POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN FRANCE AND GERMANY

Attitudes and Activities of Citizens and MPs

EDITED BY

Oscar W. Gabriel, Eric Kerrouche and
Suzanne S. Schüttemeyer
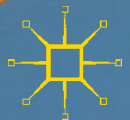
New Perspectives in German Political Studies

Far reaching changes are now taking place in Germany. Stability lay at the core of the German model and much of the writing from Peter Katzenstein and Manfred Schmidt onwards sought to explain this enviable stability. Changes in the external environment have created a number of fundamental challenges which pose a threat to that stability. Germany is now Europe's central power but this has generated controversy about how it is to exercise this new power. Although attention is often centred on German power the migration crisis demonstrates its limits. *New Perspectives in German Political Studies* aims to engage with these new challenges and to cater for the heightened interest in Germany. The Editors would welcome proposals for single-authored monographs, edited collections and Pivots, from junior as well as well-established scholars working on contemporary German Politics.

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Editors

Political Representation in France and Germany

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palgrave
macmillan

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Cover illustration: CHROMORANGE / Ralph Peters / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

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List of Abbreviations

APSA	American Political Science Association
ARD	Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
BAC	Baccalauréat
BEP	Brevet d'études professionelles
BEPC	Brevet d'études du premier cycle
CAP	Certificat d'aptitude professionelles
CDU	Christlich-Demokratische Union
CITREP	Citizens and Representatives in France and Germany
CNIL	Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés
CNRS	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union
DEA	Diplôme d'études approfondies
DESS	Diplôme d'Études Supérieures Spécialisées
DVU	Deutsche Volksunion
Eds.	editors
EELV	Europe Écologie—Les Verts
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
ML	Maximum-Likelihood
MMP	Mixed-Member-Proportional-System
MP	Member of Parliament
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands
OLS	Ordinary last squares
PRG	Parti radical de gauche
PS	Parti socialiste

RCF	Radio Chrétienne Francophone
RRDP	Groupe radical, républicain, démocrate et progressiste
RTL	Radio Télévision Luxembourg
Sat 1	Satelliten Fernsehen GmbH 1
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
SRC	Socialist, Radical and Citizen
U.K.	United Kingdom
UMP	Union pour un mouvement populaire
ZDF	Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen

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Introduction: Political Representation in France and Germany

Oscar W. Gabriel, Eric Kerrouche,
Suzanne S. Schüttemeyer, and Sven T. Siefken

Somewhat surprisingly in view of the worldwide process of democratization (Haerpfer et al. 2009; particularly Berg-Schlosser 2009), the quality of political representation and, first and foremost, the quality of the linkages between the representatives and the represented have been a highly disputed issue in political science for several decades. The report of the Trilateral Commission on the Crisis of Democracy (Crozier, Huntington, and Watanuki 1975) raised the question of whether the alleged alienation of citizens from democratic institutions originated in a growing distance

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between citizens and their representatives. This is an ongoing debate in modern democracies such as France and Germany, among other, and pertains to theory as well as to empirical research.

In spite of the involvement of French and German political scientists in the international debates and research activities on the future of representation and representative democracy, there has been very little comparative French-German research on how the concept of political representation is implemented in these two political systems, what ideas the citizens of both nations hold regarding representation, and how they assess the quality of representation in their countries. This applies particularly to analyses of the practice of representation as being manifest in the activities of French and German Members of Parliament (MPs) in the national arena as well as in their local districts. Although research on representation in the two national political systems has been conducted for several years, this research was done in a state of splendid isolation from the neighbor country.

Roughly the same can be said about the investigation of civic attitudes towards the process of representation. Admittedly, France and Germany have been included in existing cross-national survey programs such as Eurobarometer, World/European Values Survey, the International Social Survey Program, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and the European Social Survey. These surveys have yielded a large number of publications, some of them addressing the issue of representation more or less broadly (particularly Thomassen 2014). However, neither can it be said that attitudes towards representation are at the core of these survey programs, nor do they give specific attention to France and Germany in the respective publications. Moreover, French and German scholars have not been eager so far to use the existing data sources for exploring what the two countries have in common with respect to the practice and culture of representation, how and why they differ, and what this implies about the prospects for democratic government in the two countries.

Thus, a comparison of political representation in France and Germany seems to be necessary and overdue for several reasons. First and foremost, representation is a key issue in the practice of democratic government, and both actual and perceived weaknesses of the process of representation create challenges for the French and German democratic regimes. Second, although a first impression of how representation works and is perceived in France and Germany is conveyed by national research and some cross-national programs, a systematic comparison between representation in France and Germany starting from a common scientific program is still

missing. And third, the institutional arrangements and the cultural traditions of the two countries show some variation that could account for differences in the ideas and practices of the two nations. Although the relevance of these systemic variables cannot be examined systematically in a two-nation comparison, they may be helpful in the interpretation of the empirical findings.

A Crisis of Representative Democracy?

The concept of political representation is among the most important topics in the analysis of the idea and practice of modern democracy. Representation has been adopted alongside the principle of sovereignty of the people as the key mechanism of political decision-making in the wake of the French revolution and became even more indispensable with growing democratization, in particular with the introduction of equal voting rights in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In this process, countries developed quite diversified doctrines and practices of representative government.

During the last few years, the idea as well as the practice of representative democracy have been called into question by the demand for democratic innovations (e.g., Cain, Dalton, and Scarrow 2008; Smith 2009; Geissel and Newton 2012). Doubts about the legitimacy of the logic of representation are due to several factors: erroneous notions of democracy often offered by the media and opinion polls, the craving for the mechanisms of "direct" democracy, the idea of power being confiscated by a caste of politicians; each of these factors is further enhanced by processes of European integration and globalization. This is not new, since the concept and institutions of democratic representation have been criticized ever since they came into being. Thus, the "decline of parliament" and the "crisis of parliamentary representation" have been commonplace in studies on the subject for nearly a century (e.g., Bryce 1921; Schmitt 1923; Laski 1928; Mosca 1928; Speyer 1935; Perin 1960; Chandernagor 1967; Loewenberg 1971). The objections to representative democracy were and are manifold; some are directed at its principles and some at aspects of its practice at a given period in time.

Since the debate on the crisis of late capitalism reached its height in the 1970s, scholars emphasizing Marxist, liberal and conservative ideological premises have raised the issue of the "democratic malaise" in a countless number of publications (see as good summaries of the debate: Kaase and

Newton 1995; Rosanvallon 2006; Thomassen 2015). Keywords in this debate are the decline of trust in the core institutions of representative democracy, a growing distance between the governing and the governed, and even a legitimacy crisis for representative democracy in general. In view of a mixed picture conveyed by the available data on regime support, attachment to the political community, and trust in political institutions (Dalton 2004, 21–48), Dalton presented a thoroughly critical summary on the state and prospects of contemporary representative democracies:

> There is a contemporary malaise in the political spirit involving the three key elements of representative democracy (what I will refer as the three Ps): politicians, political parties, and parliament. Moreover, this is not a contemporary disenchantment with the present government or the present sets of political candidates. In many instances, these patterns have persisted over several decades and across changes in government administrations. (Dalton 2004, 38).

The supposed spread of negative feelings towards politicians, political institutions and the political system as a whole cannot be traced back to one single reason. Poor systemic performance, socioeconomic modernization and the shift from traditional to self-actualization values, the decline of social capital, and the negativist reporting of mass media are among the reasons often mentioned as promoters of changing political support (Dalton 2004, 62–74; Norris 1999, 21–26). Others point to a growth in education and political competence plus rising aspirations as having led to increasing political discontent (Norris 2011, 119–215). Finally, the social and political consequences of globalization, such as the weakening of national identity and the declining capacity of national political institutions to cope with global political challenges, might also have promoted citizens' disenchantment with representative democracies. In an analysis of the loss of democratic responsiveness in the United States, Jacobs and Shapiro (2000, 5) identified unresponsive behavior of political representatives as a key to the currently felt democratic deficit:

> The general decline in responsiveness of politicians since the 1970s is connected … to two of the most widely debated and worrisome trends in American politics: the mass media preoccupation with political conflict and strategy, and the record proportion of Americans who distrust politicians convinced that they no longer listen to them.

Along with a critical view of the present state of representative democracy, the hope of "curing the democratic malaise with democratic innovations" (Newton 2012) appeared as a viable alternative. Ironically, this optimism has been fostered by roughly the same processes of social and cultural change which were named as sources of the crisis of representative democracy: the spread of mass education, the rise of participatory values, the growth of "critical democrats", and, finally, technical innovations as the increasing use of digital media open the possibility of a direct exchange between the governing and the governed. These together are the most important aspects of this development (see for more details: Norris 2002, 19–31).

In the normative debates on the doctrine of representation, the populist interpretation of the principle of sovereignty of the people has always stipulated a critical look at any kind of representative agencies. The populist view of democracy explicitly rejects an intermediary between the will of the people and the political decisions that bind all citizens. Thomas Jefferson can be taken as testimonial when it comes to proving that the representative form of democracy is *per se* inferior to direct democracy: he spoke of representative democracy as "popular government of the second degree of purity." At more or less the same time, the founders of the American constitution "associated direct democracy with mob rule and with unwise policies" (Mezey 2008, 9). They did not argue defensively by citing practical obstacles to implement "true" (that is, direct) democracy but rather emphasized systematic and theory-based disadvantages to this form of government. In this they moved partly in line with Emmanuel Sieyes' view that representation was a genuine principle of state organization. Indeed, for him it was the only form adequate for the emerging civil society with its specific feature of division of labor and its abandonment of the Aristotelian understanding of *zoon politikon*. The founding fathers were, however, also driven by a deep-rooted fear of the uneducated masses, their passions and their self-interest; thus, they favored the republic, and not direct democracy.

Although all these arguments were on the table, two hundred years later Robert Dahl declared representative democracy to be a "sorry substitute for the real thing" (Dahl 1982, 13), a makeshift system used because of the large size of populations and territories, and the scope and complexity of existing large-scale political communities. With emphatic tenacity, generations of democratic reformers as well as populist theorists have disregarded the logic of representation and have striven for the allegedly

genuine form—direct democracy. In their eyes, it would overcome all the deficits of representative government and might even lead to true self-government by the people. Under these conditions, the civic community decides authoritatively on all public issues after a process of careful deliberation of all available alternatives and an exchange of opinions strictly relying on the quality of the arguments ("herrschaftsfreier Diskurs"). In this line of reasoning, representative institutions and processes can only be justified by the organizational requirements of modern large-scale societies and the corresponding systems of government.

Here is not the place to develop at great length the theoretical arguments why such a vision of power-free self-government is a conceptual illusion. It must suffice to point out that not even comprehensive and complete participation is identical with self-determination: "Whoever takes part in decisions which are binding for others, has command over them, no matter what the rules of decision-making are in detail. And: whoever is subject to collective decisions is subjugated to the determination of others, even if he participated in these decisions" (Kielmansegg 1988, 63; translation by the authors). This observation cannot be refuted—neither with Aristotle whose anthropological basis does not fit contemporary pluralistic and individualized societies nor with Rousseau who had his small socially homogeneous hometown Geneva in mind when he wrote his concept of volonté générale and strictly refused representation.

It has also to be acknowledged that any collective decision, no matter how inclusive its rules of participation are and how "direct" it is, is of a representative nature as it binds those who are not present and who are not empowered but affected (e.g., children, foreigners, next generations, etc.). Such representative decisions become democratic by their quality as acts of *responsible* government, i.e., the representatives must justify them and can be held accountable to and by the represented.

Moreover, a frequent error of judgment about the historical sequence must be cleared up with the observation that "democracy" came after "representation." Representative assemblies were established to create consensus between the monarch and estates or at least to ensure the latter`s willingness to follow the monarch's lead, long before ideas of broader, let alone equal, political representation of individuals saw the light of day. These ideas were gradually—and in more or less violent fights—incorporated into the political structures and practice of countries in Europe and North America in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Despite these facts, verdicts such as those quoted above about the inferiority of representative democracy are long lived and exert lasting influence on the popular understanding of democratic government. Invariably they are the breeding ground—at least they deliver the justification—for a public mood which can best be described by General de Gaulle`s famous dictum that politics is too important to leave to the politicians. The belief that representative democracy is an aberration dignifies all attempts to introduce more direct forms as a "truly democratic" return to democracy's roots. The consequence is an often highly ideological controversy that arises when it comes to discussing appropriate reforms of representative government.

Two Perspectives on Representation: The Views and the Practice of the Representatives and the Attitudes of the Represented

For the practices and perceptions of representation that we are setting out to study in comparison between France and Germany, research on "legislative behavior" which emerged in the USA in the 1960s has been the starting point. Scholars as Boynton and Patterson, Eulau and Wahlke, Miller and Stokes, and later Fenno and Fiorina prepared the ground for studying the practice of representation in contemporary democracies. This research includes, among others, representational activities of members of parliament in the institution itself and at the national level, their linkage in the constituencies as well as the perceptions of citizens on representation and the congruence of these perceptions with those of the representatives.

This book pursues descriptive as well as explanatory goals. It includes a "thick description" of the attitudinal and behavioral patterns of representation in France and Germany as well as an attempt at explaining differences we found. Describing the similarities and differences in the practice of representation in the two countries is not just an adequate starting point of explanation. Due to the limited empirical evidence on representation in France in Germany, showing how MPs view their roles as representatives, how they behave in their exchanges with the constituency, and how French and German citizens assess the quality of representation in their countries all deserve attention in their own right. Regarding explanation, it should be distinguished between inter-systemic and intra-systemic approaches.

The first explore what factors account for the differences in the practice of representation in France and Germany. In this context, institutional arrangements and cultural traditions may have an impact on patterns of representation at the elite and the mass level. Since we have only two nations to compare, this part of the explanation will, in a strict sense, be illustrative rather than systematic. Besides that, the search for determinants of variations in citizens' attitudes toward representation and the representational behavior in France and Germany is also important. In the analyses of intra-systemic differences, we can systematically examine what the existing hypotheses on the determinants of representative attitudes and behaviors contribute to our understanding of the representation practices in France and Germany.

METHODS

All national studies of political attitudes and behaviors face the problem of linking theory and empirical research in a meaningful way. This applies also to the study of political representation, which is a multifaceted concept including the study of behavior and attitudes, the relation between those constructs as well as different classes of actors, the representatives and the represented. The process of representation is shaped by the attitudes and behavior of representatives, by the attitudes and behavior of the represented, and by the relationship between these characteristics of the actors. For many reasons, collecting data on attitudes as latent constructs requires other methods than are needed in the investigation of manifest behavior. Moreover, there are good methodological and practical reasons for designing different strategies of data collection with regard to the representatives—who are professional politicians—on the one hand and the broader public that consists mostly of political laymen on the other hand. Thus, the validity of the findings depends on the theoretical foundations of the research program and on the quality of the research design, particularly on the sampling and the applied methods of data collection and analysis.

According to Harkness, Mohler and van de Vijver (2003, 10), these challenges become multiplied in comparative cross-national research:

> The quality of cross-cultural measurement depends on factors as diverse as appropriate theory, instrument design, sampling frame, mode of data collection, data analysis and documentation across all the cultures involved. The total quality is the net result of the combination of outcomes of these factors.

This statement holds true even if research is conducted as a two-nation comparison and if the countries under observation are not as different as, for instance, China and Sweden. Comparative research on France and Germany takes place in the context of varying national research traditions, and it refers to two societies and political communities sharing some characteristics—such as being embedded in the European Union and featuring democratic regimes and a high level of socioeconomic development—but differing in others—such as the type of democracy and the nature of the party systems.

In order to assure a maximum of comparability of the data gathered in France and in Germany, the research team developed a common theoretical program and research design, including all the steps of the research process starting with finding the relevant research questions up to the publication of the results. Substantive questions, research methods and organizational provisions ensure a maximum of comparative knowledge, which could not be obtained in the same quality by using a more decentralized research strategy. The research program (research questions, hypotheses, conceptualization and operationalization of the key constructs, integration into existing research), the organization of the fieldwork (mass survey, elite survey, observation of MPs), the strategy of data analyses, and the dissemination and publication of the results were planned jointly and implemented in the same way in France and Germany. The fieldwork was done simultaneously in both countries and used the same methods and design. Thus, the underlying research project was conducted as a problem-oriented cross-national comparison from the beginning instead of country-by-country analyses to be integrated at the end.

It was clear from the outset, that the research on political representation should be conceptualized as equally including characteristics of the represented and the representatives on the one hand and attitudes and behavior on the other. Just for that reason, a mix of methods was considered as an adequate approach to data collection. Thus, we employed a combination of structured observation and survey research.

Unlike other studies on the practice of representation by MPs, our concern was not primarily with the national political arena, but with the district level, i.e., with the linkages of the MPs to their local constituency and with the activities they carry out in their local context where most interactions between the represented and representatives take place. Hence, the representational activities of German and French MPs were observed in their districts by accompanying them for several days. In order to gather

information on how MPs saw their role as representatives and how they fulfilled their functions in the district, semi-standardized interviews were also conducted with them at the end of the observation. Chapters 2–6 use primarily data on the attitudes and behaviors of MPs gathered in the electoral districts.

The second part of this book (Chaps. 7–11) deals mainly with citizens' views on representation. The data used there stem from standardized personal interviews of representative samples of the French and the German electorates. Besides a large set of questions on different attitudes towards representation, related political attitudes and behaviors and demographics, these surveys included three survey experiments on the characteristics of the ideal candidate and on the autonomy of MPs regarding their parties.

