Whom do we trust?
People’s Voting Behaviour and Trust in Western European Countries under the light of the Crisis of Democracy Discourse

Author:
Sabrina Krebs

Supervisor:
Professor Geoffrey D. Gooch

Linköping 2008
# Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. 3  
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 4  
**Part I – Research Outline** ................................................................................................. 5  
  1 Aim and structure of the study ........................................................................................ 5  
  2 Review of relevant literature ........................................................................................... 6  
    2.1 Theoretical literature .................................................................................................... 7  
    2.2 Empirical literature ....................................................................................................... 9  
  3 Theoretical framework ................................................................................................... 10  
    3.1 Crisis of democracy – background ............................................................................. 10  
    3.2 Term clarifications ..................................................................................................... 11  
      3.2.1 Theory .................................................................................................................. 11  
      3.2.2 Democracy .......................................................................................................... 13  
      3.2.3 Crisis ................................................................................................................... 14  
      3.2.4 Crisis of democracy – a formal definition ........................................................... 15  
    3.3 Exit-voice-theory ........................................................................................................ 16  
    3.4. Political Culture – Civic Culture ............................................................................... 19  
  4 Methodological framework ............................................................................................ 21  
    4.1 Scientific literature discourse ..................................................................................... 21  
    4.2 Quantitative data analysis ........................................................................................... 23  
    4.3 Methodology .............................................................................................................. 24  
    4.4 Problems and weaknesses of the methodology .......................................................... 25  
**Part II – Scientific discourse and analysis** ................................................................ 27  
  5 Discourse on the so-called crisis of democracy ............................................................. 27  
    5.1 Periods of discussion ................................................................................................. 28  
      5.1.1 First Crisis: Overload of government ................................................................. 28  
      5.1.2 First Relaxation: Trend might be a problem but no crisis .................................. 30  
      5.1.3 Second crisis: dissatisfied democrat ................................................................. 32  
      5.1.4 Change not crisis ............................................................................................... 35  
    5.2 Core topics .................................................................................................................. 37  
      5.2.1 Overload on government ..................................................................................... 37  
      5.2.2 Individualism ....................................................................................................... 39  
      5.2.3 Participation ......................................................................................................... 40
Abstract

The debate about a possible crisis of democracy has been present over 30 years. Questionable is what researchers mean when talking about a potential crisis. What are the factors that are causing it? Are we in a crisis of democracy in Western European countries?

The goal of this thesis is to evaluate how different authors characterize what some call a crisis of democracy, to define core topics and to test one of these on empirical data. This will be achieved by firstly, analyzing pieces of literature related to the scientific crisis of democracy debate. Secondly, using Hirschmann’s theory of exit and voice, mass data from will be categorized and analyzed under the light of participation and trust in political institutions.

Issues that return are overload on government, individualism, participation and a new culture versus old structure. Analyzing people’s trust in political institutions depending on their intention to go to national elections shows trends: people lose trust in the institutions government, parliament and political parties. Separating the data into groups of potential voters, non-voters and blank voters shows that the latter two show a greater mistrust in political institutions and less interest in politics.

Overall, the debate on a potential crisis of democracy is multifaceted and varies between different authors. People are less active in traditional ways of participating, but that does not mean that Western European democracies stand before collapse. It could however mean that new forms of participation are needed to engage people in politics again.
Introduction

Democracy is a term that is used in many different ways and concepts. It can describe a political system but it can also implicate a lot more than that by referring to the concept of freedom and rule by the people. Some say that democracy in its capitalistic form is the end stage of political development, other disagree. Some argue that even though democracy is talked about like it exists, it is “a concept before it is a fact, and because it is a concept it has no single precise and agreed meaning”. Nevertheless, starting out from the word itself, democracy originates from the Greek “demos” people and “kratos” rule, which together means rule of, by and for the people. However, that does not tell much about which characteristic have to be associated with a democratic ruling. Is it even possible to find a general definition for democracy?

There is a negative notion about content with politicians, political institutions as well as parties in many Western Democracies. Less people are participating and engaged in the old kind of politics, which seems to pose a problem to democracy as a form of government. For the last 30 years there has been a modern debate about the potential crisis of democracy throughout the scientific literature. This discussion has varied in extent and results but there definitely is a constant unease about democracy being in a crisis. One aspect that comes into focus in that perspective is growing discontent of the citizens with their governments and lost trust in political institutions.

Next to the discussion about the so-called crisis of democracy there has also been much debate about the shift from old to new politics. Old politics mean here the classical party politics, the interests of the nation being the most important, and the try to govern the nation as a closed entity. By contrast, new politics describe the globalization of interests and community feeling, meaning that animal rights and the fight against global warming move in the focus of political engagement, which leaves the classical form as not as important behind. That does not however mean, that people are less interested in politics or that they are participating less, maybe just less in traditional ways. It seems more crucial to find out why they are turning away from the classical forms of politics to this new movement.

---

1 Fukuyama (1992) for the first and for example Dunn (1992) for the latter.
7 See Klingemann/Fuchs (1995), Luther/Müller-Rommel (2002) as well as section 5.2.4 on the connection between the old new politics discussion and the so-called crisis of democracy discourse.
9 Webster (2001).
Part I – Research Outline

1 Aim and structure of the study

Since there has been a debate about the so-called crisis of democracy the aim of this study is to draw a historic overview about this very discussion. The main focus will be laid on finding common grounds in the various studies and to try to find core topics that return in different literature on the issue. One issue that comes into mind immediately when talking about the crisis of democracy is the issues of participation. Presuming that this will be a recurring topic in the literature the question rises, how participation and a potential crisis of democracy are interrelated, how they affect each other and what participatory behavior might be able to tell us in relation to the so-called crisis of democracy. This constitutes the second aim of the study: to analyze participatory behavior in Western European states, how it has changed over time and possibly to predict or to put up a hypothesis on what that might tell one over the so-called crisis of democracy discussed in the scientific world.

The research question leading the study to achieve these aims is: How can participation and trust in political institutions in Western European countries be analyzed under the light of the so-called crisis of democracy? Is decreasing participation promoting a crisis of democracy? Is there a relationship between voting behavior and trust in political institutions? Along the way to answer this question, the following sub-questions will have to be answered first:

1. What do scholars mean when talking about the crisis of democracy? Which common problems can be identified?
2. How has participation changed over the years?
3. Is there a relation between voting behavior and trust in political institutions?

In order to begin the discourse of crisis literature and the analysis of participation in Western European countries, the following sections in this chapter will focus on relevant literature, both in theoretical and empirical terms. Important terms will be discussed and

---

clarified in chapter 3. Moreover, theories applied as well as the methodology of this thesis will be elaborated, the latter in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 will then start the discourse through the discussion of the so-called crises of democracy, starting in the 1970s covering studies until today. The aim thereby will be to find explanations as to what the authors mean with the crisis of democracy, whether they concentrate on similar dimensions of the phenomenon and if it is possible to find core topics, which returns in the discussion and could therefore be considered core issues in the discussion on the so-called crisis of democracy.

Following this discourse will be the analysis of how the results of chapter 5 can be analyzed in the empirical world. Therefore, participatory behavior in Western European democracies will be analyzed in relation to Hirschmann’s thesis of exit, voice and loyalty and trust in political institutions. Hopefully, the research question will be answered throughout this analysis in the extent to identify whether political trust influences people’s decision on exiting/voicing at national elections.

The thesis will be completed be a concluding part, where the results of chapters 5 and 6 will be summarized. Following that will be a section on how the topic of this thesis can be taken further as well as to other focus points.

2 Review of relevant literature

The beginning of all academic writing lies in literature concerning the topic. Whether that means that one gets an idea on what to write about or whether one wants to falsify what has been written. The foundation to new knowledge is most, almost all of the times, based on the thoughts of others, who inspire us and enrich our own thoughts. The idea to write this thesis on the topic presented already arose three years ago while studying Almond and Verba and their theory on political culture. Their thoughts on how the culture in a country should be composed in order to function well can be seen as the starting point for this thesis. Even though there has been harsh critique on the concept of “civic culture” the ideas behind it can be well-connected to the discussion on the so-called crisis of democracy, the question whether and/why citizens grow more distrustful of national political institutions and finally, whether that leads to a problem in Western democracies.

---

For these reasons, the following two sections will concentrate on theoretical as well as empirical literature, which has been important for writing this thesis. In order not to go into too many details from the books, the descriptive parts will be kept short. Some pieces will be discussed more extensively in sections 3.3 and 3.4 as well as chapter 5, the latter being the first one in the analysis. The main objective here is rather to value the importance of the different publications for this paper, the research question and the field of research in general, as far as possible.

2.1 Theoretical literature

As for theoretical literature that has been influential for this thesis, various authors and books, editorials articles would have to be mentioned. In order not to repeat the literature list, the most important pieces have been picked out.

The first book to be named is *The Civic Culture* by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba from year 1963\(^{15}\). Their theory on political culture has not only been influential in the process of finding the topic for this paper, it has also had an impact on the author’s way of looking at certain facts. Bringing it down to one fact: the theory that Almond and Verba develop, namely, that a political culture has to be represented by the nation’s political structure in one way or another can the governors of a country be legitimized by the countries citizens, can be considered the very foundation to this thesis\(^{16}\). Even though the thesis does not go into Almond and Verba’s theory itself, the thoughts and reasoning presented here, ground to a great extent on their book.

Albert O. Hirschmann wrote the book *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*\(^ {17}\) in which he explains the dynamics of groups of consumers or members when the product the purchase or the group they belong to starts to deteriorate. These thoughts become extremely valuable when thinking about, why people stop participating in traditional politics, meaning for example elections. Hirschmann does not only broach the issue of exit and voice as options for consumers/members, he also takes the variable loyalty into account\(^ {18}\). The latter is the most relevant when talking about democracy, whether it could be in a crisis and what the reasons could be that people stop participating.

\(^{15}\) Almond/Verba (1963).
\(^{16}\) Meant here is the first version from 1963. The author of this thesis realizes that there has been an extensive critique on Almond/Verba and their concept of civic culture, especially since their ideal picture of democracy and political culture is extremely close to the American system. Nevertheless, their ideas and study makes the starting point for political culture studies as we know it today. It seems therefore more than legitimate to use the book regardless of the age of the theory. Almond/Verba (1963) and Pickel/Pickel (2006): p.52.
\(^{17}\) Hirschmann (1980).
\(^{18}\) Hirschmann (1980).
How frustrated do people have to be with political institutions to lose trust in them? Does that necessarily mean that they participate less in traditional ways as elections? These questions will come up more often throughout the thesis, hopefully leading to an answer towards the end of the analysis.

In order to be able to analyze the so-called crisis of democracy, which is the background discussion that leads to the question of declining participation; one needs to know what the so-called crisis of democracy means. Therefore, in the first chapter of Part II various contributions on the topic “crisis of democracy” will be analyzed on their context as well as common points. The book of Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki _Crisis of Democracy_ from 1975\(^\text{19}\) was chosen as a starting point. These three authors opened up a discussion on whether democracies in the Trilateral Countries (United States, Western Europe, Japan) find themselves in a crisis and which factors are most influential in that perspective. As Almond and Verba were pioneers in modern political culture studies\(^\text{20}\), so were the three authors of _Crisis of Democracy\(^\text{21}\) on modern crisis literature. Therefore, their contribution needs mentioning here in a double way: first, their book represents a new beginning on discussing the performance of Western democracies; secondly the other literature chosen for analysis in the scientific discourse chapter was mostly selected according to its relation to Crozier et al.’s book. _Crisis of Democracy\(^\text{22}\) is in this sense is not only one of if nor the most important contribution on the discussion of the so-called crisis of democracy; it is also a criteria on which further readings were selected.

Relating to Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975)\(^\text{23}\) Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam edited the book _Disaffected Democracies – What’s Troubling the Trilateral Countries?\(^\text{24}\) The contributions in this book take up the problems characterized by Crozier et al. and rewrite their book 25 years afterwards. The editorial\(^\text{25}\) therefore can be seen as a second edition of, as a new version of _Crisis of Democracy\(^\text{26}\). It has therefore value for this thesis because it takes up rather recent questions, analysis data collected after 1975 and gives therefore harder evidence for its conclusions. The analysis in chapter 6 is inspired by certain chapters in the book of Pharr and Putnam\(^\text{27}_.

\(^{19}\) Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\(^{21}\) Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\(^{22}\) Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\(^{23}\) Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\(^{24}\) Pharr/ Putnam (2000).
\(^{25}\) Pharr/ Putnam (2000).
\(^{26}\) Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\(^{27}\) Pharr/ Putnam (2000).
2.2 Empirical literature

Another important part in this thesis consists of the analysis: one could even say it will be the heart of the whole paper. It seems therefore important to name some sources that will turn out valuable in conducting the two-folded analysis. Chapter 5, the first section in the analysis, will concentrate on scientific literature discussing the so-called crisis of democracy. Chapter 6 will then go into electoral turnout, people’s confidence in political institution and whether these two seem to be related. The next section will therefore first mention important literature for the literature discourse and then mainly focus on data sources.

The chapter on scientific literature contains short descriptions and evaluations of books, articles and editorials, which are related to the discussion of the so-called crisis of democracy. In order not to take away too many conclusions, only a few pieces will be named at this point. Certainly, Crozier et al.’s Crisis of Democracy takes a special position in this part as well. Moreover, books like Political Action. Mass Participation in five Western Democracies edited by Samuel H. Barnes and Max Kaase, Challenging the Political Order: New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies edited by Russell J. Dalton and Manfred Kuechler, as well as Why People don’t trust Government edited by Joseph S. Nye, Philip Zelikow and David C. Kin are milestones in the scientific discourse. They represent analyses from different periods of time, analyzing data according to different backgrounds or philosophies; but all of them are important when trying to grasp what authors mean when writing about the so-called crisis of democracy.

The second significant part within the analysis is the data analysis itself. Here one can actually see with numbers whether ones hypotheses can be supported or falsified. Consequently, quantitative data accessed from the World Value Survey (WVS) as well as election statistics accessed on the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) are major sources. Since these two institutions provide their collected data without restrictions, the analysis, which follows in chapter 6, is possible.

Finally, both types of sources, literature discussing the so-called crisis of democracy as well as the survey data are main sources for the analysis. These two groups of sources serve different purposes but they are essential in order to find answers to the research question of the paper.

