SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN AUSTRIA AND EUROPE:
IMPROVING DEMOCRACY
THROUGH POPULAR DELIBERATION

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Abstract: Beginning with the Trilateral Commission report in 1975, recent studies have demonstrated increasing dissatisfaction with the performance of democracies across Europe (Crozier, et al. 1975). Citizens have become increasingly mistrustful of politicians, skeptical about institutions, and disenchanted with the effectiveness of the democratic process (Dalton, 2004). Recent longitudinal studies, analyzing satisfaction with democracy of European citizens showed that in many European countries satisfaction with national democracies flourishes and increases in time (see Wagner et al. 2009, Bellucci et al. 2012). At the same time, the scientific has been characterized by the development of different theoretical perspectives that all utilize different approaches in order to define and explain support for democracy. We will first attempt to understand what citizens effectively support when they say that they support "democracy."

In order to answer this question, we will briefly review the literature on popular support for democracy and then empirically explore the main theoretical model adopted in support for democracy studies in order to understand if it still explains today's empirical reality of Europe. In the second section we will try to assess where each European country is placed on key dimensions of support for democracy. In that way, we will be able to see where Austria stands within the European family in terms of support for democracy. Our third section explores the possibility of deliberative mini publics to improve popular support for democracy. The data we will analyze are produced by a deliberative poll experiment, EuroPolis, which took place in 2009 and involved random sample of European citizens. We seek to understand not only whether the citizens could become more supportive of the political system, after participating in deliberative process, as assumed by deliberative model of democracy, we also aim to learn something about the differences between the Austrian and European sample.

Introduction

Much has been recently written about decline of popular support for democracy in consolidated democracies (Norris 1999). The study conducted by Crozier et al. (1975), emphasized disintegration of civil order, weak political leaders, and political alienation, all factors indicating a crisis of democracy.[1] The scholars have revealed a misalignment between the demands of citizens and the capacities of political institutions to effectively respond. Citizens become increasingly mistrustful of politicians, skeptical about institutions, and disenchanted with the effectiveness of the democratic process (Dalton, 2004). Still, the picture is not that simple: recent longitudinal studies, demonstrated that popular support for democracy has generally increased across Europe (see Wagner et al. 2009, Bellucci et al. 2012). At the same time, the active scientific debate on support for democracy has been characterized by the development of different theoretical perspectives adopted different approaches in order to define and explain the concept. Democracy is naturally a multifaceted concept, and can vary depending on the social and cultural environment in which it exists.

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[1] The study conducted by Crozier et al. (1975) represents the first analysis on support for democracy.

Naturally, this also engenders the possibility of difficulty in assessing its performance and in generalizing those results for accurate comparison. (Sartori 1991)

In our first section, we begin by clarifying what constitutes democratic governance and what citizens consider democracy to be. We will briefly review the literature on support for democracy and with the use of data empirically explore the main theoretical model adopted in support for democracy studies in order to understand if it still explains today's empirical reality of Europe

In the second section we will assess where each European Union member state scores on key dimensions of support for democracy.

The third section of the paper will be dedicated to exploring the possibility of improving popular support for democracy by using deliberative mini publics, a process born out of a search for methods to improve public engagement in democracy (Rossi 1997; Shapiro 1999; Williams and Matheny 1995; Witte 1980; Wright 1992). Many scholars have identified the root of democratic malaise within democratic systems that are unable to effectively respond to the demands of their citizens (Köchler 1987; Rosenthal 1998). Approaches that call for new forms of participatory and deliberative democracy are born with the appearance of problems that seem difficult to manage through the traditional instruments of representative democracy. (Habermas 1996, 1997; Cohen 1997; Benhabib 1996). Citizens can be brought back to the public sphere by becoming engaged in thoughtful deliberation that aims at solving common problems, at bringing policymakers to account, and by producing legitimate policy outcomes.

Deliberative mini publics are citizen forums in which a sample of citizens, selected from the population affected by some public issue, deliberate on that specific issue (Goodin and Dryzek 2006, Fung 2003, Gastil 2008, Smith 2009, Warren, 2009). Mini publics are used to involve citizens in the decision making process. In our paper we will use one such deliberative process that represents a standardized quasi-experiment, in order to assess if participation in such a process could increase popular support for democracy.

Section 1: What do European Citizens mean when they say they support "Democracy?"

David Easton's works (1965; 1975) identify the key factors for popular support of democracy as being the performance of both political institutions and of politicians and parties. In order

to describe the functioning of the political system Easton adopted the cybernetic model of self regulation. Easton in his work underlines several key points that should be considered: the political life as a behavioral system; the distinction between environment and the political system; answers offered by the political system and the feedbacks that permit the system to receive information from the environment.