Analysis of Deputies' Practice of Representation at the District Level

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through systematic observation of MPs in the districts and extensive expert interviews with MPs. Visiting and accompanying MPs allowed us to assemble data from "the real life" of an MP and to study the practice of representation in one of its key aspects: local and direct interaction with constituents. Pragmatic arguments for data collection in the districts also played a role: MPs are much more accessible and flexible in their schedule there than at the seat of parliament. And the reluctance of MPs to answer questionnaires sent to them without prior personal contact has risen considerably in both countries with the fast growing number of requests from students and research projects.

Observations are more intrusive than other methods of data collection: They last longer and give MPs less opportunity for checking and "correcting" the data. They are also far less usual than interviews or written surveys, so MPs hardly have any experience with them. For these reasons, MPs needed to be approached and convinced to participate with a high effort and through various channels. The selection followed a systematic sampling based on 20 criteria. One group of criteria focused on the district, for example its urbanization, the age distribution, its unemployment rate and whether it was a stronghold or diaspora of the respective party. Other criteria focused on the individual MP: party affiliation, gender, seniority, age, professional background, and leadership positions (in parliament or government). To cater for national conditions,

some country-specific criteria were included, too: for France the "cumul des mandats" and the proximity of the district to Paris; for Germany whether the MP was elected through direct mandate or party list and which faction inside the party an MP belonged to.

According to the 20 selection criteria, the sample was characteristic of the Bundestag and the Assemblée nationale. Included are 116 MPs (67 Germans, 49 French), all of whom were interviewed. Some MPs did not agree to the requested observation or it was not feasible for organizational reasons because there were no upcoming district activities within the time frame of data collection. Thus, observations were conducted in 64 of the 67 German cases between February 2011 and May 2012 and with 46 of the 49 French MPs between May 2011 and June 2012.

The work of Richard F. Fenno (1978, 2007) on the "Home Style" of House members in the United States of America inspired the observational approach of the project. But instead of embedding single researchers over a long period and then analyzing the data inductively, a more systematic method was employed: Building on existing theories and empirical knowledge, a standardized report card was filled out for each observed event. It included clear instructions, questions to answer and criteria to evaluate, while leaving room for open remarks, notes and personal impressions of the observers. The report card asked for some basic information about each event (the event type, number of participants, whether or not it was public), the structure of communication and its content, and the role behavior of MPs.

The participant observations were conducted during three consecutive days by 20 (Germany) and seven (France) trained observers, mostly graduate students. When making appointments in Germany, there were no further requests than visiting the MP for three consecutive days in the district. In France, typical district activities were requested, and it was suggested to accommodate office hours ("surgeries"), visits to local public organizations or companies and a local event. It was also suggested to include the administrative duties in local government because of the importance of the accumulation of mandates. But the final decision on when to invite researchers for observations lay with the MPs. All in all, 954 events were observed with a net time of 1678 hours (Germany 618 events and 969 hours, France 336 events and 709 hours).

At the end of each observation, the observer conducted an extensive expert interview with the MP. Ideally, the two had developed a personal connection and rapport during the three days of observation, which often

resulted in a more open atmosphere for discussion. The interview was based on a semi-standardized questionnaire with 45 items. It included topics like the deputy's understanding and practice of representation and also contained some questions that brought up results of the participant observation and asked for the MP's related intentions and judgments. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and—in the German case—sent back to the MP for authorization so they can be quoted by name. In France there was no authorization of the interviews, and the MPs are only quoted anonymously with consecutive numbers. In addition to the CITREP interviews, Olivier Costa used one interview from a previous research project that was relevant for our topic (LEGIPAR), and Corentin Poyet quoted two interviews stemming from his Ph.D. work.

Analysis of Mass Attitudes Towards Representation

The representative survey of the enfranchised French and German population living in private households was conducted in both countries as Computer Aided Personal Interviews (CAPI). The interviews took place from November 17 to December 17, 2011 and were administered by TNS Sofres in France and Infratest dimap in Germany. The number of German respondents was 1545 persons, 1068 of them living in West Germany and 485 in the Eastern part of the country. In the analyses, the German data were weighted according to the population size of the old and new German Länder. The total number of interviews in France amounted to 1009.

The respondents were recruited by a stratified multistage sampling procedure according to the ADM-Master sample in Germany, and the INSEE regional sample in France. The latter has proved to be roughly equivalent to the German sampling procedure and is applied in the Eurobarometer. In Germany, 53,000 electronic grids listed in a GIS (geographic information system) and related sample points served as the first level in the sampling. The relevant households were selected in a random route procedure. In these households, the interviewers recruited the interviewees by a random procedure in Germany and by the last birthday method in France. In order to reach the target rate of 1500 (Germany) and 1000 (France) interviews, 3091 and 4342 addresses were used. After having been adjusted for neutral dropouts, the percentage of interviews realized from the gross sample of addresses was 51.3 percent in Germany and 23.2 percent in France.

The questionnaire administered in both countries was developed jointly by the French-German research team and contained mostly standardized questions and several survey experiments. In order to achieve a high degree of comparability of the data, an English root-questionnaire was first designed and then translated in several steps into French and German. With a very small number of exceptions, the questions asked in France and Germany had an identical English wording and the same answering categories. They were ordered in the same sequence in both countries. The final version was pre-tested between October 20 and November 2, 2011 and slightly modified afterwards. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: 44 questions were part of each interview in France and Germany. Second, there were some country-specific questions in France (27) and Germany (18). The common as well as the country-specific questions cover the following topics: satisfaction with democracy; preference for direct or representative democracy; idea and practice of political representation; feeling of being represented by political institutions and actors; feeling of being represented regarding values, interests or issues; information on and contact with Members of Parliament; important task and attributes of representatives; media use and political participation. Third, questions were asked about the respondents' socio-demographic background. The average interview-time was 43 Minutes in France as well as in Germany.

Since the usual survey formats only measure the result of the process of attitude formation, but not the process leading to attitudes, the questionnaire included an experimental part using a vignette format for the assessment of specific political problems. In France, five experiments were conducted, in Germany three. The uniqueness of questions, one of the dogmas of opinion polls, has been shattered by the development of experiments in which the wording of questions is varied on a random basis; this corresponds, in the domain of quantitative surveys, to the experimental methods used in social psychology. All these different techniques have led to advances in the study of the cognitive processes involved in the formation and expression of opinions. Random experiments have proven to bring to light judgment distinctions that remain undetectable through traditional questioning. With this instrument, it is possible to construct many scenarios fitting with our research question on representation. Indeed, the experiment is still a relatively recent technique, proceeding by trial and error; it nonetheless opens up new rich perspectives.

Deputies' Practice of Representation
at the District Level

One part of the project aims at a comparative analysis of the attitudes and behaviors of members of the French Assemblée nationale and the German Bundestag. The goal was to describe and explain core representational activities of the deputies, i.e., their linking up with the represented. Since an actor's political behavior is always influenced by his political attitudes, the representatives' attitudes towards representation also needed to be included in the analysis. Although collective actors (parliaments, parties) are also involved in the process of representation, the focus is on individual representatives (members of parliament, MPs) who, besides their own role (Wahlke 1962), act on behalf of political institutions and make representative institutions visible to the represented. In other words, our definition of roles takes into account the ability of representatives to learn and to adapt their behavior according to institutional and political environments (Thaysen 1972; Payne et al. 1984; Searing 1994; Müller and Saalfeld 1997; Lagroye 1994). Individual political representatives interact with their constituency and build networks in local and national contexts. At the district level, they are involved in various representational activities such as communicating directly with voters, interest groups, local decision-makers and other influentials, building and maintaining local networks, using the local media to communicate their views to the electorate, and by providing services to the constituency. At the national level, they participate in the representational activities of the parliament as a whole, such as public debates; they bring district interests into the legislative process; they sometimes try to get extra resources for their constituency (i.e., the American concept of pork-barrel politics, see Pennock 1970; Lancaster 1986; Martin 2003); some are involved in bargaining with interest groups, play a role in their national party organizations and are often present in the national mass media. The pattern of local and national interactions can be interpreted as an indicator of how representatives view their role in the representation process and what kind of activities and resulting networks they prioritize (captured in Fenno's famous terms of Hillstyle and Homestyle). One of the main concerns of the project has been to record the various kinds of representative activities and networks, assess them in detail at the constituency level and to analyze the relative priority French and German members of parliament give to them.

State of Research

Parliaments are the core institution of democratic representation. Their linkage function has been studied with different perspectives and intensity in many countries. Yet systematic empirical comparison in this area is widely lacking and does not exist at all with regard to France and Germany. Whereas parliamentary organization and procedures and the way that deputies operate within this framework are the subject of frequent and in-depth research in Germany, this can be found much less often in France. It is not at all the case for the activities and linkages that members of the national parliament (MPs) develop at the local and regional level. The latter have received rather little empirical attention; again this is especially true for France. This is quite surprising because the everyday work and the networks of deputies in their districts are of utmost importance for successfully fulfilling the parliamentary functions of legitimization and representation as well as enhancing MPs' chances of getting reelected. This is particularly obvious in countries where the personal votes determine the composition of parliament (Fenno 1978; Cain et al. 1987; Harden 2015).

Static approaches to studying representation center on the issue of "representativeness", i.e., demographic and socio-structural properties of assemblies. Yet this focus on "descriptive representation" (Pitkin 1967) cannot contribute much to understanding the functional aspects of representation that are continually changing. Rather, it is necessary to obtain a clear picture of the interactions between representatives and the represented. Some empirical research on constituency contacts and societal networks of MPs that can be built upon does exist for the two countries.

The most detailed findings about German MPs' linkages and practices of representation in their districts can be drawn from Patzelt's work. He adapted the concept of roles for German parliamentary research (Patzelt 1989, 1990, 1993; Patzelt and Schirmer 1996), analyzed the activities of MPs and their societal functions in the districts, their integration into their environment (parliament, political system, pre-parliamentary profession) and the role orientations they exhibited in their daily routines. These empirical findings are based on surveys conducted among MPs. Patzelt showed that most MPs have deep roots in their districts, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. While there are changes in some of the details, the findings are in line with an older analysis of the time spent by MPs on different activities (Kevenhörster and Schönbohm 1973). It is also supported in the practical perspective of MPs reflecting on their own work:

For example Bartels (2008) counted his own contacts in the district and distinguished a variety of instruments used to stay in touch with individual citizens, interest groups, and other influentials between election campaigns. Earlier findings from the CITREP project for Germany confirmed this strong district orientation of MPs and the various activities and contacts they take on there (Siefken 2013; Schindler 2013). Surveys among German MPs have shown that their representation focus is squarely on the country as a whole—as prescribed by the Basic Law—and on their own party. District orientation as a focus of representation is weaker, but there is evidence for its growth in recent years (Best et al. 2007, 9; Best and Vogel 2012, 40).

Kielhorn has investigated the representational roles of MPs in a comparative study of eleven EU member states that also included Germany and France. He showed that MPs' style and focus of representation are related to each other and that they are influenced by characteristics of the political system (Kielhorn 2001, 247). It has also been found that role orientations of MPs are quite dynamic and can change over time (Best and Vogel 2012, 62). Knaut (2011) has identified different ideal types of MP representation, two of which are the most common: The "pastor"-type (German: "Seelsorger") is deeply rooted in his district and takes care of issues there. The "networkers" are skilled in using the formal and informal resources and opportunity structures that are available to them in a professional manner. All in all, she expects that the latter will become more usual in the ongoing process of professionalization and warns that this may lead to a decoupling of political decision-making from its societal connection (Knaut 2013).

Yet in investigating the mechanisms of responsiveness, the survey-based research did not—and could not—include the actual interactions in the district. Patzelt and Algasinger (2001) thus observed deputies. They studied their societal context as well as the relationship with "role partners" and put a special focus on their networks of communication. They concluded that there was enough of a connection of MPs into society and that no signs of a general dissociation could be found. Yet Elsner and Algasinger (2001) showed in an experimental study that while MPs value service responsiveness highly, their actual behavior in reacting to citizen requests was lagging behind.

The comparison of East and West German members of the Bundestag sheds special light on the function and importance of societal networks on the district level: After unification there was no "pre-political" arena in

Eastern Germany which for Western MPs had long been part of their representational practice and socialization. The organizations that West German associations, interest groups, unions, and other such organizations quickly "exported" to the new Länder were almost immediately used by East German MPs as functional networks for obtaining information and advice (Patzelt 1995, 1996, 1997).

Borchert and Stolz (2003) have shown that such contacts and, even more effective, simultaneous office-holding in parties and associations both add to the professionalism of MPs and play a role in their getting renominated and reelected. Membership in associations can also be understood as an important informal opportunity structure for MPs. In this vein, Liepelt and Lietz (2006) conducted a statistical network analysis among members of the Bundestag. Collecting quantitative data on contacts and focusing on "networking" on the federal level, they did not consider similar linkages of parliamentarians and the reality of representation in their districts. These factors have been highlighted by Weßels (1993) who inspected the connection between communication of MPs with citizens and interest groups and the congruence of their opinions. He showed that communication leads to strong coherence in (general) values and judgments between representatives and the represented (see also Rebenstorf and Weßels 1989). Brettschneider (1996) argued that congruence between representatives and the represented in Germany is not achieved by an individualized connection but through a party-based model of collective representation. He does however find a high degree of responsiveness between majority opinions and parliamentary action.

Research has also focused on the mass media as a channel of indirect communication between representatives and the represented. Investigating responsiveness of the German Bundestag as a whole, Brettschneider (1995) studied how changes in public opinion and parliamentary action are related and stressed the role of mass media in representing interests and exercising leadership. All in all, he found a high level of parliamentary responsiveness to public opinion. He argued that changes in public opinion can be triggered by parliamentary leadership—indeed, this is frequently the case. He also shows that the activities of individual MPs in using parliamentary questions are more geared towards their district than to national political opinion.

There is evidence that political communication is more and more left to experts in party headquarters and even supported by external organizations (Tenscher 2003) which—almost paradoxically—name

"direct citizen contact" as an important source of their information. Rolke (2007) found that although they put much emphasis on public relations, MPs have difficulties reaching voters through means of mass communication. Others have argued that MPs increasingly adapt to media demands (Pontzen 2006) and that there is a symbiotic relationship between journalists and politicians in Berlin that can be understood as exchanging information for publicity—to the advantage of both sides involved (Baugut and Grundler 2010).

Schatz et al. (2002) suggest that the usual channels of communication need to be adjusted in light of the "new media." Although at first German MPs were slow to adapt (Bilgeri and Lamatsch 2001), now most deputies use these tools rather intensely. This is also a consequence of a change in demand: Increasingly, citizens write e-mail instead of letters and special websites serve the connection function between citizens and deputies (in Germany for instance Abgeordnetenwatch). Zittel (2010) has investigated the use of direct communication between MPs and voters via personal websites. He conducted a comprehensive comparative study of the situation in the United States of America, Sweden and Germany and showed that the variation in the use of these instruments is largely influenced by MPs' strategic considerations and the contextual factors of the political systems. Yet the interactive possibilities of the electronic media were not used very much by MPs. So all in all, it seems that the full potential of these technologies (in terms of representational linkages) has not been realized yet (Stern 2007) and that there is still quite some variation in the use of online communication among different MPs (Tenscher and Will 2010, 516). Whether this has changed in the meantime (Zittel's data are from 2004; Tenscher and Will's are from 2007) with the broader reach of the Internet and expanding computer literacy is unclear.

That the institutional setting influences MP behavior is a commonplace in modern political science. Applied to the district orientation of MPs, it has been debated whether the two types of MP posited come about as a result of the German electoral system. Stratman and Baur (2002, 513) argued that the committee assignments of MPs are "systematically different" for MPs elected on a direct mandate and those on a list mandate. Yet later research based on a broader data set failed to confirm these results (Heinz 2010). Systematic arguments also speak against it: Double candidacies for both types of mandate by MPs are the norm (Schüttemeyer and Sturm 2005; Reiser 2011) as is the reality that many MPs alternate between both types of mandates during their parliamentary career (Manow 2012).

While some studies have shown differences caused by their mandate type in parliamentary behavior (Sieberer 2010) or in their presentation of self (Marcinkiewicz and Tepe 2012), such research is rare for MPs' district activities. Patzelt (2007) has shown that MPs with direct mandates do report a slightly higher share of constituency work than those elected through the party list, and they put a slightly stronger focus on constituency service. But the differences are minor and he concluded: "There is a fairly uniform core to the role of a German MP, irrespective of … whether they hold a direct or a list seat" (Patzelt 2007, 66). But he also observed that apparently "direct members are closer to citizens and less dependent on party structures than list members" (Patzelt 2007, 67).

The French parliament has failed to arouse much interest among political scientists, and its inherent "weakness" seems so obvious that, until recently, few researchers wished to pursue the question further, especially in France. This situation could be regarded as a success of the constitution of the Fifth Republic, adopted in 1958, which was deliberately designed to weaken the parliament. It is worth noting, however, that a reform designed to substantially modify the balance of powers in favor of the parliament took place in 2008.

As a result of this legislative branch weakness, parliamentary research as such gradually disappeared in France (Nay 2003). The only noticeable systematic work on French deputies was published in the 1970s (Cayrol et al. 1973). Studying the parliament appeared to be problematic or useless, and there was little interest in the methods of mainstream legislative studies—with the exception of Chérot (1980). Thereafter, French political scientists scarcely published on the National Assembly or MPs' activities, and what was available was often out of date or incomplete (Kerrouche 2004). In contrast to this, MPs and activities of the parliaments before 1958 have been the subject of much attention. The focus often lay on MPs' professionalization, especially from a historical or sociological point of view (for example Woshinsky 1973, Masclet 1981). Many historians dealt with the early French chambers, and the study of the MPs of the Third and Fourth Republics underwent a period of development through a more sociological approach during the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century (Fuligni 2006; Best and Gaxie 2000).

