Klingemann 1990; Huber and Powell 1994; Powell and Vanberg 2000; Thomassen 2012).

More than two decades ago, Listhaug and Wiberg observed that “[a]mong the factors influencing voting behaviour and political evaluations at the mass level, the consistently most important is the left-right ideology” (1995, 315). The connection between voting behavior and Left-Right ideology has been confirmed and re-confirmed in numerous studies and in different Western countries since the publication of the Listhaug and Wiberg article and for an obvious reason: “left-right ideology has long been a dominant cleavage in the politics of the industrialized democracies” (ibid.). However, the Left-Right dimension has been much more than a mirror for the industrial class society. Indeed, it has become “a kind of ‘super-issue’ encompassing various issue domains” (Thomassen 2012, 14). Along the same lines, Fuchs and Klingemann (1990, 205) have viewed the Left-Right scale “as a mechanism for the reduction of complexity which serves primarily as an orientation function for individuals and a communication function for the political system.” Thus, from this perspective, Left-Right ideology has two important functions: (a) it helps individual citizens find their way through the complexities of politics and (b) it provides the system (and institutional actors of the system such as political parties) with an instrument to communicate their positions in a simple and easily comprehensible manner. What more could one possibly ask of a single concept and a single measure!

If Left-Right ideology is such a valuable key to predicting important puzzles of political life, that assumption should hold for both citizens and their representatives. Hence, we ask the following questions:

- a) What is the degree of ideological congruence, as measured with the widely used Left-Right scale, between political representatives and citizens?<sup>19</sup>

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of fact the present work is an extension and perhaps expansion of Hoffmann-Lange (2010, 2016) and Petterson (2010).

<sup>19</sup> Our analyses use respondents’ (that is citizens as well as MPs) own positions on the ideology scale. Although the questionnaire included two more Left-Right scales (assessment of party positions and perceived positions of party supporters) we believe respondents’ position is the appropriate choice since we are concerned with the individual’s ideological position ra-

- b) Should we be looking at collective or dyadic representativeness with regard to this indicator?

### 3.1.1 Collective Representation (Ideological Congruence)

As explained earlier, we use WVS/EVS plus parliamentarians' data for our seven countries in an attempt to answer these questions and we shall be analyzing non-cumulative distribution functions (Andeweg 2011).<sup>20</sup> In Table 1 (first two rows for each country), we summarize the findings related to the overlap (both for each score on the scale and the total percentage overlap) of the left-right scale between the citizens and the parliamentarians of our seven countries.

The first thing we observe about *in toto* overlaps given in Table 1 is the high degree of congruence except for South Africa and Poland in 2007 and, perhaps to some limited extent, for South Africa in 2013 as well. The finding for South Africa would be expected given that the cleavages based on class, to the extent that they exist, are fairly recent phenomena in that country and, for that matter, in most other African countries. However, the low degree of congruence in Poland in 2007 comes as a surprise especially considering the rather sizeable difference of almost 18 percentage points between 2007 and 2013. Nevertheless, even in these two countries, the total overlap is over 50% for both survey years.

Second, except for Poland, there is a very high degree of consistency between 2007 and 2013 in total overlap percentages.

The most significant finding is that, with regard to Left-Right ideology, parliaments as a whole are highly representative of the electorate in six out of seven countries with Sweden achieving the highest level of ideological congruence. Data in Table 1 are summarized visually in Figure 1 (all figures in the Appendix).

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ther than the party's position. However, the two measures are highly correlated (see Hoffmann-Lange 2018).

<sup>20</sup> As explained by Andeweg (2011), in this technique, the overlap is calculated by cumulating the smaller value of the two distributions for each scale value. More concretely, suppose 3% of citizens and 2.5% of parliamentarians have chosen 1 on the scale. Then, the first quantity to be cumulated is 2.5%. The process is repeated for all 10 scores of the scale.

**Table 1:** Overlap of Distributions of Left-Right Scale: Collective and Dyadic Representation (Non-Cumulative Distribution Functions for Citizens and Parliamentarians of the Given Party)

			Total % overlap
Chile	Citizens and Parliament	2007	68.2%
		2013	73.2%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	UDI	60.4%
		PDC	58.8%
Germany	Citizens and Parliament	2007	76.7%
		2013	69.9%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	CDU	66.3%
		SPD	45.9%
Poland	Citizens and Parliament	2007	54.9%
		2013	72.6%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	PiS	59.1%
		PO	64.4%
S. Africa	Citizens and Parliament	2007	52.5%
		2013	58.6%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	ANC	54.5%
		DA	66.0%
S. Korea	Citizens and Parliament	2007	81.0%
		2013	82.6%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	NFP	60.5%
		DP	68.5%
Sweden	Citizens and Parliament	2007	89.8%
		2013	80.7%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	MS	78.7%
		SD	61.8%
Turkey	Citizens and Parliament	2007	76.1%
		2013	77.0%
	Two Largest Parties (2013)	AKP	78.0%
		CHP	47.0%

### 3.1.2 Dyadic Representation (Ideological Congruence)

We next consider the degree of ideological congruence between political parties and their supporters. We define “supporter” as voters who have indicated in WVS/EVS mass surveys that they would vote for a given political party in general elections. Dyadic representation is important because it is frequently argued that “[t]he policy agreement between voters and their preferred party [...] is a central measure of the functioning of representative democracy” (Dalton 2015, 610). Dalton (2015) finds high levels of congruence on Left-Right

ideology between the publics of 24 member states of the European Union and the *candidates* – not MEPs but candidates – of their preferred parties in the European Parliament elections.

The results (summarized in Table 2 and Figure 2) of our dyadic analyses for the 2013 data come as a surprise and certainly do not agree with Dalton's findings. Our data also contradict Pierce's speculation, as summarized by Hoffmann-Lange (2008) that – at least in Europe – although policy congruence between party leaderships and supporters is lower than expected, ideological congruence (operationalized with the Left-Right scale) should be high.

Indeed, one would ordinarily expect a higher degree of congruence between the MPs of a given political party and the supporters of that party. On the contrary, in almost all cases, the ideological overlap between the two largest parties in the parliaments of seven countries on the one hand and their supporters on the other is smaller, not greater in comparison to the overlap between the parliaments and voters as a whole. This holds true for both major parties in Chile, Germany, Poland, South Korea, and Sweden and also for ANC in South Africa and CHP in Turkey. Of the 14 parties in seven countries, the only two exceptions are Democratic Alliance in South Africa and AKP in Turkey but, in the Turkish case, the difference (1.0 percentage point) is negligible. Thus, for 12 of the 14 parties in seven countries (two largest political parties represented in the legislature in each country), the ideological overlap – measured with non-cumulative distribution functions – between a given party's legislators and supporters is smaller than the overlap between the given country's voters and parliamentarians taken as a whole.

This finding begs an explanation and has prompted us to examine another measure of ideological congruence in addition to the non-cumulative distribution function. Hence, we now consider what is referred to in the relevant literature as “centrism” that is, the absolute difference between two common measures of central tendency, the mean or the median (Dalton 2015; Achen 1978; Mansbridge 2003; Pettersson 2010). Dyadic comparisons of measures of central tendency for the Left-Right scale are summarized in Table 2.

In comparison to measures of dispersion, measures of central tendency tell a different story indeed.

First, the differences between the citizens' and parliamentarians' L-R ideology (last two columns of Table 2) are much less pronounced compared to non-cumulative distribution functions.

Second, except for Chile, social democratic (or center-left) parties are less representative of their supporters as compared to the center-right parties and, except for Sweden, the differences are considerable. This is true for SPD of Germany, ANC of South Africa, Minjuang (DP) of South Korea, Social Democrats of Sweden, and CHP of Turkey. (Poland is excluded from this comparison due to the fact that both of its two largest parties are to the right of the ideological spectrum.)