---

28 Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
29 Barnes/Kaase (1979).
31 Nye/Zelikow/King (1997).
33 IDEA Homepage (2008) on Electoral turnout over the world.
3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of an academic investigation is one of the most important parts. It defines how and which theory will be used as well as which results one will get in the analysis. Therefore, this chapter will concentrate on elaborating background information, term clarifications and theory description and operationalization. Thus, this part will lay the groundwork for the understanding of the rest of the thesis and function as the base for the analysis. In the first section of this chapter, the focus will be on identifying in which field in the academic world the crisis of democracy discussion is located and what that might tell us about its relevance and scope. Following that, there will be four sections, which address the four most relevant concepts and terms that will be used throughout the thesis: theory, democracy, crisis as well as crisis of democracy. The main goal there will be to show, how these terms are defined in an objective way, not necessarily meaning the understanding they might have in the debate on the so-called crisis of democracy. Finally there is going to be a section on the theory being used in this thesis, exit-voice and loyalty\textsuperscript{34} as well as political culture as Almond/Verba used it in their Civic Culture study\textsuperscript{35}.

3.1 Crisis of democracy – background

The discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of the political system called democracy is as old as the literature on political system. Already during times of Aristotle, Plato and many other classics, the question on how a political system functions the best has been present\textsuperscript{36}. In modern times this discussion has not only entered political science but also influences other fields as for example economics. This section will shortly inform on where the discussion on the so-called crisis of democracy since 1975 is located and what that can tell the reader about the focus the debate has.

Generally speaking, the debate can be located in two broad academic areas: sociology and political science. It is certainly a debate that concerns political science because it questions the political system in industrialized democracies. The discussion mostly concerns the relationship between the citizens and the government, in which way whatsoever. It can also be located in the realm of representative democracies, since not very many direct democracies exist. Within the political science one can say, that the debate concerns, structure, legitimacy and well as relationship with the citizenry.

\textsuperscript{34} Hirschmann (1970).
\textsuperscript{35} Almond & Verba (1963).
One the other hand, the debate enters the field of comparative politics as well as sociology when examining the relationship between people and their government as well as why this relation might change. Therefore, behavior of the citizens comes into focus, mainly in order to find explanation for why there is a problem within democracies when people grow unhappy and/or distrustful of their government.

In summary, the discussion of the so-called crisis of democracy is a debate that concerns the field of political science. Since individual perceptions and evaluations are rather important, the field of sociology is tapped. In order to find answers researchers usually need to work with individual or aggregated data on individual behavior and attitudes. One could therefore say that the debate can be localized within in the field of political culture because the relationship between the political culture of the citizens and the political system in the country seems crucial\(^{37}\). After the sections of term clarification and the discussion of Hirschmann’s theory, there will therefore be a short part on political culture.

### 3.2 Term clarifications

Whenever one reads an article or a book on a scientific topic, the author is using specific terms and concepts while discussing a problem. In order for the reader to understand the logic of the author it is essential that the latter clarifies the use of terms and theories and in which way these are employed in the study. However, these clarifications or even definitions are often lacking, for example in the discussion on the crisis of democracy, which is why the idea for this paper came up. To not make the same mistake, this section will give general information on the three main terms used in the paper: theory, democracy and crisis. Later on in the analysis these formal explanations will also be valuable when looking at the different pieces of literature.

#### 3.2.1 Theory

What is a theory? Why do we need theories? What do we want them to do for us? All three questions are important to answer before using a theory. To start with the first one, theory can be defined as “A set of statements or principles devised to explain a group of facts or phenomena, especially one that has been repeatedly tested or is widely accepted and can be used to make predictions about natural phenomena.”\(^{38}\) In the scientific world, this is the definition guiding most scholars. The pure word theory can however also mean an assumption, which has not been tested yet, something not sure, a speculation. There are a few

\(^{37}\) Almond & Verba (1963) as well as Lipset (1983).

other meanings of the word, but for the purpose of this section the stated definition is the most important.

What is then the use of theories? Theories provide a researcher but also every other person with a set of principles to categorize the world. That means that, since there are so many details concerning every event in the world of whichever nature, we need to filter out the important facts in order not to drown in the details. Even our daily observations and opinion making process is guided by a theory in our head, whether we are aware of that or not. “It is sheer craziness to dare to understand world affairs. […] change is the only constant in world affairs.”39 Therefore, especially when trying to understand politics and international relations it is essential to move up on the latter of abstraction, to distance oneself from an overload of empirical data in order to be able to understand it.

Finally, the question remains, what we expect theories to do for us. One option was just discussed, namely to give us the possibility to understand complex events by reducing endless details to important facts, in short generalizing40. But theory in academic writings can also serve other purposes. It can for example be the item of research, meaning that the theory is the material being tested. One final option, the one that is important for this thesis, the theory can be the reason of discussing a topic. By that, one means that a discussion within the academic world in present that circles around one topic, in this case the so-called crisis of democracy. However, it could also mean that two competing theories are resented, how they differ and which views they have on certain issues.

In this thesis, the theory of the so-called crisis of democracy serves on one hand as theoretical framework, since the empirical material is selected according to the topic. On the other hand, the theory is the main object of investigation in order to find a general description on what authors mean when they write about the crisis of democracy. It is therefore expected from the theory to limit the empirical material to the ones concerning the so-called crisis of democracy. Moreover, it will provide the base to conclude a general description.

The other type of theory in this work will be the tool to analyze participatory behavior in Western European democracies, Hirschmann’s theory of exit, voice and loyalty41. This theory and which purpose it will serve will be discussed in a later section of this chapter.

3.2.2 Democracy

Democracy is a term, a concept, a principle, a theory and much more. It is probably one of the terms that are used many different ways, and that everyone can understand and interpret in a different manner. It is therefore certainly one of the most difficult tasks to define democracy. According to Bernhard Crick, democracy has been used in four ways throughout history: the Greek usage, the Roman usage, the usage in the French revolution, and the one in the American constitution. Another point he makes is, that one has to be cautious on the usage of the term democracy. In his view it can be talked about as an ideal or doctrine, a description on how we behave in relation to others, or as the pure institutional and legal form. The aim of this section is not to discuss the various usage of democracy but rather to find a general definition of the term that can be used and helpful later on in the thesis. Instead of focusing on different democracy theories for example, this section will end up with a working definition of the term democracy, which will clarify the terms usage in throughout the thesis. Moreover, this will be of value when discussing the definitions of the so-called crisis of democracy as the authors describe and analyze the topic.

Beginning with the meaning and translation of the word itself, democracy derives from the Greek words demos, which means people and kratos, which is translated as rule. Therefore the one-to-one translation of democracy is rule of, by and for the people. This in turn leads to the specification of various indicators, which have to be fulfilled in order to call a political system a democracy. One very precise definition of the term is the following, where democracy includes five factors:

“1. Government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives.
2. A political or social unit that has such a government.
3. The common people, considered as the primary source of political power.
4. Majority rule.
5. The principles of social equality and respect for the individual within a community.”

Summarized a definition could sound like this: Democracy is a form of political system, which has a government exercised directly through or voted for by the people, which follows a majority rule and holds on to the principles of equality and individuality. How precise is this

---

definition however? There are examples where certain people have called a certain state a democracy while others reject to classify the state in question as a democracy\textsuperscript{46}. It seems to be more to the term of democracy than a pure definition.

Nevertheless, for the purpose of this thesis the definition as mentioned above will be held valid. Democracy is therefore understood as a certain set of institutions, a political division of competence within a country, where the people vote for representatives and the majority rule applies; individual rights are preserved and all people have to be considered equal within the society. The definition here is therefore concentrating on the denotative sense of the word, the meaning of the word in an objective manner, without any suggested meaning\textsuperscript{47}. In short, the above mentioned definition represents the authors understanding of democracy when using the term in the following sections. An exception can be found in the chapter discussing the different pieces of literature, where the understanding of the specific author is the main focus. The definition in this section is supposed to clarify the meaning of democracy in this thesis.

3.2.3 Crisis

As in the sections above, the question of this one will be what the understanding of the term crisis can be. It is crucial for the aim of this thesis to be clear in how terms are used in order to be able to answer the research questions. One important point is therefore to clarify what crisis means, how it is defined. This will again, be of usefulness later in the analysis chapters, where the different scholars understanding of the so-called crisis of democracy will be compared.

The term crisis is usually connected to a negative event or development. However, the pure definition is:

\begin{quote}
“1. a. A crucial or decisive point or situation; a turning point.
b. An unstable condition, as in political, social, or economic affairs, involving an impending abrupt or decisive change.
2. A sudden change in the course of a disease or fever, toward either improvement or deterioration.
3. An emotionally stressful event or traumatic change in a person's life.
4. A point in a story or drama when a conflict reaches its highest tension and must be resolved.”\textsuperscript{48}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{47} For an explanation of the difference between connotation and denotation see Bryman (2004): p. 393 and 538.
For the purpose of this thesis the first part of the definition under point 1.a and 1.b are the most relevant. Here the term does not necessarily have to be describing a negative turn of development. It seems rather, that crisis means that a certain situation, political system or affair has come to a point, where change is necessary but where the development can go in both directions: improvement or deterioration. This is a definition one has to keep in mind while reading the interpretations of the authors discussing the so-called crisis of democracy. Most importantly, how do the authors interpret crisis, what do they mean by it and which consequences does that bring when analyzing a potential crisis of democracy.

At this point the statement that crisis does not necessarily mean change towards a negative end is the most crucial one. The term crisis implies a turning point, a possibly insecure situation, which requires action and change. The working definition is therefore free of values when talking about crisis, negatively as well as positively, which has to be kept in mind when reading on in this thesis.

3.2.4 Crisis of democracy – a formal definition

Concluding the arguments above, one should be able to find a formal definition of a crisis of democracy by combining the definitions of democracy and crisis. In that, it is possible to speak of an objective definition of the term as such, without having to confirm any arguments by scholars examined in the analysis.

A formal definition of crisis of democracy could therefore be: a crucial point within a political system of rule of, by and for the people, where a government acts as a majority decides and where equality and individuality are core concepts. How one interprets this definition is a question in itself but according to the two definitions discussed in the sections above the definition offered here, should be acceptable.

Nevertheless, there are some problems that arise when combining these two definitions. It is the problem of identifying which feature of democracy is in crisis. It is not possible to locate, where the exact problem is located within the democracy and why that makes the political face a turning point but that is not the aim of this section. The general definition makes it however possible to compare the writings of authors and their summarized understanding of crisis of democracy with the definition introduced here. It will therefore be helpful to remember a general definition of the term in order to see how the various authors interpret the phenomenon.
3.3 Exit-voice-theory

Albert O. Hirschmann’s theory of exit, voice and loyalty\textsuperscript{49} can be applied in more than one scientific field. Starting out from being a rather economical theory, it can also be valuable in political science. In general, the author attempts to describe and potentially predict consumers’ reaction towards a certain product, firm or organization in case of deterioration\textsuperscript{50}. Since this can be a valuable tool of analysis, Hirschmann’s theory will be explained in the following section.

The main idea of the book is that there are two possibilities for consumers of a product or even members of an organization to react to changes in the relationship to the product or organization. That means that for example quality of a product can drop or the price of the same could rise or an organizations performance or core values can change. Hirschmann argues that there are basically two possible reactions of the consumer respectively member: exit or voice\textsuperscript{51}. The aim of his book is to analyze under which circumstances exit restricts voice and vice versa, which events will most likely cause which reaction and how the concept of loyalty adds to the equation\textsuperscript{52}. In general terms, he sees exit as a main instrument in economics and voice as the equivalent tool in politics. There are however ways of combining the two, which will become clear through this section.

Exit means that consumers stop buying a certain product because of a certain reasons\textsuperscript{53}. That could be dropping quality or higher prices. In order for them to exit the possibility of an alternative product has to be available. Therefore, the option of exit “(is a) characteristic(s) of “normal” (non-perfect) competition, where the firm has competitors but enjoys some latitude as both price-maker and quality-maker”\textsuperscript{54}. In short, as soon as an alternative is available, exit has a lower cost to the consumer than voice would have. That is especially true in the economic realm, in politics however, voice is a vital and much more used tool.

Voice describes the articulation, the reaction of a customer or member to changes within the firm or organization\textsuperscript{55}. These changes can be, as mentioned above, quality variation, a rising price, or even changing philosophy. Voice is therefore characterized by the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{49} Hirschmann (1970).
\item \textsuperscript{50} Hirschmann (1970): pp. 19-20.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Hirschmann (1970): p.4.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Hirschmann (1970): p.5.
\item \textsuperscript{53} Hirschmann (1970): chapter 2 pp. 21-29.
\item \textsuperscript{54} Hirschmann (1970): p. 21.
\item \textsuperscript{55} Hirschmann (1970): chapter 3 pp. 30-43.
\end{itemize}
attempt of the consumer or member to change the deteriorating situation of the firm or organization instead of switching to competitors. Hirschmann’s definition of voice is

“any attempt at all to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to the management directly in charge, through appeal to a higher authority with the intention of forcing a change in management, or through various types of actions and protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion.”

This definition shows how wide the voice option can be as well as how considerably high the costs to use voice are, because it can take much effort and time to use voice effectively. Voice is therefore most of the time limited to areas where there are no or not comparable alternatives to change to, because the costs of using voice are higher than the costs of for example switching to a competitor, when there is one.

More important than the considering both strategies separately is their combination and the concept of loyalty, which adds a new dimension to the question of how a person reacts to the deterioration of a firm’s product or the organization one is a member in. The two options of exit and voice can be combined in many different ways, meaning that depending on how costly they are for the user. Furthermore, factors like price for entry and exit, or the pure possibility of exit and/or voice add to the equation of the consumers or members decision how to react. Loyalty then comes in as a promoter for the voice option, because one is in one way or another connected to the product or organization and the desire to better the situation is greater than the desire to exit. “Loyalty holds exit at bay and activates voice.” One could therefore see the concept of loyalty as a barrier for exit, which can be extremely important.