In recent years, French legislative studies on the Fifth Republic, however, have rediscovered parliament and MPs as legitimate topics of investigation (Costa 2016). Research has developed in several directions. A first approach consists of institutional analyses: the relationship between

legislative and executive powers, internal rules of the chambers, and the impact of voting rules. It is conducted mainly by lawyers, practitioners of politics, and historians (for example Kimmel 1991; Loonis 2006; Jan 2010; Camby and Servent 2011; Türk 2011; Blacher 2012). There are also macro-analyses of the French regime, combining constitutional law with history and structuralist sociology, but relying on empirical data (François 2010; Brouard and Kerrouche 2013; Brouard et al. 2013a; Kerrouche 2006, 2009a). It also deserves mentioning that there are many surveys devoted to peripheral actors of the parliament, like MPs' assistants (Courty 2005), chambers' staff or both (Beauvallet and Michon 2017). A few anthropological approaches exist as well, notably Abélès (2000), describing the Assemblée nationale as a strange and exotic world. There is also a lot of work pertaining to "socio-history" that focuses on the French parliament: members, debates, organization, symbols (Joana 1999).

For a number of years typical legislative studies that apply the concepts, methodology and data that are widely used in other democracies for this discipline and were mainly developed in the USA have emerged also in France. In the past, studies on the National Assembly were mainly conducted by foreign scholars (Converse and Pierce 1979; Huber 1996; Frears 1990). The book by Costa and Kerrouche (2007) is typical of the new approach. It has led to some new developments in this area of research (Rozenberg and Kerrouche 2009; Costa et al. 2012) such that the lack of exhaustive and systematic data on MPs' profiles and behavior as well as chamber activities—or MPs' efficiency (Navarro et al. 2012)—has been partly remedied. This also holds true for gender studies (Achin 2005; Sineau 2008).

Thus, there has been tremendous progress made in the level of knowledge about French deputies' district activities. Studies have underlined that despite an abstract conception of representation, MPs are nevertheless very active at the local level. They spend most of their time there, expressing a greater level of satisfaction working in their constituency than in Paris (Brouard et al. 2013b). This local involvement derives from the electoral rules, the "cumul des mandats", and constituents' high level of expectations towards their MP (Brouard and Kerrouche 2013). Moreover, the existence of a "candidate effect" has been highlighted for legislative elections (Brouard and Kerrouche 2013). Other studies of parliamentarians' networking practices at the local level are also available: Escarras, Imperiali, and Pini (1971) analyzed the mail of MPs; Le Lidec (2008) and Kerrouche (2009b) described the role of surgeries in establishing links with citizens.

More recently, Costa and Poyet (2016) presented a detailed account of how district features and MPs' individual characteristics shape their behavior in their constituency.

Costa and Kerrouche (2009) also showed the extent of the professionalization process at work across the entire population of French MPs under the Fifth Republic. They underlined the key role played by the "cumul des mandats" in the structure of political careers in France. They also reiterated the crucial role of district work for MPs. This local engagement guarantees the longer office tenure and allows the deputy to establish a long-term political career. The professionalization process has been put in perspective in two recent publications: Costa and Kerrouche (2017) insist one more time on the MPs' presence in their districts, while a longitudinal survey on that topic chose to incorporate new dimensions to explain this process (Boelaert et al. 2017). Moreover, one aspect of the professionalization of MPs' elective career has received special attention because of its importance until its abolition in 2017: the "cumul des mandats", the plurality of mandates (Marrel 2003; Foucault 2006; Dewoghélaëre et al. 2006).

Deputies' Practice of Representation at the District Level in France and Germany: Sketching the Findings

As the previous subsection has shown, there is no unified and developed body of knowledge about the activities of MPs in the district but rather a number of little pieces of a big puzzle. Given this limited systematic knowledge, the indispensable first step is to obtain a picture as comprehensive as possible about the reality of representation at that level in France and in Germany. Thus, the following paragraphs give an overview of the main findings reported in this volume and refer to the relevant chapters for the deeper and more detailed analyses. It deals with the normative ideas of representation first, shows MP activities in the district and their linkage to fulfilling the parliamentary functions. Then, it discusses possible variations caused by the characteristics of the deputy and his mandate and the ongoing professionalization of the parliamentary mandate.

Normative ideas of representation: The concept of representation is a complex one—it is for MPs as well. When asked about it, many MPs focus on electoral legitimation and on their duty to advocate for interests. While French MPs mention their role as representatives of the whole nation more often and talk about the resulting tension between the local and

national focus of their activities, German MPs stress their role as trustees and their formal authority to make decisions more often. Yet overall, it is apparent that the academic concepts guiding style and focus of representatives need more elaboration in order to adequately describe reality: The roles that MPs take on are often context specific, and switching between roles does occur.

Representation is a dynamic and interactive process. In the interviews, German MPs stressed the need to explain and give orientation to citizens. But the observations show that, in both countries, MPs put far more emphasis on collecting input in their districts than on explaining politics and policies to their constituencies. In party events, however, MPs are much more active in providing leadership. Thus, all in all, there is room for expanding the leadership activities of MPs. This is particularly relevant in times when a general distrust and disconnect between citizens and the political elite has been diagnosed. Chapter 7 analyzes the MPs' perspectives on representation and contrasts them with that of citizens. More details on the connection and differences between listening and leading can also be found in Chap. 3.

Activities in the district: In both countries, MPs maintain a very active connection to their electoral districts. Being professional politicians and seeking reelection, they have a strong incentive for district work in order to maximize their vote share in the next election. They organize and participate in a wide variety of events there, ranging from visits to public agencies and private enterprises (both of which are particularly pronounced in Germany) to participating in social and political events (both more pronounced in France). It is also common for MPs in both countries to hold office hours or surgeries, where citizens can come by with their concerns to talk to the MP. This type of individual service for citizens provided by the MPs is more frequent in France than in Germany.

In both countries, MPs' district activities are not limited to issues in their formal jurisdiction—this applies to casework during office hours but also to other activities. MPs often deal with topics of local politics, so they must be understood as multilevel representatives who serve various locations of decision-making simultaneously. Apparently, they have the feeling that they can be useful helping constituents or supporting projects, which explains why they are quite accessible to citizens and often help with any issue that is brought to them. Further, they seem to see some advantage from this level of service responsiveness.

Generally, a difference of style is obvious: Local and ceremonial activities are more important for French MPs; visits to organizations are more frequent by German MPs. The latter seem to extend their style as members of a working parliament into the district while extending the topics beyond their policy specialization in parliament. Meanwhile, French MPs perform in a more ceremonial and presidential role in their districts. Apart from varying electoral incentives, different traditions and cultural explanations may help explain this distinction. The activities of MPs in the district and how they are influenced by the political system are analyzed more closely in Chap. 3 of this volume.

Relationships with political parties also differ. When looking at role orientations, MPs' self-perception as a party agent is equally high in both countries. Yet even though MPs do not say so, party connections play a greater role for their activities in Germany than in France. German MPs devote more time and effort to interactions with their local party. In their role behavior, French MPs communicate as "party representatives" much less often in district events than do German MPs. The higher share of party-related activities in German district work reflects the stronger role of local parties in the nomination process; in France, the local parties play more of an advisory role. Chapter 4 takes a closer look at the party activities of MPs, and Chap. 3 discusses the institutional incentives of candidate nomination.

District work and the parliamentary functions: District work has a high relevance for the communication function in France and Germany. It provides the most direct, targeted and personal way of communicating between the represented and their representatives. At the same time, MPs in both countries report that they find it rather difficult to be up-to-date about citizens' opinions. As far as French and German citizens are concerned, they prefer to choose the easiest ways to get political information, and they continue to rely almost exclusively on the mass media. In this particular environment, MPs' efforts to bypass the filters imposed by the mass media and communicate directly with voters have been largely unsuccessful. In fact, electronic media do not seem to play a central role in MPs' activities—with the exception of some renowned representatives, who can access the national media. In this sense, newspapers are more accessible and more important for MPs, despite the frustration interviews often generate for them. Turning to the communication opportunities given by the Internet is another avenue, but our data show that MPs are far less active on social media than expected. The traditional media and

direct communication still prevail for MPs in their district work in both countries. All in all, there is much room for improving the communicative relationship between MPs and citizens, as Chap. 6 shows.

But district work is not just a matter of communication; it also contributes to fulfilling other functions of parliament. Our observations show that it provides an important way to transmit direct information and allows MPs to check the general mood of the population, listen to the demands of citizens and evaluate the implementation of policies. Because of the genuine limitation of the Assemblée nationale in the French political system, the role of district work for legislation is weaker. But in both countries, district activities are generally deemed relevant by MPs for performing their legislative and control functions in various phases of the policy cycle: They provide input; they can serve as "fire alarms;" and they can give feedback to MPs on the implementation of national laws. This important information is usually not brought directly into plenary or committee work. Instead, it is forwarded indirectly and filtered via the policy experts of the parliamentary parties in Germany or via the cabinet in France. Chapter 5 deals with these processes in more detail.

Features of the deputy and his mandate: It is plausible that MPs with time-consuming leadership functions in the legislative and executive branch or in their central party organization devote less energy to constituency work than regular MPs. They may compensate for this by using other means of communication, for example the Internet and mass media, trying to profit from their higher visibility and prominence. But French and German MPs, no matter what their leadership status is, were found to be active in their district work and spent a large amount of time there, regardless of their electoral strategy. So, in the district, MPs in leadership deal with much the same issues as all other MPs. Apparently, they make a role switch.

Two other features of deputies' mandates in France and Germany require special attention. The fact that French MPs often simultaneously hold public office at the local level ("*cumul des mandats*") led to the hypotheses that these persons engaged more in constituency services and built closer links and networks at the local level than those deputies who held only their seat in the Assemblée nationale. French MPs often argue that this double role is crucial for them to know about implementation problems. It also serves as a functional equivalent for French MPs to the strong networking with the local party of German MPs. Yet, as a consequence it seems to spawn a stronger focus on pork-barrel politics in France than in Germany.

For Germany, it has been suggested that, based on different incentives, MPs in seats won directly behave differently from MPs who won their seats through party lists. Interview statements of the MPs lend some support to this hypothesis—yet it mostly is mentioned when MPs talk about other MPs and not about themselves. However, based on the observations of actual MP behavior in the district, there is no clear indication that such a difference exists. While there certainly is variation among MPs' individual styles, it is not systematically linked to their mandate type according to our data. Chapter 3 discusses these issues more closely.

The professionalization of MPs: MPs in both countries play their role in a specific arena. This is a crucial point since in France and Germany politics has become the main—if not the sole—form of paid professional activity for many MPs. This evolution has been possible because of improvements to MPs' financial and material conditions in both countries. At the same time, but also because of this transformation, access to the parliament is easier for a certain type of politician, irrespective of national differences: well educated and with a specific professional background that facilitates political work. This does have, in turn, some consequences for the way MP's are able to perform in their role as elected representatives. While in general the process of professionalization appears similar in both countries, there are also differences. In particular, two typical patterns of professionalization can be distinguished: In Germany, the process is centered on the parliament, and MPs' activities in the district do not seem to earn them much political capital for their parliamentary careers. In France, however, it is centered on constituency activities and the effects of the "cumul des mandats". Chapter 2 deals with the professionalization of the parliamentary mandate.

The data show that being an MP encompasses much the same activities and challenges in France and Germany. And while the commonalities prevail from a bird's eye perspective, upon closer inspection there is quite some variety with regard to what MPs do, how they do it and what difference it makes. A lot of this variety can be explained by the different political systems and the resulting incentives. But cultural forces and traditions also seem to play a big role.

All in all, the analysis shows that it is very valuable for parliamentary researchers to, first, extend their perspective beyond the walls of the parliament building and, second, to combine different methods of data collection such as interviews, questionnaires and observations. As is true for

human beings in general, what MPs say they do and what they actually do is not always the same. Taking in both perspectives allows for a deeper and richer understanding of the processes and the challenges of parliamentary representation.

CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS REPRESENTATION AND REPRESENTATIVES

State of Research

According to Fenno (1978), MPs' activities at the district level make an important contribution to the quality of democratic representation, but they are by no means the only factor in this respect (see also Patzelt 1990, 1993). Apart from doing district work, MPs perform their roles in national parliaments that decide on how the concerns of citizens are considered in making public policy. Moreover, district MPs are not the only agents of representation. Representing the citizenry is seen as a core task of the parliament as a whole, but other institutions such as political parties and interest groups also play important roles in establishing close representational linkages between citizens and the political system. For these and other reasons, MPs' behavior is not automatically reflected in citizen attitudes. It should not be overlooked that citizens may perceive the representational activities of MPs and other agencies of representation differently and that they may use different normative standards when evaluating the activities of their representatives.

Accordingly, research on representation has always included the citizens' perspective and the relationship between representatives and the represented as important dimensions of the quality of representation. Whether political representation is seen as being performed well has also been related to the citizens' satisfaction with the current state of affairs and to various aspects of the congruence between citizens and MPs (Hoffmann-Lange 1991, 287–289). Although analyzing these aspects is not our main concern (some information on this topic can be found in Chap. 7), this book highlights how citizens perceive what is going on in the process of representation, how they assess the quality of this process in general and how they assess some of its most important components. Thus, the normative expectations of the behavior of representative agencies as well as the perception of how well these expectations are met in

political practice are one crucial point in the analyses. Another key point refers to citizens' assessment of representation in general, of the quality of performance of various agencies of representation and of the representation of important civic concerns.

Compared to other areas of research on political attitudes such as support of democracy, trust in political institutions and actors, political interest and party identification, citizens' attitudes towards political representation have been less thoroughly investigated, particularly in a comparative perspective. Almond and Verba (1963/1989, 341–344) gave strong emphasis to the problem of resolving the balance between power and responsiveness—two key attributes of democratic government. However, they did not devote much attention to issues of representation and responsiveness in their empirical analyses of the characteristics of a civic culture. Only in a small section of the chapter on citizen competence and subject competence, did they raise the question of whether people felt they could communicate their views to government agencies (and to the police) and how they perceived their chances of being heard (ibid., 171–174).

Subsequent international research broadly covered civic attitudes to parliaments, MPs, parties, and politicians in general, but feelings of representation are for the most part uncharted territory. Several studies deal with various dimensions in citizens' attitudes towards parliaments and MPs, and some of these analyses include attitudes towards representation (Dennis 1981; Herrera et al. 1992; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995, 2001, 2002; Kornberg and Clarke 1992; Onate 2016; Parker 1977, 1981; Parker and Davidson 1979, Patterson et al. 1969; Patterson et al. 1972; Patterson et al. 1975; Patterson et al. 1992). Since most of this research was conducted in the United States and reflected the specific institutional and cultural conditions of the US system of government, the findings cannot be readily transferred to European political systems. As shown by several European researchers, the strong differences between the weak American party organizations and the strong European party democracies cannot be ignored in the conceptualization of representation and the interpretation of empirical findings (Hoffmann-Lange 1991; Holmberg 1991; Thomassen 1991, 1994).

In the tradition of the work of Eulau and Wahlke (1959), other studies have analyzed how role expectations toward MPs—trustee, delegate, and politico—were distributed in the publics under observation (Andeweg and Thomassen 2005; Bengtsson and Wass 2010, 2011; Campbell and

Lovenduski 2015; Carman 2006, 2007; Mendez-Lago and Martinez 2002). Again, considering the caveats against generalizing the American findings, the problem of how to take the different contexts into account emerges.

A large number of comparative studies have examined how much people trust parliaments, individual MPs and politicians as a group, with some of these analyses including feelings of responsiveness as determinants of trust (Catterberg and Moreno 2005; Dalton 1999, 61–65, 2004, 25–31, 2014, 259–265; Denters et al. 2007; Gabriel and Walter-Rogg 2008; Klingemann 1999; Listhaug 1995; Listhaug and Wiberg 1995; Magalhaes 2006; Miller and Listhaug 1990; Newton and Norris 2000; Norris 2011, 72–74; Torcal 2017, 424–428). Sometimes external political efficacy was used as a measure that comes closest to the idea of responsiveness of political leaders (Dalton 2014; Hayes and Bean 1993; Listhaug 1995). Studies dealing with the distribution of trust in the agents of representation are available for a considerable number of democratic countries, but they do not pay specific attention to the French and German cases. Comparative analyses of this type focusing on these two countries are missing almost entirely (one of the rare exceptions: Dageförde and Deiss-Helbig 2013), and the same applies to perceived responsiveness.

Several of the studies quoted above that include France and Germany have shown that levels of trust in parliament, parties and politicians are clearly below the Nordic democracies or Switzerland, but above Eastern and Southern Europe. This can also be said for attitudes towards responsiveness. While data are available from international survey research programs such as ESS and ISSP, comparative analyses of how citizens assess the openness and responsiveness of their MPs and representative institutions hardly exist at all. Summarizing the findings of research on civic attitudes on representation in more detail would not be an easy task, nor is it necessary. Major obstacles to comparative analyses are missing conceptual differentiation, variations in item wordings and a lack of research continuity.

With regard to France and Germany specifically, the state of research is not much better. For Germany, several empirical studies on citizens' attitudes towards the quality of representation by the national parliament, MPs, parties and politicians have been conducted (see in particular Boynton and Loewenberg 1973; Dageförde 2013; Gabriel and Schöllhammer 2009; Herzog et al. 1990, 1993; Patzelt 1994, 1998, 2005; Rebenstorff and Weßels 1989; Saalfeld and Dobmeier 2012, 329–330; Schüttemeyer 1986;

Walter-Rogg 2005). For France research is poor (Bréchon 2006, 154–156; Costa et al. 2012; Rozenberg 2013), to say the least. Regarding comparative research on the respective attitudes, the situation is even worse.

