



**CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

# **DEMOCRACY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION AND MEDIATIZATION**

**HANSPETER KRIESI, SANDRA LAVENEX, FRANK ESSER,  
JÖRG MATTHES, MARC BÜHLMANN AND DANIEL BOCHSLER**



*Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century series*

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# Democracy in the Age of Globalization and Mediatization

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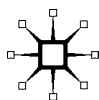
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# Preface

This volume represents a sort of mission statement for the National Competence Centre for Research (NCCR) Democracy, a Swiss research program on democracy funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) since 2005. We elaborate our particular approach to democracy research and what we see as the main challenges of democracy today. This new perspective on democracy and its challenges constitutes the basis of the research conducted in more than two dozen projects in our program. The present volume summarizes the results that have been published in more detail in a series of NCCR working papers (<http://www.nccr-democracy.uzh.ch/publications/workingpaper/challenges-to-democracy-in-the-21st-century>), in monographs, and in journal articles (<http://www.nccr-democracy.uzh.ch/publications>).

The volume comprises two parts. In Part I we lay the groundwork for our view of democracy and the way we wish to approach democratic processes: we discuss the preconditions of democracy and democratization, we present a model for the key mechanisms linking citizens and politicians in a representative democracy, and we show the empirical variety of established representative democracies across the globe. Against the background of the fundamental concepts and empirical facts introduced in Part I, we discuss in Part II the challenges of mediatization and globalization, which we consider to be the most important ones for democracy under contemporary circumstances.

We come from different fields in two related social sciences – political science (international relations and comparative politics) and communication science (political communication and media effect studies). But although we are all social scientists and we are all trying to test theoretical insights with empirical research, it took considerable time to find a common conceptual meeting ground and to agree upon a shared understanding of democracy research. It has taken us several years to arrive at the cross-disciplinary conceptualizations and findings the reader will encounter in this volume, and we certainly do not pretend that the theoretical and empirical tool kit we present here represents in any way a complete and authoritative view. But we hope

that our approach to the study of democracy and democratization will prove to be helpful to our readers and stimulate further research on denationalization and mediatization processes and their impact on democracy.

*Zurich, July 2012*

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This volume would not have been possible without insistent prodding by the expert committee that has been evaluating this research program on behalf of the SNF since its beginning. Our colleagues in the committee kept asking us to elaborate our approach along the lines presented here. We are grateful for their critical assessment of our work. Last but not least, we would like to thank the SNF and the University of Zurich, the leading house of our program, as well as all the host institutions of NCCR Democracy projects – ETH Zürich, the universities of Bern, Luzern, Lausanne, St Gallen, and Geneva, the University of Applied Science in Winterthur, Idheap Lausanne, WZB Berlin, and the Zentrum für Demokratie Aarau – for their most generous support of our research program.

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# 1

## Introduction – The New Challenges to Democracy

*Hanspeter Kriesi*

During the last half of the 20th century, democracy became the only legitimate game in town. The world witnessed an extraordinary and unprecedented expansion of the number of democracies, as a result of the third wave of democratization. Of course, not all countries have completed and consolidated their transition to democracy, and there are still a considerable number of countries that have not even begun to make their transition to democracy. Beyond the West, the process of democratization has proven to be more difficult than expected. Moreover, the world is currently changing in ways that, according to many observers, pose new threats to the already established democracies. In contrast to the optimism of the early 1990s, when some observers heralded an ‘end of history’ that would definitively seal the victory of liberal democracy across the world, a realistic assessment of the state of democracy today must admit that democratic regimes are faced with numerous challenges that threaten to undermine their very legitimacy. Contrary to the optimists’ predictions, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the triumph of democracy it symbolized have given way to a severe political malaise almost everywhere in the West. Today, citizens in Western democracies are increasingly disillusioned with their leaders and institutions. This disillusionment is, for example, expressed in declining levels of electoral, or in the increasing populist, mobilization in Western Europe and the US.

We shall concentrate in this volume on two challenges to democracy, which we consider the major ones in the 21st century – globalization and mediatization. While concentrating on these, we by no means imply that they are the only challenges to contemporary forms of democracy. Before we go on, we should just briefly mention a series of

other challenges that are of considerable importance for democracy as we know it.

First, *technological change* tends to drive economic transformation with a vast range of implications for political-interest mobilization and the complexity of policy making. Many observers argue that most of the risks generated by modern societies are the product of technologically induced structural transformations inside national economies (e.g. Iversen and Cusack 2000).

Second, *demographic change* has become a major force, making it increasingly difficult for politicians to deliver rising levels of benefit and satisfy popular demands at a time of rising pressure on health and social security systems. The demographic transition may causally drive certain aspects of globalization (such as migration) rather than the other way around.

Third, the increasing *socio-economic inequality and cultural heterogeneity* of national political communities, which are, of course, intimately related to globalization, tend to undermine the societal preconditions for political equality. Current economic trends of increasing inequality ‘raise the question of whether democracy can flourish in the midst of great concentrated wealth’ (Bartels 2008: 284). As Bartels shows for the US example, economic inequality has ‘pervasive, corrosive effects on political representation and policy making’. Fears of cultural heterogeneity linked to global migration flows are particularly salient in Western European democracies and have given rise to defensive forms of mobilization by the indigenous populations.

Fourth, *social-cultural preference formation* is a partially autonomous force of democratic change that gives rise to new demands for democratic autonomy. Thus, social movement scholars suggest that our contemporary modern societies have become ‘movement societies’ (Meyer and Tarrow 1998) – that is, they suggest that political protest has become an integral part of modern life; that protest behavior is employed with greater frequency, by more diverse constituencies, and is used to represent a wider range of claims than ever before; and that professionalization and institutionalization may be changing the social movement into an instrument of conventional politics. As protest becomes a part of everyday politics, we assist in the ‘normalization of the unconventional’ (Fuchs 1991).

Finally, the continuing expansion of what Mény (2002) has called the ‘constitutionalist element of democracy’ to the detriment of its popular element is also driven by forces internal to the political system.



## Globalization

'There has been an assumption at the heart of modern democratic theory 'concerning a "symmetrical" and "congruent" relationship between decision-makers and the recipients of political decisions', David Held (2006: 290) explains in his *Models of Democracy*. This is the assumption of a political community which governs itself and determines its own future. This political community inhabits a bounded territory, and decision-makers and decision-takers are both locked into that territory.

For centuries, the development of the nation-states in Europe was a process of territorial consolidation, center formation in the newly consolidated territories, nation building and democratization. To the extent that the populations in the consolidated nation-states could no longer avoid the consequences of the decisions taken by the political centers in the consolidated nation-states, and to the extent that these centers imposed ever more demanding obligations on their populations, the members of the national populations began to identify with the others equally locked into the delimited territory and to demand a share in the control over the national centers of power. According to the 'dialectic of control' (Giddens 1985: 202), the increasing power of the national centers went hand in hand with an increasing democratization of national politics. As a result of this development, the 'demos' has come to be defined as the set of members of the political community locked into the territory of a given nation-state, or, more precisely, by the residents of that territory who enjoy citizenship rights. As a result of this long-term development, congruence or symmetry between decision-takers and decision-makers exists to the extent that the members of a nation-state are exclusively affected by the decisions taken by the authorities of their own territory. In other words, modern representative democracy is based on the 'container' of the modern nation-state.

Today, as Held goes on to explain, this congruence is fundamentally put into question by the challenge of globalization, which tends to invert the century-long experience of European nation-states. Today, advancing economic, cultural, and political globalization leads to an expansion, deepening, and acceleration of global interdependencies across the borders of the nation-states. These processes can be interpreted as processes of 'denationalization' (Zürn 1998). They imply the dissolution of boundaries between the nation-states, or, as Ruggie (1993) calls it, the 'unbundling of territory'; that is, the dissolution of the different types of relationships which have been packed together by the national borders.

Congruence and symmetry can break down in different ways. First of all, the lives of citizens in a given state can be affected by the trans-border effects of decisions taken by the authorities of neighboring or other, more remote nation-states. Neighboring states may locate nuclear power plants at their border, which poses a potential threat for the population across the border. Industrial plants pollute the water of rivers, which poses a problem for the populations living downstream in countries that did not have any say in the location of those plants. Landing approaches of airports are designed to alleviate the collateral impact on the national population, which may create considerable nuisance for the people living across the border whose well-being has not been considered in the siting decisions. In some cases, the states concerned by such decisions may retaliate, creating problems for the citizens in the countries where the original decisions were taken. The Czech nuclear power plant Temelin, located close to the Austrian border, provides an illustrative case of the resulting problems in the relationship between states when one of the state authorities takes decisions which impinge on the populations of neighboring states to whom they are not accountable. This case is particularly problematic, because neighboring Austria had not put into service its own nuclear power plant at Zwentendorf (in the same region) and had decided to get out of nuclear energy altogether.

These examples all involve neighboring states, for the simple reason that they are caused by the physical proximity of the source of the nuisance. There is another set of political decisions with transborder impacts which do not depend on physical proximity: these concern regulations that incite citizens from other states to exit from their home country, or prevent citizens from other states from doing so. This kind of problem is by no means restricted to the relationship between neighboring states. For example, tax laws may be crafted in such a way as to incite tax evasion among citizens or corporations from countries all over the world. The Irish corporate tax code illustrates this possibility. Immigration regulations provide examples of countries trying to attract citizens from other countries (the 'brain drain'), as well as examples of countries trying to prevent citizens from other countries from entering.

Phenomena such as the ones illustrated by these examples have always been troubling the relationship between sovereign states, and one could maintain that they are nothing new. Borders have never been completely closed, and the siting decisions and regulations of one state have always had an impact on the citizens of other states. Taking issue with the view that, in this respect, there is nothing new under the sun, we would like to suggest that – as a result of technological developments,

as well as of social and political change – the siting decisions and regulations introduced by nation-states are likely to have much greater potential impacts on the populations in other states than they did in the past. That is, the sovereign decisions taken by the authorities of any given state pose a potentially much greater threat for the life chances of the populations in other states. Thus, as illustrated by the nuclear power plants (e.g. Chernobyl), the pollution potential by a source in any given nation-state is today immeasurably greater than it used to be in the past. Similarly, the example of the Irish corporate tax code illustrates that the character of a policy changes with the changing technological, social, and political environment: with the deregulation and opening up of the financial markets, the implications of the Irish corporate tax code took on proportions that had been unknown before, which implies that the specificities of this code pose a much greater threat to a much larger number of countries than it did in the past.

Second, congruence and symmetry can also break down within a given nation-state. The citizens of one territorial sub-unit within a nation-state may be affected by the decisions of the authorities of another sub-unit which are not accountable to them. In other words, the incongruence and asymmetry that we encounter at the level of the nation-states may, in perfectly analogous ways, repeat itself at the sub-national (regional or local) level. The more decentralized a given nation-state, the more likely this kind of incongruence and asymmetry will be. In federalist states, one sub-unit (state, Land, canton) may take decisions which pose a threat to the population of another sub-unit. At the local level, the authorities of one city may take decisions which hurt the population of a neighboring township. Local incongruences are particularly widespread in metropolitan areas, where the core cities provide services and infrastructures for the residents of the suburban areas.

At this level, too, incongruences become more important as a result of technical developments, and of social and political change. Thus, as a result of improving transport systems, the size of the metropolitan areas increases, and formerly unconnected political units become part of the metropolitan area. In reaction to such a change, the authorities of some of these formerly unconnected units might decide to change some local or regional regulations – such as their tax laws – in order to make their unit more attractive to residents from other parts of the metropolitan area. Their decision, of course, will have consequences for the life chances of the citizens in the other parts of the metropolitan area who do not have the opportunity or the intention to move and to whom the authorities in the unit concerned are not accountable.

Both types of incongruence we have discussed so far concern relationships between decision-makers and populations at the same level – either the national or the sub-national level. This type of incongruence could be called horizontal incongruence. The authorities of one territorial unit at a given level take a decision that has serious consequences for the population of another territorial unit at the same level. This type of incongruence should be distinguished from vertical incongruences, which imply that decision-makers at a higher level take decisions which are binding for decision-makers and populations at a lower level of a multi-level governance structure, without being accountable to them. This second type of incongruence is at least as important as the two versions of horizontal incongruence which we have already introduced. It concerns the decisions of supranational decision-makers, such as the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations, and the EU, which increasingly impinge on the life chances of national populations.

One could argue that, in Europe, globalization mainly means European integration. The process of European integration can be described as the process of forming a supranational state, which goes beyond the common intergovernmentalism, even if the EU has not yet reached the character of a completely autonomous state. Stefano Bartolini (2005) interprets the European integration as the last stage in a process of European political development. The preceding stages corresponded to the formation of state centers, the formation of nations, the democratization of nation-states and the creation of the national welfare states. Bartolini suggests that this last stage can be analyzed along the same lines as the preceding development of the nation-states and based on the same processes. At the European level, the new center already has considerable policy competencies, and EU law is now recognized as superordinate and directly applicable by the member-states, even if the resulting institutional structure of the EU and its borders do not (yet) correspond to the model of the nation-state. Thus, the EU institutions presently still lack the necessary means of coercion and the bureaucratic apparatus to impose EU law against the resistance of the member-states. In the EU, the hierarchy of law is not based on a corresponding hierarchy of real power. Still, the expansion of the competencies of the EU means that the supranational governance structure becomes ever more important.

The extension of existing multi-level governance structures to the supranational level is, of course, a response to increasing global interdependencies, which involve the problem we have just described, with

respect to the horizontal incongruences, of externalities or spillovers of decisions taken in one sovereign state affecting all the other sovereign states. As is pointed out by Hooghe and Marks (2003: 239), the chief benefit of such structures lies in their 'scale flexibility'. This benefit comes, however, at a double price: the 'demos problem' is accompanied by a 'coordination problem' – that is, the problem of how to coordinate the spillovers of decisions taken in some units or jurisdictions for other units or jurisdictions. Hooghe and Marks call this a 'second-order coordination problem' because 'it involves coordination among institutions whose primary function is to coordinate human activity'. Second-order coordination costs increase exponentially as the number of relevant units or jurisdictions increases. There are two strategies to limit these costs – either one limits the number of autonomous actors who have to be coordinated or one limits the interactions among actors by splicing competencies into functionally distinct units.

The first solution leads to what Hooghe and Marks call type-I governance – governance by general-purpose, non-intersecting, and durable jurisdictions hierarchically structured into units of ever more encompassing scale. The units of such structures are typically territorially defined. This is the model we know from federalism. The second solution leads to type-II governance – governance by functionally specific, intersecting, and flexible jurisdictions which are not hierarchically structured into ever more encompassing units, but are more like task-specific networks often of a more informal character.

Given that the demos is defined in territorial terms, type-I governance structures are much more compatible with liberal democracy as we know it than type-II governance structures. Type-I governance structures are, however, subject to increasingly long chains of delegation, which is likely to lead to problems of accountability. Type-I structures may also give rise to new incongruences and asymmetries between decision-makers and decision-takers. Such incongruences may arise when the EU decision is taken by authorities within the EU who are not accountable to the national electorates. In addition, several territorially defined demoi may be concerned, and the question is how the multiple chains of delegation are coordinated. New incongruences may arise when the representatives of a (qualified) majority of national demoi imposes a decision on a minority of national demoi within the supranational structure. Even more serious are incongruences arising from powerful minorities of states imposing their decisions on a majority of weaker states. Thus, from the point of view of small states, governance beyond the nation-state typically seems to imply that a small group of powerful

states gets the upper hand in the formulation of internationally agreed rules, through a combination of formal and informal influence, and that most nation-states become rule-takers rather than rule-makers.

Compared to type-I governance structures, type-II governance is even more problematic for democracy: the territorially structured jurisdictions and corresponding political communities do not necessarily correspond to the functionally defined jurisdictions, which means that there is no demos to whom the decision-makers could be accountable. Functionally defined ‘stakeholders’ replace territorially defined demoi, which leads, as Papadopoulos (2009: 7) notes, to a form of democracy that is quite different from what we usually mean by the term, i.e. to ‘advocacy democracy’. In such a situation, actors eligible for participation in decision-making are ‘those who can credibly claim that they express strong preferences and defend causes that are of central concern to them’. Traditional forms of advocacy democracy include the well-known forms of representation by interest groups and social movement organizations – that is, forms of representation which operate outside of the electoral channel. As a result of the emergence of multi-level governance structures, functional channels are generally said to be strengthened (for the EU, see Bartolini 2005: 382; Papadopoulos 2010).

With the increasing interdependence between nation-states, the creation of supranational governance structures becomes necessary to provide a solution for the externalities or spillover effects produced by the decisions of sovereign national decision-makers. But while the establishment of a supranational governance structure may solve some of the horizontal accountability problems for democracy which arise at the national level, it creates new, possibly more serious, vertical accountability problems, which arise from the specificities of the relationship between the authorities at the national and the supranational levels in the multi-level governance structure. Thus, it increases the number of stakeholders to whom the national governments are held accountable. As Peter Mair (2009: 14) has observed, by ‘disembedding liberalism, globalization in general and Europeanization in particular create many new principals to whom governments must act responsibly’, which, in turn, increases the governments’ difficulties in responding to their own citizens.

At its most abstract, this is the challenge of globalization for democracy in the 21st century, which we shall further elaborate in this volume: how can the ‘democracy deficit’ of multi-level governance structures be alleviated, and what does it mean for the existing forms of democracy, if such structures as the EU are democratized?

## **Mediatization**

The second major challenge for democracy which we shall focus on in this volume concerns the processes of communication between decision-makers and the citizens. In the process of democratization of the nation-states the populations locked into the consolidated territories, whose exit options were heavily reduced by the national power centers, increasingly raised their voice in order to get a share of control over national political decision-making. As described by Manin (1995), elections became the key mechanism of control of the national centers by the locked-in populations. The principle that all legitimate authority is to be based on the consent of those over whom it is exercised has been imposed by the three modern (British, American, and French) revolutions. Elected representatives, who were accountable to the public, replaced the former autocratic authorities. As a result, the process of political communication between the citizens and their representatives became of crucial importance.

The archetype of classical Athenian democracy was essentially local democracy. It was an assembly democracy where 'all major issues such as the legal framework for the maintenance of public order, finance and direct taxation, ostracism and foreign affairs [...] came before the assembled citizens for deliberation and decision' (Held 2006: 17). It is, however, often overlooked that the direct assembly democracy in Athens also relied on elected authorities. The assembly was too large a body to prepare its own agenda, to draft legislation, and to be a focal point for the reception of new political initiatives and proposals. However, the assembly constituted the public sphere, where the communication between the citizens (the audience) and their representatives (the speakers) – who were, by the way, all designated by lot, and not elected (Manin 1995: 19–61) – took a very direct form.

The scope of modern representative democracy is no longer local, but essentially national. The extension of the scope of the democratic process required a change in the basic communication infrastructure between the citizens and their representatives. As the public sphere extended beyond the local realm, it became much harder for the two to meet in assemblies; the communication between citizens and their representatives became essentially media-based. Assemblies of all citizens are still of some importance at the local level (town meetings, citizens' assemblies ('Landsgemeinde'), meetings of local party sections), and for the internal coordination of those political actors who link the citizens to the political decision-making bodies (parties and interest groups).

Moreover, they have a particular importance for those non-established political actors, like social movement organizations, who do not get access to the media (Neidhardt 1994: 10). But, for all practical purposes, in the modern representative democracy the communication between politicians and the citizens at large is media-centered.

This means that the process of political communication depends on the media infrastructure and is subject to change as the media are changing. The challenge of mediatization refers to the consequences of the changing conditions of the media infrastructure for democracy, and can be defined as the growing intrusion of the media logic as an institutional rule into fields – such as political communication – where other rules of defining appropriate behavior prevailed (see Chapter 7). This challenge results from a double transformation the media have undergone over the last few decades, both of which are, ultimately, rooted in technological change, although they are not entirely technologically determined.

The first transformation is the proliferation and diversification of the media channels. Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) call this the emerging third phase of political communication systems. It is marked by media abundance, ubiquity, reach, and celerity. We experience the multiplication of radio stations and television channels, and a proliferation and increasing integration of communication equipment in people's homes. Beyond mass media, political news, information, and ideas can be circulated via the internet and the personal computer.

In Europe, television and radio had once been concentrated communication outlets, largely controlled by the state according to the 'public service' model of broadcasting regulation. Both radio and television were nationally organized and eventually reached out to the nation as a whole. Public radio started its explosive expansion in the early twenties, just at the time when political suffrage became universal. It reached levels of coverage of about three-quarters of the households in the US by the end of the inter-war period, of two-thirds in the UK, and of roughly one half in Germany. Other countries, such as Switzerland, were slower in the development of radio coverage, but they followed suit only few years thereafter. The national demos was increasingly covered by national news, provided for the entire population at prime time. In German-speaking Switzerland, for example, comfortably installed at the lunch table, the whole nation received the national news at 12.30, after the 'time-signal' from the observatory at Neuchâtel, which allowed the listeners to synchronize their watches. In this respect, the rise of television after World War II did not introduce much of a change: the public



service television stations just added one more medium to the standardized diet of news and information programs that were the same for the entire demos. Nationwide public radio and television reached out to sectors of the electorate that were previously more difficult to reach, and they reduced selective exposure. In other words, they contributed to the inclusion of disadvantaged citizens into the public audience. Moreover, they were constitutionally mandated to non-partisan norms and were expected to fulfill the highest standards of quality, and to contribute to the development of a democratic public sphere and to the political enlightenment of the citizens (Jarren et al. 2002: 28).

In Western Europe (but not in the US), this nationwide broadcasting system went hand in hand with partisan print media, which were closely controlled by or allied with political parties and churches. 'Political parallelism' characterized the print media in many European countries up to the more recent past. Therefore, we do not think that Blumler and Kavanagh's (1999) distinction between the 'golden age of parties' before the 1960s and the age of limited channel nationwide television starting in the 1960s makes much sense.

While globalization leads to incongruence between the national demos and the decision-makers from without, the proliferation and diversification of the media channels fragments the 'demos' from within. It leads to increased competitive pressures for politicians and to centrifugal diversification (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999). As media abundance advances, politics must vie for the attention of editors, reporters, and audiences in a far more competitive environment. More television channels mean increased availability of entertainment, sports, and other forms of specialist journalism (business, fashion, celebrity) which compete with political journalism for resources and appeal.

Moreover, the big players of political journalism no longer control the field. Diversification changes the relationship of the politicians to the public as well: in the age of nationwide broadcasting, when radio and television offered relatively little choice, the news audience was near-universal and captive to the uniform message. Politicians aimed to project a limited set of master images and priorities throughout most sectors of the electorate. Standardized notions prevailed of what counted and what did not. Under the changed environment of multiple channels, they have more incentives or chances to tailor their message to particular identities, conditions, and tastes. The size of the mass audience is reduced. This creates openings for previously excluded voices to express themselves. But it also restores the prospects for selective exposure, widening cultural ('digital') gaps in society, and, in the final

analysis, for the segmentation or even ‘balkanization’ of the public sphere – a specter evoked by Sunstein (2001) in his analysis of internet-based communication. Without any doubt, however, the multiplication of channels creates a much more complex flow of information, and it disrupts the media’s and elites’ ability to establish dominant frames.

The proliferation and diversification of media channels is not a purely technical phenomenon, but is inseparably linked to the second transformation of the media systems in established democracies – commercialization, which is, in turn, a result of the admission of private broadcasting stations (both radio and television) with their orientation to the consumers’ demands, and their dependence on advertisers and investor-owners. In combination with the multiplication of the channels, commercialization contributed to the autonomy of the media from politics and the imposition of the ‘media logic’ on the ‘political logic’. Commercialization replaced the traditional supply market of mass communication in Europe, provided by the established national broadcasting monopolies, by a demand market. That is, it replaced a market in which the media decided what content to offer to their public with a market where the consumers’ desires and expectations as well as considerations of commercial success have come to play a much more important role. As Hamilton argues (2004), consumers’ desires are the key exogenous determinants of the production of news. Under such conditions, news content is a product, the creation and distribution of which depends not in the first place on the needs of politicians, but on the market value attached to the attention and tastes of its consumers, the technologies affecting the cost of information generation and transmission, and the values pursued by journalists and media owners. Competition drives news organizations to maximize profits, so the media play more to the audience than to the source.

Focusing on the consumers, however, overlooks some other important players, such as advertisers and investor-owners, who may play an even more important role in the commercialization of the media. As MacManus argues (1995), the consumers, in fact, find themselves in an asymmetrical relationship with media firms. On the one hand, this asymmetry results from the fact that news is most often not an experience, but a credence good – a good you buy on faith, because you as a consumer may not be able to establish its quality, even after consumption. Consumers, in other words, are vulnerable to opportunism on the part of the media firm, much more so than investors, advertisers, and sources, even if brand names sometimes help them evaluate quality after a product gains a reputation. On the other hand, and

even more importantly, investors, advertisers, and sources as individuals exert much greater influence over the media corporation than an individual consumer, and they also have a greater stake in the outcome of the transaction with the media corporation than the consumer. The individual consumer is the least powerful and the least interested stakeholder in the news production. To the extent that it increases their profits, rational investors are expected to take advantage of the consumers' inability to recognize quality news and of the low reward for reading or viewing it. This implies that the media may lower their costs in news production without losing their viewers or readers by providing 'soft' or low-quality news.

The mediatization thesis maintains that, as a result of these momentous transformations, the media increasingly follow their own, commercial logic in selecting, presenting, and interpreting the political news. In other words, the 'media logic' as 'the frame of reference within which the media construct the meaning of events and personalities they report, increasingly has come to reflect the commercial logic of the media industry, mixing the structural constraints of media communication with the typical aims of commercial communication activity' (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999: 251). The fact that everyone else in society – including politicians, parties, and governments – has learnt to adjust and adapt to the media logic as the way of perceiving and interpreting the world, and acting upon it, has further boosted the media's significance.

Politicians are among those who have learnt to adapt to the media (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999: 249–251). One of the most significant results is that politicians who wish to address the public must negotiate with the media's preferred timing, formats, language, and even the content of their messages. Pessimists argue that television in particular has come to 'colonize' politics to the extent that we now live in a 'mediacracy' (Meyer 2002). They argue that the public agenda is increasingly defined by the media, that political news is increasingly replaced by 'faits divers' (Bourdieu 1996) – that is, by the trivial inanities of daily life – and that the news formats are increasingly guided by viewer figures (television) or coverage figures (print media). This means that the news formats are said to increasingly cater to the precepts of 'popular culture', typified by personalization and dramatization, which leads to the depoliticization of the citizen public. From a more optimistic point of view, van Zoonen (2005) suggests that even if this were true, and even if popular culture admittedly has its flaws, the style of popular culture may offer a way into politics for people otherwise excluded or bored.

Popular fictions of politics may enable people to perform as citizens, and popular culture needs to be acknowledged as a relevant resource for political citizenship, a resource that produces comprehension and respect for popular political voices and that allows for more people to perform as citizens.

In the new preface to the revised edition of his *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, Habermas (1990) reassesses his originally very critical evaluation of the transformation of the public sphere. Among other things, he uses the example of the fall of the Berlin Wall to point out (p. 49) that the revolutionary change in the German Democratic Republic (the former East Germany) could only have come about because the television coverage of the mass demonstrations in East Germany turned the physical presence of protesters in the streets and squares into an omnipresent phenomenon (but see Kern 2011). Eventually, he comes to the conclusion that the democratic potential of the public sphere under contemporary conditions is ‘ambivalent’. We take this assessment as our point of departure and shall ask how the challenge of mediatization impacts on the prospects of democracy in the 21st century.

## Content of the volume

This volume is divided into two parts. Before embarking on the detailed discussion of the two challenges in Part II, we propose to discuss the preconditions, models, and varieties of democracy under contemporary conditions. In this way, Part I will lay the groundwork for the discussion of the two challenges. There we also intend to drive home our view that democracy is both a moving target and a highly complex, and variable, set of institutions and practices. As we see it, democracy is a moving target because democratization is an ongoing process that not only leads to an extension of democracy to new countries and to new layers of supra- and international governance, but also continuously transforms the way politics works in established democracies. In the Chapter 2, we introduce the preconditions of democracy against the background of the two major challenges which we have singled out. The challenge of globalization seriously questions some of the conditions that the literature has insisted upon as necessary requirements for the proper functioning of a democratic polity – the existence of a demos, of a state, as well as of appropriate economic and cultural conditions. As we shall show, however, it does not necessarily increase the importance of the international context for the democratization of nation states, which has been important all along. Both the challenge of globalization and

mediatization raise serious questions with respect to the preconditions of political communication more specifically.

At the same time, we conceive of democracy as a highly complex and variable set of institutions and practices. Given its complexity, democracy can be conceptualized in different ways. Chapter 3 presents our process-oriented model of representative democracy that follows in the footsteps of Robert Dahl (2000). The second transformation of democracy which extended democratic forms of government from the city state to the nation-state introduced the principle of representation and the designation of the representatives by elections. Elections establish a double link between the political input (the citizens' preferences) and the political output (public policies adopted by the elected representatives) by allowing for a combination of responsiveness and accountability. We shall elaborate this double link given by the chain of responsiveness and the chain of accountability. We believe that the electoral channel of representative democracy constitutes the core of any model of democracy under contemporary conditions. To become empirically more realistic, this model should, however, be extended in several respects. Accordingly, Chapter 3 extends this core model in three directions – in the direction of direct democracy, advocacy democracy, and protest politics.

The normative principles of democracy cannot only be combined in different ways in theory, but also in practical implementations. The different existing democracies constitute varying attempts to implement the general underlying normative principles of democratic theory. They have implemented these principles by various formal institutional arrangements, and informal practices and procedures. In Chapter 4, we shall conceptualize and empirically measure the existing variety of established democracies. Our analysis will be largely exploratory, an attempt to map out a largely unexplored territory. As we shall show, existing democracies differ considerably in the way they implement the basic principles under conditions of globalization and mediatization. Moreover, we shall also show that there are trade-offs involved in the implementation of the democratic principle: in the real world, it is not possible to maximize all the aspects of this principle. The institutional designers have to make some hard choices when trying to make democracy work. The diversity of existing democracies implies that they may be confronted quite differently by the two challenges of mediatization and globalization.

The four chapters of Part II present a detailed discussion of the two major challenges. They elaborate the theoretical concepts linked to

these challenges and provide empirical results from our own and related research, which allows us to assess the impact of these two challenges on democracy as we have come to know it. Chapters 5 and 6 deal with the two major aspects of globalization-related challenges – the transformation of democracy in its vertical and horizontal dimensions. Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the establishment of multi-level governance structures (the vertical dimension), while Chapter 6 focuses on the horizontal spread of democracy, with particular attention to external democracy promotion. Chapters 7 and 8 are devoted to the challenge of mediatization. Chapter 7 systematically introduces the concept of mediatization, while Chapter 8 discusses its consequences for news content, for political organizations, for decision-making processes, as well as for the public audience. Finally, Chapter 9 concludes with a short assessment of the state of democracy today.

## **Part I**

# **Democracy, a Moving Target of Great Complexity and Variability**

# 2

## Democracy as a Moving Target

*Hanspeter Kriesi*

The challenge of globalization seriously questions some of the conditions that the literature has insisted upon as necessary requirements for the proper functioning of a democratic polity – the existence of a *demos*, and of a state, as well as of appropriate economic and cultural conditions. Similarly, the challenge of mediatization raises serious questions with respect to the cultural preconditions of democracy and, most importantly, with respect to the preconditions of political communication more specifically. We shall discuss the preconditions of democracy with particular attention to the implications of our two challenges for the future chances of democracy. In this respect, we shall be especially attentive to European integration as the most advanced form of political and economic integration at the supranational level.

The question of the preconditions of democracy has given rise to an enormous amount of literature, which we shall review here in order to get an idea about how it can be answered under contemporary conditions of globalization and mediatization. Our reading of this literature suggests that six 'structuralist' arguments about necessary conditions of democracy deserve closer scrutiny:

- Democracy presupposes a *demos*.
- Democracy is only possible in a state.
- Democracy requires a supportive culture and cultural heterogeneity is an insurmountable obstacle to democracy.
- Economic prosperity is a precondition for democracy.
- The international context facilitates or constrains democracy on any given count.
- Democracy presupposes a public communication system that allows for the free deliberation of all.



We shall discuss these arguments one by one. The upshot of our assessment of these preconditions will be that, in the contemporary situation, there are no necessary, but only more or less favorable, conditions for democracy.

We shall argue that politics – the configuration of power, the goals of power holders and challengers, and their interaction in the context provided by the structural conditions – is crucial for the chances of democratization. We shall argue that politics may even create the required conditions for democratization. Crucial for the consolidation of democracy is the choice of an appropriate institutional design that takes into account the variable conditions encountered under contemporary circumstances. As Schneider and Wagemann (2006: 775) observe at the end of a particularly systematic analysis of the conditions under which democracies consolidated in 32 countries from six world regions between 1974 and 2000: ‘some democracies consolidate in unfavourable conditions, while others fail to consolidate in favourable contexts. The reason for this seems to be the choice of an (in)appropriate configuration of institutions’. New democracies consolidate if the specific combination of political institutions chosen fit the societal context in terms of power dispersion. Put differently, even under adverse conditions, there exists a chance to consolidate democracies through skillful institutional choice and adaptation (p. 776).

This conclusion is in line with the agency-oriented or ‘voluntarist’ approach to democratization, which was originally put forward by O’Donnell et al. (1986). According to this approach, democratization is ultimately a matter of political crafting. As Przeworski (1986: 48) formulates this position: ‘objective factors constitute at most constraints to that which is possible under a concrete historical situation but do not determine the outcome of the situation’. We would like to suggest that this is also true under conditions of globalization and mediatization – at the global level, and in regions yet to be democratized at the domestic level. This is what we deduce from the discussion of each of the six major structuralist arguments.

## **The existence of a demos**

Democracy is, first of all, about a *demos*. Democratic procedures presuppose the existence of a *demos*. As Greenfeld (1992: 10) has observed, the idea of democracy at the national level was originally closely related to the idea of the nation. The idea of the nation – and by implication the idea of nationalism – was originally based on two

principles, which are at the same time the basic principles of democracy (Greenfeld 1992: 10; 1999: 37): the principle of popular sovereignty which sought expression in a polity of its own, and the idea of the fundamental equality of the members of the national community. Originally, she writes, the idea of democracy was contained in the idea of the nation as the butterfly in the chrysalis. The nation constitutes the demos at the level of the nation-state.

But what is a nation? A nation is an 'imagined community', as the title of Anderson's (1983) study famously declares. It is an imagined community, because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them. In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages or face-to-face groups are imagined. However, even if it is too large for its members to know each other, the nation is still a limited community of solidarity, based on the belief of its members that they are united by some set of characteristics that differentiate them (in their own minds) from outsiders. A nation is an exclusive group that is distinguished from other nations. Its defining characteristic is that its members are striving to create or maintain their own polity (see Weber's (1948: 176) well-known definition). The members of the nation have 'a collective consciousness because of their sentiment of difference, or even uniqueness, which is fostered by the group's sharing of core symbols' (Haas 1986: 726f.).

The difficulty of a democracy beyond the nation-state is that there is no corresponding community of solidarity at the global level, or even at the level of a single continent like Europe. The question of whether such a community of solidarity – a demos – is possible beyond the nation-state has mainly been discussed in the context of the EU. The basic question here is not, in the first place, whether a polity as large as the European continent can be democratized, but whether it is capable of being a democracy in a more fundamental sense, that is, whether there exists something like a community of solidarity among Europeans from different nation-states. There are quite a number of theorists who argue that the creation of a European demos has to precede the democratization of Europe, and who are at the same time very skeptical about the possibility of such a demos developing. Kielmansegg (2003: 57), for instance, observes that a politically resilient identity of the Europeans as Europeans does not exist, not yet, as he adds for the hopeful among us. He explains this absence of a European identity as being above all due to the lack of a 'communication community' in Europe, attributable to the elementary fact that Europeans live in their languages as separate 'structures of perception and understanding'. Moreover, there are no

common memories, as he sees it: the past is remembered nationally, in highly specific ways.

This analysis is shared by other German observers. Thus, Grimm (1995: 296), in a very influential paper, argued that 'the absence of a European communication system, due chiefly to language diversity, has the consequence that for the foreseeable future there will be neither a European public nor a European political discourse'. What obstructs democracy at the European level, in his view, is not so much the lack of cohesion of Union citizens as a people, but 'their weakly developed collective identity and low capacity for transnational discourse' (p. 297), from which he deduces that the democracy deficit at the European level cannot be removed by institutional reforms in any short term. Offe (1998, 2003) shares this analysis and adds the pessimistic twist that the increasing functional integration in Europe might provoke a reaction on the part of the European citizens that seeks to reduce the community of solidarity and trust to the national, or even regional or group, level. As he suggests (1998: 132), the functional needs and the moral prerequisites of European integration might develop in opposite directions.

This perspective is based on the cultural definition of a nation, typical for Germans whose nation constitutes the paradigmatic case of a 'cultural' nation. The opposite view, the French, republican, or political definition of a nation suggests instead that the existence of a demos is not an immediate precondition for the democratization of a polity. A political view of the demos suggests that the political institutions and the political practice within the institutional framework are capable of creating a demos where there had been none before. According to this argument, which is defended by Habermas (1995, 1998), an untypical German theorist, the collective identity is not a precondition, but a consequence of the creation of political institutions. According to this alternative view, the European demos would be a side product of institutional constructions, above all of the creation of a European constitution. The European demos would be held together by what Habermas calls a 'constitutional patriotism'.

In line with this voluntaristic view, the demos is largely the result of a process of political structuration (Schimmelfennig 2010: 217). It takes intermediary organizations – political parties, interest groups, social movement organizations – to mobilize and articulate the citizens' interest for a demos to be capable of effective political action. In the analysis of Bartolini (2005: 89), the democratization of the European nation-states was 'a process of internal voice structuring in externally

consolidated and relatively closed territorial systems, whose military, economic, and cultural boundaries had already tended to stabilize.’ From this point of view, the lack of appropriate political structuration at the EU level is the main reason to be pessimistic about the prospect of democratization of the EU.

Switzerland may serve as a possible model for this contrasting view. Switzerland, the ‘nation of political voluntarism’, succeeded with a minimum of common culture, and its political democratization preceded nation formation (Kriesi 1999, 2007). In line with this argument Stojanovic (2009: 14f.) maintains that ‘a repeated practice of direct democracy strengthens the sentiment of the Swiss that they belong to the same “people” or to the same “nation”.’ The direct-democratic practice, as he argues, makes the nation visible: ‘When, in the aftermath of a referendum, politicians and the media affirm that “the people” has decided, there can be no doubt what “people” they have in mind: it is the Swiss people, the Swiss *demos*’. Probably no other country, he argues, better illustrates Ernest Renan’s famous definition of a nation as a ‘daily plebiscite’: the Swiss do not vote every day, but they vote frequently enough to recognize themselves in the popular verdict – even if they do not participate in the vote.

The Swiss example shows that even a culturally very heterogeneous population with rather diverse historical memories can be constructed as a *demos*. As far as mediatization is concerned, the Swiss example also illustrates that a common communication system is not a necessary condition for the existence of a *demos*. In Switzerland, the mass media are essentially segmented along linguistic lines. What the Swiss case illustrates is that the linguistically segmented communication system does not prevent the emergence of common public debate (Kriesi 1993). Thus, Tresch (2008) has shown that there is no fundamental incompatibility between a multilingual context and an integrated public sphere. As long as all the segmented communication systems discuss the same political issues, and as long as politics in the different linguistic segments are structured along the same lines (i.e. as long as they are vertically integrated, as we shall argue below), such a common debate is bound to emerge.

Cederman and Kraus (2004) take an intermediary position and, with respect to the emergence of a European *demos*, plead for a perspective that combines the two competing points of view in an approach which they term ‘bounded institutionalism’. On the one hand, they share the ‘voluntaristic’ political view that democratic practice can contribute to the integration of the political community at the European

level. On the other hand, they agree with the 'deterministic' cultural view that this mechanism alone is insufficient: they argue that the democratic practice has to be rooted in an already existing demos, which it reinforces in turn. According to this intermediary position, which we share, a demos cannot be constructed out of thin air. It takes some common memories, myths, symbols, and a common territory to build upon. This is the basic insight of Smith's (1986) argument about the 'ethnic origin' of nations. However, the degree to which the demos requires cultural standardization can be exaggerated (see below).

As far as Europe is concerned, there are indications that the density of social interactions across Europe and the willingness of Europeans to identify themselves as Europeans are increasing, some think to the point where 'it is possible to say that there now exists a European society' (Fligstein 2008: 244). There are also signs that, as has been argued by Hooghe and Marks (2009), the European populations are waking up to the increasing importance of the EU for their well-being. The increasing salience of the EU is already undermining the 'permissive consensus' about the EU, which may eventually lead to an intensification of political conflict about Europe. This in turn, may provide leverage for the political structuration of the European integration both at the domestic and the European level (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012).

However, Cheneval and Schimmelfennig (2011: 7) insist the basic fact about the EU is that there is no consolidated European demos; instead, 'the coexistence of primarily national demoi with a secondary and mediated European demos appears to be a stable pattern for the foreseeable future'. As they argue, the debate on the democratic deficit in the EU suffers from neglecting this multiple-demos condition. There is no voluntaristic fix to this predicament, and a return to the protection of the existing national demoi comes down to the resigned conclusion that the EU is not ready for any kind of democracy. As Cheneval and Schimmelfennig show, however, the EU rather closely corresponds to the principles of a new kind of democratic system that can best be described as 'demoicracy' – a model of democracy that builds on the premise that national demoi will persist for the foreseeable future rather than being replaced or superseded by a regional or even global demos, and that in 'any democratic polity beyond the nation-state, multiple demoi will therefore need to play an indispensable part as bearers of negative and positive rights of protection and participation' (p. 5).

## The existence of a state

Democracy is not only about a demos, but also about *kratos*, that is, about power. Linz and Stepan (1996: 7) argue that democracy 'is a form of governance of a modern state. Thus, no modern polity can become democratically consolidated unless it is first a state'. Referring to Dahl (1989: 207), who maintains that the democratic process presupposes a unit, they argue that 'agreements about stateness are logically prior to the creation of democratic institutions' (p. 26). Democracy requires, in other words, a political center that has the capacity to make binding decisions and to implement them for the demos that inhabits the bounded territory over which it governs. The monopoly of violence and an administrative infrastructure of this center are necessary to restrict the capacity of local power holders to ignore and challenge the decisions taken by democratic institutions.

However, the question is again how much centralization of force is needed to guarantee the possibility of democracy. As Koenig-Archibugi (2010: 9) points out, the early experience of the US as well as the current experience of the EU disconfirm the thesis that a central monopoly of force is necessary to ensure high levels of compliance with the law. We would even go a step further and argue that these experiences show that democratization processes are possible without a strong central state. As is pointed out by Schimmelfennig (2010: 218), mainstream theories are ill-equipped to explain *de facto* EU democratization because they assume a centralized state with a mature demos. They are not attuned to the question of how the democratization of the multilevel and multinational realities of the EU has become possible – at least to a modest extent.

But even at the national level, we find trajectories to democratization which did not rely on a strong state. Thus, Tilly (2007: Chapter 7) distinguishes between three ideal-typical trajectories of domestic democratization: 'strong state', 'medium state', and 'weak state' trajectories. In a strong state trajectory, state capacity increases well before significant democratization occurs. The opposite may happen in a weak state trajectory. As Tilly points out, weak states have often existed in history, but until recently they have rarely democratized at all. Instead, they have most commonly disappeared into the territories of more powerful competitors. In recent decades, however, an increasing number of regimes have been following weak state trajectories toward democracy, that is, they experienced considerable democratization before any substantial increase in state capacity. As Tilly (2007: 164) also suggests, a weak state

suffers from significant obstacles to continued democratization beyond some threshold – the existence of subordinate autonomous power centers, insulated citizens' networks, and large inequalities. But weak states may eventually move toward significant strengthening of central state authority, change to the medium state trajectory, and guarantee the expansion of democracy.

Switzerland illustrates the weak state trajectory, and it suggests that democracy both slows down the strengthening of central authority, and creates the preconditions for a move toward a stronger center. In the Swiss case, the early introduction of direct-democratic institutions generally limited the expansion of state activities. This can be shown especially with respect to the expansion of the welfare state (Kriesi and Trechsel 2008: 161f.). At the same time, as we have already argued in the preceding section, the early, radical democratization which meant that the disparate parts of the country had repeated occasions each year to debate the same political issues provided a strong incentive for the creation of a common demos.

With Koenig-Archibugi (2010: 12) and Tilly (2007) we can conclude that a certain state capacity constitutes a necessary condition for democratization, 'because democratic rights of participation (input) as well as compliance with democratic decisions (output) need to be secured.' But the required level falls far short of a strong state. A strong state may even be detrimental to democracy (Lipset 1993: 4), as is illustrated by the rich petrol states, where resources supporting state activity flow in without bargaining between rulers and citizens for those resources (Ross 2001). The main problem in democratizing non-state entities, such as the EU, may actually not lie in their insufficient stateness, but in the fact that this democratization involves institutional mechanisms, as discussed in Chapter 5, which are unfamiliar to the citizens, since they diverge from the standard democratic models developed in the state contexts (Hurrelmann 2010: 7).

## **The cultural preconditions**

Culture is relevant for democracy in two respects. Democracy requires both a supportive culture and a culturally integrated demos. Dahl (2000: 147) lists both of these cultural preconditions among his five essential conditions of democracy. We take up these two aspects one at a time.

Inglehart and Welzel (2005) provide a comprehensive framework for discussing the socio-economic (see below) and cultural prerequisites of democracy. Their theory postulates that macro socio-economic

development is linked to value change, that is, it contributes to the spread of self-expression values, which in turn increases the demand for democracy. They are able to demonstrate these linkages empirically. The upshot of their argument is that, as a major effect of modernization, mass demand for democracy increases (Welzel and Inglehart 2008: 136). Their optimistic view suggests that the modernization process quasi-automatically produces the general cultural demand for the democratization process today. Amartya Sen (1999) even suggests that democracy has become a universal value. He attributes this claim to a plurality of virtues of democracy, including the intrinsic importance of political participation and freedom in human life, the instrumental importance of political incentives in keeping governments responsible and accountable, and the constructive role of democracy in the formation of values and in the understanding of needs, rights, and duties.

Having come to this optimistic overall assessment, the question remains how the universal value of democracy is to be institutionalized in a given cultural context. We would agree with Saward (2003: 113) that there are 'no wholly non-Western models of democracy', but that 'there can be significant, and legitimate, adaptations, variations and institutional innovations of democratic understanding and practice'.

Political scientists have been more skeptical about the cultural preconditions for democracy in the past, and the quest for the appropriate political culture for democracy goes at least back to Almond and Verba's (1963) 'civic culture'. This culture, which they considered as a requisite for a democracy, was a 'mixed culture', very much inspired by the Anglo-Saxon political culture, that struck a suitable balance between power and responsiveness, consensus and cleavage, and between affectivity and affect neutrality. Putnam's (1993) study on the democratic performance of regional governments in Italy has revived the interest in political culture by famously arguing that civiness was, indeed, a prerequisite for democracy to work. Advancing in Tocqueville's footsteps, Putnam argues that a society's civiness was rooted in social networks, especially in voluntary associations and political parties, that is, in what is usually called 'civil society'. Associations create the basis for generalized social trust, which in turn constitutes the basis for social cooperation and the solution for the collective-action problems in democracy.

Putnam's study met with a number of critiques. One that is particularly important from our point of view here is that it is impossible to treat political culture as an exogenous factor, independent of politics. Thus, as Tarrow (1996) has argued, the malfunctioning of the state in



the Italian south is not the result, but the origin of its pervading lack of civism. According to this interpretation, the lack of civism in southern Italy is best viewed as a side-product of the development of the state, and not the other way around. In contrast to Putnam's neo-Durkheimian approach, we ought to take into account the inevitable interdependence between the state, politics, and society (Skocpol et al. 2000: 542), which is to suggest that political culture is, among other things, a product of the way politics works. Freitag and Bühlmann (2005), for example, show on the basis of world value survey data that universalistic, impartial, and power-dividing institutions contribute to the development of social trust. Similarly, Rothstein (2001) has shown that the universalistic Swedish welfare state contributes to social trust, and Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) present empirical evidence for the more general thesis that social trust depends on the type of welfare. In other words, even if a democratic political culture is helpful for the consolidation of democracy, democratic institutions and practices in turn are likely to constitute the best support for such a culture.

The second aspect of cultural preconditions, the question of cultural diversity, has also much preoccupied scholars of democracy. As Lijphart (2004) observes, most experts would agree that deep societal divisions pose a grave problem for democracy, and that it is therefore generally more difficult to establish and maintain democratic government in divided than in homogenous societies. It is important to observe, however, that ethnic conflicts are not any more likely in culturally diverse countries: ethno-demographic diversity indices rarely achieve significance in the explanation of ethnic conflicts, and they do so only for a circumscribed subset of conflicts. As pointed out by Wimmer et al. (2009: 335), cultural (ethnic) diversity does not matter *per se*, rather, it matters for politics because the nation-state itself relies on ethno-national principles of political legitimacy: the state is ruled in the name of an ethnically defined people and rulers should therefore care for their own people. 'The state is an active agent of political exclusion that creates ethnic conflicts in the first place – especially in poor states that lack the resources for universal inclusion, as well as in states with weak civil society institutions where other, non-ethnic channels for aggregating political interests and rewarding political loyalty are scarce' (Wimmer 2002).

In line with this argument, Cederman et al. (2010b) show that large ethnic groups that are excluded from state power or under-represented in government are much more likely to challenge the regime's insiders through violent means. Moreover, a loss of power in recent history

or previous conflict further increases the likelihood of armed conflict. Finally, ethnic exclusion by incumbent governments leads members of ethnic groups that are systematically excluded from state power to fight longer conflicts (Wucherpfennig et al. 2012). Rebel organizations from excluded groups develop stronger group solidarities and become more cost tolerant, which allows them to recruit and fight on behalf of such groups and to maintain their fighting base for longer periods of time.

This is to say that cultural heterogeneity does not per se pose problems for democracy. The adverse political consequences of cultural diversity are themselves a product of politics and can be made more manageable by suitable strategic and institutional arrangements, which allow for the political inclusion or the political autonomy of cultural minorities. Dahl (2000: 151–156) mentions four ways to do deal with the problem: assimilation into the dominant culture (the American way); deciding by consensus (the Swiss, Belgian, or Dutch way); electoral engineering, that is, the introduction of suitable electoral systems allowing for adequate representation of cultural minorities (the proportional representation (PR) way); and separation, that is, the introduction of federal systems with the possibility of adding new federal units (the Indian or the Swiss way) or secession (the Norwegian way).