Easton, moreover, allows for the classification of the political and institutional systems emphasizing the difference and similarity among three specific political objects: the political community, the regime, and the authorities. The *political community* refers to a basic attachment or a sense of belonging to a political system. It is the essential precondition for the foundation of any stable national state (Linz and Stepan 1996). The *regime* refers to the main authority institutions and to the public attitudes toward the constitutional order. The *authorities*, instead, refer to the present incumbents of the authority rules: it includes the evaluation of elected politicians and the performance of party leaders, prime ministers, and heads of state.

Easton (1975) also made a distinction between diffuse and specific support: the former is a deep-seated loyalty to the own community, while the latter is based on the fulfillment of demands or satisfaction with outputs. Yet, whereas diffuse support is less susceptible to daily governmental performances, the specific support is related to politicians' daily actions. In this way, when diffuse support is high, it is not necessarily the case that dissatisfaction with government outputs destabilizes the political system. However, Easton's argument that all those objects might be explicative of both specific and diffuse support has raised additional problems of interpretation and operationalization (Torcal and Montero 2006). For this reason, a more punctual definition of the Estonian framework was proposed by Norris (1999) and Dalton (2004). Adopting a five-fold approach, they refined Easton's conceptualization in terms of political regime and distributed the object support along a one-dimensional axis ranging from diffuse to specific support (Tab. 1).

Focalizing the attention on the political regime, the scholars looked at three different political objects: *regime principles* which express the ideal and specific normative values of the political system, and which are measured through the agreement with the idea of democracy as the best form of government or the most preferred political system (Dalton 1999); *regime performance,*[2] which represents how democratic governments work in practice, and which is

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[2] It is also denominated regime norms and procedures (see Dalton 2004).

measured in performance terms (satisfaction with the way democracy works - see Norris 1999) or in evaluative terms (satisfaction with democracy itself);[3] and, finally, *regime institutions* which is based on measures of trust and confidence in private and public institutions. Of course, some differentiations have been proposed in terms of measurement: some scholars prefer to measure these political objects only with regard to public institutions (Dalton 2004), while others extend this to private institutions (Norris 2006).

Table 1. Levels of political support

	Level of Analysis	Affective Orientations	Instrumental Evaluations
Diffuse Support	Political Community	National pride National identity	Best nation to live
	Regime: Principles	Democratic values	Democracy best form of government
	Regime: Performance	Participatory norms Political rights	Evaluations of rights Satisfaction with democratic process
	Regime: Institutions	Institutional expectations Support for parties Output expectations	Performance judgments Trust in institutions Trust in party system
Specific Support	Authorities	Feelings towards political leaders	Evaluations of politicians

Source: Dalton (1999).

In order to provide additional insight into these issues and to understand if the model of democracy support described previously still explains European reality, we included here the analysis of European public opinion[4] (Memoli 2011, Bellucci et al 2012). The analysis is based on the European and World Values Surveys, wave 1999- 2002 since it represents the most complete survey in terms of indicators of support for democracy. In fact, thirteen

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[3] Some doubts could emerge in validity terms on these two measures, especially if we compare old democracies with new democracies: in the former, the satisfaction with democracy is more stable than in the latter (Anderson 2001).

[4] The 24 countries included in the analyses are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

indicators[5] that were available in the surveys allowed us to study five dimensions of democracy support, differently then Norris (1999) and Dalton (2004) that due to the limited number of indicators explored four out of five dimensions. Different measures of democracy support are here analyzed by use of the factor analysis that allows finding some latent structure (dimensions) of the support for democracy of European citizens'. In this way we have reduced attribute space from thirteen variables to a smaller number of factors. To obtain a clear pattern of loadings we adopt a Varimax rotation strategy, which give as the possibility to maximize the variances of the squared normalized factor loadings across variables for each factor. As Table 2 shows, a five dimension solution stands out, where is reported the correlation of each item with the factors - we reported only those relationship which have at least a moderate correlation level (r>0.4)[6]. In this view, for example, satisfaction for government performance and satisfaction with democracy contribute to regime principle factor.