**Table 2:** Collective and Dyadic Measures of Central Tendency for the Left-Right Scale, 2013

Country	Total Country and Party	Citizens	Parliamentarians	Difference (citizens-MPs)
		Mean	Mean	Mean
Chile	Collective	5.10	5.66	-0.56
	UDI	7.67	7.91	-0.24
	PDC	4.79	4.87	-0.08
Germany	Collective	5.02	4.46	0.56
	CDU	5.79	6.12	-0.33
	SPD	4.64	3.10	1.54
Poland	Collective	5.53	6.57	-1.04
	PiS	7.25	8.82	-1.57
	Po	5.62	6.37	-0.75
S. Africa	Collective	6.25	4.10	2.15
	ANC	6.44	3.89	2.55
	DA	5.62	4.84	0.78
S. Korea	Collective	5.36	5.27	0.09
	NFP	6.25	6.59	-0.34
	DP	4.80	3.62	1.18
Sweden	Collective	5.42	5.56	-0.14
	SD	3.83	3.44	0.39
	MS	7.77	8.06	-0.29
Turkey	Collective	6.39	5.66	0.73
	AKP	7.41	7.45	-0.04
	CHP	4.57	2.14	2.43

Third, for all five center-left parties mentioned above, representatives are to the *left* of their supporters. Thomassen (2012) reached a similar conclusion with respect to issues related to law and order, immigration, minorities and European integration. This finding seems to hold for the L-R positions as well and is confirmed in Figure 2 which shows that, for social democratic parties of the five countries, the representation gap between the party MPs and the party's supporters peaks on the left of the scale. This explains the "anomaly" in Table 2 that we have noted above.

### 3.2 Policy Congruence

Unlike the L-R scale which is almost universally regarded as *the* indicator of political ideology, the analyst measuring policy congruence is faced with a much more complicated task since the choice of indicators is only limited by data availability and their relevance might show great variability from one country to another. Clearly, European integration or immigration, for instance, are non-issues in a sizeable majority of countries and this is true for even our extremely limited sample of seven countries.

To assess policy congruence we analyze an additive index<sup>21</sup> of three policy questions that were included in both questionnaires (i.e. parliamentarians and the general public) for both survey waves and which we believe are meaningful policy domains in all of our seven countries.<sup>22</sup> All three questions are 10-point scales and all tap economic policy preferences. The questions are related to opinions on:

1. Whether or not it is the government's responsibility to see to it that all citizens are provided for;
2. Whether incomes should be made more equal or more income differences are needed;
3. Whether government or private ownership of business and industry should be increased.<sup>23</sup>

From a theoretical perspective, all three questions should be related to ideology and particularly Left-Right ideology. Clearly, the end points of the scales represent classical positions of the Left and the Right. Our findings indicate that Thomassen (2012) who observed that a strong association between Left-Right ideology and policy preferences should not be taken for granted, is partially but not entirely confirmed (Table 3).

In Table 3, we report a total 84 correlation coefficients for 2007 and 2013. Of these, 77 are in the expected direction. Furthermore, five of the seven exceptions (indicated in bold) do not attain statistical significance. Thus, we can confidently state that, for our seven countries, the more to the left a person is on the ideology scale, the more likely he/she is to favor more equitable income distribution, more state (as opposed to private) ownership of industry and business and more state responsibility for taking care of citizens' basic needs. Very briefly, we draw the following conclusions from Table 3:

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<sup>21</sup> The index is constructed as follows: a) variables are recoded so that in all three of them higher values point out to the same ideological preference, and then b) taking the arithmetic mean of the three variables and rounding the resulting index to whole numbers. With our sample of parliamentarians from seven countries (2013), policy variables are all positively correlated and Cronbach's alpha is 0.674.

<sup>22</sup> This is evidenced by the fact that, overall, the proportions of non-responses (don't know plus refusal) are usually less than 2% and never exceed 5%.

<sup>23</sup> The exact wording of the questions are given in the appendix.

- 1) *Without exception*, correlations of MPs are all in expected direction. This is true for all seven countries and for both points in time.
- 2) In almost all cases, MP correlations are greater in magnitude than citizen correlations, and most of the time considerably so.
- 3) Consequently, MPs have much stronger ideological awareness (and consistency) and appear to exhibit a much better fit between their (and their party's) ideology and policy preferences.
- 4) Uniformly, the link between ideology and policy preferences is considerably weaker for parliamentarians of Poland and South Africa.
- 5) Correlations, and especially citizen correlations, in Table 3 do warrant a separate analysis of congruence in policy preferences between general publics and their parliamentary representatives since it is problematic to assume that the Left-Right ideology will suffice for policy choice.

**Table 3:** Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Left-Right Ideology Scale and Economic Policy Variables

	Incomes should be more or less equal (1 indicates more, 10 indicates less equal)				Government vs. private ownership of business (1 indicates more private, 10 indicates more state ownership)				Government or private responsibility to provide for citizens (1 indicates more state, 10 indicates more individual responsibility)			
	Citizens		MPs		Citizens		MPs		Citizens		MPs	
	2007	2013	2007	2013	2007	2013	2007	2013	2007	2013	2007	2013
Chile	.096*	.322**	.661**	.347**	.122**	.235**	.729**	.257**	.081*	.360**	.620**	.326**
Germany	.162**	.225**	.739**	.716**	.141**	.082**	.518**	.466**	.083**	.152**	.743**	.738**
Poland	.012	-.005	.174	.019	-.029	-.031	-.268*	-.017	.008	-.032	.071	.167*
S. Africa	.083**	.258**	.066	.177*	.022	.196**	-.079	-.122	.106**	.229**	.142	.002
S. Korea	.052	.100**	.646**	.669**	.043	-.051	.515**	.397**	.139**	.129**	.441**	.505**
Sweden	.485**	.498**	.781**	.823**	.510**	.377**	.812**	.748**	.423**	.491**	.756**	.767**
Turkey	.112**	.024	.431**	.528**	.065*	-.024	.399**	.512**	.086**	-.016	.404**	.543**

Note: \*p.<= 0.05; \*\*p.<= 0.01.

### 3.2.1 Collective Representation (Policy Preference Congruence)

Table 4 summarizes the percent overlap between citizens' and parliamentarians' policy preferences for 2013. The first and the most striking finding is the amazingly high levels of congruence between citizens and their representatives. The figure exceeds 90% in South Korea and the lowest overlap in our sample is for

Turkey (71%) but even that is not a level one would particularly be concerned about.

The second point that is worthy of mention is that the MPs of Germany and Sweden, our two benchmark democracies, do not have the highest levels of overlap. On the contrary, the fit between the two groups is somewhat better in Chile, Poland, and particularly South Korea. This brings into question the assertion that higher levels of elite-mass congruence should be expected in consolidated and advanced democracies (Holmberg 2011). At least for our economic policy variables, this assumption does not hold. Our findings with respect to policy preferences confirm Petterson's (2010, 142) conclusion that "better elite-mass congruence among the more advanced democracies" is not supported by our data.