The political scientist who has probably made the most important contribution to the discussion of this problem, Arend Lijphart (2004), recommends power sharing for culturally divided polities, which implies appropriate constitutional engineering. This recommendation, which is shared by many other observers, includes nine areas of constitutional choice. The first two, indeed, refer to the electoral system: Lijphart recommends PR-systems that are simple to understand. Next, he recommends parliamentary systems, power sharing in the executive, cabinet stability (to be strengthened, for example, by the introduction of a constructive vote of non-confidence), a primarily symbolic head of state, with very limited power and elected by parliament, and power sharing beyond the cabinet and parliament (in the civil service, judiciary, police, and military). These elements largely cover what Dahl meant by ‘deciding by consensus’. The final two elements concern federalism and decentralization of power, as well as non-territorial autonomy for communal groups in divided societies that are not geographically concentrated.

There are some dissenting voices. The question of the electoral system has been subject to particularly intense discussions. Horowitz (2003), for example, has argued that the alternative vote would be a better solution for divided societies than PR, and Stojanovic’s (2006) analysis

of the Swiss case, the paradigmatic case of multicultural integration revealed that, in fact, PR was not the privileged electoral system in the Swiss cantons. Rothchild and Roeder (2005: 9) launched a more general attack on power sharing. They maintain that the conditions for the success of power sharing – the continuing commitment of the leaders of ethnic groups to moderate their own demands and their ability to contain hard-line elements within their own communities – may be in short supply in situation where it is needed most, that is, in post civil-war situations. They argue that power sharing after civil wars may lead to institutional instability, the escalation of conflict and to blocked transitions to democracy (Roeder and Rothchild 2005: 325). As an alternative, Rothchild and Roeder (2005) propose power-dividing strategies, in the Madisonian tradition: instead of empowering minority groups, they propose to empower civil society by expanding individual liberties and rights at the expense of government (reduce the scope of government) and to empower different majorities in independent organs of government (separate powers) – civil liberties, multiple majorities, and checks and balances. Given the power-dividing logic, they prefer presidentialism with a real balance of powers between executive and legislature to parliamentarism in protecting democracy and human rights. And they prefer bicameral legislatures with competing bases of representation to unicameral bodies; and independent judiciaries empowered with judicial review over weak judiciaries (p. 17).

As we see it, the strategies of power sharing and power dividing are – with the important exception of the choice between parliamentary or presidential systems – actually complementary and mutually reinforcing. Lijpharts' (1999) conceptual map of democracy accommodates the two strategies for dealing with cultural diversity in one overarching scheme. Power sharing refers above all (although not exclusively) to the sharing of power within institutions, that is, to the executive-party dimension (which includes PR, parliamentary systems, multi-party systems, and power sharing in the executive) of Lijphart's two-dimensional map. Power dividing, by contrast, refers to the sharing of power between institutions, that is, to the federal-unitary dimension (which includes federalism, bicameralism, judicial review, a flexible constitution, and an independent central bank) of Lijphart's two-dimensional map. The leaders involved in the processes of democratization will have to reach agreement on what to pick from this set of institutions, but it is important to note that the solution to the democratic compromise consists, as Przeworski (1986: 60) suggested a long time ago, of institutions.

## The economic preconditions

The forerunner of the debate about the economic preconditions of democracy is Lipset (1981 [1959]), whose conjectures on economic development as a requisite of democratization proved extremely influential in the following decades, especially as part of a broader set of hypotheses known as 'modernization theory'. Lipset (1981 [1959]: 31) suggested that 'the more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy'. As Boix (2003: 1–2) observed, 'excluding Duverger's law on the effect of single-member districts on party systems, it may be the strongest empirical generalization we have in comparative politics today'. In the same breath, however, he also pointed out the weaknesses of this thesis.

In fact, recent research has considerably nuanced the conjecture that economic development increases the chances of democratization. In their landmark study, Przeworski et al. (2000) purported to show that the level of economic development has no effect on the emergence of democracies, if one looks at data from the post-World War II period (1950–1990). They suggested that democracies can emerge at almost any level of per capita income. They failed to detect any thresholds of development that would make the emergence of democracy predictable. In turn, they found that the survival of democracies is quite closely related to economic development: per capita income turned out to be by far the best predictor of the survival of democracies. Democracies survive in affluent societies whatever may be happening to them. They are brittle in poor countries, but they are not always sentenced to die. As they saw it, this argument pulled the rug from under the modernization theory. Teorell (2010: 57–60) arrived at similar results for the period 1972–2006.

Critics have, however, challenged Przeworski et al.'s study on both empirical and theoretical grounds (Wucherpfennig and Deutsch 2009). Thus, Boix and Stokes (2003) show that, contrary to the claims of Przeworski et al., economic development both contributes to the transition to democracy and sustains it.

In a more recent study, Boix (2011) confirms that the effect of economic development on democracy plays only in certain time periods. Also, economic development matters to the prospect for poor countries to democratize. In already developed and democratized countries, however, any extra growth has no further effect on the level of democracy. Moreover, the effect of economic development on democratization turns out to be conditional on the international context

(Boix 2011: 821): income per capita had no effect on political regimes in the first half of the 19th century and it had no such effect from the thirties to the end of the Cold War. By contrast, it had a strong effect on democratization from the 1850s through the post-World War I settlement, and again during the third wave of democratization, that is, the period from the 1970s up to the present.

Having set the empirical record straight, the question then becomes: which causal mechanisms account for the fact that development causes dictatorships to fall to democracy and causes democracy to last. The younger literature on economic effects on democracy suggests that democracy is caused not by income per se, but by declining levels of income inequality (Boix and Stokes 2003). In economically highly unequal dictatorships, the political elites usually heavily overlap with the rich part of society. They are afraid of revolutions and democratization, because this would threaten their wealth, and will therefore opt for heavy repression to avoid upheavals. As countries have developed, income has become more equally distributed (at least until more recent decades, when we witness a 'great U-turn' in this relationship) (Alderson and Nielsen 2002). More equal income distributions, in turn, mean that democracy becomes less threatening for the rich, that is, they become more willing to countenance democratization. In an extended version of this theory, Boix (2003) emphasizes not only income equality, but also capital mobility as a structural condition for democracy. As with income equality, capital mobility is expected to reduce the threat of democracy for the rich – it makes their assets harder to tax. Therefore, it also reduces their resistance against democracy.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) present a similar framework for explaining the relationship between economic development and democracy. Their approach, however, is a bit different from that adopted by Boix: whereas Boix argues that democracy is most likely to occur when it is least threatening to the elites, according to Acemoglu and Robinson, it is an immediate threat of revolution from below that leads elites to consider democracy as the lesser evil. Just as Boix does, these authors argue that democracy becomes a greater threat and repression more attractive to the elites when inequality increases. On the other hand, too much equality is not conducive to democracy either: it is likely to reduce the pressure of the lower classes for change. It is a medium range of inequality that is most conducive to democratization (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006: 36–37). Under these conditions, they argue that democratization constitutes a credible commitment of the elites to future policies in favor of the majority of the population, a

commitment made credible by the redistribution of the future political power in favor of the majority, that is, by the transition to democracy. This argument, they boldly suggest, is consistent with much of the historical evidence.

These theories, which put economic inequality in the national population at the center of their explanation of democratization, are contradicted by a recent result: Teorell (2010: 60f.), on the basis of a new dataset and very elaborate controls, shows that economic inequality does not have any effect on democratization during the third wave of democratization. As he argues, Boix's (2003) previous results appear to be highly sensitive to specification, and only apply to a sample of 50 countries, while he covers 165 countries. Moreover, these theories hardly apply to democratization at the supranational level. As Schimmelfennig (2010: 215–216) observes, the EU in particular not only has the highest standard of living in the world, but Europe is also the region with the world's lowest inequality. Moreover, capital mobility is high, and the repressive capacities of the EU are extremely weak or, more precisely, extremely decentralized. Finally, the comparatively high wealth of the region does not create significant social pressure, and grievances would have to be directed at national governments who still do most of the taxing in the EU. In spite of all these conditions, several of which are unfavorable to democratization, the EU has been undertaking steps in the direction of democratization. How this has been possible is beyond the explanatory scope of these theories.

We conclude from this discussion that the empirical record has generally vindicated modernization theory and has established that (national) economic development in particular and socio-economic modernization more generally may facilitate democratization. However, and we would like to put the emphasis on this point, economic development does not seem to have an impact on democratization *per se*, but its impact seems to be conditional on the international political context. It is to this set of conditions that we turn to now.

## **The international context and diffusion**

Huntington's (1991) well-known thesis of the three 'waves' of democratization maintains that the worldwide democratization process took the form of a wave-like movement where waves of progressing democratization were interrupted by periods of set backs. He distinguishes between three waves of democratization and two set backs. The fact that democratization processes have occurred in waves suggests that they have been

influenced by the international context and by diffusion processes, but also by important global shocks (world wars or economic crises), or even parallel developments, which might have affected democratization simultaneously. The fact that these waves characterize the entire history of democratization suggests that the more recent push of globalization did not change much with respect to the importance of the international context for the spread of democracy. We shall focus here on the structural, non-purposeful conditions of the international context and diffusion processes. Chapter 6 will show in more detail to what extent these processes result from explicit attempts by political actors to promote democratization across the globe.

As far as the international context is concerned, Boix's (2011) realist conception of the international order focuses on the extent to which the structure of the international system affects the relationship between rising income levels and democratization. Looking at the relationship between great powers, he distinguishes between democratic, anti-democratic and neutral international orders. In a democratic international order, all great powers are democratic. They do not generally intervene in favor of authoritarian regimes. This situation, which prevailed briefly after World War I until the Wilsonian order collapsed, as well as after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, supports democratization. And, indeed, Boix is able to show that under a democratic international order, the likelihood of democratic transitions increases with higher levels of income and the probability of democratic breakdowns is reduced. By contrast, anti-democratic international orders, where at least one of the great powers is anti-democratic and where great powers structure their alliances along political ideologies, depress democracy. Such a situation existed under the Holy Alliance in the early 19th century, in the interwar period, and during the Cold War, which explains why many middle-income countries took so long to become democratic in the immediate post-war period, even though they enjoyed an income level similar to that of European countries before 1920. In the polarized version of the anti-democratic international order, which characterized the Cold War when great powers were divided into two politically homogenous blocs (an authoritarian and a democratic one), even the democratic great power has stronger preferences for authoritarian regimes in poor (and, that is, unstable) countries – especially if the competing (authoritarian) great power benefits from and supports a revolutionary movement. In a neutral international order, as existed from the mid-19th century up to World War I, cooperation and alliances among great powers do not follow a political or ideological cleavage and

no great power invests any extra resources in maintaining the regime type of its clients or changing those of its enemies. In such a context, income affects political regimes unconditionally.

Diffusion processes partly specify the mechanisms through which great powers exercise their vertical control, partly they add mechanisms accounting for the horizontal spread of democracy during waves of democratization. Thus, Huntington (1991) points out that the democratization of any given country creates favorable conditions for the democratization of other countries. According to this view, democratization spreads as a result of demonstration and snowball effects. Wejnert (2005) distinguishes between three sets of structural elements that serve as diffusion mechanisms: spatial factors, networks, and media communication. Spatial proximity is important, because the closer the countries are to each other, the greater the number of linkages between them through which democracy can be promoted or spread. In addition, it often implies structural and cultural similarities. Thus, Teorell (2010: 81) found fairly tight long-run adjustment of the levels of democracy among neighboring states during the third wave of democratization. Wejnert (2005) also found strong spatial proximity effects for the 168 countries and the whole period (1800–1999) covered by her data.

Membership in international networks exposes a country to the influence of the other members in these networks, and might either hinder or foster democratization. The impact of the networks strongly depends on their internal structure. In heavily centralized networks, the center exerts a strong influence on the peripheral members, who may be forced to adapt their practices to the standards set by the center. The best example for such an influence is the highly centralized, coercive economic and political network of the former communist bloc, where the authoritarian center – the Soviet Union – had prevented any kind of democratization processes for a long time. Once the center weakened and eventually fell apart, the bloc unraveled and the former satellites of the Soviet Union democratized one after the other (Bunce 1999). The former colonial empires provide other examples for such centralized, coercive networks, where the former colonial dependencies only got a chance to democratize once they were set free. Wejnert's (2005: 68) study indicates, however, that the hegemonic imposition of a democratic system on newly independent colonial dependencies did not lead to sustainable democracy. By contrast, her results (p. 68) suggest that membership in international economic and political networks (such as the Council of Europe, the Arab League, NATO, or the Warsaw Pact) is important for democratization: the larger the number of democracies in



such a network, the more likely it is that the other members democratize to some extent. In different analyses of successful democratization, the regional environment of a country (spatial proximity), membership in international networks, and international leverage turn out to be very important factors, especially in the third wave (Levitsky and Way 2010; Pevehouse 2002; Teorell 2010: 140; Wejnert 2005: 69). In Wejnert's model, after considering these factors, economic development hardly plays a role any more.

In an important study of the democratizing effect of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), Torfason and Ingram (2010) add three new ideas regarding the democratizing effect of international networks: first, the IGOs who may have influence are not restricted to a select few (as the ones studied by Wejnert); the authors count some 300 organizations. It is not only the powerful, but also the obscure and weak IGOs, which might play a role. Second, there are different mechanisms through which IGOs may exert influence. One of them is coercion, but Torfason and Ingram find that there are also other mechanisms that play a role. Third, the influence does not flow top-down, from the IGO to its members. Rather, IGOs promote horizontal exchange from member to member. This is also reflected in a slightly different research design from Wejnert. While she looked for the influence of IGOs on democratization by counting a country's membership in various IGOs, Torfason and Ingram investigated whether joint membership in IGOs of dyads of countries helps democratic standards to spread.

Democracy's long-term rise around the world is not simply a consequence of IGOs, but Torfason and Ingram argue that the channels of contact offered through IGOs have provided important support for this process and hastened it. IGOs provide interpretation and interaction venues for elites, while also supporting a shared identity among the populace of member-states. This increases the likelihood of change consistent with shared norms and decreases the likelihood of inconsistent change. Normative diffusion among rulers is important even when demands for change originate with the public. Their results confirm the idea that democracy diffuses through this normative mechanism provided by IGOs, while autocracy does not.

This key result holds up, even when Torfason and Ingram control for other diffusion mechanisms. They find evidence for spatial diffusion, whose geographical reach seems to have expanded over time as the world has become smaller. They find support for world polity theory which maintains that exposure to international society, as measured by the number of memberships in IGOs and International

Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), enhances democratization. They also find that the example of rich countries influences poor countries and that the militarily powerful influence the weak. Controlling for all these other mechanisms, diffusion of democracy through IGO networks turns out to be both statistically and substantively significant. We can conclude with the authors that it is no overstatement to say that the IGO network has been fundamental to global democratization.

Finally, media communication may contribute to democratization by exposing the public of non-democratic societies to the reality in democratic countries, by providing their civil society with a forum for debate, and by providing channels for mobilizing the general public. Therefore, Teorell (2010: 67–70) has been interested in media effects as an aspect of modernization in the third wave of democratization. It turns out that as radios, televisions, and newspapers spread in the population, democracy becomes more consolidated, so that anti-democratic coups are either deferred or aborted. There is no measurable media effect, however, under authoritarian conditions, that is, the media do not promote democratization. Therefore, he suggests (p. 6) that widespread access to media outlets might be an aspect of modernization that defers backsliding from these achieved levels rather than triggering movement toward more democracy. These tentative results are seconded by Wejnert's (2005) study, which finds evidence for media becoming a factor sustaining democratization in the post-war period (1950–1999). This was the time when television and radio became the key means of political communication. The media's effect varies depending on the world region, however. Thus, the media's pro-democracy effect was particularly strong in Africa, while the media had a significant negative effect on democratization in the Middle East, where authoritarian regimes censored them and had them distribute anti-democratic information. In line with Teorell's interpretation, Wejnert (2005: 72) concludes that modern means of communication enhance democracy only if the country's domestic conditions allow for the promotion of democratic principles.

### **The preconditions for political communication**

Let us, finally, turn to the domestic preconditions of political communication and to the question of how they are transformed in the age of globalization. As a point of departure for the discussion of the first question, we can take a quote from Manin (1987: 351f.), who points out that, in democracy, 'the source of legitimacy is not the predetermined will of individuals, but rather the process of its formation, that is, deliberation

itself. An individual's liberty consists first of all in being able to arrive at a decision by a process of research and comparison among various solutions'. And, by implication: 'A legitimate decision does not represent the will of all, but is one that results from the deliberation of all. It is the process by which everyone's will is formed that confers its legitimacy on the outcome, rather than the sum of already formed wills' (p. 352). This implies, as Habermas (1990: 38) added, that the processes of public communication, that is, the procedures of democratic opinion and will formation constitute the crucial precondition for democracy. In short, democracy crucially depends on the quality of the process of political communication.

As already discussed in the introduction, the communication between citizens and their representatives has become essentially media-based, which means that the process of political communication depends on the media infrastructure. Accordingly, the media are expected to fulfill some important functions for the democratic process. There are different ways to characterize and summarize these functions. We shall follow Beierwaltes (2000) who distinguishes between the two dimensions of 'publicity' and 'discursiveness'. Publicity refers to the media's coverage of the relationship between elites and citizens, discursiveness to their responsibility for allowing a free public exchange of arguments among the citizens. Müller (2012) suggests the labels 'vertical' and 'horizontal' media functions for these two dimensions. The vertical (publicity) functions include the 'forum function', the 'information function', and the 'watchdog' function. The media have to provide a forum for candidates and political parties to debate their demands and proposals before a national audience. As discussed in more depth in chapters 3 and 7, the media are also expected 'to serve as eyes and ears for citizens' (Graber 2003: 146), they have to inform the citizens about the performance of their elected representatives so that they can be held accountable. In turn, they are also expected to give voice to public opinion, that is, to keep the elected representatives informed about public opinion so that the elected representatives can be responsive to the public's demands. The watchdog function refers to investigative journalism, which is expected to monitor misbehavior, corruption, and abuses of power by government. As Müller (2012: 6) observes, this vertical dimension of the media's functions for democracy is heavily emphasized by the classical liberal model of the public sphere (Ferree et al. 2002: 206–210).

The horizontal dimension refers to the media's role as a marketplace of ideas. The media are expected to provide a forum not only for candidates

and parties, but also for interest groups, social movement organizations, experts of all stripes, and individual citizens. This function is especially valued by the participatory, deliberative, and constructionist models of the public sphere (Ferree et al. 2002: 210–229), which put the accent on popular inclusiveness and empowerment of the citizens, in addition to the liberals' concern with diversity, and pluralism of opinions.

The ability of the media to deliver on these functional requirements varies considerably across societies and media systems, as a function of regulatory policies and market forces (Iyengar and McGrady 2007: 19). In the final analysis, it is these factors which constitute the conditions determining how political communication works. As already pointed out in the introduction, in Europe heavily regulated public broadcasting systems that were mandated to observe non-partisan norms and were expected to fulfill highest standards of quality went hand in hand with a highly partisan press, characterized by 'political parallelism'. This situation changed as a result of two major trends that characterized the development of European media systems: professionalization and commercialization. As a result of these developments 'media logic' has become differentiated from 'political logic' (see Chapter 7). As Hallin and Mancini (2004a: 290) point out, it is important to recognize, however, that the emerging media logic is a 'hybrid logic', rooted in each one of the two trends. Both professionalization and commercialization lead to a greater differentiation between the political system and the media system; but while the former implies the growth of autonomy, critical professionalism, distinct professional norms, and public service orientation, commercialization leads to a de-differentiation between the media system and the economic system, which undermines the autonomy, blurs the boundaries between news and entertainment, as well as those between advertising and news.

The situation of the media in Europe also changed as a result of the multiplication of channels, that is, the decentralization of political communication, which we also briefly sketched in the introduction. New forums of public debate have been created, especially by the development of the internet. Compared with traditional media, the internet supplies information collected by a wider array of sources allowing for the representation of more diverse viewpoints. It offers citizens more information than ever available before. Moreover, many of the sites permit and often invite two-way communication via the Web, SMS, or email (Graber 2003: 152). Brants and Voltmer (2011: 9) argue that 'with its openness, interactive structure and flexibility, the Internet has fundamentally changed the position of the public from simply being at the

consuming end of political communication to active, creative and vocal citizenship.'

Reviewing the extent to which the US media system fulfills its functions for democracy, Graber (2003: 156) comes to the conclusion that 'democracy manages to function, albeit imperfectly, despite a media system that gives it too little support much of the time'. In addition, we would like to suggest that the way the media logic is affecting the development of democracy depends a lot on the way politics and the citizens react to the changing circumstances of political communication. Again, politicians are capable of adapting to these changing circumstances, and citizens are likely to use the new technological opportunities in as yet unexpected ways.

Turning to the aspect of the transformation of the conditions of political communication in the age of globalization, we can distinguish between the supranational, the cross-national, and the domestic level of communication. With respect to the relationship of these three levels of communication, we can get some first cues from the discussion about the Europeanization of the public sphere. As already observed, a European communication system has not yet emerged. But, as the Swiss example we discussed earlier tends to suggest, this may not be necessary for democracy to work at the supranational, European level. Just as it did in the Swiss case, the political process may again endogenously produce the requisites for political communication, and, by implication, for democratization.

To see how this may come about, Koopmans and Statham's (2010: 38) distinction between vertical and horizontal Europeanization, which they distinguish from the emergence of a supranational European public sphere, proves to be useful. An example of vertical Europeanization is Gerhard's (1993, 2000) view of the Europeanization of the various national public spheres – a view which assumes that nationally based mass media are here to stay, but that their content may become less focused on the nation-state context and may increasingly include a European perspective. That is, the national media may increasingly cover European themes and actors, and evaluate them from a perspective that extends beyond a particular country and its interests. Gerhard's view presupposes a form of Europeanization of policies and politics along lines similar to the process of nationalization in the traditional nation-states. This position has been criticized by Eder et al. (2000) as too restrictive. In their view, which illustrates the horizontal version of the concept, the Europeanization of public spheres may instead lead to a parallelization of national public spheres, in the sense that increasingly

the same themes are discussed at the same time under similar criteria of relevance. This type of Europeanization does not consist of direct references to European actors and themes, but of increased attention to public debates and mobilization in other member-states.

Empirically, Koopmans et al. (2010) found, for the seven countries they studied during the period 1990–2002, that, in the fields where the EU has gained strong supranational competencies (monetary policy, agriculture, and European integration), actors from the European level were highly visible participants in the public debate. Moreover, levels of Europeanization have increased over time. However, these increases pertained exclusively to vertical Europeanization. By contrast, horizontal forms of Europeanization declined. Arguably, this is a shift from weaker toward stronger forms of Europeanization. Overall, these results suggest that the Europeanization of the public sphere is, indeed, taking place – as a reaction to the transfer of decision-making competencies to the European level, and, we would add, as a function of the politicization of the decision-making processes at the European level.

The relationship between the three levels of communication is also illustrated by the experience of the Arab Spring in 2011. One of the explanations of how the long-standing grievances of the Arab public were translated into collective action in early 2011 emphasizes the role of the media (Dalacoura 2012: 68). On the one hand, cross-national political communication (such as the influence of Al Jazeera) may have undermined the control of domestic media by authoritarian regimes. The Qatari-based satellite channel Al Jazeera continued to air reports on Egypt and Tunisia despite the regimes' pleas to the Qatari government to stop it. On the other hand, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and of course mobile phones, were widely used to organize the revolts and link the protesters to each other and the outside world. Perhaps even more crucially, as suggested by Dalacoura, media played a role in preparing for the rebellions over a number of years and even decades, by facilitating the circulation of ideas in national and global spaces and challenging state monopolies of information.

The precise role of the new media in these revolts has not been clarified yet. As is observed by Dalacoura (2012: 69) and Anderson (2011), the hype which has surrounded the use of social media in the Arab Spring obscures the fact that enormous popular mobilizations in the past were achieved using much more basic methods of communication and organization. It also overlooks the fact that social media are used by conservative as much as by progressive and revolutionary forces, and that governments used them for their own purposes or simply shut

them down. For instance, in the weeks leading up to the fall of Mubarak internet access was often blocked in Egypt.

The Chinese example documents the capacity of politicians to adapt to the possibilities of the new media. As MacKinnon (2011) points out on the basis of the Chinese example, authoritarian regimes rapidly learn how to deal with these new media and pour unprecedented resources into building their capacity to influence and shape digital communications networks in direct and indirect ways. The internet may even enhance the life of authoritarian regimes, by providing them with deliberative venues to bolster regime legitimacy (He and Warren 2011). MacKinnon (2011: 44) suggests that without some baseline conditions of rule of law, transparency, and accountability opposition, dissent, and reform movements will face an increasingly uphill battle against progressively more innovative forms of censorship and surveillance. In other words, we may conclude that there is no easy technological fix to overcome the obstacles to democracy, but that, once again, politics decisively shapes the preconditions of democracy.

## Conclusion

Multiple paths to democracy exist and there do not seem to be any hard and fast necessary conditions for democracy, except for the existence of a minimal demos and a minimal polity. One could argue that these minimal conditions are met even at the global level, that is, that democracy is a possibility even at the supranational level. As we have argued in the introduction, the key problem in an emerging multi-level governance structure is rather that the political communities and the polities, that is, the *demos* and the *stateness*, no longer tend to be congruent: the group of people who are affected by political decisions (decision-takers) no longer corresponds to the decision-makers or the people to whom the decision-makers are accountable (see also Hurrelmann and Debardeleben 2009). Attempts to democratize multi-level governance structures such as the EU should in particular pay attention to this problem. In the context of globalization, as Saward (2003: 97) has argued, we need to ask with a new urgency: ‘what is the appropriate group or community or unit to whom democratic rules apply?’ The challenges involved in uploading democracy to the supranational level are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

As regards the horizontal spread of democracy toward authoritarian regimes, Teorell’s (2010: 146) full model provides explanations for the variation in the long-term democratization during the third

wave. Teorell concludes that, on average, the actual level of democracy comes fairly close to the long-term equilibrium level determined by the (mostly) structural explanatory variables. What appears unpredictable and erratic in the short term, turns out to be stable and predictable in the long term. By contrast, in reviewing the six 'structuralist' arguments, we have repeatedly argued that the cultural, economic, international, and communication-related preconditions are not given once and for all, but that they are evolving in interaction with politics. Instead of putting the accent on the long-term 'structuralist' view, we propose to view democracy as an ongoing process of democratization and de-democratization. Moreover, we propose that the process of democratization creates, in part at least, its own prerequisites. Finally, we should not forget that de-democratization is also a possibility, the seeds of which may be found in the democratic process, too. In the next chapter, we shall set out a model that specifies the details of our process-oriented approach to democracy, which we build following the examples of Dahl (2000) and Tilly (2007).



# 3

## Models for Democracy

*Marc Bühlmann and Hanspeter Kriesi*

Democracy can be conceptualized in different ways. Tilly (2007: 7) distinguishes between no less than four ways to define democracy: constitutional, substantive, procedural, and process-oriented. These four ways to approach our subject essentially boil down to two, however: *process-oriented* (procedural, constitutional) vs. *substantive*. In his Gettysburg address, Lincoln famously spoke of ‘government of the people, by the people, for the people’.<sup>1</sup> His short phrase encapsulates the essence of the different theoretical perspectives of the democratic process. ‘Government of the people’ and ‘government by the people’ refer to process, ‘government for the people’ refers to substance. Scharpf (1970, 1999a: 6–20) makes the same point by distinguishing between input- and output-oriented democratic thought. From the input-oriented perspective, political decisions are legitimate because they reflect the ‘will of the people’. From the output-oriented perspective, they are legitimate because they effectively promote the common welfare of the people.

We adopt a process-oriented approach here. Very broadly, we follow in the footsteps of Robert Dahl (2000: 37–38), who, in a classic statement, identifies five criteria for a democratic process:

- effective participation;
- voting equality;
- enlightened understanding;
- exercising final control over the agenda; and
- inclusion of all adults.

Democracy provides opportunities for these five criteria, which are clearly process-oriented, even if they do not specify any rules for how they might be implemented in any given democracy. Applied to

'large-scale democracy', Dahl (2000: 85) suggests that they are implemented in six distinctive institutions: elected officials; free, fair, and frequent elections; freedom of expression; alternative sources of information; associational autonomy; and inclusive citizenship. We provide a more detailed view of the democratic process in order to be able to situate its different elements.

Dahl's (1989: Chapters 12 and 13) discussion of the possibility that a democratic process may fail to achieve desirable results, that is, that it may be difficult to find the proper balance between procedural and substantive values, leads him to reject the contrast between substance and process (p. 175): 'For integral to the democratic process are substantive rights, goods, and interests that are often mistakenly thought to be threatened by it'. Included in the democratic process in particular is the right to self-government by means of the democratic process, which is not 'merely process', but also an important kind of distributive justice. It is not 'merely process', because it helps to determine the distribution of the crucial resources of power and authority and thereby influences the distribution of all other crucial resources as well.

We do not contest that the democratic procedures themselves have a normative content. On the contrary, we share the idea that democratic procedures cannot be reduced to purely formal legality, as Carl Schmitt (cited by Poggi 1978: 107) has maintained. However, we would keep the distinction between procedure and substance. The (substantive) outcome of democratic procedures is open and may violate some other norms, such as liberal principles defending the rights of minorities, or social principles defending the claims of some discriminated groups. Having rejected the contrast between procedure and substance, Dahl admits that the democratic process may impair important substantive rights or other requirements of justice. In particular, he admits that it may come into conflict with the liberal principle of the protection of minority rights. Dahl has no definitive solution for such conflicts, and there probably isn't one. He proposes to rely on constitutional engineering, hopes for the evolution of public opinion, and considers, but is not convinced by a kind of 'quasi-guardianship', that is, the possible protection by officials (above all judges) who are not subject to the democratic process.

Our process-oriented model focuses on representative democracy, the classic form of democracy under contemporary conditions of large polities. This model can be regarded as a model for the 'government of the people'. Examples of the representative model are liberal democracy, protective democracy, competitive elitism, pluralism, or legal democracy

(Held 2006; Schmidt 2010). We provide a heuristic framework for the discussion of these models. More ambitious models rely on an expansive conception of democracy and aim at ‘government *by* the people’. Examples of these more ambitious models are participatory, deliberative, constructivist, or feminist versions of democracy. After presenting our core model, we shall briefly extend it by discussing three additional channels of representation that are related to these more demanding models. The third element of Lincoln’s dictum – ‘government *for* the people’ – certainly shares the idealism of these more ambitious models (Cohen and Fung 2004; Fuchs 2007; Fung 2006; Sen 1980, 1997). The substantive orientation is most important in models of social democracy (Meyer 2005) and social citizenship (Marshall 1974). However, one could argue that any model of democracy, even an explicitly process-oriented one, is designed to implement the idealistic goal of good governance, that is, to improve the citizens’ common welfare.

Under contemporary conditions, democracy essentially means representative government. The second transformation of democracy, which extended democratic forms of government from the city state to the nation-state, introduced the principle of representation and the designation of the representatives by elections. Elections of the political decision-makers at regular intervals constitute the key institution of representative democracy today (Manin 1995: 18; Powell 2000: 3). Elections establish a double link between the political input (the citizens’ preferences) and the political output (public policies adopted by the elected representatives) by allowing for a combination of responsiveness and accountability (Figure 3.1). The ‘chain of responsiveness’ links the citizens’ preferences to the results of policy making. Democratic responsiveness occurs when the democratic process induces the government to form and implement policies that citizens want (Powell 2004a: 91). The chain of accountability, in turn, links public policies to the citizens’ preferences. It refers to the obligation of incumbent governments to assume responsibility for their acts and to enable voters to respond with sanctions, if the political output does not correspond to their preferences. Accountability combines an obligation of information and justification

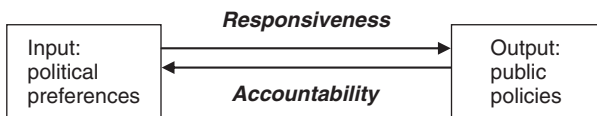


Figure 3.1 A simple model of representative democracy

on the part of the representatives (they have to explain and justify their decisions to their voters) with the possibility of control on the part of the voters (they can sanction their representatives, if they do not deliver) (Papadopoulos 2007: 470). Accountability and responsiveness are widely and broadly used concepts in democratic theory. We shall conceptualize them in some detail and combine their different components in our model of representative democracy. The combination of responsiveness and accountability as we present it closely resembles the combination of a chain of delegation (from voters to elected officials, to governments, to the head of government and to public officials) with a corresponding chain of accountability (Strom 2000: 267). All democracies entail a combination of these two chains, but different constitutions imply different articulations of the links in the two chains.

## Responsiveness

Democratic responsiveness requires that the outcomes a government produces reflect the policy preferences of the citizens. Following Powell (2004a), we can distinguish four different links in the chain of responsiveness (see also Fuchs 1993): the formation, mobilization, aggregation, and implementation of preferences. These links are institutionalized in the most central process in representative democracy: elections. However, it is important to note that responsiveness must also be guaranteed by ongoing processes *between* elections. In the following, we take a closer look at the different stages in order to identify the key requirements for ongoing responsiveness.

The first, most fundamental link concerns the formation of preferences. Doing what the citizens want presupposes *knowing* what they want. Contrary to minimalist realist economic models of democracy, we assume that preferences are not exogenously given but that they are, in part at least, the result of endogenous processes. Responsiveness crucially depends on the quality of this process, which, in turn, is influenced by the institutional arrangements of the representation process and by the citizens' own characteristics. 'Democracies require democratic citizens' (Galston 2001: 217), and one of Dahl's (1989: 307) five criteria mentioned earlier requires democratic citizens to have an 'enlightened understanding'. This means that democratic citizens must be capable of discovering and validating (within the time permitted by the need for a decision) the choice on the matter to be decided that would best serve their interest. Dahl adds that 'a person's good or interest is whatever that person would choose with the fullest attainable

understanding of the experience resulting from that choice and its most relevant alternatives.' Enlightened understanding presupposes the motivation to take part in, as well as a sufficient understanding of, politics. To adequately formulate their wants and desires, citizens must be interested, informed, and capable of understanding and evaluating the available political options. The citizens' preference formation is influenced by a number of additional factors of crucial importance, such as access to substantive and uncensored information about political affairs as well as opportunities for deliberation. The availability of diverse information sources and the existence of multiple competitors are equally decisive for this first link in the chain of responsiveness. A media system that fulfills its required functions (see Chapter 2) provides a favorable context for the process of preference formation.

The second link in the chain of responsiveness refers to the mobilization of preferences. At this stage, political organizations – political parties, interest associations, and social movement organizations – play a key role. They provide the political structuring of the individual preferences by supplying a limited number of options for the citizens to choose from, and by mobilizing them during election campaigns and between elections. It is not the sheer number of parties and interest groups that counts here. Rather, the offer must be manageable and it must consist of competing alternatives. New organizations must be able to enter the fray to cater to newly arising preferences. But, as is emphasized by Bartolini (1999, 2000), there is a trade-off between, on the one hand, the possible entry of new political organizations (contestability), and, on the other hand, the structuration of the citizens' preferences (the distinctiveness of the political offer), which is, foremost, guaranteed by the stability of the organizational supply. Bartolini deconstructs political competition into different dimensions and suggests that a good balance between contestability (open access to the electoral contest) and decidability (availability of distinctive political offers) is a requirement for responsiveness at this stage.

The third link – the aggregation of preferences – focuses on elections and the subsequent government formation. This is the stage of the selection of policy-makers who are 'committed to doing what the citizens want' (Powell 2004a: 94). Political programs are translated into the formation of political offices. How preferences are aggregated and translated into parliamentary and governmental seats crucially depends on electoral mechanics, that is, on the electoral system. Proportional systems aim at ensuring responsiveness via the inclusion of all important preferences, weighted according to the size of the parties representing

these preferences. Majoritarian systems accept vote-seat distortions in the name of clarity of responsibility and clear government mandates (Powell 2000). As we shall reiterate below, there is a clear trade-off between representation and accountability, which is resolved differently by the two major options for electoral systems, and the related type of government (i.e. single party government vs. coalition).

At the aggregation stage, responsiveness heavily relies on political competition as well. It is at this stage that the other two dimensions of competition discussed by Bartolini (1999, 2000) – availability and vulnerability – come into play. The translation of political preferences into seats can only reflect the preferences of the citizens if incumbents are vulnerable and not protected by gerrymandering, the asymmetrical allocation of campaign funds, or traditional loyalty of voters, and if the voters are to some extent available, that is, open to the different options offered by the parties. If, due to traditional partisanship, there is no chance for new competitors to attract voters with new programs, the preferences that they represent cannot be translated into seats. Competitiveness in the four senses of the term is not only a question of party competition, but also of a viable civil society more generally: a civil society consisting of multiple private and public interest associations articulating a large spectrum of different interests and points of view, as well as of a myriad of informal, heterogeneously composed groups discussing the arguments proposed by the political elites.

Lijphart (1997) reminds us of the importance of participation for responsiveness. Inclusion is crucial, too: if suffrage rights are limited and large parts of the adult residents in a given system are excluded from the vote, responsiveness cannot be high. Equal participation guarantees that votes mirror the preferences of the whole population. If citizens are not mobilized by the political campaigns, and do not translate their preferences into votes, the very idea of responsiveness is compromised: unequal participation leads to unequal representation and to policies that cannot reflect the wants of all the citizens. Note that responsiveness is less affected by abstention when participation is unbiased. Assuming that voters are similar to non-voters with respect to important characteristics such as gender, social class, income, or education, the bias in the representation of different wants should not be strong. However, comparative research on participation shows that this is normally not the case (Teorell et al. 2007a). Thus, responsiveness at all three stages (formation, mobilization, and aggregation of preferences) depends heavily on the equality of participation.

The final link in the chain of responsiveness concerns the implementation of public policies. An adequate translation of preferences into seats is only one necessary condition for responsiveness. 'Doing what the citizens want' must eventually be reflected in the decisions adopted by the political representatives, that is, substantive representation is most important for the idea of responsiveness. 'Democratic representation means that the actions of these policy makers are supposed to be responsive to the wishes of the people' (Powell 2004b: 273) and responsiveness is high when the citizens' policy preferences correspond to the roll-call behavior of the representatives (Miller and Stokes 1963).

It is the regular repetition of elections which constitutes the crucial mechanism that allows voters to influence the decisions of those who govern, that is, to incite their representatives to be responsive (Manin 1995). Based on this repetitive mechanism, the elected representatives are forced to take into account the retrospective (and, we should add, the prospective) judgment of the voters about the policies they have adopted. Repetition creates anticipatory pressure on elected representatives to take into consideration the preferences of the voters, which allows the voters to have an influence on their representatives on a daily basis. As Dick Morris (1999), a former political advisor of President Clinton, has observed, every day is election day in the US today. In other words, voters do not make their choice of representatives between competing elites only once every so many years and then let their representatives govern, as suggested by Schumpeter's (1962 [1942]) 'realistic' theory of democracy, but they influence their representatives between elections, too. This means that, in representative democracy, the elected officials have a strong incentive to adapt their decisions to the opinion of the mass public between the elections. This idea corresponds to the model of 'dynamic representation' of Stimson, MacKuen and Erikson (Erikson et al. 2002; Stimson et al. 1995). According to this model, the citizens have a direct and an indirect effect on policy decisions: on the one hand, their opinion influences policy decisions *indirectly*, by determining the election outcome, which, in turn, leads to modifications in the policy decisions; on the other hand, public opinion influences the policy decisions of the political authorities *directly* via their rational anticipations during a legislative period.

The 'dynamic model of representation' is, however, still unrealistic to the extent that it considers public opinion as an exogenous factor, which implies, of course, a highly restricted view of what political representation in a democracy is all about. In fact, in democratic systems, the key issue for political actors is precisely to shape public opinion on specific

issues. Public opinion is the product of the debate in the public sphere – a communication system involving a wide range of political actors. The public debate, its inclusiveness, and its deliberative quality are essential for the quality of a democratic decision. This is Schattschneider's (1975 [1960]) view of democratic politics, for whom the expansion of conflict constitutes the essence of democracy. For Schattschneider, conflict is contagious and the larger the attentive public for a given conflict, the more democratic is the struggle in question. Accordingly, the most important political strategy is concerned with the expansion of the scope of conflict, that is, the number of people involved in the conflict. For Schattschneider, it is the scope of conflict which essentially determines its outcome and, at the core of each political conflict, there is the struggle for its privatization or socialization. The privileged attempt to privatize the conflict, that is, take it out of the public's view, while the disadvantaged attempt to socialize it, that is, to expand the attentive public: 'Democratic government is the greatest single instrument for the socialization of conflict in the American community' (p. 12).

Schattschneider's view of democratic politics corresponds to that of the agenda-setting approach (see Burstein 1998, 1999, 2002; Baumgartner and Jones 2002; Jones 1994). This approach distinguishes itself from traditional approaches to democratic representation by the fact that it focuses on the information processing of citizens and decision-making authorities and on the struggle for attention among the actors in the political elite. The participants in the public debate not only include government actors, but policy-makers of all types may opt for 'going public' too. Any collective or individual political actor may participate in this struggle – policy-makers as well as challengers from outside of the political system (see below). This extended view of representation implies that the political supply by the elite is crucial for the democratic process. Accordingly, the vote basically appears as a reaction of the citizens with regard to the terms proposed by the elite. As Manin (1995: 290) observes, in politics, there is no demand which is independent of the supply, which, among other things, means that the metaphor of the market is rather inappropriate for the political process and obscures the fundamental character of the political sphere.

The dependence of the democratic process on the elite's supply does not mean that the elite, that is, the representatives or the political decision-makers, are no longer responsive. However, decision-makers are only responsive under quite demanding conditions (Kriesi 2011): to guarantee responsiveness of decision-makers requires the fulfillment



of at least three conditions. Competition is the first, as we have already argued. In the words of Bartolini (1999: 450): 'Elections make politicians accountable on a regular basis, but only competitive interactions make them responsive'. Second, a responsive elite requires an attentive public. Such a public implies less than full participation from all the citizens; nor need all the citizens be fully informed, or fully involved in politics. It suffices that they monitor the political process (Schudson 1998), and keep the scores (Stimson 2004): monitoring or scorekeeping citizens scan (rather than read) the informational environment so that they may be alerted if something goes wrong, and they often use heuristic shortcuts (rather than elaborate arguments) to make up their political minds. Third, responsiveness on the part of the political elites is enhanced by the independence, resourcefulness, and plurality of the news media, because this constitutes a crucial precondition for the presence of an attentive public. The combination of these three requirements defines the liberal representative model of the public sphere. This model is distinct from more radical normative models (participatory, discursive, and constructionist models), which set more demanding standards with respect to the citizens' involvement in the public debate, and place a high value on their 'empowerment' (Ferree et al. 2002: 205–231). The three conditions, in other words, define a minimal set of conditions that have to be fulfilled for the public debate to attain the quality required for elite responsiveness.

Finally, we should not forget that responsiveness finds its limits in exogenous, uncontrollable events and conditions, which also influence the actions of policy-makers. They are often constrained in their decisions by circumstances they cannot control. Economic developments (e.g. on the bond market) or supranational regulations can narrow the alternatives for different policies. It is one of the key tenets of our approach to democracy that the maneuvering space of the national political decision-makers is increasingly constrained by the multi-level governance structures. However, 'distinguishing between truly uncontrollable conditions and those that national policy makers can alter' is not an easy task (Powell 2004a: 96).

In a nutshell: responsiveness is measured by the substance of representation, that is, by the degree of correspondence between the representatives' decisions and the citizens' preferences. For substantive representation to work, the electoral system has to be inclusive and participation high or at least unbiased. Furthermore, the degree of competition should be high and parties must be able to structure political conflicts and issues into comprehensible programs. Finally, an

attentive public and independent media system should monitor the policy-makers and induce them to keep their electoral promises, implement their programs and adapt their policies to the changing public opinion between elections.

## Accountability

While our idea of responsiveness links input to output, that is, highlights the preconditions for the adequate translation of citizen preferences into policy outcomes, accountability links output to input. We adopt a narrow concept of accountability and understand it as the relationship between an actor (such as the government as an account-holder) and a public (a 'forum', such as the citizens as accountees) in which the former has an obligation to inform the latter and to explain and justify his decisions. The public has the right to pose questions on these decisions and to scrutinize explanations and justifications. Based on the accounts given, the accountees can either accept the decisions (and their consequences) or sanction the decision-makers. When it comes to sanctions, the account-holders have the obligation to submit to these sanctions (Bovens 2007; Schmitter 2004).

We can again distinguish three links in this chain. The first link refers to the obligation of the policy-makers to inform the citizens about their decisions and to explain and justify their policies. In the next link the citizen public evaluates whether the actions, political decisions, and justifications of the policy-makers meet its expectations. In the third step this evaluation leads to a positive or negative judgment, possibly followed by sanctions. If they are effective, these sanctions must have consequences, that is, the sanctioned account-holders must be induced to accept the sanctions and to face their consequences. In the following, we take a closer look at each one of these three links and discuss the requirements that facilitate and ensure accountability at each stage.

The first link is best described by the notion of answerability: according to Schedler (1999), being accountable means the obligation of decision-makers to answer questions regarding their decisions and/or actions. This obligation can be formal (induced by different checks and balances) or informal (imposed by the public) and has two aspects: information and justification. Answerability implies that the policy-makers inform the public about their actions and decisions, that is, answerability implies transparency. Evaluating and sanctioning (the following two stages of the accountability chain) are not possible in the

absence of access to transparent and comprehensible information. But answerability goes beyond the simple provision of facts and figures. It also demands explanations and justifications of actions and decisions, that is, a dialogue between account-holders and accountees. Ideally, democracy is characterized by ongoing debates between representatives and represented. This is the idea of interactive or communicative representation (Mansbridge 2009).

Mansbridge (2009) reminds us that transparency also has its costs. Among other things, democratic decision making depends on negotiations behind closed doors. Negotiators must be able to act creatively and think about and say things that they would not think or say in public. 'We should not favor extreme transparency in process (for example making all committee meetings public), but instead transparency in rationale – in procedures, information, reasons, and the facts on which the reasons are based' (Mansbridge, 2009: 18). Transparency should above all be claimed for the justification of decisions.

The second link in the chain of accountability consists of the evaluation of the decisions and acts of the policy-makers by the citizens. Representative democracy is a regime, where the decisions of those who govern are submitted to the public's judgment. Manin (1995) maintains that the concept of 'public judgment' best describes the role of the people and its representatives in such a system of government. This judgment may be positive or negative. The object of this judgment can be a specific policy, the (mis)conduct of a single policy-maker, or the performance of the whole government during a given legislation. Accountees assess whether the policy-makers have met the expected standards. At this stage, they must have opportunities to question the quality of the given information and to test the honesty of the acts, conduct, and justifications of the account-holders.

There are different types of accountees: we may distinguish between the public at large, on the one hand, and institutionalized agencies that are mandated with the control of the policy-makers, on the other hand. This distinction corresponds to the one between vertical and horizontal accountability (O'Donnell 1994). Vertical accountability lies at the heart of our model of representative democracy. In democracies, the evaluation of decisions and acts of account-holders must be the principal duty of the citizens themselves. Citizens not only have the right, but also the obligation to evaluate their representatives and to sanction them when expectations are not met. As we have already pointed out, this kind of accountability is an ongoing, day-by-day process; because of the repetitive nature of elections the representatives are induced to heed the

citizens' demands on a daily basis. Vertical accountability is essentially *public* accountability. The public includes the monitoring individual citizens, but also social movement organizations, interest groups, and the media. Schmitter (2004: 54) stresses the importance of the citizens' active involvement: 'the more citizens participate actively [...] the more attention they will pay to the subsequent process'. Thus, mechanisms that facilitate awareness and encourage civic and political engagement as well as a free press help to strengthen vertical accountability.

While vertical accountability highlights the bottom-up evaluation of acts and conduct, horizontal accountability refers to the agencies with formal competencies to control the account-holders' behavior and to effectively sanction misconduct if necessary. 'Checks and balances' are an important characteristic of a democracy as a whole and of accountability in particular: 'Political accountability must be institutionalized if it is to work effectively' (Schmitter 2004: 48). A comparison of existing democracies reveals varying forms of institutionalized horizontal accountability. The distinction here is mainly one between presidential and parliamentary systems: presidential constitutions tend to feature institutions that facilitate active legislative and juridical oversight, while parliamentary systems do not have monitoring capacity necessary to determine when sanctions are appropriate (Strom 2000: 274). By contrast, parliamentary systems heavily rely on *ex ante* control mechanisms, especially prior screening of representatives, as compared to *ex post* accountability. As Strom (2000: 282–284) argues, the problem with this reliance on screening is that the screening devices (reliant on ascriptive information and prior experience) are generally in decline today: voting along ascriptive lines (such as class voting) is declining, while the increasing volatility of the political agenda is making reliance on past experience problematic.

At the stage of evaluation, other issues concern the target of evaluation and whether an evaluation of representatives is possible at all. The principal target of the evaluation by voters is the performance of the government in a given legislative period. Voters retrospectively assess the past performance of the decision-makers. If this performance is perceived as satisfactory, voters re-elect the incumbents. If not, they throw the rascals out. Or as Manin et al. put it (1999: 40): 'Governments are "accountable" if voters can discern whether governments are acting in their interest and sanction them appropriately, so that those incumbents who act in the best interest of citizens win reelection and those who do not lose them.' Accountability to the voters, however,

presupposes the possibility that responsibility can be clearly attributed by the voters. When it is not possible to relate a given decision to a specific decision-maker then how should voters be able to decide whom to re-elect and whom to sort out? As Lord and Pollak (2010: 973) point out, it is worth emphasizing the indeterminacies of ‘account-giving’. In the complex contemporary governance structures (see below), the attribution of responsibility is often difficult. Such circumstances are propitious to credit-claiming and blame shifting, and ‘to continuous attempts to renegotiate the terms of account-giving itself: to shift its standards and understandings of cause-effect relationships in ways which will make some behaviours more praiseworthy, others more reprehensible’ (Lord and Pollak 2010: 973).

The possibility of attributing responsibility also depends very much on the institutional make-up of a democracy: as is well known, majoritarian systems (including presidential systems, see Shugart and Mainwaring 1997: 33f.) allow for a much clearer attribution of responsibility than proportional systems (Powell 2000), with measurable consequences for the way policy-makers operate: Tavits (2007) shows that in systems where responsibility can be clearly attributed, politicians have incentives to pursue good policies and reduce corruption. Powell (2000) is, however, also very clear about the trade-offs involved here: while majoritarian systems are better able than proportional systems to clarify the representatives’ responsibility, they are less inclusive than proportional systems, override the interests of minority groups, and, in the final analysis, turn out to be less responsive to the median voter. There is an irreducible trade-off between representation and accountability (see also Lord and Pollak 2010).

The outcome of the evaluation is a judgment that is followed by sanctions and consequences. Depending on the quality and the object of the judgment, we can thus distinguish different situations with different possibilities of sanctions and consequences. If the judgment is positive, no sanctions will follow. Positive evaluations strengthen support for and confidence in the respective policy-makers, which, in turn, fosters legitimacy and finally responsiveness. The positive evaluation of the government’s performance at election day (the second situation) translates into re-election of the respective government. Arguably more important for accountability are the sanctions and consequences that follow the negative judgments.