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[5] The indicators used are following:

National pride (question: How proud are you to be (country national)?; very proud + quite proud);

Interest for compatriots' conditions of life (question: To what extent do you feel concerned about the living conditions of: Your fellow countrymen; very much + much + to certain extent); Approval democratic ideals (question: I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? Having a democratic political system;) : very good + fairly good);

Democracy is the best form of government (question: I'm going to read off some things that people sometimes say about a democratic political system. Could you please tell me if you agree strongly, agree, disagree or disagree strongly, after I read each one of them?; Democracy may have problems but it's better than any other form of government; agree strongly+ agree); Confidence (Parliament, Civil Service, Justice System, Police; question: Please look at this card and tell me, for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them, is it a great deal, quite a lot, not very much or none at all?; a great deal+ quite a lot); Satisfaction with democracy (question: On the whole are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in our country?; very satisfied+ fairly satisfied); Satisfaction for government performance (People have different views about the system for governing this country. Here is a scale for rating how well things are going: 1 means very bad; 10 means very good;0=under mean, 1= up mean). Location of the self or not in a left-right spatial continuum (question: In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?; 1=left – 10=right; ?; 0= did not place her/himself on the scale – 1= placed her/himself somewhere on the scale, don't answer-excluded) Electoral turnout (question: If there were a national election tomorrow, for which party on this list would you vote?; 0=no vote – 1=vote); Party membership (question: Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say... which, if any, do you belong to?; political party: 0=no – 1=yes).

[6] The reliability analysis confirms that the items considered in the factor analysis are acceptable in statistical terms.

Table 2. Components of democracy support

		Political Community	Regime: Democratic principles	Regime: Institutions	Regime: Performance	Regime: Political Authority
National pride		0.667				
Interest for compatriot conditions life		0.776				
Having a democratic political system			0.825			
Democracy - best form of government			0.822			
Confidence in Parliament				0.663		
Confidence in Civil Service				0.741		
Confidence in Justice System				0766		
Confidence in Police				0.664		
Satisfaction with democracy					0.725	
Satisfaction for government performance					0.723	
Location of the self in a left-right spatial continuum						0.653
Turnout						0.470
Belonging to political parties						0.637
Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Test	0.745					
Barlett's Test (Sig.)	0.000					
N	32.316					
Eingevalue		1.053	1.380	2.148	1.428	1.163
% of variance explained		8.1	10.6	16.5	11.0	9.0

Note: Table entries are Varimax rotated factor readings of a principal component analysis (missing data were replaced by mean scores). The KMO measures the sampling adequacy while the Barlett's
Test examines if correlation matrix is an identity matrix. The countries included in the analysis are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom,
Source: European and World Values Survey, 1999-2002

- As Table 2 shows, a five dimension solution stands out; in details:

- the first dimension (which explains 8.1% of variance) capture the support for political community, and correlates with national pride and interest for compatriots' conditions of life;

- the second dimension (with an explicative power of 10.6%) identifies support for democratic principles, and correlates with adherence to democratic ideals;

- the third factorial dimension describes confidence in public institutions and explains 16.5% of the variance;
- the fourth dimension taps regime performance, correlating with the two measures of satisfaction with government performance and the way democracy has develops action for government performance (11.0%);
- finally, variables capturing the involvement with the political system[7] load on the fifth dimension, which can be interpreted as support for political actors (9.0%).

Therefore, our analysis confirmed the multidimensional nature of political support.

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[7] Given the lack of suitable measures of support for political actors, location of the self or not in a left-right spatial continuum, turnout and party membership have been employed as subjective behavioural indicators of involvement with the political system.

Section 2: Support for democracy- Where is Europe (and Austria) today?

In this section emphasis is laid upon today's empirical reality of Europe with particular focus on Austria. Before all, using the same data set as in the previous section we aim to discover where each European country is placed within the key dimensions of support for national democracy. Furthermore, we aim to understand how the support for democracy, in the case of European countries, is changing during time. In order to do this, we will use the satisfaction with democracy indicator since differently than other indicators of support for democracy it's available for the eleventh years' time period (1997-2007).

The table below therefore shows the factor scores for each country within each of the five dimensions.

Table 3.

Ranking of countries for each of 5 dimensions of political support for (national) democracy.

Diffuse   ⟵──────────────────────────────────⟶   Specific

Support   Support

Political Community			Democratic principles			Institutions			Regime performance			Political Authority	
Belgium	.434		Greece	.257		Denmark	.557		Netherland	.638		Netherland	.441
Czech Republic	.415		Denmark	.222		Luxembourg	.413		Malta	.597		Sweden	.407
Denmark	.380		**Austria**	**.177**		Ireland	.323		Portugal	.452		Malta	.286
Estonia	.329		Italy	.161		Sweden	.320		Luxembourg	.448		Greece	.240
Finland	.295		Netherland	.151		Finland	.312		Finland	.354		Belgium	.214
France	.179		Sweden	.141		**Austria**	**.264**		**Austria**	**.319**		Slovakia	.148
Germany	.122		Germany	,098		Portugal	.156		Germany	.307		**Austria**	**.077**
Greece	.117		Czech Rep.	.068		United Kingdom	.143		Spain	.301		Denmark	.065
Hungary	.085		Spain	.053		Malta	.107		Ireland	.201		Germany	.063
Ireland	.031		Luxembourg	.027		Germany	.092		Denmark	.169		Finland	.053
Italy	-.012		Malta	.025		France	.081		Greece	.041		Czech Rep.	.047
Latvia	-.016		Ireland	-.022		Netherland	.054		Sweden	.015		France	.007
Lithuania	-.033		Portugal	.023		Spain	.014		France	-.040		Italy	-.018