**Table 4:** Overlap of Distributions of Policy Scale: Collective and Dyadic Representation (Non-Cumulative Distribution Functions for Citizens and Parliamentarians of the Given Party)

			Total % overlap
Chile	Citizens and Parliament	2013	87.9%
	Two Largest Parties	UDI	74.8%
		PDC	79.8%
Germany	Citizens and Parliament	2013	75.9%
	Two Largest Parties	CDU	48.9%
		SPD	65.3%
Poland	Citizens and Parliament	2013	80.2%
	Two Largest Parties	PIS	67.8%
		PO	62.7%
S. Africa	Citizens and Parliament	2013	74.7%
	Two Largest Parties	ANC	66.6%
		DA	59.5%
S. Korea	Citizens and Parliament	2013	91.8%
	Two Largest Parties	NFP	78.8%
		DP	67.1%
Sweden	Citizens and Parliament	2013	76.1%
	Two Largest Parties	MS	56.5%
		SD	70.8%
Turkey	Citizens and Parliament	2013	70.9%
	Two Largest Parties	AKP	49.8%
		CHP	55.6%

### 3.2.2 Dyadic Representation (Policy Preference Congruence)

Our finding with regard to ideological congruence is repeated and even magnified with regard to economic policy preferences as well (Table 4). Again, parliaments as a whole represent citizens significantly better than political parties represent their own supporters. For political parties and their supporters, the range of overlap is between a minimum of 48.9% (Germany's center-right CDU) and a maximum of 79.8% (Chile's center-left PDC). Unlike Left-Right ideology, however, it is impossible to say that one family of parties (that is, social democrats or conservatives) is a better representative of their constituents since the results vary from country to country. The unweighted arithmetic mean of the overlap for the six social democratic parties in Table 4 is only slightly better than the mean for the eight center-right parties (67.5% vs. 62.4%, respectively).

Table 5 gives both collective and dyadic measures of central tendency for our composite policy scale. Reviewing the means and medians in Table 5, we observe the following:

- 1) The differences between parliamentarians and citizens are very small.
- 2) This is also the case with respect to dyadic differences between means; the greatest difference of all is between Turkey's AKP and its constituents (2.02).
- 3) With respect to the direction of incongruence, the results are mixed. Collectively, in Chile, Germany, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey, citizens' mean scores are more in the *etatist* (state interventionist) direction compared to parliamentarians whereas in South Africa and South Korea the very slight difference in means is the opposite direction.
- 4) The supporters of the left-of-center parties in Germany, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and Turkey (that is, in 5 out of 6 countries whose left-of-center parties are included in the analysis) favor more state intervention compared to their deputies.

**Table 5:** Collective and Dyadic Measures of Central Tendency for the Policy Scale, 2013 (higher values indicate more rightist policy preferences)

Country	Party	Citizens	Parliamentarians	Difference
		Mean	Mean	(citizens-MPs) Mean
Chile	Collective	3.99	4.15	-0.16
	UDI	4.45	5.25	-0.80
	PDC	3.80	4.00	-0.20
Germany	Collective	4.91	5.25	-0.34
	CDU	5.21	6.74	-1.53
	SPD	4.69	3.89	0.80
Poland	Collective	5.12	5.81	-0.69
	PiS	4.49	4.49	0
	Po	5.68	6.81	-1.13
S. Africa	Collective	5.54	5.23	0.31
	ANC	5.57	4.59	0.98
	DA	5.50	6.87	-1.37
S. Korea	Collective	5.12	5.01	0.11
	NFP	5.43	6.00	-0.57
	DP	4.82	3.80	1.02
Sweden	Collective	5.39	5.90	-0.51
	SD	4.77	3.82	0.95
	MS	6.70	8.15	-1.45
Turkey	Collective	5.09	5.75	-0.66
	AKP	4.82	6.84	-2.02
	CHP	4.72	3.50	1.22

### 3.3 Democratic Values

Not unlike policy indicators, the choice indicators of pro-democratic values is not a simple task either. This is especially true when we are limited, as we are, with the common questions in both MP and mass surveys. By way of an example, Klingemann (1999) uses a 7-point scale that is the sum of two questions: agreement that democracy is the best form of government and that democracy is a good way of governing. Pettersson (2010) counts the number of “pro-democratic” responses to seven questions. Fuchs (2007) constructs a four-question index based on support for democracy and opposition to autocracy. He views

respondents in three categories: non-democrats, weak democrats, and solid democrats. Esmer (2013) uses a six-question “minimal democrat index” which is based on a broader spectrum of basic democratic values. Inglehart and Welzel (2005) emphasize the centrality of what they call “self-expression values” for democratic cultures.

Our index for measuring congruence of democratic values is simple. We combine two questions common to both surveys: how good or bad would it be for the country to have a democratic system plus having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections. The answers to both of these questions range between 1 and 4 resulting in a combined index with scores ranging between 2 and 8.<sup>24</sup>

### 3.3.1 Collective Representation (Congruence of Democratic Values)

Table 6 summarizes the collective and dyadic representation levels for the simple democratic values index that we have described above. Once again, we find the results surprising and perhaps a little disturbing from a democratic culture perspective. The surprising point is that the overlap between citizens and parliamentarians is considerably lower for democratic values as compared to ideology and policy preferences. The disturbing point is the fact that democratic culture is weaker for the masses in comparison to their representatives. This brings to mind the issue raised by Welzel and Klingemann (2011). The question is whether or not the popular demand for democracy lags behind its supply and, therefore, theories that claim that democracy is basically an elite designed and led project have greater validity.<sup>25</sup>

The data in Table 6, once again, fail to confirm the hypothesis that the higher the quality of democracy in a society, the higher should be the congruence between the represented and the representative. From this perspective, even if our two indicators are not the best choice to measure democratic values, one would, nonetheless, expect at least somewhat greater congruence in Sweden and Germany. This is not true and the percent overlap in these two advanced democracies is lower than even Turkey. Consequently, and in agreement with Pettersson (2010), we also conclude that higher levels of congruence between parliamentarians and citizens cannot be taken as an indicator of the quality of democracy.

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<sup>24</sup> This is a simple additive index of two questions mentioned above with the coding in the second item (having a strong leader) reversed so that with both items higher scores indicate more democratic attitudes. Hoffmann-Lange (2018, in this HSR Special Issue) uses a similar, but three-item measure. The two scales are highly correlated.

<sup>25</sup> Introducing the concept of “substantive democracy,” Welzel and Klingemann (2011) answer this question in the negative.

South Africa has by far the lowest overlap of our seven countries from a democratic culture viewpoint. The overlap of the distribution of our democratic values index, in this country, is a mere 27%.

**Table 6:** Overlap of Distributions of Democratic Values Scale: Collective and Dyadic Representation (Non-Cumulative Distribution Functions for Citizens and Parliamentarians of the Given Party)

			Total % overlap
Chile	Citizens and Parliament	2013	59.3%
	Two Largest Parties	UDI	56.7%
		PDC	44.6%
Germany	Citizens and Parliament	2013	52.6%
	Two Largest Parties	CDU	51.6%
		SPD	45.1%
Poland	Citizens and Parliament	2013	64.5%
	Two Largest Parties	PiS	70.4%
		PO	60.6%
S. Africa	Citizens and Parliament	2013	27.1%
	Two Largest Parties	ANC	25.1%
		DA	24.4%
S. Korea	Citizens and Parliament	2013	48.8%
	Two Largest Parties	NFP	52.5%
		DP	40.4%
Sweden	Citizens and Parliament	2013	47.9%
	Two Largest Parties	MS	51.9%
		SD	43.0%
Turkey	Citizens and Parliament	2013	54.1%
	Two Largest Parties	AKP	62.3%
		CHP	26.8%

It should also be noted that the elite-mass incongruence is observed only at the upper (i.e. more democratic) end of our index and the lower cells indicating strong non-democratic preferences are empty for both groups. This finding, no doubt, comes as an encouragement for democrats. This is very clearly seen in Figure 5.

Nevertheless, Table 7 clearly shows that democratic values, as we have measured them, are decisively stronger in our sample of parliamentarians. When we examine the arithmetic means for our seven countries as a whole as well as the means for individual countries, we observe that for all seven countries and for 13 of the 14 political parties, the means for MPs exceed those for



citizens. The only exception is Poland's PiS whose representatives' mean score is equal to its supporters' score. If values can be converted to effective demand, then citizens' demand for democracy is, in all cases, lagging behind the parliamentarians.