In the discussion on exit, Hirschmann gives the example of public schools versus private schools. He argues that, if public schools drop in quality, the parents with a rather high income would be the ones to exit first in order to provide their children a good education. These parents would therefore switch to private schools. This however is disastrous for the public school that tries to save itself from deterioration, because the actors that would have the most influence and willingness to voice their unhappiness with the drop in quality are the ones to exit first. Their loyalty comes in: if these high-quality concerned parents are involved in the school, if they feel a connection to it, their reaction to exit would be delayed and their first impulse would most likely be to use voice, which would be probably improve the school’s situation.

This results in the concept of public goods, which one cannot easily exit.

---

“If I disagree with an organisation, say, a political party, I can resign as a member, but generally I cannot stop being a member of the society in which the objectionable party functions. […] he can stop being producer, but cannot stop being a consumer.”61

That means that loyalty can be produced through the pure fact that the product or organization one might want to exit is located in the public goods. Loyalty is a very important essence in the concept of exit and voice, because it prevents fast exit, delays it62, and gives the organization a possibility to recover because important members of the group raise their voice before exiting. The combination of exit voice and loyalty is vital.

Hirschmann (1970) results in three conclusions of the discussion of exit, voice and loyalty. Firstly, organizations that concentrate primarily on either exit or voice need to introduce the other mechanism occasionally. Secondly, organizations might have to switch between exit and voice as primary actors. Finally, organizations, which need both mechanisms in order to function well, need to realize that an optimal mix between exit and voice is instable and needs adjustment every so often.63 The author is very clear in stating that he does not believe that there is an optimal mix of exit and voice, nor does he agree that each organization needs its own mix of the two, which can be achieved through trial and error64. Instead, as stated in the three conclusions drawn, the two concepts of exit and voice need to complement each other, where the notion of loyalty can contribute a delay in reaction towards exit.

In an article form 1993, Hirschmann analyses the event of the German reunification of 1989 under the light of his exit-voice-loyalty concept65. In his first book, the events of exit and voice were argued to alert the management of a firm or organization, which then would introduce actions to stop the firm or organization from dropping in quality, in other words deterioration. In the events of 1989 on the other hand, the combination of mass exit and mass voice lead to the collapse of the political system of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Hirschmann sees several reasons for this outcome. Firstly, exit and voice occurred at the same time, which is rather an unusual event66. People that exited the country encouraged others to voice their concerns about the fact that so many people were actually fleeing the country. Instead of exit limiting voice, as Hirschmann had argued at some point before67, in this case exit encouraged or even caused voice from others. Instead of exit complementing or opposing

62 See the figure and explanation in Hirschmann (1970): pp. 87-90
voice, it was a necessary precondition to make voice strong and functional. Moreover, since so many people chose exit, they found themselves in a group of many people thinking the same way, so this group entered a voice phase as well, purely by being a group that exited the country they voiced their unhappiness with the system\textsuperscript{68}. “Thus private exit turned into public exit, which in turn generated public voice and even organized delegation and negotiation with the authorities—all within a matter of days.”\textsuperscript{69}

The concept of loyalty also comes into play in the events of 1989 in Germany. While the ones that left the country might be considered members with a low level of loyalty, the ones that stayed can be considered the ones with a high degree of loyalty not necessarily to the government but to the country and the people living there. Both groups were essential for the events to turn out the way they did. In general, Hirschmann concludes his theory and the events of 1989 in Germany like this:

“it essentially chronicles how many East Germans found the road back from exit and apathy to voice, from withdrawal and purely private reaction to public action. However unintended this movement was initially, it became nevertheless a powerful and successful citizen movement.”\textsuperscript{70}

Recapitulatory, Hirschmann’s theory of exit-voice-loyalty provides an interesting aspect on the analysis of people’s behavior. Loyalty adds to the question of why people might behave in a certain way or another. In general, exit, if available, is most likely chosen if there are alternatives to choose from or if voice did not function the way it was expected. Voice on the other hand characterizes the attempt to raise issues one is unhappy with, with the intention to better the situation for oneself, the firm or the organization. Loyalty improves the likelihood of voice to be chosen over exit because one feels connected to the firm or organization. All of these comments will be helpful when analyzing people’s voting behavior in Western European countries in the analysis.

3.4. Political Culture – Civic Culture

Political culture research examines stability of political systems, primarily in democracies\textsuperscript{71}. The leading question hereby is, if the structure of a country represents its political culture and is therefore legitimized by the people\textsuperscript{72}. When talking about the attitude of people towards their government or more generally the way they are governed, one has to talk about \textit{The Civic Culture} study by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba\textsuperscript{73}. In 1963, they

---

\textsuperscript{68} Hirschmann (1993): pp. 198-199.
\textsuperscript{69} Hirschmann (1993): p. 199.
\textsuperscript{70} Hirschmann (1993): p. 201.
\textsuperscript{71} See Almond/Verba (1963).
\textsuperscript{72} Pickel/Pickel (2006): p. 52.
\textsuperscript{73} Almond/Verba (1963).
published their book and presented a study of five countries, the USA, Great Britain, Germany, Mexico, and Italy. Generally, their study is done by transferring individual data, the attitudes towards the political system, onto the macro level. That means with the help of individual data, statements about the population of a country as a whole are made\textsuperscript{74}.

There are four indicators identified by Almond/Verba (1963): the “‘general’ political system”, “the ‘self’ as political actor”, “input process”, and “output process”\textsuperscript{75}. These indicators can take different values according to if and how people think or feel about these indicators. The different values are cognitive, which means that the person has a general knowledge about the indicator, affective, which refers to having feelings or in other terms an opinion about the indicators, and evaluative which includes that the person asked judges/evaluates the indicators\textsuperscript{76}. According to which values are represent the authors set up categories for different types of political cultures\textsuperscript{77}: parochial, subject, and participant\textsuperscript{78}. The study then defines a “civic culture” with consists of a mixture of their three types of political culture in countries, parochial, subject, and participant. The civic culture therefore represents the best possible congruence between culture and structure, which in turn should lead to stability of the democratic system\textsuperscript{79}.

The main critique of Almond and Verba’s study was that it was too influenced by the U.S. American system. Seymour Martin Lipset’s model on legitimacy and efficiency\textsuperscript{80} extends and modifies Almond and Verba’s theory on the relationship between the political structure of a country and its political culture. Lipset attempts to predict the degree of stability for a given country with a given political system, not necessarily a democracy. He therefore divides the judgments of the people in attitudes towards the efficiency and legitimacy of the political system of a country. He concludes then, that legitimacy is more important than efficiency, because even if a government might not be efficient for a certain period, people would not question the political order itself right away. That, and that is an important point for this thesis, only happens after political leaders have been ineffective for a certain period. He

\textsuperscript{74} Pickel/Pickel (2006): p. 56.
\textsuperscript{75} Almond/Verba (1963): p. 15.
\textsuperscript{76} Almond/Verba (1963): p. 15.
\textsuperscript{77} There are four indicators with can different values according to cognitive, affective or evaluative orientations of the people in a country; see Almond/Verba (1963): pp. 14-15. The four indicators are: recognition of the political system itself, recognition of the person itself within the system, recognition of the input structure as well as recognition of the output structure; see Almond/Verba (1963): pp. 15-17.
\textsuperscript{78} See Almond/Verba (1963): pp. 16-20. Besides these ideal forms of political culture the authors also identify mixtures namely the Parochial-Subject-Culture, the Subject-Participant-Culture, and the Parochial-Participant-Culture; see Almond/Verba (1963): pp. 22-26.
\textsuperscript{80} Lipset (1983): p. 68.
describes that as a shift from effective and legitimate regimes, over the stage of ineffective but legitimate regimes towards ineffective and illegitimate regimes.\textsuperscript{81}

This presentation of ideas from political culture studies shows how important the relationship between the citizens and the political system as such is. It is crucial that political actors are legitimized by the people and that there is a healthy congruence between culture and structure. Thus, it becomes obvious why the focus of this thesis has been chosen. It lies within the area of participatory behavior of citizens and tries to find answers to whether lost trust in political institutions could be related to whether a person goes to the polls or not. Having established that, the next chapter will focus on the methodology of the thesis.

4 Methodological framework

After having established all important theoretical literature and theories, this chapter will focus on the methodological framework of this thesis. While theories and data represent the material base for any academically writing, the methods are the tools used to reach the answers to one’s research question. Therefore, the methods used in this thesis are an important factor in coming to conclusions. In the next sections different elements of the methodology will be discussed, which ones were chosen in the analysis as well as how the whole thesis is build up, refers to and supports itself. In the final section of this chapter, possible weaknesses of the research design will be named, to show that the author is aware of the downsides of the methods chosen here.

4.1 Scientific literature discourse

The first part of the analysis, chapter 5, will concentrate on the so-called crisis of democracy, how it has been discussed over time by various authors, and which core topics can be identified. In order to do so, books, articles and editorial will be evaluated through a scientific literature discourse. That means that the pieces of scientific literature chosen will be analyzed on their position within the academic debate, their publication date, and core topics which they contain. The position of the sample book or article promotes the fear from a so-called crisis of democracy or whether they reject. This is strongly connected to the publication year, in order to be able to categorize the various pieces of literature. This will make it possible, to form groups according to a timeline which have a positive, a negative, or a compromising attitude between the two extremes.

\textsuperscript{81} Lipset (1983): pp. 68-70. The shift is also possible the other way around. A political system might not be seen as legitimate or effective, when being the latter for a certain time though, legitimacy might follow. One exception of that rule are most Eastern European countries, where people do believe that democracy is the best way of governing and therefore legitimate it, but the governments are not performing effectively yet.
The method of discourse refers most often to Michael Foucault’s concept, where “discourse was a term that denoted the way in which a particular set of linguistic categories relating to an object and the ways of depicting it frame the way we comprehend that object.”82 That means that the way something is written about a certain topic influences people’s perception of his very topic, it therefore generates a social reality.83 The way of discourse used in chapter 5 is precisely analyzing which picture the pieces of literature draw in relation to the so-called crisis of democracy; positive, negative, compromising. Nevertheless, the form of discourse used here will not focus on linguistic means of the authors, at least not in depth. At some points it will be necessary to focus on the tone of language in the books, but the analysis will not focus on linguistic characteristics.

Moreover, the strategy for choosing books and articles needs to be elaborated. As mentioned above, Crozier et al.’s book from 197584 was used as a starting point for the literature analysis. From there the sampling can be referred to as the so-called snowball sampling.85 This technique stands for choosing objects for investigation through one starting point, shifting interest to other samples which are connected to this starting point in some way or another. Usually, this technique is used when conducting qualitative interviews, where a sample is accessed through contacts of one person being interviewed. That means that through one example others can be accessed. Using this kind of sampling however includes the downside that “such techniques cannot possibly claim to produce a statistically representative sample”86. Nevertheless, through this method various pieces of literature where chosen for the analysis in chapter 5, all covering the topic of the so-called crisis of democracy. Most of them refer to Crozier et al. and or other classics that were identified through the process of literature scanning in preparation for writing this paper.

The goal of this part was to explain the choices which were made when selecting books and articles that should be analyzed in the part on the crisis of democracy debate. Moreover, an explanation was given in how these pieces of literature are used in chapter 5. It can be summarized that the approach chosen can be classified as a qualitative research method. The next section will now focus on quantitative part of the analysis and methods chosen for the latter.

---

84 Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
87 Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
4.2 Quantitative data analysis

Using quantitative data is unavoidable when trying to make general assumptions over people’s opinion. It is the method using for example answers from standardized questionnaires in order to come to an understanding or even an explanation for certain phenomena. Usually computer programs are used to evaluate data since the number of data can be very large. The most common and best developed program is SPSS, which stands for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.\(^{88}\) The program can in other words be the tool to use quantitative data analysis in academic research.

Quantitative data analysis is therefore the method chosen for chapter 6, the analysis of WVS data\(^{89}\) as well as Statistics from the IDEA.\(^{90}\) Since the goal in the second part of the analysis is to evaluate whether people have lost trust in political institutions and whether that is connected to their voting behavior one cannot make statements without analyzing mass data. SPSS will be the program used as the analyzing tool. The analysis itself will be a mixture between univariate\(^{91}\) and bivariate\(^{92}\) analysis. That means that in parts only one factor is going to be the center of attention, while in other sections the relationship between two factors will be in the focus.

In general, with the help of SPSS mass data from WVS and IDEA will be possible to handle and to use for the analysis. Without this tool the method could not have been chosen. The reasons for using the data of the WVS are important to evaluate. The data from this particular survey has been collected in four waves from 1981 until 2004.\(^{93}\) For the most part, the same or similar questions have been asked in numerous countries all over the world. These facts make it extremely valuable source because all data is located in one big data file and the questions asked are rather constant. The countries selected for analysis are: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

For the purpose of this thesis to analyze if there is a relation between less electoral participation and trust in political institutions the method, tool and data source selected seem to be the perfect fit. It is surely possible to draw conclusions through other strategies as well, but the author is convinced that the choice has been right and legitimate. Certainly, one has to

\(^{88}\) See SPSS Homepage.
\(^{90}\) IDEA Homepage (2008).
\(^{93}\) The fifth wave from 2005-2006 has been made available yet.
admit that there are risks using just this way of working but that will be discussed in chapter 4.4. Nevertheless, the next section will focus on discussing how the different parts of this thesis fit together, how they support each other as well as what is expected of them.

4.3 Methodology

The methodology of an academic piece of work describes the general working design that has been adapted. That means that the different parts need to stand in relation to each other and that they need to be defined. In this section the aim will therefore be to define the five main parts of this thesis as well as to clarify how they relate to and how they interact with each other.

The problem defined in this thesis and investigated throughout it is on one hand how the academic discussion on the so-called crisis of democracy can be described as well as which core topics are formulated by many of the authors selected. On the other hand, voting behavior and trust in political institutions will be in the focus in order to see whether the academic discussion can be connected, or even proved in real life. With the help of the methods and the theories described above, the material will be handled and analyzed which will then lead to results that can answer the research question. In other words, the problem will be the starting point for the analysis later an. The research questions formulated will make it easier to tackle the problem and to come to answers which hopefully contribute to the knowledge on the topic of the crisis of democracy debate. That means that the general problem is the debate of the crisis of democracy and whether there is empirical evidence for such a thing, which is captured in the research question and sub-questions formulated above.