Individual actors may be negatively evaluated and sanctioned for their legal or moral misconduct. Although elections are the key mechanism of accountability, ‘representation, and the electoral process themselves

depend on accountability to the courts and independent administrative bodies such as Ombudsmen, especially for protections against the grave misconduct of representatives' (Lord and Pollak 2010: 973). However, moral misconduct is usually not illegal, and is above all sanctioned by public disapproval. Consequences can be informal such as loss of reputation or the forced retirement from a political career. Negative evaluations may also refer to specific decisions. When a given decision does not meet the expectation of particular interest groups or stakeholders, these groups can put pressure on the policy-makers who may depend on the support of the respective groups. In this case, the sanction may consist of a withdrawal of resources (e.g. in terms of support at the polls or in terms of financial support).

The most important sanction in representative systems is electoral punishment. Negatively evaluated incumbents may be sanctioned and thrown out of office. However, a negative judgment of the government's performance only leads to such consequences if there is competition in terms of contestability, decidability, availability, and vulnerability.

The threat with sanctions is a constitutive element of accountability (Mulgan 2003; Strom 2000). Sanctions function like the sword of Damocles: because policy-makers know that undesired decisions and illegitimate conduct can lead to sanctions, they act according to the expectations of the accountees. They 'anticipate the negative evaluations of forums and adjust their policies accordingly' (Bovens 2007: 453). Of course, such forums must again be part of a lively civil society. This is the point we already made above when we referred to the anticipatory pressure exerted on representatives by the repetitive nature of elections. The more (formal or informal) opportunities for sanctions exist and the more serious the effective consequences of these sanctions are, the better for accountability *and* for responsiveness, because of the prevention and anticipation function of these sanctions.

Figure 3.2 summarizes our expanded model of representative democracy. This model breaks down the two key processes of responsiveness and accountability into a chain of three sub-processes each, and links these two chains to nine generic processes which make representation work: (equal) participation, political communication in the public sphere, competition, transformation of votes into seats (regulated by the electoral system), coalition formation, the provision of transparent information, attribution of responsibility, institutionalized reciprocal controlling (checks and balances), and the creation of implementation capacity.

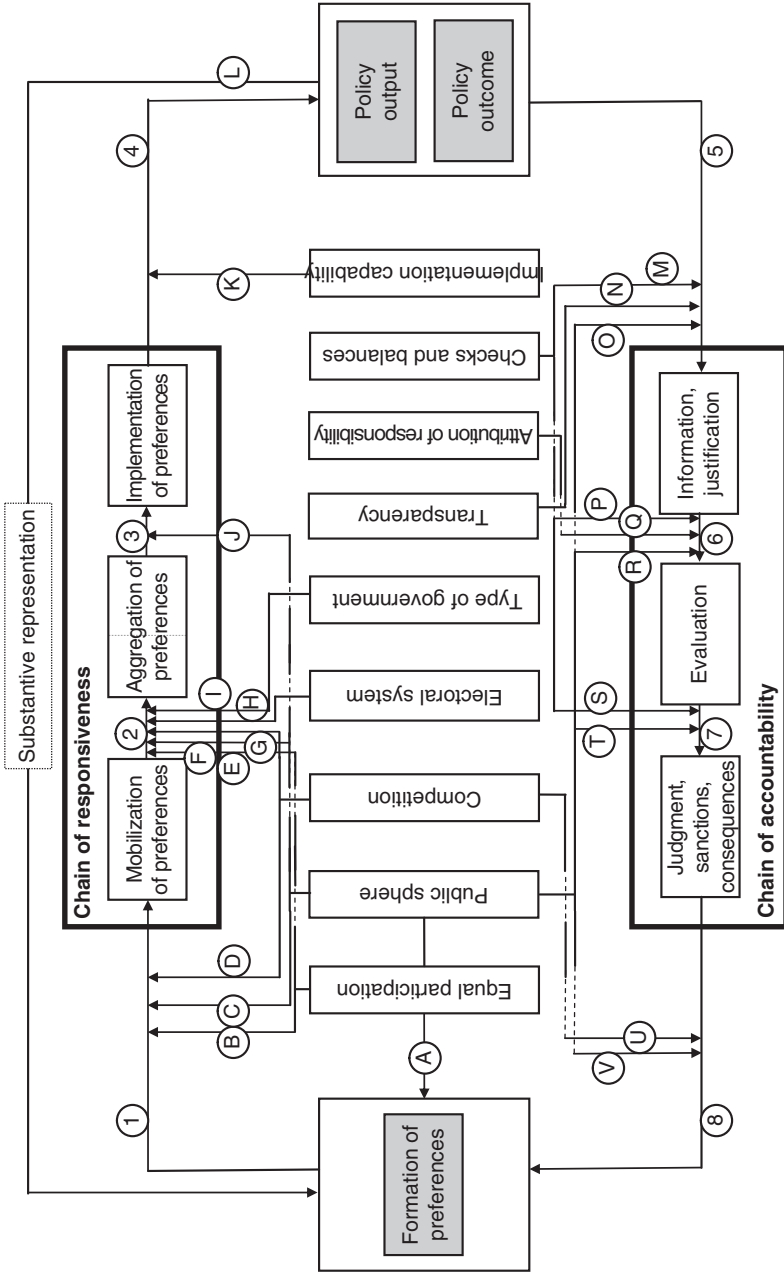


Figure 3.2 A model of representative democracy

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*Stages:*

- Formation of preferences: Process of opinion formation preceding chain of responsiveness, determined partly by chain of accountability, partly by exogenous factors.
- Mobilization of preferences: Collection, activation, and mobilization of preferences.
- Aggregation of preferences: Within this stage we distinguish aggregation by means of elections (votes into seats) and coalition formation.
- Implementation of preferences: The aggregated preferences are translated into political decisions; this stage corresponds to the policy-making process.
- Policy output/policy outcome: The policy output reflects the political decisions. The policy outcome consists of the intended as well as the unintended impacts of the political decisions (influenced by (non-)controllable exogenous constraints).
- Information, justification: Answerability; information about political decisions and acts.
- Evaluation: Account-holders evaluate the given explanations and justifications of political decisions and acts.
- Judgment, sanctions, consequences: Depending on the evaluation, a judgment is made that can be followed by consequences and sanctions.

*Links between stages:*

- 1 The preferences are collected and mobilized by different actors in a competitive pluralist system.
- 2 The *mobilized* preferences are reproduced in public offices (parliament/government).
- 3 The policy-making process, which involves not only elected authorities, but all kinds of interest groups, public officials, and experts, implements the aggregated preferences.
- 4 Political decisions constitute the policy output of a government. The outcome of these decisions can be intended as well as unintended.
- 5 The political elite provides information about the political decisions, policy output and outcomes, and attempts to justify them.
- 6 The information and justification provided are evaluated by control agencies (public sphere, institutions).
- 7 Evaluations lead to positive or negative judgments.
- 8 The judgments influence the preference formation, which can then lead to sanctions (electoral or otherwise).

*Requirements:*

- Equal participation: Participation must be as widespread as possible and must not be distorted due to social characteristics or different resources. Unequal participation leads to unequal inclusion of preferences and to a favouritism of voters over underprivileged non-voters.



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Public sphere:	The public sphere consists of (sophisticated) individual citizens, interest groups with different aims and different degrees of organization (according to the ideas of pluralism and social capital), and free and independent media.
Competition:	Competition is understood as a multidimensional process. It implies contestability (conditions of low entry to the electoral contest), decidability (the transparent distinctiveness of the political offer), availability (a given probability of changes in the preferences of the citizens), and vulnerability (low degree of an incumbent's safety of tenure).
Electoral system:	The electoral system embraces formal rules that define how votes are translated into seats.
Type of government:	Depending on the electoral system, governments are formed by single parties or by coalitions of different parties.
Transparency:	Transparency embraces formal rules that enforce actors to inform and act in a transparent way as well as a culture of openness, i.e. the willingness of political actors to inform and act in a transparent way.
Identifiability of responsibility:	Identifiability of responsibility is provided when each decision can be clearly assigned to one distinct actor.
Checks and balances:	Checks and balances consist of different institutions and formal rules that aim at controlling other institutions.
Implementation capability:	Implementation capability is high when there are no or few (legal or illegal) constraints in terms of veto players and/or circumstances outside the government realm.
Substantive representation:	Substantive representation is provided when the policy output corresponds to the preferences of the citizens.

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*Linkage mechanisms:*

- A Preferences are influenced by various exogenous factors, but the formation of preferences is also an endogenous process. The quality of this process crucially depends on the quality of the process of deliberation in the public sphere (including equal and widespread participation).
- B *Responsive* mobilization of preferences is the collection of all existing preferences. This only is possible, when *all* citizens participate equally, or when at least all preferences are mobilized in an undistorted way.
- C The responsive mobilization of preferences depends on organizations: in order to make their preferences heard, individual citizens must be organized by collective actors (parties, interest groups, social movements).
- D Competition influences preference mobilization in two ways: first, the openness of the system allows for the entry of competing organizations (contestability); second, the distinctiveness of the political offer (decidability) makes it possible for the citizens to structure their preferences.
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- E Equality of participation guarantees that votes mirror the preferences of all voters.
- F The arguments proposed by the political elites should be discussed by a viable civil society articulating different interests and point of views.
- G Responsiveness depends on two additional dimensions of competition: vulnerability forces incumbents to adopt preferences and voter availability enhances the possibility that competitors will attract the voters with new programs reflecting new preferences.
- H The degree of responsiveness heavily depends on the electoral system.
- I Responsiveness in terms of congruence of citizens' preferences and their representation depends on the composition and the size of the coalition.
- J An active debate in the public sphere influences the political decision making on a daily basis. The idea of 'dynamic representation' is based on an attentive public. It also presupposes the supply by the elite that shapes the deliberation process in the public sphere.
- K Even if the decision-making process is responsive, the policy output depends on the capability of the government to implement the decision. This capability can be constrained by various (formal and informal) veto-players and socio-economic circumstances. Furthermore, the implementation depends on the quality of the public administration.
- L The congruence between policy output and the preferences of citizens defines the degree of substantive representation that, in turn, feeds back into the preference formation.
- M Information and justification of political decisions and/or acts of representatives can be required by other formal and informal institutions designed to control the account-holders.
- N Answerability implies transparency. At least the justification of decisions must be transparent.
- O The media (public sphere) can also require information and justification from the account-holders.
- P Whether information and justification is evaluated (or must be evaluated) depends on checks and balances, i.e. control agencies. There must be opportunities providing horizontal accountability.
- Q Evaluation works when there is identifiability of responsibility, i.e. when the decisions and acts can be ascribed to distinct account-holders.
- R Whether information and justification is evaluated (or must be evaluated) again depends on the public debate in the public sphere; vertical accountability depends on the quality of the public judgment.
- S Whether evaluation leads to consequences depends on the strength of horizontal accountability, i.e. the formal possibilities of the different control institutions denoted by 'checks and balances'.
- T An active public sphere can strengthen public (and electoral) accountability ensuring that negative evaluation really lead to sanction and consequences (in terms of replacement of government by means of elections).
- U Sanctions can lead to electoral consequences, i.e. negatively evaluated incumbents are thrown out of the office. This depends heavily on the four aspects of competition.
- V Information on sanctions and their consequences for account-holders is provided by the public sphere.
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## Extensions of the model for representative democracy

The model for representative democracy constitutes the core of any model of democracy under contemporary conditions. To become empirically more realistic, this model should, however, be extended in at least three directions. Today, policy-makers are 'accountable to a plethora of different forums, all of which apply to a different set of criteria' (Bovens 2007: 455). Thus, at the national level, the electoral channel is not the only possible channel of representation. First of all, in some countries, it is complemented by a direct-democratic channel. Second, everywhere the electoral channel is accompanied by an administrative channel, which links the policy-makers directly to various interest groups in a society and extends policy making to various unaccountable agencies. Third, there is the channel of protest politics that introduces the so-called advocacy democracy (Cain et al. 2003), which extends accountability to various social movement organizations, that is, organized forms of civil society. As is noted by Bovens (2007: 457), 'in reaction to a perceived lack of trust in government, there is an urge in many Western democracies for more direct and explicit accountability relations between public agencies, on the one hand, and clients, citizens and civil society, on the other hand'. Representation via direct-democratic procedures (initiatives, referendums, recall), interest groups, or protest politics provides alternative mechanisms allowing for additional accountability relations. Rosanvallon (2006: 16) would call these alternative mechanisms forms of 'counter-democracy' or 'democracy of distrust', which are getting increasingly important because of the generalized lack of confidence in the functioning of contemporary societies.

In the representative model, the possibilities for the citizens to sanction those who govern are fundamentally limited by two key aspects of the model (Kriesi 2005). On the one hand, the initiative remains on the side of those who govern. Since the crucial mechanism of regularly repeated elections works retrospectively, it does not give the voters the possibility to force their representatives to execute the policies for which they have been elected. On the other hand, the crucial control mechanism is rather imprecise, because the government is responsible for a multitude of political decisions and the citizens only have the opportunity to sanction the multipack of decisions, not any single decision. By contrast, in a representative democratic regime which is complemented by elements of direct democracy, these two restrictive conditions are partly removed: (a) groups of voters can launch initiatives

which put certain issues on the political agenda and require a vote by all the voters; and (b) single decisions of those who govern can be challenged by referenda.

We should note, however, that, as Budge (1996: 56) points out, the 'passage from expressing opinions and advice to actually voting, through a simple adaptation of existing means of consultation, would seem more a change of degree than of kind, on a broad view of current developments'. The difference between the two types of democracy is all the more limited, because direct democracy is also likely to be mediated by political organizations and their representatives. As Budge (1996: 43) points out, too, even the Athenian Assembly probably created something like a crude party system. The Swiss example illustrates that, under conditions of contemporary 'party democracies' and with an appropriate institutional design, direct-democratic procedures are guided and controlled by political parties and related political organizations. In fact, the intermediary form of 'party-based direct democracy', where the representative institutions do not disappear but are only modified by combining them with direct-democratic elements is nothing else but the 'semi-direct democracy' that has been institutionalized in Switzerland for more than a century. While parties and other intermediary organization are still mobilizing citizens in direct-democratic campaigns, there are nevertheless two key differences which distinguish the representative model from the one augmented by a direct-democratic channel. The first key difference is that the citizens vote directly on specific issues, that is, their preferences are directly aggregated to a vote on a given policy and the question of whether or not the elites are responsive to the voters no longer applies. The second key difference is that the elites can be held responsible for the outcome of the vote only in the indirect sense that they mobilized their citizens in the direct-democratic campaign. When the voters decide directly on a given policy, the voters are themselves responsible for the decision. As Trechsel (2010) argues, they are responsible, as the highest organ of the state, to themselves. He suggests that the accountability relationship created in such a situation departs from the classic, vertical vision and is best described as a form of 'reflexive accountability'.

The administrative channel provides direct access to policy-makers for a large number of interest groups. It is also distinguished from the electoral channel by some key features. First, and most importantly, the representatives of interest groups are not elected by the voters and they are not accountable to the public at large, but only to their own, often highly specialized, constituency. Second, the interest groups,

much more than the main actors representing the individuals' preferences in the electoral channel, are focused on specific interests which they represent in issue-specific domains. Third, in spite of their large number, interest groups do not equally represent all possible interests in a society. Some interests, especially those of large groups in the population, are not capable of organizing (Olson 1965) or not capable of conflict ('konfliktfähig', Offe 1970). As Schattschneider (1975 [1960]: 30, 69) has famously observed, organization is the mobilization of bias, and 'the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus of interest groups sings with a strong upper-class accent' (p. 34f.). Taken together, these characteristics of interest groups imply that interest representation in the administrative channel is likely to be much less responsive to the public at large than representation in the electoral channel.

Interest groups mainly intervene in the implementation stage of the chain of responsiveness. In general, they can count on a stable constituency which they represent in the policy-making process on a routine basis. In Europe, the 'logic of influence' (their insertion into policy-related network arrangements) tends to have priority over the 'logic of membership' (their interaction with their members and the representation of their members' interest) for them (Schmitter and Streeck 1981). They are typically part of policy communities where they interact on an ongoing basis with legislators and public officials with a shared interest in the same public-policy problem. These policy communities form more or less open networks and are typically structured into 'advocacy coalitions' confronting each other and keeping each other in check (Baumgartner et al. 2009: Chapter 3). They are characterized by low visibility and they are, to some extent at least, 'decoupled' from representative bodies, and more accountable to 'peers' (the other participants in these networks) than to the voters (Papadopoulos 2002). Still, the electoral channel has an influence on policy making, because legislators and government officials are also part of these networks. Moreover, elections may change the incremental policy process – by increasing the opportunities for policy change that did not exist under the previous government, by reversing policies that had been adopted by previous governments, and by shifting the agenda (Baumgartner et al. 2009: Chapter 5).

Increasingly, collectively binding policy decisions are also taken by a number of other actors who are even more removed from the citizen public than interest groups – courts, independent regulatory authorities (IRAs) such as central banks or regulatory boards, or, in the context

of new public management, more client-oriented government services. Judicialization and delegation to unaccountable administrative entities are aspects of a continuing expansion of what Mény (2002) has called the 'constitutionalist element' of democracy, inherited from the liberal approach to government. These tendencies limit the obligations of the incumbents to report on their acts to the citizens and the possibilities for the voters to respond with electoral sanctions. This degradation of democratic accountability takes place outside of the public purview and regardless of whether or not the representatives behave responsively. Summarizing these trends, Papadopoulos (2007) arrives at the pessimistic conclusion that there is an increasing divorce between 'front-stage' (electoral) and 'back-stage politics' (administrative politics), which implies a decline of accountability of the representative process in established democracies. In a more optimistic mode, Thatcher (2001) suggests that several forms of accountability have been developed for IRAs in particular – the use of controls by elected officials such as appointments, and, more importantly, mechanisms of answerability which require such agencies to explain their actions and to face questioning.

Protest politics, finally, provide a channel of mobilization for organizations which do not have direct access to the electoral or the administrative channel. This channel opens up the possibility for political participation for a large number of citizens. This form of politics is focused on the mobilization stage in the chain of responsiveness, because the subsequent stages tend to be inaccessible for the actors involved. Accordingly, the appeal to the public constitutes the crucial element of the action repertoire for the organizations engaged in protest politics. Challengers who do not have routine access to the decision-making arenas or to the established media have to attract the attention of the media for a specific issue. They mainly do so by staging protest events. The reports in the media about these events are designed to unleash a public debate and reinforce the position of the minority actors in the corresponding policy communities within the decision-making arena (Gamson 1988: 228; Gamson et al. 1992: 383; Hamdan 2000: 72).

By creating controversy, where there was none before, protest opens up access and legitimacy among journalists for speakers of the movement and allied sponsors among the decision-makers in the corresponding policy communities (Gamson and Meyer 1996: 288). Indirectly, protest always creates political opportunities for established political

actors. This holds in the negative sense – protest may serve as a pretext for repression; as it does in a positive sense – the cause may be taken over by some elite actors (Tarrow 1994: 98). In the final analysis, the goal of creating public attention is to divide the elite and to reinforce the opposition among the decision-makers (Wolfsfeld 1997: 27). As Tarrow observes, protest is most successful when it provides a political incentive for elites within the decision-making arena to advance their own policies and careers.

For Rosanvallon (2006: 68–71), the protest politics of new social movements is a typical example of what he calls ‘surveillance democracy’. These movements are involved in the three aspects of this type of counter-democracy – monitoring, denunciation, and rating. He argues that they tend to operate like watchdog committees or whistle-blowers in the policy domains (environmental politics, consumer protection, health politics) they focus upon. Like rating agencies, they work by naming, blaming, and shaming. They point out problems, and try to force public authorities to act upon them. Contrary to interest groups or political parties, they do not have representation functions and they do not want to take power.

The modal action repertoire in Western European protest politics has become quite moderate and the respective social movement organizations have professionalized and institutionalized (Koopmans 1996; Kriesi 1996). Since the early 2000s, non-electoral political participation in Western Europe most likely takes the form of donating money (i.e. ‘check-book’ activism), signing petitions, or of ‘deliberately buying certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons’ (Teorell et al. 2007b: 340). Social movement scholars summarize these trends by the term the ‘movement society’ (Meyer and Tarrow 1998) – a term which serves to suggest that political protest has become an integral part of representation in contemporary democracies; that protest behavior is employed with greater frequency, by more diverse constituencies, and is used to represent a wider range of claims than ever before; and that professionalization and institutionalization may be changing the social movement into an instrument of conventional politics. As protest becomes a part of everyday politics, we assist in the ‘normalization of the unconventional’ (Fuchs 1991). At the same time, social movement organizations become rather like interest groups. Paradoxically, as unconventional forms of participation become increasingly accepted and political systems become more open to unconventional forms of mobilization, these forms are likely to become more moderate and less prominent.

## Conclusion

Administrative politics and protest politics extend the number of stakeholders to whom government is to be responsive and accountable, way beyond the electorate of the representative or direct-democratic channels. In a multi-level institutional setting such as the one we see emerging in Europe today, the number of stakeholders whom responsible governments have to take into account is multiplied even more: governments of other nation-states, and supranational organizations have to be taken into account as well. At the level of the EU in particular, the problems of accountability are compounded by the 'lack of politics': at the EU level, we have, as Schmidt (2006) put it, 'policy without politics', that is, a decision-making system that is weakly responsive in terms of elections, parties, and the conventional procedures of representative democracy. Instead of representative democracy, we have an 'agencification', an increasing delegation to 'non-majoritarian' institutions (institutions which are not directly accountable to voters or their representatives), and an 'informalization', the creation of informal structures and opportunities to influence decision making which largely bypass representative democratic procedures (Lord and Pollak 2010: 981). In such a setting, as Mair (2009) has observed, the parties who routinely govern are exposed to the increasing tension between their role as representatives of the national citizen publics, and their role as responsible governments. As representatives of the national citizen publics, they are expected to be responsive and accountable to their voters; as responsible governments, they are expected to take into account the increasing number of principals constituted by the many veto players who now surround government in its multi-level institutional setting. Moreover, governments who act 'responsibly' are not only limited by the constraints of the multi-level institutional setting, but also by the weight of prior policy commitments, a weight which, by definition, grows heavier year by year.

The question is whether these other forms of responsiveness or accountability are functional equivalents to the electoral responsiveness or accountability of the classic democratic model (Curtin et al. 2010: 938). The complex setting that results from the extension of the representative model to bring it closer in line with the reality of contemporary governance structures holds out the promise of 'new possibilities for mutually suspicious clusters of actors to compete to hold one another to account, whilst opening up new possibilities for legal and administrative accountability, as well as external accountability' (Lord



and Pollack 2010: 984). However, to the extent that these new possibilities are not linked to the electorate, they are not democratic in the proper sense of the five criteria formulated by Dahl and presented at the beginning of this chapter.

## **Note**

1. See Roy P. Basler (Ed.) 1953–1955. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 7: 22. Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

# 4

## Varieties of Democracy

*Daniel Bochsler and Hanspeter Kriesi*

The normative principles of democracy can be combined in different ways in theory, and in practical implementations. As Kohler-Koch and Rittberger (2007: 3) have pointed out, different strands in democratic theory do not differ with respect to the basic normative assumptions about democracy's essence, but in their emphasis on different dimensions of democracy. They are all variations on a general theme. Similarly, the different existing democracies constitute various attempts to implement these general underlying normative assumptions. They have implemented these principles through various formal institutional arrangements and informal practices and procedures. In this chapter, we shall conceptualize and empirically measure this variety within established democracies, using the Democracy Barometer<sup>1</sup> – an empirical tool that has been developed in the framework of the National Competence Centre for Research (NCCR) Democracy. Our analysis is mainly exploratory, an attempt to map out largely unexplored terrain. As we shall show, the existing democracies differ considerably in the way they implement the basic principles. Furthermore, there are trade-offs involved in the implementation of the democratic principle: even though normatively desirable, in the real world it is impossible to maximize all its aspects evenly. Institutional designers have to make some hard choices when trying to make democracy work.

Probably the most famous attempt to put some order into the variety of existing democracies is Lijphart's (1999) 'Pattern of democracies'. As he suggests, 'the enormous variety of formal and informal rules and institutions that we find in democracies can be reduced to a clear two-dimensional pattern on the basis of the contrast between majoritarian and consensus government' (Lijphart 1999: 301). This

famous typology is based on a limited number of ten indicators for 36 established democracies, and extends and updates an earlier, similar attempt (Lijphart 1984). Lijphart's measurement approach, which we shall follow here, relies not only on formal institutional rules, but also takes into account the way these institutions are used in a given country (the informal institutions). At the heart of his approach are the 'institutional rules and practices'. Based on his theoretical concept of power-sharing, Lijphart expected that democracies can be distinguished as being either the consensus or the majoritarian type. His empirical results demonstrate, however, that the differences between the 36 countries are more nuanced than expected, and he distinguishes two different ways of sharing or dividing power – between actors within the central executive and legislative, versus power-sharing between different institutions.

Lijphart's two-dimensional conceptual map of democracies has been very influential, but it has been by no means the only typology proposed for sorting out the empirical variety of democracies. In another attempt to bring some order into the bewildering institutional variety, Lane and Ersson (1996) came up with a much more complex variety of possible empirical configurations than Lijphart. In their comparison of the institutional characteristics of the established Western European democracies with the emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, they used no less than five dimensions along which the established democracies were shown to vary. They concluded that there is a general variability of institutional conditions, which hardly allows for any systematic differences.

Indeed, the result of the empirical search for a few underlying dimensions of democracy is heavily contingent on the details of the empirical analysis. Thus, it depends on the set of analytical concepts we have in mind at the outset of our search, on the set of indicators we have at our disposal for the operationalization of each concept, on the set of countries we include in our analysis, and on the time period covered.

Like Lane and Ersson, we shall start our analysis of the variety of democracies from a more differentiated set of conceptual dimensions, we shall make use of a more ample set of indicators than Lijphart, and we shall analyze a somewhat different set of 50 countries for the period of 1990–2007. The sample includes established democracies (all countries which are evaluated full democracies both by Freedom House and by the Polity IV index), and is limited only by the availability of data in the Democracy Barometer.<sup>2</sup>

## **Five dimensions of democracy**

Starting from Lijphart's two dimensions, we move toward a more complete picture of democracy. To be sure, the operationalization of a full-fledged account of democracy is limited by the availability of appropriate indicators in our dataset, and by the existing empirical variance among democracies. Thus, for lack of reliable data we are not introducing a separate dimension referring to the situation of the media, although the media constitute a key condition for political communication today. We can, however, extend Lijphart's two-dimensional framework to a five-dimensional configuration of democracy.

Our first addition concerns the distinction between liberal and illiberal democracies. Modern democracies are liberal democracies. Although the liberal principle may constrain the democratic principle, the institutionalization of the liberal principle constitutes a crucial requirement for the chain of accountability. It provides the basis for transparency, checks and balances, a functioning public sphere and the citizens' capacity to attribute responsibility. The dimension of direct versus representative democracy introduces the participatory element of democracy and takes into account the direct-democratic channel in addition to the central representative democracy. Finally, the distinction between inclusive versus exclusive democracies refers to one of Dahl's (2000) five key criteria mentioned in the last chapter, and reflects whether or not the citizenry is fully included in democratic decision-making.

### **Lijphart's two dimensions: Consensus vs. majoritarian and federal vs. centralized democracies**

The two dimensions in Lijphart's scheme reflect the degree to which power is concentrated in governments. The first dimension refers to the degree of shared responsibility in governments and legislatures, the second one to the division of power between different institutions (Lijphart 1999: 5). The indicators of his first dimension are directly or indirectly linked to two crucial institutions (Lijphart 1999: 303): proportional representation and a parliamentary system of government. Indeed, the electoral system constitutes the crucial formal element that is closely related to three other elements of this first dimension – the concentration of power in the executive (one party vs. coalition government), the relationship between the executive and the legislative (executive dominance vs. legislative dominance), and the party system (two vs. multi-party system).

Lijphart's first dimension closely resembles the trade-off between the proportional and the majoritarian visions of democracy, documented by Powell (2000), which is exclusively based on how the two basic electoral systems work. Powell shows that each vision arrives at realizing the goals it sets itself, at the cost of neglecting the goals of the competing vision. On the one hand, the majoritarian vision values the concentration of power, which enables the elected representatives to carry out their promises (mandates) and clarifies the responsibility for government actions (transparency and vertical accountability). On the other hand, proportional representation is valued by its adherents for its ability to allow for authorized representation, that is, for proportionate policy-making influence of each group of voters. The vision of proportional democracy most closely resembles Dahl's (1956) pluralist idea that democracy is not majority rule, but the 'rule of minorities', who, proportionately represented, are forced to cooperate with one another to find majority support.

The second dimension in Lijphart's scheme refers to horizontal accountability, that is, the division of power *between* institutions of government, the 'checks and balances' of the US Constitution. Empirically, however, it essentially boils down to a federalism–centralism dimension.

### **Liberal vs. illiberal democracies**

Modern democracies combine the liberal and the democratic principles, they are liberal democracies. We consider the active involvement of citizens in the public debates preceding the vote and its necessary guarantees – based on liberal rights and freedoms – as the baseline of what we call a democracy today.

Citizens require protection from the government's arbitrary decisions, as well as from each other. Liberalism sought to restrict the power of the monarch and of the Church. Its goal was freeing the polity from religious control and freeing civil society from political interference (Held 2006). Liberalism upholds the values of freedom of choice, reason, and toleration. The liberal principle guarantees basic rights of the citizens – freedom of speech, freedom of association, protection of property rights, religious freedom, as well as equality before the law. According to the liberal principle the power of the state has constitutional limits, the modern state has to speak the language of law and the entire machinery of the state ought to be controlled by the law. The rule of law implies the submission of the state under the legal strictures. Constitutionalism, the division of power, checks and balances, and an independent judiciary in particular ought to guarantee the lawfulness of the state's actions.

Democracies combine the liberal freedoms with a strong and vivid civil society. Civil society is, on the one hand, the embodiment of the freedom of association, in practice, filled by organizations of citizens which are not under direct state control. On the other hand, it serves as the intermediate body between the political institutions and the citizens, and hence creates the space for the public control over politics, and articulation of needs and demands.

Modern democracies combine this liberal principle with the democratic principles of popular equality ('one man one vote'), popular sovereignty ('government of the people, by the people, for the people'), and the majoritarian principle, which is the baseline of most democratic decisions. As we have pointed out in the previous chapter, liberal and democratic principles are not necessarily compatible. The liberal principle limits the democratic principle to the extent that the citizens may exercise their popular sovereignty only within the constraints imposed by the legal order. 'Madisonian democracy', as Dahl (1956) has called a democracy that puts a heavy accent on the liberal principle, seeks to protect the liberties of certain minorities (of status, power, and wealth). In Dahl's (1956: 32) view, Madison went about as far as it was possible in his quest for preventing the 'tyranny of the majority', while still remaining within the bounds of what we call democracy. On the other hand, the democratic principles limit the liberal principle to the extent that the legal order can be arbitrarily modified by democratically legitimated political decisions. As the American diplomat Richard Holbrooke said about Yugoslavia in the 1990s: 'Suppose elections are free and fair and those elected are racists, fascists, separatists'.<sup>3</sup> Dahl (1956) has called a democracy where the majority has unlimited power, a 'populist democracy', and he formulated a series of objections against the attempt to maximize popular sovereignty and political equality at the expense of all other political goals.

Where the citizens do not have strong liberal values, the conflict between the two principles is particularly acute. Zakaria (2007) paints a very bleak picture about the current relationship of the two sets of principles: they are, he maintains 'coming apart across the globe. Democracy is flourishing; liberty is not'. We would like to suggest that the lack of liberalism is above all a problem in emerging democracies, that is, in countries that have only recently made their transition to democracy. Their lack of liberalism is an indication that it takes time to develop the characteristics of an established democracy. Even Zakaria (2007: 56f.) concedes that we should not judge the new democracies 'by standards that most Western countries would have flunked even 30 years ago'.

We would like to add that not even all Western countries are capable of living up to these standards today.

### **Direct vs. representative democracies**

As we have pointed out in the previous chapter, modern democracies are representative democracies. Elections of the political decision-makers at regular intervals constitute the key institution of representative democracy today (Manin 1995: 18; Powell 2000: 3). While Lijphart's dimensions have focused on the procedures and the outcome of elections – the electoral system and the format of the party system – the role of the citizen is not covered by his approach. Universal suffrage constitutes the legal foundation of citizens' representation, but in practice, good representation also requires high and equal participation in the elections. Although we will not be able to demonstrate this aspect of the general model, we would like to add that elections are instruments of democracy only to the extent that they give the citizens influence over policy making, that is, to the extent that governments have the capacity to act on the citizens preferences, and to the extent that they are accountable and responsive to the preferences of the citizens, considered as political equals (Dahl 1971: 1).

Even if representative forms of democracy dominate today, direct-democratic forms of political participation have not entirely disappeared. As we have also suggested in the previous chapter, the electoral channel coexists with direct-democratic forms of government in several countries, and the latter are, indeed, increasingly introduced in newly emerging democracies. In particular, the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe typically have introduced direct-democratic instruments.

In his recent contribution to the theory of democracy, Hendriks (2010) combines Lijphart's distinction between majoritarian and consensus (non-majoritarian) democracies with the distinction between direct (self-governing) and indirect (representative) forms of democracy. The resulting four combinations he calls 'pendulum democracy' (the classic Westminster case), 'consensus democracy' (the classic consociational case), 'voter democracy' (the combination of majoritarian and direct forms of democracy), and 'participatory democracy' (the combination of consensual and direct forms of democracy). Voter democracy refers to 'unmediated popular rule'. Citizens participate by casting their votes in plebiscites, either in town meetings or in referendums. California-style referendums illustrate this type. Participatory democracy in Hendrik's view refers to a very demanding

form of democracy. In this version of democracy, decision making involves 'a process of engaging in thorough, preferably transformative, and usually lengthy deliberations to seek consensus' (p. 28). In Hendrik's view (p. 137), Swiss democracy is a combination of elements from voter democracy and consensus democracy. Demanding less than Hendriks with respect to deliberation, one might, however, argue that the Swiss democracy illustrates precisely the combination of direct-democratic elements with a consensus democracy which is characteristic of Hendrik's participatory democracy, and which distinguishes it crucially from California-style referendums.

There have been some conceptual attempts to connect Lijphart's two models of democracy with direct democracy. Consensual democracies are often conceptualized as systems which rely on compromises between different political groups, as each of them has the possibility of vetoing unpopular decisions. In this vein, Hug and Tsebelis (2002) show that direct-democratic institutions introduce a new veto player into the political system – the median voter of the population. This argument has allowed Vatter (2009) to link them theoretically and empirically to the Lijphart model, showing that referendums create an incentive for the extension of the governing coalitions. Neidhart (1970) long ago argued that the risks arising from optional referendums and popular initiatives can be limited by co-opting all those forces into the governing coalition who are capable of efficiently threatening with the use of these instruments. Vatter's empirical analysis based on 23 of Lijphart's 36 countries and a modified list of 12 indicators confirms this hunch. He finds three dimensions: in addition to Lijphart's two original dimensions, he uncovers a third dimension for direct democracy. As expected by his theoretical argument, the concentration of power in the cabinet turns out to be closely associated with this dimension (and not with the executive-party dimension as in Lijphart's analysis).

### **Inclusive vs. exclusive democracies**

A last crucial criterion for democracy is the inclusion of all, or at any rate most, adult permanent residents in the democratic process (Dahl 2000: 37f.). Before the 20th century, this criterion was unacceptable to most advocates of democracy. Women were generally excluded from political rights, as were various classes of the population that were considered unfit, that is, incompetent to participate. Today, some countries still effectively deny the right to vote to some parts of their population by requiring voters to register and by making access to registration procedures complicated. Most importantly, however, in an age



of globalization more or less important parts of the resident populations in democratic countries are of foreign origin and, in most of them, they do not enjoy full citizenship rights in their country of residence.

With the construction of the nation-states, civic, political, and social rights have become intimately linked to membership in a national community, to national citizenship. Or, as Wimmer (2002: 57) has observed, 'the national idea has become the central principle according to which modern society structures inclusion and exclusion, not only in the sphere of culture and identity, but also in the legal, political, military and social domains'. While foreign residents have acquired civic and social rights (Soysal 1994), they are still denied full political rights in most democracies.

## Measurement

As already pointed out, we are using the Democracy Barometer to operationalize our five dimensions of democracy. We have defined 19 indicators. Appendix 1 provides an exact definition for each one of them in terms of the original measures contained in the Democracy Barometer. For each indicator, the country values correspond to the average of the yearly values for the period 1990–2007. Taking averages over a more extended period provides us with a more stable assessment of the kind of democracy that has been implemented in a given country. Appendices 2 and 3 present the statistical distribution and the correlation matrix of our 19 indicators.

*Consensus vs. majoritarian democracy.* We are using five indicators for Lijphart's key dimension. Three of them (effective number of parties, electoral proportionality, and proportionality of electoral system) are closely linked to the distinction between proportional and majoritarian electoral systems. The remaining two (wage coordination and union density) refer to the integration of interest groups into the political system, which is also part of Lijphart's first dimension. Our indicators measure the proportionality of elections, as we do not have suitable indicators for executive dominance, nor for cabinet composition, which are part of Lijphart's attempt to distinguish between consensus and majoritarian democracy, for the set of countries that we are analyzing.<sup>4</sup> We would like to suggest, however, that the key characteristics of this dimension can be captured without these two types of indicators.

Lijphart has been criticized for his inclusion of interest groups in his first dimension. Thus, several authors (Armingeon 2002: 88; Keman and Pennings, 1995; Roller 2005: 111f.) proposed to reduce the first

dimension to purely party-related characteristics. In this respect, we prefer to follow Lijphart, because one can make a strong argument in support of the institutional complementarity between consensus democracy in the party system and corporatist-like arrangements in the interest-group system, on the one hand, and between majoritarian democracy in the party system and pluralist-like arrangements in the interest-group system, on the other hand (e.g. Hall and Soskice 2001).

*Federal vs. centralized.* For Lijphart's second dimension, we have three indicators at our disposal. Following Vatter (2009), we distinguish between two different aspects of federalism and decentralization – one representing the constitutional division of territorial power and one the fiscal division of territorial power – and add bicameralism as a third indicator, which is also used by Lijphart.<sup>5</sup> With respect to judicial review – also part of the federalism–centralization dimensions with Lijphart and Vatter –, we expect it to be positively associated with the liberalism dimension and negatively with the direct-democracy dimension. The liberal principle includes an emphasis on checks and balances, especially on an independent judiciary. By contrast, direct-democratic procedures may have 'populist' tendencies, which limit the possibilities of judicial review, since they attribute decisive competences to the people as sovereign.

*Liberal vs. illiberal democracies.* In addition to the indicator for judicial review, we have six indicators for this dimension. They measure equality before the law, property rights, freedom of the press, government capacity, the existence of a powerful civil society, unconventional political participation, and representation of women. While the first three may seem obvious indicators for this dimension, the remaining four need some additional comments. 'Government capacity' is intended to measure the submission of the state under the law. 'Effective unconventional participation' is both an indicator of the effective use of the freedom to associate, and of the effective use of freedom of speech. The 'adequate representation of women' is also an indicator of equality before the law and of the freedom to associate, but it is probably less exclusively linked to this dimension, since it also measures the equality of participation (i.e. it has a link to the representation vs. direct-democracy dimension) and the equality of representation (i.e. it also has a link to the consensus vs. majoritarian democracy dimension).

*Representative vs. direct democracy.* We are operationalizing this dimension with turnout and equality of electoral participation (for representative democracy), and the frequency of national referendums (for direct democracy).

*Inclusive vs. exclusive.* We only have a single indicator for the inclusiveness of the democracies, the share of registered voters among the adult population.

## The overall configuration

The overall distribution of values provides us with a first rough idea of the characteristics of our sample of 50 countries. This sample consists of rather centralized and unicameral democracies, with a high degree of inclusion, proportional electoral systems, and hardly any democracies with direct-democratic elements. The sample is inclusive, as only four countries (Estonia, Luxembourg, South Africa, USA) count less than 80 per cent of their voting-age population in their voting registers. Most countries also have very low degrees of disproportionalities, with values below or around 10 (on a scale from 0 to 100), including even majoritarian democracies, such as Australia (10.0) or the US (3.5). The US example confirms that very proportional election outcomes can even be reached under plurality rule, if minor parties hardly win any votes. There are only a few exceptions with higher disproportionality rates, notably France (19.3), Turkey (18.1), the UK (15.8), and Canada (13.1). With regard to the practice of direct democracy, Switzerland is a clear outlier, with 16 yearly referendums, followed only by Italy with six referendums per year (measured by five-year averages). Most countries had no, or hardly any, referendums at the national level. Finally, two-thirds of our countries have a unicameral parliament, and three-quarters are unitary (non-federal) states.

Just like our predecessors, we have performed an exploratory factor analysis, in order to uncover the underlying dimensions of our 19 indicators. The result of this analysis is presented in Table 4.1. The overall configuration corresponds to our expectations. There are, indeed, no less than five dimensions for the characterization of the 50 democracies. These five dimensions correspond to our five theoretically defined dimensions.<sup>6</sup> With few exceptions, the indicators turn out to be associated with the theoretical dimensions as expected by our conceptual discussion. Some of them are related to more than one dimension, which is, however, not quite unexpected either. Thus, union density is both associated with the consensus–majoritarian dimension, which covers the main aspects of consensus democracy, but also with the liberal–illiberal and the federal–centralized dimension. Wage coordination is not only associated with the consensus–majoritarian dimension, but even more closely with the inclusiveness dimension, suggesting

Table 4.1 Results of exploratory factor analysis:  $n = 50$ 

Variable	Factor 1 liberal- illiberal	Factor 2 federalist- centralized	Factor 3 consensus- majoritarian	Factor 4 representative- direct democratic	Factor 5 inclusive- exclusive	Uniqueness
Equality before law	0.94	0.16	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.081
Governing capacity	0.97	-0.02	0.08	0.03	-0.01	0.058
Property rights	0.91	-0.05	-0.11	0.02	0.13	0.149
Non-conventional participation	0.66	-0.16	0.17	0.02	-0.05	0.504
Freedom of press	0.83	0.10	0.18	-0.07	-0.19	0.228
Women representation	0.61	-0.12	0.41	0.17	0.17	0.384
Judicial review	-0.42	0.07	0.15	0.39	-0.25	0.579
Unitary (no territorial division)	0.01	0.83	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.315
Single chamber (no bicameralism)	0.21	0.77	-0.03	0.13	0.07	0.339
Fiscal centralization	-0.33	0.55	0.22	0.02	-0.18	0.507
Effective number of parliamentary parties	0.00	-0.12	0.34	-0.40	0.29	0.626
Proportionality (effective magnitude)	-0.10	0.19	0.58	-0.09	0.40	0.456
Disproportionality (Gallagher index)	0.17	-0.05	0.79	-0.03	0.01	0.339
Wage coordination	0.12	-0.11	0.31	0.00	0.66	0.440
Union density	0.37	0.32	0.50	0.22	0.08	0.465
Equality of participation	0.13	-0.01	-0.03	0.75	0.15	0.400
Turnout	0.31	0.19	0.33	0.38	0.00	0.615
Referendums/direct democracy	0.05	-0.31	-0.01	-0.64	0.10	0.483
Inclusion	-0.11	0.38	-0.08	0.11	0.59	0.472
Eigenvalue rotated solution	4.79	2.10	1.85	1.55	1.26	

Note: Shaded areas in this table refer to the highest loadings of the factor analysis

that electoral and corporatist inclusiveness are, indeed, complementary. The representation of women is associated with the liberal and the consensus–majoritarian dimensions. Probably the biggest exception to our expectations refers to the negative association of judicial review with the liberal dimension. While its trade-off with direct democracy was to be expected, its negative association with the liberal dimension is something, we shall look into more closely below.

Given that one of the five dimensions – direct democracy – is so closely associated with a specific country – Switzerland, we have rerun our analysis excluding the Swiss case. It turns out that the overall configuration does not change very much if the Swiss case is excluded.<sup>7</sup> However, the indicators for direct democracy and turnout become less closely associated with the fourth dimension, which means that this dimension becomes more of an equal participation dimension.

### **The positioning of the democracies in the five-dimensional space**

The fact that we have uncovered no less than five underlying dimensions to the democratic space means that we can regroup the variety of democracies in quite different ways. We shall present some of the possible classifications in order to show the different configurations of democracies.

Let us start with a focus on the liberal–illiberal dimension. The characteristic of this dimension is that it does not involve any trade-offs. The more liberal a democracy is according to our measurement, the better it implements the basic preconditions for accountability. Thus, liberal democracies are clearly superior to illiberal ones. We shall combine the liberal dimension with the two dimensions of Lijphart’s typology in order to see how the democracies as defined by Lijphart fare in terms of the liberal–illiberal dimension. Figure 4.1 presents the combination of the consensus–majoritarian with the liberal–illiberal dimension. In this figure, we divide the space created by the combination of these two dimensions into four quadrants, which correspond to four types of democracies – liberal–consensus democracies, liberal–majoritarian democracies, illiberal–consensus democracies, and illiberal–majoritarian democracies. The terms are to be understood in a relative sense. All of these countries are democracies, but some are more consensual or liberal than others.

What immediately strikes the eye is the greater liberalism of the long-established democracies in Western Europe and in the Anglo-Saxon

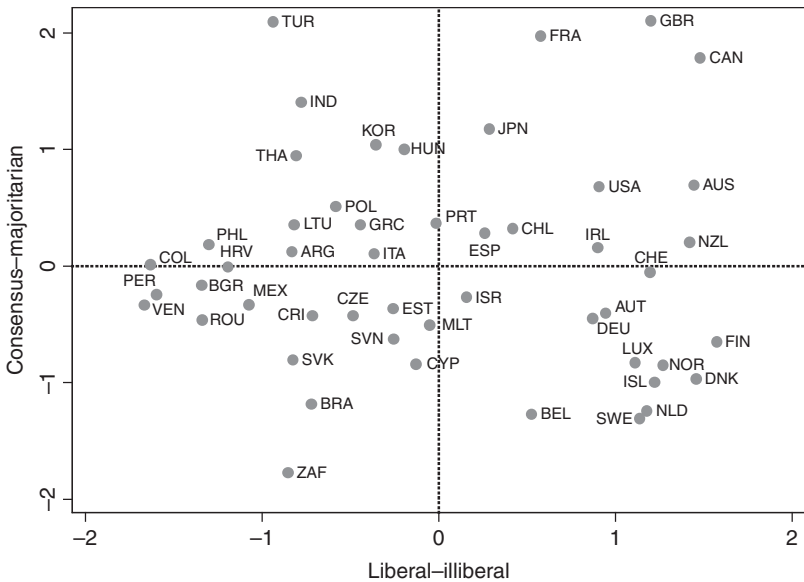


Figure 4.1 Liberal vs. illiberal and consensus vs. majoritarian democracies

world. Young democracies of Latin America (Peru – PER, Columbia – COL, Venezuela – VEN, Mexico – MEX) and of South-eastern Europe (Bulgaria – BGR, Romania – ROU, Croatia – HRV) are less liberal than the democracies with a longer historical record. The same is the case, to a more limited extent, for the democracies of Southern (Spain – ESP, Italy – ITA, Portugal – PRT, Cyprus – CYP, Malta – MLT) and Central Europe (Hungary – HUN, Czech Republic – CZE, Poland – POL, Slovenia – SVN), and of Africa (South Africa – ZAF).

Among the liberal democracies, we find a clear separation between the Anglo-Saxon, majoritarian group of countries (Great Britain – GBR, USA, Canada – CAN, Australia – AUS, New Zealand – NZL), and the consensus democracies of Scandinavia (Denmark – DNK, Finland – FIN, Iceland – ISL, Norway – NOR, and Sweden – SWE) and the north-west of the European continent (Belgium – BEL, Germany – DEU, Luxembourg – LUX, the Netherlands – NLD). The most liberal democracies turn out to be Denmark and Finland on the consensus side, and Australia, Canada, and New Zealand on the majoritarian side. All of these countries are characterized by very high values for equality before the law, governing capacity, and property rights. What distinguishes them is unconventional participation (higher on the majoritarian side)

and women's representation (higher on the Scandinavian side). Surprisingly, two traditional consensus democracies, Switzerland (CHE) and Austria (AUT), turn out to be on the margin between consensus and majoritarian countries. This is because our consensus–majoritarian dimension measures the formal institutions (electoral system and its direct consequences), rather than the functioning of the government, and many Swiss and Austrian institutions are proportional only within limits.

The rather illiberal democracies tend to be less clearly divided on the consensus dimension. Many of them tend toward the middle ground. Only Turkey (TUR) with weak trade unions, and a unique 10 per cent legal threshold for national elections, which over long stretches results in a dominant majority party system, appears as by far the most majoritarian country of our dataset. South Africa, whose institutions have been deliberately designed with the consensus model in mind, constitutes the proportional extreme. In South Africa, the transitional constitution of 1993 imposed the formation of grand coalition governments (all parties with more than 5 per cent of the vote had to form a 'Government of National Unity'). The result was a consensual decision-making process (Lijphart 1998: 144). Under the final constitution, South Africa has a proportional electoral system and very proportional electoral outcome, although it has a very low effective number of parliamentary parties and a high concentration of the parliamentary seats (in the hands of the African National Congress (ANC)). This suggests that Lijphart's key dimension is mainly relevant for the long-established democracies, while it has less purchase for the characterization of the emerging democracies.

Next, we combine the liberal with the federal–centralized dimension, as illustrated in Figure 4.2a and b. The countries are regrouped on both sides of the liberal–illiberal divide. We find that the group of illiberal countries usually has a highly centralized administration (measured by fiscal centralization), and we find a negative trend between the two dimensions ( $r = -0.34$ ), with Brazil (BRA), Argentina (ARG), India (IND) and Turkey being among the few exceptions (Figure 4.2a). Once we exclude these four countries, the negative trend is accentuated. Taking all three indicators of centralization and decentralization into account (Figure 4.2b), we find that many of the fiscally centralized countries in fact do have a federal or decentralized structure for their state administration, but tend not to provide the lower levels of administration with sufficient funds (Falleti 2005).