Austria	-.046		Belgium	-,030		Hungary	-.009		United Kingdom	-.067		Luxembourg	-.037
Luxembourg	-.059		Lithuania	-.032		Belgium	-.013		Belgium	-.140		Ireland	-.067
Malta	-.076		Slovenia	-.053		Slovakia	-.047		Czech Rep.	-.238		Spain	-.079
Netherland	-.096		France	.059		Latvia	-.055		Poland	-.252		Portugal	-.099
Poland	-,131		Estonia	-.092		Poland	-.096		Slovenia	-.270		United Kingdom	-.160
Portugal	-.152		Latvia	-.121		Italy	-.119		Estonia	-.290		Lithuania	-.192
Slovakia	-.183		Finland	-.178		Slovenia	-.235		Italy	-.310		Estonia	-.205
Slovenia	-.250		United Kingdom	-.194		Estonia	-.241		Latvia	-.384		Latvia	-.284
Spain	-.287		Poland	-.204		Greece	-.556		Hungary	-.509		Slovenia	-.322
Sweden	-.403		Hungary	-.245		Lithuania	-.589		Slovakia	-.652		Hungary	-.333
United Kingdom	-.411		Slovakia	-.287		Czech Rep.	-.626		Lithuania	-.713		Poland	-.353

Note: The values are factor scores obtained by factor analysis.
Source: European and World Values Survey, 1999-2002

As we can see from the table 3 Austria scores high on all factorial dimensions. With only exception represented by the support towards political community, the overall support for national democracy of Austrian citizens is pretty high, in particular when compared with other European consolidated democracies.

Since the indicators of democracy support are scarce- only one wave is available - it is impossible to have a complete picture of support for democracy in the last decade. Still, using the satisfaction with democracy indicator[8] we can have an insight[9] on how democracy support change over the 11 years time period (1997-2007)[10]. In the figure 1 we reported the trend of satisfaction with national and European democracy of Austrians together with the average of all European countries.

As it was the case in the previous analysis reported in table 3, the satisfaction with national democracy of the Austrian citizens is high respect to the European average. In the first part of new millennia, citizens were satisfied how democratic government works in practice which increases especially between 2005 and 2007.

At the same time, the satisfaction of Austrian citizens with how democracy works in Europe during the same period was quite low and not stable until 2002 when the trend seems to stabilize. In general, the picture of satisfaction with national and European democracy delineates a clear difference between Austrians and the European average: the first are more satisfied with national democracy while the latter appreciate more how democracy works in Europe.

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[8] The wording of the question is: On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in (country)/ Europe?

[9] This indicator, although strongly criticized represents an useful instrument that measure how democracy works (see Wagner et al. 2009, Bellucci et al. 2012)

[10] Although the satisfaction with democracy indicator was included in the EB surveys after 2007, the data sets are still not available.

Figure. 1 Satisfaction with European and national democracy (1997-2007).
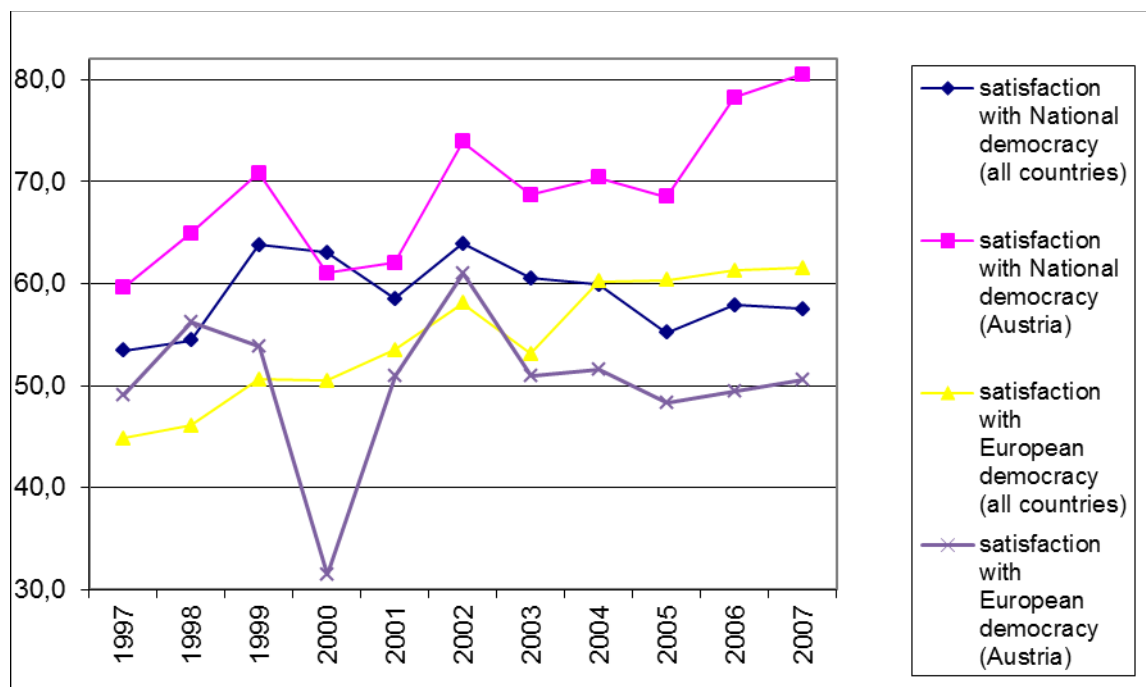
Note: the figure reports the percentage of those who were very and fairly satisfied with how democracy work (in country/Europe) of the European and Austrian sample.
Source: The Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend (1976-2002), Eurobarometer 60.1 (2003), 61 and 62 (2004), 63.4 (2005), 65.2 (2006), 68.1 (2007), Central and Eastern Eurobarometer (1990-1997, 2003-4).