The first German data on the perceived responsiveness of MPs was gathered in the 1950s and showed considerable citizen skepticism, which, however, declined over the years. By 1975, about half the population believed that representatives acted in the interests of citizens rather than on their own behalf. After 1978, perceived responsiveness fell dramatically—in 2001, even to levels below those of 1951 (Fuchs 1989, 96–97; Gabriel 2005, 502–503). These findings are in line with the most comprehensive study on attitudes towards the German Bundestag and MPs, published by Schüttemeyer (1986, 241–261). Based on a broad sample of secondary data from several sources and covering a time span of more than 30 years, Schüttemeyer presented a mixed picture of the cognitive, affective, evaluative and conative attitudes of German citizens towards the Bundestag and its members: Citizen attitudes were positive rather than negative, but far from enthusiastic. The degree of support depended strongly on the specific issue under observation. In addition, support fluctuated considerably over time. Several other studies show negative trends of perceived responsiveness of politicians since the 1980s. This negative trend continued in the first decade of the twenty-first century (Dalton 2014, 259–262; Gabriel and Neller 2010: 102–109; Krimmel 1999; Walter 2000).

French scholars (Dalton 2014, 259–262; Grunberg 2002, 118–129; Mayer 2002) observed a similar decline in perceived responsiveness since the early 1980s and pointed to a significant increase in the proportion of citizens doubting that "politicians care about what people like us think" (Boy and Mayer 1997, 41). Only a handful of French and German studies have dealt with specific aspects of representation. The finding presented by Parker and Davidson (1979) that the American public lends much more support to the individual representative elected in the district than to Congress as a political institution was not confirmed by French and German surveys. In the eyes of French citizens, a specific political party and politicians in general performed their roles as representatives poorly, and the respective ratings did not differ much. Compared to this critical view, trust in the National Assembly as a whole was considerably higher, though declining when compared with earlier years (Mayer 2002, 87–90). Like the French, Germans were far more critical of politicians in general and of individual MPs than of the Bundestag (Gabriel 2001, 176–180; Gabriel and Schöllhammer 2009; Walter-Rogg 2005).

Despite a clearly improved data situation, comparative evidence on French and German citizens' views of representation as a core principle of modern democracy, on their satisfaction with the quality of representation in the two countries and on more specific aspects of the process of representation is still extremely limited. Moreover, the information conveyed by different survey programs is rather superficial and sometimes shows different distributions of attitudes that cannot be readily explained. For example, trust in parliament as measured by the European Values Survey was 20 percentage points higher than the respective value in the European Social Survey (Torcal 2017: 424). Given this background, it remains an urgent issue in empirical research to show what ideas the French and German publics hold on representation and how they assess its practice in their countries.

Citizens' Attitudes Towards Representation and Representatives in France and Germany: Mapping the Territory

As shown before, citizens' attitudes towards representation encompass different views of a complex political process. Thus, a general statement on citizens' attitudes towards the quality of representation in France and Germany would hardly meet political reality. To avoid the risk of assessing the empirical givens superficially, a closer look at specific components of representation is needed, particularly at the normative ideas of "good" political representation and the many different facets of the reality of representation, i.e., the behavior of the representative agencies, the perception of having represented different civic concerns, and the like. Likewise, citizens' attitudes towards representation should be put into the broader context of civic attitudes and behaviors.

Preference of representative government: Although democratic regimes spread over a large part of the world in the decades after World War II, the concept of democracy is by no means uncontested, and varying types of democratic regimes have been institutionalized. Moreover, as sketched above, representative democracy as the standard form of democratic rule for a long period has increasingly been challenged by claims for democratic innovation (Cain, Dalton, and Scarrow 2008; Smith 2009; Geissel and Newton 2012). In this context, the idea of improving the existing forms of representative government by elements of direct democracy has

found increasing support among scholars as well as political leaders. How citizens themselves think about democratic rule and whether they prefer a strictly representative form of government or a direct type of democracy are the most fundamental questions when thinking about political representation. At the same time, comparative empirical evidence on this question is rare. In a recent study based on ESS-data gathered in 2014, Ferrin and Kriesi (2016) showed that the demand for direct democracy varies considerably among European countries and that their citizens differ strongly in their perceptions regarding whether they have direct democratic rights of participation at their disposal.

According to our data, in France and Germany representative democracy is not the most popular type of democratic regime. When asked whether they preferred a type of government with a parliament that is democratically elected by citizens, decides authoritatively on political matters and takes responsibility for these decisions, or by contrast favored direct decisions made by citizens themselves in referenda, only 34 percent of French and 36 percent of German respondents opted for a representative type of government, while almost two-thirds in both countries were in favor of direct democracy. In Germany, support for representative institutions and processes has remained low during the last twenty years when confronted with a direct-democratic alternative (Gabriel 2015, 94–97). In both France and Germany, the preference for forms of direct democracy is related to a critical attitude towards the process of representation—whatever might be the cause and effect in reaching such views (see also Bürklin et al. 2001; Kaina 2002).

Normative ideas: Research on value orientations, political norms and ideas points to the role of these constructs as normative standards in the formation of attitudes towards particular objects (Converse 1964; Sniderman et al. 1991; Sniderman et al. 1996; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). The basic idea that people define their relationship towards politics according to their ideas about what is right and proper in political life is highly relevant to the study of attitudes towards representation as well. Citizens' expectations about the behavior of representatives have been an important topic in international research on representation. In line with the conceptualization of Eulau and Wahlke (1959), the degree of autonomy accorded to MPs by citizens has led to a distinction between different role models of representatives. With some revisions and additions, how MPs should organize their exchanges with the public and whether they behave in the way people expect them to behave still seem to be important questions in

the relevant literature. At the core of these debates is the balance between a top-down or a bottom-up component in the relationship between the representatives and the represented (Andeweg and Thomassen 2005, 510–514; Esaiasson and Holmberg 2017; Converse and Pierce 1986, 664–696; Mansbridge 2003).

French and German citizens hold different, but not opposite normative ideas on what representatives should do on behalf of the represented and how they should organize their interactions with citizens. When conducting a factor analysis over a larger set of items describing various elements of the role of a representative (data not presented here), we found three components of the idea of representation that are compatible to each other rather than mutually exclusive. One factor lists the general norms of behavior for a representative and consists of the virtues of behaving fairly towards one's own voters, doing good work in parliament, being open and tolerant, and acting reasonably. The second one comes close to the notion of a trustee by ascribing a high degree of independence to representatives. This is mirrored in the expectation that MPs should follow their own independent judgment, primarily consider the interests of the population as a whole, be independent from lobbying, and decide on the basis of their own convictions. Although the third factor does not neatly fit into the concept of an instructed delegate, it emphasizes more strongly the attempts of MPs to establish close links to the constituency than the second one. The core elements of this approach are: representing the interests of the constituency and the values of the respondent, listening to voters and contacting them, but also being loyal to their own party.

As shown in Table 1.1, the French and the German publics agree to a certain degree as to what makes a good representative, but they also differ in some respects. All three segments of the role expectations, the attitudes towards general norms of behavior, the emphasis on MPs' independent role performance and the demand for close links with the constituency, are supported by a majority of citizens in both countries. Even more explicitly underlined by the correlation coefficients, the three role components are seen as compatible with each other by the public. Thus, the French and Germans want to be represented by MPs who act independently, but at the same time feel closely linked to their constituency. In both countries, behaving according to the general norms was considered to be the most important task; independence ranked second and strong linkages third. Germans hold somewhat higher expectations in these respects than the French.

Table 1.1 Attitudes towards representational roles and their performance in France and Germany

		France	*Germany*	*Eta*
General Norm	Idea	5.24	5.59	.21[a]
	Reality	2.79	3.39	.22[a]
Strong Linkages	Idea	4.64	4.85	.11[a]
	Reality	2.56	2.97	.14[a]
Independence	Idea	4.73	5.24	.27[a]
	Reality	2.49	3.15	.23[a]
N	Idea	883–973	1497–1538	
	Reality	796–863	1249–1303	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France n=1009, Germany n=1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are mean values on a scale ranging from 0 to 6. Eta [a] $p < 000$; [b], $p < 0.01$; [c] $p < 0.05$

Item Wording and Indices: Roles: "What should MPs particularly emphasize in their political activity? Please tell me by using a scale ranging from 1 (recoded to 0) to 7 (recoded to 6) whether MPs should strongly emphasize that task or not so strongly emphasize it. 1 means that they should not so strongly emphasize it and 7 means that they strongly emphasize it." "And now please tell me how well the MPs correspond to these requirements in their daily work. Please use again the scale ranging from 1 (recoded to 0) to 7 (recoded to 6). 1 means that they do not at all correspond to these requirements and 7 means that they fully correspond to these requirements."

General Norms of Behavior: (D) behaving fairly regarding own voters, (H) doing good work in parliament, (K) being open and tolerant, (M) acting reasonably. Reality: Items D, H, K

Independence: (C) following one's own independent judgment, (F) considering interests of the population as a whole, (J) being independent from lobbying, (L) deciding on the basis of one's own convictions. Reality: Items C, F, J

Strong Linkages: (A) representing the interests of the constituency, (B) representing the values of the respondent, (E) listening to the voters, (G) contacting voters, (I) being loyal to their own party. Practice: Items A, E, G

The indices for measuring these three sets of role expectations were formed as additive indices of the respective items and divided by the number of included items

Correlations: General role*Independence: F .63[a] G .57[a]; General Role*Strong Linkages: F .59[a] G .45[a]; Independence*Strong Linkages: F .50[a] G .43[a]

Whether these high expectations can be met at all by MPs, and whether the three role-components that require somewhat different types of behavior can easily fit together, remain open questions. The data on citizens' opinions about how French and German representatives perform their roles cast some doubts on this assumption. In both countries, but even more so in France, citizens perceive a gap between their normative expectations and the practice of representation. On a scale ranging from 0 (extremely negative perception) to 6 (extremely positive perception), the

general conduct of representatives is assessed as slightly positive on average by Germans, and the same applies to the evaluation of the independent behavior of MPs. This rather positive view contrasts the attitudes towards the linkages between representatives and their constituency, where the answers are mostly ambivalent. French respondents have a negative view about the performance of their MPs in all three components of a representative's role. As in Germany, French attitudes appear less pronounced about general role expectations and are most critical about the linkages between the representatives and the represented. The perception of independence takes a position in between.

Obviously, French and German citizens share crucial normative standards on how their representatives should behave. Most of them do not favor one specific role model; instead they prefer a combination of independence and linkages. In line with the findings of Andeweg and Thomassen (2005), this calls the traditional antonymic view of representatives as either trustees or delegates into question.

The juxtaposition of high expectations for representatives' behavior on the one hand, and the perception of their corresponding activities on the other, can also be observed in a second set of attitudes: the views on what social and political groups MPs should primarily regard as referents for their representational activities and how they set their priorities in political practice. Potential objects of representation are manifold; in our survey we focused on the citizenry as a whole, on the constituency and the MPs' voters, on the political party the MP belongs to and on a specific social group as targets of representation. As shown before, the attitudinal patterns found in France and Germany differ gradually, with French citizens mentioning a broader spectrum of groups as referents of representation. Around nine out of ten stated that, in the first instance, MPs should represent their voters (91%), 88 percent answered that they should represent the whole citizenry and 86 percent said that the constituency was the prime object. While almost half of the electorate is also in favor of having the parties represented (47%), only a small minority conceives representation of a certain social group as desirable. On a lower level, the priorities stated by Germans are quite similar. The MPs' voters rank as the top referent of representation (72%), followed by all citizens and the constituency as a unit (69%). A political party (40%) and a specific social group (19%) take the bottom positions in this respect.

The perception of the practice of representation contrasts sharply with these expectations. While only sizeable minorities of French and German

citizens strongly emphasized the representation of party positions, they perceived this linkage between MPs and their parties as clearly prevailing in practice (France 71%, Germany 77%). Contrary to their normative ideas that the most important factors are the representation of the citizenry as a whole, the MPs' voters, and the local constituency, Germans more than the French are skeptical about the representation of other units in comparison with the MP's party. The MPs' voters were mentioned by only 35 percent of Germans and 42 percent of the French. The respective figures for the constituency were 31 percent in Germany and 37 percent in France. Ten percent of the French and 25 percent of Germans regarded representation of a specific social group as the most dominant concern of MPs. The most striking picture concerns the representation of the whole civic community. In sharp contrast to the demands of some normative theories of representation and also to the expectations of the French and German citizens, only a quarter of them are convinced that MPs emphasize most strongly the representation of the people as a whole (Germany: 26%, France: 25%). While German respondents held a slightly more positive view of their MPs than the French when looking at the correspondence of general role expectations, independence and linkages to the constituency, the opposite applies to the comparison of ideas and practice of group representation.

Apart from the description of role expectations and the perceived performance of representational roles, it would be interesting to investigate what accounts for the inter- and intra-systemic differences described above and what it implies for the citizens' overall relationship to the political system. Dealing in detail with these questions is beyond the scope of this introduction, but will be done in some of the contributions in this volume. The issue of what accounts for normative expectations of representation and what they imply for other aspects of civic attitudes and behavior is addressed in the Chap. 7. The authors analyze in what respects and for what reasons French and German MPs agree with their citizens in their normative views on representation and their perceptions of the reality of representation. Their analysis cannot only be read as a comparison between the views of citizens and their representatives, but also between French and German citizens and MPs. In bringing the perspectives of the represented and their representatives together, questions of attitudinal congruence between the elected and the electorate are also considered.

Perception of representatives' activities and personal contact: Citizens' feelings of being adequately represented in the political process are an

important cultural characteristic of the quality of a representative democracy. As found by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse in the US (1995), a perceived lack of firm linkages of representatives to their district is one important reason for negative feelings towards Congress. Similarly, Jacobs and Shapiro (2000) assume that citizens' perception of not being heard by their representatives has strongly contributed to the existing democratic malaise. More often than not, the underlying perception of a crisis of representation does not originate from sufficiently differentiated data, but is rather inferred from rather diffuse conceptualizations of the constructs under scrutiny. This applies, for instance, to the standard ANES items on trust in government or in other representative agencies or on feelings of external efficacy. Although these data convey a first, crude impression of perceptions and evaluations of responsiveness, they are not sufficiently specific as information regarding the extent to which people feel well represented or poorly represented.

In order to gather more specific information on how French and Germans feel about political representation, we need new items on attitudes towards various aspects of the process of representation. At the most general level, we need a measure of how well people feel represented in their political systems. At first glance, citizens feel poorly represented in France and in Germany, but the French are far more critical of the political status quo than their German counterparts. Less than a fifth of German respondents regard themselves very well or well represented in politics, and in France the respective proportion is alarmingly low: only seven percent. As a closer look at the data shows, the attitude prevailing in Germany is ambivalent, with almost half of respondents feeling partly well represented and partly not so well. In France the proportion evaluating the representational system negatively amounts to 64 percent.

The picture originating from the analysis of French and German attitudes towards representation in general is repeated in many respects when investigating more specific aspects of this process. When asked how well they felt represented by a larger set of institutions, actors and other agencies, most Germans chose generally the middle category (neither bad nor well), although the respective proportions ranged from 25 (churches, religious organizations) to 44 percent (national parliament). In France, the neutral or ambivalent midpoint of the scale featured as mode of the distribution in only three instances: the evaluation of the representative performance of parliament, a certain party and professional organizations. Regarding the other agencies, most French respondents offered either a

positive or a negative assessment. Labor unions and citizen initiatives were held in high esteem as representatives, with most French feeling well represented by them. On the evaluation of these two organizations, they were more positive than Germans. By contrast, the government, the district MP, churches and religious organizations were rated as representing the citizens very badly. In Germany, a specific party (28%) was given the most favorable evaluation as a representative agency, while the European parliament (11%) fared least well. In France, the respective figures were 45% for citizen initiatives and 10% for the government.

How critically French citizens look upon the performance of the core agencies of democratic representation is underlined by the data in Table 1.2. All these institutions and actors (parliament, government, own MP and a party) receive very low ratings. Given an average value near to the scale point 1 (represented badly), it does not count so much that to a certain degree a political party stands out of this negative overall picture. While Germans show a somewhat more optimistic outlook regarding the core representative agencies, they are also far from being enthusiastic in this respect. Irrespective of a rather negative attitude prevailing in Germany regarding the performance of representatives, it deserves mentioning that on average the evaluation of all four agencies comes close to the neutral scale point.

Table 1.2 Assessment of the performance of core representational agencies in France and Germany

Feeling of being represented by	France	Germany	Eta
Government	1.10	1.78	.33[a]
Parliament	1.29	1.86	.29[a]
Own MP	1.30	1.75	.21[a]
A political party	1.39	2.05	.31[a]
N	779–957	1160–1496	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are mean values on a scale ranging from 0 to 4. Eta [a] $p < 000$; [b], $p < 0.01$; [c] $p < 0.05$

Item wording: "Many institutions of public life take care of the concerns of the citizens. Please tell me now for each of these institutions how you feel your personal ideas and concerns represented by these institutions. (A) the government, (B) the German Bundestag/Assemblée nationale, (C) own MP, (D) a political party? Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3) neither well nor badly (2) badly or (1) not at all (0)?"

Table 1.3   Assessment of the representation of important concerns in France and Germany

Feeling of being represented by	France	Germany	Eta
Values	1.22	1.92	.37[a]
Economic interests	1.13	1.90	.37[a]
Group concerns	1.18	1.88	.33[a]
Issues	1.14	1.82	.35[a]
N	769–980	1364–1484	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France 1009, Germany n=1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are mean values on a scale ranging from 0 to 4. Eta [a] $p < 000$; [b], $p < 0.01$; [c] $p < 0.05$

Item wording: "Now we would like to know how well you feel represented in our political system in the following domains: (A) your values, (B) your economic interests, (C) your interests as a member of a particular social group and (D) in political issues you regard as important. Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3) neither well nor badly (2) badly or (1) not at all (0)?"