The methods discussed in sections 4.1 and 4.2 will be the tools used to handle the research questions in order to get to answers. Moreover, literature analyses as well as quantitative data analysis are the techniques used to handle the material. At this point the theory plays an important role as well: it serves the criteria and theoretical framework, rather than the practical from the methods, to be able to conclude findings in the analysis. The object of investigation is the material used: literature on the so-called crisis of democracy as well as data from WVS and IDEA. The frame that the theory provides will be realized with the methods in order to handle the material in manner that leads to results that are valuable to get closer to the roots of the problem presented.

Without wanting to repeat, it is important to clarify how the different parts of the thesis play together. All parts are interconnected in special ways. The problem serves the base, the theory a structure of categorizing, the methods the tools to handle the material which
is the object of investigation and will through the analysis lead to results. In this short section the understanding in how this thesis is thought through became hopefully clear and will help the reader in later parts.

4.4 Problems and weaknesses of the methodology

To all bright sides there are down sides: in this cases mistakes that can be made while trying to reach the aim of answering the research questions. There are three problems that will be mentioned here: the problem of data selection, the use of quantitative data as well as the possibility of ecological fallacy. In the next section each of these three will be discussed separately.

Data selection is often a problem in academic writing. The author needs to legitimate why and in which manner data was chosen. The delimitation of possible cases is crucial and likewise a challenge. One needs to find crucial cases, which are in relation to the topic discussed and valid at the same time. Here, data was chosen on one side according to the snowball sampling. On the other hand data sets were picked according to their relevance to the question of whether trust stands in relation to voting behavior. Countries for data analysis were selected due to their location in Western Europe. The biggest risk when choosing data is that the researcher is already so involved in the topic that he or she will tend to select cases that support the hypothesis put up. Therefore, problems can arise while data for the analysis is selected. In this thesis however, the selection of the data has been legitimize and explained which hopefully eliminates this downside effect.

The use of quantitative data generates problems as well. Numerous researches are grounded on the evaluation of mass data collected through questionnaires. It seems that this is the most accurate way of analyzing for example why people act in a certain way. However, the downside of this method is that “whenever people know that they are participating in a study […], a component of their replies or behavior is likely to be influenced by their knowledge that they are being investigated.” This negative side effect in using mass data is unavoidable when trying to make general statements. It is therefore a weakness that has to be accepted in order to perform an analysis on aggregated data. It is however, as in all cases mentioned, important to be aware of possible weaknesses in order not to fall for too early conclusions.

The final section will concentrate on the ecological fallacy, which is also connected to the use of aggregated data in the analysis. When using this kind of data a researcher is

---

94 See King et al. (1994) and George/Bennett (2005).
working on macro level. That includes leaving the individual level and, unfortunately, the chance to get into the danger of making wrong assumptions such as the ecological fallacy. That means that results based on collective data are projected onto the individual one, which does not necessarily has to be right. For example, findings that 40% vote for party X in year Y and Z, does not mean that the same group of people voted for party X. It could mean that different 40% of the population have voted for this particular party at these two measuring points. One can therefore not say reason that the voters have been from the same group, e.g. blue-collar workers. Therefore, when referring back to the attitude of people towards democracy, one has to be aware of the danger of ecological fallacy.

This section should be drawn too dark. The aim is not to mark everything that will follow in the chapters down. Rather, one should be cautious at every step one takes in while conducting research, being aware of possible weaknesses. With the understanding of the mentioned points, the next part will be devoted to the analysis, first the literature discourse of the so-called crisis of democracy debate and then the analysis of data on people’s trust and political participation in Western European countries.

---

An erosion of confidence in the mayor institutions of society, especially those of representative democracy, is a far more serious threat to democracy than a loss of trust in other citizens or politicians.97

Part II – Scientific discourse and analysis

The second mayor part of the thesis contains the scientific discourse on the so-called crisis of democracy as well as the analysis of data from the WVS as well as IDEA.98 In the first chapter, there will be an overview of the different literature on the topic. Following this, the focus will be laid on formulating common topics within the discussion of the so-called crisis of democracy. In the second chapter of this part, in chapter 6, there will be the analysis on participatory behavior in Western European countries and whether there is a relationship between voting behavior and people’s trust in political institutions.

The goal of this part is to give an overview on the topic of the crisis of democracy and to define what is really meant with it. Moreover, will there be the analysis as described above.

5 Discourse on the so-called crisis of democracy

The topic of problems within the political system democracy has been discussed in modern scientific literature for a long time. There have been writings about the phenomenon as early as 1940/1950. This section will however only include writings that have been published after 1975, with the starting point of Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975) and their prediction of the crisis of democracy. Their book represents the beginning for the analysis of this section. After at least 30 years of democracy in the countries discussed in the book, it seems surprising to find them predict a crisis of democracy. Especially since the system has worked well in the three regions of the Trilateral Countries, which include Western Europe, Northern America as well as Japan. Nevertheless, the authors are questioning whether democracy will be able to cope with new challenges posed upon it. Therefore, this piece of

99 See Kaase/Newton (1995): pp. 18-24. The early literature concentrates more on explaining the events of the 1930s and 1940s as well as the economic dimension.
100 Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
literature represents the starting point for the literary discourse on the so-called crisis of democracy.

How the problem of the crisis is approached and to which conclusions one can get from that, varies tremendously within the literature on the topic. It seems therefore not only helpful but also necessary to clarify what the so-called crisis of democracy means in general terms. Which trends of handling the problem are there and which are the aspects the various scientists focus on depending on which period one is referring to? Are there core topics that return in different studies and can one summarize common grounds that the authors could agree on? All these questions need to be discussed in order to reach the goal of identifying common grounds in the debate about the so-called the crisis of democracy, which will be the main goal in this chapter.

5.1 Periods of discussion

The discussion on the potential crisis of democracy has seen ups and downs in evaluating it as well as rights and lefts meaning the range of which topics where included. It seems confusing at first, because many authors have written about the topic. Almost all of them seem to come to a different conclusion, even if they differ only slightly. One way of organizing the literature is to separate them according to which position the author takes, and when the piece was published\textsuperscript{101}. That will be the general approach chosen for this section.

5.1.1 First Crisis: Overload of government

The ultimate starting point for this discourse is the book of Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975). It examines the situation in three regions of the world, Western Europe, the United States of America, and Japan\textsuperscript{102}. Combined they represent the trilateral counties. Their main points are that there are three challenges to the democracies of these regions: contextual challenges, social structure and social trends as well as intrinsic challenges\textsuperscript{103}. Moreover, they argue that increased demands on government and participants as well as consensus without purpose lead to delegitimation of authority, overload on government, disaggregation of interests and parochialism of foreign affairs. Shortly, these factors make out the dysfunctions of democracy\textsuperscript{104}. Even though evaluations of the situation vary among the regions, the authors argue, “The cause of the current malaise is the decline in the material resources and political

\textsuperscript{102} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\textsuperscript{103} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975): pp. 3-9.
authority available to government to meet these demands.” The book “Crisis of Democracy” describes a pessimistic view on the situation in the trilateral region, doubting that the then present form of democracy could cope with challenges posed on it.

Within the same line of argument stands, the article from Samuel Brittan “The Economic Contradictions of Democracy” published in the same year as the book above. The author compares democracy to market economy and reaches a similar conclusion as Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975) by saying that excessive expectations pose problems to the then current form of democracy. He sees it as the result of the voting paradox, the lack of budget constraints among voters and the question of what fair distribution is. Both, Brittan and Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975) see the problem of increased individuality and self-interest. Brittan argues that different groups, e.g. trade unions, act too much in self-interest and do not see the implications their actions have for the system as a whole. All together, the aspects that Brittan takes up, is the lack of seeing historic achievements, increased expectations, range of democratic ruling, tolerance and democratic self-control as well as a strong bureaucracy and an understanding of what fairness means. All these lead, in his opinion, to a weakened democracy because no common ground exists anymore for legitimizing government and its decisions, because competing groups become too self-interested. Conclusive, equality has turned into a negative dimension where everyone demands an equal share of everything but does not want to have the responsibilities going along with it. Therefore, people and groups are lead by egoistic reasons not able to see the implications of their actions in the bigger context thus posing a problem to the general idea of democracy.

There is other literature, which discusses the topic in a similar direction, but these two examples show which way the argumentation was taking in the mid 1970s. Main points are overload on government through too high expectations of citizens, too extreme self-interest and the connected loss of consensus as well as individuality, which potentially undermines the very base of democracy. Generally, the picture drawn is dark, pessimistic and to a certain degree even anti-democratic. Solutions are not really offered, and certain lines of argumentation seem questionable. We will see how the next group of authors describes the phenomenon.

---

106 Brittan (1975).
107 Brittan (1975): pp. 132-142
5.1.2 First Relaxation: Trend might be a problem but no crisis

Already in the following decade, scholars look at the so-called crisis of democracy from a different perspective, coming to different results than Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975) and Brittan (1975). The three examples covered in this section will be Barnes/Kaase (1979) *Political Action – Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies* as well as two volumes of the series Beliefs in Government: the first one of Klingemann and Fuchs (editors) “Citizens and the State” as well as the fifth of Kaase and Newton *Beliefs in Government* both from 1995.

The main arguments of Barnes/Kaase (1979) can be summarized with two quotations. As for the first one, “we find no evidence of an imminent breakdown of these Western democracies because of declining legitimacy”\(^{111}\) as well as the second saying that “clearly, politics will become more difficult for political authorities who have to put up with these less apathetic and less deferential mass publics.”\(^{112}\). What does that mean in respective to the so-called crisis of democracy? Their argumentation is that there is no such thing as a crisis of democracy but that the way and the understanding of participation in democracies has changed. This they say is a sign for “New Politics”. In general, political systems are facing challenges because new forms of participation, for example protesting, are emerging more and more. These forms of participation in turn do not fit in the conventional pattern of political parties and elections and therefore challenge the form of classical involvement in politics.\(^{113}\) Again, they argumentation aims more to explain protest behavior in Western democracies but it implies the above-mentioned consequences for the discussion of how well democracies functioned at the time. Concluding one can say, that the Barnes/Kaase (1979) do not share Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975) evaluation of the performance of democracy because they see new forms of participation as a challenge to old patterns, however not as an implication for a crisis\(^{114}\).

The five-fold series of Beliefs in Government sets out to examine the change of relationship between citizens and the state. For the purpose of this thesis, the first and the final volume are the most valuable. These have been chosen as representatives for this section since the series had been initiated already in 1989\(^{115}\). “Citizens and the State” edited by Klingemann and Fuchs (1995) serves this aim by studying the question in how the relationship between the two entities has changed. They argue that effectiveness of the

\(^{113}\) Barnes/Kaase (1979): p. 531.
democratic mechanism relies on how many citizens regard at least one party as suitable and competent to represent their interests and on the congruence of processes and structure. This is important because it constitutes the core of legitimacy concepts.\textsuperscript{116} The crisis theorists mentioned in the above section argued that expectations among citizens increased while the capacity of government due to economic performance stagnated or decreased. The authors Klingemann and Fuchs do not conclude however that this leads to a crisis of democracy. In contrast, their arguments state that this phenomenon characterize struggle of the political structure to adjust to social changes, but not a crisis of the system itself\textsuperscript{117}. After having said that, it becomes clear, how different interpretations of the same phenomenon can be. The bottom line of Klingemann and Fuchs (1995) is that a system crisis in Western democracies is unlikely, but in certain countries possible\textsuperscript{118}.

Max Kaase and Kenneth Newton (1995) wrote volume five Beliefs in Government in the series of the same name. They summarize the four previous volumes and try to find an answer to the defined problem of less participation and the potential mistrust of citizens towards various elements of the political system. They start out from the fact, that “democracy is not to be taken for granted”\textsuperscript{119} and therefore it is important to study the causes that might make it fail. They describe three levels that need to be considered: micro (individuals), meso (intermediary) and macro (system) level. By saying that they believe that democracies are more durable, flexible and able to adapt to change, they distance themselves from for example writers like Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki\textsuperscript{120}. However, the two authors realize that new forms of political participation need to be found, and that this process is indeed difficult\textsuperscript{121}.

The main problem they see is “What is required is an intelligent and practical discussion of the options and their limitations (of political participation, added S.K.), but this is exactly what is lacking in liberal democracies at present.”\textsuperscript{122} Their argumentation of the problem is also directed against scholars who reason that there is a division of attitude, depending on level. That means that even though citizens are unhappy with the authorities they will not immediately question democracy as a system\textsuperscript{123}. Kaase and Newton (1995) do not agree. Instead, they say that if discontent with political authorities is consistent over a

\textsuperscript{116} Klingemann/Fuchs (1995a): p. 3.
\textsuperscript{123} See for example Norris (1995).
certain period, with changing political parties in power, disenchantment could spread to the political system as well. By the time of their survey, they did not however see evidence that people were actually mistrusting political actors, institutions and the system. They therefore come to two mayor conclusions. First, every country has its own way of exercising democracy and handling the potential problems, which means that it is impossible to generate for all Western democracies. Secondly, the stable Western democracies have undergone change of their citizenry. They have become more educated, more politically involved (even though not in old forms), and active, but at the same time have they developed into more individualistic, self-centered and groups-specific needs interested. What follows is that the general picture of the whole system gets lost and that poses problems. This however represents the shift from old forms of politics to new forms of politics and not crisis of democracy.

These three examples show how the evaluations of the same phenomenon have changed. This might have something to do with different starting points of the authors; some are more system scientists, other political culture scholars. Nevertheless, in this period author tried to find if there was decreasing trust in politicians, political institutions and maybe even the system itself, instead of listing shortcomings and not addressing possible ways of solving the problem. At this point authors were not sure, whether these developments in Western democracies are even a reason to worry. If and how this view has changed will be examined in the next section.

5.1.3 Second crisis: dissatisfied democrat

In the mid-90s, new work on the question of the crisis of democracy was published. One of these was the editorial of Nye, Zelikow and King “Why People don’ trust Government”. Being published already in 1990, Dalton and Kuechler on the other hand tackle the topic from the perspective of new social movements and what their rise in popularity means for the then current political system. Even though it looks at the crisis from a different perspective, the book falls into this category of a revived crisis theory period because it shows new demands on the system and the authors evaluate it as a challenge to adjust or react at all. The first piece to discuss in this section will however be the article

---

127 Nye/Zelikow/King (1997).
“Democracy and its Discontent” by Charles S. Maier because he addresses the question if democracy is in a crisis and which kind129.