Section 3: Improving democracy trough citizens' deliberation?

Until now, many empirical studies explored the effects of participation in deliberative mini publics confirming that it produce different "democratic" effects: political sophistication, political interest, political participation, internal political efficacy, political trust, political "respect", political empathy, "sociotropism" (Fishkin and Luskin 2002). Although the idea on which all deliberative mini publics are based is that discussion and deliberation among citizens has a positive effect both on health of democracy and the citizens involved in the deliberations, the main focus of research on deliberation effects, remained primarily concerned with understanding how the deliberation influence opinions and knowledge of the individuals making them become "ideal" citizens, leaving aside the direct relationship of the benefits of deliberation process with the concepts explored by the studies of the quality of representative democracy. Focusing on support for democracy, in this section of the paper we will try to assess if the participation in deliberation process could increase citizens support for democracy. At the same time we aim to assess if these effects are different in the case of Austrians when compared to European average.

Data and method: European Deliberative Polling - EuroPolis

The data we use in this part of our paper are produced by EuroPolis - a Deliberative Polling held in Brussels in May 2009 that involved a random sample of European citizens from 27 member states. Deliberative Polling [11](DP) is deliberative quasi experiment created by James Fishkin in 1988 for studying processes of deliberation and opinion formation that aims to show that people could become better citizens if they are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful deliberation on public issues and to involve the population in process of decision making (Fishkin 1997, Hansen 2004). It is based on participation of a representative sample of the population. By applying random sampling, DP aim to guarantee plurality of opinions, neutrality of participants (Parkinson, 2003) and to avoid problems related to the self-selection of the subjects often encountered in deliberative settings where other methods of selection are adopted (Mansbridge, 2010). At the same time, by giving all members of the same population the same possibility of being selected to participate, DP speaks to principles of substantive inclusion and equality- the fundamental principles of deliberative democracy. Differently than many other mini publics, in DP, at least 100 participants must be included in the exercise. This criterion is very important because when the sample is too small, it's impossible to claim representativeness. Given the fact that some selected participants may not show up, which could threaten the representativeness of the sample, DP as many other deliberative exercises, offer economic incentives to participants. The representativeness of the population relates to external validity of experimental studies that inquires about generalization of results. Therefore, differently than mini publics that adopts other selection methods DP demonstrates higher level of external validity.

Once selected, interviewed and invited to participate, citizens are provided with briefing materials approximately two weeks before the deliberative event, that inform them on the issue that will be discussed. In DP, the briefing materials have a purpose to inform the participants about the key elements of the issue and to allow them to initiate deliberation from equal starting positions in terms of their factual knowledge.

In DP, it is only after the input of factual information that the deliberative event can take place. It usually last from one to several days. In the case of DP, deliberative event consists of two main phases. In the first phase the participants are gathered together in small discussion groups assisted by professional moderator who should ensure a highly respectful

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environment and balanced participation. At the end of discussions, participants formulate questions for the experts and politicians. In the second phase, they meet in a plenary assembly to hear the answers to their questions. A balanced panel of experts and politicians within the plenary sessions further ensures the inclusion and the exposure to the justification of different opinions and preferences. In order to guarantee the appropriate implementation of the exercise all the phases of the DP are supervised by scientific committee which includes, in most of the cases, its creator James Fishkin. At the end of DP the participants fill out the questionnaire that includes the same questions already asked at the initial interview. Such use of questionnaire as method of data collection makes possible the measurement of the effects of participation in deliberative setting on attitudes of participants.