**Table 7:** Collective and Dyadic Measures of Central Tendency for the Democracy Scale, 2013

Country	Party	Citizens	Parliamentarians	Difference (Citizens-MPs)
		Mean	Mean	Mean
Chile	Collective	6.32	7.12	-0.80
	UDI	6.20	7.08	-0.88
	PDC	6.29	7.26	-0.97
Germany	Collective	6.86	7.91	-1.05
	CDU	6.94	7.92	-0.98
	SPD	6.77	8.00	-1.23
Poland	Collective	6.13	7.08	-0.95
	PiS	6.01	6.01	0
	Po	6.28	7.32	-1.04
S. Africa	Collective	5.29	7.61	-2.32
	ANC	5.28	7.66	-2.38
	DA	5.19	7.68	-2.49
S. Korea	Collective	5.40	7.01	-1.61
	NFP	5.41	6.75	-1.34
	DP	5.45	7.34	-1.89
Sweden	Collective	6.78	7.83	-1.05
	SocDem	6.76	7.88	-1.12
	MS	6.74	7.72	-0.98
Turkey	Collective	5.78	7.15	-1.37
	AKP	5.76	6.85	-1.09
	CHP	5.74	7.75	-2.01

### 3.3.2 Dyadic Representation (Congruence of Democratic Values)

With respect to our democratic values index, the differences between collective and dyadic measures are not as dramatic as they were for ideology and policy preferences. In fact, the results are mixed and some parties are better represent-

atives of their constituents compared to congruence between all citizens and parliaments as a whole (Table 6 and Figure 6). This is the case for Poland's PiS, for South Korea's NFP, for Sweden's Social Democrats, and for Turkey's AKP. Somewhat ironically, the social democrats of Turkey (CHP) have the lowest percent of overlap among all 14 parties that we have looked at. This is due to the fact that CHP constituents adhere to democratic values much less than their own party's representatives. Indeed, while our "democratic values" mean score is 7.75 out of a maximum score of 8.00 for CHP deputies (except for Germany and Sweden, this is the highest score for all remaining parties), CHP supporters' mean is only 5.75. Finally, save for the two parties in South Africa and CHP of Turkey, the differences between the medians for party supporters and their MPs never exceed two and in majority of cases it is only one.

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#### 4. Summary and Conclusions

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We have considered three of the most widely referred to dimensions of congruence between citizens and their parliamentary representatives in seven countries at two points in time. Our premise was the postulate that a certain – and preferably high – degree of congruence between the represented and the representative was an essential characteristic of democracy regardless of whether we prefer the "trustee" or the "delegate" approach to representation.

To assess the strength of the congruence and thus (at least according to one definition) the quality of representation, we analyzed the overlap between legislator and voter positions with regard to ideology, economic policy preferences, and democratic values. Although we considered measures of central tendency as well, our main tool for comparison was the non-cumulative distribution function which, we believe, offers a number of advantages.

We have found that collective ideological (i.e., position on the Left-Right scale) and policy preference (a composite index of three economic policy preferences) congruence was high – in some cases extremely high in our seven countries. We can safely conclude that for these countries, parliaments as a whole are highly representative of the views of the electorate on these two dimensions of representation.

On the other hand, dyadic levels of congruence between the supporters and deputies of given parties are considerably lower. A review of relevant literature reveals that the jury is still out on this issue. While some scholars have found that there is a high degree of dyadic congruence in some countries, there is evidence to the contrary as well.

Congruence levels for the democratic values scale – which, admittedly, is far from being ideal – are much lower than both ideology and policy dimensions of representation. Although, in general, there is very high preference for a democratic system of government, citizens are lagging behind their representa-

tives on this dimension. Put differently, popular demand for democracy is behind the levels measured for the political elites.

Finally, at least in our seven countries, the hypothesis that the quality of democracy in a country is positively correlated with the degrees of congruence between citizens and political elites has not been confirmed.

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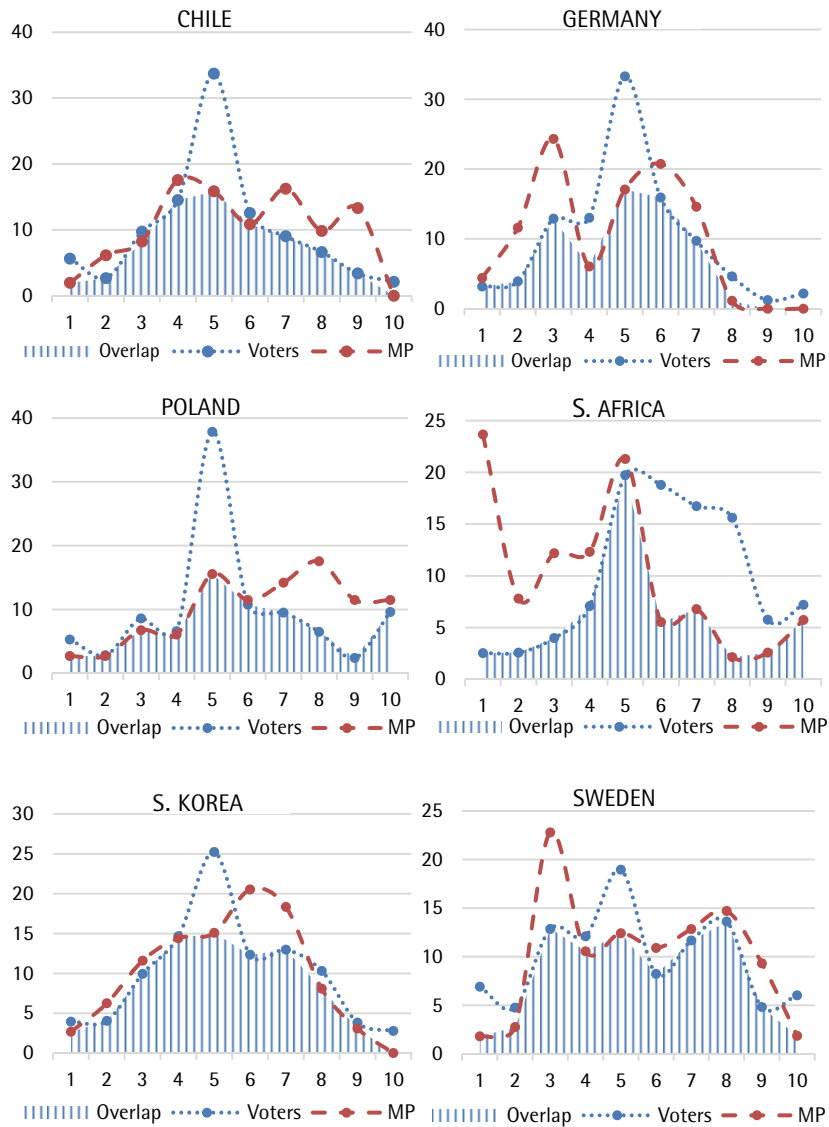
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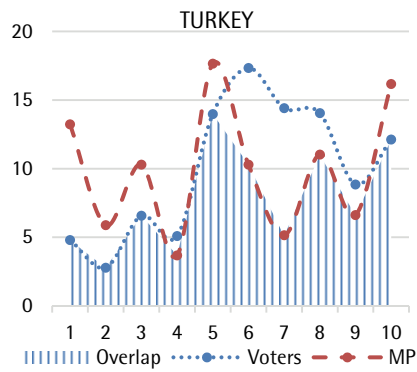
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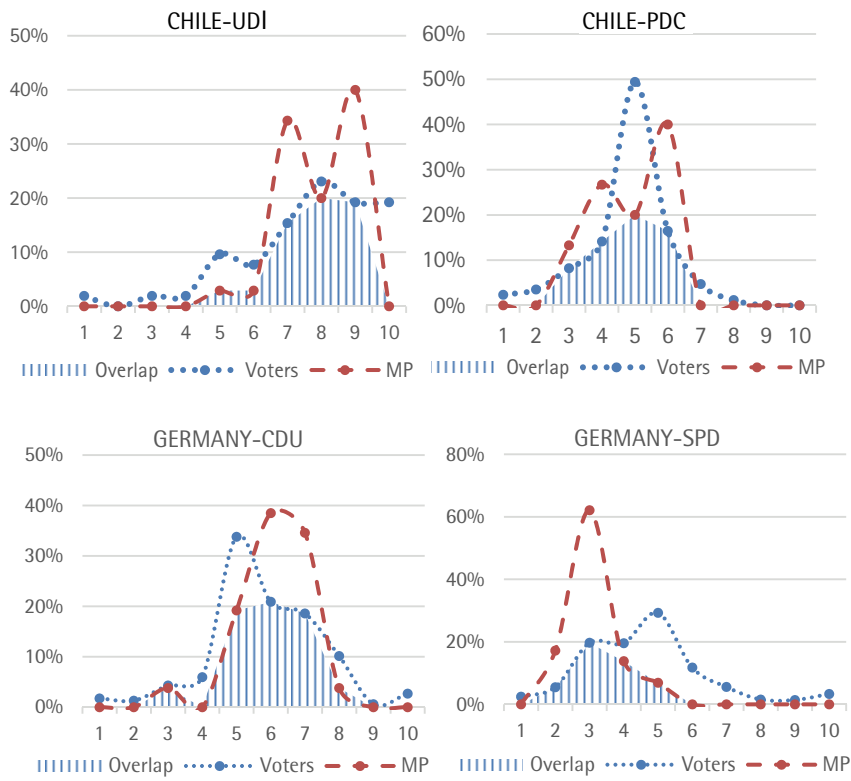
## Appendix