Maier starts out by referring to earlier contributions on the so-called crisis of democracy. In his opinion, however “Citizens do not so much confront their states with demands as they back away in disillusion. If there is a crisis, it is of a different sort.”130 He then argues that we are witnessing neither an economic nor political crisis, but a social or in other words moral crisis131. This phenomenon does not necessarily lead to the collapse of a system but it does pose a threat to existing structures.

“The moral crises of democracy, in contrast, comprise a flight from politics, or what the Germans call Politikverdrossenheit: a weariness with its debates, disbelief about its claims scepticism about its results, cynicism about its practitioners.”132 What Maier means is that the problem of the moral in the public needs to realized, unlike Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975) who warned us from a crisis of the democratic system. The argument plays into the old versus new politics discussion, whereas the author here reasons for the new kind of politics. Countries need to extend their focus, which lied on territorial boundaries before, and need to broaden their perspective in order to overcome the moral crisis of democracy.133

While authors in the period before argued that there was no evidence for declined trust in government134, the contributions in the book of Nye et al. (1997) find evidence for exactly that135. One main argument is that the declining role of political parties as the link between the government and the people can be connected to the declining trust in government136. The authors rule out economic performance as one of the crisis facilitators similar to Maier (1997). They see two deep structural changes, which have changed the situation in democracies: the third industrial revolution and the shift from collectivism to individualism137. There is a pessimistic tone in the argumentation by cautioning readers about the unknown course this phenomenon can take. There definitely is a reason to worry in the view of Nye et al., which could lead to the solutions they offer to reduce unknown factors that influence the process and to realize that we might not need more but different kinds of

129 Maier (1994).
governance\textsuperscript{138}. That could also include examining which institutions in a country do have high levels of trust within the population and which ones have lost trustworthiness as the governments\textsuperscript{139}. Overall, the book gives evidence for earlier speculations if and how much trust in government and institutions in general has declined as well as what can be done.

Finally, Dalton and Kuechler (1990) offer a different view on the crisis theory by discussing new social movements (NSM)\textsuperscript{140}. They argue that these movements “challenge contemporary political order on several fronts”\textsuperscript{141}. These are the basic goals NSM try to achieve as well as their internal structure and organization. This leads to the question how the existing political order is reacting to these challenges. Obviously, this challenge represents again the clash of new and old politics. The NSM do not purely act in self-interest, they rather act based on common goals, with a fluid membership and organization. Instead of reaching for political power, new social movements focus on using political pressure and the weight of public opinion\textsuperscript{142}. The greatest challenge these groups pose is directed towards political parties, since their represent the exact counterpart to NSM. Ideology versus class cleavages, self-interest instead of common goals, and mobilization versus organization are the most obvious differences. The editors of the book therefore see the biggest challenge in the ability of the existing order to face these new actors on the political stage\textsuperscript{143}. The authors conclude by stating that the new movements challenge the existing system on several fronts, while they themselves have undergone some institutionalization in order to act within the existing system\textsuperscript{144}.

In general, this period of crisis discussion has shown that new forms of explanations have entered the field. Thereby opening the discussion of how the political system can and must react, still focusing on the threat this development poses. At this point, it seemed unclear, whether the existing political structure would realize the challenge and how it would react to it. The literary discussion was therefore critical and negative but more willing to see ways out of the dilemma than the first crisis literature in the first section of this chapter had been.

\textsuperscript{140} Dalton/Kuechler (1990).
\textsuperscript{141} Dalton/Kuechler/Bürklin (1990): p. 5.
\textsuperscript{143} Dalton/Kuechler/Bürklin (1990): p. 6 as well as Kaase (1990), chapter 5 and Brand (1990), chapter 2 of the same volume.
\textsuperscript{144} Dalton/Kuechler (1990): pp. 283-296.
5.1.4 Change not crisis

This final section describes the most recent literature on the so-called crisis of democracy. Dalton will be represented with two contributions, one from 2004 focusing on the change that is occurring in Western democracies and one from 2006 having public opinion and political parties as the main point of examination. The last piece of literature discussed here will be the book edited by Brian D Loader “Young citizens and the Digital Age”. The latter connects the discussion of the so-called crisis of democracy to the group of young people, which is an interesting way of looking at the topic. Nevertheless, this will section begin with the two Dalton contributions.

The first book of the author Democracies, Democratic Choices – The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Societies points out that their has been change within the democratic systems of advanced industrial societies. The author then discusses which source these changes have what their effects are.

“Contemporary democracies are facing a challenge today. (...) the challenge comes from democracy’s own citizens, who have grown distrustful of politicians, sceptical about democratic institutions, and disillusioned about how the democratic process functions”.

Democracies are therefore challenged from within and need to react to this threat. Dalton does not however see this as a weakness but as strength of the democratic political system. He argues against Klingemann and Fuchs (1995) and their claim that there is no evidence that citizens grow distrustful of their government. Dalton also rejects Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki’s (1975) conclusion since he sees it as too pessimistic. Rather he defines three aspects that facilitate loosing trust in governing institutions. Firstly, growing expectations of the youth, the better educated, the more affluent and post-materialists pose a challenge to the political order because greater diversity of issues (e.g. environment etc.) make it harder for the government to fulfill the expectations of citizens. Moreover, new movements and non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) always question governments, which spurs unhappiness with the latter. Finally, the resulting main problem is that “the performance of politicians and institutions has improved over time (...) Thus, the gap between expectations and performance has widened because expectations have risen faster than performance.” Therefore, evaluation of the so-called crisis of democracy depends on which part of the problem is

---

146 Loader (2007).
analyzed, citizen’s expectations, performance of government or the gap between the two. Again, in Dalton’s view change does not mean crisis but rather a positive characteristic of democracy.

In the book from 2006, Dalton focuses on public opinion and political parties because he defines the relationship between political participation and the strength of democracy as a political system as the most vital one. Thus, political culture moves in the focus of discussion. As in the volume mentioned above, Dalton realizes the threat that declining trust in institutions and politicians brings along. A more critical media seems to be one source, but also an increased discussion of political performance of the government within the public facilitates the challenges posed to political elites and institutions. Therefore, the core problem lies in the fact that “dissatisfied democrats have different expectations about how the democratic process should function and about their role within that process.” The best solution is to open up the process of political participation, to give citizens more extensive input possibilities and to educate them about the process itself. Thereby, trust and participation in the process would increase, which would eliminate or at least better the problem.

Loader, who concentrates on youth and their involvement in politics in the digital age, edited the last book being examined in this section. Along the same line as Dalton, this author says, “young people are not necessarily any less interested in politics than previous generations but rather that traditional political activity no longer appears appropriate to address the concerns associated with contemporary youth culture.” The basic problem therefore is a discrepancy between the structure of the political system and youth culture. Throughout the book, various authors examine parts of the problem mostly concentrating on which role the internet and the media play in the relationship of young people and politics. In the final chapter, Stephen Coleman speaks about the “Big Brother generation” and how politics need to be reconnected to this group. One-way communication from politicians seems to be the main reason why young people do not engage in politics. Politicians need to realize that the next generation is of a different kind than generations before. Moreover, input,

157 The classic on political culture and the precondition of congruence between culture and structure for stability of the political system is Almond & Verba (1963).
communication and participation structures need to adjust in order not to loose the engagement in politics. As Dalton argued above, the current situation poses a challenge to the existing political order, it requires change, but it does not threaten democracy as the form of government.

These last three contributions to the question of the so-called crisis of democracy agree largely with the authors discussed in the second section. They do see a challenge being posed towards current forms of governing; however, they do not in any way question democracy as the best form of government in general.

These four sections generally describe the development within academic literature on the so-called crisis of democracy. The contributions selected represent only a fraction of what has been written about the topic but the literature can be classified along certain timelines. It becomes also clear that the discussion has gone up and down, as every argumentation does. While the differences between the first and the second period were rather significant, the arguments of the third and fourth period have become closer. There is still a distinction between the last two sections but the curve of discussion seems to level out more and more. The task for the next part of the chapter will be to define core topics that are mentioned throughout all periods.

5.2 Core topics

After having presented various literature on the topic of the so-called crisis of democracy, the aim in this section will be to highlight arguments and topics that can be found in all or most of the contributions. This will be done by discussing the four most important aspects returning throughout the literature in ascending order, beginning with the arguments of overload on government and increased individualism, followed by a section on participation and an observation of a changed culture that challenges the existing structure. Certainly, the aim of this section is directed towards major concepts, which will make it easier to understand the so extensive discussed crisis of democracy.

5.2.1 Overload on government

One of the main topics that return in almost all presented literature is overload on government. The authors speak of it in different ways, but the theme returns in various ways even though the argument is presented mostly in the first period of the discussion mentioned above. Crozier et al. see overload on government as one of the reasons for the struggle of
democracy\textsuperscript{160}. Similar, Brittan argues that excessive expectations lead to a serious of problems democracies face\textsuperscript{161}. While the two just mentioned writings see overload on government as an indicator for their crisis theory, this view changes in the period after. The aspect returns in the second as well as the fourth period described above but through a different color of glasses. Klingemann and Fuchs\textsuperscript{162} for example see the problem of an overload on government but they argue that this is due to greater diversity of people’s interests. Governments therefore face the challenge of adapting to these demands of their citizenry but that does not mean that the system finds itself in a crisis\textsuperscript{163}. Moreover, Dalton says that more differentiated issues make it harder for the government to meet expectations, but that it is rather a question of a widening gap between people’s expectations and governments’ performance than a decrease or increase of one of the two\textsuperscript{164}.

The basic tone therefore concentrates on the fact that there is an increased demand of citizens on what a government should take care of. Depending on the way of interpreting this fact, in searching for reasons and, most important, in defining results, the scholars vary tremendously. While some see the trend of overload on government as an indicator for a crisis of the system, others argue that it is a challenge for the system but not life threatening. Why scholars reason in so varying ways about a similar fact is questionable but it relies on which theoretical background they come from and when they wrote about the fact. Crozier et al.\textsuperscript{165} are the first ones in this analyses that take up the topic and one can speculate that the observation of an overload on government was rather new in that time. Since they could not know how the system would react to this phenomenon, they drew a dark picture on the then current situation, maybe to wake politicians and to get a discussion started on the topic. In later writings, as mentioned above, authors address this very aspect, to answer Crozier’s et al.\textsuperscript{166} position and to falsify their assumptions. Therefore, even though we now know that the overload on government did not cause the political system of democracy to collapse, it was helpful to start a discussion about the aspect. Time proved the hypotheses of Crozier et al.\textsuperscript{167} wrong, but who knows what would have happened if scholars would not have started a discussion on the topic.

\textsuperscript{160} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975): pp. 161 and 163-164.
\textsuperscript{161} Brittan (1975): pp. 137-142. See also section 5.1.1 above.
\textsuperscript{162} Klingemann/Fuchs (1995a).
\textsuperscript{165} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\textsuperscript{166} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\textsuperscript{167} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
5.2.2 Individualism

A topic also discussed widely through the literature of the so-called crisis of democracy is individualism. When searching for explanations of the, for example, overload on government a number of authors mention increased level of individualism as one of the factors that could be the cause. Again, Crozier et al. and Brittan name increased individualism or in other words disaggregation of interest as one of the factors for the dysfunction of democracy\textsuperscript{168}. The latter author describes individualism however in a collective frame. That means that the biggest problem he sees, is that various groups fight for their various group-specific rights and advantages, losing the big picture and consequences of their actions out of sight\textsuperscript{169}.

Ironically, individualism is one of the main characteristics of democracy. How can it be one of the main points in the discussion of a potential crisis of democracy? Are citizens by living up to the ideal of equality, undermining democracy’s base? These questions cannot be answered here, but the fact remains that even authors in later periods name individualism as one of the crisis factors for democracy. Nye et al. for example speak of two deep changes in the structure that have changed the situation in democracies, one of them being the shift from collectivism to individualism\textsuperscript{170}. In the same period Dalton and Kuechler argue that new social movements also act in pure self-interest\textsuperscript{171}. Even though they represent a group, the interests are only group specific, which is why they can be called individualistic or selfish.

Increase individualism could be one of the reasons why the gap between expectations of citizens and performance of governments or rather perceived performance of governments widens. The more individualistic people become, the more they expect from the authorities, and the less they are willing to take back for the greater good, consequently the more negative their attitude towards the governments becomes. Individualism and the shift of societies towards this concept seems to challenge democracy on a certain level, namely on the very base. The greater good and well-being of a greater group, e.g. the nation, looses priority compared to individual needs and wants. Nevertheless, this is the result of democratic principles, which cannot be taken back, but need to be dealt with\textsuperscript{172}. The fact that societies grow more individual therefore can be seen as strength and weakness of democracy at the same time. While being one of the main principles it can undermine the system itself by

\textsuperscript{169} Brittan (1975): pp. 142-146.
\textsuperscript{172} Some authors (Crozier et al. (1975): p. 160) even talk about finding a new common evil or counterpart in order for people in democratic countries to be united in the fight against that threat. Before 1990, this counterpart was the Soviet Union, now after September 11, 2001 the fight against terrorism could be such a factor.
detaching citizens from the whole. How much individuality is healthy for a country remains therefore discussable and it is therefore authors have used the term as one of their main arguments to describe and discuss the so-called crisis of democracy.

5.2.3 Participation

One of the most important indications whether citizens are content with the form they are governed is their participation behavior. It is the third mayor topic discussed in the literature on the so-called crisis of democracy. The aspects starts moving into focus during the second period discussed above, the first relaxation period. Barnes/Kaase already speak about new forms of participation, mainly meaning protest behavior and a change within democracy\textsuperscript{173}. Even though they do not have the evidence of declining trust as authors in later periods, where a change is realized; however, in their view this does not necessarily lead to a crisis. Continuing a similar line of thought, Kaase/Newton argue that less participation and less trust of the citizens towards the politicians and the system will pose even greater problems in the future; unless new forms of participation are found and the structure of the system is adjusted\textsuperscript{174}. In this respect, political parties play an important role since they are the link between the government and the people\textsuperscript{175}. New Social Movements with their unconventional structure could be the new forms of participation people might need since the trust in institutions like political parties has declined\textsuperscript{176}. The question is only, whether the system is able to adapt to these new forms of actors in the political field, but that will be the topic in the next section.