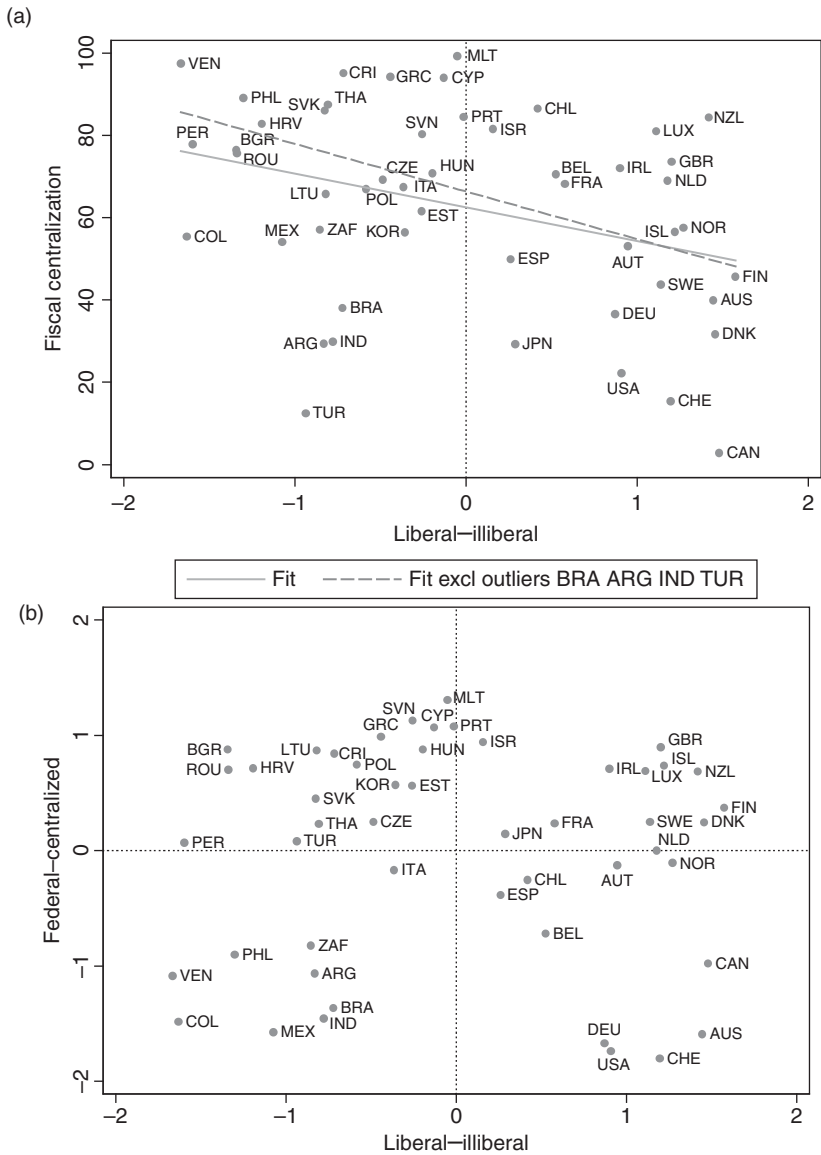


Figure 4.2 (a) Liberal vs. illiberal democracies and fiscal centralization (b) Liberal vs. illiberal and federalist vs. centralized democracies



In Figure 4.2b, we observe a clear contrast between post-communist countries and others. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe all belong to the illiberal–centralized field, whereas most young democracies in Latin America, South and South-east Asia (India and Philippines – PHL), and South Africa belong to the illiberal, but federal–decentralized group of countries, with the notable exceptions of Costa Rica (CRI) and South Korea (KOR). On the liberal side, Germany, Switzerland, Australia and the US are the highly federal countries, Belgium and Canada among the decentralized democracies, too. All the other democracies in this sample are more or less centralized.

Using our attempt to operationalize the two dimensions of Lijphart's typology, we are also able to reconstruct his two-dimensional conceptual map. Figure 4.3 presents the results in three parts. The first image in Figure 4.3 reconstructs Lijphart's map for the 24 countries which are included both in his and our own sample, using his data for the period 1971–1996. The second image reconstructs the map for the same 24 countries, but now using our data and our model for the year 1995, which overlaps with Lijphart's period. The third image corresponds to the reconstruction of the same map, but for all the 50 countries in our sample, using our data and our model for the 1995–2007. Overall, the three images are very similar, and we measure almost the same underlying dimensions, as correlation tests show.<sup>8</sup> Hence, the two dimensions are quite robust: even if we modify the set of indicators, the period covered or the set of countries included, the resulting configurations of countries turn out to be rather stable.

Although the overall configurations are remarkably similar, some countries have a somewhat different position in our space for 1990–2007 than in Lijphart's space for 1971–1996. This may point to differences in measurements, but it is certainly also a result of institutional change. Thus, Italy has become both more federal and more majoritarian in our configuration for 1995–2007, which is a reflection of the regionalization and the adoption of a new electoral system which have taken place in Italy in the meantime. Japan has made a similar shift toward a more federal and more majoritarian position, again as a result of a change in its electoral system from a rare system with some proportional features (single non-transferable vote) to a mixed system in 1994. Switzerland, to mention a third example, no longer is an extreme case, which is a consequence of the slightly different set of indicators that we rely upon. As already mentioned, we measure the proportional features of the system, and do not have indicators for the consensus-oriented governing style (large coalitions, etc.). Austria becomes more centralized,

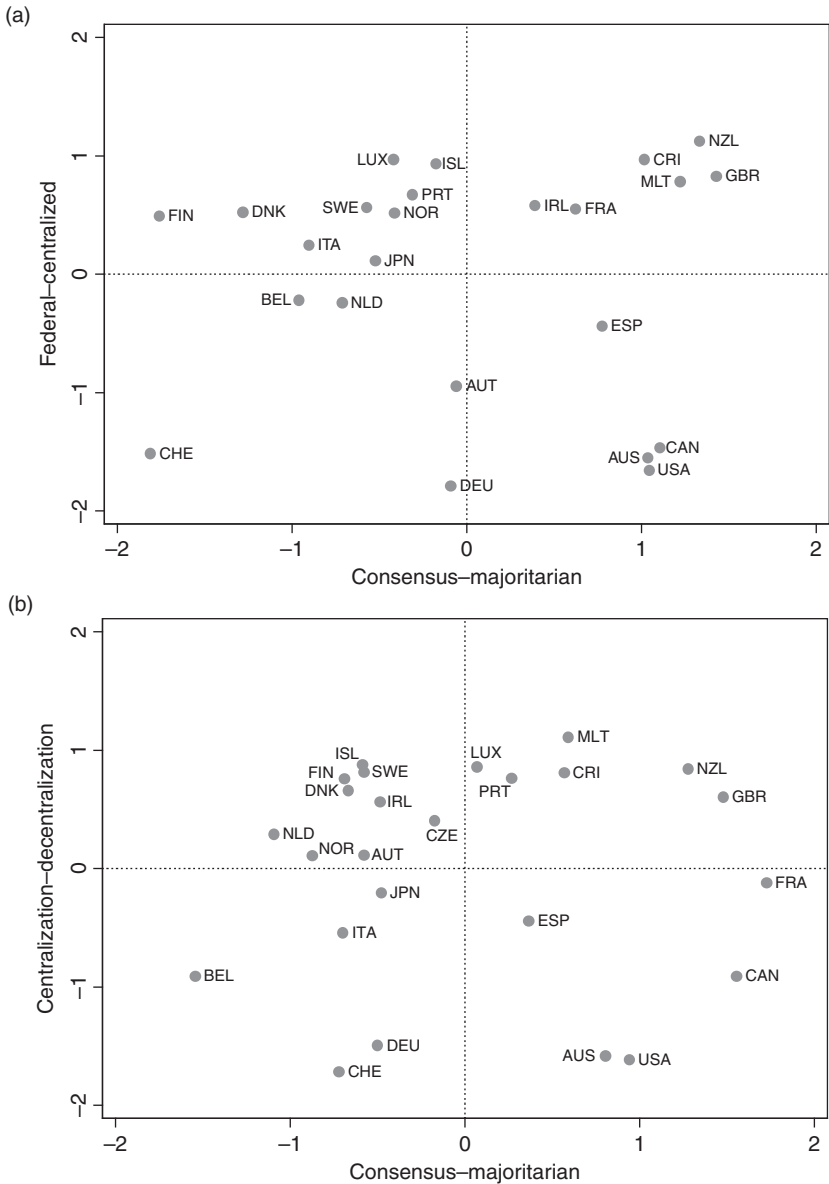


Figure 4.3 Lijphart's typology – consensus-majoritarian vs. federalist-centralized democracies (a) Replication of Lijphart with his own data 1971–1996,  $n = 24$  (b) Replication of Lijphart with our data 1995,  $n = 24$  (c) Replication of Lijphart with our data, 1990–2007,  $N = 50$

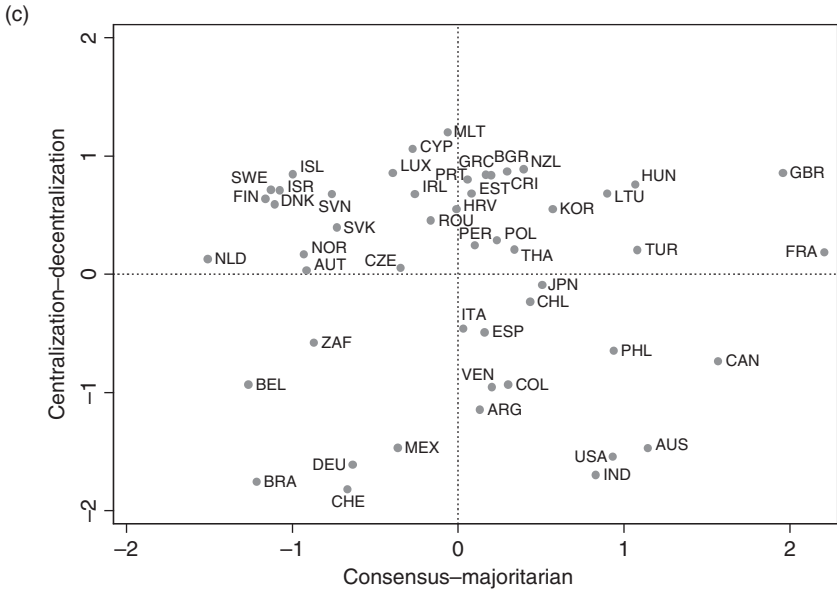


Figure 4.3 (Continued)

Iceland and Belgium, due to their large (and, in the case of Belgium very regionalized) party systems and low disproportionality, more proportional. France moves to the majoritarian end, due to very high disproportionality of the two-round majority electoral system, and low union density. The 26 democracies that were not covered by Lijphart are spread out along the centralization–decentralization dimension, but, as we have already pointed out, they vary less on the consensus–majoritarian dimension, which leads to a crowded center space. Overall, the democracies not covered by Lijphart are slightly more majoritarian than his original cases.

With our five dimensions, we can also reconstruct Hendrik's (2010) fourfold typology empirically. Figure 4.4 presents the configuration we obtain if we combine the consensus–majoritarian dimension with the direct-democracy dimension. The resulting configuration sets Switzerland apart. As we have suggested in our conceptual discussion, it is this country that most closely resembles Hendrik's 'participatory democracy'. In the other countries, direct-democratic elements are much less developed, but apart from Luxembourg and Italy, several new democracies are also rather on the direct-democratic side

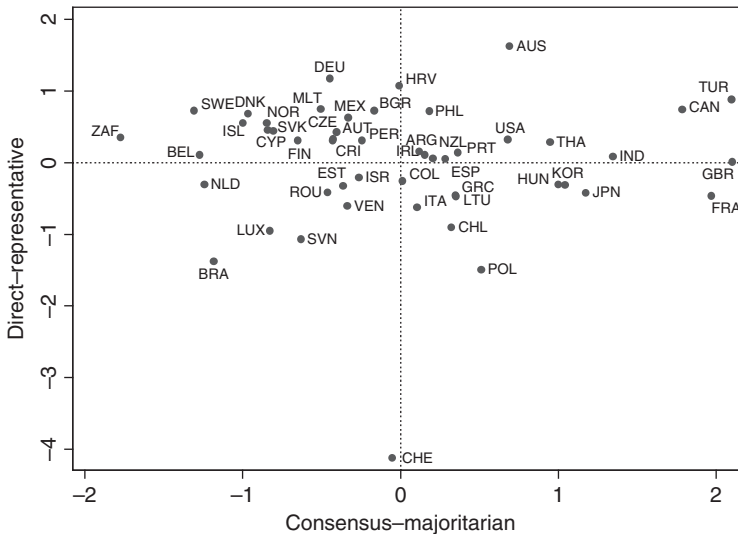


Figure 4.4 Hendrik (2010): consensus-majoritarian and direct-representative democracies

(especially Poland, Slovenia, and several Latin American democracies). The specificity of the Swiss case becomes even more apparent when we combine the direct-democratic dimension with the federal one, as is illustrated in Figure 4.5. It is the combination of direct-democratic institutions with federalism which sets Switzerland apart from all the other countries. The Latin-American countries Brazil, Venezuela, and Columbia adopt a similar combination of federalism and direct democracy, but in a much less pronounced way, while old federal cases (USA, Germany, Austria, Canada) do not have any direct-democratic elements at the national level.

Finally, let us also briefly discuss our last dimension – inclusiveness, which refers to the inclusiveness of voting rights, and wage coordination, as a measure of inclusion of the labor unions in policy making. Figure 4.6 illustrates the combination of federalism and inclusiveness. Surprisingly, the relationship between the two dimensions is curvilinear: both highly federal and highly centralized countries are less inclusive than countries of average centralization. The most exclusive democracies are the US, Australia, and South Africa on the federal side, and Estonia, Luxembourg, and Lithuania on the centralized side. In the US and in South Africa, registration for voting still poses a problem

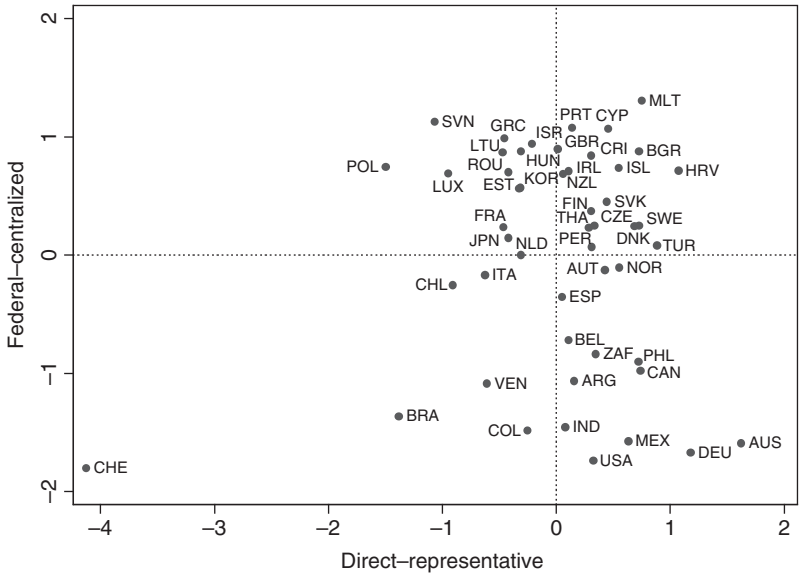


Figure 4.5 Representative-direct and federalist-centralized democracies

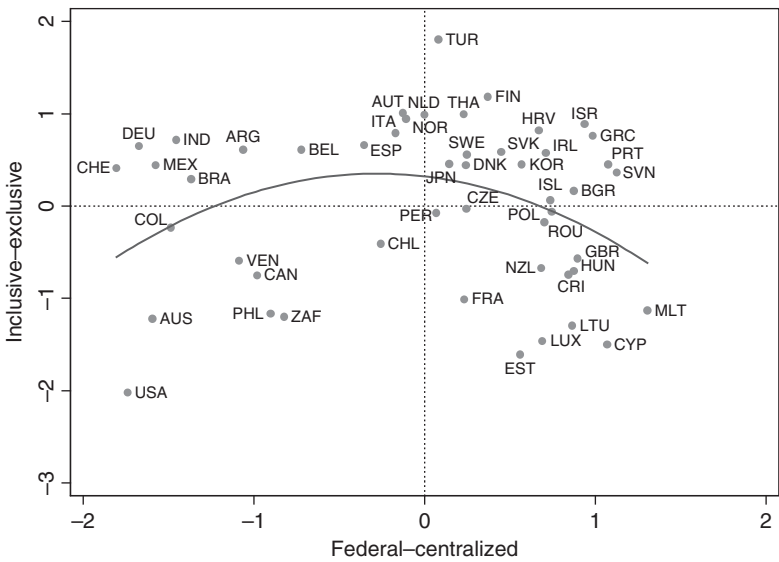


Figure 4.6 Federalist-centralized democracies and inclusiveness. Curvilinear relation at the 95% significance level

for some groups of voters. In Europe, the most exclusive countries are Estonia, where large parts of the ethnic Russian and Ukrainian minorities do not have citizenship rights, Luxembourg, where due to a large number of immigrants, the voting population is fairly restricted, and Lithuania, with an unequal labor market (similar to other countries in the region, Estonia and Poland).

## Trade-offs

As we have seen, there are different visions of democracy, which cannot all be implemented at one and the same time. This means that there are trade-offs between the democratic ideals that can be attained by real-world democracies. We have already pointed to one of these trade-offs in our previous discussion.

The key insight that there are trade-offs between various aspects of the democratic ideal has been clearly put into evidence by the studies of Lijphart (1999) and Powell (2000), who have, each one in his own way, tried to focus on the dilemmas faced by democratic institutional engineering. The key trade-off which they have put into evidence is the one involved in our second dimension, which we have modeled based on their reasoning – the trade-off between vertical accountability and what Powell calls ‘effective authorized representation’. Majoritarian democracy maximizes vertical accountability, while consensus democracy maximizes effective representation.

The indicator of disproportionality (the so-called Gallagher index, measuring the extent to which the parliament’s composition mirrors the vote distribution for parties), which we take as our measure for effective representation, correlates very closely ( $r = -0.87$ ) with the consensus–majoritarian dimension (see Table 4.1), which is indicative of the trade-off in question. Figure 4.7 illustrates the trade-off for our 50 countries. Note that this figure very closely resembles Powell’s (2000: 235, Figure 10.1) illustration of the trade-off between majoritarian and proportional processes. While disproportionality is closely related to the proportional–majoritarian dimension, two majoritarian countries do slightly better on this trade-off: The US has a fairly low degree of disproportionality, because there are very few votes cast for small parties, whereas in India, the regional differentiation of the party system leads to more proportionality. The US proved to be exceptional in Powell’s analysis, too. However, the other exception in Powell’s study – Germany – no longer appears to be exceptional according to our data, since it turns out to be much more consensual than according to Powell’s measurements.

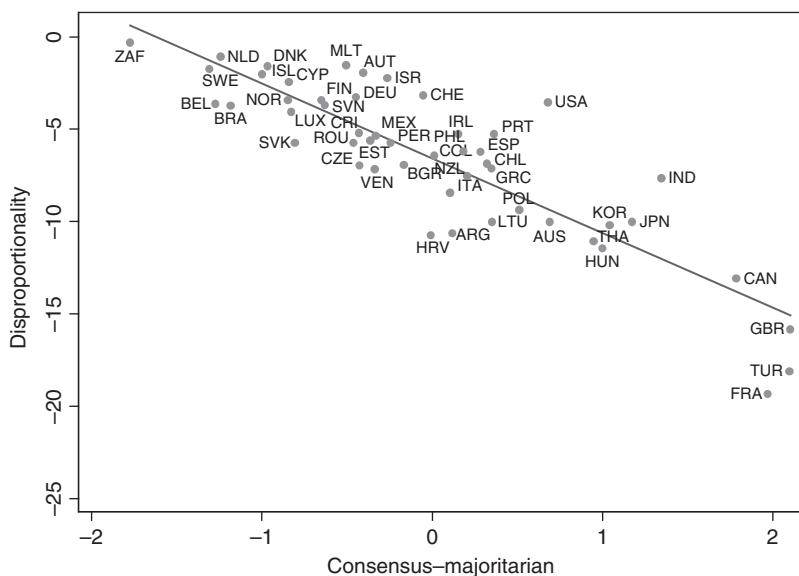


Figure 4.7 Proportionality of representation and consensus-majoritarian democracies. Correlation:  $-0.87$

Powell also introduced a measure for the politicians' responsiveness to their voters' preferences by comparing the median voters' position on the left-right scale with the corresponding position of the median legislators. In his analysis, the proportional vision of democracy proved to be unambiguously more responsive than the majoritarian vision. In other words, vertical accountability can only be increased at the cost of decreasing responsiveness. We can confirm this relationship, using the Democracy Barometer's indicator for responsiveness (*issuecongr*), which is constructed in line with Powell's indicator. Figure 4.8 provides the illustration. The correlation between the consensus-majoritarian dimension and issue congruence has the expected sign, but is not significant for the whole sample of 50 countries ( $r = -0.17$ ). However, once we remove two outliers, it becomes quite substantial ( $r = -0.34$ ) and highly significant. The two outliers include an 'over performer' (Canada), whose politics are highly responsive in spite of its majoritarian system, and an 'underperformer' (South Africa), whose politics are less responsive than we would have expected on the basis of its position on the consensus dimension.

We also find the expected clear-cut trade-off between direct and representative democracy; a trade-off between effective and equal

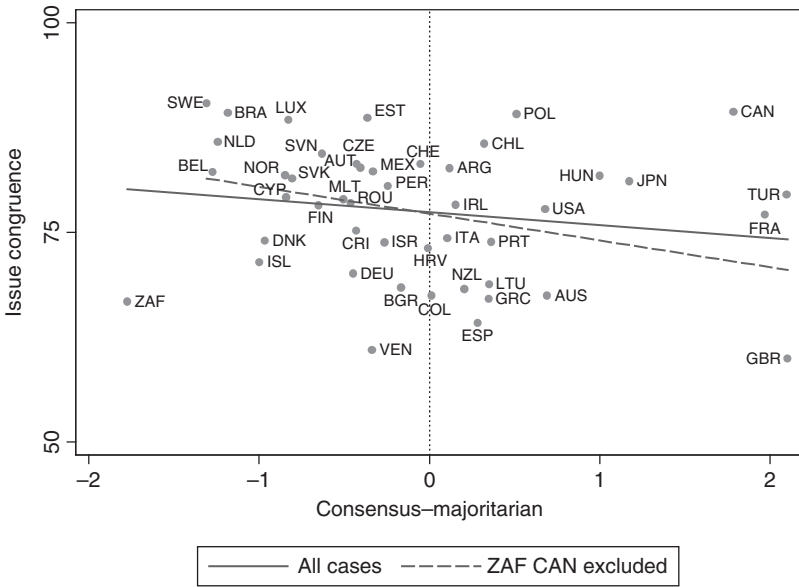


Figure 4.8 Issue congruence and consensus-majoritarian democracies. Correlation:  $-0.17$ ; after exclusion of South Africa and Canada:  $-0.34$

participation in the representative channel and the number of national referendums. As has been argued by Swiss scholars (Linder 1994: 132–134), elections are less important in a system like the Swiss one, where the voters do not provide their representatives with a generalized credit of support for the duration of a legislative period, but where they can withdraw their support selectively in specific direct-democratic votes in the course of a legislative period. In a related argument, Franklin (2004: 92–98) credits the low electoral turnout in Switzerland to the lack of accountability in the Swiss system, where elections have not changed the composition of the government since the formation of the grand coalition between the four major parties in 1959.<sup>9</sup> The link between Franklin's argument and the effect of direct-democratic institutions is provided by Vatter's argument discussed earlier, which maintains that direct-democratic institutions provide an incentive for the extension of government coalitions to all major parties.

This trade-off is illustrated by Figure 4.9. Our indicator for direct democracy is highly negatively correlated with this dimension ( $r = -0.73$ ). The size of this correlation is largely attributable to the Swiss case, but even if we leave out this outlier, the negative correlation is still important ( $r = -0.38$ ) and significant. In the paradigmatic Swiss



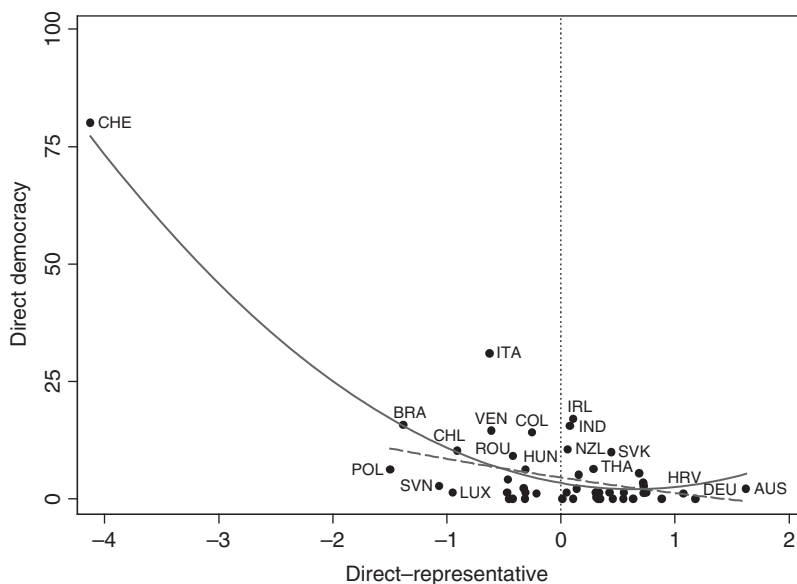


Figure 4.9 Direct democracy and representative democracy. Correlation without CH:  $-0.39$

case, strong direct-democratic influence, indeed, goes together with very low electoral participation and, correspondingly, very high electoral political inequality. For both of these indicators, Switzerland has the lowest values in this sample. As Linder (1994: 134) has observed, it seems that we cannot have it both ways. Maximum influence in both votations and elections are impossible to realize in the same political system. We are therefore limited to looking for 'optimal' voters 'influence'.

There are some other, less well-known trade-offs involved in our conceptual map of democracy as well. One concerns the liberal dimension: quite surprisingly, there is a trade-off between the extent to which democracies have implemented the liberal principle and judicial review. We had expected judicial review to be part of the liberal-illiberal dimension, but, as already pointed out, it actually is negatively correlated with this dimension ( $r = -0.43$ ). The reason is that the new democracies, which tend to have difficulties with the implementation of the liberal principle, also tend to have institutionalized procedures for judicial review, while some of the established democracies do not know such procedures. The most extreme case is, of course, the UK, where parliament is sovereign and the judiciary has no effective option for

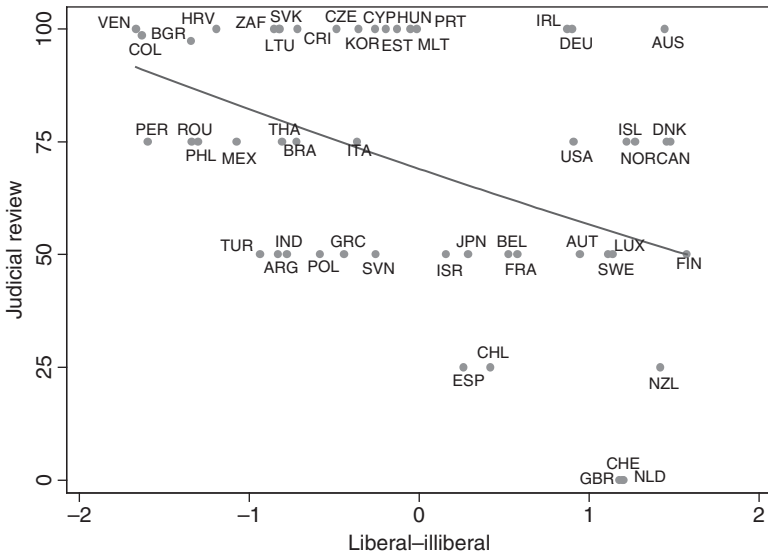


Figure 4.10 Liberal-illiberal democracies and judicial review. Correlation:  $-0.43$ , without outliers:  $-0.27$

controlling political decisions. Similarly, in Switzerland the Supreme Court's authority is heavily curtailed by the direct-democratic procedures, which attribute sovereignty to the electorate (and which is also the reason why judicial review is positively associated with the representative democracy, see Table 4.1). The Netherlands and New Zealand also belong to the group of established democracies with only limited procedures of judicial review. Once we remove these four outliers, the relationship between the liberal dimension and judicial review weakens, but remains negative ( $r = -0.27$ ) (Figure 4.10).

## Conclusion

In this chapter, we have made an attempt to map out the variety of existing democracies. Our exploratory analysis has shown that there are, indeed, quite different ways to implement the democratic principles, each of which has its own advantages and disadvantages. This is all trivial. Most importantly, this idea of multiple versions of the democratic ideal challenges the existing indices of the quality of democracy. All of these rank countries on a single scale from more to less democratic. They assume that there is a unidimensional model of democracy,

so that all aspects of democracy can be related to a single scale. The most well-known of these indices, which are habitually used by researchers to measure the quality of democracy of different countries, are the Freedom House and the Polity IV index. These indices have, for example, been used by most of the studies of democratization which we have presented in Chapter 2. The Democracy Barometer also allows assessment of the quality of democracies on a unidimensional scale. Contrary to the established indices, which rate all the countries in the world, the Democracy Barometer has, however, been designed to provide a more detailed assessment of the world's best democracies, which reach the top values on the scales of the established indices.<sup>10</sup>

The question is, of course, how these unidimensional scales of democracy relate to our five-dimensional space of democracy. We have empirically tested this question by predicting the average scores of the various countries for the period 1990–2007 on the three indices – Freedom House, Polity IV, and Democracy Barometer – by their values on our five dimensions. The Freedom House index provides a value for all of our 50 countries, Polity IV for 47 of them (excluding Iceland, Luxemburg, and Malta), and the Democracy Barometer assesses a subset of these 50 countries – the sample of the 30 'best democracies'.<sup>11</sup> Table 4.2 presents the results, using straightforward OLS-regressions.<sup>12</sup>

As it turns out, the quality assessments of all three indices is above all a function of the implementation of the liberal principle. Their scale values most heavily depend on the countries' scores on the liberal–illiberal dimension. In the case of Freedom House, the sign is negative, because the Freedom House scale assigns higher values to non-democratic regimes. This result is very interesting. On the one hand, it is not surprising at all, since the liberal–illiberal dimension is the one that does not include any trade-offs. In other words, the indices measure mainly the one dimension which allows for a clear ranking in terms of the fundamental principles. On the other hand, with two exceptions, these indices have very little to say about the comparative advantages of the varieties of democracy in terms of the other four dimensions. The first exception concerns the consensus–majoritarian dimension. Both the Democracy Barometer and the Freedom House scores confirm Lijphart's (1999) contention that consensus democracies are 'better', that is, 'kinder and gentler' than majoritarian democracies. Both indicators suggest that for the 50 countries included in the analysis (Freedom House scores), and the 30 countries of the blueprint sample of the Democracy Barometer, consensus democracies turn out to be significantly 'more democratic' than majoritarian democracies.<sup>13</sup>

*Table 4.2* The quality of democracy as assessed by the Polity IV, Freedom House, and Democracy Barometer, explained by our five dimensions, unstandardized regression coefficients and *t*-values, for average values during the period 1990–2007

	Polity IV (b/t)	Freedom House <sup>a</sup> (b/t)	Democracy Barometer (b/t)
Liberal–illiberal	1.148*** (6.05)	−1.408*** (−11.84)	14.019*** (5.49)
Federal–centralized	0.253 (1.23)	−0.470*** (−3.67)	−0.102 (−0.05)
Consensus–majoritarian	−0.095 (−0.46)	0.291* (2.25)	−5.162* (−2.74)
Direct–representative	−0.298 (−1.40)	0.159 (1.19)	1.129 (0.62)
Inclusive–exclusive	−0.26 (−1.19)	0.377** (2.82)	3.414 (1.60)
Constant	8.937*** (47.77)	3.504*** (30.06)	56.509*** (23.65)
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.43	0.77	0.62
<i>N</i>	47	50	30

Significance levels: \* = 0.05, \*\* = 0.01, \*\*\* = 0.001.

<sup>a</sup>Contrary to the other two indicators, the Freedom House indicator has low values for democratic systems, and high values for non-democratic systems.

The second exception regards the third and the fifth dimension. For the countries included in our sample, Freedom House tends to rate more centralized and rather exclusive models of democracy as better democracies.

We would like to conclude by pointing out that the exercise in this chapter is only a beginning. Next, we should explore the correlates of the variety of democracies. Except for the liberal dimension, which has essentially been operationalized by the established indices, and except for Lijphart's (1999) discussion of the determinants of consensus democracy, this is a largely open task. We should also explore the validity and reliability of our five dimensions: are they, indeed, the key dimensions along which existing democracies tend to vary, and are they stable over time and over different country samples? We do not maintain that we have found the definite set of dimensions, but our results suggest that there is definitely more variation than that which is captured by the existing indices (Freedom House and Polity IV), or by the dominant (Lijphart's) typology.

## Appendix 1: Definition of the 19 indicators

Indicator	Description	Names in the Democracy Barometer
Consensus-majoritarian		
Effective number of parliamentary parties	Effective number of parliamentary parties	enpp
Electoral proportionality	Reversed Gallagher Index, which essentially compares the distribution of seats in parliament with the distribution of votes for the different parties	gallagindex
Proportionality of the electoral system	We take the log of the minimum of mean district magnitude (meandistrict) and legal electoral thresholds (dpi_thresh). The log takes into account the decreasing marginal importance of additional seats in the electoral district. Following Lipphart (1994), we also convert legal electoral thresholds into the equivalent of mean district magnitude, to account for electoral systems that are restrictive due to high legal thresholds.	elsystem = log <sub>n</sub> (min(meandistrict, 100/dpi_thresh))
Wage coordination	Index of degree of coordination of wage bargaining, from 1 (bargaining at company level) to 5 (economy-wide bargaining) (Visser 2011)	wCOORD
Union density	Union membership as a percentage of wage and salary earners	union
Federalist-centralized		
Constitutional division of territorial power	Federalism	nonfed
Bicameralism	Non-bicameralism	nonbicam
Sub-national fiscal autonomy	Mean of two measures of fiscal decentralization: sub-national expenditures as a percentage of the total national expenditures (subexp), and sub-national revenues as a percentage of the total national revenues (subrev)	subexp, subrev
Liberal-illiberal		
Equality before the law	Mean of two indices measuring effective impartiality of the legal system (impcourts) and the integrity of the legal system (integrlegal)	impcourts, integrlegal

Freedom of press	Mean of two indices of informational openness, measuring the legal environment of press freedom (legmedia) and the lack of effective political control of the media (polmedia)	legmedia, polmedia
Effective property rights	Facto of the legal protection of private property (propright) and a measure of de facto protection of personal security and private property (secprop)	propright, secprop
Government capacity	An index we created from a combination of indicators for conditions of efficient implementation – a public service independent from political interference (publser), bureaucracy quality (bureau) and effective implementation of government decisions (govdec), as well as indicators for the absence of corruption (bribcorr, corruption perception index (CPI)) and the willingness for transparent communication (transp) (see Appendix 4).	publser, bureau, govdec, bribcorr, transp
Effective unconventional participation	An index we created from a combination of indicators for freedom of association (memhum, memenviron), which measure membership in humanitarian and environmental/animal rights organizations respectively, and effective and equal non-institutionalized participation (petitions), and a summary indicator of different forms of inequalities in non-institutional participation, par_eqpa3) (see Appendix 4).	memhum, memenviron, petitions, par_eqpa3
Adequate representation of women	The proportion of female representatives in the lower house of parliament as a percentage of all seats	womrep
Judicial review	Mean of two measures of the possibility that courts can review the constitutionality of laws (judrev) and whether the judiciary has the final say over all laws (powjudi)	judrev, powjudi
Direct-representative Turnout	The participation rate as a percentage of the registered electorate in parliamentary elections of respective or previous years (parlvote)	parlvote
Equality of electoral participation	A summary index composed of four indicators, measuring inequalities in turnout with regard to education, income (repturned), gender, and age (repturngeag)	Returned, repturngeag
Frequency of national referendums	The number of national referendums voted in a given year (ref_nat). We rely on the logarithm of the number of national referendums (increased by 1) to take into account the declining marginal importance of additional referendums.	ref_nat
Inclusive-exclusive Inclusion	The registered voters as a percentage of the voting age population	regprovpap

Appendix 2: 19 indicators for 50 advanced democracies, averages 1990–2007

Country	Code	Equality before law	Governing capacity	Property rights	Non-conventional participation	Freedom of press	Representation of women	Effective number of parties	Proportionality (district magnitude)	Disproportionality (Gallagher index)	Wage coordination	Union density	Equality of participation	Turnout	Referendums/direct democracy	Judicial review	Unitary (no territorial division)	Single chamber (no bicameralism)	Fiscal centralization	Inclusion
Argentina	ARG	12.8	34.0	34.9	24.0	28.7	29.2	23.8	2.4	-10.7	49.6	33.4	0.6	78.3	5.1	50.0	0.0	1.0	29.4	99.3
Australia	AUS	88.4	87.5	94.7	75.9	83.3	33.7	6.8	0.0	-10.0	27.8	28.6	0.9	95.2	2.2	100.0	0.0	0.0	39.9	86.9
Austria	AUT	83.8	74.8	100.2	48.2	59.8	51.8	18.0	3.0	-1.9	75.0	38.3	0.7	82.2	1.4	50.0	1.0	2.0	53.1	92.2
Belgium	BEL	62.9	55.8	81.0	71.0	84.4	44.1	86.1	2.0	-3.6	84.7	53.4	0.7	91.4	0.0	50.0	0.2	1.0	70.6	92.4
Brazil	BRA	18.4	37.2	30.6	52.0	37.2	10.8	88.7	2.9	-3.7	58.2	30.2	0.3	79.5	15.7	75.0	0.0	0.0	38.0	97.9
Bulgaria	BGR	20.3	23.4	9.1	20.1	31.8	31.0	14.7	2.0	-7.0	31.3	41.1	0.7	68.1	1.2	97.2	2.0	2.0	76.3	108.3
Canada	CAN	85.5	86.9	93.7	70.1	73.4	39.8	10.0	0.0	-13.1	0.0	31.2	0.7	64.7	1.4	75.0	0.0	2.0	2.8	89.6
Chile	CHL	50.4	65.7	81.7	30.1	43.2	27.8	49.1	0.7	-6.9	38.9	16.4	0.4	88.1	10.3	25.0	0.0	0.0	86.5	84.2
Colombia	COL	-28.1	32.1	17.2	26.2	-5.7	32.8	36.5	1.6	-6.4	32.9	6.4	0.6	42.1	14.1	98.6	1.1	0.0	55.4	87.0
Costa Rica	CRI	28.7	38.9	31.3	33.2	72.0	34.6	11.1	2.1	-5.2	31.6	15.4	0.7	73.4	1.4	100.0	2.0	2.0	95.2	100.5
Croatia	HRV	41.6	22.1	3.3	43.7	-5.4	25.4	14.1	2.6	-10.8	47.9	62.1	0.8	68.4	1.1	100.0	2.0	1.2	82.8	106.8
Cyprus	CYP	54.6	52.9	57.9	41.0	59.2	8.3	23.7	1.2	-2.5	25.0	70.4	0.6	91.3	0.0	100.0	2.0	2.0	94.1	84.3
Czech Republic	CZE	39.1	40.9	52.7	49.7	60.1	17.6	25.4	2.9	-7.0	40.3	45.5	0.7	75.6	1.4	100.0	1.5	1.0	69.3	101.1
Denmark	DNK	94.0	96.1	96.9	61.4	87.7	65.7	37.2	2.4	-1.6	56.9	74.3	0.8	85.2	5.4	75.0	2.0	2.0	31.7	96.8
Estonia	EST	40.9	53.5	41.6	33.6	64.0	26.1	43.8	2.2	-5.6	1.7	29.3	0.6	65.4	2.2	100.0	2.0	2.0	61.6	77.9
Finland	FIN	91.0	97.2	98.8	51.8	79.9	75.8	43.5	2.6	-3.4	68.1	75.9	0.7	66.8	1.4	50.0	2.0	2.0	45.7	103.7
France	FRA	61.0	61.5	67.0	51.7	64.8	25.6	13.2	0.0	-19.4	25.0	8.8	0.5	64.4	4.1	50.0	2.0	1.0	68.2	85.6
Germany	DEU	80.3	70.5	91.3	51.6	72.6	58.0	21.2	2.4	-3.3	75.0	26.3	0.8	79.5	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	36.5	92.5
Greece	GRC	40.6	36.6	61.5	68.8	36.3	11.1	4.6	1.7	-7.1	75.0	29.5	0.4	77.0	0.0	50.0	2.0	2.0	94.3	110.0
Hungary	HUN	49.3	45.2	55.9	19.4	52.4	15.3	14.8	0.9	-11.5	25.0	29.5	0.4	67.8	6.2	100.0	2.0	2.0	70.9	91.9
Iceland	ISL	86.5	87.7	91.1	53.9	87.9	49.0	26.1	2.1	-2.0	52.4	88.9	0.7	86.1	0.0	75.0	2.0	2.0	56.6	101.5
India	IND	36.2	26.5	49.2	40.7	26.8	12.9	39.7	0.0	-7.7	26.4	10.6	0.7	58.8	15.5	50.0	0.0	0.0	29.8	105.4
Ireland	IRL	84.5	80.4	86.0	39.3	69.8	25.7	17.9	1.4	-5.3	94.4	43.4	0.7	66.0	17.0	100.0	2.0	2.0	72.0	104.9
Israel	ISR	58.2	64.3	69.6	36.6	37.4	17.2	60.2	4.3	-2.2	25.0	24.8	0.8	71.5	1.1	50.0	2.0	2.0	81.6	108.2

Italy	ITA	48.2	36.8	56.3	42.2	57.4	19.7	50.7	1.0	-8.4	69.4	36.0	0.5	8.3	31.0	75.0	1.0	1.0	67.5	104.4
Japan	JPN	61.0	57.0	87.6	40.5	66.7	11.5	25.8	1.2	-10.0	62.5	22.0	0.6	61.7	0.0	50.0	2.0	1.0	29.3	99.8
Lithuania	LTU	38.1	29.1	12.1	39.4	63.1	23.4	27.5	1.7	-10.0	1.4	13.5	0.5	58.1	1.3	100.0	2.0	2.0	65.8	91.5
Luxembourg	LUX	84.4	77.5	89.5	75.5	83.3	38.9	28.4	2.7	-4.1	27.8	43.4	0.3	88.8	1.4	50.0	2.0	2.0	81.1	67.3
Malta	MLT	62.2	54.2	59.5	34.7	57.9	10.5	0.5	1.6	-1.5	0.0	64.5	0.7	96.1	1.4	100.0	2.0	2.0	99.3	99.9
Mexico	MEX	12.0	33.0	31.4	41.1	4.3	26.4	9.3	2.9	-5.4	63.3	21.0	0.7	59.1	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	54.0	91.5
Netherlands	NLD	89.1	85.4	84.7	109.6	73.1	58.7	40.5	4.6	-1.1	75.0	23.3	0.8	78.3	1.4	0.0	2.0	1.0	69.0	96.4
New Zealand	NZL	88.3	93.3	89.8	85.9	86.0	42.1	14.3	2.5	-7.6	6.9	26.9	0.8	83.5	10.5	25.0	2.0	2.0	84.4	93.7
Norway	NOR	87.3	84.8	93.3	57.5	84.4	80.8	36.1	2.3	-3.4	81.9	55.9	0.7	76.8	1.4	75.0	2.0	1.0	57.5	98.3
Peru	PER	7.1	22.1	6.3	32.3	-8.3	24.9	29.5	2.7	-5.8	21.8	6.6	0.7	76.8	0.4	75.0	2.0	1.0	77.9	91.1
Philippines	PHL	-1.6	27.3	34.6	22.9	29.1	21.8	15.4	0.0	-6.2	21.0	17.0	0.8	68.3	3.5	75.0	1.0	0.0	89.1	83.4
Poland	POL	40.9	33.1	32.5	19.8	47.9	22.6	39.5	2.7	-9.4	0.0	32.0	0.3	47.3	6.2	50.0	2.0	1.0	67.0	102.0
Portugal	PRT	58.8	51.5	67.5	15.7	70.2	24.4	7.3	2.4	-5.3	50.0	21.3	0.6	64.5	2.2	100.0	2.0	2.0	84.5	112.9
Romania	ROU	25.0	23.4	0.4	18.2	15.6	13.8	26.0	1.9	-5.8	36.0	51.7	0.5	69.0	9.2	75.0	2.0	1.2	75.6	100.9
Slovakia	SVK	38.8	34.6	28.4	48.9	29.7	27.9	40.6	3.3	-5.8	59.7	38.8	0.8	77.6	10.0	100.0	1.5	1.8	86.0	99.1
Slovenia	SVN	58.4	40.9	39.8	30.7	56.4	22.9	53.9	2.4	-3.7	66.7	40.0	0.4	72.6	2.7	50.0	2.0	2.0	80.3	101.3
South Africa	ZAF	27.6	42.2	23.5	26.8	37.5	39.6	2.8	3.3	-0.3	49.8	35.3	0.5	83.0	0.0	100.0	1.3	0.0	57.1	72.1
South Korea	KOR	36.2	42.1	78.8	46.2	47.8	9.7	11.1	2.0	-10.2	58.0	12.1	0.4	63.2	0.0	100.0	2.0	2.0	56.4	100.3
Spain	ESP	56.7	57.3	67.0	21.9	67.8	46.8	9.6	1.9	-6.2	58.3	15.8	0.6	74.9	1.4	25.0	1.0	1.0	49.9	104.0
Sweden	SWE	87.4	84.3	79.2	85.7	82.9	81.3	29.3	2.5	-1.8	56.9	79.6	0.8	83.4	2.7	50.0	2.0	2.0	43.8	96.1
Switzerland	CHE	79.0	85.7	90.6	58.8	81.8	36.6	51.2	2.2	-3.2	58.3	21.3	0.1	45.0	80.1	0.0	0.0	15.4	83.4	
Thailand	THA	24.4	35.1	69.7	40.3	17.7	8.5	34.4	2.9	-11.1	46.3	3.2	0.8	67.4	6.3	75.0	2.0	1.0	87.5	99.1
Turkey	TUR	25.3	34.3	58.6	8.2	-29.2	5.3	19.5	1.9	-18.1	73.1	12.8	0.8	83.5	0.0	50.0	2.0	2.0	12.4	94.1
United Kingdom	GBR	87.1	77.6	80.5	59.2	59.9	29.5	3.9	0.0	-15.8	0.0	31.9	0.7	67.5	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	73.6	96.9
United States	USA	78.0	74.0	85.9	80.5	78.5	23.8	0.4	0.0	-3.5	0.0	13.5	0.7	59.4	0.0	75.0	0.0	0.0	22.3	72.9
Venezuela	VEN	-16.0	16.0	10.3	41.5	8.3	19.7	26.1	1.9	-7.2	41.0	16.4	0.4	48.6	14.6	100.0	0.0	0.6	97.5	85.6
Overall mean		51.3	54.1	59.1	45.6	51.4	30.8	27.3	2.0	-6.6	43.1	33.4	0.6	72.5	5.9	69.4	1.4	1.3	62.5	94.9

shaded: imputed values



## Appendix 3: Correlations between the 19 indicators

Equality before law	1.00																		
Governing capacity	0.90	1.00																	
Property rights	0.84	0.88	1.00																
Non-conventional participation	0.62	0.64	0.57	1.00															
Freedom of press	0.82	0.79	0.72	0.56	1.00														
Representation of women	0.55	0.66	0.45	0.47	0.54	1.00													
Eff number of parliamentary parties	-0.04	-0.01	-0.01	0.08	0.04	0.08	1.00												
Proportionality (district magnitude)	-0.04	-0.03	-0.13	0.06	-0.10	0.25	0.33	1.00											
Disproportionality (Gallagher index)	0.20	0.25	0.11	0.22	0.32	0.42	0.27	0.49	1.00										
Wage coordination	0.13	0.11	0.24	0.08	0.02	0.31	0.28	0.38	0.26	1.00									
Union density	0.46	0.38	0.21	0.22	0.38	0.46	0.11	0.17	0.44	0.21	1.00								
Equality of participation	0.16	0.19	0.16	0.15	-0.02	0.26	-0.26	-0.01	-0.01	0.03	0.15	1.00							
Turnout	0.37	0.30	0.31	0.25	0.27	0.20	0.04	0.11	0.26	0.20	0.47	0.32	1.00						
Referendums/direct democracy	-0.01	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	-0.06	0.33	-0.05	0.07	0.12	-0.14	-0.47	-0.34	1.00					
Judicial review	-0.37	-0.39	-0.41	-0.34	-0.19	-0.24	-0.24	-0.05	0.07	-0.10	0.10	0.17	-0.01	-0.26	1.00				
Unitary (no territorial division)	0.14	0.04	-0.02	-0.16	0.03	-0.01	-0.12	0.23	-0.06	-0.06	0.25	0.04	0.15	-0.32	0.00	1.00			
Single chamber (no bicameralism)	0.33	0.19	0.16	0.01	0.23	0.06	-0.15	0.17	-0.06	-0.05	0.40	0.09	0.22	-0.31	0.05	0.66	1.00		
Fiscal centralization	-0.25	-0.34	-0.35	-0.16	-0.14	-0.26	-0.06	0.18	0.13	-0.14	0.05	-0.02	0.15	-0.21	0.20	0.51	0.27	1.00	
Inclusion	0.01	-0.17	-0.07	-0.21	-0.09	-0.07	0.07	0.21	-0.07	0.32	0.18	0.22	-0.03	-0.08	-0.01	0.27	0.35	0.15	1.00

## Appendix 4: Factor analyses for specific indices

### a) Government capacity

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
publser	0.86	0.26
govdec	0.83	0.31
bureau	0.74	0.45
bribcorr	0.96	0.08
cpi	0.95	0.10
transp	0.69	0.52
EW	4.28	

### b) Non-conventional political participation

Variable	Factor1	Uniqueness
memhuman	0.63	0.61
memenviron	0.64	0.59
par_eqpa3	0.62	0.61
petitions	0.64	0.59
EW	1.60	

## Notes

1. <http://www.democracybarometer.org>.
2. Average Freedom House scores below 1.5 and Polity IV scores above 8 for the period 1995–2005, more than 250,000 inhabitants. Imputing only two indicators for a restricted number of countries, we have a complete dataset for 50 countries: the indicator for direct democracy (*directd*) is fully available for 35 countries, and imputed for the other 15 cases; the indicator for wage coordination is available for 49 countries, and imputed for one country.
3. Cited by Zakaria (2007: 17).
4. Lijphart's choice of indicators for these two concepts has been heavily criticized. With respect to executive dominance, Tsebelis (2002: 111) has pointed out that Lijphart attributed 'impressionistic' values to no less than 11 of his 36 countries for his indicator of this concept. Vatter (2009: 134) uses an improved indicator based on Siaroff (2003) and Schnapp and Harfst (2005). We did not use this indicator, however, because it is available for less than half of our set of countries, and only for a limited period of time. Vatter also criticizes Lijphart's use of minimal winning one-party cabinets, since his category of single-party cabinets includes both single-party minority cabinets (which are linked to consensual patterns of decision making) and single-party majority cabinets. He proposes an improved version of this indicator, which is, however, again not (yet) available for a sufficient number of our cases.