Figure 1: Overall Overlap of Left-Right Ideological Distributions, 2013 (%)

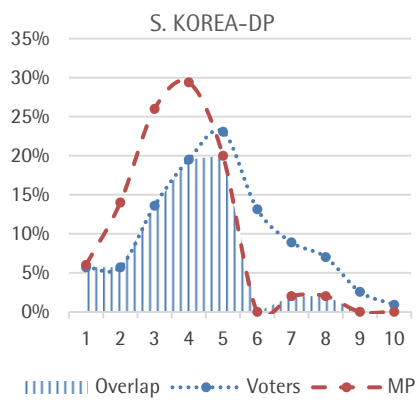
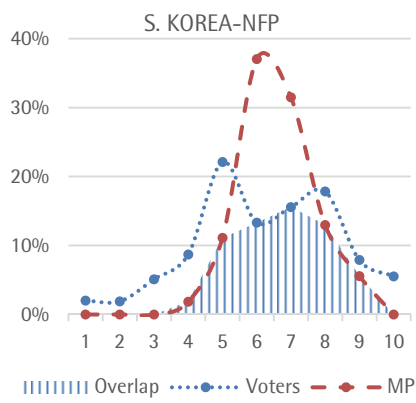
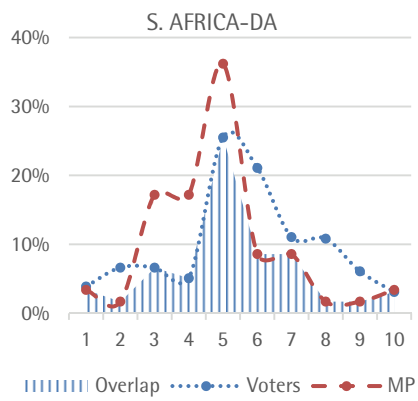
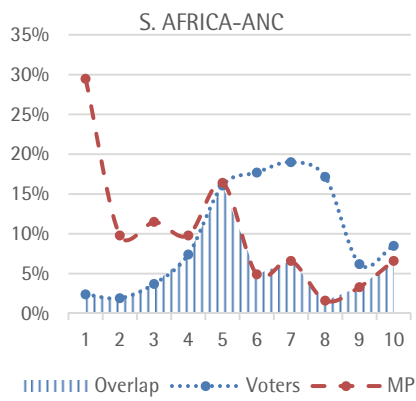
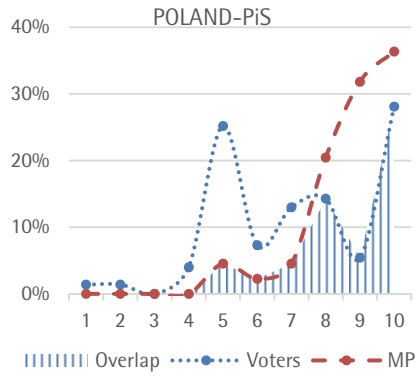
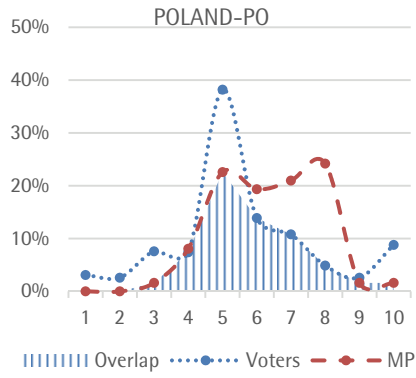




**Figure 2: Overlap of Left-Right Ideological Distributions: Parties and Their Supporters, 2013 (%)**







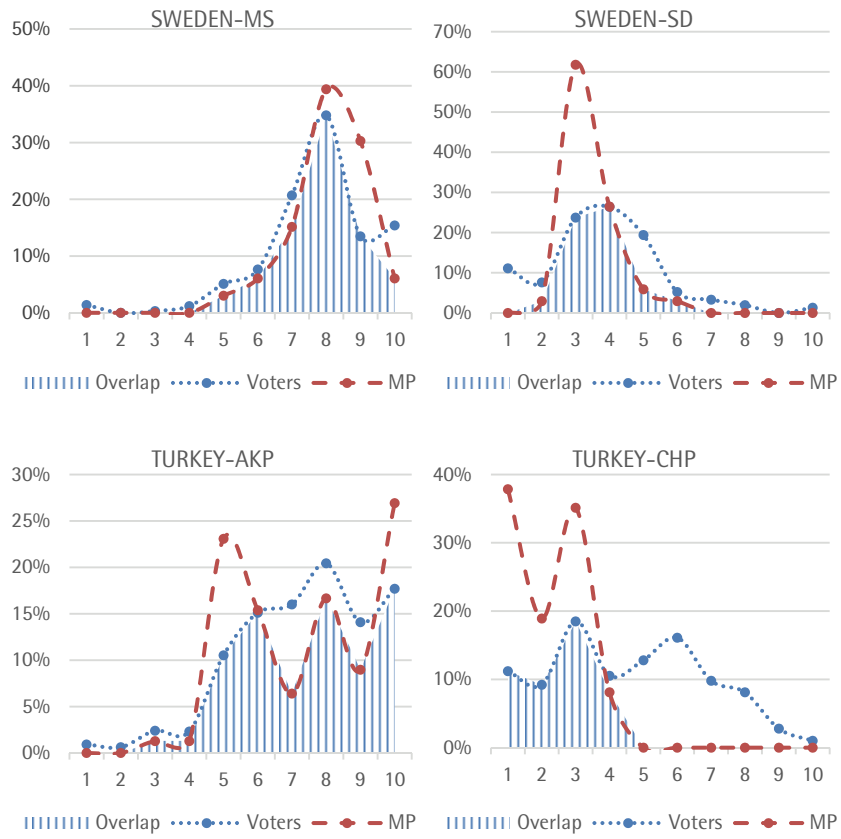
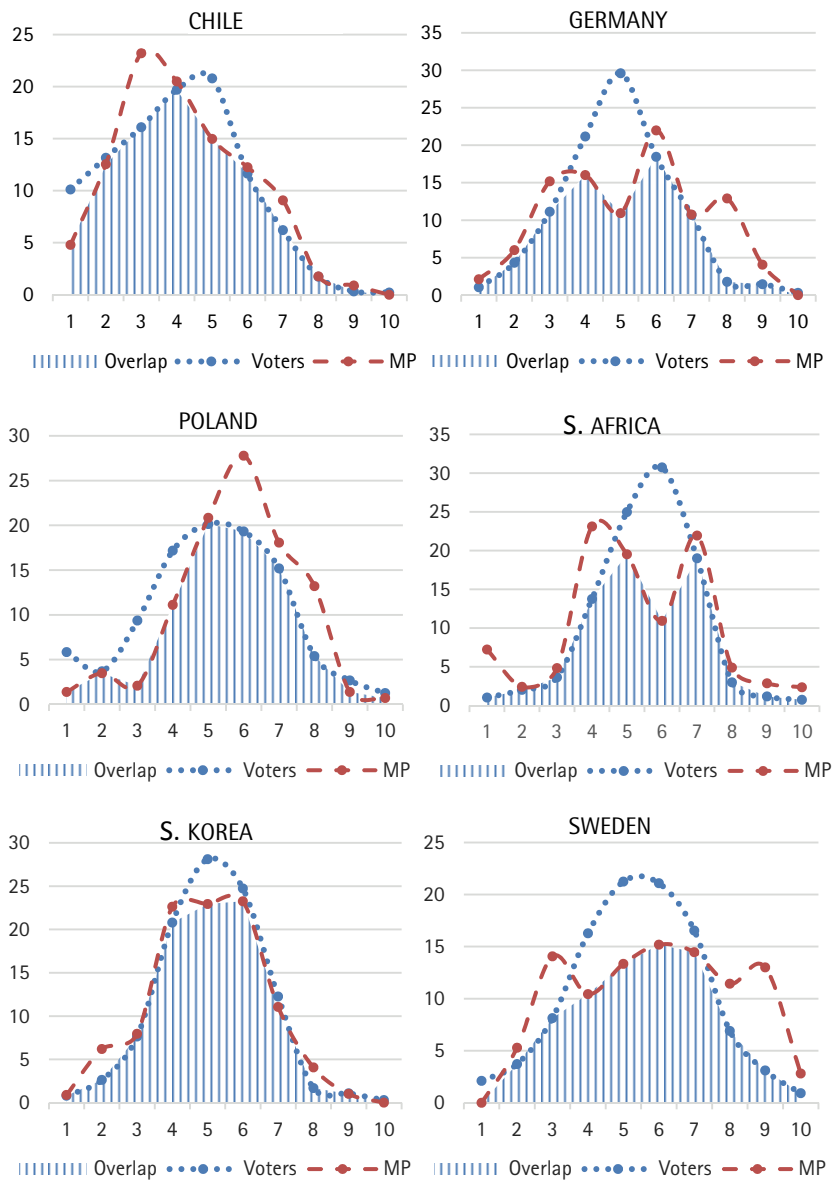