Europolis followed the standard DP design, adding one important element of inquiry: a control group was included that did not attend the event but that was administered a before-after questionnaire. This will allow us to assess if the measured effects of deliberation are not due to some external factors and therefore could be ascribed to the experimental treatment. The data we are using were collected in the moment of recruitment and two months after that Deliberative Polling took place. The first survey of about 4.300 EU randomly selected European citizens started one month before DP (Time1). 3.000 randomly selected individuals out of these 4.300 interviewed were invited to take part in the Deliberative Polling event in May 2009. A random sub-sample of 400 individuals was drawn from all those that accepted the invitation and 348 actually attended the event. This group was proportionally stratified according to the number of seats allocated to each Member State in the EU Parliament. This means that only 6 participants from Austria participated in the European Deliberative Poll and 17 Austrians made part of control group composed of approximately 700 individuals. The EuroPolis DP focused on two topics: climate change and immigration at European level. The team of experts and stakeholders prepared a draft of briefing materials that gave the basic and balanced information about these two European issues, including therefore alternative policies, social costs and benefits argued and position of interest groups and party families of the EU Parliament. Additionally, the first part of briefing materials described the institutional design of the European Union and its policy-making processes. The inclusiveness and accuracy of the briefing materials were assessed by two stakeholders' committees (one for each issue). Experts that contributed to draft the briefing materials were also invited to attend EuroPolis event by participating in the plenary sessions.

Participants were assigned into 25 small groups consisting of two or three languages. In order to allow to all participants that spoke 21 different languages to communicate in their mother-tongue simultaneous translation was provided for each group.

Like already confirmed by other DP exercises, the DP treatment in the case examined here, had important effects on participants attitudes and knowledge[12].

Related to the representativeness of the sample, as already observed in other Deliberative Polling's, in terms of socio demographic characteristics there were only a few significant differences betwen partecipants and non partecipants: the sample of participants was slightly better educated and upper class than non-participants and it was more interested in politics. At the same time there were some minor differences concerning the attitudes towards the issues under deliberation: participants shoved slightly more pro-immigration and pro-European attitudes and were more intended to vote in the European parliamentary election than the non participants. Given those differences we can still say that the sample of participants was highly representative in socio demographic terms although we should bear in mind that they were more pro-european.

What really interest us here is if the support for democracy of the participants of deliberative mini publics could increase and therefore if those new forms of institutional devices once implemented could improve democratic performance of political system. That's why we analyze the effects of deliberation treatment on participants' satisfaction with democracy[13]. This indicator of support for democracy is one of the most used indicators, employed in numerous surveys and although criticized by some scholars (Canache et al 2001) it still could be considered as an useful instrument that measure support of citizens for democratic system (see Wagner et al. 2009, Bellucci et al. 2012)

Our hypothesis that the 'satisfaction with democracy' of the participants would increase after they have participated in the Deliberative Poll is based on promise of deliberative model of democracy to enhance democratic performance of political system. On the one hand, the citizens would consider political decision more legitimate since they would be produced by "participated" process. On the other hand, they would, better understand democratic

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[12] For detailed analyses and discussion of changes that occurred in Europolis see: Isernia et al, ' Europolis Project' in R. Kies and P. Nanz (eds.), forthcoming, European citizens' deliberation: A promising path for EU governance?, Ashgate/Roehampton University Press.

[13] The question used is '*On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in (country/Europe)*'? The answer modalities are: very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied.

procedures (Grönlund et al., 2010) and would develop more trust in and satisfaction with the workings of a democracy.

Note that the assumption of increased satisfaction with democracy as an effect of deliberation in our case is not that straightforward for two reasons. First, due to the quasi-experimental nature of the Europolis that didn't aimed to influence decision making process but was used as a pure scientific exercise- we cant expect that citizens become more satisfied with how democracy work because of the fact that political decision were produced by "participated" process. In fact, participants were conscious that their voices were not supposed to be taken in consideration by political authorities. The second reason is related to the context in which the deliberation is taking place- issues discussed were European, participants were selected from European sample, the politicians and experts were European – so can we assume that the satisfaction with how national democracy work increase after participating in a setting framed at European level? Or the only outcome we could expect is the increase of satisfaction with European democracy? Still, based on deliberative theory assumption- deliberation should produce better understand of democratic procedures and knowledge related to the complexity of decision making process in general. Therefore we could assume that the satisfaction with how national democracy work should increase too after participating in deliberation.