Roughly the same pattern becomes visible when assessing the representation of important civic concerns (see Table 1.3). Without any exception, the French are extremely negative in their views—in absolute terms as well as compared to the Germans. With regard to the representation of the values they support, their economic interests, group concerns and issue positions, the French feel badly represented while the Germans show rather ambivalent attitudes. The differences between the two nations are somewhat stronger than in the assessment of the representative agencies, and the national patterns seem to be more uniform than in the former case, since the assessments of the various concerns show a high degree of similarity.

Once more, these data on the evaluation of representation by the French and German publics need to be put in the broader context of citizens' political attitudes and behaviors. More detailed information is needed on the factors leading the citizens of both France and Germany to their assessment of the process of representation. At first glance, the weak French party system could go along with a lower degree of party identification, which, in turn, could weaken the links between the representatives and the represented. Additional factors such as the personal or indirect contacts between citizens and MPs or the perception of mass media reporting could account for the differences between the two publics. At the same time, the questions arise as to whether and how strongly beliefs

about the quality of representation influence citizens' overall relationship to the political system, their support for democracy as a form of government, their trust in political institutions and their type and level of political engagement. These questions are addressed in Chaps. 7–11 of this book; the authors deal with agreements and disagreements between the views of the represented and their representatives on the process of representation, the relationship between the perceived behavior of MPs in the process of representation and the assessment of the quality of representation, the relationship between the attitudes towards representation and political trust and the linkages between representation and participation. Using experimental data Chap. 11 examines the impact of selected characteristics of MP candidates in the electoral districts on candidate preference.

What Explains the Practice of Representation—and Does the Practice of Representation Make a Difference?

As shown in the short reports on basic findings of representative behavior and attitudes towards representation, and in the various chapters of this book, both aspects differ between France and Germany, but several similarities between the two societies also exist. Two sets of factors need to be taken into account in an attempt at explaining the patterns of representation in France and Germany: systemic and individual level properties. Macro characteristics, such as the institutional setting and national cultural traditions, may account for long-standing differences between the two countries but may also explain some similarities between them. For methodological reasons, the role of these macro-level characteristics cannot be examined systematically in a two-country comparison, but they may provide an important background in the interpretation of the data.

Cultural Traditions: In this respect our data clearly show that there exist substantial differences between the French and German publics. The French are far more skeptical of the quality of representation in their country and far more distrustful of politics than their German neighbors. Whether this finding can really be traced back to the different cultural heritages of the two countries is a matter of dispute. France is embedded in a longer tradition of democratic rule than Germany, but this has not led to a more vivid civic culture. Some stereotypes of Germany pointing to etatism, formalism, legalism, collectivism and authoritarianism as specific

parts of the German cultural heritage were seen as accounting for the so-called German Sonderweg. However, it remains an open question as to whether the French cultural tradition really does look different in the respects mentioned before. Most of these characteristics seem to apply to both countries and hence contribute to similarity rather than difference. Whether and how the strong role of national identity and the perceived legitimacy of conflict and protest in France really influence the actual practices and perceptions of representation is far from clear (Dalton 2014, 1–12). More plausibly, the different levels of overall satisfaction with government and politics, as well as the varying distributions of party identification and social capital, may shape the different views on political representation actually held by the French and German publics.

Political Institutions: As far as the institutional setting is concerned, several important differences exist between France and Germany which may have an impact on patterns of representation. The most important, at least the most obvious factor to be mentioned here, is the character of the German political system as a strict parliamentary type of government (the federal chancellor having a strong position), while the French system is commonly characterized as "semi-presidential." Regardless of the debate about whether this is a separate type of government, the government in France also does need the support of a majority in the Assemblée nationale. But there are features of the French system that differ from the German one: The French constitution states that the president is elected by the people and has considerable political powers. That these powers are weaker in practice when the parliamentary majority is assembled by parties different from the president's goes without saying. However, the French presidency also is regarded as a symbol of national unity (at least in theory) and does have concrete political influence and a high degree of visibility, which certainly adds an institution to the system that is perceived as a representational agent by the public, possibly competing with other actors, particularly with parliament and its members.

A second difference refers to the role of political parties. For decades the German party system appeared as more stable, centripetal and better rooted in society than its French counterpart. This could be taken from indicators such as the constitutional status of parties, their organizational continuity, and the number of party members as well as the density of parliamentary parties in the two countries. Recently, this picture seems to have changed with the emergence of new parties, in particular right-wing populists or even extremists, and considerable losses of support on the side

of the big established parties, the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats. The French party landscape underwent even more drastic changes in this year's elections. The Socialists and the Gaullists/ Conservatives were heavily weakened; the party system is no longer characterized by a bipolarity, by two camps with a dominant party each, but now displays a broad center with considerable attractiveness for the right as well as for the left. After the September 2017 elections, three quarters of the Assemblée nationale membership were newcomers, even more than in 1958, the year of the establishment of the Fifth Republic. Hence, it seems that the distance between the two countries with regard to parties is upheld for the time being, and the German parties look stronger, more stable and better equipped than their French counterparts, which may have repercussions for their capacity as institutions of representation. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the number of Germans who cast a protest vote against the established parties has grown. But it has to be equally considered that 87 percent of Germans stuck to these parties in this year's federal election. This may be taken as an indicator that voters were not that dramatically disenchanted with their performance of democratic representation. In any case, the environment in which this representation through parties takes place has changed considerably in both countries, albeit somewhat less so in Germany, making it harder to compete and rendering it more difficult for MPs to fulfill their linkage function satisfactorily.

A third difference pertains to the electoral system. The German Bundestag consists of 299 MPs regularly elected by relative majority in single-member districts, plus 299 members elected through closed party lists in the Länder (the states). The composition of the parliament in terms of party strength is determined according to the proportion of votes cast for these lists. In France, all 577 members of the National Assembly are elected in single-member districts by absolute or relative majority (in the second ballot). Hence, one might assume that the French system fosters a more individualistic conception of representation than its German counterpart, particularly with regard to what has been described as the German MPs "owing" their mandates to the political parties. In practice, this difference is smaller than expected, since most candidates nominated by the district party organizations in Germany are also listed on the state-wide party proposal lists. This fact, highlighted and further underpinned in its practical dimensions through our observations and interviews, changes the incentive structure of German MPs fundamentally and runs counter to

all allegations that there exist two types of deputies with differing perceptions of representation. And this, in turn, widens the comparative perspective for a clearer understanding of the scope of differences between the two countries: Indeed, these differences connected to the electoral system are much smaller than theoretically expected. This is an example of how indispensable it is to gain deep insights into the practice of politics in order to generate meaningful results when comparing.

This becomes clearer still when the ways parliamentarians are embedded in their local constituency are taken into account. Laws of incompatibility prohibit members of the Bundestag from holding executive positions at the local or regional tier, while in France until this year the "cumul des mandats" was a widespread and legally based political practice and an important attribute of the process of representing local interests at the national level. German deputies are limited to holding party offices in the local political system or seats in the local assemblies, while many of their French colleagues used to occupy mayoral executive positions. Due to their high visibility to the public, such "mayor-parliamentarians" can be more easily targeted by their local constituencies as representatives of local issues in the national political process than German MPs. But again, closer scrutiny of these features of the two systems reveals that the party networking of German MPs and the French "cumul" can be regarded as functional equivalents of the basic principle of rootedness, clearly an inevitable asset of successful representation. This directs attention to the individual level.

Irrespective of their potential to shape the process of representation and how it is perceived by citizens, the effect of institutions seems to be a rather long-term factor in cross-national comparison and is of limited value in the explanation of intra-systemic variations. As in other fields of research on political attitudes and behavior, we do not dispose of an empirically validated—(or even well-elaborated)—theory of representational behavior and culture, but some middle-range theories that have been developed in these fields can be transferred to the analysis of representation. In the CITREP project, most attention was directed at performance.

Political institutions and political performance in a micro-level perspective: Many different characteristics of a political system have been regarded as important determinants of people's attitudes towards the political system. Other approaches emphasize the importance of (1) the individual's position in society, (2) civic attitudes and (3) behavior in explaining how citizens define their role in politics.

The strength of party identification and support of the governing parties are often regarded as micro-indicators of people's institutional affiliation. They have a rather long tradition as antecedents of political trust and satisfaction and can also be used in the explanation of feelings of being well represented (Denters et al. 2007; Zmerli 2004). It seems highly plausible that party identifiers and voters of the governing parties also feel better represented in the political system than do people who lack those features. Other studies point directly to citizens' perceptions of political institutions and processes as determinants of attitudes towards the political system.

In their important analysis of attitudes towards the US Congress, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1995) mention a large number of perceived structural characteristics of Congress contributing to public disgust, such as the perception of the institution as too bureaucratic, inefficient, too strongly professionalized, powerful and blocking presidential initiatives, as well as too remote from citizens. Negative media reporting further adds to the unfavorable image of this institution. In generating feelings of being well represented, process characteristics such as transparency, deliberation, and openness to people's concerns may play an important role (Fenno 2007; Mezey 2008), though—as shown by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1995)—not necessarily a positive one. In line with existing research, we also found empirical evidence that citizens' overall satisfaction with the way government and parliament perform their functions are conducive to trust in various political institutions and actors.

One particular component of political performance is given special emphasis in this book: the perceived quality of representation that is broadly analyzed for its own sake as well as for its relationship with other civic attitudes and behaviors. As shown in several chapters, French and German citizens' trust in politics is strongly shaped, on the one hand, by the perceived quality of representation. On the other hand, the perceived quality of representation and political participation reinforce each other. Moreover, it is highly plausible to assume that the electorate's impression that MPs are working in their districts, are engaged in building networks and playing an active role in communicating with their electoral base strongly contributes to the perception of being well represented, not only by the MP, but also by the parliament as a whole and by political parties. This assumption can be based on broad empirical evidence of carry-over effects from political actors to political institutions (and vice versa, Gabriel 1999; Walter-Rogg 2005). Having had—particularly positive—contact

with the representative will produce a similar effect. The analysis of people's attitudes towards representation by MPs in France and Germany proved to be in line with the findings of previous research: The French display stronger feelings of distrust towards the institutions of democratic representation than the Germans, and this difference can be explained by their perception of being less well represented. The data collected in the CITREP project allowed us to also turn to the subjective dimension of the evaluation of MPs and parliament, bringing to light the differences between the two components of Hanna Pitkin's "acting for"—"the substance or content of acting for others" (1967, 114). It does not make a big difference for the judgment about the district MP and the national parliament how citizens feel represented concerning their interests and how positively they evaluate the performance of their MP. However, it makes a difference which directs scholars' attention to an important aspect: On what basis are such judgments developed? Knowledge-based explanations of attitudes, as well as approaches that emphasize belonging to a social group, have been offered. Indeed, the recent success of populist political actors, with their simplifications and anti-elite stands, suggest that we need more insights into these factors. This would be an important prerequisite in order to take active measures to improve information and communication about representation, as well as providing advice regarding how MPs' representational performance could be enhanced.

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Parliament Centered or Constituency Centered? The Professionalization of the Parliamentary Mandate

Eric Kerrouche and Suzanne S. Schüttemeyer

Politics as a profession is not the common perspective of citizens, the media and sometimes not even of politicians themselves when it comes to assessing the Members of Parliament, their activities and achievements. Indeed, the contrary can often be observed: The public ascribes much of what is regarded as shortcomings or aberrations in the political sphere to the professionalization of politics. In this view, the circumstances of politics as a professional career, especially the financial circumstances, are held responsible for all sorts of dependencies, greed, overly long terms of office, mediocrity and so on.

The normative idea of a deputy that seems to be firmly rooted in the minds of many people resembles that of a nineteenth-century notable: A member of parliament should be a benevolent amateur who occasionally feels the obligation to become involved in politics to foster the common

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good and thus takes over the seat in parliament as an honorary office. This image of a good politician is widespread and frequently expressed directly. Even more often, it can be detected as the yardstick by which politics and its actors are measured and, hence, inevitably judged as deficient. The hype which usually accompanies so-called parachutes, i.e., leaders from business, industry or science who take over positions in politics, proves how prevalent these public sentiments are and that there exists an underlying hope that politics can be had without politics, that "unpolitical" expertise and good intention are all that is needed. The language used for commenting on the acts and behavior of politicians also mirrors this normative misunderstanding and outdated perception over and over again— and constantly contributes to stabilizing it. The growing dissatisfaction and frustration with politics that can be observed all over Europe in recent years can certainly, to a great extent, be attributed to these mechanisms.

Although the careers of politicians in (Western) democracies have received much scholarly attention in recent years (e.g., Golsch 1998; Best and Cotta 2001; Borchert 2003; Edinger and Patzelt 2011), the term professionalization is not easy to define, neither in general nor for politicians or members of parliament in particular. At least two dimensions need to be taken into account. First, professionalization carries a legal dimension: It is conditioned by the laws, regulations and formal rules that determine the office or position in question and furnish its framework. Second, it has a far more complex sociological dimension (Linton 1945): in this respect, professionalization includes notions of competency, education, professional experience, advancement or career patterns, ethics and so on.

The sociological study of professions provides us with an interesting theoretical basis. Also, without an in-depth look at the debates in this specific discipline, it is helpful to make use of its distinctions and keep in mind that terms like "métier", "Beruf " and "profession" vary with the country concerned (Dubar 2000). This has led other writers to hold that activities in politics, like in art, can either be a form of artistic expression or a "métier", but that it does not (yet) have the characteristics necessary to qualify as a real profession (Lasswell 1960; Prinz 1993; Lehingue 1999). Such works see politics as an "occupation"—all the know-how and techniques which allow an elected representative to establish authority, for instance in an electoral district or in a party and successfully build his political future there.

German literature on the issue has a basis in Max Weber's famous speech, "Politik als Beruf ", held in January 1919, shortly before the

National Assembly came together in the city of Weimar, thus giving name to the Weimar Republic and its parliament, the "Reichstag". Weber sketched the figure of the professional politician, the "Berufspolitiker", its features, preconditions and framework. His ideas have been widely confirmed and further developed[1] since he first formulated them by arguing that one could go into politics in several different ways—as an "occasional" profession (as a political militant for example), but also as a secondary profession (as counselor to a prince) or, indeed, as one's main profession (vocational).

Here is not the place to scrutinize the conceptual-theoretical arguments in full. For the time being, the most convincing approach seems to be treating the parliamentary mandate as a profession that is still undergoing a process of formation, like others before it (Chapoulie 1973). Its model of professional identity waits to be determined because of the specific nature of the functions exercised and the inherent tension between democratization and professionalization.[2]

Hence, we will not attempt to ultimately determine whether or not being an MP in France or Germany is a profession. Rather, we will deal with the conditions and indicators that bear witness to what is wiser to call a specific *process* of professionalization. This entails covering details of the basically undisputed and empirically more tangible elements of professionalization such as long-term and full-time commitment to a career in politics, providing sufficient income and a certain status. Special emphasis will be laid on aspects of the deputies' work in their constituencies: This is the field about which least is known in parliamentary research. Moreover, the way MPs act there may turn out to be a driving force in the professionalization process.

Remuneration and Equipment of Mandate

In Europe, the shift towards professionalization of elected offices is, to differing degrees, reinforced by the changing legal framework (Guérin and Kerrouche 2006). There is at least a tacit acceptance that it would no longer be reasonable to expect that office holding—at the local, regional and national level—is exercised on a wholly voluntary basis, side by side with existing professional employment. In this perspective, and even if other factors—such as working conditions—need to be taken into account,

the development of a reward system plays a crucial role in the process of professionalization of the mandate (for an international comparison see Brans and Guy Peters 2012).

The most visible changes in France concern the staff made available to MPs, primarily under the Fifth Republic after 1958. In 1968, a new rule was adopted that allowed individual deputies to form their own secretariat or use the services of the collective secretariat of their political party. At that time some MPs used their own financial resources to employ unofficial aides whose presence was only just tolerated. This state of affairs obviously greatly advantaged those MPs who had private fortunes, occupied several positions in office or entertained close relations with the private sector which would contribute to the remuneration of these off-the-record assistants. This is why, in the late 1960s, MPs demanded, though in vain, that they should receive the funds necessary to recruit a parliamentary assistant in their constituencies to deal with the most time-consuming tasks (Chandernagor 1967, 169).

Eventually, remuneration for typists was introduced in 1970 and was subsequently reviewed on several occasions. In 1997, it was replaced by an allowance covering the expense linked to the exercise of the mandate, "indemnité représentative de frais de mandat" (IRFM), which provides for costs incurred by an MP in the exercise of office not covered by the National Assembly. In 2015 this came up to € 5770 gross per month. This allowance, which has long been the subject of controversy, was abolished in August 2017 and replaced by a reimbursement of expenses related to the mandate after presentation of the supporting documents, as in the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada.

The situation greatly improved after 1974 when Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the newly elected President, pledged to modernize parliament and make available the means to tackle changes in the way parliament worked (Canoves Fuster 2006, 53). Since 1975, French MPs were provided with a parliamentary assistant of their own choosing, who was remunerated by the National Assembly and who had the required level of technical competence to aid the MP in his parliamentary work. In 1979, MPs gained a second assistant charged with helping them in their constituency work (Gibel 1981). At the end of the 1970s, each MP thus had the means to finance a small team, composed of a part-time secretary, an assistant in Paris and a second in their constituency. From 1980 to 1990, MPs continued to demand increased staff resources.

In 1986, the Assemblée nationale improved the material working conditions of MPs. In the early 1990s, individual deputies were equipped with

a computer, and this had great impact on their work, especially on their communication and the ways by which they made their activities known to the general public. The use of computing systems allowed them to gain more autonomy but also increased the amount of petitioning they received from voters. It was for these reasons that, in 1995, after frequent demands, they were authorized a third assistant.