Figure 3: Overall Overlap of Policy Distributions, 2013 (%)



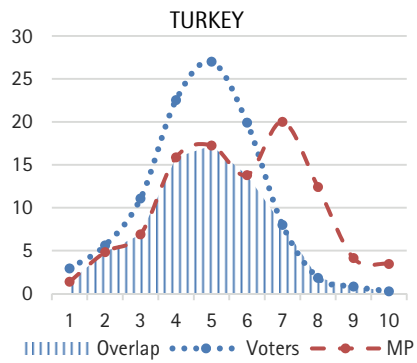
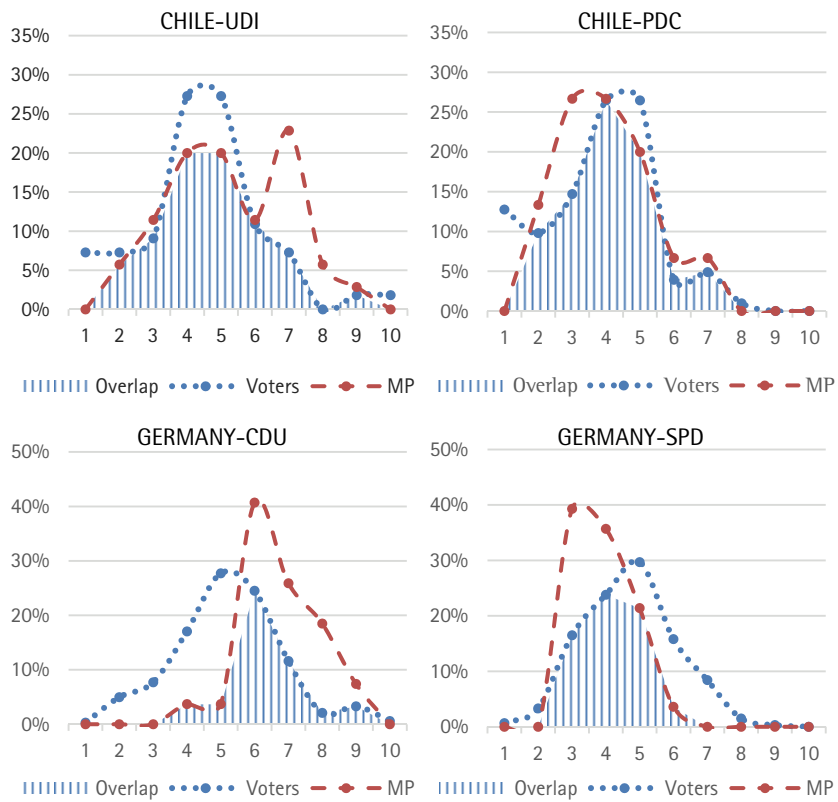
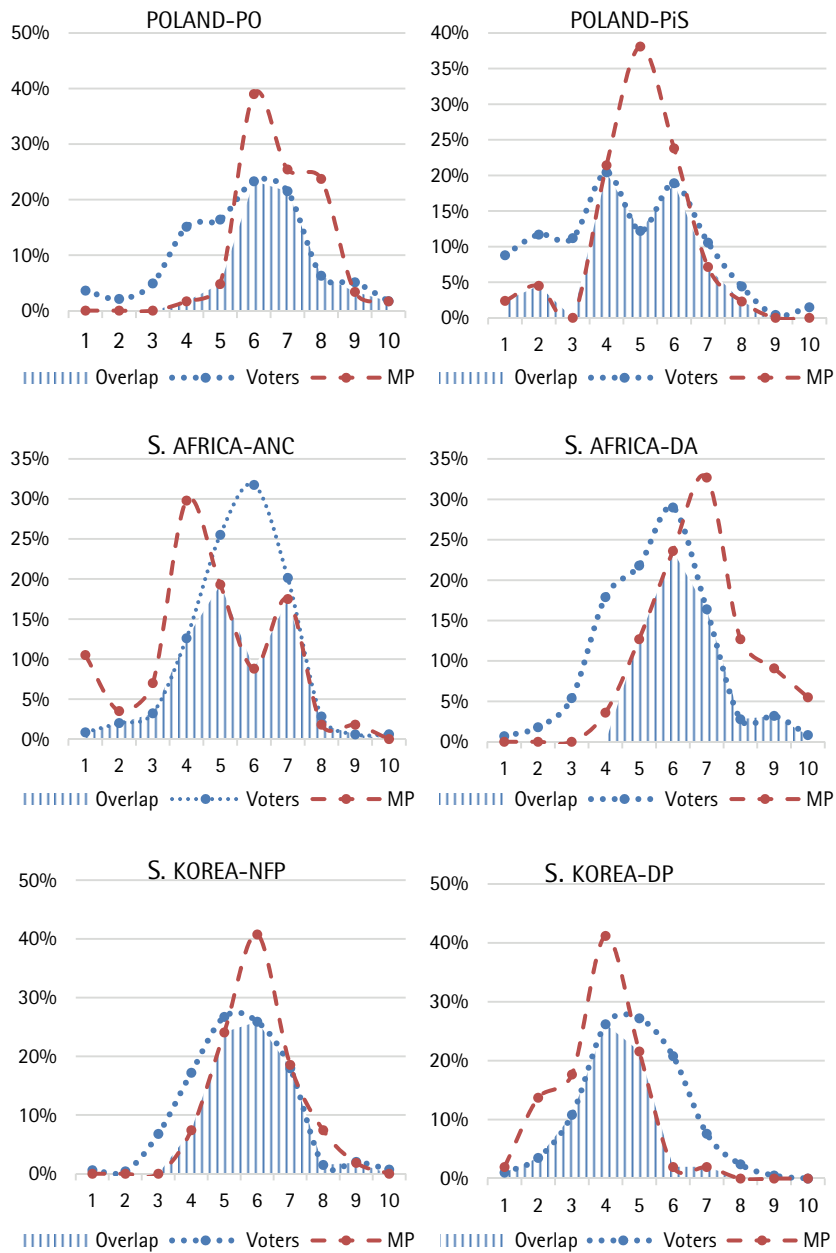