In the figure 2 we reported the percentage of the European sample next to the Austrian one for the group of participants. The blue bars represent the percentage of those who were very and fairly satisfied with how democracy works (in country/ Europe) before participating in Europolis while the violet bars represent the percentage of those who were very and fairly satisfied two months after deliberation.

The figure 3 instead, reports the same percentage for the control group. It's important to note at this point that even if we included separate measures for Austrian sample next to the European average, the Austrian sample is composed only by 6 individuals for the group of participants and 17 individuals for the control group. Therefore, due to the small numbers of Austrian sample the interpretation of the results related to the comparison between the two samples should be taken with caution.

What we can see from the figures is that:

First, the European sample of participants became more satisfied with how democracy work at national and European level: the satisfaction increase approximately 7 % for both levels.

When we compare the participants with control group we realize that the sample of participants was already more satisfied with democracy before participating in Deliberative Poll but at the same time its clear that deliberation did have a "positive" effect since the changes that occurred in control group were very little and not systematic.

Second, the Austrian sample of participants became more satisfied with national democracy but not with European one. Comparison with the control group shows us that the changes observed represent the effects of deliberation treatment, since similar changes did not occurred in the control group. At the same time we can not say the same thing for the satisfaction with European democracy since similar changes occurred in control group.

Third, if we focus only on the comparison between participants and control group before deliberative treatment and on comparison between the Austrian and European sample related to the levels of the satisfaction with democracy it becomes clear that there are some important differences. The "Europeans" that accepted to participate in deliberative quasi-experiment were in general more satisfied with how democracy work, then those who made part of control group. Austrians that participated in deliberation when compared with control group were, instead, less satisfied with both, national democracy (the difference is approximately 30%) and with European democracy (the difference is approximately 13%).

Once acknowledged the limits of the data analyzed here and exposed previously, we can say that that Austrian sample has different attitudes then the European one and that this is truth for both, sample of participants and the control group. At the same time, we realized that there is a selection bias that regards the attitudes towards democracy. Still, given the problems related to the small sample and the self-selection that occurs when recruiting citizens to participate in deliberative mini publics, our analyses clearly shows the signs of the "positive" effects of deliberation on the citizens attitudes towards democracy.