Participation continues to be one of the main topics throughout the different periods discussed above. Dalton argues as well that the understanding of and the content with the processes in democracy have changed\textsuperscript{177}. That means that people see themselves in a different way within the system and that they might want to participate in another way that the one offered by the system. Apparently, participation is a keyword that combines the two topics above. Due to increased individualism, citizen’s expectations on governments rise. In turn, this leads to expectations on the elites in power, which make out an overload on government. People grow dissatisfied since their expectations are not met by the overloaded government, hence citizens do not see the input structure of democracy, e.g. political parties and elections, appropriate anymore. Thus, they either isolate themselves from the process or make their

\textsuperscript{173} Barnes/Kaase (1979).
\textsuperscript{176} See Dalton/Kuechler (1990).
opinion heard in other ways, as for example through the involvement in new social movements.178

Change in participatory behavior is an important indicator on changes in a country. It must be caused by certain facts, which can possibly be threatening for the system. On the other hand, change in for example voting behavior is influenced by various factors. Not all of them need to be connected to the system as a whole. It makes it therefore difficult but important to analyze changed in participatory behavior because it could have big implications for the political system of a country. Many authors, which have been analyzed above include a section on participation and possible changes, which shows the aspects importance for the discussion on the so-called crisis of democracy179.

5.2.4 New culture versus old structure

The final aspect that will be talked about in this section is the discussion about a changed, new culture in democracies, which is potentially not represented by the structure anymore. Once again, it is a topic most of the authors being included here, have taken up at one point or another. Of the four aspects named here, it is the one that returns most often. Nevertheless, it is the only aspect not mentioned by Crozier et al.180 and Brittan181. The discussion therefore begins in the second period describes above, the first relaxation period. Here it is Barnes/Kaase182 who speak about declining legitimacy, which directly linked to the culture/structure relation. The main problem is that the structure of a system needs to represent the political culture of a country. According to Almond/Verba that is the precondition which has to be met so that its population legitimates the political system183. Thus, the relationship between rulers and ruled is stable and the prospects for the survival of the democracy are good. Therefore, this final aspect takes an important position within the discussion of the potential crisis of democracy.

The authors tackle the topic from different perspectives throughout the three periods. The contributions placed in the second period of discussion mostly point to the congruence between structure and processes as well as a challenge to the political system through new forms of participation. The latter, for example protesting, do not seem to fit into the old system of party democracies184. Nevertheless, the contributions see different reasons for this

---

178 See Hirschmann (1980).
179 See chapter 6 below.
180 Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
181 Brittan (1975).
182 Barnes/Kaase (1979).
phenomenon: Barnes/Kaase\textsuperscript{185} as well as Kaase/Newton\textsuperscript{186} see new participatory behavior as the major challenge to the system, whereas Klingemann/Fuchs\textsuperscript{187} speak only about the difficulties of the system to adjust to a changed social structure without naming causes for this change. The focus lies on the question of whether the system is legitimate or not.

In the next discussion period, Dalton/Kuechler (1990) for example try to answer the question why structure and culture are not congruent anymore. New social movements are therefore the ones representing a threat to the old order, and that is the challenge the old political structure is facing: to adjust to new actors in the political sphere.

One point that is talked about across the last two sections is the role of political parties, their position within the system and their relationship to the challenge posed on the political system. Nye et al. argue that political parties’ role is declining and that therefore, since parties are the connecting link between the people and the government, the trust in the latter is declining\textsuperscript{188}. Similarly, Dalton reasons that various groups within the population show growing expectations towards the government through a more diverse spectrum of issues\textsuperscript{189}. Here again, political parties do not seem to be able to handle the new issues, which have moved their focus from national to global problems as for example environmental questions.

As said above, new actors enter therefore the political scene, new social movements. Additionally, the ways of communication have changed. Especially the youth is craving new forms of participation as well as articulation as over the internet for example\textsuperscript{190}. The challenge to the old structure to adjust to a changed culture poses challenges on various fronts: input structure, organization as well as ways of communication, to only name a few.

Finally, the aspect of a changed or still changing culture within countries that affects the functionality of the system is a fundamental discussion. Located mainly within the field of political culture studies, finding causes for these cultural changes could help the political system to adapt to new expectations of citizens. It would therefore adjust the structure so the latter is congruent with the culture again, which according to certain political culture theorists provides the precondition for the stability of a political system\textsuperscript{191}.

\textsuperscript{185} Barnes/Kaase (1979).
\textsuperscript{186} Kaase/Newton (1995).
\textsuperscript{187} Klingemann/Fuchs (1995a, 1995b).
\textsuperscript{190} Coleman (2007).
\textsuperscript{191} Almond/Verba (1963) with the focus on democracies, Lipset (1983) generally on the stability of political systems.
5.2.5 Common grounds?

Overall, there are certain core topics that dominate the discussion of the so-called crisis of democracy. Overload on government and individualism are especially present in the first two periods described above, whereas participation and the problem of old structure versus new culture preponderate in the last three time frames. Thus, one can observe that the discussion itself has developed over time, shifting focus from certain topics to other ones.

What does that mean for the purpose of this thesis then? Generally, political parties and participation move into the focus of the discussion for various reasons. Firstly, parties seem to lose legitimacy and trust of citizens due to changed expectations of the latter on which topics the government should address. This reflects back to political parties because they are the most important link between citizens and their government, they are the instruments that have the most direct influence on the input structure of a political system being used by the population. Obviously, in case that institution is facing problems, the political system as a whole could be affected as well.

Nevertheless, other factors as individualism are very important as well. Several authors argue that increased individualistic or even selfish behavior threatens the political system of democracy. One could even go as far as saying that even though individualism is one of the most important aspects of democracy, which is to a greater or lesser extent however undermining the very base for democracy itself. Democracy also needs certain consensus of its population on how the system should function and which issues should be addressed. As soon as citizens grow too selfish, loosing track of the common good for the country, expectations are not fulfilled, mistrust grows and the system could move towards a crisis.

Even though all authors have their unique starting point when discussing the so-called crisis of democracy, there are lines of arguments that return. Even though all contributions lay their focus upon different topics, identify diverse reasons as well as potential solutions, there is a common ground, which can be found when analyzing the sources. It would however be very helpful, not only for readers but sometimes even for the authors, to give a definition of certain key words, which are used throughout the literature. It can be frustrating and difficult to discover what the author really means when for example talking about democracy, crisis or the so-called crisis of democracy.
5.3 Conclusion

When discussing the so-called crisis of democracy it is important to know what the general meaning of that term is. As seen above in the analysis of some literature concerning the topic, authors approach the topic from various directions. It is however possible to identify certain key concepts that return within the literature. These are overload on government, individualism, participation and new culture versus old structure.

One book that summarizes all the factors as well as the discussion as such is edited by Robert D. Putnam and Susan J. Pharr “Disaffected Democracies – What is troubling the Trilateral Countries?”\textsuperscript{192} They argue, which can be supported by the discussion above, that democracy as a political system is not in a crisis because the citizenry discontent with political institutions grows. Instead, one must say that a more critical population shows that the system as it exists now in Western democracies does not function well. Thus, the reasons for that seem to be one of the most important questions that have to be asked. Putnam/Pharr offer a model for this objective, including factors as direct and indirect influences to people’s perception of performance. These can be social capital, fidelity, as well as capacity/competence as indirect factors. As direct influences, they identify information about the political institutions performance as well as evaluation criteria.\textsuperscript{193}

These arguments show that the discussion about a so-called crisis of democracy might be stretched too far. Instead, one could call the situation in Western democracies a disillusionment or democratic discontent, which is what will be done from here on in this thesis. The core conclusions of this chapter are therefore the following:

1. The modern scientific debate on the so-called crisis of democracy has changed over time, from authors as Crozier et al.\textsuperscript{194} until Putnam/Pharr\textsuperscript{195} as well as Dalton\textsuperscript{196} focusing on different aspects of the problem, reasoning according to different assumptions.

2. In recent literature, authors agree on the fact that the democratic system as such is not in danger of collapsing, so that the term crisis of democracy suggests a too negative view of the challenges the countries are facing.

3. It is implied that citizens lose trust in political institutions such as the government, political parties and the parliament. Since these institutions constitute an, if not the most important base of democracy, one needs the search for the reasons of discontent and lost of trust.

\textsuperscript{192} Putnam & Pharr (2000).
\textsuperscript{194} Crozier/Huntington/Watanuki (1975).
\textsuperscript{195} Putnam/Pharr (2000).
\textsuperscript{196} Dalton (2004) and (2006)
4. Western democracies are therefore facing challenges, which need to be realized, analyzed and counteracted. Saying that, democracy as a system is probably not in danger does not mean that Western democracies do not have problems that need solving.

The goal for the next chapter is now to analyze data from Western European countries in order to identify relationship between loosing trust and participation.

6 Exit, voice and trust in political institutions in Western European Countries

Citizens in Western democracies are losing trust in democratic institutions, which is a phenomenon that needs to be taken seriously. Even though, as established above, that does not necessarily mean, that democracy as such is in a crisis, it does pose the question after the reasons for growing mistrust and the consequences that bring for the well functioning of the democracies in question. The aim of this chapter is therefore to analyze the data of the World Value Surveys (WVS) on confidence in political institutions under the light of participatory behavior. Therefore, groups will be identified according to their intention of participation, which will then be compared to each other when it comes to trust in political institutions.

As a theoretical framework, Hirschmann’s theory on exit and voice\(^{197}\) will be used. Here, the focus of inquiry lies in the area where complete exit is nearly impossible and connected to a high price. Even though some citizens do not go to vote, they exit from one of the main participatory mechanism, they cannot exit the unwanted system as a whole unless they immigrate to another country\(^{198}\). That means that there is only a limited version of exit available for the people, since the object wanting to be exited is a public good. One the other hand, one could say that exiting elections is a way of expressing one’s discontent with political parties, which could in turn be seen as voicing an opinion. Nevertheless, the exit option is one of public character, in comparison to private goods like a certain product one purchases, which has changed in either price or quality and therefore the consumer makes a decision whether to exit or to voice. Public goods can therefore be characterized as a loyalty force, since the person, wanting to exit will still be affected by the good and might be ore compelled to use voice before exiting. Anyways, Hirschmann offers a way of looking at participatory behavior through the distinction of exit and voice and to a certain degree forced loyalty, which will be helpful in the analysis below.\(^{199}\)

\(^{197}\) Hirschmann (1970).


The focus of analysis will be laid on Western European countries since they can be considered as having a similar democratic development. Since there is not the space here to discuss every country in detail, the way of selecting Western European democracies seems to be the most reasonable and functional choice for the purpose of this paper. In addition, in some sections some countries will be selected as examples.

Concerning the data, the WVS and all available waves will be used to find answers to the research questions. These surveys represent one of the best documented and continuous questionnaires in Western European countries. Furthermore, up to four points in time, where the same or similar question have been asked from the early 1980s until the turn of the century seems a very good base for the research question of this thesis. It will always be indicated which survey data is used and where to access the data.

In the next section, the analysis of how many people in Western European countries exit participation, meaning general elections, and how many voice their opinion. Following that, the focus will be laid on how trust in political institutions has developed in the countries included here, which will then lead to the analysis whether trust in political institutions influences participatory behavior. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of the results and possible consequences.

6.1 Exit and voice in practice

In the area of public goods the relationship or the decision between exit and voice is influenced by the concept of loyalty, one could even say created loyalty. That means that since people cannot totally escape from the product, which they would like to exit from, they probably feel more compelled to try and to do something against deterioration. Thus, voice is facilitated and exit is only present in a limited version or connected to a very high personal price. One could therefore argue that when people exit anyways, it shows an even greater discontent with the public good. A hypothesis for the analysis in this chapter can therefore be: the more people mistrust political institutions the higher is the likelihood that they do not go to vote in national elections or that they cast a blank vote. Whether this hypothesis can be confirmed will be seen throughout the next parts of this chapter by using the data from the WVS in Western European countries. More specifically the question, which party the questioned person would vote for in the next election will be used to form three groups, voters, blank voters and non-voters. These three groups will then be analyzed in how much

---

they trust political institution, first separately then comparatively. If the hypothesis is correct, the group of non-voters should show the least trust in political institutions, followed by the blank voters.

Before going into this analysis, the next part will start to look at the statistical distribution of the three groups, non-voters, blank voters and voters, and their occurrence in Western European countries. Then, there will be a part on what that tells us in relation to the disenchantment with democracy in Western European countries, which will be followed by conclusions.

6.1.1 How many people exit or voice?

One of the main questions in relation to political participation is electoral turnout. It is one of the easiest ways to see how many people go to the polls and therefore engage in the easiest way of decision making in modern democracies. One could think that voting is an action, which costs the least effort; mostly meaning time one has to lay done. Voting for a political party can therefore be called the most direct way of expressing an opinion of how one’s country should be governed.

Going to vote is an action which expresses one’s opinion in several ways: one can re-elect the government, if satisfied with it, one can “throw the rascals out” when unsatisfied with performance or one can resign, which can be caused by various reasons. One thing sticks out however, and that is the fact that voting is the easiest way of voice, according to Hirschmann’s concept. It is therefore interesting to evaluate how voting behavior has developed over the last 25-30 years. Since the data from the WVS is not as valuable for this section as it will be later one, IDEA statistics have been chosen as the data source to show a general trend in how participatory behavior has developed.

Electoral turnout depends on various factors: is the person motivated to voice an opinion, can the person make it to the polls, and does the person even have the right to vote? The electoral turnout statistics used here show the percentage of registered voters of the respective country that actually went to the polls. That means that invalid votes are not recognized. In a first step of the analysis, the question is how many percent of possible voters actually made it to the polls.

---

203 See for example Le Duc/Niemi/Norris (2002).
Figure 1 shows how the electoral turnout has been in seven Western European countries: France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. There are some developments that stick out. France has experienced a drop in electoral turnout from 1946 where 81.9% of eligible people voted to 2007, where the number is only 60.4%\textsuperscript{208}. A similar trend is visible when looking at the UK’s timeline. Here the percentage has decreased from 83.6% in 1950 to 61.4% in 2005\textsuperscript{209}. But even the Netherlands has seen less people going to the polls from 93.7% in 1948 to 80.4 % in 2006\textsuperscript{210}. In these three countries has the electoral turnout decreased between 13%and almost 22%. And that still counts everyone going to national elections, including invalid votes, like blank or multiple votes.