Figure 4: Overlap of Policy Distributions: Parties and Their Supporters, 2013 (%)





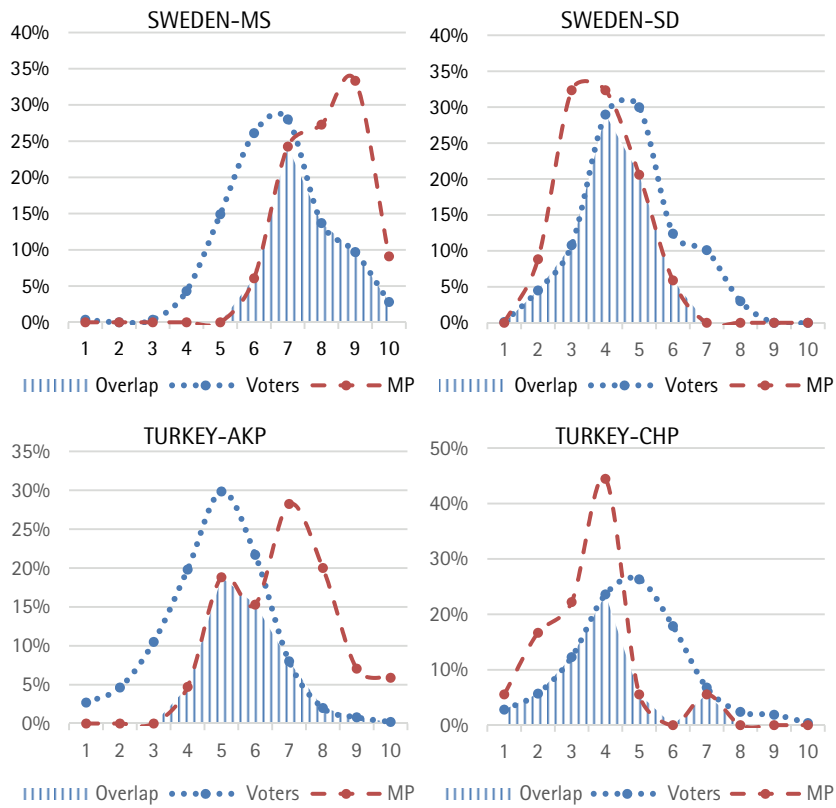
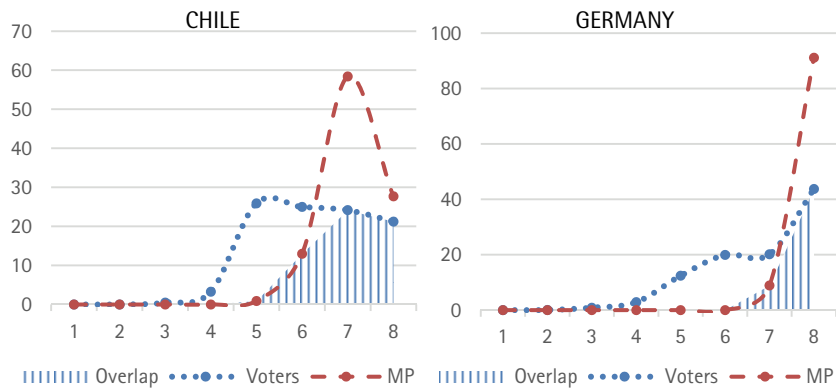


Figure 5: Overall Overlap of Distributions of Democratic Values, 2013 (%)