As of 2015, each MP has at his disposal an allowance of € 9540 per month which enables them to recruit up to five assistants. Since 2002, the MP manages this sum directly and is, therefore, legally the assistants' employer, not the Assemblée nationale. Individual MPs are free to choose their own assistants and may also dismiss them, determine their working conditions and salary.[3] In fact, almost all deputies ask the finance department of the parliament (SAF) to manage their assistants' payment for them. The parliamentary administrators in charge of this department provide them with model contracts, but MPs are entirely free in how they distribute their assistants between the National Assembly and their constituency work. Altogether, they now have a real team working with them, up to five people, whose average level of qualification has greatly increased, making them professionals in this sphere (training courses, collective programs, improved contracts, etc.) (Canoves Fuster 2006; Fretel and Meimon 2005; Treille 2005; Romzek and Utter 1997). This has, in turn, nurtured the professionalization of MPs themselves.

Another aspect of the professionalization of the mandate is the remuneration of the deputies. This has a long and controversial history in France (Garrigou 1992)[4], but things have changed considerably during the Fifth Republic. In 1980 a French MP's gross allowance was about € 3500. In 2014, this figure reached € 7100 (which means a net income of about € 5200 per month).[5] Also the pension plans for MPs give testimony of the growing professionalization as they resemble more and more the patterns of other professions. In France, the system was changed in 2010 in order to reduce the privileges of MPs and make their pensions more comparable to those in the public sector. An optional complementary system of old age pensions was established (with an increasing contribution rate that will reach 10.55 percent in 2020). The average pension for a French MP is € 2700 per month.

In Germany, the remuneration of MPs is, for all practical purposes, under constant supervision as several aspects of it have been subject repeatedly to verdicts of the constitutional court and because it is a topic which can arouse immediate public indignation. The long and varied story of the

deputies' payment and pensions, their allowances and the equipment of their mandate cannot be told in full here. Normative considerations are very important in this context. Hence, the Independent Commission on the Legal Status of Deputies that was installed by the 16th German Bundestag to submit reform proposals started its work by outlining the principles of the mandate of a modern representative ("Leitbild").[6] The Commission, composed of eleven experts and former politicians, compared the functions, context and working conditions of MPs with other professionals and assessed the particular nature of the parliamentary mandate: It is undoubtedly a full-time job. It shows many signs of a profession with career patterns. However, MPs shall not lose touch with the world of "ordinary" citizens. Hence, the mandate shall not become a lifetime profession. As a result, financial regulations must be found that enable many to enter parliament. The regulations must be sufficiently attractive compared to other demanding jobs and also allow for a (professional) life after the mandate.

The 17th Bundestag, elected in the autumn of 2013, followed most of the recommendations that the Commission had submitted earlier that year and passed in 2014 a comprehensive amendment to the "Abgeordnetengesetz", the law guiding the legal and financial status of MPs. As a consequence, since January 2015, the German MPs receive a monthly payment of € 9082 (before tax) in explicit analogy to the salary of judges at high courts (2017: € 9542). This yardstick was fixed in acknowledgement of the responsibilities and the level of demands on the mandate in terms of quality as well as quantity.

The extent to which the Bundestag endorsed the Commission's view of the mandate as a profession becomes especially clear in another amendment that was passed in the reform process: Previously, only the President and the Vice-Presidents of Parliament received a higher salary; indeed, some thought it unconstitutional to treat deputies unequally with regard to their monthly payment. The new rules now provide for a 15 percent increase in the remuneration of committee chairs.

A push in the process of parliamentary professionalization comparable to 2014 occurred earlier in the late 1960s with the reform efforts of those years. Since that time, MPs have received funds for employing staff. These were increased from DM 1500 in 1969 to € 16,019 in 2014. In 1969, all MPs together employed 398 assistants, 18 of them classified as research staff with a university degree. Forty years later, MPs collectively employed 6784 (two-thirds of them as part-timers) and 2232 belonged

to the category of research staff. On the one hand, this is the result of growing requirements of the mandate; on the other hand, it contributes itself to professionalization. With better means of collecting and processing information and knowledge, the readiness of deputies to get involved grows hand in hand with the demands imposed by citizens. Of the staff the MPs hire, 55 percent are working in the constituencies; in 1970 this applied to only one-third, but as early as 1978 it had reached one-half of deputies' personal staffs (Schindler 1999, 3263).

In order to facilitate the exercise of the mandate, German MPs are also entitled to a tax-free lump sum of € 4340 (2018). They spend it for instance on an apartment in Berlin or an office in the district.

The extent to which the mandate has developed into a profession is further highlighted by the fact that all parliamentary parties in the Bundestag—that receive considerable funds from the federal budget for fulfilling their functions—pay extra allowances to certain position holders, such as their chairpersons, whips and committee chairs. The pension scheme points in the same direction of regarding the mandate as an "ordinary" profession. Some of the advantages that the MPs enjoyed in contrast to average working citizens were abolished in the reform of 2014—but again, these changes were guided by the principal reflections on the nature of a modern representative mandate.

The Educational and Professional Background of the Members of the German Bundestag and the French Assemblée Nationale

Educational background is an important factor in any desire to understand the process of professionalization, as it is often taken to be one of its prerequisites (Boudon and Bourricaud 2000). Examining the most straightforward factor here, that of the level of education reached, the data available for Germany and France clearly show that MPs in the two countries are, in the vast majority and on average, more highly qualified than the citizens they represent.

Since its beginnings in the 1950s, the Bundestag has become more and more "educated". At that time, approximately 45 percent of its members had acquired a university degree; now, more than four-fifths of them have a university education. This development mirrors the growing complexity of issues and the differentiation of modern society, as well as a corresponding

Table 2.1   Educational level of German MPs (18th Bundestag as of May 2015)

School education	Secondary school (9 years)		Secondary school (10 years)		Grammar school		Vocational school		n/a	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
All (631)	10	1.6	42	6.7	519	82.3	13	2.1	47	7.4

Higher education	Technical college, Teachers' Training College, Polytechnic, Academy		University with degree		University without degree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
All (543)	94	14.9	427	67.7	22	3.5

Source: Datenhandbuch zur Geschichte des Deutschen Bundestages (2015)

growth of demands on the state and its regulatory capacities. As a consequence, it seems that only persons with advanced knowledge and abilities can enter politics and succeed on the political stage (see Table 2.1).

Such an evolution is also obvious in France between the beginning of the Fifth Republic (1958) and 2007. In 1958, 24 percent of the deputies did not have a degree higher than a primary school certificate; in 2007, this percentage had dropped to under four. Even in 1958, half of the French MPs had higher education qualifications, in marked contrast to the general level of education of the country at that time. This discrepancy has been confirmed over time by several studies (Costa and Kerrouche 2007; Rouban 2012). In 2007, 92.3 percent of MPs had higher education qualifications (i.e., more than the "Baccalauréat"), compared to only 27.8 percent of the French population.[7] The role of two university faculties, namely "Sciences-Po" (the departments of political science, especially in Paris) and Law, needs to be stressed. Despite a relative narrowing of the gap over time between MPs and the rest of the population, the former still come from an elite background. With regard to the professionalization of elected office, the figures point in the same direction as in Germany (see Table 2.2).

The professional background of MPs in Germany is similar. Previous experience in occupations that require communicative skills, organization talents or have to do with the application of laws and regulations make one more qualified to become a politician. Not only do selectors in the nomination processes look for such qualifications, but also the everyday practice in politics indeed calls for them. Additionally, it can be noted that the

Table 2.2   Educational level of French MPs in 1958 and 2007

	No degree equivalent or higher to the Baccalauréat	Professional degree	Baccalauréat	University degree		
				Law degree	Sciences-Po (Paris and others)	Other fields
1958	24.0	0.6	11.0	28.0	9.0	35.2
2007	3.6	9.7	6.7	25.0	13.6	53.7

Source: Adapted from Rouban 2011

Note: Entries are percentage points

Bundestag is composed of a wide variety of occupations so that the deputies represent a differentiated spectrum of expertise and experience.[8] Hence, the common notion that the German Parliament is a "Beamtenparlament", a parliament full of civil servants, has to be repudiated. In quantitative terms, less than one-third of all MPs in the 17th Bundestag hold that status. More important, under the label "civil servant" we find, for instance, teachers at primary schools and university professors, judges and attorneys, administrative staff from local and Land agencies, elected mayors and soldiers. All of them contribute in very different ways to the knowledge and skills needed in parliament.

It must not be overlooked, however, that there are growing numbers of deputies who have no professional background outside politics, i.e., they moved immediately from school or university to administrative jobs in a party organization or a parliamentary party, possibly gained a seat in a Landtag and entered the Bundestag from there. Currently, this is true for roughly one out of ten MPs, and particularly so in the case of the Greens (where one-quarter follow this pattern) and of the Left (where almost 40 percent belong in this group) (see Table 2.3).

In France some of the developments in the occupational structure of the Assemblée nationale resemble those in Germany. For instance, blue-collar MPs have virtually disappeared from both parliaments. Generally, this is the consequence of the specific demands of political decision-making and communication, and hence also a sign of professionalization. In France, in particular, it is also due to the decline of the Communist Party. The number of farmers has decreased as well, parallel to their falling numbers in the working population. However, the overall distribution of occupations among MPs in France also reflects the requirements of political

Table 2.3   Professional structure of the 17th and 18th German Bundestag

	17th Bundestag (as of January 2010)		18th Bundestag (as of February 2014)	
	N	%	N	%
Civil servants ("Beamte")	184	29.6	183	29.0
Public sector employees	31	5.0	20	3.2
Clergy	3	0.5	2	0.3
Employees of political institutions and organizations of civil society	103	16.6	124	19.7
White-collar	84	13.5	93	14.7
Self-employed[a]	60	9.7	61	9.7
Freelancers[b]	101	16.3	87	13.8
Housewives	3	0.5	4	0.6
Blue-collar	2	0.3	1	0.2
Others	27	4.4	28	4.4
Missing or incomplete data	24	3.9	27	4.3
Sum	622	100	631	100

Source: Kintz 2010, 2014

[a]This category contains persons who are their own employers in industry, commerce, crafts etc. as well as farmers.

[b]This category contains lawyers and notaries (with their own law firms), medical practitioners, pharmacists, tax consultants, journalists and so on.

office more than anything else. Hence, managers and those in intellectual professions provide the vast majority of members of parliament. This trend was already clearly perceptible in 1958. Generally speaking, deputies from the upper-middle classes are six to seven times more numerous in the National Assembly than across the French population as a whole. The growth of the share of permanent politicians is also significant. This category, which was non-existent in 1968, represents 13.3 percent of French MPs in 2017 (Rouban 2017) (see Table 2.4).

Nevertheless, before the elections to the Assemblée nationale in 2017, the declared occupation did not necessarily mean what it would intuitively seem to be. In the French case, it was not exact to speak of a deputy exercising a given occupation, because the distance between the two entities was too great. "Declared occupation" was the more fitting term. Before 2017, for typical deputies more than 20 years had passed since their first election to political office (local or national). This led some to conclude

Table 2.4 Professional structure of the Assemblée nationale in 2007 and 2017

	2007	*2017*
High Civil Servants	15.8	9.5
Teachers	19.0	12.5
Employees of the public sector and other public officials	14.7	23.7
Manufacturers, business leaders and liberal professions	27.5	28.0
Craftsmen, merchants and farmers	4.7	6.6
Private sector executives	14.5	16.6
Employees of the private sector and blue collar workers	4.0	2.6

Source: Rouban 2017

Note: Entries are percentage points

that a vast majority of MPs made a profession out of politics in that their sole source of income lay in the remuneration that went with their position(s) in office (which is one aspect of the professionalization process, Costa and Kerrouche 2007). In other words, the occupation criterion was, for most French MPs, a label that was part of their public image that allowed them to assert expertise in certain policy fields within parliament. Things have changed considerably with the 2017 elections. The current Assemblée nationale, with its unprecedented renewal rate (72 percent are new MPs, the highest proportion during the Fifth Republic) is less concerned with this pattern: 475 MPs are less than 60 years old, in other words, at a working age, and engaged in a professional career.[9]

Self-perception as Professional Politician and Duration of the Mandate

But it is not only these deputies who would agree that politics is a profession. In the interviews conducted with 66 German MPs during the observations in the CITREP project, only two said that he or she was not a professional politician ("hauptberuflicher Politiker"). And although our method did not aim at generating representative data, the picture is so overwhelmingly clear that it seems justified to generalize: German deputies regard themselves as professionals in the political business while their previous occupations play different roles for them—an issue to which we will come back (see Fig. 2.1).
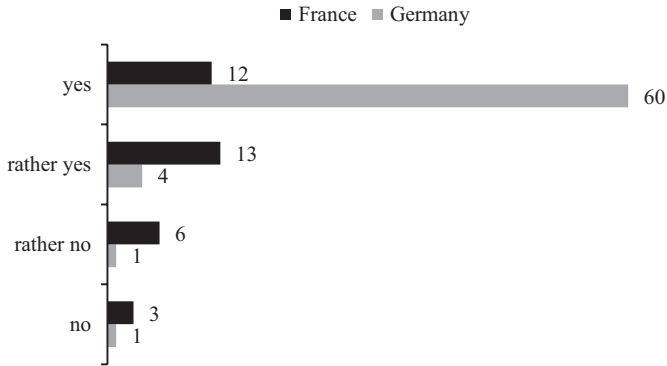
Fig. 2.1   Self-perception of French and German MPs

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs, France *n* = 49, Germany *n* = 66

Item wording: "Do you see yourself as a professional politician?"

The situation is different in France. Two previous surveys conducted in the Centre Emile Durkheim have shown that French deputies tend to avoid *presenting* themselves as professionals (Costa and Kerrouche 2007). CITREP interviews confirm this finding. It seems that some MPs do not want to consider their office as a profession ("I am an activist, I always tell people that. Politics is not a *métier*, it is an activist engagement; this is what I explain to children when I visit school.") because they fear its potential political cost since most of them want to be reelected in the future. As much as they avoid the label "professional politician" ("I'm not a professional politician, not at all. I'm a normal citizen, who was a mother, full-time teacher, a locally elected representative with national responsibilities." "I never say that I'm a professional politician, but I never say the contrary."), there is no indication that they do not accept the fact of being "full-time politician" ("This is 80 percent of my life, yes." "When you're MP, it's not possible to do a good job if you're not a full-time MP."). The data from the CITREP survey confirm that they are more reluctant than their German counterparts to fully consider themselves as professionals. In the interviews conducted with 34 French MPs during the observations in the CITREP project, only 12 said that she or he was a professional politician (13 answered "rather yes", and nine "rather no" or "no").

Also, the duration of the mandate points to the fact that being a deputy has become a profession: A member of the Bundestag serves on average 2.5 terms, i.e., roughly ten years. This is a considerably long phase in a professional life but not a lifetime job, at least not for the large majority of MPs. Hence, for many their former occupation matters as it constitutes a fallback for the time after the mandate—with the consequence that not few deputies try to maintain ties to their former way of earning a living (this is especially true for freelancers like lawyers, architects, tax consultants, journalists and others and, of course, imperative for those deputies who are self-employed in their own businesses in industry, trade, agriculture or other fields).

In 2007, the average time in office for a French MP was 11.7 years. 60 percent of the deputies served two terms on average and only 10 percent served more than five terms. In other words, the probability of having a career as an MP is quite weak. There was nevertheless a big difference with Germany: Until June 2017 there existed the possibility of accumulation of mandates. The professionalization of the MP's role and the evolution of office into a career has greatly benefited from this.

The "cumul des mandats" is particularly worth noting, as the extent to which it was practiced made it a distinctive feature of the French political system (Kerrouche 2017). The concept of "cumul" refers to the practice of political actors holding multiple mandates at the same time. But its best-known and most controversial aspect was the simultaneous accumulation of the parliamentary mandate and elected local offices (Dewoghélaère et al. 2006), in particular the combination of MP and mayor (in 2007, 83 percent of the French MPs had at least one local mandate, in 45 percent of the cases it was a mandate as mayor). Although this practice began during the two previous Republics, it is with the Fifth Republic that it reached its fullest expression and became, for almost sixty years, a generalized phenomenon—even in its slightly watered-down and strictly regulated current form (by two regulations in 1985 and 2000[10]). Hence, the "cumul des mandats" has been one of the basic mechanisms of the professionalization of elective office in France. The practice had three main knock-on effects. First, it reduced uncertainty—accumulating office, just like remaining in office over a long period of time, was a source of electoral stability and secured the income necessary for an MP to exercise office on a full-time basis. Second, it allowed MPs to monopolize important local positions, thus "cutting off" the sources of income and/or resources available to potential rivals (be they political allies or opponents). Third, the "cumul"

was a way to limit, or at least, to regulate if not to deter the electoral com-
petition at national elections (François 2006). Just before the renewal of
2017, 80.6 percent of French MPs exercised this accumulation of man-
dates (83% in 2007). Even if local allowances were lower than those of
MPs, they provided a substantial complement (Bach 2012).

The career possibilities that French politics holds for MPs may explain
why they regard their former professions as less important than German
deputies. For the latter, returning to their occupation or even the same
workplace they held before the mandate seems to be a much more fre-
quent reality than in the French case. More than two-thirds of the depu-
ties who leave the Bundestag have to find (re-)entry into an "ordinary"
professional life (the remaining third has reached the pension or pre-
pension age); of those who left the 16th Bundestag, for instance, one-
third went back into their old profession (Best et al. 2010). A study on
"life after the mandate" (Edinger and Schwarz 2009) found that approxi-
mately 20 percent of MPs find a new occupation, for instance as consul-
tants, mostly in those areas in which they had specialized during their
mandate, and 88 percent of the freelancers and the self-employed returned
to their former occupation.