5. We dropped Lijphart's indicator for central bank autonomy, which is not inherently linked to the federalism–centralization dimension. In fact, in Vatter's (2009: 143f.) analysis, this indicator is more closely associated with Lijphart's first dimension.
6. In a factor analysis, the relative importance of a resulting dimension is measured by the so called Eigenvalue of the dimension, which is reported in the last row in Table 4.1. Among other things, the relative importance of a dimension depends heavily on the number of indicators used for its operationalization. It is, therefore, not very surprising that the liberal dimension, for which we had more indicators at our disposal than for the other dimensions, turns out to be the most important one; and the inclusiveness dimension, for which we had just one suitable indicator, the least important one. Substantively, however, all five dimensions are of equal importance to us.
7. Compared to Table 4.1, the Eigenvalues of four dimensions change only little, whereas the Eigenvalue of the representative–direct-democracy dimension drops substantially: 4.8/4.9, 2.1/1.9, 1.6/1.7, 1.6/1.0, 1.1/1.2.
8. Lijphart's two dimensions correlate at 0.77 and 0.84, respectively, with the corresponding dimensions from our model, when we use the data for 1995 for the set of 24 countries. The correlations are 0.71 and 0.83 respectively, if we replace the data for 1995 with the means for the entire period 1990–2007, and include the 50 best democracies.
9. Since Franklin's book has been published, the composition of the Swiss government has again been changed after the elections in 2003 and after a party split in 2008.
10. The Democracy Barometer shows how democratic the 30 best democracies are, NCCR Newsletter No. 8, February 2011, *Die Vermessung freier Gesellschaften – Das Demokratieberometer bietet ein differenziertes Bild* WZB Mitteilungen, Heft 131, März 2011.
11. Democracy Barometer scores measuring the quality of democracy are available for 30 countries, with a value of 1.5 or below on the combined Freedom House Scores *and* a Polity IV Score of 9 or above during the whole time span between 1995 and 2007.
12. One might argue that OLS-regressions are not appropriate for predicting the Freedom House and Polity IV values. In their case, the data are largely right-censored, given that the countries in the subset of the 30 best democracies reach the maximum value on the respective scales or fall only slightly short of it. In order to check for this sensitive issue, we have rerun our analyses for these two scales using censored-normal regression. Substantively, the results are largely identical with the ones presented in Table 4.2, although the variance explained is much more limited (Pseudo- $R^2 = 0.26$  in both cases).
13. Note: majoritarian democracies have high values on the consensus–majoritarian dimension. Centralized and inclusive democracies have high values on the federal–centralized and the inclusive–exclusive dimension.

## **Part II**

# **The Challenges of Globalization and Mediatization**

# 5

## Globalization and the Vertical Challenge to Democracy

*Sandra Lavenex*

Modern democracy has emerged in parallel with the consolidation of the Western nation-state. This process was characterized by the relative congruence of state and boundary formation, nation building, and cultural standardization. Like its forerunners, the direct-democratic city republics of ancient Greece, the modern model of majoritarian representative democracy was based on the existence of a clearly delimited demos. In a representative democracy, the demos is composed of a shared sense of identity, a common public sphere, and a high level of political structuring through political parties and other intermediary organizations (see also Chapter 3).

From the perspective of international relations, the current de-bordering of societal and political transactions associated with the term globalization contributes as much to the external diffusion of democracy as it yields the internal decomposition of this historical process of democratic-state formation. On the one hand, an ever-growing array of national and international political actors and institutions are active in the promotion of democracy beyond the Western world. Especially since the demise of the communist bloc, democracy has been heralded as the only legitimate form of government and has become a global point of reference at the national as well as the international level.

At the same time as democracy is being promoted as a global norm abroad, it is being deprived of some of its fundamental tenets 'at home'. From the perspective of the Western democratic states, the contemporary challenges of internationalization and Europeanization may be regarded as yielding the 'third transformation' of democracy that is 'associated with a great increase in the scale of the political system' beyond the nation-state (Dahl 1994: 21, see also Blatter 2009; Grande

2000; Schimmelfennig 2010; Zürn 2000). The spatial reconfiguration of the political system is driven by the contiguous and yet uneven forces of (inherently partial) societal denationalization and political reordering. Whereas societal denationalization undermines the territorial scope of national policies political reordering, expressed in increasing international cooperation and the emergence of supranational polities, progresses at a slower pace – and yields new perils for the exercise of democracy. Robert Dahl has conceptualized these transformations as a fundamental dilemma between effectiveness and participation, or between ‘the ability of the citizens to exercise democratic control over the decisions of the polity versus the capacity of the system to respond satisfactorily to the collective preferences of its citizens’ (Dahl 1994: 21).

This chapter deals with the challenge of globalization with regard to the vertical transformation of democracy in the democratic world. Globalization is thereby conceptualized in terms of internationalization and Europeanization of politics – that is the extension and the shift of political processes beyond the nation-state toward supranational polities, notably the EU, and international organizations. The second aspect of globalization, the horizontal spread of democracy to authoritarian states, is the subject of Chapter 6. In order to highlight the plurality of theoretical perspectives on the question of vertical transformation of democracy, we first introduce three ideal types of international polity formation: the intergovernmental organization, the federal superstate, and the multilevel polity, each posing different challenges to democracy. Whereas the first two models vindicate the statist notion of representative democracy by either emphasizing the enduring primacy of the state (intergovernmentalism) or advocating its merging into a larger polity (federalism), the notion of multilevel governance underlines on the one hand the persistent and fluid interlinkages between domestic and supranational levels of governance and, on the other hand, the diffusion of authority away from the traditional representative institutions toward decentered, functionally specific, and non-majoritarian institutions (Hooghe and Marks 2003). Embracing this transformationalist concept of multilevel politics, we then link up with the representative model of democracy presented in Chapter 3 and discuss the challenges posed by multilevel internationalization and Europeanization. Five problems are distinguished: congruence, inclusion, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness. Based on this review, we will make the case that the extent to which internationalization poses a challenge to democracy depends very much on the way international politics are anchored in domestic democracy. Concurring with Dahl, and providing evidence from various empirical research projects, we argue that in order

to avoid 'the danger [...] that the third transformation will not lead to an extension of the democratic idea beyond the national state but to the victory in that domain of de facto guardianship [...] *democratic institutions within countries* would need to be improved' (Dahl 1994: 33, emphasis added).

### **The vertical transformation of democracy**

At the same time as democracy has lost its ideological competitors, it is being challenged and transformed from within. Three developments contribute to this internal transformation: the denationalization of societal interactions and the incumbent limits of unilateral state action; the turn toward regulatory politics; and vertical integration in supranational polities.

The most fundamental trend is the growing interconnection of societies across national borders, which leads to an increasing incongruence between social and political spaces. The transnational scope of societal problems challenges the problem-solving capacity of the territorial nation-state. No state is any longer capable of effectively regulating transnational issues, such as environmental protection, financial stability, or human migration, alone. National policies, while inherently insufficient, are furthermore affected by the positive or negative externalities of other states' regulatory approaches.

Partly as a consequence of the transnationalization of societal problems, partly also because of the increasingly complex nature of many regulatory issues, a second trend that is often associated with globalization is a change in the nature of governance and the shift from the interventionist to the regulatory state (Majone 1994, 1996). This shift goes along with a move from value-based, politicized politics within majoritarian, elected representative bodies toward more technocratic, science- and expert-based practices in non-majoritarian, non-elected bodies such as independent regulatory agencies and, especially at the international level, transgovernmental networks (Benz and Papadopoulos 2006; Gilardi 2008; Slaughter 2004). Politics in international institutions, in particular the EU, possess a particularly strong inclination toward the regulatory approach (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2008: 10; Majone 1996).

The third trend is partly a response to the first two and relates to the vertical integration of political systems in supranational polities through European integration and global governance. The internationalization of politics is not per se the cause of a hollowing-out of democracy. It is rather the consequence of the incapacity of domestic political systems

to respond satisfactorily to the demands of their citizens, and thus the attempt to regain effective problem-solving capacity over transnationalizing social spaces. As in the horizontal relations between states, also this vertical reconfiguration of the political space is increasingly invoking the standards of democracy as constitutive norms. The more powerful international institutions become, the greater is the need for democratic legitimation of their decisions or, put differently, 'as state competences dwindle, [...] democratic substance seems necessarily to be draining away' (Zürn 2000: 91). Notwithstanding some indications of the rise of a 'global civil society' (Anheier et al. 2001; Pasha and Blaney 1998; Scholte 2001), political internationalization involves two main trade-offs for democracy (Dahl 1994; Schimmelfennig 2010): it diminishes the scope of citizen participation and influence in the political process and threatens to undermine collective identity and public spirit.

### **Models of international polity formation**

The extent to which vertical political integration challenges democracy depends on the underlying understanding of internationalization as a process of polity formation beyond the state. Three models or ideal types are distinguished: the intergovernmental model, the federal model, and the multilevel model. The first two models reflect a 'methodological nationalism' insofar as they either assert the democratic sovereignty of the nation-state (intergovernmentalism) or postulate a domestic analogy, by which the model of representative democracy that we know from the modern area is being projected on the international level (federalism). The third model is more transformationalist, as it denies the possibility of conceiving vertical democratization along the standards developed for national democracy. Instead, it postulates the parallel and intertwined existence of national and transnational communities, rights, and institutions, including a horizontal diffusion of political spaces beyond representative, territorially or demos-based settings.<sup>1</sup>

#### **The intergovernmental model**

The intergovernmental model conceives of international institutions as functional regimes designed by states to address certain problems that they cannot resolve when acting alone. From this point of view, vertical integration is the solution to states' loss of problem-solving capacity due to societal denationalization: 'Since such interstate arrangements are crucial for citizens to achieve security, welfare, and other



legitimate public purposes, refusing to delegate some authority to multilateral institutions represents a self-defeating and arbitrary restriction on national democratic deliberation' (Keohane et al. 2009: 4; see also Moravcsik 1998).

From this perspective, internationalization hardly poses serious challenges to democracy. This is because the main sources of international institutions' action and legitimacy are the 'democratically elected governments of the Member States' (Moravcsik 2002: 612). The supranational level's own legitimacy is based on its ability to produce substantive outcomes in line with the principle of Pareto optimality (Scharpf 1999b). In this light international institutions may even enhance domestic democracy by increasing capacities to achieve important public purposes (Keohane et al. 2009: 2). This means however that only decisions that no one will find unprofitable and that will make at least one party better off, are capable of generating legitimacy (Scharpf 1999b).

Protagonists of the intergovernmental perspective further argue that while it may be true that multilateral institutions, like the EU, involve less participation, it would be wrong to judge them according to the same criteria as for their member-states. This is because of the limited and delegated nature of their mandate. Accordingly, international institutions would be 'simply specializing in those functions of modern democratic governance that tend to involve less direct political participation' (Moravcsik 2002: 606); that is, more technocratic issues. In these areas, delegation to non-majoritarian institutions is seen as a necessity of our time: 'depoliticisation of European policy making is the price we have to pay in order to preserve national sovereignty largely intact' (Majone 1998: 7). As long as the competences accorded to international institutions remain limited to non-redistributive and regulatory issues, a working system of checks and balances anchored in domestic political systems warrants the democratic legitimacy of international institutions (Majone 1998: 28; Moravcsik 2002: 605). Since international institutions are being set up by states, joined voluntarily by states, and controlled by states, from an intergovernmentalist point of view, democracy is 'saturated' (Offe and Preuss 2006: 176). The question of the *pouvoir constituant* and the delimitation of the demos is relegated to the national level. Insofar as the system of checks and balances works and that international organizations as 'agents' do not overstep the principals' permissive consensus, 'there is no normative need for distinct mechanisms of legitimation for international organizations' (Offe and Preuss 2006: 176).

### **The federal model**

Whereas the intergovernmentalist perspective makes hardly any distinction between classic international organizations active in a neatly delimited issue area and more ambitious integration projects such as the EU, the federal model implies comprehensive forms of internationalization. Historically, federalism has been associated with the conventional processes of state building and national integration. In contrast to the intergovernmental model, which conceives of international organizations as instrumental supplements to states, federalism denotes a particular way of bringing together previously separate, autonomous, or independent territorial units to constitute a new form of union (e.g. Riker 1976). This 'coming together-federalism' (Stepan 1999) is thus based on a federal bargain in which pre-existing political units decide to pool sovereignty in order to attain particular goals linked to security and economic well-being. This emphasis on a voluntary union of states and peoples is based on the principle of subsidiarity, meaning that political decisions should be taken at the lowest possible level.

According to Michael Burgess (2009: 30) this voluntary union is rooted in notions of 'mutual respect, recognition, reciprocity, tolerance, consent and equality'. The federalist approach is therefore gradualist in the sense that it proposes that the evolving authority of supranational institutions goes along with the creation of some sort of supranational demos as an integrated *pouvoir constituant* as well as all other mechanisms of legitimation that we know from the nation-state.<sup>2</sup> The model of representative democracy that started to take shape with the early modern city-states is thereby extrapolated to the larger unit. This supranational polity would draw on genuine direct legitimation and comply with fundamental democratic principles of due process and equal respect for all (Eriksen and Fossum 2007: 16). Among other things, its direct legitimation must be based on the granting of fundamental rights, the representation of the political community and its minorities, and fair procedures of will-formation guaranteeing citizens' participation and influence. This emphasis on the opportunities for political participation goes along with the assumption of an integrated civic-institutional infrastructure, including the media system, the creation of political parties and other intermediary organizations, and the strengthening of electoral and parliamentary components. Whereas comparative analyses of state-level federations have shown that federalism can have demos-constraining effects by institutionalizing ethnic or other divides in the political partition of competences (Stepan 1999), as a model of

polity formation, the federalist approach suggests the parallel evolution of political structures and political communities as a gradual vertical shift.

This understanding goes along with an encompassing view on the process of internationalization. In contrast to the model of functionally limited international regulatory institutions postulated by the intergovernmentalist perspective, federalism understands supranational polity building as a deeply political and constitutional process involving not only regulatory policy, but also distributive and redistributive ones. Whereas limited regulatory delegation can be legitimized to some extent on the basis of its output efficiency, judgments over values and the allocation of wealth presuppose a collective will and a level of solidarity that substantiates the need for parallel demof-formation.

### **The multilevel model**

The multilevel model of internationalization takes to some extent an intermediate position between the two other models because it postulates the co-evolution of domestic and supranational structures rather than opting either for the primacy of the state or full-fledged supranational integration. From a conceptual perspective, however, it departs from the latter's methodological nationalism as it proposes a transformationalist understanding of democracy and, more generally, the polity. The basic claim of the multilevel approach is the need to consider both the national (including sub-national) and supranational levels in their complex interlinkages in the assessment of internationalization. Furthermore, this approach concedes that this internationalizing polity is an evolutionary entity that takes different forms from the classic representative model of democracy.

As pointed out by Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, the emergence of multilevel polities involves two types of governance and institutions that coexist and each propose different views on democracy (Hooghe and Marks 2003). The first type of governance ('type I governance') has parallels with the federalist model in the sense that it refers to the dispersion of authority to general-purpose, non-intersecting, and durable institutions. Comparable to the vertical separation of power in a federal state, the internationalizing polity is system-wide, the functions are bundled, and the levels of government are multiple but limited in number (Hooghe and Marks 2003: 263). The core institutions of government are the ones we know from the liberal democratic model, the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary. These institutions are based on an

integrated and encompassing political community, which shares a common identity as well as a public sphere and intermediary institutions that together account for collective self-government (Hooghe and Marks 2003: 240). When it comes to vertical type-I integration beyond the state, from a democratic perspective, two challenges stand out. Firstly, vertical differentiation occurs unevenly since the executive branch crosses levels of governance much more easily whereas the territorial reach of parliaments and courts remains limited. As a consequence, internationalization leads to a one-sided empowerment of the executive branch and weakens the influence of directly elected representatives in parliament (Putnam 1988). Secondly, this challenge to parliamentary actors is exacerbated by the boundaries of the demos, which are the slowest ones to adapt to the process of vertical democratization. Thus, whereas, as in the EU, supranational parliaments can be institutionalized and empowered, their democratic legitimacy stands and falls with the development of intermediary organizations, a public sphere, and a common sense of political identity. A crucial problem from the point of view of democracy is that the development of a transnational public sphere does not keep pace with the vertical transformation of political institutions. This is all the more so since type-I governance is not limited to functional areas but has an encompassing scope, including resolving conflicts about values and (re)distributive issues.

The most strongly transformative aspect of the multilevel governance approach rests in the acknowledgment that internationalization does not only engender shifts in the vertical diffusion of authority across levels of government but even more so in the horizontal dispersion of authority. This comes along with 'type II governance', in which jurisdictions are task specific, intersecting, and flexible (Hooghe and Marks 2003; Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2008: 8). Such type-II structures, while existing at all levels of government, are typical of international institutions or regimes. They are functionally specialized within one or a few policy areas; their functional differentiation leads to partially overlapping, intersecting memberships; they are polycentric and lack an overarching hierarchical order; and have flexible designs, that is, are less formally institutionalized than type-I governance systems. With reference to the EU, Philippe Schmitter has introduced the term 'condominio' to describe 'dispersed overlapping domains' having 'incongruent memberships' that 'act autonomously to solve common problems and produce different public goods' (Schmitter 1996: 136). Typical examples of type-II institutions in the EU system are regulatory agencies, specialized policy networks, or comitology committees.

These non-majoritarian institutions have been studied in recent years under the label of 'new modes of governance' or 'network governance' (Héritier 1999).

From the perspective of democratic theory, the emergence of type-II governance beyond the state constitutes different challenges than those associated with the vertical transformation of type-I governance. As in a federalist model, type-I governance presupposes the congruence between the political institutions and the demos. Type-II governance, in contrast, relies on functionally specific types of participation. According to Hooghe and Marks (2003: 241), 'the former is designed around human (usually territorial) community; the latter is designed around particular tasks or policy problems'. In the international realm, and insofar as states constitute the membership of type-II institutions, type-II governance bears some resemblance to the intergovernmentalist model presented above. Discussions of the challenge for democracy therefore replicate to some extent the postulates associated with the intergovernmentalist model. This refers especially to the emphasis put on output legitimacy (Majone 1998). From the point of view of participation, authors have also underlined that network governance in specialized settings has the advantage of being more open for the inclusion of new actors and ideas (Héritier 1999: 275), and in particular experts and stakeholders. Moreover, and in line with the argument for delegation used by proponents of the intergovernmental model, will-formation and decision making within such institutions is seen to have more deliberative traits and lead to more efficient outcomes (Joerges and Neyer 1997). The problem is however that without universal representation, network governance necessarily leads to selective inclusion and participation. Furthermore, given the somewhat secluded setting of these fora, the relations between actors are weakly exposed to public scrutiny, and to the scrutiny of the representative bodies (Papadopoulos 2007).

As pointed out by Hooghe and Marks (2003: 268), 'type II governance is generally embedded in type I governance, but the way this works varies'. Thus, it can be said that the coupling or nesting of non-majoritarian, task-specific, networked, and functional agencies in the representative, encompassing, hierarchical, and territorially bound type-I institutions is strongest where type-I institutions are strong, that is, at the national level. An intermediary pattern of less tightly nested, but more loosely coordinated coupling exists in the EU, while at the international level international organizations and regimes hardly find a type-I equivalent but rely on their loose and imperfect coupling

Table 5.1 Multilevel model of internationalization

	Type-I governance	Type-II governance
Logic of differentiation	Vertical (hierarchical)	Horizontal (polycentric)
Functional scope	Encompassing	Specialized
Membership scope	Territorial	Functional
Degree of institutionalization	Durable	Flexible
Decision-making style	Voting/majoritarian	Deliberative/consensual
Community base	Demos	Stakeholders/civil society

Source: Adapted from: Hooghe and Marks (2003)

with type-I governance at the level of the member-states. Table 5.1 summarizes the main elements of the multilevel model.

The flexibility and integrative potential of the multilevel governance model, which combines elements of both the intergovernmental and federal model, substantiate its usefulness for analyzing challenges to democracy across different types of international institutions, including more encompassing, truly hybrid ones like the EU as well as functionally specific (purely type-II) international regimes. Based on this model, the next section discusses five challenges to democracy in the process of internationalization.

## Challenges to democracy

There is no general consensus on the questions how far, or in what terms, and through which mechanisms, globalization challenges democracy. For sure, this question depends on the extent and the form of internationalization studied as well as on the ingredients and types of democracy that are being challenged or transformed. The multilevel governance approach provides a useful heuristic framework for naming and differentiating these different dimensions since it pays tribute to both representative and functionalist modes of governance and accounts for various scopes of internationalization, without either vindicating or reaffirming the (nation) state model.

Linking up with the system theoretical approach outlined in Chapter 3, challenges to democracy may arise at all stages of the governance process, that is, at the input and output level of the political system. From the perspective of multilevel governance, five challenges can be identified to democracy: the problems of congruence, inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness.

### The problem of congruence

The most fundamental challenge to democracy posed by the spatial reconfiguration of the political system is the problem of congruence, meaning the matching between the rulers and the ruled (see also Chapter 3). Since democracy, in its very essence, means self-government of the people, this problem emerges when government is no longer congruent with the people. Internationalization as the transfer of political authority to supranational institutions transcends the territorial demarcation of national demoi and necessarily involves the question of the new demarcation of 'the people'. This applies as much to the boundaries of the political community which is empowered to participate in the political process as to the boundaries of the political community which is affected by political decisions. The emergence of multilevel governance dissociates the exercise of political rule from the basis of consolidated national demoi. The result is the persistent existence of multiple demoi and multiple, contested conceptions of a potentially arising, overarching supranational demos. In the face of pervasive multilevel governance the question therefore is: how far can international politics draw on a nascent supranational demos in order to legitimate their actions? And what role do national demoi play in the multilevel system?

The most pessimistic view on this question is pronounced by what Joseph Weiler and collaborators have called the 'non-demos' camp (Weiler et al. 1995). This view largely corresponds to the federalist perspective on internationalization. It postulates the need for extrapolating full congruence to the supranational level in the sense of the creation of a supranational demos in order to preserve democracy. In this view, the demos is composed of a political community sharing the purpose of self-government and united through a strong collective identity, public sphere, and political infrastructure.

The reasoning behind the claim for the reconfiguration of the demos is that 'Only when all those who are affected by a decision perceive themselves to be part of a common, all-encompassing political identity is it possible to differentiate between majority rule which can be consented to and the rule of strangers which will then be considered illegitimate' (Kielmansegg 2003: 57; see also Scharpf 1996: 3). As indicated in the quote, this reasoning presupposes decision making by majority rule, and implies decisions over values which have distributive effects. The more internationalized governance moves beyond mere technocratic regulatory issues and affects value judgments, and the more these entail winners and losers, the more pressing the demos question

becomes. The supranational measures developed to fight the financial crisis that took off in 2007 and the subsequent debt crisis in several European countries are probably some of the most salient and worrying instances of this problem. Caught between the doxa of neoliberal austerity and calls for Keynesian growth stimuli, the series of supranational reforms to stabilize 'Euroland' not only disclosed the profound economic choices underlying the common currency: the mobilization of multi-billion bail-out funds and the progressive communitarization of the debt represent an unprecedented transfer from the wealthier to the more troubled parts of Europe and give new weight to the question of solidarity among European peoples.

Notwithstanding the new urgency of the congruence principle in light of these recent events, the question of how far a supranational demos is emerging in Europe has been studied for some time. According to Follesdal and Hix (2005: 17), '[r]ather than assuming that a European "demos" is a prerequisite for genuine EU democracy, a European democratic identity might well form through the practice of democratic competition'. In this context, an increasing number of scholars call for a greater politicization of the EU (Hix 2008; Offe and Preuss 2006: 181f, see also Hooghe and Marks 2009). Measures that have been proposed to promote politicization and to forge a supranational identity are the direct election of the Commission President by EU citizens or national parliaments (Hix 2002), the strengthening of the EU's international action and identity (Decker 2002), the crafting of a European citizenship (Weiler 1999: 329ff), the creation of a European public sphere (Risse 2003, 2010; Trenz 2010), and the integration of political parties (Klingemann 2005; Mair 2007).

For instance, newer research on the integration of national electorates and party systems in the EU has analyzed the conditions under which a European-wide democratic citizenship may emerge. On the basis of data on election results, survey data, and party manifestos for the years 1970–2008, Daniele Caramani and his team have analyzed the degree to which the ideological positions of political parties of the same family in Europe converge over time, how far voting behavior becomes more homogeneous, and the extent to which the EU party system remains distinctive from the national party systems and their alignments. Uniform electoral swings could be detected for the green and populist party families, but less so for left–right parties and regionalists (Caramani 2011a). On the other hand, analysis of electoral data for national elections shows increasingly homogeneous voting distributions for parties of a same family across national electorates, indicating an incipient party



system institutionalization at the European level (Caramani 2011b). A similar result was corroborated in an analysis of the ideological convergence within party families at both the elite and electorate level, especially on an economic left–right dimension (Camia and Caramani 2011).

While not fully negating the desirability of a supranational demos, the multilevel governance approach postulates, first, that given the ‘incomplete’ nature of internationalization, national demoi retain a legitimating potential of their own. This idea has gained attention from a normative, philosophical perspective with the notion of *demoicracy*. This notion conceptualizes multinational polities as being constituted both by multiple demoi (the statespeoples or political communities of the member-states) and by individuals who, at least for the foreseeable future, do not yet constitute an integrated demos. From this understanding, *demoicracy* is the association of a plurality of democratic peoples who consciously recognize each other and are interlinked as a political community through political institutions and political processes (Besson 2006; Bohman 2005; Cheneval 2008, 2011; Nicolaidis 2004). In institutional terms, the notion of *demoicracy* is compatible with the multilevel governance model in that it postulates a dual representation requirement: citizens and statespeoples must be equally represented and share political rights across decision-making bodies and levels (Buess et al. 2011; Cheneval 2008, 2011; Cheneval and Schimmelfennig 2012). These rights include general principles of accountability, participation, and transparency, which are discussed later in this chapter.

Secondly, as argued above, multilevel governance transcends the nation-state analogy by emphasizing next to the representative/electoral model of type-I governance also the importance of functionally differentiated/networked forms of governance (type II). From this perspective, the congruence problem takes a different shape since type-II governance, through its delegated nature, its functional (technocratic) specialization, differentiated membership, and more horizontal, consensus-based deliberative style does – as long as it is confined to these clearly circumscribed tasks – not entail majoritarian decisions and distributive effects. The relevant questions here are not per se the congruence with a delimited demos but rather the other elements challenged by internationalization discussed later, that is, the inclusiveness of decision making, the transparency of the proceedings within these institutions, their accountability toward type-I institutions, including national demoi as well as toward relevant stakeholders, and, finally, their responsiveness to social demands, that is, output efficiency.

### **The problem of inclusion**

The question of congruence between the ruled and the rulers automatically involves the question of inclusion and participation in the political process referred to in Chapter 3 as the public sphere. Internationalization constitutes a challenge with regard to citizens' inclusion because, with the widening scope of the polity, the distance to the individual citizen increases, the chain of representation becomes more abstract and often departs from the universal model of participation via elections. A widely made statement in this context is that internationalization strengthens the relative governmental influence of the executive branch (Moravcsik 1993; Wolf 2000). This occurs most notably to the detriment of legislatures which are less strongly represented at the international level. Again, the financial crisis of the past few years is a salient example of far-reaching decisions being taken outside directly elected parliaments by executive fora with selective membership such as the G20 or the 'Troika' composed of the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. Apart from lacking representativeness, these bodies and intergovernmental settings more broadly lack a direct link to the people and bear the risk of insulating politics from their political base. As famously pointed out by Robert Putnam (1988), government representatives assume a gatekeeper function in international negotiations since they are the only participants who participate in both the international and the domestic arena simultaneously. This gatekeeper function strengthens their position vis-à-vis other negotiators but also vis-à-vis their domestic constituency and in particular the legislature which has no direct access to the international fora.

Research on the role of legislatures in the international realm has focused on two aspects: the parliamentarization of decision making at the international level and the enhancement of the role of national legislatures in international policy making. Research on parliaments in the EU shows the problems in realizing either options. Elections to the EU-level parliament have been called 'second order elections' (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Accordingly, they cannot be seen as genuine European elections since the competitors are national parties, in nationally segmented electoral competitions in which voters' choices are significantly affected by domestic politics (see also Marsh 1998). Moreover, although the European Parliament has gained considerable powers over the years (Rittberger 2005), national governments have proven reluctant to authorize co-decision in all policy areas or to determine the EU-level core executive. National parliaments, in turn, successfully

affect the positions of national governments in negotiations over EU treaty changes (e.g. Finke 2009). However, the permanence and general nature of decision-making powers of EU institutions means that national parliaments lose their sovereignty over legislative output in integrated policy areas (e.g. Schmidt 1999). One of the main reasons why governments have to include parliaments in decision making – namely the anticipation of ratification problems – thus disappears. Parliaments can reduce the challenge to their inclusion to some extent by participating in the formation of governmental negotiation strategies at EU level. Yet, only a few legislatures have implemented the institutional procedures necessary for such effective control of government representatives like the right to issue a binding negotiation mandate to the government (e.g. Raunio 2005; Winzen 2012). Moreover, even if such procedures exist, their utility is negatively affected by transparency and accountability problems (see below). Other forms of parliamentary participation outside the framework of legislative–executive relations have so far been of little relevance for EU decision making (e.g. Raunio 2009). What is more, in most countries, EU affairs play only a marginal role in the relationship between national parliamentarians and their voters (Winzen 2010: 8–11).

The hypothesis that internationalization strengthens the government vis-à-vis other members of the domestic constituency has also been studied with regard to the impact on social partners, that is economic interest groups or employers' associations and labor unions. A comparison between four countries (Austria, Belgium, Ireland, and Switzerland) and five policy areas reflecting different degrees of Europeanization (unemployment, compensation policy, freedom of movement, occupational pensions, electricity liberalization) led to mixed results. The results tend to confirm the hypothesis that Europeanization weakens not only the legislative arena but also corporatist concertation (Afonso 2012; Afonso and Papadopoulos forthcoming; Afonso et al. 2010; Fontana 2011). At the same time, however, the effects of Europeanization could not be systematically isolated from a more general trend toward a decline of corporatist deals in Western societies, and important differences between the different countries and political systems could be detected.

The question of how to include non-state actors in internationalized decision-making processes is also at the center of the debates on the democratic legitimacy of non-majoritarian and non-representative type-II governance fora. Although independent agencies such as EU regulatory agencies or the European Central Bank also retain some link to the representative bodies of the underlying constituency, for example,

through the delegation of (domestically legitimated) state representatives to their management boards, the literature on the democratic legitimacy of such new modes of governance tends to focus less on the idea of universal representation which underpins parliamentary democracy. Instead, the focus is often on the question of how far civil society actors and relevant stakeholders are able to access the process of will-formation and decision making. The notion of 'associative democracy' has come to challenge the model of representative democracy in identifying direct access by organized civil society as an alternative to participation via elections and political parties in the international realm (Cohen and Rogers 1993; Hirst 1993).

In the EU, interest-group participation has deliberately been encouraged as a compensation for the weakness of representative democracy (Kohler-Koch 2007). This tendency is particularly salient in research on independent EU agencies in their relations to citizens, civil society organizations, and interest groups, as well as corporations as 'stakeholders' (Skogstad 2003). Empirical research however shows that only very few EU agencies are subject to mandatory requirements concerning the participation of citizens (organizations) or of stakeholders in general (Barbieri and Ongaro 2008). These findings have been corroborated by Christensen and Nielsen (2010) who point out that most agencies feature weak or, mostly, no representation of stakeholders on their management boards. Their data show that, especially, agencies with some decision-making authority are less likely to have stakeholders represented. Access to the decision-making process is equally problematic. Agency meetings are usually not held in public and thus are not accessible for stakeholders without an explicit invitation. Only the management board of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) holds, as a general rule, its meetings in public and may authorize consumer representatives, other interested parties, or citizens to observe some of its proceedings (Vos 2005). Given these limits to formal inclusion, some authors, especially Vos (2000, 2005), have suggested that citizens' and stakeholders' involvement may be facilitated by the formation of agency networks: 'The creation of agency networks involving all interested parties could hence in principle contribute to "a Europe closer to the citizen"' (Vos 2005). But how inclusive and accessible for citizens and stakeholders these networks really are still needs to be scrutinized, as Vos (2000) herself concludes.

The idea that the inclusion of non-state actors in decision making may contribute to democratization is also salient at the international

level in the debates on the legitimacy of international organizations. The intensifying discourse on the democratic deficit of international governance and the mobilization of transnational civil society groups such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and social movements have led to the gradual opening up of international organizations and negotiation frameworks to such actors. While United Nations (with the exception of the Security Council) organizations were relatively early in their accreditation of NGOs (Weiss and Gordenker 1996), others, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), took more time to move away from the exclusive 'club-model of multilateralism' (Keohane and Nye 2001). Recent analyses of civil society involvement in the WTO show that inclusion is largely discretionary and lacks clear rules (Schneller 2010; Schropp 2009; see also Van den Bossche 2008). This contrasts with multilateral environmental negotiations where NGOs enjoy systematic access (Hjerpe and Linnér 2010). The democratic potential of such inclusion is however debated. Whereas standard accounts tend to emphasize the rational, functional contribution of NGO involvement for information provision, more critical studies portend that governments often include NGOs in their delegation as a symbolic step in order to enhance their own legitimacy (Böhmelet 2011). Also, scholars have observed a so-called democracy–civil society paradox concerning the inclusion of non-state actors in international governance. Accordingly, although generally democracy is positively correlated with support for international environmental agreements, the impact of NGOs on states' cooperative behavior in global environmental governance is weaker for democracies than for non-democratic regimes (Bernauer et al. 2013).

In sum, the problem of inclusion in internationalized political processes applies both to the participation of directly legitimated, universal representatives of a political community (parliamentarians) and sectorally organized non-state actors and stakeholders who act in the name of civil society. This inclusion works at two levels: through the direct involvement of these 'universal' and 'stakeholder' representatives at the international level in EU and international decision-making processes and at the national level in their relations to the governments. Although international organizations can prescribe some general rules on these actors' involvement and provide fora for their inclusion, in practice, the extent to which citizens' representatives can influence international politics depends very much on the extent of their democratic inclusion 'at home' – that is at the national level.

### **The problem of transparency**

A second problem associated with the internationalization of politics is the transparency of decision-making processes. In a narrow sense, transparency refers to access to information that is, the possibility of obtaining information about ongoing decision-making processes (Héritier 2003). In a broader sense, the transparency of the inner workings of how authoritative decisions are made is a prerequisite for the inclusion of relevant actors (see above) and the accountability of the system (see below). Therefore, the safeguarding of transparency is a crucial prerequisite for all types of governance.

It is a matter of fact that internationalization diminishes the transparency of the political process. The reasons are manifold: transnational problems often bear a high level of complexity, many actors (governments but also other) are relevant for the problems' solution, and decision-making processes take place in less accessible, often exclusive, sometimes little-formalized settings, thereby obscuring the proceedings of the decision-making process. The incumbent problems with regard to transparency have been prominently elaborated by Putnam (1988) in his concept of two-level games. The notion of two-level games problematizes the gatekeeping function of government representatives in international governance. Since in classical international negotiation settings government representatives are the only actors who participate in both the national and the international settings simultaneously, they possess a considerable information advantage over other actors which they can use strategically in order to pursue their favored policy options.

The challenges imposed with regard to transparency include internal and external aspects. Internally, transparency refers to the possibility for participating actors to share all relevant information. This problem is salient in the vertical interaction between domestic constituencies and delegated actors, such as for the flow of information between national governments representing their countries in the EU Council of Ministers and their respective national parliaments. National parliaments require information on EU-level decision-making processes to participate in the formation of governmental negotiation strategies and to hold them accountable for the implementation of these strategies. Monitoring EU policy making is generally difficult for parliaments because it often takes place in informal networks or in formal but closed low-level working groups to which governments have access but parliaments not (e.g. Papadopoulos 2003, 2007; Sprungk 2010). Moreover, national parliaments arguably need to devote more resources to

monitoring a given EU-level decision than a similar national-level decision. Besides the substance of the decision and the domestic political situation, they have to take into account the adequacy of EU-level action, the strategic context of EU-level negotiations, and they may have to understand elements of the policy justified by problems in other countries. Parliaments, thus, face challenges of access to and in the processing of information. The two problems have partly been met by domestic parliamentary adaptation involving, initially, the creation of specialized EU-affairs committees and, since the early 1990s, the diversification of monitoring instruments to include access to documents, governmental reporting obligations and the involvement of sectoral parliamentary committees (Winzen 2012). There are, however, substantial cross-national differences and, it is argued, even the best adapted parliaments such as Denmark or Finland still face information deficits (Raunio 2005; Raunio and Wiberg 2008).

The multiplication of political arenas engendered by the development of vertical (type I) and functional (type II) multilevel governance exacerbates the opaque nature of internationalized settings. This has often been stated with regard to the EU, where a multitude of more or less formal comitology committees, agencies, and policy networks, as well as informal consultations have come to complement the formal legislative process (Benz and Papadopolous 2006). Here, the problem of transparency has mainly been studied with regard to the horizontal relations between such new non-majoritarian settings and the representative bodies of the EU (the Parliament and the Council, see for example Geradin 2005; Geradin and Petit 2004; Vos 2005). In the case of EU regulatory agencies, for instance, the problem of transparency has been addressed through the inclusion of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in the agencies' governing bodies, the management boards. However, only a few agencies actually reflect this possibility, and some studies show that even when MEPs are represented in the management board their communication and coordination with the European Parliament (EP) or a specific EP committee is rather low (Groenleer 2009; Vos 2005). Surprisingly, even the fact that recent agencies are funded under the co-decision procedure does not imply that they all have MEPs on their management boards. Alternatively, some other mechanisms have been installed to secure the flow of information between the Parliament and the regulatory agencies. In recent years, the Parliament has started debating some agencies' annual reports and inviting the executive directors to comment on the latter (Curtin 2007; Geradin 2005: 233).

The problem of internal transparency also exists in international organizations. Given the intergovernmental nature of these organizations, the issue here is not one of horizontal communication and openness between different institutions participating in a decision-making process, such as in the complex EU polity. Rather, problems of internal transparency occur between the negotiators themselves within a formally shared decision-making arena. The practice of informal negotiations, such as in so-called green rooms or other informal consultations among small groups of powerful actors, is wide-spread in the international realm and precludes the full involvement of weaker actors, even if, formally, they share equal voting rights in the final decision (Payne and Samhat 2004). It can be said that actor heterogeneity and in particular large asymmetries in institutional and negotiation capacities constitute as much a challenge for the transparency of international negotiations as they tend to bias information toward smaller and more homogeneous groups of leading countries, thereby granting them considerable negotiation advantages (Held 2006: 61; Payne and Samhat 2004: 106).

The diffusion of arenas for deliberation and decision making in the international realm also poses challenges to the external transparency of the political process. This challenge is particularly strong with regard to such (type II) institutions that lack formal representative actors in charge of communicating and ensuring transparency between decision-making levels and in particular between the rulers and the ruled. It pervades, however, international politics more broadly given the weakness of links between representative actors active in supranational settings (such as members of the European Parliament) and their voters and the underdeveloped status of the public sphere (see above). As a consequence, international actors have been active to boost their legitimacy through various transparency initiatives targeted at the wider public such as, for instance in the EU, providing greater access to EU documentation for citizens, the media, and interest groups (Héritier 2003) as well as through the internet and the development of e-government (Hüller 2010) – with the consequence that this may in practice engender problems of information overload for the respective actors.

The example of the EU regulatory agencies can be taken as illustrative of the challenges facing the transparency requirement for international organizations more broadly. In contrast to the EU core legislative institutions (Commission, Council, Parliament) which, by way of Article 255 of the 'old' European Community Treaty, were legally bound to providing citizens with the general right to access their documents, no legal



equivalent existed for the regulatory agencies – as is the case also for international organizations more generally. The question of how far agencies should communicate and publish the documents produced in the regulatory process was therefore in a legal limbo (e.g. Vos 2005: 130). The question was clarified in Regulation No. 1049/2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council, and Commission documents, which explicitly extended transparency provisions to EU agency documents (Curtin 2007; Geradin 2005). Access to agencies' documents further improved with the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which in Article 15 (formerly 255) now explicitly includes agencies in the list of EU institutions subject to transparency requirements. Nevertheless, these formal requirements cannot resolve the fact that the work of such regulatory agencies, as well as of many international organizations, is conducted in a very technical fashion that is not readily accessible to the common citizens.

### **The problem of accountability**

The problems of inclusion and transparency in internationalized settings also have implications for a third challenge to democracy, the problem of accountability (see Chapter 3). The principle of accountability refers to decision-makers' obligation to justify their acts and decision-takers' right to judge or sanction this behavior (Bovens 2007: 450). According to Robert Keohane (2006: 78), 'an accountability relationship is one in which an individual, group or other entity makes demands on an agent to report on his or her activities, and has the ability to impose costs on the agent'. In a representative democracy, a variety of institutions guarantee the citizens' control over their governments, including recurrent universal elections. As pointed out prominently by Manin et al. (1999: 29), however, the idea that 'if elections are freely contested, if participation is widespread, and if citizens enjoy political liberties, then governments will act in the best interest of the people' is contestable. The reason is that government holders, once elected, may want to pursue objectives that differ from those of the citizens. In order to safeguard the principle of accountability, Manin et al. (1999: 47ff.) therefore suggest a number of institutional safeguards, such as that voters must be able to assign clearly responsibility for government performance, to vote out of office parties responsible for bad performance, and that there is an opposition in charge of ensuring the monitoring of the government and of informing the citizens. In internationalized systems, these accountability mechanisms are generally absent. As a consequence the questions 'what constitutes an abuse of

power, and why?’ and ‘who is entitled to hold power-wielders accountable, and why?’ are very difficult to answer in internationalized systems (Keohane 2006: 76f).

Arguing for a Madisonian view on accountability as a general system of checks and balances, proponents of a more intergovernmentalist vision of internationalization have proposed that the limited scope of powers delegated to international institutions constitutes as such a source of accountability. According to Andrew Moravcsik (2002), power in the EU is constrained through the substantial legal constraints which limit its mandate to basically technocratic and regulatory issues, the lack of fiscal competences, as well as the procedural rules of the decision-making process. These limits, which are also underlined by advocates of the EU as a regulatory state (Majone 1996) would constitute a security against abuses of power and thus a sort of substitute for accountability. The accuracy of this view depends, of course, on the scope of internationalization and on the question of how far domestic constituencies really control the scope of international governance. This applies to both the chain of accountability within representative institutions and between representative institutions or their constituencies and non-majoritarian bodies.

The caveats to accountability within representative institutions in a multilevel constitution can be illustrated by the case of the EU’s parliamentary system. European integration challenges the principle of the accountability of executives to directly elected parliaments in three ways (see Winzen 2010). First, national parliaments cannot hold governments accountable for legislative output in integrated policy areas because any given government is only one among several decision-makers and may even have been outvoted. Second, the European Commission, the EU institution closest to a federal government, does not take office on the basis of a policy program approved by parliament and, thus, cannot be held to account for the implementation of this program. Moreover, the powers of the European Parliament to dismiss the Commission from office resemble more an impeachment process than a withdrawal of confidence familiar from parliamentary democracies. The powers of appointment and dismissal of the European Parliament have increased over time but national governments are still dominant in the selection of personnel. Third, the Council of Ministers collectively exercises executive authority in several policy areas but cannot be held accountable or sanctioned as a collective actor either by the European Parliament or by any national parliament. The European Parliament as co-legislator does not fulfill the requirements of an accountability forum (cf. Bovens

2007), while national parliaments stand in a relationship to their respective government only and not to the Council as a whole. The hybrid character of the EU, partly a more conventional international organization with powerful governments and an international secretariat, and partly a type-1 multilevel polity with majority voting, a directly elected parliament, and a federal government thus gives rise to gaps in accountability.

From the perspective of national parliaments, European integration has transformed the substantial focus of delegation and accountability to national governments. The fact that any given government is only one among many actors in EU-level decision making means that national parliaments cannot hold their governments to account with respect to legislative output. The substantial focus of delegation and accountability instead shifts toward the representation of national preferences at EU level. Bergman (2000) thus speaks of the 'next step of delegation and accountability'. Parliaments can sanction governmental failure to represent parliamentary preferences at EU level with the whole range of instruments conventionally at their disposal in domestic politics including questions, interpellations, critical plenary debates, or, most severely, the withdrawal of confidence. However, due to the sometimes low salience of EU decision making, these tools have actually been used to only a limited extent. This notably applies to the withdrawal of confidence and all instruments counting on publicity, such as plenary debates. While parliaments could benefit from more nuanced, EU-specific sanctions, it is difficult to conceive of proper instruments and no member-state parliament currently has such mechanisms in place (Winzen 2010, 2012).

The lack of an institutional framework preserving the principle of accountability is even more glaring in non-representative, executive (type II) bodies (Papadopoulos 2007, 2010). The multiplication of executive networks and independent agencies exacerbate the diffusion of responsibility since 'it is hard to identify those who are responsible for decisions' (Papadopoulos 2010: 1034). The second challenge stems from the dissociation between type-I and type-II governance, or, according to Papadopoulos, the uncoupling of governance network from representative institutions: 'If decisions are prepared by policy networks the legislative function of parliaments is affected; if they are implemented by them, it is their control function that is weakened' (2010: 1034). Whereas state officials are accountable to their political superiors who, at the end of the long chain of delegation, can be subject to electoral sanction, the same cannot be said for international public officials working

for international organizations' secretariats, the European Commission, or an EU agency. This problem also applies to other members of policy networks such as experts, who, by definition, must be unaccountable, or NGOs and economic actors, who are accountable to their constituencies or shareholders, but not to the wider public. Given these limits to external accountability, some authors have argued that, as horizontal modes of coordination, regulatory agencies or policy networks exhibit a different kind of internal accountability or 'peer accountability' (Goodin 2003). Accordingly, participants in non-representative institutions would not be accountable to an external public or external political institutions but to one another. The underlying understanding is that actors in such institutions follow a deliberative style of decision making which favors common action based on a 'logic of appropriateness' rather than a selfish 'logic of consequentiality' (March and Olsen 1989). However, as Papadopoulos (2010: 1040) points out, 'only if policy networks are sufficiently representative and pluralist can this mutual and soft form of accountability operate to the profit of the common good'.

The case of EU agencies is again illustrative of the caveats involved in the attempt to realize the principle of accountability in practice. As with regard to provisions concerning inclusion of representative actors or transparency rules, divergent practices co-exist within the EU. A case in point are the procedures by which such agencies are created and the rules for appointing the executive director. Thus, it is only recently that the European Parliament has been granted co-decision over the creation of new EU agencies, alongside the Council of Ministers (Geradin 2005; Pollak and Riekmann 2008; Yataganas 2001). For some newer agencies, the Parliament has gained the option to hear the executive director before he is formally appointed by the management board or the Council. The Parliament can then issue advice on the proposed candidate, but does not have the power to veto his appointment (Groenleer 2009).

Another important mechanism of accountability is the power of the Parliament, together with the Council, to vote on the agencies' annual budgets. This right could in theory be used to push agencies toward more transparency to increase parliamentary scrutiny of their activities (Geradin 2005; Kreher 1997; Vos 2000, 2005). Additionally the Parliament also enjoys the power of discharge for the implementation of agencies' budgets (Vos 2005). But until today, no case is known in which the Parliament has used its financial power to actively influence the behavior or the work program of an EU agency (Groenleer 2009).

Apart from these budgetary powers, therefore, once an agency has been set up, control over its workings lies in the first place in the hands

of the member-states. This is due to the appointment (usually formally by the Council) of member-states' representatives on the management boards (with the exception of the EFSA, Geradin 2005; Groenleer 2009). Again, however, the question of how these representatives are then held accountable at the national level shows significant variation, which deserves further research (Buess et al. 2011 and Buess 2012).

Given the inherent limits of representative channels of accountability, the EU's evolution from a primarily regulatory economic body toward a deepening political union has gone along with the introduction of direct-democratic instruments and in particular the conducting of national referenda on European issues. Countries whose citizens have voted against a particular treaty or policy have negotiated opt-outs from particularly controversial fields such as, for instance, economic and monetary union, or justice and home affairs in the case of Denmark's 1992 negative referendum on the Treaty of Maastricht. The deeply political and distributive implications of the fiscal pact designed to stabilize the EU's monetary union have heightened the salience of the use of referenda in public debates. In the UK, the rule that any new transfers of sovereignty toward the EU shall be submitted to a referendum was enshrined in national law in 2011.

### **The problem of responsiveness**

The question of how far internationalized decision making responds to citizens' needs and priorities is the fifth and last problem discussed in this chapter. The search for responsiveness constitutes both the reason for internationalization and an important yardstick for measuring its legitimacy. As mentioned earlier, transborder cooperation and the setting up of international institutions is a response to states' increasing difficulties in addressing transnational societal problems. The capacity to do so, that is, the efficiency of policy outputs, is thus central to the legitimation of multilevel governance. Output efficiency involves both the capacity to address the expectations and preferences of the political subjects and to produce and implement effective policy solutions. The assessment of this yardstick depends of course on the scope of internationalization and the nature of the tasks delegated to international bodies, as well as the degree of their politicization.

For the proponents of an intergovernmentalist view of international institutions, output legitimacy is crucial since other criteria related to inclusion and participation are basically reserved for the nation-state. According to Fritz Scharpf, the supranational level's own legitimacy is based on its ability to produce substantive outcomes in line with

the principle of Pareto optimality, which states that only decisions that no one will find unprofitable and that will make at least one party better off, are capable of lending legitimacy to these decisions (Scharpf 1999: 237). Liberal institutionalist explanations of international cooperation have an in-built bias for such a line of argumentation since they explain the very motive of cooperation by its expected absolute gains (see for example Keohane et al. 2009). Empirical studies have also shown that membership in international organizations enhances the states' problem-solving capacities, in particular in developing countries. The mechanisms through which domestic responsiveness is strengthened include technical cooperation, know-how diffusion, and the maintenance of public concerns such as environmental protection or sustainable development on the agenda of governments (Ruoff 2009).

As already pointed out by Robert Dahl (1994), however, there tends to be a trade-off between output efficiency and input legitimacy in international governance. Furthermore, the possibility of determining or recognizing Pareto optimality vanishes with the degree to which international institutions move away from purely regulatory and technocratic issues toward genuinely political questions involving judgments about values and distributive problems (i.e. Hirst and Thompson 2009; Rieger and Leibfried 2003; Scharpf 1999). In his seminal work on the EU, Fritz Scharpf has argued that regional integration develops a dynamic that threatens to undermine the output legitimacy of EU policies over time. The reason is that initially limited cooperation in market-making policies, which may well have welfare-enhancing effects in the short run creates 'spillover' problems over time. These spillover problems that stem from new interdependencies in turn call for European answers in new, more sensitive fields in which member-states' interests no longer converge and where the permissive consensus for integration is missing. The result is a growing problem-solving gap: whereas internationalization may be at the first step responsive to domestic needs it may generate new problems which states are no longer able to solve domestically but where effective common solutions at the international level are blocked by political conflicts among member governments (Scharpf 2003).