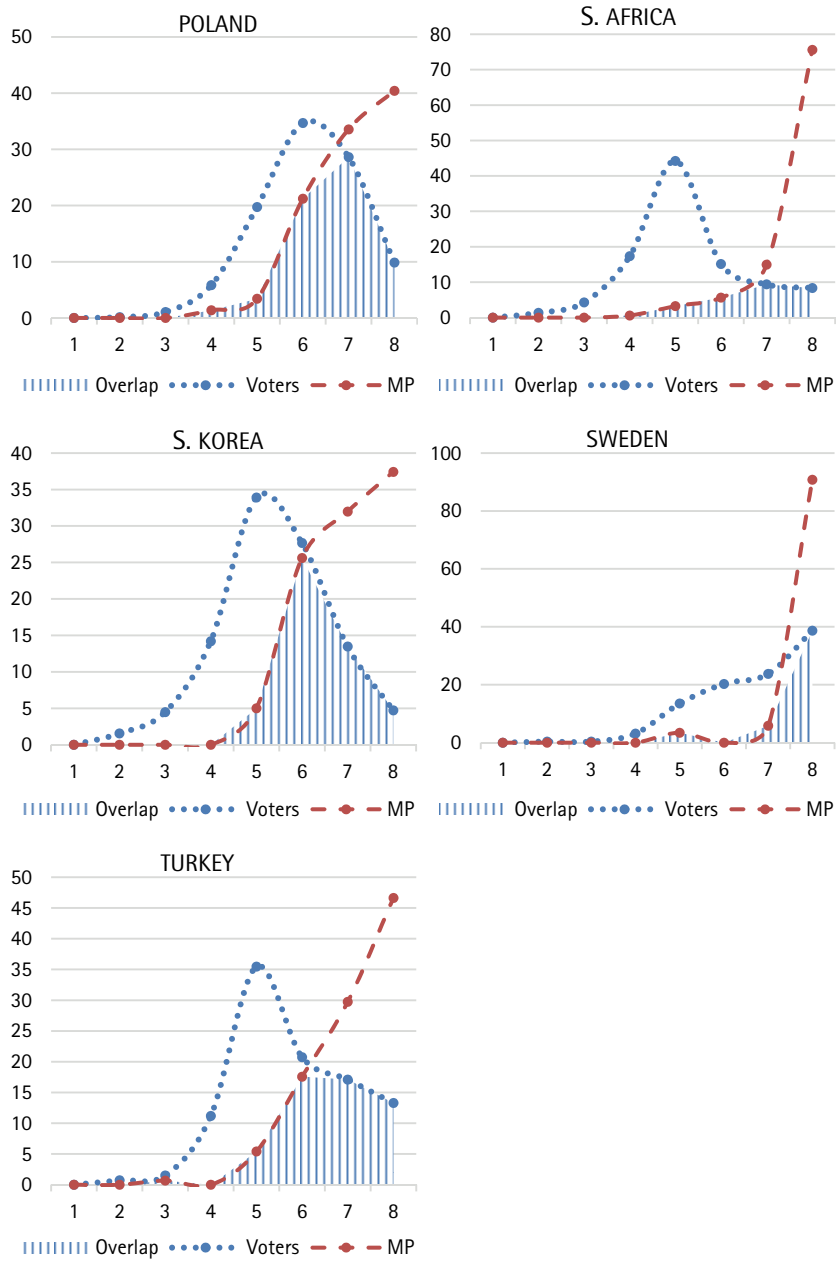
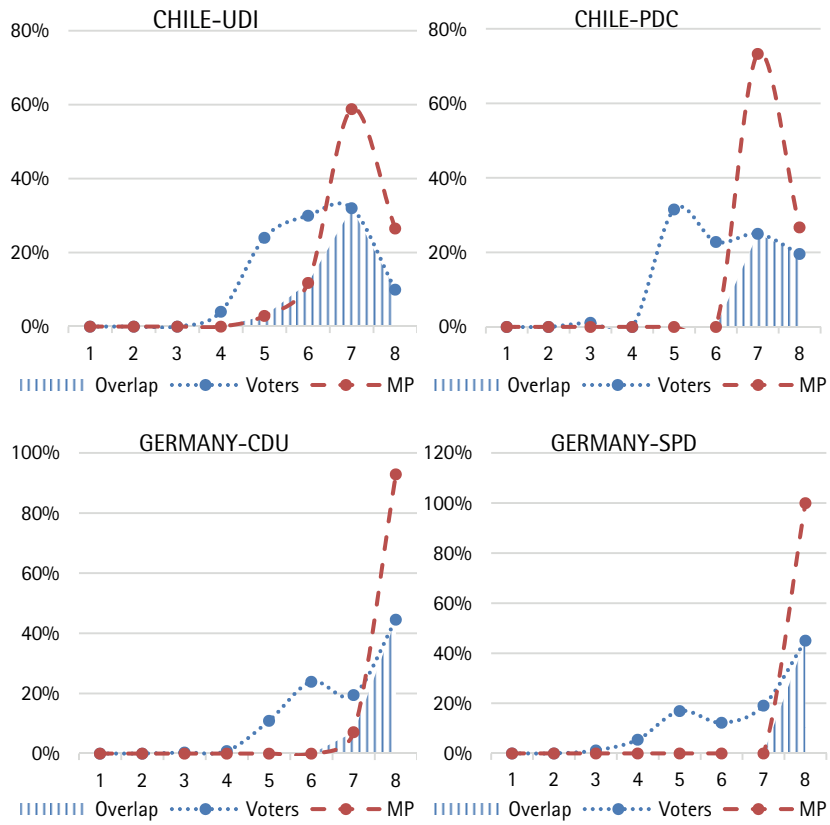
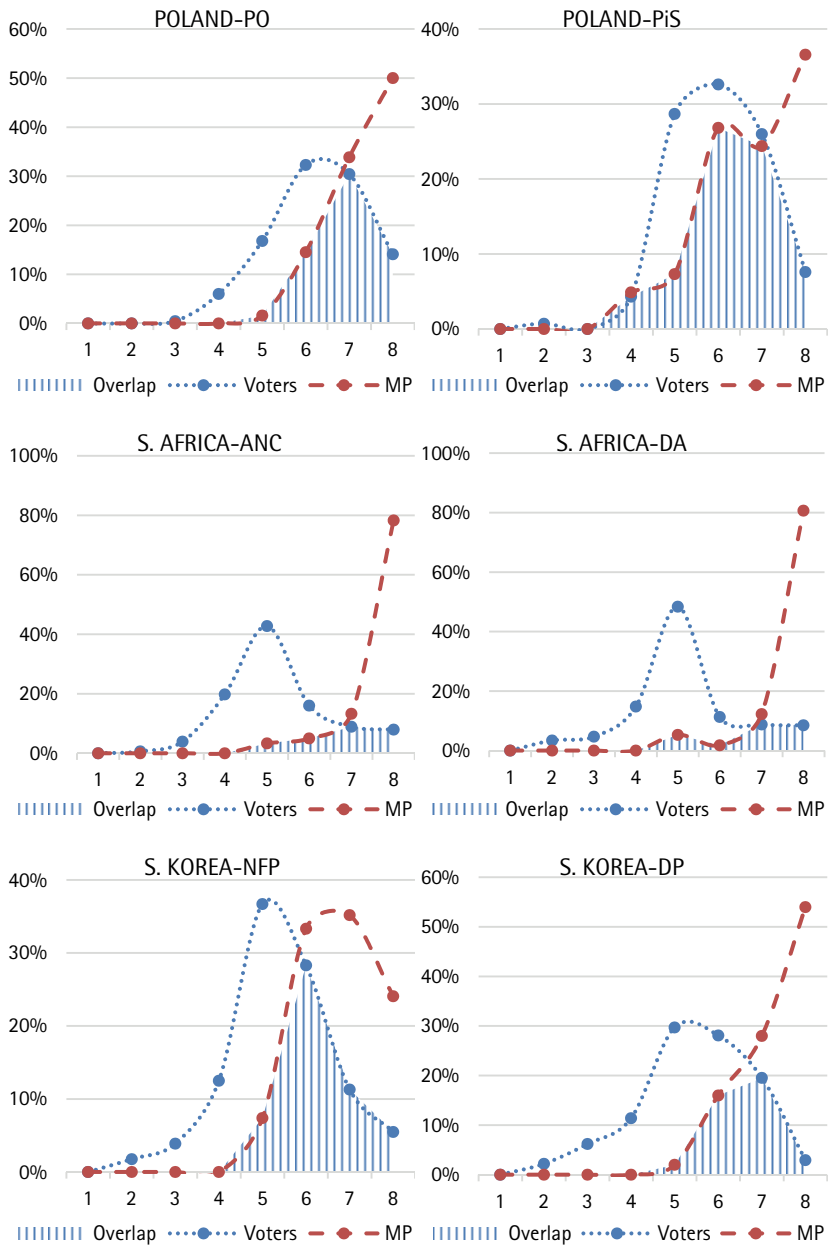
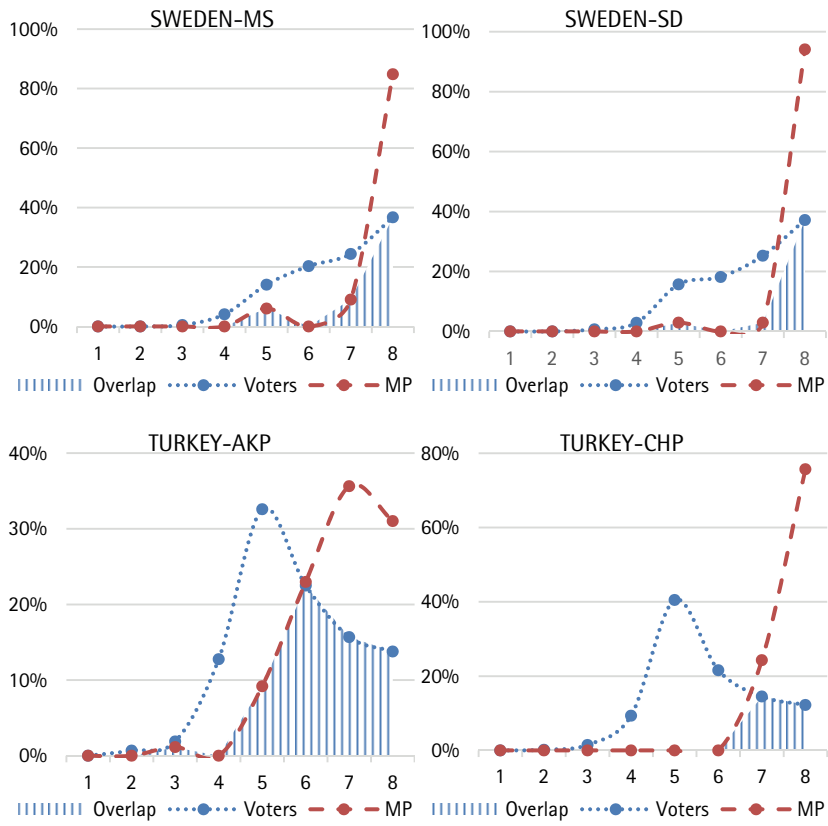


Figure 6: Overlap of Distributions of Democratic Values: Parties and Their Supporters, 2013 (%)









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