In Sweden, Germany, Norway, and Italy have the number varied instead of showing a clear trend. This depends on which timeframe one is looking at, but considering the time displayed in Figure 1, Sweden has gone down 0.7% comparing 82.7% in 1948 and 82% in 2006\textsuperscript{211}, Germany has gone down 0.8% from 78.5% in 1949 to 77.7% in 2005\textsuperscript{212}, and Norway’s percentage has dropped 4.6% from 82% in 1949 till 77.4% in 2005\textsuperscript{213}. Even in Italy

\textsuperscript{208} IDEA Homepage (2008): France.
\textsuperscript{209} IDEA Homepage (2008): the United Kingdom.
\textsuperscript{210} IDEA Homepage (2008): the Netherlands.
\textsuperscript{211} IDEA Homepage (2008): Sweden.
\textsuperscript{212} IDEA Homepage (2008): Germany.
\textsuperscript{213} IDEA Homepage (2008): Norway.
the percentage dropped 8.6% from 92.2% in 1948 to 83.6% in 2006. That means that in these countries electoral turnout has not dropped more than 10% when comparing the first\textsuperscript{214} and last time of national elections. However, when looking the highest participation 91.8% 1976 in Sweden, 91.1% 1972 in Germany, and 85.4% 1965 in Norway, the portion of the people going to elections has dropped as much as in France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. Italy, which had it highest participation in 1953 with 93.9% cannot reach the level of the other countries but looses over 10% of electorates as well.

The question is why? Have people lost interest in politics? Have they lost faith in political institutions? The next section will relate the presented problem to the so-called crisis of democracy discussed above as well as Hirschmann’s exit, voice and loyalty theory\textsuperscript{215}.

6.1.2 Relation to the democratic discontent

What do these numbers tell about the crisis of democracy set of problems discussed in the scientific realm? First, it is obvious that less people are going to the poles in numerous Western European countries. The crucial questions are: why and how can this observation be related to the so much talked about crisis of democracy. As said above, when comparing the first and the last year of national elections and there electoral turnout, most countries percentage has not decreased too much. When however taking the highest percentage compared to the most recent election, countries loose more than 10%, up to 22% of the voters. There has to be a reason for that, whether it could be related to disappointment in governments, individualism, or a new culture versus an old structure remains unclear.

Moreover, while these electoral turnout numbers seem to point in an obvious direction, it is uncertain, how the distribution of non-voters is. In other words, these statistics cannot tell us, whether it is the same people not voting at all under a certain time period or whether it is always another group of people/individuals not going to the poles. Being able to know that, would enable us to evaluate whether a certain percentage of people in Western democracies have a deep unease about how their country functions, are frustrated or just do not trust the people in office and the institutions itself and therefore do not go to vote for a long time. On the other hand it could mean that if someone does not vote one year but all others, that this person was unhappy with a special politicians or issue taken up during campaigning, but not the system or the institutions itself. These are however only ifs and buts that cannot be answered here.

\textsuperscript{214} For most countries 1945 has not been taken as the example for the first percentage of comparison, since there usually where great differences to the next number.

\textsuperscript{215} Hirschmann (1980).
Nevertheless, the conclusions drawn above pose challenges to the democratic systems of the analyzed Western European democracies. Government might have to focus on encouraging people to go to vote. Making their decisions more open could make it more visible how much influence a person has on the composition of the government with one simple vote. Political parties seem to be challenged a great deal as well. Their position as the “middle man” between the citizens and the government can only function well, when people use their right to vote and thereby express the preference for which course the country should take. But, and that brings us back to the common point of discussion in the scientific discourse, that there might be a discrepancy between culture and structure. Even on personal level, politicians could make themselves more understandable to people. By being reachable to the people, they might have more trust in representatives and feel like their vote makes a difference. All these points are however only hypotheses on how people could be encouraged to go to vote in relation to the core topics that were identified in chapter 5.

6.1.3 Relation to exit, voice and loyalty

Concerning the theory of exit, voice and loyalty other conclusions can be drawn after looking at the statistics above; certainly, arguments are similar but reasoning differs. According to Hirschmann, the politics of a national system are considered a public good. That means, that even though people do not go to express their opinion, they are always effected by the results the decision. In other words, even though their want to not-participate, they cannot withdraw themselves completely.

Therefore, citizens should be extra motivated to use their possibility to voice. What has to happen though, so that some do not participate anyways? Can that be interpreted as high demotivation, mistrust, or pure indifference? In contrast to Hirschmann, who said that the lack of the exit possibility should encourage voice, it could also lead to resignation and no action at all. Is one of the feelings above so intense that it leads to this reaction? Or what else could lie behind it? Again, it goes too far into individual decision making to be able to answer these questions. Nevertheless, it seems important to have them in mind when discussing the topics of participation, the debate on a possible crisis of democracy as well as potential reasons.

Hirschmann’s theory offers a special way of looking at these individual decisions; public goods, resignation, lack of exit-possibility and loyalty that might just not exist or be

---

216 See chapter 5.2.4 above.
strong enough to make a difference. As this point it becomes even more interesting to analyzed, whether people have lost trust in political institutions, because that could be a reason for less participation. These points will be the focus of analysis in the next sections.

6.2 Attitudes of people choosing exit and voice

After having discussed the trends in electoral behavior the next sections will elaborate people’s attitude regarding four different aspects; interest in politics in general, as well as trust in three political institutions, the national government, the national parliament, and political parties. While looking at the attitudes people have towards these factors, a general trend could be visible whether the trust in the three institutions as well as interest in politics in general is declining or not. Since trust is one of the main signs for a healthy democracy, one could even speculate on whether democracy could be in a crisis, as implied above, or not.

The analysis will be made people by dividing all data sets into groups according to people’s answer on question E179 of the WVS: “Which party would you vote for: first choice”. Group 1 will contain everyone that answered “I would not vote” or “None”. These datasets will be called: non-voters. Group 2 will contain the answer “I would cast a blank ballot; white vote”, which will be called blank-voters from here on. Last but not least, Group 3, which is summarized under the name voters, will contain data, where E179 has been answered with the name of a political party or the choice “other”.

These three groups will be the categories that divided the analysis on trust in political institutions as well as interest politics in general. That means that the next four parts are a comparative analysis on four factors: interest in politics, confidence in government, confidence in parliament, and confidence in political parties under the perspective of the three different groups. The main goal will be to evaluate whether trust and interest differ between the groups of voters, blank-voters and non-voters. The comparison will be made in relation to the overall trust and interest showed of all groups combined. Here one has to mention that the group of voters represents 92.9% of the overall sample. That might be one weakness of the analysis that follows. Nevertheless, the comparison between the groups can show how diverse attitudes can be in the three groups. It presents the possibility to see trends group specific, where the majority of voters dominates the graphs otherwise.

---

219 European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): question E179. Other answers were marked as “missing values” since they are of no value for the analysis.
6.2.1 Interest in politics

The data from the WVS includes the question on interest in politics in waves 2 till wave 4\textsuperscript{221}. The question asked is “How interested you would say you are in politics?”, with the four valuable potential answers “very interested”, “somewhat interested”, “not very interested” and “not at all interested”\textsuperscript{222}. Over the years some trends are visible when looking at the answers from people in group 1 to 3 as well as all of them together to see differences between the groups even clearer.

The groups of non-voters and blank voters show a similar development regarding the interest in politics. For both groups the majority of people answers that they are “Not very interested” or “Not at all interested” in the wave from 1989-1993. Put together these two make out 79.5% for group 2 (blank voters) and 84.3% for group 1 (non-voters). Even though the “Not very interested” percentage increases while the “Not at all interested” part decreases, the total proportion of people answering one of these alternatives remains at 75.3% for group 2 and 80.9% for group 1. Both groups show a decrease which the answer possibility “Somewhat interested” gains, but the overall picture is rather dark\textsuperscript{223}.

It is a remarkable high percentage of people that are not at all or not very interested in politics and that is not a good sign for democracy and the motivation to participate in election for example. Nevertheless, the group of voters shows a different development. The most frequent answer in this group has been “Somewhat interested” throughout all three waves. Although both rather negative alternatives, “Not very interested” as well as “Not at all interested” have been increasing from wave 3 to wave 4, the most positive answer “Very interested” has in turn declined in percentage. Generally, one can see a lighter picture when looking the statistics from group 3. There seems to be much more interest in politics in general, which is to a certain degree self-understandable since it is the group of voters. However, great interest in politics has decreased even in this group where at the same time ignorance has increased.\textsuperscript{224}

That could mean that more people have shifted from an active voice behavior to group-forced voice or even protest voice. Group-forced voice could mean that people only go to vote because their friends and family do so, or because that have done it over the years.

\textsuperscript{223} Own calculation on basis of European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): question E023. See also ANNEX 1- ANNEX 2.
This is not a favorable development but at least these people go to the poles. Protest voice on the other hand could lead to stronger extremist parties in national parliaments, a trend that has been seen in some state elections in Germany for example\textsuperscript{225}. Yet, following Hirschmann, voice is the more valuable choice when one talks about public goods. No one can flee the decisions made, even though one would like to exit. Therefore, voting, even though one might blank vote, is the better alternative then withdrawing from the process as a whole\textsuperscript{226}. In the next sections the analysis will focus on people’s trust in political institutions, which will be followed by a conclusion on if and how participatory behavior and trust are related to each other.

6.2.2 Confidence in Government

The confidence in Government question has been asked in three of the four waves of the WVS that are available in data form. The question as well as the answering possibilities are formulated as the follows: “I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?”\textsuperscript{227} This was the same for Government, Parliament and Political Parties, which will be covered in separate sections.

For trust in Government group specific evaluations can be made differently from the ones made in the section above. Non-voters is the group that does show similarities to the trend discussed under interest in politics. Here, the two negative answers, “Not very much” and “None at all” make out 87.6% of the answers in wave 2. This percentage decreases until wave 4 to 70.5% in favor for the answers “Quiet a lot” (increase from 11.3 to 25.6%) as well as “A great deal”, which increases from 1 to 3.9% of the answers. This is a positive trend, which gives hope that voting behavior does not necessarily stand in relationship with trust in political institutions. However, trust in government seems still very low among the group of non-voters even though the trend shows a positive development\textsuperscript{228}.

The group of bank-voters answers in a different pattern. Here the most frequent answer is the one “Not very much” and that continues through the waves (between 45.9 and 57.1% throughout the waves). Scaring is the fact that none has shown “A great deal” of trust in government in waves 2 and 3. However, the two positive answers have increased

\textsuperscript{225} For example in 2004 in Sachsen, where 12 of 124 seats went to the Right-Extremist party. See Statistik Sachsen (2004).

\textsuperscript{226} Hirschmann (1980): pp. 30-43.


\textsuperscript{228} Own calculation on basis of European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): question E079. See also ANNEX 1.
significantly from wave 3 to wave 4, shifting percentages from the “None at all” answer. That means that, even though confidence in government is far from high, at least the most negative answering alternative decreases while the three other ones increase.\textsuperscript{229} Maybe that means that group two is gaining trust while still being very critical of government in general.

Group 3 is again the one showing the brightest perspective. Yet, even in the group of voters answer “Not very much” has dominated in all waves available. The trend shows that “Quiet a lot” trust has gained 10 percent (from 26.6 to 36.5%). The same is true for “A great deal”, which even though it dropped in wave 3, has gained almost 2 percent (from 6.3 to 8.2%). At the same time both negative answers decrease steadily: “Not very much” from 46.5 to 41.4% and “None at all” from 20.6 to 13.9%.\textsuperscript{230} This is overall a positive trend, but the fact that a negative answering possibility still accounts for the majority its evaluation less euphorically. There seems to be a steady mistrust towards government, which has to be taken seriously. Especially since it appears in the group of voters, the one that is the vital one for government itself.

The next two sections will continue analyzing how people’s trust in political institutions is captured in the WVS, which eventually will give the reader a full picture on whether participatory behavior could be related to trust in political institutions and interest in politics. This in turn will lead to the evaluation if there could be a crisis of democracy as authors discussed the topic in the academic debate.

\textit{6.2.3 Confidence in Parliament}

In most countries included in this study, the parliament is the institution, which is directly elected into office through the electorate. It seems therefore a vital question, how much people trust this directly elected body within the political system. Analyzing again group by group as well as comparative trends, this time, from wave 1 until wave 4 of the WVS will be presented\textsuperscript{231}.

In this section non-voters and blank voters show a similar development in trust again. In both groups answer “Not very much” dominates with 50 till 46.6% (non-voters) and 46.3 till 46.5% (blank voters). Answering possibilities “Quiet a lot” and “A great deal” do not

\textsuperscript{229} Own calculation on basis of European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): question E079. See also ANNEX 2.
\textsuperscript{230} Own calculation on basis of European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): question E079. See also ANNEX 3.
\textsuperscript{231} European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): wave 2 (1989-1993), wave 3 (1994-1999), wave 4 (1999-2004). The only exception is group 2, since the possibility of casting a blank ballot was not an option when first WVS was carried out.
change much in the two groups. The trust in parliament is not very high and this fact has not changed significantly over the time that the WVS has carried out this question. Is this the most direct connection to voting behavior? Since these two groups are the ones not voting at all or casting an invalid vote, little trust in the institution one votes for could be explained. However, the trend could be generated the other way round as well. Since people do not trust in parliament they do not see a reason to go and cast a vote. Looking at group 3 might help understanding the phenomenon.

The group of voters shows a very interesting trend, which is valuable but alarming at the same time. Figure 2 shows the development that the answers of the voter group have taken. The answer “Not very much” has changed from being the next most chosen one to being most frequent in comparison to the “Quiet a lot” option. Answer “A great deal” switched places with its negative extreme of “None at all” between wave 1 and wave 2.

Figure 2

Confidence in Parliament - Group 3 - Voters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>wave 1</th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own composition with data from WVS, waves 1-4.