Summing up at this point, politics as a profession exists in France and
Germany when looking at educational and occupational backgrounds, the
character of the mandate and the self-perception as professional politicians
as well as the duration of the mandate. A closer look reveals, however, that
its meaning is different. For German and French deputies alike their seat
in parliament is a full-time job. But for the latter the "cumul des mandats"
offers the chance to stay in politics after their mandate comes to an end in
the Assemblée nationale. This is rarely the case for German MPs; they have
to keep in mind what will happen after their mandate or even take precau-
tions for the time when they will have given up or lost their seat. In fact,
such necessary considerations may guide them in some of their behavior
and must not be neglected when explaining it.[11] In this respect, the cumul
ban pledge by the French president will likely also lead to a reconsidera-
tion of professionalism among French MPs.

Career Patterns and the Importance of the District

The self-perception of the deputies as professional politicians is closely
connected with the existence of political careers in the internal mecha-
nisms of the Bundestag. It is a fact well established by German parliamentary

research that patterns of professionalization have been developed in and through the particular structures of the parliamentary parties.

It is not necessary to reiterate these findings here in greater detail (see for instance Lemke-Müller 1999; Mayntz and Neidhart 1989; von Oertzen 2006; Schüttemeyer 1998; Best et al. 2010). It must suffice to say that advancement in parliament is achieved mainly through thematic specialization. Each MP who wants to shape politics and gain influence on political decisions has to prove his competence in the working groups of his parliamentary party and, closely intertwined with them, the committees of the Bundestag. In fact, there are no other structures in which deputies can show their specific abilities and values for their party; it is here where they can recommend themselves for higher office in parliament or in the executive. The pathway to become a reporter on bills, a speaker for a subject area, a chairperson of a working group or a parliamentary committee, a member in the managing board of the parliamentary party or in the cabinet almost always begins with solid thematic work in order to achieve and demonstrate subject expertise as well as the political skills to build compromises and forge majorities. Without these mechanisms of division of labor, neither the parliament as a whole nor its parties or the individual deputies would be able to decide responsibly on a huge variety of issues. Given this logic, it is not surprising that all those MPs who do not hold leadership positions of some sort in the parliamentary party and/ or in the Bundestag emphasize their role as legislative specialists in a particular field. There is no indicator that the engagement in the district is a step on the career ladder.

From this, the assumption can be drawn that constituency work should be of much lesser importance to German deputies than work in parliament. Indeed, the CITREP data show that only nine out of the 62 MPs who were accompanied in their constituencies see the district as the center of their political activities, and 25 put most weight on their work in Berlin (see Fig. 2.2). 24 deputies regard both areas as equally important, and one might assume that they refrain from indicating a clear choice or from simply telling the truth as this could be regarded as improper. A closer look reveals that the contrary is true: The explanations of those MPs with fifty/ fifty answers are particularly valuable to understand the salience of district work in the process of representation. They underline the connectivity of their engagement "at home" with that inside the structures of the Bundestag: "Only district work would be meaningless. But only work in parliament would be like operating in a vacuum, without rootage and,
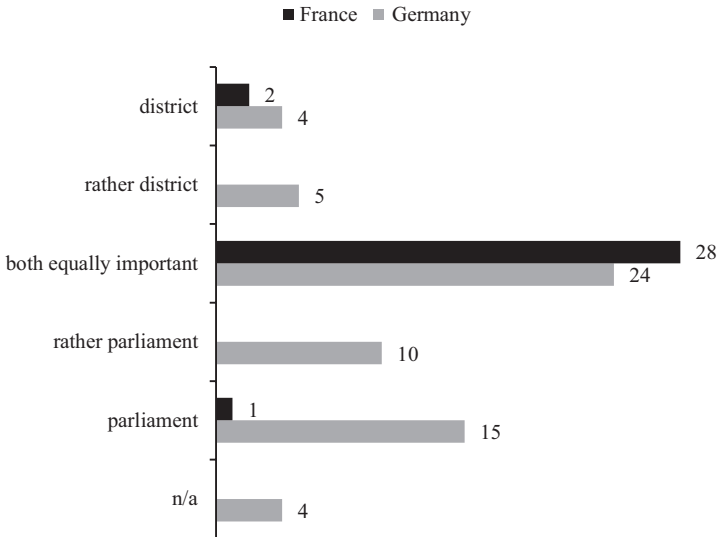
Fig. 2.2 Priority of arenas of representation in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs, France *n* = 49, Germany *n* = 62

Item wording: "Where is your main focus as MP? In parliament, in the district, or are both equally important for you?". The answer categories "rather district" and "rather parliament" were not available in France

thus, would be equally senseless." And: "One cannot and must not separate one [the district work] from the other [work in parliament]." They speak of the necessity "to do the splits everyday" and to stay in touch with the people; this would "guarantee groundedness" (see Fig. 2.3).

MPs see very clearly that the experience they collect in the constituency is far more than the general justification for their mandate; they regard their district work as a precondition for shaping politics in Berlin. Hence, it is not surprising that 43 out of 65 said that their district activities are important for their work in parliament (nine ascribed less importance to it and thirteen opted for the middle category). The influence is also seen in the other direction: Almost one-half of the deputies think that their specialization on a policy field in the parliamentary party and the Bundestag is very important for their activities in the constituencies (29 out of 64). The distribution is quite the same in France (20 out of 49), despite the
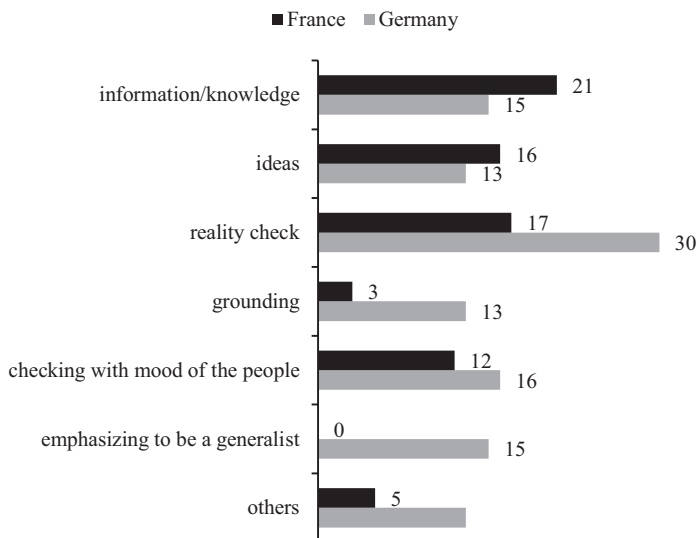
Fig. 2.3 Benefits of district work for work in parliament in France and Germany
Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs: France *n* = 49, Germany *n* = 65

Item wording: "How important is your work in the district for your work in parliament?" Multiple answers were possible

fact that the picture of a French MP's dedication to her/his constituency tends to prevail (data not shown).

The detailed answers to these questions as well as the observed activities of the MPs in the districts reveal an enormous variety, which makes it extremely difficult to reach types or classifications (see also Chap. 3). Our data can be read both as confirmation that deputies are input specialists and that they are generalists (Schindler and Siefken 2011; Siefken 2012 with further references). Much more than this, they illustrate impressively how professionally the MPs deal with this scope of demands that their mandate carries. Their interpretations of the mutually profitable relationship between the work in parliament and in the district, their reflections on how to use both arenas strategically as well as their clarity in not exaggerating the interdependence of the two give ample evidence that the MPs fully grasp the nature of their mandate, perceive its ambivalent character and are able to make rational choices about how to exercise it.

What was a mere impression, a by-product of older research that the career of a German MP takes place in parliament, thus, has to be modified in the light of our findings: There can be no doubt that deputies have to prove or acquire thematic expertise in order to achieve higher office in their parliamentary party, in parliament or in the government, but professional MPs also understand very well that moving up the ladder is hardly possible without the input and encouragement from their home base. Policy expertise is one thing; a successful politician needs yet another thing: He has to link his expertise to interests in society and considerations of societal support. This is the specific representational function he has to fulfill, for which he needs the rootedness in the district and which makes him valuable for his party inside and outside parliament. Hence, also those MPs who aspire not to stay "simple deputies" without any leadership functions in parliament have good reason to acknowledge the importance of the district for their advancement in parliament, although it is not as direct an asset as thematic expertise.

The circumstances are quite different in France where the constituency remains the core of an MP's activity. This situation is mainly a by-product of the French electoral system (Blais and Loewen 2009). The use of a two-round system for legislative elections in relatively small constituencies (around 125,000 inhabitants) has direct consequences as to how MPs behave (see also Chap. 3 in this book).

In an earlier survey (LEGIPAR, which was a "prélude" to CITREP in France in 2010[12]) MPs were asked where they experienced the most satisfaction. The results were quite illuminating: 55.5 percent experienced more satisfaction in Paris, whereas this score reached 78.2 percent for the constituency, and only 4.9 percent stated that they did not gain satisfaction in the district, while 15.6 percent felt this way for Paris (medium category: 28.9% Paris, 16.9% district).[13] Again, the fact that more than 80 percent of the members of the Assemblée nationale are also elected local representatives has to be considered to explain such results. But the main reason is connected to the fact that there are many backbenchers who have good reasons to focus their activities on the constituencies.

Costa and Kerrouche (2007) built a rough additive scale of responsibility by counting leadership positions in the National Assembly (president or vice-president of a political group or of a committee, quaestor, etc.), and distinguished three groups of MPs: Of the 577 deputies, there were 493 backbenchers (without positions) who make up 85.4 percent, the intermediate group of 66 MPs with one position (11.5%) and 18 elite MPs

who held two positions (3.1%). It certainly makes a lot of difference for the focus of the activities whether an MP belongs to the first group or the third. For the former, involvement in the constituency is a rational solution whereas for the latter engagement in the National Assembly is imperative. Those two patterns of professionalization appeared clearly when MPs were asked what they regarded as their more important task.[14] 82.6 percent of those who answered that the national level was most important were position holders, 64.6 percent backbenchers.

A similar pattern is found in the degree of satisfaction. 45.8 percent of the backbenchers experienced more satisfaction in the constituency, 18.2 percent in Paris, and shares of 36.0 percent each felt more satisfied in Paris or in both arenas equally.

This is not to say that elite and intermediate MPs forget their work in the constituency for they know that their reelection depends on it. Like backbench MPs, they are forced to be in the "field" as much as they can. Although they benefit from their national popularity and influence, they may not neglect the local aspects of their mandate because it is in the districts where they have to secure their reelection (Kerrouche 2009).

Foreign observers often assume that the German electoral system, with its combination of a vote for a candidate in a district and for a party list, enables politicians with high formal positions in parliament (or government) to spare themselves tedious work in a constituency. This has been disproven by studies on the processes of candidate nomination in Germany (Schüttemeyer and Sturm 2005). Also, the CITREP observations make it very clear that there is only a small handful of MPs who can afford (or rather have) to reduce their efforts in the district. This applies mainly to the chancellor and to ministers; it certainly does not apply to position holders in parliament. It must be said at this point, that this is a much larger group than in France, a reflection of the salience of thematic specialization in the Bundestag and another indicator of the specific kind of professionalization to be observed in the German parliament.

WORKLOAD AND ORGANIZATION

There cannot be any doubt that the work of a member of the Bundestag is a full-time occupation. The prefixed schedule of parliament with district weeks and weeks of sessions in Berlin structures the timetable of the deputies. How serious they take engagement in the constituency can be read

off the data on the length of their workdays: There is only a little difference between the weeks in Berlin and those "at home", but it occurs on a high level.

Whereas almost 80 percent of the observed deputies work over twelve hours daily in Berlin (46 out of 60), it is "only" 50 percent who work such long hours in the district weeks (31 out of 64). Still, one-third of the observed MPs work from eight to twelve hours in the district weeks (18 out of 64). And not one single MP can afford to spend less than ten hours on his duties in the Bundestag, while this is the case for 15 of them when serving their constituencies. Considering that almost 90 percent work always or often on weekends when they are in the district, it becomes unmistakably clear that the mandate is far from an amateur's or honorary business.

Our data and observations confirm findings from research a decade ago, where over 70 percent of the MPs confessed that they had never before worked as much as during their Bundestag mandate (Best and Jahr 2006, 68).

The documented workload also sheds light on the currently much debated question of whether and how much deputies can work aside from their mandate. It has been calculated that between 25 and 30 percent of all members of the Bundestag receive payment from activities outside their mandate (Röper 2005; Mause 2008). Counting paid as well as unpaid (volunteer) work, nine out of ten deputies can be found in the register of the President of the Bundestag where such activities have to be declared. The assumption that this runs counter to the requirements of a professionally exercised mandate was disproven in a recent study which came to the conclusion that the side-activities of German MPs do not impede the fulfillment of parliamentary functions (Behr 2012). A core argument was that those deputies who list (paid or unpaid) activities outside their mandate spend on average nine hours on them; given the reported workload of an MP, this leaves more than sufficient time for the mandate—indeed more than most jobs outside politics demand.

In France, the situation is blurred once more because of the accumulation of mandates. MPs tend to reduce their effective presence in Paris in order to be available in their constituencies and/or for their other political function(s). When asked how much time they have to be present at the National Assembly to correctly perform their duties, the answer for 65.3 percent of the French MPs was: less than three days a week. Only 34.7 percent of the French deputies spent more than three days at the National Assembly.

The concentration of work in Paris is a good illustration of the time constraints on French MPs' legislative activities. At the same time, it also presents a clear picture of a path of professionalization which is different from the German one. For two-thirds of the French MPs, as few as 2.5 days a week were enough to perform their legislative duties. Some scholars have spoken about a battle against time (Couderc 1981) and this is really what we are dealing with. MPs tend to minimize their presence in Paris in order to be present at the local level (both to perform other local offices and/or to be there as an MP). Moreover, the French CITREP data show that MPs tend to play on the confusion allowed by their multiple offices.

In this sense the accumulation of mandates plays an important part in the process of professionalization and appears to be a useful tool: With their presence at multiple levels the MPs, literally "drain" the local political field and avoid the entrance of contenders.

Risk of Professionalization in Germany, Revolution in France

Our findings shed light on the process of professionalization at work among the members of the German Bundestag and the French Assemblée nationale. For the vast majority of them politics has become their main occupation and their primary, if not sole, form of paid professional activity, supported by the evolution of their financial and material conditions in the two parliaments.

It also became clear again that access to the National Assembly and the Bundestag is reserved primarily for a certain type of politician, well educated and with specific previous occupations. Despite this, French MPs are reluctant to claim the label "professional" for themselves but they are also unwilling to decline it; their German colleagues accept much more readily that they are professionals.

We have by far not exhausted the data collected during the CITREP project. But we are ready now to suggest that it is possible to distinguish two patterns of professionalization in Germany and France: While the features of our two populations are quite comparable, the MPs' political paths differ. The German one is "parliament centered", whereas the French one is "constituency centered". There are no indicators in Germany that engagement in the district is a direct prerequisite for advancing on the career ladder; deputies have a concrete choice between making a career in the structures of their parliamentary party and staying the

"Wahlkreiskönig", the king of the constituency. While the quality of the Bundestag as a working parliament profits from this, the danger is increased that deputies become too separated from the citizens. This danger is certainly counteracted by institutional factors like the electoral system and the candidate nomination procedures; at least as important is the factor that the MPs themselves understand very well the complex relation between the requirements of representation in the district and in parliament and act accordingly—as professionals.

The picture is different for France: With only a limited number of high-level positions in the parliament and the phenomenon of the "cumul des mandats", it is only rational that French MPs concentrate on the work in the district and devote, for instance, much more time to office hours than their German counterparts. The decentralization process which has devolved many prerogatives to local governments has accentuated this trend. It has also been bolstered by the increased financial independence of MPs, which in turn also depended on the "cumul des mandats" that opened up several sources of remuneration to be received at once.[15] Given all this, it is only too obvious why the ban on the "cumul" which took effect in June 2017—after passionate debates and strong resistance from some deputies as well as senators during the discussion of the bill in 2014—has already led to a true revolution for French elected representatives. Indeed, after the elections, 327 of the 577 MPs had a local mandate and 223 of them were in contravention of the law.[16] Meanwhile 184 deputies have chosen between their seat in parliament and their local mandate, giving up their mayor's position.[17] Altogether, it is still difficult to get a comprehensive picture of the situation in the newly elected National Assembly, but the scope of the reconfiguration has already caused a redistribution of power within the French political system (not to mention some changes in MPs' practices). Whether this will eventually turn the Assemblée nationale into a Bundestag-style working parliament depends on many factors and opens up highly interesting issues of comparison in the future.

NOTES

1. In German political science, Dietrich Herzog did the pioneering work on politics as a profession (1975, 1982).
2. This observation of Best and Jahr (2006, 66) is based on the assertion that the holders of democratic mandates have become a socially and politically closed collective group. This not only requires further empirical proof,

theoretically it also seems to overlook the logic of representative democracy and the principle of division of labor.

3. Special attention has been paid to this question during the last French presidential campaign in 2017, given the accusations of fictitious employment against the right-wing candidate François Fillon regarding his wife. Until a bill was passed in August 2017, proposed by the new French government, it was possible for French MPs, contrary to other Western democracies, to hire their spouse/husband or members of their families. In those cases, it was not possible to allocate more than half of the financial allowance (i.e. 4700 €).

4. The allowance for MPs was originally created in 1789.

5. The exact amount is € 5059 for MPs elected before June 2012 and € 5359 for MPs elected after 2012 (the difference between the two groups being the rate of pension contribution).

6. Drucksache 17/12500 of the German Bundestag; the report of the Commission is also published in Schüttemeyer and Schmidt-Jortzig 2014.