The current turmoil affecting the common currency and to some extent also the broader global financial crisis are indicative of the long-term and unintended effects of short-term liberalization steps and of the difficulty in regaining control over deregulated market forces. The pertinence of these crises for the question of democracy and the responsiveness of internationalized politics stems from the centrality of financial stability for public policy in general. As Karl Polanyi and John Ruggie have argued, the 'golden age of capitalism' rested upon a

division of labor between a liberalized economy and the consolidation of national welfare states, or, in Ruggie's words, 'embedded capitalism'. The deregulation of financial markets that set off in the 1970s has put this social-democratic bargain under stress. To critical observers, the denationalization of financial markets and the corresponding neoliberal turn have alienated the political class from its democratic base and have led to a 'post-democracy' (Crouch 2004) in which governments have become more responsive to financial markets and economic lobbies than to their citizens. 'In capitalist democracies, governments depend on the confidence of their voters. But to maintain this confidence they also depend on the performance of their real economies and, increasingly, on the confidence of financial markets' (Scharpf 2011: 1). With the communitarization of monetary policies in the EU, the difficulty of responsible government is not only the question of how to reconcile the demand for growth stimuli and Keynesian recipes with the neoliberal imperatives of austerity dictated by the financial market. The problem is also that with the monetary union, EU member-states have effectively deprived themselves of central macro-economic instruments. Taken together, the empowerment of financial markets and the loss of steering mechanisms put into question the political capacity to craft solutions that are responsive to citizens' needs and priorities. At the same time, these constraints create a pressure for more supranational integration toward a fiscal and political union.

In light of the problems of congruence, inclusion, transparency, and accountability discussed above, the question arises to what extent the expectable losses in output-legitimacy may be met by citizen's active support for the proposed solutions, that is, input-legitimacy. Whereas in earlier national austerity programs, politicians could revert to national values and a common sense of identity to justify painful retrenchments, supranational, technocratic solutions in the fragmented multi-level EU polity fall short of such legitimizing discourses. In contrast, they are prone to diffuse accountability and may spur blame-shifting and open hostility between the donors and recipients of the respective programs (Scharpf 2011). It is against this background that the calls for the legitimation of such consequential steps through national referenda as issued Greece (by the ill-fated former Prime Minister Georgios Papandreu) and Germany (inter alia by the Federal Constitutional Court) must be understood. Whether the supranational answers to the financial crisis will spur such democratic responses remains to be seen, as does the question of whether this eventual democratic reconquest will back or undermine the corresponding sovereignty transfers.

## Conclusion

This chapter has argued that there is no simple response to the question of how far globalization and, more specifically, the internationalization of policy making challenge the exercise of democratic rule in established democracies. Clearly, the scope of challenges to democracy constituted by internationalization depends very much on the extent to which international politics depart from purely technical, regulatory issues and touch upon questions of values and/or have distributive impact. What is more, the assessment of the question of how far this is the case depends not only on the policy field at stake but first and foremost on the theoretical perspective that one takes on the models of international polity formation. In contrast to intergovernmentalist approaches that postulate a limited delegation of functional tasks to international organizations and reserve the sphere of democracy for the nation-state, and in contrast to federalist visions of a wider process of international polity building, ultimately calling for the uploading of the domestic base of democracy, including the demos, to a higher level, the notion of multilevel politics takes an intermediate position and highlights the interdependence of international and domestic structures as well as the interplay between representative and expert fora in the preservation of democracy.

Focusing on the EU as the most progressed case of internationalization, our brief discussion of the manifestation of problems of inclusion, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness has highlighted significant variation in the ways that national level institutions adapt to the multilevel polity in terms of preserving democratic principles. For instance, when it comes to the inclusion of national parliaments in international politics, analyses show that only a few legislatures in the EU have implemented the institutional procedures necessary for effective control of government representatives. The same could probably be demonstrated for international affairs more broadly. In settings that lack direct parliamentary representation, the question of inclusion is usually extended to the role of civil society groups and stakeholders. While it is true that international organizations follow very different approaches with regard to civil society participation, it has also been shown that the actual impact of such private actors on governments' behavior is to a significant extent shaped by the opportunity structures provided by their domestic political systems. Cross-national variation also exists with regard to the transparency requirements attached to international proceedings or the ways in which state representatives active in decision



making are held accountable to their domestic constituency. True, the problem of accountability is exacerbated by the difficulty of attributing clear responsibilities to individual players in complex negotiation structures. Nevertheless, it can be argued that, theoretically, national parliaments would have a wide range of instruments at their disposal to sanction governmental failure that are also used in domestic politics, like questions, interpellations, critical plenary debates, or, most severely, the withdrawal of confidence (Winzen 2010). The same is true in type-II institutions that lack the direct ties to the representative arenas. In fact, the technocratic prerogative of political independence that underpins the creation of regulatory agencies does not preclude the need for clear chains of accountability toward the democratically legitimated organs, that is, in the EU the European Parliament and the national parliaments. The literature on the democratic deficit of EU regulatory agencies has nearly exclusively focused on horizontal mechanisms of control between the Council, the Commission, the Parliament, and the agencies. This limited perspective on the supranational level neglects the fact that member-states themselves have direct access to holding EU agencies accountable through the delegation of national representatives to the agencies' management boards. The ways in which these national delegates are held accountable at the national level, and by which institutional means, indicate great variation and need to be studied more closely (Buess 2012). These observations just underline the pertinence of Robert Dahl's analysis when he argued that 'in order to maintain the vitality of the democratic process, democratic institutions within countries would need to be improved. Stronger democratic institutions would provide whatever democratic control may be possible over the authority delegated to transnational decision makers and thus help to prevent delegation from becoming in effect a total and permanent alienation of control'. (Dahl 1994: 33, see also Schmitter 2000: 106)

The multilevel perspective on the challenges posed by globalization also helps us to think beyond institutional questions regarding the institutional interplay between domestic structures and international ones in democratic rule. Beyond institutional matters, this perspective allows us to look in a different manner at what was identified as the most basic challenge to democracy: the increasing incongruence between internationalizing political spheres and primarily national demoi. In contrast to intergovernmentalists, who think of democracy and political community as prerogatives of the nation-state, and in contrast to federalist visions, which tend to forecast a parallel shift in political competences and allegiances, the multilevel approach underlines

the enduring coexistence, at least for the foreseeable future, of primarily national *demos* and a nascent, at best incomplete, supranational *demos*. The notion of *demoicracy*, developed in political philosophy, embraces such a multilevel perspective on the question of congruence. Formulated in the context of a democratic theory of multilateralism, this notion suggests a solution to the congruence problem based on the dual and equal representation of democratic statespeoples (the political communities of the member-states or *demos*) and individuals (European or global citizens) in internationalized settings (Cheneval 2008, 2011). The main challenge to democracy, from this perspective, is to devise political institutions and rules that observe the overarching common good while respecting the domestic limits to internationalization (Nicolaidis 2012). The challenges to democracy exposed by the current financial and fiscal crisis in Europe and beyond may be read as precisely an exercise in defining the domestic limits of financial deregulation and monetary communitarization between more national control and greater supranational empowerment. This differentiated view on the political community mirrors the transformative idea embedded in the notion of multilevel governance and opens new perspectives on the question of how to think of institutional and identity-building processes in the context of internationalization.

## Notes

1. Eriksen and Fossum (2007) draw a similar distinction between a 'delegated democracy' (here: intergovernmental model), a 'federal democracy' (here: federal model) and a 'cosmopolitan democracy'. By distinguishing between either minimal supranational delegation and the full-fledged analogy of the federal-state model, their typology does not consider transformative notion of a multilevel (post-national) polity. We do not consider the visionary model of cosmopolitan democracy due to its radical departure from the notion of representative democracy and its anchoring in deliberative understandings of democracy that depart from the basic model of democracy presented in Chapter 3.
2. On the notion of gradualism in democratic theory see Bohman (2007: 20f). Such a gradualist understanding of democratization in the EU can be found, for example, in the writings of Dahl (1999), Follesdal and Hix (2005), and Scharpf (1999).

# 6

## Globalization and the Horizontal Promotion of Democracy

*Sandra Lavenex*

Globalization is not only a challenge to established democracy, it is also driver of democratization beyond the confines of Western liberal democracy. Following the adoption of the first democratic constitutions in the late 18th and 19th century, the spread of democracy came in three waves (Huntington 1991). The first began in the early 19th century with the extension of the right to vote to a large proportion of the male population in the US, and continued until the 1920s. A second wave began after World War II and covered Western Europe as well as Japan. In the 1970s the third wave started with the end of the dictatorships in Portugal and Spain, and spread to Latin America in the 1980s, Eastern Europe in the 1990s, and some African and Asian nations including South Africa and Indonesia – and, most recently, the revolutionary movements in Northern Africa.

The advancement of democracy through the world has not been linear and has seen many setbacks. Moreover, many of the new democracies see deficiencies in their institutional framework and civil-society basis. Accounts of the waves of transitions that occurred prior to the 1990s gave clear primacy to domestic factors in explaining the turn toward democracy. Whilst there is a general consensus that domestic factors are uppermost in explaining long-term prospects for democratization, in recent years, and much under the impression of the historical role of the EU in sustaining democratic change after the demise of the communist bloc, scholars have started to study more closely the external sources of democratization (Burnell and Youngs 2010). Indeed, the international system has been described as the ‘missing variable’ in democratization studies (McFaul 2010). These external sources of democratization have been broadly studied in two ways. Scholars have, on the one hand, examined how far globalization contributes to the

diffusion of democratic movements and reforms across countries and regions as a phenomenon of non-purposefully induced contagion (e.g. Gleditsch and Ward 2006). This aspect has already been discussed in Chapter 2. The purposeful promotion of democratic reforms by international actors constitutes the second focus of current research and is the aspect linked to globalization analyzed in this chapter. International-relations perspectives on the role of international actors parallel the two main approaches in the domestic explanation of democratization: structural approaches which stress the transformatory power of progressing modernization, and agency-based theories which underline the choices of ruling elites. Accordingly, international actors have sought to induce political transformation through two, sometimes parallel, strategies: 'linkage' and 'leverage' (Levitsky and Way 2006).

According to the first strategy, linkage, international actors give economic aid and promote societal interchange in order to tackle the prerequisites of democracy and give support to the forces of democratization in society. 'Leverage', in contrast, is a strategy to induce power-holders to give up authoritarian rule in exchange for other (significant) benefits, such as, in the European case, accession to the EU. In recent years, and with the intensification of transgovernmental contacts between states as well as between the EU (and other international organizations) and countries of the 'non-democratic world', a third channel of external democracy promotion has taken shape. Labeled as the 'governance' model of democracy promotion (Lavenex and Schimmelfennig 2011), this approach involves the transfer of democratic governance principles related to accountability, participation, and transparency in the context of functional cooperation between administrative actors. While not tackling the reform of political institutions as such, nor the socio-economic prerequisites of democracy, this 'third way' prepares the legal-administrative basis of democratic governance and constitutes an important element in processes of transition.

This chapter discusses these three models of external democracy promotion and the conditions for their effectiveness. It puts a particular focus on the EU as external democracy promoter in its neighborhood, but the instruments discussed can be and are also used by other international actors. With regard to the EU, its impact has been particularly strong when it could exert leverage through the carrot of membership (Schimmelfennig et al. 2006). As argued by Milada Vachudova (2005), in the process of eastern enlargement the EU, by defining democracy and respect for human rights as conditions for membership, exerted both active leverage toward candidate states and passive leverage toward potential applicant states. Beyond the countries with a membership

perspective, however, the EU's leverage has not only been circumscribed by the lack of incentives: internal inconsistencies and the overriding priority given to the stabilization of its neighborhood have impeded any consistent application of threats and carrots toward 'friendly' authoritarian regimes, especially at the EU's Mediterranean borders (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2011).

Beyond the circle of candidate countries, the EU's traditional approach at democracy promotion has been linkage via aid and trade as well as support for democratically oriented domestic groups. However, these linkage policies have either been too moderate or ineffective to show any significant effect.

Thus, in the absence of a consequential policy of conditionality and of effective linkage strategies, EU impact on democratization beyond enlargement has remained modest and well below the threshold of rousing democratic revolutions. This more modest impact has worked through a complex network of transgovernmental functional cooperation established in EU external relations that promotes democratic governance norms at the level of public administrations, even in the absence of direct regime change.

The distinctions between these three models of external democracy promotion and their different scope conditions should not hide the fact that the three models are complementary and mutually beneficial. In fact, a too narrow emphasis on either only leverage or governance can even have adverse effects by, for example, introducing formal institutions like free elections without securing socio-political and economic development, or, in the case of the governance model, making the public administration, and with it the ruling elites, even stronger in relation to the population. Therefore, it seems that a successful external democracy promotion should combine political pressure for sustained democratization with support to democratic forces in society and cooperation at the level of public administrations. In any case, the success of externally induced democratization strategies, as argued also in Chapter 2, will always and to a very large extent rest on the domestic predispositions for democratic change in the respective countries.

## **Models of external democracy promotion<sup>1</sup>**

The two traditional models of external democracy promotion, linkage and leverage, have their roots in the main theories of democratization developed in the 1960s and 1980s. The notion of linkage links up with Seymour Martin Lipset's emphasis on the importance of domestic socio-economic prerequisites for democracy. Only in a wealthy society can a

situation exist in which ‘the mass of the population could intelligently participate in politics and could develop the self-restraint necessary to avoid succumbing to the appeals of irresponsible demagogues. A society divided between a large impoverished mass and a small favored elite would result either in oligarchy [...] or in tyranny’ (Lipset 1959: 75).<sup>2</sup> In this logic, democratic change can be externally supported by improving the socio-economic base.

The leverage approach, in contrast, is largely compatible with the literature on democratic transitions that focuses on political processes and choices of state leaders in explaining regime change (e.g. O’Donnell et al. 1986; Przeworski 1991). These actor-oriented approaches argue that regime transitions are not determined by structural factors, but shaped by principal political actors’ interests and strategies in a given setting. As Shin (1994: 141) expressed it, democracy ‘is no longer treated as a particularly rare and delicate plant that cannot be transplanted in alien soil; it is treated as a product that can be manufactured wherever there is democratic craftsmanship and the proper *zeitgeist*’. Political change can therefore be externally induced through offering ruling elites attractive benefits, provided that these benefits are not surmounted by the corresponding costs of compliance.

The third model of external democracy promotion, governance, has no precursor in the analysis of the domestic forces of democratization and has its intellectual roots in the institutionalist literature on modern forms of political steering and policy making, including the vanishing distinction between domestic and international spheres in the process of governing (Jachtenfuchs 2001; Mayntz 2005). Accordingly, internationalization and external actors may impact on democratization by altering the principles upon which governance is based, that is, by promoting principles of accountability, participation, and transparency.

These models of external democracy promotion target democratization processes at different levels, and, although sharing the common end-goal of democratic government, they differ with regard to their envisaged outcomes, the channels through which influence is exerted, as well as the instruments applied. This chapter introduces the main characteristics of the three models before we turn to the EU’s role as an external democracy promoter.

### **Leverage**

The leverage model is the most direct democratization strategy as it is targeted at the polity as such, including the electoral regime, the division of powers between state organs, and respect for individual

rights and civil liberties. The intended outcomes are democratic institutions guaranteeing vertical (electoral) and horizontal accountability as well as the rule of law. The actors primarily addressed by these policies are the governments themselves who will be incentivized to introduce political reforms. The channel of democracy promotion is therefore intergovernmental. The vector of influence is top-down and operates basically through the manipulation of rational cost-and-benefit calculations of the ruling elites.

In order to produce institutional reform through leverage, the EU and other international actors use political conditionality. Conditionality has been conceived of as a bargaining process between the democracy-promoting agency and a target state (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005b: 12–16). In a bargaining process, actors exchange information, threats, and promises in order to maximize their utility. The outcome of the bargaining process depends on the relative bargaining power of the actors. Informational asymmetries aside, bargaining power is a result of the asymmetrical distribution of the benefits of a specific agreement (compared to those of alternative outcomes or ‘outside options’). Generally, those actors who are least in need of a specific agreement are best able to threaten the others with non-cooperation and thereby force them to make concessions.

A prime venue for democracy promotion through leverage is membership conditionality. Since the enlargements of the 1980s, and most prominently eastern enlargement, the EU has developed a more ‘extensive and systematic’ conditionality approach than other international organizations (Pridham 2008). In using conditionality, the EU set the adoption of democratic institutions and practices as conditions that the target countries have to fulfill in order to receive rewards from the EU – such as financial aid, technical assistance, trade agreements, association treaties, and, ultimately, membership. States that fail to meet the conditions are not coerced to introduce democratic reforms but simply left behind in the ‘regatta’ to assistance and membership.

The leverage model is thus focused on the role of the ruling elites. Its most general proposition is that the government introduces democratic changes in state institutions and behavior according to external conditions if the benefits of external rewards exceed the domestic adoption costs, that is, a loss of autonomy and power for the target governments. In addition, credibility is an intervening variable. With a given size of benefits and costs, the effectiveness of leverage increases with the credibility of conditionality. In a conditionality setting, credibility refers to the international actor’s threat to withhold rewards in case

of non-compliance with his conditions and the promise to deliver the reward in case of compliance. This also implies that leverage increases with the strength and determinacy of its conditions.

The effectiveness of leverage depends also on domestic factors in the target country, in particular the political costs of democratic reform for the target governments. Domestic costs are low if meeting the international actor's political conditions engenders no or low power costs for the target government. As highlighted by Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier (2005b), this is the case if compliance is not perceived to endanger the dominance of the ethnic core group, threaten the integrity of the state, or to undermine the target government's practices of power preservation and its institutional power in the state apparatus. By contrast, domestic political costs are prohibitively high if the external demands are seen as threats to the security and integrity of the state or as tantamount to regime change.

While many authors, especially when studying the EU, have praised the use of political conditionality as the most effective means of democracy promotion, it should be noted that this policy does little to foster a civic culture or strengthen intermediary institutions such as civic associations or the public sphere. Even if it is successful, leverage might thus contribute to a formally functioning democracy that is, however, not necessarily underpinned by democratic culture and civil society. In addition, some authors have argued that a one-sided focus on conditionality may undervalue democratization processes that are already taking place (Ulusoy 2007: 472).

### **Linkage**

The linkage and governance models are more indirect strategies of democracy promotion. Linkage operates at the level of society and targets the socio-economic preconditions for democratization, including economic growth, education, the spread of liberal values, and the organization of civil society and the public sphere. The envisaged result is a democratic, 'civic' culture and meso-level institutions such as civic associations, parties, and a democratic public sphere. Here the interlocutors are not governments but opposition groups and societal actors more broadly, we therefore can speak of a transnational channel of democracy promotion. The vector of influence is bottom-up and presupposes a process of socialization whereby the system is changed from within.

Linkage is based on two pillars: agency-based support for civil society and political opposition groups, on the one hand, and more



structural support through intensified transnational exchanges, on the other. Support for the agents of democratization can be material or educational. An international actor may, for instance, give money to pro-democratic civil-society organizations or parties, or provide them with infrastructure such as computers, mobile phones, or photocopying machines. It may also organize meetings, seminars, and conferences that help these societal organizations to improve their political strategies and their cooperation. This support can also occur indirectly through societal contacts including business contacts, work or study abroad, tourism, longer-term migration, and media exposure, through which target societies are made familiar with democratic ideas and practices. To the extent that these contacts convey an attractive social and political alternative, they may contribute to value change and inspire more demand for freedom and political rights in the target countries.

In addition, the external actors may promote the economic development of target countries. By increasing trade relations, investment, and development aid, they can contribute to democracy-conducive wealth in general. The positive effects of trade, aid, and investment may increase with diversification in two respects. On the one hand, they are most helpful if they do not simply benefit small economic elites but if their benefits are spread out as broadly and evenly as possible across the population thus contributing to general wealth and higher income equality. On the other hand, they are most likely to promote democratization if they strengthen mobile against immobile assets. Rather than nurturing the agricultural or primary resources sectors, external actors would therefore have to focus their trade and investment on the industrial and services sectors.

Finally, linkage involves support for education in the target societies. By helping to raise the levels of literacy and education in the target societies – that is, through building schools and universities, funding educational programs, further educating teachers, welcoming students – international actors can prepare the ground for successful democratization in the future.

However, the conditions for effective linkage are not unidirectional. In order to be possible, and to produce demand for (more) democracy from below, contacts, exchange, and support activities require a minimum of transnational openness on the part of the target country and of autonomy for the civil society. Linkage efforts will not reach civil society if a country is isolated from the outside world and civil society has no freedom of maneuver.

## **Governance**

Finally, democracy promotion may also target states' ordinary legislation, which guides executive action within the different sectors of public policy – such as environmental policy, market regulation, welfare regimes, or internal security. Like the linkage model, according to which international actors seek to strengthen democracy through the promotion of democratic forces in society, the governance model thus postulates mainly an indirect channel of influence. We call it the 'governance model' because, rather than focusing on electoral democracy, it embeds elements of democratic governance in sectoral cooperation arrangements between an international actor and public administrations in target countries. Its focus are procedural principles of democratically legitimate political-administrative behavior embedded in sectoral legislation, including transparency, accountability, and societal participation. The primary actors introducing reforms are public officials working in the administration and ministries. Correspondingly, we speak of a transgovernmental channel of democracy promotion. Influence is exerted in formally horizontal networks gathering public officials from both democratic and non-democratic countries who engage in processes of policy transfer based on both instrumental rationality and socialization.

This type of transgovernmental networking is particularly strong in EU neighbourhood relations and has been coined as 'external governance' (Lavenex 2004). Its vehicles are the structures of external governance that have emerged with different associated third countries, which establish stable horizontal ties between public administrations in the EU and third countries in individual policy sectors (Lavenex 2008).

'Democratic governance' locates the notion of democracy at the level of the principles that guide administrative rules and practices in the conduct of public policy. The focus is thus less on specific democratic institutions such as elections or parliaments but rather on the principles underlying democracy which are applicable to all situations in which collectively binding decisions are taken. These principles include transparency, accountability, and participation. Transparency refers both to access to issue-specific data and to governmental provision of information about decision making. Accountability is about public officials' obligation to justify their decisions and actions, the possibility of appeal, and sanctioning over misconduct. This can include both horizontal accountability between independent state agencies (such as

investigating committees, or ombudsmen) and vertical accountability that emphasizes the obligation for public officials to justify their decisions. Finally, participation denotes non-electoral forms of participation such as involvement of non-state actors in administrative decision and policy making (Freyburg et al. 2007).

If successful, this model promotes the adoption of democratic governance norms in the target sector, be it environment, competition, immigration, or any other policy field. This model does not necessarily address civil-society actors, nor does it directly affect the overarching institutional arrangements of the polity. Therefore, democratic governance promotion may still occur within a generally semi-autocratic political system – although, as we shall argue, a certain level of political liberalization and of civil-society empowerment is a necessary condition for its success. While unlikely to engender by itself more profound democratic change, democratic governance plays an important role in preparing the legal administrative ground upon which eventual political transitions can draw.

Cooperation under the governance model is based on sectoral (national, European, or international) legislation containing democratic governance norms and is designed to approximate legal and administrative standards in the target countries to those of the ‘sender’. Its effectiveness therefore relies on the codification, that is, the quality and precision of the democratic governance norms emanating from international rules. In addition, and in line with studies of policy transfer and implementation, effectiveness increases the more the sectoral cooperation with the international actor is institutionalized. Consistency of the international actor’s templates with other international legal rules and the parallel engagement of other international actors should have a supportive and reinforcing effect on norm transfer.

The positive impact of functional cooperation on democratic governance may however be offset by some sector-specific factors, such as the costs of adaptation that a third country faces in the particular sector and the degree of interdependence with the international actor in the respective policy. As in the case of leverage, asymmetric interdependence in favor of the international actor is likely to enhance the effectiveness of democratic governance promotion.

As with linkage, finally, external influence depends on the openness and autonomy of domestic administrations in the target countries. The horizontal transgovernmental ties that are at the heart of the governance model presuppose a certain degree of decentralization of administrative structures, empowerment of administrative officials, and

*Table 6.1* Three models of democracy promotion

	<b>Leverage</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Linkage</b>
Target	Polity	Sector	Society
Outcome	Democratic institutions	Democratic governance	Democratic culture
Channel	Intergovernmental	Transgovernmental	Transnational
Instruments	Conditionality		Socialization

openness toward contacts and cooperation with the administrations of international organizations and other countries (Lavenex 2008: 952). In other words, the effectiveness of democratic governance promotion increases with the accessibility and autonomy of the administration of the target country. The autonomy of civil society also plays a (secondary) role in the governance model, in particular for the application or implementation of democratic governance norms: the functioning of transparency, accountability, and, in particular, participation necessitates the existence of an active civil society which demands access to the decision-making process.

The three models of external democracy promotion are summarized in Table 6.1.

The next section reviews the findings on the effectiveness of these three models of democracy promotion, with a particular focus on the role of the EU.

### **Effectiveness of EU democracy promotion**

Despite its internally deficient democratic nature (see Chapter 5), during the past two decades, the EU has developed into an agent of international democracy promotion. The EU had long conceived of itself as a community of democracies and recognized the need to strengthen its own democratic credentials. Some of its external policies – most prominently its southern enlargement to Greece, Portugal, and Spain – had also been regarded implicitly and informally as a contribution to democratization. However, most of its external relations – above all trade agreements and development cooperation – had been notable for their apolitical content and the principle of not interfering with the domestic systems of third countries. It was only in the early 1990s that external democracy promotion became an explicit, formal, and general aim of the EU. In the Treaty of Maastricht (1991), the EU declared

the development and consolidation of democracy as a goal of development cooperation (Art. 130u) and its Common Foreign and Security Policy (Art. J.1), and the principle of democracy was introduced in all its external trade and aid agreements.

From its beginnings, EU democracy promotion has been a multifaceted policy, including all three models of external democracy promotion highlighted above. Whereas the linkage approach has been a constant in EU external policies since the early support to democratic transitions in Latin America (Smith 2002: 122–129), in the 1990s, the leverage model became dominant; with the governance model starting to become more prominent in the early 2000s.

### **Democracy promotion through linkage**

The linkage model is the most indirect of the three strategies of external democracy promotion, and, given the wide economic and societal nature of its mechanisms, the broadness of its targets, and its long-term horizon, is notoriously difficult to assess empirically. On the one hand, there is statistical evidence that geographic proximity to the EU is systematically correlated with democracy (Kopstein and Reilly 2000; Schimmelfennig and Scholtz 2008). This, however, is only a proxy for a mixed bag of transnational exchanges, contacts, and similarities (and probably other unspecified influences related to distance). We do not yet know which kinds of linkages are relevant for democracy promotion and what the specific EU contribution is.

Empirical studies investigating the linkage model in EU democracy promotion have focused on the Mediterranean. Cooperation with the Arab states of the southern Mediterranean and Israel intensified in mid-1995 with the launch of the new Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also referred to as the Barcelona Process, which enshrined a high profile commitment to democracy promotion. Apart from weakly enforced conditionality elements (see below), this was mainly to be achieved through enhanced economic cooperation, including far-reaching trade-liberalization agendas, as well as societal and cultural interchange (the so-called second and third baskets of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership).

Analyses of the effects of linkage on democratization in the Mediterranean come to a sobering conclusion. Reviewing democracy promotion in the context of the Barcelona Process, Jünemann (2003: 7) observes that while the EU's bottom-up programs at the level of civil society were 'taken up [...] with great enthusiasm' by democratic forces in the target countries, 'high expectations were soon disappointed

by the EU's unexpected reluctance and caution when putting these programmes into practice'. Studies on EU support in the southern neighborhood point out that EU assistance has remained extremely modest, focused on a narrow sector of civil society (such as secular organizations that are approved by, and often connected to, Middle Eastern and Northern African partner governments); and privileged non-political community services (Gillespie and Whitehead 2002: 197; Haddadi 2002 and 2003; Jünemann 2002; Schlumberger 2006: 45; Youngs 2002: 55–57). Likewise, Youngs (2001: 193) asserts that 'the EU did not push hard to gain access for political aid work' and was 'unwilling to risk tension with recipient governments'. Finally, the domestic conditions for bottom-up support appear unfavorable in most neighborhood countries because democratic civil society is weak and lacks autonomy.

While it is true that these analyses do not prove that linkage would not have been effective if it had been pursued more consistently and vigorously, they do point out that external support for civil society in authoritarian countries quickly encounters governmental resistance, which severely limits the potential of this model of external democracy promotion. Moreover, recent upheavals in Northern Africa suggest that the social groups that were most vocal in the calls for regime change had not necessarily benefited from any EU engagement before and, what is more, that their claims did not receive direct support. On the contrary, both in the case of Tunisia and Egypt, Western states and the EU were for a long time, even during the first days of the 'revolutions', important allies of the ruling dictators.

### **Democracy promotion through leverage**

In the early 1990s, the political integration symbolized in the creation of the EU coincided with the transformation of Eastern Europe and these countries' gradual approximation to the EU. While the EU continued to give support to democratic transition through economic aid and targeted action toward civil society, it also embraced a more explicit and direct approach to democracy promotion by making aid, market access, and deepened institutional relations from association to membership conditional on third state's progress in institutional democracy. For more than a decade, political conditionality came to epitomize the EU's democracy promotion efforts. Democracy, human rights, and the rule of law became 'essential elements' in almost all EU agreements with third countries, as both an objective and a condition of the institutionalized relationship. In case of violation, the EU may suspend or terminate the agreement also; in practice, it has hardly ever done so (Horng 2003).

Most notably, the Copenhagen Criteria agreed by the European Council in 1993 made the consolidation of liberal democracy the principal condition for starting accession negotiations. From the first round of eastern enlargement negotiations, which opened in 1998 and excluded Slovakia because of its democracy deficits, to the discussions about the membership prospects of Turkey and the Western Balkans, political conditions related to the state of democracy have been of central relevance.

A considerable body of research has therefore focused on the leverage model, that is, the EU's political accession conditionality, in explaining the democratic transformation of EU candidate countries. Several comparative studies have concurred on two main findings (see, for example, Kelley 2004; Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005a; Vachudova 2005). First, only the credible conditional promise of membership has proven a powerful tool in helping Central and Eastern European countries to consolidate democracy. Socialization strategies or the use of weaker incentives have generally not been sufficient to bring about democratic change. Second, even a highly credible membership perspective has not been effective if meeting the EU's conditions implied regime change or threatened the political survival of the third-state government.

Both conditions for successful EU leverage arguably are on the wane, however. First, the EU is currently unwilling to extend the offer of membership to countries beyond the current candidates in the Western Balkans and Turkey. While membership is excluded for the Northern African and Middle Eastern neighbors, the EU has not been able or willing to commit itself to a conditional accession promise for the European transition countries of Moldova and Ukraine either. For all these neighboring countries, the EU has designed the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) as an alternative to, rather than a preparatory stage for, membership. Even in the candidate countries, political accession conditionality has lost credibility (cf. Kubicek 2011). At any rate, the potential accession date of most candidate countries will likely be so far in the future that the incentives of membership lack power in the present.

Second, the EU's political conditionality has proven highly inconsistent below the threshold of accession conditionality. On the one hand, political conditionality is strong at a declaratory and programmatic level. The ENP is based on the EU's commitment to promote core liberal values and norms beyond its borders and claims to use political conditionality as the main instrument of norm promotion. ENP strategy documents tie both participation in the ENP as such and the intensity and level of cooperation to the ENP partners' adherence to

liberal values and norms (Mayer and Schimmelfennig 2007: 40–42). In addition, the ‘essential elements’ clause features in almost all legal agreements between the EU and partner countries in the region.

Implementation is patchy, however. Comparisons of ENP action plans reveal an incoherent democracy promotion policy and the overriding importance of the EU’s geostrategic and partner countries’ political interests (Baracani 2009; Bosse 2007; Del Sarto and Schumacher 2011; Pace et al. 2009). In a comparative analysis of EU responses to violations of democratic norms in the post-Soviet area, Warkotsch (2006) shows that, while the existence of a democracy clause in EU–third country agreements significantly increases the likelihood of an EU response to anti-democratic policies, it is not significantly correlated with responses that go beyond verbal denunciation. Strong sanctions are more likely to be used against geographically proximate states and less likely against resource-rich countries. Studies of EU democracy promotion in the Mediterranean up to the Arab Spring confirm this picture (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2011; Pace et al. 2009). The EU’s application of political conditionality in this region has been undermined by its efforts to build a multilateral partnership in the southern Mediterranean and to promote peace in the Middle East – otherwise it would risk losing essential partners for these efforts. At the end of the day, the EU, and particularly its southern member-states, appeared to prefer stable, authoritarian, and Western-oriented regimes to the instability and Islamist electoral victories that genuine democratization processes in this region are likely, in some cases, to produce (Gillespie and Whitehead 2002; Gillespie and Youngs 2002; Jünemann 2002; Youngs 2001).

Finally, until the – for many unexpected – 2011 revolutions, domestic conditions in most neighboring countries stood in the way of effective political conditionality. Most of the ‘European neighbourhood’ from Belarus via the Caucasus to Northern Africa was governed by autocratic states for which complying with the EU’s political conditions would have been tantamount to regime change. Even in the democratizing countries of the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe legacies of ethnic conflict, extreme political polarization, and severe weaknesses in governance capacity blocked the road to further EU integration (on Croatia, see Freyburg and Richter 2010).

The Arab revolutions of 2011/2012 have not only disclosed the inconsistency of the EU’s approach, they have also changed the domestic opportunity structures for democratic conditionality. This was recognized by EU Commissioner Stefan Füle, responsible for enlargement and the ENP, when he stated that even though the ‘EU has always been active



in promoting human rights and democracy in our neighbourhood' it is also clear that 'it has often focused too much on stability at the expense of other objectives and, more problematic, at the expense of our [the EU's] values' (Füle 2011: 2). Yet it remains to be seen how far, in the absence of the carrot of membership, the EU will be able and willing to offer meaningful incentives to uphold the fragile democratization process in its southern neighborhood.

### **Democratic governance promotion**

Whereas the use of the leverage model of democratization via political conditionality has thus remained hitherto limited to accession countries, the main avenue for democracy promotion in the ENP has been, apart from hesitant linkage policies (see above), sectoral cooperation at the transgovernmental level.

As a new form of association policy below the threshold of membership, the ENP promotes democratic governance norms through third countries' approximation to EU sectoral policies. While proclaiming a process of gradual approximation based on shared values (including democracy, human rights, and the rule of law), the ENP has so far focused more on functional cooperation in sectoral policies such as market regulations or environmental or migration policy, in which the neighboring countries agree to approximate their legislation to the EU *acquis*. Considering the constraints on democracy promotion outside an enlargement framework, the European Commission outlined in 2006 that '[d]emocratic governance is to be approached holistically, taking account of all its dimensions (political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc.). [...] Accordingly, the concept of democratic governance has to be integrated into each and every sectoral programme' in relations with third countries (European Commission 2006: 6).

In contrast to the two other models of external democracy promotion, the governance approach is very recent and has hitherto only been systematically researched within NCCR Democracy in a project on the EU's democracy promotion through the ENP. In a comparison of three policies (competition, environment, and migration policy) and four countries, two from the eastern neighborhood (Moldova and Ukraine) and two from the southern neighborhood (Jordan and Morocco), it could be shown that the EU does promote democratic governance norms through functional cooperation with a certain success. However, this success is hitherto mainly limited to the adoption of such norms in sectoral legislation and does, with a few exceptions, not yet manifest in rule application. Interestingly, this effect seems to work

relatively independently from the influence of leverage or linkage, since country-level political variables (membership aspirations and the degree of political liberalization) do not explain the variation in outcomes (Freyburg et al. 2011; Freyburg et al. forthcoming).

The study shows that the transfer of democratic governance norms follows a sectoral dynamic and matches the conditions stipulated by the governance model. Accordingly, the adoption of democratic governance provisions by the target states is the more successful the more strongly these provisions are codified in the sectoral *acquis*; the more institutionalized the cooperation between the EU and ENP states is, the more interdependent the parties are, and, finally, the lower adoption costs are for national governments and sectoral authorities. The strongest effects of democratic governance promotion were found in the field of environmental cooperation, which is relatively highly institutionalized given the existence of several international frameworks of cooperation,<sup>3</sup> and where the EU *acquis* includes strong provisions, in particular with regard to participation and transparency, that are backed by the international Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters of 1998. Moldova was one of the first countries to ratify the Aarhus Convention and translated its central provisions into the 2000 Law on Access to Information. The EU also promoted the adoption of a law on access to environmental information in Morocco that emulates the rules concerning participation and transparency included in the EU *acquis* and the Aarhus Convention, as well as the Law on Environmental Impact Studies that guarantees public access to environmental information and the right to appeal. However, the implementation of these norms has remained patchy at best (Freyburg et al. 2011).

Other examples of successful democratic norm transfer could also be found in the more politicized field of migration policy, where the EU has backed its external policies by projects conducted through the International Organisation for Migration, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and transgovernmental networks such as the Söderköping and Budapest processes to the east and more informal cooperation to the south. For instance, the Moldovan Law on the Status of Refugees from 2002 explicitly states that the law is to bring domestic legislation on asylum to internationally recognized standards, including pertinent democratic norms such as non-discrimination, fair consideration of applications for asylum, provision of exhaustive information about procedures, possibilities for appeal and contacting the

UNHCR representative. Even Morocco, which, given its geographical situation, faces strong disincentives to engage in democratic governance with regard to migration and asylum, has introduced legislative provisions, for example, obliging the authorities to explain negative asylum decision (accountability) and to inform asylum seekers of their rights (transparency) as well as to provide access to a lawyer and allow contesting the decision before an administrative court. The adoption of these norms is claimed to be a result of EU influence. Although, as in the case of environmental provisions, the study finds little evidence for the translation of these legislative changes into administrative practice, it concludes that in a long-term perspective, the adoption of the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation in sectoral legislation may play a positive role in processes of democratization. While democratic governance is unlikely to – by itself – engender systemic change, it nevertheless plays an important role in preparing the legal and bureaucratic basis upon which eventual transitions toward a new democratic order can draw.

This interpretation is corroborated by a separate but related study, in which Tina Freyburg shifts the focus from the macro-level of domestic legislation to the micro-level of actors' perceptions (Freyburg 2011a and 2011b). She asks whether participation in transgovernmental policy networks influences the attitudes of state officials regarding democratic governance. In a comparative analysis of two EU twinning projects in Morocco, she finds conditional support for the effectiveness of democratic governance promotion. Whereas in the issue area of environmental policy, the participants in the twinning project exhibited a significantly higher support for democratic governance than the non-participants, this was not the case for the twinning project on competition policy. The difference cannot be accounted for by properties of the state officials, such as their linkage experiences, but is best explained by the difference in politicization (the intensity of the political actors' interests at stake) between the two sectors. The finding that non-politicized sectors are more conducive to democratic governance promotion matches the results of the previous study (Freyburg et al. 2011).

In so far as EU networking and policy-transfer activities contribute to public officials' attitudinal support for democratic governance norms, one may also conclude that they will play a positive role in sustaining democratic transitions. Of course, however, this diffusion of democratic governance norms via sectoral legislation should not go at the expense of democratic legislative processes in the respective countries.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed three models of external democracy promotion by international actors. Although the focus was laid on the EU, the models are also applicable to international organizations more generally and partly also to states in their relations with authoritarian and democratizing countries. These three models document different ways in which globalization doesn't actually challenge democracy but rather contributes to its horizontal spread, even if only imperfectly.

First, international organizations can use their influence to link certain benefits of membership to the requirement of democratic reforms. This leverage model of accession conditionality has been successfully applied by the EU in the context of its enlargement policy. It presupposes a sizeable incentive for authoritarian regimes to agree to domestic reforms as well as a credible and consistent conditionality policy on the part of the external actor. In theory, this instrument is also available to other international organizations, but a look for instance at the Council of Europe or the World Trade Organization show that it is not consistently applied. Softer forms of leverage are used in the field of development aid and financial cooperation by the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank. However, the requested reforms follow more the leaner principles of good governance and are less targeted toward democratic reforms proper.

The second approach to external democracy promotion, linkage, is also available to other international actors. Research on the promotion of international human rights has well documented how international organizations and transnational non-governmental organizations form alliances with domestic democratic forces in authoritarian countries. This pressure from above and from below can lead to a 'boomerang effect' by which authoritarian governments over time decide to restrain from human rights abuses and may even become socialized into human rights norms (Risse et al. 1999). In the case of EU and democracy promotion, however, the use of linkage strategies, including also measures targeted at socio-economic development such as aid and trade, have not yielded tangible results, probably also because of a lack of engagement on the part of the EU itself.

In light of these limits to established strategies of external democracy promotion, newer research has analyzed how far the more general phenomenon of intensifying functional cooperation in different policy areas among countries, the establishment of transgovernmental networks sustaining such cooperation among public administrations and

the processes of policy transfer and norm diffusion embedded therein may contribute to the diffusion of democratic governance norms. First studies on the EU's Neighbourhood Policy confirm such subtle processes of democratic governance promotion through functional cooperation under certain conditions, which refer mainly to the salience of democratic rules in the legislative texts and treaties upon which this cooperation is based as well as the intensity of institutional ties. The question of how far the governance model of external democracy promotion also applies to other international actors should be a question for further research.

The juxtaposition of these three models of purposeful external democracy promotion should however not obscure the important interlinkages and interdependencies between the processes and triggers highlighted in each of these models. There is much to suggest that in order to be really successful in inducing sustainable democratic change the three models would have to be enacted in parallel as they all speak to different but equally necessary levels of democratic transformation. For instance, the introduction of democratic governance principles relating to the transparency and accountability of public administration as well as to the participation of civil society will remain void if the country lacks a vivid civil society and institutions guaranteeing the rule of law. Also, top-down approaches following the leverage model run the risk of provoking more destabilization than democratization if the socio-economic preconditions for democracy are lacking. Taken in isolation, each model faces particular risks that may run counter to the goal of democratization and, under certain circumstances, even spur violent conflict (Cederman et al. 2010a, 2011). In any case, the sources of successful democratization are much more complex than what external triggers can yield. Even if the international community were consistent and comprehensive in its democratization policies, which it rarely is, the success of these policies will still, to a very considerable extent, rest on domestic predispositions in the target countries. As argued in Chapter 2, however, these domestic preconditions are difficult to influence from the outside.

## Notes

1. This section draws heavily on Lavenex and Schimmelfennig (2011).
2. Huntington (1991) was one of the first (quantitative) researchers to deal with the impact of development on democratic transitions. The empirical results showed that during the so-called third wave, from 1976 to 1990, countries in the middle-income zone are most likely to make a transition to democracy.

'As countries develop economically and move into this zone, they become prospects for democratization' (Huntington 1991: 60). More recent studies in this tradition emphasize, apart from economic wealth, heterogeneity of production, equality, and education, also cultural, ethnic, and religious factors as prerequisites for democracy (e.g. Lipset 1994).

3. These include, in the field of transboundary waters, the Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia component of the EU Water Initiative (EUWI), the EU-sponsored Danube – Black Sea Task Force, and the UN Environment for Europe Process to the East; or the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors Forum, the Mediterranean component of the EUWI, the Short and Medium-term Priority Environmental Action Programme and the activities of the United Nations Development Program to the South.

# 7

## Mediatization as a Challenge: Media Logic Versus Political Logic

*Frank Esser*

Political communication is a precondition of democracy, and democracy depends heavily on the infrastructure of the media system (see chapters 1 and 2). The media and mediated communication are of central relevance for contemporary societies due to their decisive influence on, and consequences for, political institutions, political actors, and individual citizens. Political actors have learnt to accept that their behavior to a significant extent is influenced by the rules of the game set by the mass media. This transformation has been described as a shift to audience democracy (Manin 1995) or media democracy (Jarren 2008a). The idea of media democracy is an extension of the model of representative democracy (see Chapter 3). It refers to a development that at its beginning aimed to make politics more inclusive and transparent. In the process policy-makers have become accountable to an ever growing volume of interests and demands from the public – not only in the context of elections but in many phases of the policy process. The pressure on policy-makers to be responsive to public opinion in general and special interests in particular has increased the role of the mass media in many ways. Politicians have grown to rely on the mass media for gauging public opinion (using media coverage as a proxy for public sentiments), and for generating attention, acceptance, and legitimation of their actions (using media channels for public presentation of politics).

Theoretically associated with the concept of media democracy is the notion of a media society (Mazzoleni 2008c). This idea implies that traditional mass media, as well as the new online media, are pervading all spheres of social life and have thus become the central precondition of exchanges and interactions among individuals and organizations of society. The media society can be seen as the result of a process of functional differentiation making the media increasingly independent

of their former sponsors, which were, in the European tradition, primarily the churches and the political parties (Jarren 2008a). The media now operate according to a specific media logic and, due to economic necessities, are guided by commercial rules in order to maximize their audience shares.

This transformation process toward greater media dependency is accompanied by critical undertones. This is particularly true with regard to potential transformations of democratic politics as a result of mediatization processes. Critics worry that the media may interfere with the 'chain of responsibility' and the 'chain of accountability' in irresponsible ways (see the model of representative democracy in Chapter 3). With regard to the former, the media may cause traditional institutions of preference mobilization and preference aggregation (like parties, parliaments) to decline; and with regard to the latter they may pressurize political actors to succumb to the specific operating logic of the news media when justifying their actions to the public. By assuming the role of an alternative public's representative, the media see it as their responsibility to scrutinize and evaluate politicians and their actions. They do so by their own media specific standards, and may, for example, 'sanction' them with bad press. The media legitimize their increasingly proactive political involvement with reference to democratic expectations such as providing 'transparency', contributing to 'checks and balances', and vitalizing the 'public sphere'. However, on the other hand, the media themselves are hard to 'sanction' themselves in case of negative consequences. This can pose a challenge to democracy, as argued by Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999: 248):

While the political parties are accountable for their policies to the electorate, no constitution foresees that the media be accountable for their actions. Absence of accountability can imply serious risks for democracy, because it violates the classic rule of balances of power in the democratic game, making the media (the *fourth branch* of government) an influential and uncontrollable force that is protected from the sanction of popular will.

Within the model of representative democracy the mass media have become an omnipresent, highly consequential 'environmental factor' that sometimes irritates, interferes, or even obstructs political processes. At the same time the media expand the repertoire of action for politicians who try to use the media to their advantage. The opportunity structures for a growing relevance of the media in politics do not follow



internationally uniform developments and are subject to conditional factors. The concept of ‘mediatization of politics’ serves as a context-sensitive tool for addressing the question of where media intrusion endangers the functioning of the democratic process, and where it may enhance it. This chapter lays out a theoretical framework of mediatization of politics whereas the following Chapter 8 reports empirical findings from projects currently underway within the National Competence Center of Research on Challenges to Democracy in the 21st century (NCCR Democracy, Zurich).

### **Mediation and mediatization**

Before addressing specific challenges to democracy it is important to place the mediatization of politics in context and illustrate its new quality. Scholars differentiate it from mediation of politics, which is an older concept that refers to the overall difference that media make by being there in the political world (McQuail 2010: 82–86). In the context of political communication, mediation is primarily used to denote the neutral act of transmitting messages through the media, and experiencing politics through mass communication channels (Mazzoleni 2008b; Strömbäck 2008). When politics has become mediated, people depend on the media for information about politics. The media have long acted as a mediator between the citizenry on the one hand, and the institutions involved in government, elections, and opinion formation on the other. The media also mediate between different actors and institutions within the governing or political communication system more broadly. In fact, as Lucian Pye (1993: 443) put it, ‘political life in any mass society is impossible without established methods of political communication.’ Some scholars have long argued that to a certain extent politics *is* communication (Deutsch 1963). Almond and Powell argued already in 1966 that ‘communication pervades the entire political process’ (p. 80) and noted that all functions performed in the political system – political socialization and recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation, rule-making, rule-application, and rule-adjudication – are performed by means of communication. For example, the preferences of citizens must be articulated by communication and are channeled into institutions of preference aggregation by mass media first and foremost. In a similar vein, political outcomes have to be communicated to the public – again mostly through channels of mass communication. In this sense, to speak of modern politics as being mediated is merely ‘a descriptive statement’ (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999: 250). It is also based on a rather static

understanding of basic fundamentals that fails to capture the changing interdependent relationships between media and politics.

Mediatization, in contrast, is an inherently process-oriented concept that focuses on how media influence has increased in a number of different respects. As such, mediatization is not restricted to politics. Rather, it has been conceptualized as being on par with other major societal change processes such as modernization, individualization, and globalization (Hjarvard 2008; Krotz 2007; Mazzoleni 2008c). As noted by Mazzoleni (2008c: 3053):

In brief, the concept of 'mediatization of society' indicates an extension of the influence of the media into all societal spheres. Therefore, it is important to see what the domains are that are influenced by the media system (remembering that the media system is both a cultural technology and an economic organization). In broad and general terms, all the main societal domains are affected by the connection between media and society: sex/gender and generational relationships, deviance, control and surveillance, religious and ritual dimensions, power relationships, urban environment and city life, localization and globalization processes, and so on.

Following this line of thought, Hjarvard (2008) describes mediatization of society as a process whereby 'the media have become integrated into the operations of other social institutions, while they also have acquired the status of social institutions in their own right' (p. 113). Thus, besides involving themselves in other institutions, the media appear increasingly as an autonomous entity with its own institutional logic. This process can be observed empirically in the ways in which the media intervene in the interaction between individuals within a given institution, between institutions, and in society at large (Hjarvard 2008). The mediatization of politics is thus part of a more general process in highly developed, post-industrial mass democracies. The degree of mediatization might vary, as the degree of modernization, individualization, and globalization also does, but it still affects society – including politics – in numerous and fundamental ways. At its core, mediatization is a process-oriented concept that is about 'changes associated with communication media and their development' (Schulz 2004: 88) or, to quote Hjarvard (2008: 113), 'the process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic.'

It is assumed that, like with globalization, more and more regions and cultures will be affected by mediatization, but there will also

be considerable differences in the influence mediatization exerts. Globalization is related to mediatization in at least two ways, as Hjarvard (2008: 113) points out: 'on the one hand, globalization presumes the existence of the technical means to extend communication and interaction over long distances and, on the other hand, it propels the process of mediatization by institutionalizing mediated communication and interaction in many new contexts'. It is important to emphasize that neither mediatization nor globalization are coercively consistent, linear, or teleological, as Horkheimer and Adorno (1969) showed for another meta-process, enlightenment (Krotz 2007). It can thus be an opportunity as well as a problem for societies. Whether mediatization has positive or negative consequences is an open empirical question and cannot be determined in a priori set terms. It depends on a range of factors that also describe the varieties found in contemporary democracies (see Chapter 4).

Blumler and Kavanagh's (1999: 211) early definition of mediatization as 'the media moving toward the center of the social process' can be specified insofar as the media provide a commons for society, a shared forum of communication that other institutions and actors increasingly use as arenas for their interaction (Hjarvard 2008). Within the model of representative democracy as laid out in Chapter 3 the media not only occupy the public sphere but have become its dominant occupant. The consequences of a public sphere that is regulated by media logic can be captured theoretically within the framework of neo-institutionalism (Donges 2006, 2008; Jarren 1996; Marcinkowski 2005, 2007).