This is an interesting observation because both negative answers have outrun their positive connected counter answers. Nevertheless, it shows that even in the group of voters trust in parliament is not as high as expected or wished for. However, this might be a sign for loyalty in Hirschmann’s interpretation meaning that people even though they do not entirely trust the political institution they vote for, they go to the poles anyway; maybe to express their

unhappiness with the current representatives and often government, maybe because they want to change and improve the political situation in their country.\footnote{233}{Hirschmann (1980): p. 102.}

Whichever the reasons are for people to trust in parliament the way they do, a rather critical position towards parliament can be interpreted as good and healthy for democracies as well.\footnote{234}{See Dalton (2004).} In this sense, representatives are controlled and cannot easily exploit the power given to them. It shows that the concept of ruled of, by and for the people is most obvious here. In the last section, the next one, trust in political parties will be analyzed.

### 6.2.4 Confidence in Political Parties

Trust in political parties will be the last section in this analysis. The investigation of this political body was chosen to be the last one, because it seems to be the connecting link between the actors and bodies described above. Political parties are often the in the focus of analysis when researching on the functionality of democracy and the content people have in their political system.\footnote{235}{See Dalton (2006).} This section will therefore help to combine the results made above and hopefully give a clearer view on the question whether political participation and trust in political institutions have a relationship.

Starting again with the group of non-voters, one can see an interesting and surprising development of trust towards political parties. When wave 2 was conducted the majority of group 1 (52.2%) answered that they have “Quiet a lot” confidence in political parties. The other answers were represented with 30.8% for “Not very much”, 15.7% for “None at all” and 1.3% for “A great deal”. This changed tremendously in waves 3 and 4. The answer that had been the majority “Quiet a lot” dropped to 11.5% for wave 3 and 15.7% for wave 4, where as the two negative responses gained in percentage and made out 45.7% for “Not very much” as well as 38.8% for “None at all”. The big question is again, what happened? Trust seemed to have disappeared or at least been much less when looking at wave 2 compared to waves 3 and 4. This could mean that little trust in political parties has become a reason why people might be in the group of non-voters. The next groups might help understand this development.

The group of blank voters shows the following development in trust in political parties. When wave 2 was carried out all answers were close together percentagewise. “A great deal” 28%, “Quiet a lot” 38.9%, “Not very much” 36.1% and “None at all ” 22.2%. Already in wave 3 these results had changed a great deal. The two negative answers had

\footnote{236}{Own calculation on basis of European and World Values Surveys Four-Wave Integrated Data File, 1981-2004, v.20060423 (2006a): question E080. See also ANNEX 1.}
increased to 51.4% (“Not very much”) and 45.9% (“None at all”). In contrast, both rather positive answers lost big shares. In wave 4 then “Not very much” gained even more to 59.3%, whereas “Quiet a lot” and “None at all” received 18.5%, meaning that the latter decrease in percentage while the former increased.\(^{237}\) Again, what does that tell us? In this group as well, it seems that something changed between the second and third wave. Even though one can see an improvement of trust towards wave 4, the general picture is rather negative. In other words, there is not very much confidence towards political parties in the group of blank voters. Interesting to know would be, in which way participation and trust influence each other. Are these people in the group of blank voters because they do not trust political parties and therefore do not vote for any, or the other way round they do not vote for any party, which causes mistrust of the latter. Observation of the group of voters might help to find some answers.

The development in group 3 is rather simple to describe. In wave 2 “Quiet a lot” made out almost 60% of the answers. “Not very much” was represented with 30.1% and “None at all” as well as “A great deal” received less than 10%. By the next time the same question was asked, the distribution had changed. “Not very much” (59.6%) and “Quiet a lot” (21.6%) have changed position. Moreover, “None at all” increased to 17.6% and “A great deal” lost support to 1.1%. This distribution did not change a lot to wave 4.\(^{238}\) That means, that even in group 3, the group of voters, trust in political parties has decreased. Moreover, since this is the group of the most direct voicers, the development should be taken seriously.

Consequently, confidence in political parties has decreased over time. It varies quite a lot between the participatory groups defined, but the general trend is visible: people do lose trust in the political institution of political parties. The reasons for that, once again, can vary to a great extend, but the general observation is important when trying to find an answer to the research question posed in the beginning of this thesis. Only for this section, the conclusion can be that there are differences in trust between the three groups identified. The results of group 3 could be interpreted so that even though people lose trust in parties they go to the poles; maybe because they want to change the situation through voicing their opinion and voting for another party.\(^{239}\) The next section will draw conclusions for all groups and the whole chapter 6 before the part on the overall thesis conclusion.

---


6.3 Conclusions

The sections above elaborated trust in political institutions while separating the participants of the WVS by their intention to vote in national elections. Moreover, sub-chapter 6.1 shows with data from IDEA how the trend of voting behavior, actual electoral turnout has been from over the last 60 years. This part will only draw conclusions for the analysis, whereas the next chapter will conclude the whole thesis.

The reason for choosing to analyze mass data on participation was that the latter is one of the main concepts that returns throughout the literature on the crisis of democracy debate discussed in chapter 5. In connection the Hirschmann’s theory on exit and voice the main goal was to find out whether participation and trust in political institutions could be related in order to determine whether the academic debate grounds on findings in the real world. Certainly, most of the authors discussed above use statistical data to prove their points, but the question here was whether the general discovered problem of less participation discovered in the debate can be found in empirical data.

Generally, there is clear evidence that less people are participating in national elections. That might be due to various reasons. Nevertheless, electoral turnout has not dropped in the extent as one would expect it to be a reason to declare that democracy is in a state of crisis. One could therefore conclude that even though less people participate in national elections, the number is not decreasing so drastically as to that the development poses a huge problem. It seems therefore that some authors, especially in period one, covered in section 5.1.1, draw the picture too dark and way too pessimistic.

When looking at the development on trust in political institutions, one finds that people do lose trust in them, varying depending on which political institution one looks at. Especially concerning political parties people have lost confidence. The question is however, at which stage one can speak of a crisis. According to Hirschmann, people either exit or voice when they feel that the organization they belong to deteriorates. This could lead to a rather unexpected conclusion: democracy is working fine, since people use their voice option but the latter in not increasing unexpectedly, which in turn would mean that people do not think the system is losing quality. Nevertheless, especially in the group of voters, less trust in political institutions should be taken seriously. It seems however not the case, that trust and participation have a direct connection to the quality of the political system as a whole.

Therefore, participation is an important issue when examining the potential crisis of democracy. According to the analysis in this chapter evidence that loosing trust in political

---

240 Hirschmann (1980).
institutions, general interest in politics and electoral turnout could not be found. There are challenges governments in Western European democracies should be aware of, but democracy as the political system does not seem to be challenged in itself. In other words, loosing trust and interest as well as decreasing participation have not reached an extend as that the analysis could result in the statement that there is a crisis of democracy in Western European democracies.
Part III – Conclusion and Perspectives

7 Democracy in Western European Countries, discontent with democracy and participation

This part includes the final chapter of this thesis. After having explained how problem, research question, theory and methods are related to each other, after having conducted the analysis and after having drawn conclusions, the following chapter will complete and conclude the whole thesis. Moreover, further points and perspectives will be taken up to give an idea about which course research could take from here.

7.1 General Findings

In the following section, all parts of the thesis will be concluded and the research question will be answered. As described in the methodology chapter both qualitative and quantitative research has been combined in this thesis. The first chapter in the analysis aimed firstly, to elaborate what various authors mean when they write about a crisis of democracy, and secondly, to identify core topics that return throughout the crisis literature. One of these core topics, participation, was then chosen as the focus for the second analysis chapter. There, electoral turnout, interest in politics as well as trust in three political institutions were analyzed on whether participation and trust seems to have a relationship as well as whether those findings support the authors that named participation in their crisis discussion.

In general one can say that there are many different understandings of the term crisis of democracy in the debate on the same topic. It is hard to find consensus in various publications on what that term means and which consequences that involves for democracy as a political system. Therefore, one should keep the formal definitions presented in chapter 3.2 in mind. Crisis does not necessarily mean that something, in this case democracy, is at the point where it will crash and vanish. It means that we could find ourselves at a turning point. Most authors however tend to think of crisis in negative terms241. Throughout the analysis one could see that even though the trend shows that people are less participating, less interested in politics in general and loosing trust in political institutions. However, that does not mean that democracy is in a crisis in the negative sense that many authors interpret. Democracy might be at a turning point, for example to introduce other possibilities of political participation, but it should become clear here that the author of this thesis takes a distanced position towards a

---

241 See chapter 5 above.
crisis of democracy as implied by authors in chapter 5. Moreover, the relationship between loosing trust in political institutions and participation is visible but unclear to determine. That means, that even though one finds differences in trust according to which group (non-voters, blank voters or voters) one talks about, the character of the relationship could not be identified a direct. It seems that other factors are involved.

The main conclusion therefore is, that even though people exit\textsuperscript{242} traditional ways of participation, the conclusion that Western European democracies are in a crisis (in the negative sense) cannot be supported. This leads to speculation on where these democracies stand. Could one call it supervised crisis? That would mean that politicians are well aware of the fact that a part of their citizenry are critical towards political institutions and performance, but that the extend is in controllable numbers. For example, electoral turnout still is over 75\% in almost all Western European countries. Maybe there is the attitude that it is not so bad after all. Another speculation is that people are so used to having democracy as a political system, that they forget what it requires so that the system functions well\textsuperscript{243}. Could people be called lazy democrats? However one will interpret the data and findings above, it seems important not to forget that “Democracy is not to be taken for granted”\textsuperscript{244}, which is why research on why people lose trust and participate less is important. The findings up until now do not however lead to the assumption that Western European countries are in a crisis of democracy.

\textbf{7.2 Further Points and Perspectives}

Where can research go from here? There are many possibilities. The perfect scenario would be to be able to find out why people react in the way they do, which factors influence them and how authorities could counteract negative developments. This, however, is so extremely individual that it seems impossible to grasp the whole complex situation. Therefore, research has to focus on limited aspects which could then lead to enriching the general picture. One of these aspects is appearance of new participatory options. Conclusions in this field could provide solutions or strategies for politicians in how to motivate people to more interest in politics and expressing their opinion, in whichever form.

Uncountable possibilities for new research that could enlighten society are imaginable. It will therefore be interesting to see, how Western European democracies will develop and which course they will take.

\textsuperscript{242} According to Hirschmann’s concept of exit and voice. Hirschmann (1980).
\textsuperscript{243} See for example studies on Eastern European countries. Their trust in political institutions is very high, even thou they do not have such a long experience of how it is to live in a democratic system. See Pickel et al. (2006) as well as Linde (2004).
\textsuperscript{244} Kaase/Newton (1995): 5.


Literature

Books and Articles


Maier, Charles, 1994, Democracy and Its Discontents, Foreign Affairs July/August 1994, pp. 48-64.


Internet sources


Annex 1

Group 1 (non-voters)

**Interest in politics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very interested</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>3,8</td>
<td>3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat interested</td>
<td>12,7</td>
<td>11,1</td>
<td>15,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very interested</td>
<td>23,3</td>
<td>23,5</td>
<td>33,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all interested</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61,5</td>
<td>47,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Confidence in Government**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>11,3</td>
<td>19,7</td>
<td>25,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>46,9</td>
<td>46,1</td>
<td>40,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>40,7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Confidence in Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 1</th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>29,3</td>
<td>25,3</td>
<td>22,6</td>
<td>22,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40,3</td>
<td>47,8</td>
<td>46,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>17,2</td>
<td>31,4</td>
<td>27,8</td>
<td>28,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>0,4</td>
<td>0,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>52,2</td>
<td>11,5</td>
<td>14,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>30,8</td>
<td>42,9</td>
<td>45,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>15,7</td>
<td>45,1</td>
<td>38,8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 2

Group 2 (blank-voters)

Interest in politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very interested</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>8,1</td>
<td>4,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat interested</td>
<td>15,7</td>
<td>10,8</td>
<td>20,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very interested</td>
<td>30,1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all interested</td>
<td>49,4</td>
<td>54,1</td>
<td>37,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>15,8</td>
<td>13,5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>47,4</td>
<td>45,9</td>
<td>57,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40,5</td>
<td>10,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Confidence in Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>6,1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>23,2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>46,3</td>
<td>47,2</td>
<td>46,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>24,4</td>
<td>27,8</td>
<td>26,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>38,9</td>
<td>2,7</td>
<td>18,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>36,1</td>
<td>51,4</td>
<td>59,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>22,2</td>
<td>45,9</td>
<td>18,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 3

Group 3 (voters)

Interest in politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very interested</td>
<td>16,2</td>
<td>15,2</td>
<td>11,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat interested</td>
<td>36,9</td>
<td>42,6</td>
<td>32,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very interested</td>
<td>27,2</td>
<td>28,4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all interested</td>
<td>19,7</td>
<td>13,8</td>
<td>24,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>6,3</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>8,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>26,6</td>
<td>37,4</td>
<td>36,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>46,5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>20,6</td>
<td>15,3</td>
<td>13,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Confidence in Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 1</th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>13,3</td>
<td>6,6</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>5,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>45,6</td>
<td>39,5</td>
<td>39,3</td>
<td>37,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>1,9</td>
<td>42,2</td>
<td>44,9</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>9,2</td>
<td>11,7</td>
<td>12,3</td>
<td>13,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>2,9</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>58,2</td>
<td>21,6</td>
<td>21,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>30,1</td>
<td>59,6</td>
<td>53,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>8,8</td>
<td>17,6</td>
<td>18,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 4

All Groups

Interest in politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very interested</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat interested</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very interested</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all interested</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Confidence in Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>wave 2</th>
<th>wave 3</th>
<th>wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet a lot</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not very much</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Confidence in Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quiet a lot</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>None at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wave 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38,1</td>
<td>40,3</td>
<td>12,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37,1</td>
<td>43,1</td>
<td>13,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 3</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>36,9</td>
<td>46,6</td>
<td>13,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 4</td>
<td>5,7</td>
<td>37,8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>13,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Confidence in Parliament Graph](image)

### Confidence in Political Parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wave</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Quiet a lot</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>None at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wave 2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>57,6</td>
<td>30,3</td>
<td>8,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20,1</td>
<td>59,2</td>
<td>19,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 4</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>25,3</td>
<td>53,9</td>
<td>18,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Confidence in Political Parties Graph](image)