Figure 2. Participants group—satisfaction with European and national democracy (before - after deliberation).
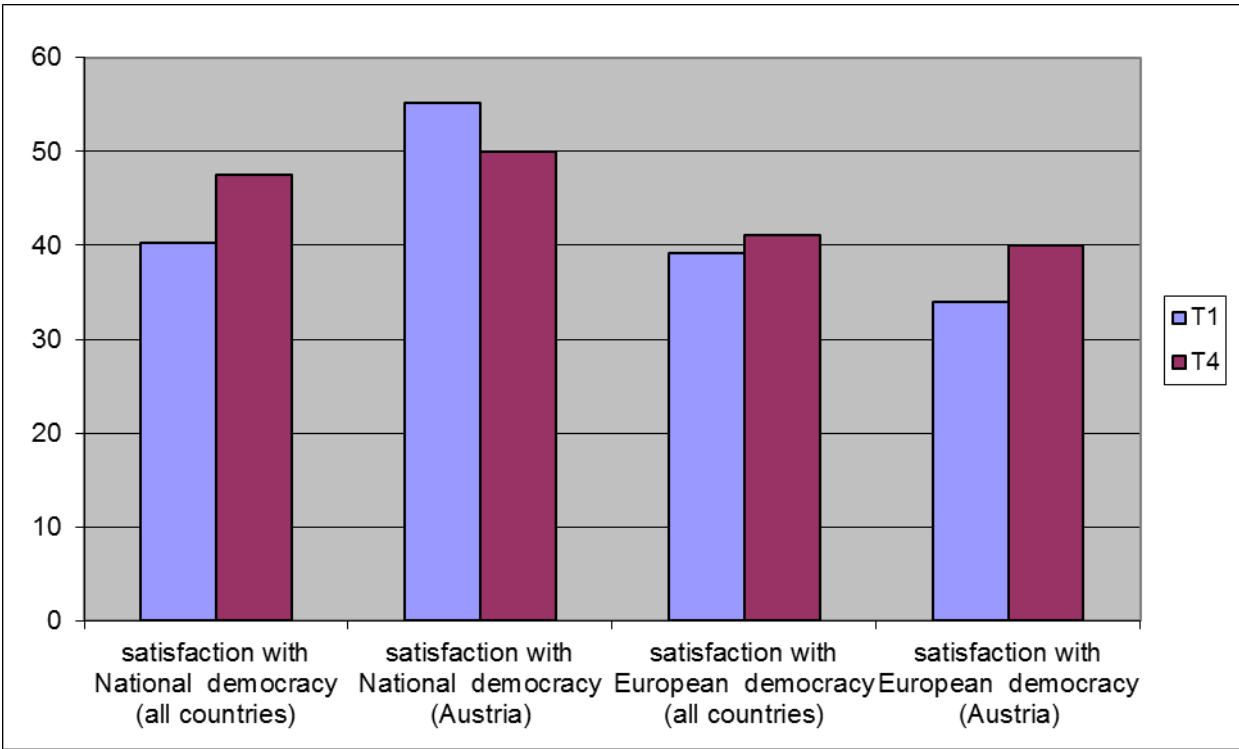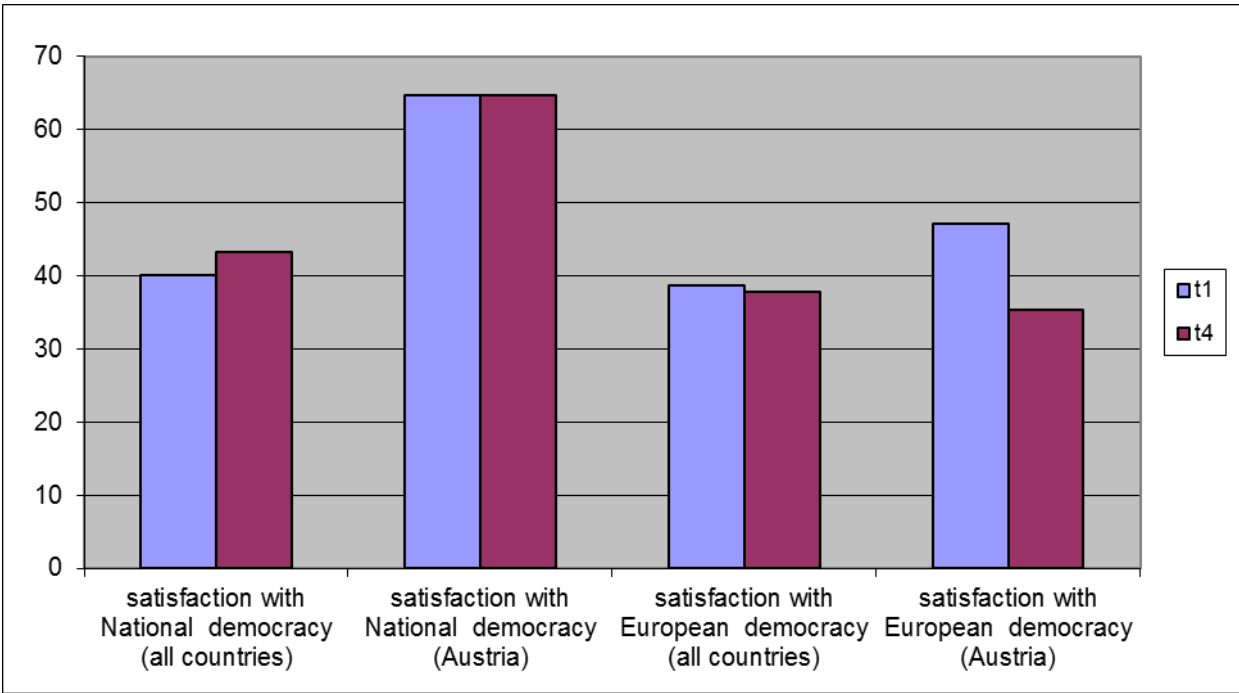

Figure 3. Control group—satisfaction with European and national democracy (before- after deliberation).

Conclusions

In our paper we empirically explored the main theoretical model adopted in support for democracy studies and confirmed the multidimensional nature of the phenomena. We analyzed European countries on key dimensions of support for democracy and discovered that Austria, when compared to other European countries, is placed high on all factorial dimensions with only exception for the case of support towards political community. Furthermore, we traced the trend of support of democracy in the last decade both for Europe and Austria using the satisfaction with democracy indicator. Our analyses confirmed that the Austrian citizens appreciated how democratic government worked in practice and that the satisfaction increased from 1997 to 2007. At the same time, the satisfaction of Austrian citizens with how democracy works in Europe during the same period was quite low and this result together with previous findings contribute to outline a clear difference between Austrians and the European average: the first are more satisfied with national democracy while the latter appreciate more how democracy works in Europe. The differences between the attitudes of Austrians when compared to those of the European average were once again confirmed in the third section of our paper where we use the date from quasi-experimental setting of European Deliberative Poll. Given all the limits related to the data (small sample size, above all) and problems related to self-selection that occurs in mini publics our findings still bring to light the potential of deliberation to increase the satisfaction with democracy of the citizens.

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