### **Mediatization of politics: An institutionalist perspective**

In the course of the development from mediation to mediatization, the mass media are less and less regarded as mere technical channels of communications. Instead, the media are regarded as 'organized actors' (Fox News, the *New York Times*, the BBC, *The Sun*) which pursue certain goals and act in the interest of realizing these goals. For scholars who examine the mediatization of politics, one group of media organizations is particularly relevant – the group of news organizations.

News organizations can be grouped together as an inter-organizational field. This field can be conceived of as a singular institution because its constituent organizations are structured similarly to achieve similar goals, they follow 'shared rules' of what is considered appropriate professional behavior, they operate in the same economic and political environments, and above all they adopt the same basic rules of

the game when confronted with the question of what is important and interesting enough to be considered news (Cook 2006; Scott 1994). Journalists follow professional rules when they select their stories (criteria of newsworthiness), when they interact with news sources (exchange of exclusive information for granting publicity), while they incorporate norms like objectivity into their news production as a strategic ritual (to protect themselves against outside criticism; see Hjarvard 2008).

Various media outlets constitute the building blocks of the media as an institution (which has come to rule the public sphere as depicted in Figure 3.2, Chapter 3). The rules and norms that govern the media taken as a whole are often more important than what distinguishes one media company, outlet, type, or format from another (Altheide and Snow 1979, 1988, 1991; Mazzoleni 2008c). This is not to say that there are no significant differences between, say, public service news and commercial television news, but rather that the commonalities, from the perspective of mediatization, are more important than the differences. Stated differently, mediatization means that the media form a system in their own right, *independent* of, although *interdependent* with, other social systems such as the political system (Cook 2005; Hjarvard 2008; Marcinkowski and Steiner 2010; Mazzoleni 2008c; Strömbäck 2008).

Institutions are generally defined as collections of rules and routines identifiable across the organizations that are generally seen within a society to preside over a particular social sphere (March and Olsen 1998). A key argument for treating the media as an institution is one of power. Neo-institutionalism conceptualizes the news media as exerting influence through consonant and cumulative reporting, resulting from a professional consensus and comparable routines of how to make news (Cook 2005). The core institutional feature of the news media is their trans-organizational mode of operation, called 'media logic', which refers to the media-specific rules of selecting, interpreting, and constructing political news messages. The fact that everyone else in society – including politicians, parties, governments – has learnt to adjust and adapt to the media logic as the obligatory way of perceiving and interpreting the world, and acting upon it, has further boosted the media's significance (Altheide and Snow 1979). Mediatization then can be defined as the growing intrusion of media logic as an institutional rule into other fields where it now supplements (and in extreme cases replaces) existing rules for defining appropriate behavior.

Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999) describe mediatized politics as 'politics that has lost its autonomy, has become dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions

with mass media' (p. 250). What turns modern mass media into politically relevant actors is media logic. This media logic comprises the professional production routines in newsrooms where political statements are translated into 'stories', but also technological possibilities and constraints, and finally the economic organization of the media organization. A transmission of this logic and its establishment in other social fields would be a sufficient indicator for the impact of the media that exceeds their original mediating function. Mediatization can thus be further defined as a temporal (dynamic) process of media-induced change that is characterized by the institutionalization of media logic in social spheres that were previously considered separate from the mass media (Schrott 2009). In such cases, media logic does not replace the original logic but overlays it. Mediatization of politics thus refers to changes in the decision criteria and action rationales of political institutions without turning them into media institutions.

The neo-institutionalist approach has proved particularly fruitful for studying mediatization (Cook 2005, 2006; Donges 2008; Hjarvard 2008; Marcinkowski 2005, 2007; Sparrow 1999, 2006). Cross-nationally speaking one can distinguish different path-dependent models of institution-formation, different regulatory cultures of media policy, and different institutional arrangements ruling the media-politics interchanges. Within each country news-media organizations have become more similar to one another as they increasingly sought to differentiate themselves from their political environment. Cook (2005) and Sparrow (1999) conceptualize the news media as a social sector at least partially autonomous from external pressures and exhibiting some degree of internal homogeneity, which taken as a whole is able to exert a significant amount of power vis-à-vis other social sectors. Cross-national differences in how media institutions developed are explained with longstanding historical and ongoing struggles in the formation of media-politics relationships. The process of institution-formation explains why, in each country, the news is rather similar from one news outlet to the next. Several factors push news workers toward similar news within any given country: professional consensus, comparable routines of making news, the need under deadline to reduce high uncertainty about what is news, the reliance on standard definers of reality, and how public policies and government officials accommodate and regulate news workers as a distinct group (Cook 2006).

The broad acceptance of media logic as a 'rule of the game' (North 1990: 3) or 'way of life' (Altheide and Snow 1979: 237) gains a structure-forming quality. From the standpoint of political actors, the mass media

are providing a regular and persisting framework through which and within which they operate (Sparrow 1999). As an institution, the news media constrain the choice sets of political actors. The actions of the media thereby guide and channel – or structure – the actions of those working in government, public administration, and the various stages of the political process (Donges 2008; Jarren 2008a; Marcinkowski 2007; Sparrow 2006). From a neo-institutionalist standpoint a key aspect of mediatization is that the media constitute the contextual framework (or communicative infrastructure) through which politics presents itself to the public or is represented by news outlets.

The news media thereby exert important effects on political actors but there is an important reciprocal loop in this relationship. Modern-day politicians have internalized the media's attention rules, production routines, and selection criteria, and try to exploit this knowledge for attaining political goals. If political actors stage an event in order to get media attention, or if they fashion an event in order to fit to the media's needs, we speak of a self-mediatization (Meyer 2002). Politicians' instrumental use of marketing strategies, proactive news management and spin doctoring also fall under this term.

### **Self-mediatization of politics**

Understanding self-mediatization is crucial for gaining a complete picture of the interactional media–politics relationship. At the macro-level, the political system and media system are two distinct institutional spheres which fulfill divergent functions: the policy making versus the news making. However, because democratic politics is dependent on legitimacy through continuous public support, political actors (including governments, parties, and associations) have a vital interest in presenting their programs, goals, and accomplishments on the media stage. In fact, the principle of answerability and accountability oblige political actors to inform the public of their policies, decisions, and plans. To achieve this, actors in the political system have in recent years professionalized their self-presentational skills. They did so by setting up and upgrading 'media relations' units and staffing them with experts whose task it is to tailor all political output to media logic. By way of 'self-mediatization', politics engages in a process of self-initiated stage-management and media-friendly packaging. For example, when Tony Blair's New Labour government came into power in 1997, it introduced decisive changes to the approach of government communication. They installed a new Strategic Communications Unit, supplemented with a

24-hour media monitoring unit, to assist them with coordinating the dissemination of the government's message of the day; they appointed friendly former journalists to senior posts in government departments; they increased the number of special advisers with an explicit presentational role; they used new media modes to circumnavigate the Whitehall press corps and communicate with relevant parts of the public directly, among others. Many of these changes were so fundamental that they became subject to parliamentary inquiries, independent investigations, and critical media scrutiny (cf. Kuhn 2002; Scammell 2001; Seymour-Ure 2002).

The imperative of professionalizing political publicity holds 'that attending to communication through the media is not just an add-on to political decisions but is an integral part of the interrelated processes of [...] policy-making and government itself' (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999: 214). In the age of mediatized politics, media logic has recast the inner workings of the representative model of democracy (Chapter 3). To understand this process analytically, it is useful to distinguish three steps in the process of political communication (Meyer 2002; Sarcinelli 2011):

- the 'production' of politics at the level of program development, problem-solving, bargaining of interests, and decision making;
- the 'self-representation' of politics at the level of publicizing plans and justifying outcomes – increasingly with the help of political communication professionals; and
- the 'media representation' of politics in the form of news reports.

Within our model of representative democracy (Figure 3.2, Chapter 3), the production of politics refers basically to the implementation of preferences, the self-representation of politics, and the media representation of politics in the public sphere. Under the conditions of mediatized politics, self-representation by political actors has gained enormously in importance, both in terms of personnel and methods (Esser and Spanier 2005). Whereas political scientists describe its function innocuously as 'communicative representation' (Mansbridge 2009) and journalists sometimes pejoratively as 'spin doctoring' (Esser 2008a), we describe it as 'self-mediatization', that is, as self-initiated stage-management of politics by means of strategic communication in an effort to master the new rules that govern access to the public sphere (cf. Meyer 2002). It is a reflexive response by the political system to media-related changes in their institutional environment. This process has therefore also

been described as 'reflexive mediatization' whereby political actors take advantage of media services, anticipate their effects, and exploit them through strategic communication for their own purposes (Marcinkowski and Steiner 2010; Schulz 2011).

### **The political logic**

Differentiating between the 'production of politics' and 'self-presentation of politics' within the political system has important implications for understanding 'political logic'. Politics can be said to be ultimately about who has the right to make authoritative decisions and policies for solving problems that require political decisions. Thus, while power is an integral and inevitable part of politics, politics is also about policies and programs for solving societal problems according to various value systems or ideologies. Some might argue that power is the ultimate goal, and policy programs and promises are the means to reach that goal (Downs 1957). But others might argue that, while power is the means, being able to enact policies according to their own value system or ideology is the ultimate goal (Sjöblom 1968). The conflict between these two positions will probably never be resolved, but it is important to recognize that politics cannot be reduced to one dimension only (Strömbäck 2011; Strömbäck and Esser 2009). This has implications for defining political logic where three dimensions can be distinguished: politics, policy, and polity (Meyer 2002: 11–13; Pennings et al. 2006: 23–26). This triad has been developed in political science as an analytical tool to delineate the 'political' from the 'non-political', and to distinguish political logic from the logics of other societal spheres like economics, sports, or the media (Pennings et al. 2006: 23–26). This triad also provides guidelines for journalists as to how to communicate the essential features of political realities comprehensively and authentically (Meyer 2002: 1–26).

### **Policy aspects**

The policy-related facet refers to the 'production' side of politics. Within the model of representative democracy (Chapter 3), the production logic of politics dominates the stages of policy making and policy implementation. It is prevalent in phases and institutional settings that are characterized by coordinating and balancing interests, organizing negotiations, debating alternative policy choices, devising programs through deliberation and collective decisions, reaching consensus, and – ultimately – finding long-term solutions to substantial issues.



### Politics aspects

Politics in contrast is a more power-oriented facet. It refers to the 'self-presentational' side of politics. It is particularly prevalent when politicians seek to gain office in election campaigns or when they, once in office, approach governing as a permanent campaign. Formally speaking, self-presentational politics is dominant in the stages of interest articulation and preference mobilization, problem definition, policy communication, and outcome justification (see Figure 3.2, Chapter 3). It must be emphasized that self-presentational politics is not completely issueless. Its main goal is to garner support for one's program. Strategies for achieving this may include political pseudo-events, image projections, and symbolic politics. The democratic justifications behind presentational politics are to publicly visualize responsiveness, demonstrate answerability, personalize responsibility, and make account-giving a public act. Compared to the production side of politics, the presentational side is more interested in individuals than collectives, short-term effect than long-term reflection, front-stage than back-stage, strategy than policy, prioritization than objective needs, and gaining support than balancing out compromise.

### Polity aspects

If the first two facets of political logic pertain to the policy and politics dimension of politics, then polity is the third constituent element (see Table 7.1). It refers to the system of rules regulating the political process. Understood as the underlying institutional structure of democracy, the polity framework limits what political actors can do. Even within a single system many aspects of polity are currently undergoing change as democracies move from 'nationalized' to 'denationalized' entities, from a hierarchical 'government' approach to a network-oriented 'governance' approach, or from 'party democracy' to 'media democracy'. Equally important are those institutional elements in the set ups of democratic systems that have remained unchanged.

*Table 7.1* The three constituents of political logic

Political logic		
<i>Policy aspects</i>	<i>Politics aspects</i>	<i>Polity aspects</i>
Policy- and decision-based 'production' of politics	Power- and publicity-gaining 'self-presentational' politics	Institutional framework conditions of politics

From an internationally comparative perspective, differences in government systems, electoral systems, party systems, and political cultures must be accounted for in assessments of political logic as these institutional polity elements have direct implications for the policy and politics dimensions in a given country.

As Marcinkowski (2005) has argued convincingly, not all political institutions within a single system are equally prone to being mediatized – only those where opportunity structures allow for the political logic being complemented, overlaid, or replaced by media logic. Institutions that are dependent on public support and therefore guided by self-presentational logic will be affected the most. The US polity environment and the typical US-style election campaign, for example, offer multiple opportunities for accommodating media logic, and candidates and their advisers will see their electoral chances rather enhanced than threatened by adapting their operations to media logic. In contrast, Swiss-style direct-democratic votes on policy issues are a different matter – and somewhat less prone to mediatization – because the policy dimension of issue deliberation and the polity element of consensus democracy balance out the self-presentational element of the campaign process. Political institutions least likely to be affected by mediatization are those guided almost exclusively by the production logic of politics, for example confidential negotiating committees. Should media logic interfere with delicate negotiations nonetheless, it is likely to disrupt or even obstruct their way of working.

## **The media logic**

Altheide and Snow (1979) introduced the term media logic and described it as a specific ‘format’. Format defines how material is organized, the style of presentation, the focus or emphasis, and the ‘grammar’ of the mediated communication (Altheide and Snow 1979: 10). The main aspects of format are the selection, organization, and presentation of information, as Altheide (1995: 11) later explained. Media logic can thus be understood as a particular way of covering and interpreting social, cultural, and political phenomena. It encompasses all those imperatives that guide the production of news that – from the standpoint of the general public – serves as an authoritative representation of the political reality. This can create a very real tension with political logic.

News-media logic, like political logic, consists of a combination of several elements (Hallin and Mancini 2004a; Mazzoleni 2008d). The most

Table 7.2 The three constituents of news-media logic

News-media logic		
<i>Professional aspects</i>	<i>Commercial aspects</i>	<i>Technological aspects</i>
News-production according to distinctively journalistic norms and criteria	News-production according to economically motivated rationales	Medium-specific technological conditions of news-production

important constituents are professionalization and commercialization, followed by technological change (see Table 7.2). They describe different forces of the news media's operating logic, making media logic – like political logic – a hybrid concept that combines three sub-concepts. All three are assumed to causally influence the culture of news production in individual media organizations and in media institutions as a whole. More importantly, they are considered to be chiefly responsible for a historical process of greater differentiation of the media system from the political process (and thus help explain the relationship between media and political logics).

Based on these differences in the relationship between media and politics, Hallin and Mancini (2004a) have introduced three media-system models: the 'liberal model' which prevails in Great Britain, Ireland, and North America; the 'democratic corporatist model', which is located across northern continental Europe, and the 'polarized pluralist model', which is found in the Mediterranean countries of Southern Europe. Briefly stated,

the Liberal Model is characterized by a relative dominance of market mechanisms and of commercial media; the Democratic Corporatist Model by a historical coexistence of commercial media and media tied to organized social and political groups, and by a relatively active but legally limited role of the state; and the Polarized Pluralist Model by integration of the media into party politics, weaker historical development of commercial media, and a strong role of the state.

(Hallin and Mancini 2004a: 11)

According to the diversity of political systems (see Chapter 4), different patterns in media-political relations have emerged that are of relevance for understanding different shades of media logic.

### Professional aspects

Professionalization of journalism means that journalism is differentiated as an occupation and institution from other social institutions, particularly politics, and follows a distinct common culture and distinct sense of social purpose. Here we follow the argumentation of Hallin and Mancini (2004a, 2004b) who distinguish three dimensions.

Professionalism means growing autonomy from outside influences and outside control over one's work. In liberal and democratic-corporatist media systems, journalism has achieved autonomy at a faster rate and to a greater extent than in polarized-pluralist systems. In liberal and democratic-corporatist systems, this helped erode press/party parallelism. In polarized-pluralist systems, journalists have been subject to political instrumentalization, or even control, to a certain extent until today, and are thus more likely to lack a set of professional practices that is different from political logic.

Professionalism means, secondly, a distinct set of professional norms like protecting sources, separating news and advertisements, and – most importantly – common rules for selecting material. News factors like timeliness, proximity, surprise, conflict, harm, personalization, or elite involvement have emerged as universally accepted criteria for determining newsworthiness. Interestingly, norms that signal clear distance to a partisan-political logic (like objectivity, neutrality, fourth estate, watchdog) gained broad acceptance first in liberal systems, from where they diffused later into democratic-corporatist systems (but more often as an ideal than a practice). In democratic-corporatist systems, journalistic norms that are in accordance with political logic (like advocacy, proportional representation of viewpoints, civic education) also prevailed. In polarized-pluralist systems, partisan-political rather than distinctively journalistic criteria continue to guide news work.

Professionalism means, thirdly, a claim to serve the public interest. Being recognized by society as a 'public trust' is an important historical development in the professionalization of journalism. It assigns certain democratic functions to the news media that are crucial for the chain of responsibility and accountability (see Chapter 3), like contributing to enlightened understanding through substantive and uncensored information, contributing to public deliberation and opinion formation through diverse and inclusive issue debates, monitoring the political environment and alerting citizens to important and potentially dangerous developments, as well as facilitating the communicative exchange between the governed and the governing and holding the

latter accountable in case of misconduct or underperformance. Serving as a public trust justifies certain legal privileges and eases journalists' relations with sources and other social institutions. Even in liberal systems, the 'social responsibility model' of journalism served as a guiding principle from the beginning (aiming at providing information that is important for informed citizenship and rational participation, rather than information that the political elite allows to be known), but already in the 1940s the US Hutchinson Commission of the Press (1947) saw this principle compromised by commercial influences (to which we turn in the next section).

Yet there is another aspect of media professionalism that deserves attention: journalistic voice (Zaller 1999). Journalists want to be more than mere mouthpieces of politicians and would rather control, frame, and interpret the flow of political communication themselves. According to inner-professional standards, an excellent piece of journalism is one that is rich in journalistic interpretation and critical analysis. This enhances peer recognition, professional prestige – and is intellectually more rewarding. Thus, journalists have an interest in creating and selling a form of journalism that offers more than stenographic transcription of what others have said, or one that appeals to the lowest common denominator of the mass market. What journalists add should be, in their ideal, as arresting and manifestly important as possible – so as to call attention to journalists and to the importance of their work (Zaller 1999).

This understanding of professional journalism as an autonomous, value-added process underwent a shift in the late 1960s toward 'critical professionalism' (first in liberal systems, later in democratic corporatist systems). A new ideal of critical scrutiny emerged that concentrated on blunders in political strategy and mistakes in governing (Hallin and Mancini 2004b; Neveu 2002). Critical journalists will, for every political statement, seek a counter-statement from an opponent, thus creating a more confrontational climate in media-politics relations (Westerstahl and Johansson 1986). Critical professionalism grew out of increased levels of education (leading to more reflexivity and analysis in news reporting) and a general shift toward post-materialist values. Combined with new opportunities of opinion-polling it contributed to the emergence of a new, self-assured role-understanding: a self-perception of journalism as the (better) representative of the public will (Hallin and Mancini 2004b; Patterson 2009).

This new style of more assertive, skeptical reporting and interpretation turned at times adversarial when journalists felt threatened in

their reporting options. In order to protect their professional integrity and their public image as an independent institution, journalists grew increasingly critical toward proactive news management and manipulative message control by political communication experts responsible for the self-representation of politics. The self-mediatization of politics led to 'countermeasures' like negative, deconstructive, or even cynical news (Blumler 1999; Kerbel 1999; Zaller 1999), and contributed in the US and Western Europe to a 'démontage of politics' in public affairs coverage (Kepplinger 1998; Patterson 1993).

We can thus distinguish several effects of professional imperatives on political news coverage:

- gatekeeping and reporting according to news values (instead of political values);
- controlling access to the mediated public sphere (by selecting voices and standpoints according to news values);
- agenda setting (by selecting and prioritizing issues according to news values);
- balanced reporting (incorporating counter-standpoints, dissociating journalism from being a political mouthpiece);
- interpretative, analytical reporting (dissociating journalism from being a political mouthpiece; contributing to informed citizenship; participating actively in public opinion formation; inserting critical expertise);
- critical watchdog reporting (observing public-interest obligation like account-holding, creating transparency, demanding answerability; but also inserting critical professionalism);
- adversarial attack-dog reporting (countering attempts of political instrumentalization; but also incorporating critical professionalism).

Many of these professional aspects refer to the news media in their role of an independent representative of the public that may pressurize officials – according to its own standards and operating logic – to be responsive to those very demands it has made public in the first place, and evaluate them accordingly. As either a publicly recognized or a mere self-appointed account-holder it can sanction officials with good or bad press. Mediatization theory expects that with increasing professionalization the news media assume a more autonomous, proactive role within core processes of representative democracy – those of responsibility and accountability (see Chapter 3).

### Commercial aspects

Commercialization as the second core constituent of media logic has a strained relationship with professionalization. Journalists in many news organizations traditionally have insisted on a principal separation between the newsroom on the one side and the business departments (advertising, marketing, owner interests) on the other. They did so in an effort to preserve their autonomy against commercial forces. Yet, under the influence of growing neo-liberalism and deregulation in most Western media systems, news organizations have lost autonomy in relation to the market at the same time as they became more detached from the political system. Put differently, commercialization pushed news organizations further away from the world of politics but more toward the world of business. As a result, Hallin and Mancini (2004a) state, ‘the journalist’s main objective is no longer to disseminate ideas and create social consensus around them, but to produce entertainment and information that can be sold to individual consumers’ (p. 277). They further argue that commercial imperatives are most pronounced in the media logic of liberal systems, and that in recent times more and more media organizations in the democratic-corporatist and polarized-pluralist systems have fallen under their influence too. Yet one could make the argument that, for example, in democratic-corporatist systems public service broadcasters and quality newspapers are still more driven by professional than commercial considerations – although even they could not escape the transformational effects of the ‘commercial deluge’ since the mid 1980s (Hallin and Mancini 2004a: 252).

Mazzoleni (2008b, 2008c; see also Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999; Hallin and Mancini 2004a: 278–281) distinguishes several effects of commercial imperatives on political communication:

- spectacularization (playing up sensational or uncommon features of political events);
- confrontainment (focusing on conflict rather than compromise, scandal rather than investigation);
- dramatization (relying on emotionalization, visualization, polarization, and stereotyping for storytelling; adopting ‘game schema’ and ‘horse race frames’ in election coverage);
- infotainment (packaging political news in appealing formats by using ‘soft news’ angles and ‘episodic framing’; emphasizing the ‘common citizen’ perspective by privileging ordinary citizens and common sense over elite discourse and party representatives);

- personalization (attributing political activity to individuals as opposed to parties and institutions; constructing political news around persons with their own temperaments, charisma, looks, idiosyncrasies, ideas; pressurizing political institutions to presidentialize their leadership style and recruit more personnel with telegenic image, popular rhetoric, and marketable messages);
- transformation of discourse (favoring 'sound bite news' that fragments the political discourse in brief, catchy phrases, and 'image bite news' that relies on compelling visuals);
- depoliticization (marginalizing substantial issue discussion since it is considered a turnoff in race for ratings and profit; strategic instead of issue framing; reducing national and international policy coverage).

It must be emphasized that some of these indicators have actually a 'professional' core but have been overlaid with a 'commercial' logic. A case in point is *confrontainment*. A focus on conflict and scandal is of high commercial 'animation value' but, at the same time, connected to the rise of critical professionalism. Confrontainment can thus be said to reflect a commercially motivated exaggeration of the professionally motivated watchdog function. Put differently, confrontainment is driven simultaneously by the desire of media organizations to compete for audience, and by the desire of journalists to build professional prestige and assert their independence vis-à-vis political actors. Other hybrid elements of media logic, combining commercial and professional imperatives, include negative tonality, or strategic reporting.

Mediatization theory recognizes that commercial influences may have a certain liberating, mobilizing effect on media and politics, and also open up new possibilities. By and large, however, proponents point to potentially detrimental effects for representative democracy – particularly with regard to the role of the news media in chains of responsibility and accountability. They fear that commercial imperatives of media logic lead to an insufficient supply of substance in public affairs coverage that no longer allows for an adequate understanding and evaluation of available policy options. They further suspect that commercial media logic will discourage political interest, subvert political knowledge, and disadvantage the formation of informed opinions as well as the deliberation of key issues. The media may become unreliable or altogether unhelpful in assessing whether policy-makers' decisions match citizens' preferences. A decline in transparent and comprehensive policy coverage may further undermine the media's capacity to act



as an institutionalized account-holder; its specific kind of coverage may even discourage citizens to get involved themselves, check on their representatives, and fight for their interests. We will expand this discussion further in Chapter 8 and, at this point, move on to the third component of the hybrid concept of media logic, technology.

### **Technological aspects**

A third element of media logic is technology. It refers to how the applied communication technologies shape content in production and reproduction processes. The ways in which radio, television, print, and internet translate political reality into story 'formats' is influenced by the physical nature of their respective information technology. Technology pressures the news practitioners embedded within them to adopt certain formats – television formats for instance are arguably more linear, more visual, more affective, and less cognitively complex than print formats.

A core question is what the advent of new online media will contribute to the present understanding of mediatization. With its openness, interactive structure, and flexibility, the internet creates new opportunities for bottom-up communication, for the expression of public preferences, for participation in policy making, and for holding political actors accountable for their actions (through e-consultation, online petitions, alternative blogs, citizen journalists; see Coleman and Blumler 2009; Brants and Voltmer 2011). The interactive, participatory logic of the internet has also created new opportunities for countering the traditional top-down communication of existing print and broadcast media: new websites – either by news aggregators or alternative suppliers – increasingly threaten the business model of legacy media, the professional model of journalism, and the traditional understanding of political news (Brants and Voltmer 2011). Sobering aspects of this new interactive online logic are that its participatory and deliberative potential has rarely been realized so far, that its potential of creating multiple public spheres has rather increased fragmentation and polarization, and that it thus far has enriched popular culture more than institutionalized politics (Dahlgren 2009; Hindman 2009). However, it must be also emphasized that the internet has had only modest success in displacing traditional media sources (Hindman 2009), and there is strong evidence that the mediatization effects of the old media will endure in the new. By this we mean that online news providers may only resonate professionally and commercially in the long run if their content follows a similar media logic to their offline counterparts.

Some observers thus expect a convergence process whereby old and new media operate alongside each other with a singular, merged media logic (Schulz 2004). The central conclusion at the moment is that both traditional news media logic and new interactive online logic seem to ‘imply a process whereby established communication elites are losing their ability to control the public debate and the way in which political issues are framed’ (Brants and Voltmer 2011: 11).

## Conclusion

We conclude our discussion of political logic by reiterating that political logic consists of three facets (Table 7.1): The two more prominent ones are the policy-oriented ‘production side’ and the politics-oriented ‘self-presentational side’. The third facet, the polity-oriented ‘institutional side’, is somewhat beneath the surface of day-to-day politics but consequential for its execution. It is crucial to understand that most political events and processes are composed of all three facets, and public communication about them will need to reflect all three facets if it aims to meet the requirements of responsibility and accountability as laid in Chapter 3. This would be the yardstick for covering politics according to political logic: news media would be expected to pay tribute to all three aspects of the political in their public affairs coverage (Meyer 2002). It would facilitate an ‘enlightened understanding’ of politics which is necessary for citizens to form their preferences and recognize whether political decisions correspond with their preferences or not (important elements of the chain of responsibility in our model of representative democracy; see Chapter 3). Transparent and comprehensive information allows citizens also to better evaluate the performance of policy-makers and sanction them in case they do not meet expected standards (which are important elements of the chain of accountability).

It is an unresolved scholarly debate whether or not to demand of the media the ‘full’ democratic standard or a ‘reduced’ standard in their public political affairs coverage (Bennett 2003; Patterson 2003; Zaller 2003), yet most agree that citizens can only acquire relevant information from the media about politics if the media report on the political process in all its diverse dimensions and facets (Meyer 2002; Sarcinelli 2011). The degree to which the media cover politics according to political logic or media logic is a core question of mediatization research. It is another open question that can only be answered by empirical studies of concrete cases whether the intrusion of media logic leads to an enhancement, adaptation, obstruction or even substitution of political

functions (Marcinkowski 2005). The composition of political logic (i.e. the proportion of its three facets) behind an event or within an institution predetermines its chance of being mediatized, and predetermines the concrete mediatization effect. This leads Marcinkowski (2005: 364) to argue that a democratic system will never be mediatized in toto but rather be distinguished 'by islands of higher and lower mediatization'. Media logic affects the front-stage part of political activity ('politics') more easily and forcefully than the back-stage part (genuine 'policy making'). One should thus refrain from making sweeping assumptions about transformations of the entire model of representative democracy (see Figure 3.2, Chapter 3) without detailed, comprehensive analyses of all political institutions and processes. It should further be taken into account that we are confronted with a variety of democratic settings in the West (Chapter 4), each offering different entry points and defense barriers to media influences.

We conclude our discussion of media logic by reiterating that its three facets are professional, commercial, and technological aspects (see Table 7.2). Over time, commercialization helped push news organizations further away from the world of politics and more toward the world of economics. It has had the additional effect of eroding various elements of journalistic professionalism in the long run.

Professionalization, commercialization, and technological change are the independent variables that explain (or drive) media logic but it is important to recognize that these processes have developed differently in different countries and across time. It follows that media logic appears in diverse shades and compositions across types of media channels and genres, and across time periods and media systems. For example, private television stations and tabloid newspapers in a highly commercialized media market (like contemporary US) are likely to be guided by a more commercially driven composition of media logic than public service channels and quality newspapers in the Scandinavian countries of the 1960s. The difference in media logic between public broadcasters and highbrow quality newspapers on the one hand and commercial broadcasters and lowbrow popular newspapers on the other hand may in certain fields be weaker than is theoretically often assumed (Esser 2008b; Strömbäck and Dimitrova 2011).

Our tripartite differentiation of facets of media logic allows for more precise predictions about the mediatization of politics in different contexts. But it must be emphasized that the concrete effects of mediatization on politics depend on the respective policy, process, and polity conditions. Based on these theoretical foundations (and the necessary

differentiations between different kinds of political and media arrangements) the following Chapter 8 turns to concrete empirical evidence gathered by colleagues inside and outside NCCR Democracy. It will conclude with an overall assessment of implications of the mediatization of politics for representative democracy.

# 8

## Mediatization Effects on Political News, Political Actors, Political Decisions, and Political Audiences

*Frank Esser and Jörg Matthes*

We define mediatization as the growing intrusion of media logic as an institutional rule into fields where other rules of defining appropriate behavior prevailed (see Chapter 7). Mediatization can lead to an enhancement, adaptation, obstruction, or even substitution of political functions by the logic of the media system. At its extreme it can lead to a state of ‘mediatized politics’ where politics ‘has lost its autonomy, has become dependent in its central functions on mass media, and is continuously shaped by interactions with mass media’ (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999: 250). The professional, commercial, and technological production rules of the media –its operating logic – are important requirements which political actors must take into account if they are to receive publicity, public support, and legitimacy. Media logic provides an incentive structure that contextualizes, and often shapes, political processes – particularly those that are dependent on publicity and public support. From this it follows that – contrary to a priori assumptions of a fully transformed ‘media democracy’ – the concept of mediatization does not assume a complete ‘colonialization’ of politics by the media. Rather we expect that some institutions, stages, and activities in the political process will be mediatized more than others, depending on how *media-compatible* they are (Marcinkowski 2005). Those characterized by the power- and publicity-gaining self-presentational aspects of political logic are more likely to be affected by media logic than those characterized by the policy- and decision-based production aspects. Put simply: political institutions in need of publicity are easier to mediatize than others (Marcinkowski and Steiner 2010).

We acknowledge that mediatization may endanger the functioning of representative democracy in some parts and to some degree but assume that the process of mediatization is not one-sided and self-contained. Mediatization is not one-sided because not everything that looks like media dominance can actually be attributed to the independent behavior of journalists. Often it is political actors themselves who use the mass media for their own ends: they may anticipate media logic by staging events whose sole purpose it is to generate news coverage for their own interests; they may have an interest in playing up certain media issues and playing down others in an effort to hurt the opposition; or they may substitute political activities by mediated activities if the latter allow them to mobilize their base more effectively than via party channels. Despite growing attempts by political actors to professionalize their self-mediatization strategies, there is plenty of evidence that political actors quickly lose control over the news agenda – not the least because the media dislikes to be instrumentalized.

### **Mediatization of politics as a multi-dimensional concept**

To gauge the degree of mediatization, Strömbäck (2008, see also Strömbäck and Esser 2009) has suggested a useful typology that distinguishes four dimensions of mediatization. Developing this a little further, we distinguish four dimensions of mediatization focusing on (1) contents, (2) actors, (3) organizations and processes, and (4) audiences of political communication.

- The first dimension examines whether media coverage of political affairs is predominantly shaped by media logic or political logic.
- The second dimension examines how political actors (individuals) are guided by elements of media logic.
- The third dimension investigates how political organizations and decision-making institutions (parties, governments, interest groups, negotiation committees, and bargaining processes) are affected by media logic.
- The fourth dimension investigates the effects of mediatization on people's knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

An important pre-condition for mediatization processes is the growing independence of the media from political institutions. This historical process has progressed at different rates and to different levels in contemporary societies. In most cases, though, the mass media have

established themselves as a highly influential new player in the intermediary system of society, now competing for attention and credibility with parties, churches, unions, interest groups, and other 'old' intermediaries. International surveys show that the media have become the most important source of political information for the wider public, so that the question of how 'political reality' is constructed by the news media is of general importance (dimension 1). We assume that news production today is more closely linked to media logic – that is, driven by professional and commercial motives. We also assume that the growing importance of the media and their media logics has placed great demands on political actors (dimension 2), on organizations and the intermediary system (dimension 3), on policy-making institutions (dimension 3), and on citizens (dimension 4). The model of representative democracy described in Chapter 3 is thus expected to be undergoing transformational change.

Since we understand mediatization as a developmental process, empirical research should ideally employ longitudinal designs. Because the main drivers of media logic – professional, commercial, and technological development – are not universally consistent across countries, empirical research into mediatization should be context-sensitive and thus adopt cross-national comparative designs.

As should also be apparent from the above, the four dimensions of mediatization are highly intercorrelated. The breakdown into separate dimensions might help clarify the concept and aid in assessing the degree to which politics in a particular setting is mediatized. This does not, however, imply that the process of mediatization must be linear or unidirectional. As argued earlier, it is certainly conceivable that the impact of media logic on political actors, located within political institutions, varies both within and across countries and across time and circumstances. Against this background, several main lines of challenges to democracy can be fleshed out (Chapter 7; see also Chapter 4 on the varieties of democracy).

### **Precondition: Independence of the news media from political institutions**

For the media to have an independent impact upon other social or political actors or institutions, as implied by the mediatization thesis, they have to form an institution in their own right. Lucht and Udris (2011; Udris and Lucht 2009) examined the degree of functional differentiation – or lack of differentiation – between media and political

institutions in five countries over time. This team traced the retreat of organizational links between news organizations and political organizations in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Great Britain over an almost 50-year period from 1960 to 2008. In each of these countries (treated as representatives of the democratic-corporatist model, pluralist-polarized, and liberal model of media-politics relations; see Hallin and Mancini 2004a), the authors studied the 30 largest print-news titles (popular, mid-market, and quality outlets published daily or weekly) as well as the most-watched television information programs (pursuing hard news, soft news, or mixed approaches) for their links to parties, churches, associations, and other intermediary or government institutions. Their analysis shows that the disentanglement of the press from their former social and political ties has progressed first and foremost in the liberal system (Britain), followed by the largest democratic-corporatist system (Germany), and then by the smallest democratic-corporatist system (Switzerland). In Austria, another smallish corporatist system, the process is still underway and political parallelism of the press still fairly noticeable. The only polarized-pluralist system in the sample (France) provides an ambivalent picture. Developments in the French press are in many ways similar to those in the other two models but also influenced – and at times offset – by the historically close ties between media and politics (reflecting the deep cultural embedding of the media more than its crude instrumentalization). The French television sector has, as in the other two models, seen the advent of programs mixing hard and soft news but hard news still accounts for most programs.

From a cross-national and cross-temporal standpoint we can deduce from this study that mediatization effects are more widespread today than in the past, and that they are most pervasive in the liberal systems and least common in the polarized-pluralist systems. An important similarity across all systems could be observed with regard to how the differentiation process takes place: first the circulation of news outlets with close social or political ties decreases; then news outlets with close social or political ties go either out of business or cut their former ties to social or political institutions and transform themselves into purely economic organizations.

### **Challenge 1: Mediatization of political reality in ‘news’**

Given the centrality of media to politics, political actors are continuously involved in efforts to shape news coverage of political and current



affairs. At the same time, the media personnel do not want to be reduced to passive carriers of political actors' messages. Journalists view it as their professional responsibility to act as a watchdog and to make their own decisions regarding what to cover and how to cover it. Whether journalists or their sources have the most power in this 'negotiation of newsworthiness' (Cook 2005) is a contested issue. What is consequential in this context is whether news-media content is shaped mainly by the characteristics and needs of the media or by the wants and needs of political actors and institutions. In the former case, news-media logic is decisive for how the media cover social and political affairs, whereas in the latter case political logic is decisive (Strömbäck 2011). This suggests that the first important aspect of the mediatization of politics is the degree to which news-media content is determined mainly by news-media logic as opposed to political logic.

Oftentimes nowadays, the production of news is not primarily driven by the needs of politicians but by the tastes and preferences of media consumers, potentially giving birth to a populist political culture (see chapters 7 and 9 of this volume). Such a dominance of media logic is often theorized to result in a simplification, dramatization, or negative representation of politics favoring conflict, scandals, and episodic over thematic frames. In fact, political communication scholars in Europe and North America have observed structural trends in the news coverage of politics such as a shift from hard news to soft news (Patterson 2000), an increase of political trivialization (Bennett 2003), a rising negativity in political news coverage (Farnsworth and Lichter 2007), and a shrinking degree of sound bites by political actors (Patterson 2000; for European data see Esser 2008a). As should be apparent, all these developments are expected to have a negative impact on the functioning of representative democracy. After all they do not help put pressure on politicians to address legitimate concerns of the public, nor do they put the news media in a more credible position to demand responsible behavior of politicians – they rather discredit the media's role within the chains of responsiveness and accountability (see chapters 3 and 7).

Along this line of argument, Patterson (2002) has found that – with the rise of interpretive journalism – media coverage of political campaigns in the US has become overwhelmingly negative (see also Farnsworth and Lichter 2006). Likewise, findings by Kepplinger's (1998, 2002) extensive analysis of German newspapers from 1951 to 1995 suggest an increase of negative statements about politicians (with a constant share of positive statements) and an increasing amount of items referring to problems (with a decreasing amount describing solutions).

Beyond the increasing negative characterization of politics (as a consequence of mediatization), Patterson's (1993) content analysis of US news magazines also found a rising share of horse-race journalism, focusing on strategies, personalities, and campaign tactics rather than on substantial issue frames. Research indicates that this development is less present in Europe compared to the US (see for instance, Wilke and Reinemann 2000). Still, with a diminishing level of substance in political coverage, the watchdog function of journalism is undermined and the media platform is more often used by journalists or 'the man in the street' than by substantive experts or politicians. The consequences of these forms of coverage are predominantly negative. For instance, horse-race coverage has been shown to foster public distrust, particularly among politically less sophisticated people (Cappella and Jamieson 1997).

Another line of research has investigated the personalization of politics as an indicator of mediatization. Though research on personalization has been characterized by various theoretical frameworks, disagreement about definitions, and diverse methodologies (see Adam and Maier 2010), the prevailing key argument is that news coverage emphasizing candidates, politicians, and personalities has increased over time when compared to organizations, parties, and issues. Several reasons for this observation have been suggested. One the one hand, it is expected that the media increasingly 'have a limited capability to transmit a full and complete picture of the political world, so they give priority to those aspects that can be transformed into good media products' (Campus 2010: 221). On the other hand, it is believed that the relevance of political parties in the political communication process is waning, and this, in turn, opens the floor to personalities as transmitters of political messages (Dalton 2000). The negative implications of a rising personalization of politics for the functioning of democracy are straightforward: when serious, argument-based issue politics is increasingly displaced by political performers that 'have gained the status of celebrities, like rock stars or movie stars' (Campus 2010: 223), the public is seduced into making superficial judgments based on largely irrelevant criteria.

Despite its intuitive appeal, however, there is only limited support for the personalization thesis in recent scholarly literature (Adam and Maier 2010; Kriesi 2011; Vliedenthart et al. 2010). In fact, neither has personalization of media content increased over the past decades, nor is there a rising influence of personality or candidate-based decision-making processes in public opinion formation (Adam and Maier 2010; for cross-country evidence, see Kriesi 2011).

Furthermore, with news content determined by media logic, the lines between news and entertainment become increasingly blurred. As Blumler and Kavanagh (1999: 225) have put it,

Key boundaries that previously shaped the political communication field seem to be dissolving – for example, between ‘political’ and ‘nonpolitical’ genres, between matters of ‘public’ and ‘private’ concern, between ‘quality’ and ‘tabloid’ approaches to politics, between journalists serving audiences as ‘informers’ and as ‘entertainers’, and between ‘mass’ and ‘specialist’, ‘general’ and ‘attentive’ audiences.

This has stimulated a debate about the quality and future of news journalism, culminating in the question of whether political news will endure to serve its basic function of informing the public about issues of collective interest.

After all, these trends toward negativity, personalization, and populism can undermine the chain of responsiveness insofar as they compromise the formation of people’s preferences: lack of access to substantive information, lack of access to undistorted and diverse information, and lack of opportunity to deliberate pose serious challenges to a vivid public sphere and thus democratic life. These content features may also undermine the chain of accountability by handicapping citizens’ capability to evaluate the inclusiveness and fairness of the policy-making process as well as properly evaluate political outcomes for their service to the public good (see Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3).

Yet, the extent to which political news is shaped by media logic is vastly different across systems, as an ongoing study by Esser (2008a; see also Esser and Buechel 2012; Esser and Umbricht 2012) indicates. It compares television and newspaper reporting of public affairs across space and time. The study is interested in the media-centered political reporting style in which, increasingly, journalists become the stories’ main news-makers, not politicians or other social actors. This style can be interpreted as professionally motivated behavior by journalists to increase their influence, authority, and prestige – and, ultimately, their control over the news content. Its theoretical underpinnings are the concepts of ‘media intrusion’ (Baran 1990) or ‘journalistic intervention’ (Blumler and Gurevitch 2001). Media interventionism in election campaigns is high when journalists report on politics in their own words, scenarios, and assessments – and when they, for example, grant politicians only limited opportunities to present themselves with their own voice in the news.

In accordance with the theoretical accounts outlined so far, the contextual setting of the US is expected to favor a news culture that displays the largest degree of journalistic intervention. At the other extreme of the spectrum is France, a prototype of the polarized-pluralist model of media–politics relations, where the least inclination to journalistic intervention is expected. These assumptions were tested with a content analysis of television election news in the US, Great Britain, Germany, and France over two election cycles. The study found, indeed, evidence of a more interventionist US approach and a non-interventionist French approach (Esser 2008a). French election stories displayed a more passive, yielding reporting style and were more structured by political logic whereas US (and to a lesser degree German) stories were more structured by interventionist media logic.

In addition to this television study, Esser and Umbricht (2012) conducted a newspaper content analysis comparing political affairs coverage from six countries (Great Britain, US, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France) over five decades (1960–2010). This attempt to map reporting styles outside election periods also found strong evidence in support of Hallin and Mancini's (2004a) three models. Political news coverage in liberal systems is most forcefully characterized by media logic, in particular by the commercial imperatives of media logic. In Great Britain and the US (i.e. countries of the liberal system) political news coverage is characterized by personalization, strategy frames, negativism, conflict-focus, and a generally audience-grabbing 'pragmatic' approach to political reporting. Coverage in Switzerland and in Germany (i.e. in the countries of the democratic-corporatist model) shows less conflict, less negativism, less personalization, little to no criticism of the government or governing, less strategic framing, a greater reliance on established sources, and a generally sacerdotal approach to political reporting. Beyond the direct implications these results have for the effectiveness of the chains of responsiveness and accountability, this study also found that the news media in the different countries under examination contribute to different understandings of democracy. In their daily political affairs coverage, the Swiss news organizations exhibit quality standards much more in line with the idealistic conception of a participatory or consensus democracy, whereas the quality standards being realized in US news coverage are more in accordance with a pragmatic, more elitist conception.

The finding that Switzerland is an exceptional case – largely protected from destabilizing influences of an over-commercialized media logic – is confirmed by findings by Matthes et al. (2010) on Swiss news coverage

in Swiss direct-democratic campaigns. They found no signs at all to diagnose a negative or impertinent rendering of politics (as a consequence of mediatization). For instance, a content analysis of television and newspaper coverage for the asylum-law campaign revealed that only 6.7 per cent of all statements voiced by political actors (in news coverage) included a direct attack on the political opponent. By contrast, news coverage was rather substantial, factual, and based on arguments that were relevant to the campaign. In contrast to US findings (e.g. Patterson 1993) there was a very low share of episodic news frames present in the news (only 2.8 per cent). At least in the peculiar case of Switzerland, there are hardly any traces for a media logic dominating the news. In fact, Swiss news coverage seems to play a de-escalating role, focusing on substantial arguments rather than sharp conflict. The exceptional role of the Swiss democracy, which features already prominently in our comparative discussion of political systems (see Figures 4.5 and 4.9 in Chapter 4 on the varieties of democracy), is also reflected in these findings on the Swiss media system and news culture.

This general picture was further confirmed by another content analysis of Swiss (and German) news exploring the question of whether media coverage of political affairs still reflects features of political logic or is solely driven by a standardized media logic. This study by Floss and Marcinkowski (2008) finds – in line with expectations – that news coverage of negotiating processes in Switzerland is characterized by a greater amount of collective orientation and consensus frames (and framed less in personalized and conflictual scenarios than in Germany). News framing thus seems to reflect core polity aspects of a country's political logic, although it may also contain considerable elements of media logic.

## **Challenge 2: Consequences of mediatization on political actors and organizations**

The more dependent political actors and organizations are on public opinion, and the greater their need to influence public opinion, the greater their dependence on, and hence their need to influence, the news media and their coverage. There are three strategies to achieve this (Strömbäck 2011: 375): one is to leverage the advantage political actors retain with respect to the access to information that might be transformed into news. Another strategy is through increased efforts at agenda-building and news management. A third strategy is to make the media and their potential reactions an important consideration in all political processes, from the selection of issues to promote, policies

to pursue, and people to appoint or nominate, to the way campaigns are run.

Thus, to influence the news, political actors must devote ever more resources to the task of news management. And yet, success may come at a price – the adaptation to or adoption of media logic. Political actors may reach their immediate goal of getting ‘into the news as they wish’, but ‘they may end up losing the war, as standards of newsworthiness begin to become prime criteria to evaluate issues, policies, and politics’, as Cook (2005: 163) has argued so forcefully.

The pressure to ‘perform’ in an audience democracy, to be ‘authentic and empathic, populist, and entertaining’ (Brants et al. 2010: 31) is likely to privilege those actors and organizations who fully adapt to the media logic. This is particularly true of populist leaders and movements, potentially resulting in a rise of populism (Mazzoleni 2008a; Mazzoleni et al. 2003; Mény and Surel 2002). In a heavily mediatized democracy populism benefits from a media complicity (Mazzoleni 2008a), as a result of which the news media rather prefer popular, that is dramatized and emotionalized, messages (as conveyed by populist political leaders) over a more neutral but less arousing style of political reporting.

As a consequence, and challenge to democracy, political success might then be determined by media competence, not substantive competence (Reinemann 2010), and party leaders ‘are more likely to be chosen because of their ability to deal with the media rather than their skills of building alliances across social groups and fractions’ (Brants and Voltmer 2011: 6). As Papadopoulus observed, there is also a risk of a broadening gap between mediatized ‘front-stage’ politics and the more complex policy-making activities which take place at the ‘back-stage’ involving non-elected actors. This could result in a decreasing overlap between the true policy agenda (driven by the political logic) and the media agenda (driven by the media logic). This insight also reflects the argument of Chapter 7 that policy is less prone to mediatization compared to politics.

As another potential threat to democracy, a spiral of mistrust might evolve between journalists and politicians. The reason is that politicians become more sophisticated in instrumentalizing journalists for their own purposes and, as a consequence, ‘journalists complain about politicians who, to control the uncertainty of the outcome of free publicity, have in a process of “mediatization” professionalized the art of news management and introduced the framing and packaging of spin’ (Brants et al. 2010: 29). It follows that journalists might put less trust in

politicians, which in turn could have an impact on politicians' trust in journalism as well.

There is some evidence for mediatized campaigning strategies by political actors. For instance, Maurer (2010) found that political actors in Germany (and the news media) largely fail to precisely communicate their substantial goals and policies. However, our research on three direct-democratic campaigns conducted in Switzerland came to a more positive conclusion. Hänggeli and Kriesi (2010) and Hänggeli (2010) report findings indicating that the news media rather faithfully reproduce the framing by camps present in direct-democratic campaigns. Using a content analysis of all campaign material and all campaign news coverage (television and newspaper), they could show that the frames in the news media generally correspond to the frames found in the media input communicated by political actors. They also found that the ratio between pro and contra arguments in news was around one, signaling that the media generally tended to balance the news. Personal interviews conducted with all main campaigners supported the conclusion that media coverage was balanced rather than biased. Only very few campaigners felt they were treated badly in their respective news coverage. The study also found that there was a clear dialogue between the camps visible in news coverage. That is, the audience was given the possibility of learning about the positions of all camps involved. Nevertheless, such campaign dialogue was, as could be expected, significantly less present in free news media. The free press mediated less and provided a less coherent picture. These newspapers mainly reprinted the information provided by the news agency.

Compared to the media input, however, there were a few differences in the media's news reporting. First, media input involving attacks and conflicts was generally more likely to be covered. Still (and quite remarkably), substantive frames largely dominated all campaigns. Thus, there was strong indication that Swiss direct-democratic campaigns were primarily conducted in substantive terms. Second, the news media rarely increased the share of the main frames compared to the media input because the respective political actors were very active with advertisements and focused on the respective frames in their ads. Third, compared to media input, the media increased the share of counter-frames three times. These findings again reflect a media logic that favors dialogue and vital exchange of arguments. Taken together, the findings of this project are not at all alarming for the quality of direct-democratic campaigns. Overall, one could say that the news media are doing quite a good job in this specific context. They *mediate* the frames provided

by political actors. Rephrased, instead of political actors (and their campaign material) being governed by a media logic, one could conclude that media content is governed by a political logic.

From a different vantage point, the study of Swiss direct-democratic campaigns revealed additional findings that are compatible with this claim. Thus, in his extensive analysis of eight direct-democratic campaigns, Bernhard (2010) analyzed the role of the news media in explaining the campaign-related power of political actors. Starting with the general observation that the media have become an autonomous force in politics, Bernhard conducted interviews with all relevant campaign managers who acted on behalf of their respective organizations. Campaign-related power was measured with reputational indicators based on a series of questions. Combining these data with a content analysis of campaign coverage, he found that media coverage increased rather than decreased campaign-related power. Furthermore, results suggested that the amount of resources in general and of money in particular have a positive impact on power, though this influence is much smaller than is commonly expected. Based on these findings, Bernhard (2010: 18) concludes that,

direct democracy thus not only enables weak actors (such as parliamentary minorities or even outsiders) to provoke a public debate on issues of their concern, but also to gain a fair amount of media access. In this sense, Swiss media can be credited with a ‘democratizing force’ in these campaigns.

This underscores the importance of political communication as a key precondition of democracy (Chapter 2), and its positive contribution to democracy if the news media’s role is confined to mediation rather than mediatization. It also illustrates the importance of polity again, that is, of specific contextual conditions, which in the case of Switzerland seem rather favorable for positive media effects (see chapters 4 and 7).

### **Challenge 3: Consequences of mediatization on political organizations and decision-making institutions**

Media-driven democratic systems are assumed to cause the decline of political parties as parties lose their function to mediate between the people and the government to the mass media. The US is the prototype of a decaying system in which the candidates no longer need the parties to reach the voters but instead rely completely on the media (Patterson



1993). The situation in Europe is different. Although political leaders may run campaigns independently of the traditional party system, as the Italian example of Berlusconi demonstrated, the usual pattern is still that candidates are nominated by party organizations and that the campaigns depend to a high degree on the party organizations (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999). Nevertheless, even in Europe parties are pressurized to adapt to a changing mass communication environment. This raises the question of whether mediatization could damage the party structure of European democracy, or undermine its reputation as being an effective political order.

A comprehensive study by Jarren, Donges, and Vogel (Donges 2008; Donges and Vogel 2008; Jarren 2008b; Steiner and Jarren 2009; Vogel 2010) analyzed party organizations in Austria, Germany, Great Britain, and Switzerland. They aimed to assess the extent to which the rules and repercussions of media logic challenge long-established mass parties in their execution of core democratic functions.

In the four countries, the study finds that mediatization clearly influences organizational structures and behaviors of political parties – and particularly those structures and behaviors that are responsible for the ‘self-presentation of politics’. Since structural changes in this sector are rather similar across parties, this can be read as evidence for reciprocal observation and imitation of parties across national borders. Different shapes and speeds of the process can be explained by the importance of polity-related framework conditions that do not offer the same kind of opportunity structures for media-induced changes. Altogether, it appears that European parties are very conservative organizations, although – and especially after election defeats – they are able to adjust to altered environments. An important environmental factor (among others) are the mass media which, through consonant and cumulative reporting, are perceived as a powerful institution that controls the communication infrastructure of society.

Within the mediatization process that triggered structural changes within European party organizations a three-step process of changed perceptions, structural change, and changes in output can be distinguished (Donges 2008; Donges and Vogel 2008): the change process starts with the perception within party organizations that the media and mass media communication have become an increasingly relevant factor in their operational environment. Communication is no longer viewed a mere ‘add-on’ to policy making. Party organizations monitor and imitate one another, so that structural changes within one organization are copied quickly by others. With regard to structural changes,

the responses to mediatization within parties manifested themselves most clearly in the expansion of organizational structures responsible for communication, and the assignment of additional staff. Two models of internal change became apparent: the integration of all communication tasks within one unit, and the differentiation of internal and external communication in different units. A trend toward bundling competences, tasks and resources in terms of 'centralization' could not be confirmed. In particular, parties with a distinctively federal form of organization found themselves less able to change their internal structures because they needed to balance the requirements of media communication (for instance, rapid responses) and internal factions (for instance, collective decision making and consultation). Party organizations are investing more and more resources in communication, especially personnel, but these developments must be considered against the background of the declining membership rates and thus smaller party income. In the amount of financial resources allocated to communication, a general upward trend is not observable.

The third step concerns output. Although party organizations are found to communicate more extensively than in the past, a fundamental increase in certain channels of communication, for instance, press releases or press conferences, is not observable in the majority of parties analyzed. The internet has become the most important tool for internal communication (intranet), and the most relevant channel of communication to inform party officials and members before the media can do so. In general, however, new communication technology seems to supplement rather than replace traditional channels of internal communication.

A similar three-step process, described here for political parties, was also found to be at work for governments (Vogel 2010). The current changes in the media environment have also enabled more possibilities for interest groups and civil society actors. They find new opportunities to raise issues and influence politics through a mix of private (lobbying) and public (mediated) campaign strategies (Steiner and Jarren 2010). Or to put this in the language of our model of representative democracy in Chapter 3: the administrative channel experiences an extension of access under the influence of mediatization and allows for a potentially broader representation of interests.

A study by Marcinkowski and collaborators (Floss 2010; Marcinkowski 2007; Schrott and Spranger 2007; Spörer-Wagner and Marcinkowski 2010a and 2010b) examined the mediatization of political bargaining processes in Switzerland and Germany. It analyzed how print and

broadcast media covered different negotiating institutions in both countries, such as the committees mediating between the two chambers of the German and Swiss parliaments (the German *Vermittlungsausschuss* and the Swiss *Einigungskonferenz*) as well as various government-initiated committees like the German committee for sustainability in financing the social security systems (Rürup Committee) or the joint committee of the German federal parliament concerned with the reform of the labor market (Hartz Committee).

In line with differentiation between policy and politics (see Chapter 7), political negotiations can be made public (front-stage bargaining) or kept private (back-stage bargaining). In the examples above, all meetings were kept private because experience shows that exclusion of the public facilitates compromise: concessions can be made and compromise reached without participants losing their credibility as loyal representative of their respective interests. Yet, by definition, the rationales of media publicity and political negotiation are hard to combine: the media call for transparency in political processes and show specific interest in individuals, conflicts, and negative outcomes. Negotiations, on the other hand, require an atmosphere of privacy which allows for compromises, communicated to the public as collective decisions without indicating any winner or loser.

Given this incompatibility between news-media logic and political bargaining logic, a considerable decline in the quantity and quality of negotiation outcomes seems likely in a mediatized environment. On the other hand, bargaining officials can also exploit the media public for selfish reasons. For instance, political actors can try to increase their bargaining power through the mobilization of external support. One effective strategy of going public may be to leak insider information confidentially to the media. It follows that media disclosures about delicate negotiations can occur in many ways – by journalists pursuing transparency (according to professionally motivated media logic) or pursuing spectacularization of politics (according to commercially motivated media logic), or by politicians engaging in self-mediatization (according to self-representational political logic) – and eventually complicate collective decision making.

The study finds, indeed, that media attention creates difficulties for finding a compromise. But, ultimately, it is not so much media-induced intrusion but negotiators' self-mediatization which poses the biggest challenge to successful political bargaining. The study concludes that, although media logic is omnipresent in the minds of participants, it does not have a direct destructive effect. A more reciprocal effect is at

work where media awareness (triggered by high-density reporting) leads to communication failures of participants – for example, by spreading indiscretions and non-authorized information, by inefficient news management of the negotiation leadership, or by uncoordinated statements of appointed speakers.

For the concept of mediatization, the studies by Jarren et al. and Marcinkowski et al. both underscore that the media have an impact on organizational and institutional actors not only through their coverage but equally so through their very existence. Political actors and organizations are under pressure to engage in self-mediatization because they causally attribute power to the media and their operating logic. The subjective perception of media power is sufficient to prompt changes in political behavior. From the perspective of democratic theory one may thus conclude that processes of responsiveness and accountability increasingly follow considerations of media logic.

The second study illustrates also that transparency comes at a cost. This is another lesson for the chain of accountability described in Chapter 3. Striking a balance between political values of confidentiality, compromise, and collective decisions on the one hand and news values of transparency, conflict, and interest-pursuing personalities has become harder to accomplish. The balance is shifting in favor of the media if considerations of media logic begin to influence how politicians conduct negotiations (the production of politics) and how they try to win and ultimately sell negotiations (the politics-oriented self-presentation of politics). Under conditions of mediatization scholars will also be well-advised to check whether journalists' demand for transparency is driven by democracy-related motives (raising answerability) or democracy-distant motives (fueling spectacularization), in other words by professional or commercial imperatives of media logic (see Chapter 7, on answerability see also Chapter 3).

#### **Challenge 4: Consequences of mediatized information for citizens**

Normative theories of modern representative democracies rest on an information environment that enables citizens to learn about political and social affairs, evaluate the actions of elected political figures, get information needed for sound decision making, and communicate their opinions to these representatives. As put by Delli Carpini (2004: 395), theories of direct democracy assume an even

richer communications environment that helps provide citizens with the motivation, ability, and opportunity to participate in more ongoing, demanding, and varied ways. In turn, limitations in the communications environment are pinpointed as a primary reason why democratic practice falls short of normative expectations, whereas enhancements to this environment are held out as a way to improve this state of affairs.

The impact of mediated communication on citizens' civic attitudes is of special interest for the fourth dimension of mediatization. This addresses – in the language of the model of democracy in Chapter 3 – the conditions of a mediated public sphere, in particular the degree to which people use various kinds of media for information about politics, develop political perceptions and preferences, make their preferences heard, participate in the policy-making process, and evaluate the production and self-presentation of politics.

The ways in which the news media portray politics – though these ways vary across countries (see Esser 2008a; Vliegenthart et al. 2011) – pose a challenge for these democratic functions, especially with regard to participation. Research has demonstrated, for instance, that negative media coverage of politics fosters citizens' dissatisfaction with politics (Fackler and Lin 1995) as it decreases trust in politicians in particular (Kepplinger et al. 1986) and democracy in general (Della Porta 2000). Dissatisfaction with politics, in turn, reduces citizens' willingness to become engaged. It goes without saying that a decrease in participation (i.e. low voter turnout) affects the very heart of political decision making and reduces the quality of democratic representation. Furthermore, negative media coverage might not only be detrimental to the credibility of politicians and politics but also to news credibility itself (Patterson 2002). As Patterson (2002: 93) suspects, 'knee-jerk criticism only weakens the press's watchdog capacity. When the press condemns everything and everyone, audiences will shun the messenger.' Similar effects have been found for horse-race coverage. It points citizens to the power-seeking self-interests and strategic goals of politicians. As a result, politicians' substantive frames are perceived as less credible and more tactically motivated. Such reporting nourishes a spiral of cynicism, with 'cynicism not only in terms of politics, politicians, and policy but also vis-à-vis the messengers themselves, the journalists as the reliable and trustworthy guardians of democracy' (Brants et al. 2010: 26).

The dissolving boundaries between the genres of news and entertainment, especially, have – in the eyes of some scholars (e.g. Jamison and Baum forthcoming; Patterson 2000) – alarming consequences for the citizens' capacity to fulfill their responsibilities in a democracy. Findings by Aarts and Semetko (2003), for instance, suggest that tabloid news users are less informed and involved than users of classic news formats. Also new US entertainment formats such as *The Daily Show* by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert's *Colbert Report* have unwittingly become recognized by citizens as legitimate news sources and trustworthy political commentators. The use of *The Daily Show*, for example, has been found to increase political distrust and decrease support for presidential candidates, especially for young voters (Morris 2009).

The results of a study by Schemer (2009, 2010a) also demonstrate that only specific media outlets are likely to arouse voters' emotions, mainly due to their style of reporting. Some media outlets provide factual background information that may even decrease emotion arousal. Extensive panel survey studies on three Swiss direct-democratic campaigns (asylum policy; corporate taxation; naturalization of immigrants) found strong evidence that especially elite newspapers and some regional papers are excellent in providing background information about political issues. However, other outlets, such as tabloid news, and intense political talk may be detrimental to democratic processes of opinion formation. In fact, it was found that the use of tabloids such as *20 Minutes* or *Blick* increased negative emotions toward asylum seekers in the course of the political campaign. That is, the more people use tabloids as important sources of information, the more they see anger and fear toward asylum seekers. Moreover, political talk and campaign advertising had the same effects: the more people relied on talk shows such as *Arena*, the more negative their affective reactions toward asylum seekers. This effect can be traced back to the conflictive nature of this specific genre. The focus on conflict and the polarization of political positions in these broadcasts may have created the impression that asylum policy is a big problem that political actors cannot solve. Additionally, campaign ads that portrayed asylum seekers mainly in a negative light (e.g. refugees as bogus asylum seekers and scroungers that abuse the Swiss welfare system) also aroused negative emotions such as anger and fear in audience members (Schemer 2010b). In contrast, however, the use of elite press decreased negative emotions toward asylum seekers (Schemer 2010a). Obviously, the focus of these media sources on facts and background information worked against the emotion arousal of tabloid news.

Pointing to the larger questions of democratic citizenship, these studies make a clear case that the arousal of negative emotions in political campaigns can have a considerable impact on the voting intentions of citizens. For the direct-democratic campaigns, negative emotions turned out to be important predictors of voting intentions above and beyond the approval of arguments that were relevant in the specific campaigns (Kühne et al. 2011; Schemer 2009). Thus, emotions can directly enter the judgment formation of individuals and distract people from deliberating on the relevant campaign arguments. In this context, affect functions as a surrogate for information. However, this effect was only present for tabloid media outlets. In fact, the opposite was true for quality news media that largely dominate direct-democratic campaigns when it comes to the sheer quantity of coverage (see Hänggli 2010). How far the specific conditions of the Swiss political and media system can account for this positive finding remains an issue for further exploration.

In the more general body of scholarly work, though, not all research points in the same direction. Some studies found that media use is positively correlated with political interest, political knowledge, and political participation. Others found that media use can also foster cynicism, apathy, ignorance, and disengagement. There is even some evidence that negative coverage raises citizens' interest in campaigns, which leads Patterson (2002: 90–91) to conclude that there 'is something worse than exposure to persistently negative news, and that's no news exposure at all' (Patterson 2002: 97). There is also some evidence indicating that political comedy programs have the potential to educate viewers and stimulate interest among those citizens who may otherwise be disengaged from the political process. Baum (2002) suggests an 'incidental byproduct' model, which holds that soft news makes political information accessible to otherwise politically inattentive viewers (see also Van Zoonen et al. 2007). Similarly, Baum (2003) observed a 'gateway' effect, whereby exposure to soft news outlets motivates viewers to consume additional political information via traditional news sources.

Research by Matthes et al. (2010) found no indication for negative effects of news exposure on political trust. Using survey data on the issues of asylum policy and the World Economic Forum, they could demonstrate that exposure to Swiss news coverage actually *increased* rather than decreased trust in politicians and the political system. This effect can be explained by the lack of negative news footage characterizing politicians as unreliable, selfish, or lacking credibility. For these two issues, by contrast, politicians were largely able to stage themselves

in positive terms, demonstrating their substantial competence, good will, and broad issue knowledge. With such a positive (and uncritical) depiction of political actors in the news, it is not surprising that exposure to news content led to outcomes likely to foster participation and engagement.

One approach to resolving the contradictory expectations caused by political mobilization approaches and media malaise theories is to start at the beginning of the effects chain, the early socialization phase of children and young adults. A study by Bonfadelli, de Vreese, and collaborators (Kunz 2011; Möller 2010) analyzes how adolescents develop democratic competencies and participatory repertoires in today's multi-channel environments. This process is heavily mediated since very few adolescents have any direct experience with politics. Relying on representative surveys in the Netherlands and Switzerland among teenagers aged 15–18, this study finds four universal factors for political engagement in both countries: participating (high involvement), deliberating (online discussions), contributing (donating and collecting money), and voting. With regard to political attitudes, though, there are significant cross-national differences. In Switzerland, where people can participate in direct-democratic procedures and are exposed to extensive media coverage of the accompanying issue-centered campaigns, teenagers have a much stronger sense of being 'able to influence policy outcomes' than their Dutch opposites. Thus, the 'internal efficacy' of teenagers being socialized into a direct democracy is significantly higher than of those living in a representative democracy. A moderating effect of news-media use could not be established but the results underscore the great importance of the institutional framework conditions – the polity imperative of politics – for socialization effects.

In sum, democracy requires its citizens to have an 'enlightened understanding' of the issues that concern their lives (see Chapter 3). They are dependent on a political communication environment that provides the resources necessary to understand and evaluate the available political options. So far the Swiss media system seems to fare better in this regard than comparable systems (for instance in the Netherlands), although important qualifications must be made for the emotion-driven discourse in tabloids and talk shows. If the political communication behavior of the Swiss youth is any indication of the future then the Swiss system may be in for a change. Only a very small minority is politically active (at a level comparable to those in the Netherlands) and their current online communication behavior seems to carry them away from the center of institutionalized politics rather than toward it. If correct, this



process is likely to have feedback implications for the system itself, at least in the long run.

## Conclusion

The model of representative democracy as laid out in Chapter 3 is undergoing change. On the one hand state politics is embedded in an increasingly international, multi-layered political structure (chapters 5 and 6), and on the other it is confronted with an increasingly self-determined media system (chapters 7 and 8). As a result of these developments national sovereignty has been compromised in various ways, and conventional political actors and institutions have suffered a similar challenge to their status. In many (although not all) Western democracies we observe a decline in public support for traditional parties and institutional politics, declining membership and turn-out levels, and falling levels of citizen engagement. At the same time, mass media has grown enormously in significance. A wide range of channels and genres provides a large diversity of content, and this content addresses people less and less in their roles as democratic citizens and more and more in their roles as consuming audiences. This is the outcome of a long-term process that has evolved in stages, which have been described variously as a sequence of 'political communication eras' (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999) or 'phases of mediatization' (Strömbäck 2008). The conditions of the current era, as laid out in chapters 1 and 7, have led scholars to describe most Western societies as 'media democracies' (see Jarren 2008b; Pfetsch and Marcinkowski 2010).

In a neutral understanding, the term media democracy refers to the fact that fundamental elements of the 'chain of responsiveness' and 'chain of accountability' cannot be realized anymore without the services of a mass communication infrastructure. Both chains require – as explained in Chapter 3 – that citizens are reliably and accurately informed, and that their choices in elections and other contexts are reasoned and rational. In practice it often suffices that citizens scan the political process from a distance and use heuristic shortcuts, rather than elaborate arguments, to make up their minds. The normative democratic ideal, however, is one of enlightened citizenry to which the news media are key contributors. In addition to information, the news media are also expected to provide analysis: coherent frameworks of interpretation that help citizens to recognize their own interest and preferences, evaluate political outcomes, and comprehend globalized and mediatized politics. An extension to the information and analysis function is the role

of critical scrutiny over the powerful, be they in government, business, or other influential spheres of society. In the capacity as watchdog, the news media monitor whether politicians fulfill their responsibilities to the people who elected them, and whether their policies and programs are based on sound judgment. In addition to providing transparency and checks and balances in their information and watchdog role, the news media serve as a mediator between the citizen and the politician. In this role as public representative they are expected to ensure that the preferences of the public are heard. This is aided by pluralist and inclusive news coverage that serves as a mediated proxy of the public sphere. Finally, the news media can assume the role of an advocate or champion of the people. The news media can serve as advocates for particular political programs and perspectives, and mobilize people to act in support of these programs.

In their provision of information, analysis, critical scrutiny, public representation, and advocacy the news media have a wider range of content genres at their disposal. The media are thus moving toward the center of the democratic process by providing a shared forum that other political institutions and social actors increasingly use as an arena for their interaction.

Whether or not the news media fulfill their intended democratic functions in practice has become a matter of fierce debate. It is here that the neutral use of the term media democracy is tipping into negative territory. In negative use, media democracy refers to conditions in which the imperatives of media logic (and its underlying powers of critical professionalism, commercialism, and technological change) undermine journalists' ability to be objective, pluralistic, and conscious of society's needs. Critics claim that many Western democracies are pushed and deformed by media organizations which find pleasure (and professional and commercial satisfaction) in interfering with political processes. The information value and orientation value of their media coverage is said to be decreasing due to a growing fixation on sensation, conflict, drama, triviality, and negativity – all of which is expected to foster public cynicism and political alienation (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995; Lloyd 2004; Meyer 2002; Patterson 1993, 2002). In its extreme, this scenario expects societies to turn into 'mediacracies' in which informed citizenry and traditional political institutions deteriorate beyond recognition (Meyer 2002).

A counter-scenario to mediocracy is 'telecracy' – another negative outgrowth of media democracy (Mazzoleni and Schulz 1999; Pfetsch and Marcinkowski 2010). The term telecracy describes political actors not

as victims but beneficiaries of mediatization. Here, politicians govern 'with' and 'through' the media, and rely heavily on strategic communication and news management. They employ professionalized communication experts who help them exploit media logic for their own purposes. A prototype is said to be Berlusconi's Italy (Crocchi 2001; Raniolo 2009).

Both scenarios are obviously gross exaggerations but help explain the scholarly attention this line of research has received. Following recommendations by Jarren (1996, 2008b), Donges (2008), and particularly Marcinkowski (2005, 2007) we have developed a neo-institutionalist conceptualization of mediatization. It helps us explore potential challenges to democracy that can be traced either to the initiative of the media or the self-mediatization of political actors. In a neo-institutionalist perspective the media are considered as providing a 'regular and persisting framework' through which and within which political actors operate (Sparrow 1999: 10). The media thereby guide and channel – or structure – the actions of those working in government, public administration, and the various stages of the political process (Donges 2008; Jarren 2008b; Marcinkowski 2007; Sparrow 2006). Put simply, the media constitute the communicative infrastructure through which politics presents itself to the public (reflexive mediatization via self-presentation) or is represented by the media itself (direct mediatization via news coverage). As an institution in its own right it is guided by an autonomous operating logic. Everything that 'runs through it' will be formatted by media logic. This process can obstruct, enhance or substitute political functions. However, not all political institutions are equally dependent on mediated services and, hence, are less pressurized to adapt (or even submit) to media logic. The research we discussed in this chapter confirms this by showing that not all political organizations, institutions, and systems are equally prone to become mediatized. And not all media organizations and systems are driven by the same blend of media logic. Its three constituents – professional, commercial, and technological aspects (see Table 7.2 in Chapter 7) – mix differently in different settings and therefore produce different mediatization effects on their own content, political actors, organizations, institutions, and audiences (see Chapter 3).

Three characteristics of mediatization effects are crucial to understand: first, in addition to direct, media-induced effects we must pay at least the same amount of attention to reflexive, self-mediatization effects initiated by political actors in response to what they perceive as a powerful media environment. The 'professionalization' of

self-mediatization (i.e. the externalization and scientification of political public relations) is one of the best-documented consequences of direct mediatization. Second, mediatization effects ought to be studied at three levels of analysis: the micro-level of individual actors or recipients (and their opinions, decisions, and behaviors); the meso-level of parties, governments, interest groups, decision-making institutions, but also media organizations; and the systemic macro-level where implications of media logic for political culture or consequences of national media policy styles for media logic can be studied. Third, and related to the second, it is important to realize that mediatization effects can be assumed for the interactions between political actors (politics), the definition of political issues and problems (policy), and the normative and institutional order of a system (polity). We argued in the context of our definition of political logic (Table 7.1 in Chapter 7) that the politics sphere is the easiest to mediatize and the polity sphere the hardest.

Although it may be natural to ask whether mediatization improves or worsens the quality of democracy, in actual research this question needs to be broken down in more specific investigations. Does mediatization have a positive or negative influence on the structure and functioning of public communication? This is a key issue addressed by the first dimension of our mediatization concept. It examines the representation of politics in the news and is interested in the information quality of political news coverage, particularly in the framing of public issues and debates, the involvement of different types of actors in the discourse, their communication style and level of argumentation analysis.

Does mediatization improve or dampen the responsiveness of the political-administrative system and the control of political power? This question is behind the investigations on the diversity and quality of political coverage as well as agenda-building and agenda-setting. It is also tied to the question of whether mediatization puts political organizations or institutions under stress so that their political functions begin to suffer. These questions are addressed by the second and third dimension of our mediatization concept.

Does mediatization promote or constrain people's access to political information and their political competences? This is related to whether mediatization favors or reduces political engagement and political participation of citizens. It also asks whether mediatization promotes or diminishes the public's confidence in democracy and its institutions. These questions refer to information processing, media use, and political awareness as well as the relationship between political communication and political engagement. It has also prompted investigations into

concepts such as video malaise or political cynicism, which are all discussed in the context of the fourth dimension of mediatization.

This chapter showed that although the adaptation of democracies to the mediatization of politics has so far been cast in mainly negative terms, our research comes to quite moderate conclusions. Any premature talk about 'media democracy' must be checked to see if really all political structures, processes, and policy fields are mediatized – and not just those which are inherently dependent on public support. In many areas we do see clear trends toward mediatization of politics but they constitute less fundamental discontinuities than anticipated in some parts of the literature. These trends do, however, signal a growing tension between the needs of democratic institutions and the media, which sporadically claim to be the guardians of democracy but just as often neglect or deny the responsibility that goes with the job. These changes vary in severity from one political system to another, and one should beware of over-generalization.

In some European countries (and this includes Switzerland) governments are still in a position to tackle these problems by way of media-policy initiatives aimed at securing better media performance or limiting media commercialism. This route of action is no longer available in the US, and many European states have also been moving in the direction of deregulation and neo-liberalism lately.

Whatever may be done to remedy some of the problems discussed here will have to be gradual and long term, and will depend on the ability of democratic institutions to solve their own problems of communication effectively. As argued by McQuail et al. (2007: 276): 'It will involve the combined efforts of active citizens, politicians who take a wider view of their responsibilities, and journalists and other media people who recognize a professional and institutional task of informing citizens.'

# 9

## Conclusion: An Assessment of the State of Democracy Given the Challenges of Globalization and Mediatization

*Hanspeter Kriesi*

In this concluding chapter, we shall try to assess the contemporary state of democracy as we know it on the basis of the previous chapters of this volume. We shall do so in three steps. First, we shall discuss the global spread of democracy at the level of the nation-states. Second, we shall discuss the vertical spread of democracy within the emerging multilevel governance structures. Our main focus in this respect will be the EU. Third, we shall try to assess the democratization of established democracies. This section will focus on the experience of Western European democracies in particular. In assessing the state of the art of democratization, we shall try not to succumb to the pessimism that has seized a large number of perspicacious observers of the current state of democracy. Nor shall we fall into the opposite extreme which believes that we live in the best of all worlds. Democracy is progressing worldwide, but it is never guaranteed once and for all. Confronted with new challenges, the process of democratization continues in an open-ended way.

### **The global spread of democracy**

Democracy progresses in global waves, and the third, most recent wave has had the most profound consequences on the spread of democracy across the globe. Since the early 1970s, the number democracies has risen steadily. According to the Polity IV index, the number of 'full democracies' in the world more than doubled between 1985 and 2010 (from 43 to 93), while the number of full autocracies was cut by

more than two-thirds. For the first time in human history, a majority of the world population lives under freely chosen governments. In spring 2011, democracy even started to spread to the Arab countries of North Africa and the Middle East, which have been particularly resistant to the contemporary wave of democratization (Teorell 2010: 50).

As a result of global processes of modernization, there seems to be a universal demand for democratic government. This is documented by Welzel and Inglehart (2008: 136), whose optimistic view suggests that the modernization process quasi-automatically produces the general cultural demand for the democratization process today. Thanks to its many virtues, democracy seems to have become, as argued by Amartya Sen (1999), a universal value. However, as we have discussed in Chapter 2, the pressure of the universal demand for democracy is not quasi-automatically transformed into democratization, but gives rise to democratization only under favorable political conditions.

Thus, the third wave of democratization has swept across the globe thanks to a favorable international political opportunity structure. At the most general level, the demise of the authoritarian hegemonic power of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have given rise to a more supportive international context, allowing for the diffusion of democracy across Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and other parts of the world. We have discussed these processes in detail in Chapter 2. More specifically, the horizontal spread of democracy has benefited from the spatial proximity of neighboring states, from international networks (especially those provided by supranational international governmental organizations (IGOs)), and by the impact of the media. Finally, more recently, the spread of democracy to ever more nation-states has also been explicitly promoted by the democratic hegemon, the US, and by the EU.

We have presented the EU's efforts in democracy promotion in more detail in Chapter 6. As this chapter shows, the EU has successfully applied the leverage mechanism in the framework of its enlargement program, which held out the credible promise of EU membership to all those states that were ready to give up authoritarian rule. While this 'top down' mechanism proved to be highly successful, the 'bottom up' linkage mechanism of creating the socio-economic preconditions for democracy, however, did not deliver tangible results in the European case. For countries that do not have a membership perspective, the EU now also implements a third kind of mechanism – governance, which contributes to democratization by transferring to authoritarian regimes democratic principles of governance related to accountability,

transparency, and participation (of non-state actors in administrative decision and policy making). This mechanism is intended to prepare the legal administrative ground upon which eventually political transitions can occur. The studies reported in Chapter 6 confirm the impact (so far limited to legislation and not yet extending to implementation of policies) of such subtle processes of democracy promotion.

The important message of this analysis of democracy promotion as well as of our analysis of the preconditions of democracy more generally (Chapter 2) is that the success of democratization crucially depends on the domestic preconditions in the target countries – conditions which are difficult to influence from the outside. In an analysis of the factors that undermine democracy, Fish and Wittenberg (2009: 258f.) show that, over the past several decades, the main culprits for democratization's reversal have not been the popular masses (which, under contemporary conditions, push for democracy rather than against it, as shown by Bermeo (2003)), nor insurgents, nor foreign powers, or armed forces (which may also have contributed to setbacks of democracy in some countries), but the chief executives. Illustrative examples of countries where the chief executives have been responsible for derailing democracy are President Lukashenko's Belarus, King Hussein's and King Abdallah's Jordan, Kuwait, Vladimir Putin's Russia, and Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. According to these authors, the key to reducing the potential for presidential or monarchical abuse of power is a strong legislature: the weaker the legislature, the greater the chance that democracy fails. Their policy prescription is obvious (Fish and Wittenberg 2009: 261): 'would-be democratizers should take special interest in strengthening the legislature'. This policy recommendation has the weakness that it tends to put the cart before the horse. Of course, a strong legislature provides a check on presidential strongmen. But then the strong legislature is precisely the kind of institution that is not a precondition, but the result of processes of democratization.

We would like to add three caveats to the generally quite optimistic picture of the horizontal spread of democracy across the globe. First, it is not stressed enough that democratization takes time. As is indicated by our analysis of the variety of democracies in Chapter 4, the emerging democracies are still more illiberal than the Western European and Anglo-Saxon democracies (US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) that have been established during the first two waves. This means that it is unwise to judge the new democracies according to standards that many of the established democracies would themselves have failed not so long ago. Second, there is always the possibility of setbacks. There have been



two periods of de-democratization in the past – the thirties, when only a few European democracies survived the authoritarian onslaught, and the sixties and seventies, when many emerging democracies in Southern Europe, Latin America, and Asia succumbed to military coups and authoritarian tendencies (e.g. Indira Gandhi's martial law in India).

Third, there are still many remaining authoritarian regimes. The most prominent example is China – a country that has become an economic world power and that is becoming an increasingly important military power, but that is still subject to the authoritarian rule of the Communist Party. We assume that the future of democracy across the globe crucially depends on the future of democracy in China. If we are to believe the survey results of Welzel and Inglehart (2009: 139f.), China is a prominent exception among the countries surveyed to the extent that the country actually became somewhat less democratic from 1988 to 2000–2004, despite mass demands for more democracy. According to their figures, China, together with Belarus, is the country with the greatest gap between the mass demands for democracy and the real, existing level of democratization.

The new media may provide a possibility for enhancing transparency and accountability in a country like China. Thus, *The Economist* (January 28, 2012: 19) suggests that Weibo, the Chinese equivalent to Twitter, 'transformed public discourse in China. News that three or four years ago would have been relatively easy for local officials to suppress, downplay or ignore is now instantly transmitted across the nation. Local protests or scandals to which few would once have paid attention are now avidly discussed by Weibo users' (of whom there are now around 250 million in China). However, as we have pointed out in Chapter 2, there is no easy technological fix to overcome the obstacles to democracy, but that, once again, politics decisively shapes the preconditions of democracy. In the remaining authoritarian countries, without some baseline conditions of rule of law, transparency, and accountability, opposition, dissent, and reform movements 'will face an increasingly uphill battle against progressively more innovative forms of censorship and surveillance' (MacKinnon 2011: 44).

## The vertical spread of democracy

Compared to the global spread of democracy, the democratization of the emerging multilevel governance structures has been much less successful so far, and remains the crucial challenge for democracy in long-established democracies. As we have argued in chapters 1 and 5,

the growing interconnection of national societies increasingly requires political regulation and coordination across borders. This need has been met by the extension of horizontal coordination between nation-states, but, increasingly, it is also being met by the vertical integration of national political systems into supranational polities such as the EU. Our discussions of vertical democratization has mainly been focused on the case of the EU, since it is the form globalization takes in Europe, and since it is the most advanced form of vertical integration of national political systems.

In Chapter 5, we introduced three models for the discussion of the emerging vertical forms of democracy – the intergovernmental model, the federal model, and the multilevel model. The intergovernmental model hardly predicts any problems for democracy as a result of the establishment of international functional regimes – everything remains under the control of democratically legitimated national governments. However, this model does not take into account that the ambitious European integration project has gone far beyond traditional international regimes, and therefore requires new forms of democratic legitimacy.

According to the federal model, by contrast, we simply need to extend the territorial model of the nation-state by adding a supranational layer to the national political systems of the member-states of the integrated polity. The supranational level constitutes the new center of the new polity, and the corresponding demos constitutes a new community of solidarity that includes all the national demoi of the member-states. With respect to a large number of policy domains, these national demoi may continue to be governed by the national governments of the member-states, but important competences that require coordination across national borders fall under the competence of the supranational center. Given that the interdependencies between the member-states are likely to increase over time, we can expect that an increasing number of competences will be shifted to the center in the future. The federal model presupposes clear-cut territorial borders of the supranational polity, as well as a great deal of internal political structuration at the supranational level.

While the European integration process has gone far beyond the intergovernmental model, it has only partly followed the federal model. This is the reason why we have focused our discussion of vertical democratization on the multilevel model, which is more flexible and considers the complex interlinkages between national (including subnational) and supranational levels in the real world. This model takes into account

the coexistence of territorial (type I) and functional (type II) governance structures in the context of contemporary multilevel regimes.

As far as the territorial structures are concerned, the political process within multilevel governance structures poses a number of challenges for democracy. First of all, it leads to a one-sided empowerment of the national and supranational executive branches, at the detriment of the national and supranational parliaments. Second, by extending the chains of responsiveness and accountability to additional layers of (supranational) government, the inclusiveness, transparency, and ultimately the responsiveness and accountability of the political process is reduced. Finally, and most importantly, the demos corresponding to the emerging territorial polity at the supranational level is slow to develop, and the political structuring at the supranational level remains deficient.

These problems for democracy within the emerging multilevel polity are exacerbated by the fact that functional structures of type II are heavily competing with territorial structures at the supranational level. While these structures also exist at the national level, they are typically strengthened in multilevel governance structures (for the EU, see Bartolini 2005: 382; Papadopoulos 2010). Type-II structures compound the problems of inclusiveness, transparency, and ultimately of the responsiveness and accountability of the political process, by widening the scope of the stakeholders (to include supranational institutions, such as the European institutions or the WTO, multiple national governments, independent regulatory agencies, and an non-transparent set of private corporations and interest groups), by multiplying the political arenas (formal and informal committees, independent agencies, international networks, and public fora), and by generally reinforcing the technocratic element in political decision-making to the detriment of democratically accountable representatives. Type-II structures strengthen the positions of policy communities of experts of low visibility, who are 'decoupled' from representative bodies, and more accountable to 'peers' (to the other participants in these networks) than to the voters. In functionally defined structures 'stakeholders' replace territorially defined 'demoi', which leads, as we have noted in chapters 1 and 3, to 'advocacy democracy', that is, to representation by interest groups and social movement organizations at the detriment of territorial representation through the electoral channel.

As a result of these developments, there is an increasing lack of congruence or symmetry between decision-takers and decision-makers within the multilevel polity. The national demoi are affected by decisions taken by decision-makers who are at best only very indirectly

accountable to them. At the same time, the national governments, which are still the key focus of democratic accountability, see their maneuvering space drastically reduced by these developments. The recent problems in the eurozone perfectly illustrate this point: the governments of the Southern European member-states are put under pressure by their colleagues from other member-states to take the measures necessary to save the common currency. In the Italian case, the government succumbed to this pressure in fall 2011, and was replaced by a government of technocrats which was taking the measures imposed by the functional imperatives of the monetary union. In the Greek case, the government not only succumbed to international pressure, and was replaced by a government of technocrats in 2011, it also had to face the 'troika' – the representatives of the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the IMF – making sure that the domestic conditions for international support were, indeed, fulfilled.

We contend that the resulting 'democratic deficit' in multilevel governance structures can hardly be alleviated by functional forms of inclusion, participation, and accountability. The main problem with such forms of 'advocacy democracy' is that, as we have suggested in Chapter 2, this kind of democratization involves institutional mechanisms which are unfamiliar to the citizens, since they diverge from the standard democratic models developed in the nation-state contexts (Hurrelmann 2010: 7). Moreover, such functional forms of inclusion, participation, and accountability mainly exist at the elite level and do not extend to the citizens at large. As a result, the increasing functional integration in Europe might even provoke a reaction on the part of the European citizens that seeks to reduce the territorial community of solidarity to the national, or even regional or group level (see Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012; Offe 1998, 2003).

Imagining the future of democracy in multilevel governance structures can take the gradualist route, extrapolating from national territorial models, or the transformationalist route of rejecting existing models and claiming that such structures require new models (Cheneval and Schimmelfennig 2011). Following the gradualist route, alleviating the democratic deficit in a multilevel structure like the EU may become possible by strengthening the territorial representation structures at the supranational level, that is, by moving into the direction of the federal model. This does not necessarily presuppose the existence of an integrated European demos – the different national demoi may coexist with an initially weak European demos, as in the Swiss model. However, this way of proceeding presupposes enhanced political structuring at

the European level or, in other words, the politicization of the European integration process at both the domestic and the supranational level. As a matter of fact, as has been argued by Hooghe and Marks (2009), the European populations are waking up to the increasing importance of the EU for their well-being. The increasing salience of the EU is already undermining the 'permissive consensus' about the EU, which has been characteristic for the European citizens in the past. The relative convergence of the national electorates and party systems observed by Camia and Caramani (2011) also contributes to the preconditions of enhanced political structuring at the EU level. This in turn, is likely to provide the leverage for the political structuration of the European issue at both the national and the European level.

In fact, as a recent study of the ongoing politicization of the European integration process at the national level by Höglinger (2012) suggests, this politicization process is firmly embedded in the national party conflict. First of all, the main protagonists of the politicization of European integration at the national level are supranational and national (foreign and domestic) public authorities (mainly representing the executive branch) and political parties. Taking into account that parties assume two roles in democratic polities – they represent and they govern – this means that parties are the key actors for the politicization of European integration. Second, the multidimensionality of the European integration process (deepening, enlargement, social regulation, market-making) provides multiple opportunities for politicization related to traditional conflict structures, but whether and how European integration has been politicized at the national level is largely explained by traditional lines of conflict and by well-established programmatic profiles.

Along the transformationalist route, the democratization of multilevel governance structures may give rise, as Cheneval and Schimmelfennig (2011) suggest, to entirely new forms of 'demoicracy' (see Chapter 2). A demoicracy has a double normative reference – citizens and statespeoples (people of the member-states of the multilevel structure). It does not compromise on core fundamental rights of individuals but it balances the political rights of individuals and statespeoples (who are themselves organized within liberal democracies). The principles of demoicracy as formulated by Cheneval (2011) stipulate that any concrete integration among demoi will have to be approved by self-governing demoi; that the demoi do not mutually discriminate against each other and against their citizens; that the citizens of a member-statespeople benefit from entry rights and political rights in other member-statespeoples;

that citizens and statespeoples benefit from equal legislative rights; that multilateral law enjoys primacy over national law; that linguistic territoriality is recognized and that the member-statespeoples agree upon a commonly used language as lingua franca; and that the difference principle holds for member-statespeoples. As Cheneval and Schimmelfennig (2011) observe, these principles have been to a surprisingly large extent implemented in the EU.

As far as we are concerned, these principles are, however, not fundamentally different from the federalist model as it has, for example, been implemented in Switzerland. Thus, in both the federalist and the democracy model, the representation of the citizens has to be balanced with the representation of the statespeoples. Not only in the democracy model (see Cheneval and Schimmelfennig 2011: 17), but also in the federalist model, this can be done 'by the institution of two procedurally linked governing bodies' (e.g. two parliamentary chambers) or 'by balancing two forms of counting votes in direct citizen voting, one of all citizens and of the citizens as grouped by statespeoples' (e.g. by requiring double majorities among citizens and statespeoples).

### **The democratization of established democracies**

As we have shown in Chapter 4, existing democracies differ considerably in the way they implement basic liberal and democratic principles. There is great variety in the way democracy is implemented across the world. Apart from being more or less liberal, established democracies vary according to whether they are consensual or majoritarian, purely representative or representative with direct-democratic elements, federal or centralized, inclusive or exclusive. In Chapter 4, we also showed that there are trade-offs involved in the implementation of the basic democratic principle: in the real world, it is not possible to maximize all the aspects of this principle. Thus, majoritarian systems are more accountable than consensual ones, but they pay for this greater accountability by more limited representativeness and a certain lack of responsiveness. Or, there is a trade-off between the elections and direct-democratic procedures: where the latter are elaborated, elections count for less and, accordingly, electoral participation is low and rather unequal. The upshot of the exploratory analysis in Chapter 4 is that institutional designers have to make some hard choices when trying to make democracy work.

We have also observed great variability within established democracies with respect to the mediatization challenge, which we mainly

discussed for established democracies at the national level. Mediatization, the intrusion of media logic as an institutional rule into politics, depends very much on the type of media system in a given democracy. In the Western European countries analyzed by several studies reported in Chapter 8, the effects of mediatization have not (yet) manifested themselves to the same extent as in the US. Thus, personalization has not generally been increasing across Western European countries (Kriesi 2011). Other elements of media-centered reporting style like negativity, sensationalism, or strategy-focused interpretation are more widespread. It appears that the representation of politics in the news media follows more the specific interests of the media (i.e. the professional, commercial, and technological imperatives of media logic) than characteristic dimensions of the political logic (i.e. policy, politics, and polity). Media logic undermines the chain of responsiveness in those cases where it compromises the formation of people's preferences: lack of access to substantive information, lack of access to undistorted and diverse information, and lack of opportunity to deliberate pose serious challenges to a vivid public sphere and thus democratic life. These content features may also undermine the chain of accountability by handicapping citizens' capability to properly evaluate political outcomes for whether they match their preferences or serve the higher public good.

In general, liberal media systems (US, UK) have moved farthest in the direction of the imperatives of media logic, while democratic-corporatist systems (Austria, Switzerland) have moved much less along this path, and polarized-pluralist systems (France) have probably been least subject to mediatization trends. Switzerland is a noteworthy special case (see also Chapter 4), where moderate mediatization effects are further curtailed by a consensual, integrative, and direct-democratic structure and culture. Studies reported in Chapter 8 found, for instance, that reporting on Swiss direct-democratic campaigns was still mainly focused on substance, and dominated by the politicians' arguments and not by media logic. In other cases, Switzerland conforms more to the expected effects of mediatization as is indicated by a study on the mediatization of bargaining institutions in Germany and Switzerland. This study found that media attention, indeed, creates difficulties for political compromise finding. However, it was not media intrusion that posed the biggest challenge to successful political bargaining in these two countries but the negotiators' self-mediatization (going public). Self-mediatization is a widespread trend in Western European politics. It is driven by a subjective perception among politicians that the mass media has become a powerful institution to reckon with, and that proactive changes within

political organizations are necessary to be back on an equal footing again. Studies on Western European parties and governments found ample evidence for this phenomenon (Chapter 8).

In spite of this great variability, we would still argue that, as a result of the joint impact of globalization and mediatization, established democracies face some common general challenges today. Most importantly, the embedding of nation-states into multilevel governance structures poses a set of important challenges to established democracies at the national level. As discussed in detail in Chapter 5, with the transfer of decision-making competences to the supranational level, very serious problems are posed with respect to the congruence between the government and the people, the inclusion and participation of national parliaments and national electorates in the political process, the transparency of the decision-making process, the accountability of national executives and of non-representative supranational executive bodies to national parliaments and national electorates, and the multiple executives' responsiveness to the citizens' needs.

We do not want to go into the related details here again, but we want to point out that the consequences of globalization and mediatization for national politics reinforce tendencies at the level of national representative democracies that have already been developing for other reasons as well. First of all, they contribute to the weakening of the parties' representation function and the accompanying increasing alienation of the voters from the political process. Thus, the empowerment of the executive branch at the detriment of parliament that is a result of the internationalization of politics tends to reinforce the parties' governing function and to weaken their representative function (which operates through parliament). Moreover, the embedding of the national governments into the multilevel structures implies that, as Mair (2009) has observed, the parties who routinely govern are exposed to the increasing tension between their role as representatives of the national citizen publics, and their role as responsible governments. As representatives of the national citizen publics, they are expected to be responsive and accountable to their voters; as responsible governments, they are expected to take into account the increasing number of principals constituted by the many veto players who now surround the government in its multilevel institutional setting. This is a direct consequence of the governing parties' reduced maneuvering space.

The mediatization of politics also contributes to the shifting balance of party functions by reducing the role of the party apparatus, by fostering the 'depoliticization' of the party base and by linking the parties'



leaders more directly to their voters. The increasing autonomy of the media from the political system and their increasing role for politics has led to an adaptation of politicians, parties, and governments to the imperatives of 'media logic'. Parties and politicians devote more attention to the already mentioned phenomenon of the 'self-mediatization of politics' (see Chapter 7), that is, the self-initiated stage-management of politics by means of strategic communication in an effort to master the new rules that govern access to the public sphere. Politicians, parties, and governments professionalize their internal and external communication and devote more of their resources to communication (see Chapter 8). Professional communication specialists at the service of party leaders and governments are replacing party militants.

Second, globalization and mediatization contribute to the increasing divorce between 'front-stage' and 'back-stage' politics at the national level. As we have argued in Chapter 3, the electoral channel has never been the only channel of representation at the national level in established democracies. It has always been complemented by the administrative channel and protest politics and, in some countries, by the direct-democratic channel. However, as we have argued earlier, the emerging multilevel governance structures have reinforced representation in the administrative channel, that is, in a range of arenas that are little visible, operate back-stage and are not directly electorally accountable. Similarly, mediatization reinforces the uncoupling of front-stage and back-stage politics. On the one hand, as is argued by Frank Esser (Chapter 7), the front-stage of the political process, that is, the political contest side of 'politics', is more easily subject to self-mediatization by politicians than the back-stage of policy making. The ongoing policy-making processes generally are too numerous for the limited scope of public attention, they need to be kept out of the limelight to protect the negotiators' room for maneuver, and they often are too complex and too technical for detailed public scrutiny. On the other hand, the journalists' practices in a professionalized and commercialized media system – negative reporting, horse-race journalism (focusing on strategies, personalities, and campaign tactics), conflict-focus, personalization, infotainment, and their intrusive or interventionist reporting (journalists reporting on politics in their own words granting politicians only limited opportunities to present themselves with their own voice) – mainly tend to focus on the political contest at the detriment of the policies' substantive content.

We would like to suggest that both the decline of the parties' linkage function and the tendency in political communication to focus on

the political contest and to give short shrift to the substance of politics (to policies, but also to ideologies, programs, fundamental political questions) contribute to the alienation of the voters from the political process and to populist reactions on the part of the public. The voters get the impression that the parties which habitually govern are all alike, that they all betray the public behind the scene, and that they all merit sanctioning by popular vote in the upcoming elections. Both the decline of the parties' linkage function and the decoupling of the front-stage and the back-stage of politics tend to facilitate the entry of populist leaders who are appealing to the popular dissatisfaction with established parties and their 'betrayal' of the popular demands.

Populist appeals to the public, in turn, are reinforced by the two challenges to democracy we have been studying here. On the one hand, they are exploiting the consequences of globalization for significant parts of the population who feel threatened by the opening up of the cultural, political, and economic borders of the nation-state. Thus, mobilization by the populist nationalist right in particular has successfully appealed to the globalization losers, and contributed to the restructuring of political conflict in Western European countries more generally (Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012). On the other hand, as has been pointed out in Chapter 8, populist mobilization is facilitated by the mediatization of politics: to the extent that news production is driven by the tastes and preferences of the consumers, it gives birth to a populist political culture. In a heavily mediatized democracy, populist leaders benefit from some sort of 'media complicity' (Mazzoleni 2008: 50). Such leaders are attractive for the media because they have news-value: they tend to have charisma, they are typically outsiders, who have not been part of the traditional political elites in their respective countries, they share the resentment of their clientele, and they are crass enough to express the emotions and ideas of these potentials (i.e. they spell out publicly what the 'common man' has always thought by himself).

## **Conclusion**

We have attempted to analyze the challenges globalization and mediatization pose for democracy today. Our focus has mainly been on Western Europe, where the challenge of globalization for democracy means European integration in particular. In the future, this focus should certainly be extended to cover other parts of the world as well, to begin with Central and Eastern Europe, where the two challenges

of globalization and mediatization may have different implications for democracy.

In our attempt to work out the implications of the two challenges, we have mostly treated them individually and have not been very successful in elaborating the relationships between them and their joint impact on democracy. Thus, we have studied mediatization almost exclusively at the national level and we have hardly paid any attention to the spread of regional or even global communication systems (e.g. television channels such as Al Jazeera, CNN, or RTL) that reach their audiences across national borders, and to their impact on democracy and democratization at the national and supranational level (e.g. on the Arab Spring). More specifically, we have paid little attention to the role of new media (internet, blogs, Twitter, Facebook) for democracy and democratization at the national and supranational level. In future research, questions related to the interaction between mediatization and globalization need to get the attention that they deserve.

Finally, we have not analyzed populist mobilizations in this volume, but we would like to suggest that, at least in Western Europe, as a result of the impact of the two challenges to national politics, populist reactions have become more likely and more consequential for the fate of democracy than they have been in the past. We would also like to suggest that the study of populist mobilizations should be placed high on the research agenda for the future of democracy in the 21st century. At this point, we do not know where the populist challenge in established democracies is going to lead them. We do want to suggest, however, that an exclusively pessimistic reading of this challenge is unwarranted. Rather than indicating the demise of the established Western European democracies, the populist challenge may well be an indication that they are alive and kicking, and that they are finally coming to grapple with their most important challenge – the establishment of a multilevel governance structure in Europe. To conclude, we agree with Tony Judt (2005: 796): ‘At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the dilemma facing Europeans was [...] rather, a question – *the* question – which history had placed upon the agenda in 1945 and which had quietly but insistently dislodged or outlived all other claims upon Europeans’ attention. What future was there for the separate European nation-states? Did they have a future?’

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