7. In detail: 12 percent with Bac+2 and 15.8 percent with a higher degree. Statistics from Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (INSEE) 2014.

8. There are certainly sectors of which there are no representatives in parliament; whether or to what extent this has effects on representation of specific interests is not relevant in the context of this chapter.

9. It should be noted, however, that this extreme renewal rate varies immensely among the parties: 94 percent in La France Insoumise, a movement of the extreme left, and 90 percent in the case of the new center majority party, La République en Marche (with 6 and 10 percent respectively of defectors from traditional left-wing parties), whereas the established party PS (Parti socialiste) scores 10 percent newcomers and LR (Les Républicains) 37 percent.

10. In 1985, the "super cumul" of more than three mandates was forbidden. The rule was quite simple: The number of elective mandates was limited to two, even though not all mandates were taken into account. In 2000, this regulation was confirmed and its scope extended. The laws of 1985 and 2000 had a perverse effect: They made the holding of two mandates the rule (Mény 1992).

11. This plays, for instance, an important role in a debate that comes up now and again in Germany about the "Nebentätigkeit" and "Nebeneinnahmen" of MPs, their activities and income beside the mandate.

12. Some questions were not asked during the CITREP project in France since the research team already had data available from the LEGIPAR project (Parliamentary Legitimation in France and Europe).

13. LEGIPAR questions were submitted to 227 of 577 MPs during face-to-face interviews in 2009 and 2010. The wording of this question was: "Where do you experience more satisfaction?"

14. LEGIPAR data. The relation is weak but statistically significant (Cramer's V 0.122, Chi = 0.085).

15. The law fixes a ceiling for the amount of remuneration an elected representative may receive. This ceiling corresponds to one-and-a-half times the sum of the parliamentary remuneration.

16. MPs with accumulated mandates had 30 days after their election in June 2017 to comply with the new regulation.

17. The law of 2014 forbids any cumul between an executive position at the local level and a seat in parliament. It is still possible for an MP to be a "simple" municipal councilor (or a provincial or regional councilor) but not a mayor or deputy mayor (or president or vice-president of a province or a region).

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Available, Accessible and Ready to Listen: MPs' District Work

Sven T. Siefken and Olivier Costa

What Richard Fenno (2007, 41) has formulated for the United States applies to France and Germany, too: "The home connections of our elected politicians are understudied and underreported elements of our representational system of government." To fully understand the workings of representative democracy in action, it is necessary to look not only at what is happening in the chamber but at the other side of the coin as well (inspired by Dye 1976): What do MPs do in their districts? Why do they do it? And what difference does it make?

This chapter deals with the first two questions. It takes the perspective of MPs as rational actors. Most see themselves as professional politicians and care about their career and their reelection. They are acting within the rules of the electoral game and pay much attention to their constituents—especially when elected in single-member districts (Mayhew 1974; Fenno 1978). Thus, they must not only represent the interests of a territory and

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of its people in their parliamentary work, but also be present and active on the ground to develop and uphold contacts with voters. MPs may especially seek a personal vote to escape from national electoral trends and aim at getting reelected even when their party is suffering from bad results at the national level. In other words: District work is highly relevant for MPs.

Comparative research has a particular strength for investigating these questions. It can look beyond individual level variables of MPs and at the interaction with systemic characteristics that lead to particular incentives for political actors (Carey and Shugart 1995; Pilet et al. 2012). It may also help us to learn about the consequences of institutional design for representation.

Four Reasons for the Relevance of Districts

Institutions are rules, both formal and informal. They structure the behavior of political actors (Lowndes and Roberts 2013). Yet, they do leave room for individual decisions and strategic action, as they do not fully determine what happens in politics (Scharpf 1997). Such a neo-institutional understanding is also applicable to parliament, particularly to the parliamentary parties and individual MPs. Using it helps to reduce complexity in comparative studies.

In France and Germany, parliamentary districts are important institutions for four reasons: (1) MPs are elected there and (2) candidates are nominated, (3) districts are a source of information in political decision-making and (4) they provide a forum for political communication. The institutional settings of the two political systems lead us to differing expectations about MP behavior, which are checked with empirical data from observations and interviews.[1]

The Electoral Base

Germany has 299 electoral districts that are adjusted in every electoral period for changes in the population. In each of these, one MP is elected by a simple majority vote ("direct mandate"). At least 299 more seats are filled through the party list in each federal state ("list mandate"). After the votes are cast, the total share of mandates is calculated according to proportional representation and all direct mandates are taken off the total tally. So the electoral law in Germany is really one of proportional representation with an element of majority vote added to it—and this element

leads to the importance of the district for the MPs: Whoever wins a direct mandate there has a parliamentary seat for sure. This basic setting of the electoral system has clear incentives for German MPs running for a direct mandate: They must take care of the potential voters in their district. The same is true for candidates for list mandates: To an overwhelming degree they run for direct mandates simultaneously or in alternation during their political careers (Manow 2012). This leads to a "contamination" of the differing incentives for the two mandate types (Ferrara et al. 2005, 44). Empirical studies on committee assignment (Stratmann and Baur 2002), campaign strategies (Gschwend and Zittel 2012) and the presentation of self (Marcinkiewicz and Tepe 2012) found some differences along the "mandate divide"; others stress the opposite (Heinz 2010).

The French electoral code establishes 577 districts. They were last changed in 2010 to take into account demographic developments and to provide representation for French citizens located in foreign countries. This decision was part of the constitutional reform of 2008: 11 constituencies were created, according to the number of French citizens residing in foreign countries. Some districts are huge, like the one that includes Eastern Europe, Asia and Oceania (49 countries), while some are quite small, like the ones made up by Benelux, and by Switzerland and Liechtenstein. This reform was criticized, since a representation of French citizens living abroad already existed through the Senate. So today, the continental area of France (including Corsica) has 556 districts; 10 are in overseas territories; 11 are "international" districts. The electoral system is first-past-the-post with two rounds and a threshold of 12.5 percent of registered voters for access to the second round: The runoff may thus involve three or even four candidates. This electoral system provides a strong reason for MPs to be very active at the local level. It is further strengthened by the tradition of French politicians to accumulate elected positions ("cumul des mandats") such as mayor, regional councilor, departmental councilor and MP—around 85 percent of MPs currently have more than one mandate (Dewoghélaëre et al. 2006; Costa 2013).

Bringing together those basic characteristics of the political systems in France and Germany and the incentives they provide for MPs' district work leads to the first expectation: (1) German MPs focus on their district work and the general population there in order to retain their seats in parliament. French MPs focus even more on their district and constituents because of the "cumul des mandats" and the dominant hunt for a personal vote.

The Place for Nomination

Whoever wants to be elected, first needs to be nominated as a candidate. In Germany, the nomination of candidates for direct mandates is conducted in each electoral district by the local party organization, either through a convention of delegates or by an assembly of all party members. Local party officials can play an important role in supporting or preventing candidacies (Reiser 2011, 255). The party lists meanwhile are assembled in party conventions at the Land level. Political practice shows that to achieve a spot high on the party list, one precondition is to run for a direct mandate in a district. For example, in the 15th electoral period, 94 percent of MPs who were elected through the party list had also run for a direct mandate. Candidacy in the district is thus a "bottleneck" for all MPs (Schüttemeyer and Sturm 2005, 548). Rare exceptions to this rule are high-ranking officials such as ministers or party leaders who do not seek a direct mandate. It is clear that these mechanisms lead to a very strong incentive for all MPs to keep up good relations with the local party organization if they want to be renominated—both its leadership and the regular members.

From a formal point of view, it is not necessary to have the support of a political party in France to run for an election: There are thus "independent" candidates, even for parliamentary elections. However, with only rare exceptions, successful candidates belong to a political party. They need to declare their affiliation to a party—44 are currently registered—to receive public campaign finance. This means that all MPs are connected to a party, even if some are not members of it and are only enjoying its support for the election. Once elected, most MPs pertain to a political group. As of January 2016, there are only eleven non-attached members in the Assemblée nationale who were excluded from their group after the election. They are far-right candidates, members of the Front National or close to it, or have decided to remain non-attached.

In France, the nomination process involves both national and local party organizations: The local party chooses the candidates who are preferred at the local level, especially by the party leaders in the area. But a national "investiture committee" makes the final decision. Through it, the party can impose some general objectives, derived from legal constraints (e.g., gender parity of candidates: parties need to present an equal number of women and men, otherwise their public funding is reduced) or internal objectives (e.g., representation of visible minorities, generational

renewal, balance between party wings, deals with other parties, the need to find a safe district for party leaders, etc.). The national parties can thus impose candidates on their local organizations (the "parachutage"). Since the whole process of selection lacks transparency, it is impossible to quantify this phenomenon. However, the imposition of a candidate by the national organs of the party concerns at most five percent of the districts (Dolez and Hastings 2003). In some cases, this leads to a dissenting candidature.

The characteristics of the nomination procedure lead to the second expectation: (2) German MPs tend to their local party organization in particular as it is central to their renomination and plays an important role in election campaigns. Because of their own preeminence in the constituency and of the centralized process of candidate selection, French MPs do not take much care of their local party organization.

A Source of Information

The Bundestag has a clear internal division of labor along policy lines. The parliamentary committee structure mirrors the federal ministries; in turn, the committees are reflected by working groups of each party in parliament. For parliamentary work, there is a high reliance on the respective policy specialists within each party. This leads to the expectation that district work serves as a mere complimentary—or unloved duty—for electoral rather than for substantive reasons.

In France, MPs are, generally speaking, not very involved in parliamentary work and are more focused on constituency activities (Costa and Kerrouche 2009). This is due to many factors: electoral rules, a general weakness of parliament, the political culture and the accumulation of mandates. The Assemblée nationale is in plenary session nine months a year, but most MPs are only present in the chamber on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Another restraint comes from the number of committees: There are only eight standing committees, limiting the capacity of the Assemblée nationale to scrutinize governmental action and to contribute to lawmaking (Kerrouche 2006). While the majority of MPs clearly prefer and give priority to district work (Costa et al. 2012), some deputies are nevertheless policy experts, deeply involved in parliament. Those MPs—around 25 percent of the total—are making use of their professional skills (e.g., as medical doctors, engineers, academics, lawyers), political experience (former ministers, chairs of committees) or networks (former members of

ministerial cabinets, high civil servants, businesspeople) to take charge of most legislative and control activities.

The third expectation (3) is that district work and parliamentary work are somewhat disconnected in both countries. They are not directly related but are better understood as "two sides of the coin" of being a German MP. In France, for most MPs, there are only weak connections between work in parliament and in the districts.

An Arena for Communication

Finally, district work can be looked at from a communication point of view: It allows for a more personal and better-targeted interaction between citizens and MPs than is possible on the national level. However, it needs to be noted that in Germany each district has around 250,000 inhabitants. Adding the list mandates gives a ratio of one MP per 125,000 inhabitants. If an MP wanted to spend 10 minutes with each of his constituents during an eight-hour workday, it would take him 3.5 years and leave no time for anything else. But an offer for personal interaction can be made to all those who are interested, and the local news media as well as new media can be employed to broaden the reach (Zittel 2008). This is particularly relevant in light of the general diagnosis that the logic of news-making predominates in the political process. The possibilities of direct contact and social media have been seen as a way to limit the powers of journalists and allow for direct interaction between citizens and MPs.

In France, the ratio between inhabitants and MPs is similar to Germany, around one to 115,000. Because of the deep involvement of deputies in the constituency and the "cumul des mandats", most MPs are well-known actors at the local political level. As shown by Fenno (1978) for the US, MPs perceive their constituencies as a set of concentric circles, composed of actors who are more and more remote from the deputy, reaching from "the personal constituency: the intimates", "the primary constituency: the strong supporters" and "the re-election constituency: the supporters" to "the geographical constituency: the district" (Fenno 1978, 1). They do not try to communicate with everybody in the constituency, but with key actors, especially with those who strongly support them and try to convince people around them to do the same.

This leads to the fourth and fifth expectation: (4) German MPs regularly use the mass media to communicate with their constituents and

uphold frequent contacts with local journalists. French MPs pay much attention to media in their constituency and uphold frequent contacts with local journalists. (5) German MPs employ social media to interact directly with citizens and reduce reliance on media communication. After a period of adaptation, French MPs also employ social media to communicate directly with citizens.

Findings About MPs in Their District

The Definition of the District

Before diving into the details of MP activity, a few words about "the district" are in order: In the sample for Germany all but one MP (i.e., 66 of 67) did indeed run for a direct mandate. So even though only about half (52%) of the MPs in the sample were directly elected, 98 percent are rooted in a clearly identifiable district. For organizational reasons, German MPs are usually assigned a larger area in addition to their electoral district, so that each party has an MP responsible where no mandate has been won, too—55 percent of MPs in the sample have such a "Betreuungsbereich" (area of service) to take care of. Thus one has to bear in mind that for the German case district work is not necessarily limited to the geographical boundaries of the electoral district itself.

The districts in France are quite alike regarding population, but their geographic size can be extremely different, whether they are rural or urban. In the first case, MPs are confronted with very vast territories, made of numerous villages that are difficult to cover. In the second, the district may correspond to a small area of a city that can be covered by walking; Paris (excluding the suburbs) is, for instance, made up of 18 districts. One French MP stressed this discrepancy:

> I am elected in a rural zone that includes 193 towns. This means that my job has nothing to do with the one of an urban MP, elected in Paris or Marseille. This is a major difference: I need to drive one hour and a half to go across my district from northwest to southeast. (French MP [not listed], Union pour un mouvement populaire, UMP)

Mirroring this statement, a German MP from Berlin adds the perspective on problem variation in her district:

> On the one hand, you have huge apartment blocks here, which makes home visits very different from doing that in single-family houses in a rural area. On the other hand, you also have many more differences between old and young, poor and rich … it is the biggest challenge to consolidate the approach to the differing target audiences. (German MP Eva Högl, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD)

Constituency service is thus very varied. The situation of French MPs elected in overseas territories is of a third kind, since they experience specific connection problems and are not able to travel back and forth every week like other MPs do. The behavior of MPs is also different depending on their personal situation. For an MP cumulating the mandate with a position of mayor, the constituency work inevitably gets mingled with local responsibilities. Such MPs will also benefit from their action as local leaders for parliamentary elections and enjoy the support of a local team and, very often, of the agents of the local authority they are leading. On the contrary, an MP who does not cumulate will have to undertake a different approach to constituency work, costing a lot in terms of travel, time and staff.

Focus of the District Work

The observations conducted for this study, as well as previous studies (Costa and Kerrouche 2007), show that all French MPs play an important role at the local level: Even parliamentary leaders are obliged to do constituency work, since voters do not care very much about what is going on in Paris (Costa et al. 2012). All deputies devote a lot of attention to the local level where they act more as entrepreneurs than as representatives of the French people or of parliament.

Asking MPs what are the most important things they do in their district, yielded six groups of answers (see Fig. 3.1). Serving as a contact person who is ready for exchange and stays in touch with the people is mentioned most often. This is followed by listening to the people, as one German MP described:

> I try to get as many impressions from real life here and carry them to Berlin in order to make them a base for my political decisions and my political work there. (German MP Josip Juratovic, SPD)
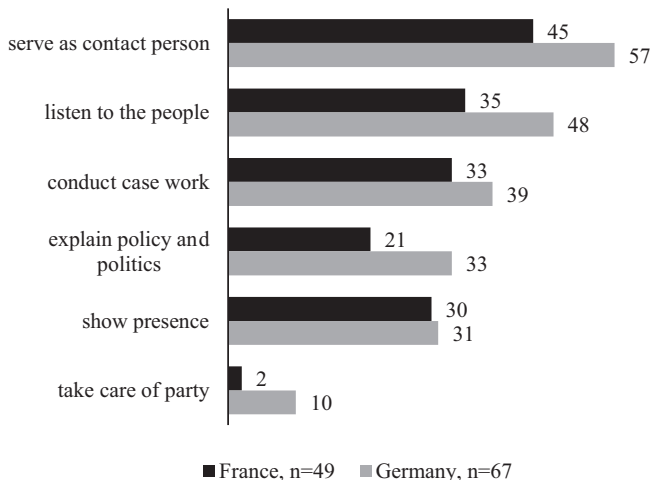
Fig. 3.1 Most important things French and German MPs say they do in the districts

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (open question): "How would you describe your work in the district? What are the most important things you do here?" Multiple answers were possible

And a French MP formulates:

> For me, constituency work is essentially about listening to people and meeting them. Then, people are able to explain their problems, and my work is to try to develop solutions, not necessarily to find some myself, but to mobilize my networks. (French MP A24, Socialiste, républicain et citoyen, SRC)

Both of these groups—contact person and listener—focus on gathering information and soliciting input. The direct counterpart of this bottom-up approach is explaining policy and politics: A third of German MPs stress the importance of actively taking a stand, while only a fifth of French MPs mention this kind of leadership activity. Says one German MP:

> What an MP always has to do is to explain the policies and politics we make in Berlin. (German MP Michael Kretschmer, Christlich Demokratische Union, CDU)

More moderately, some MPs are using metaphors such as serving as "translator" or "mediator". One French MP describes himself as an "animator":

> I feel like a territory animator in my district. As I see it, this function is to smooth out the proceedings. The facilitator should bring the right answers, express the needs, and tell people what is possible and what is not. (French MP A37, UMP)

So MPs in both countries see the focus of their district work as collecting input from the people. But the output-oriented tasks also play a role there: helping individuals and explaining the political process in the national parliament and its results.

The Curious Case of Casework

A high number of MPs stress casework, i.e., helping constituents in personal matters. Some quotes by German MPs illustrate their role orientation:

> I get active upon request: If there are any problems, sorrows or needs in my district, I will try to deal with them. (German MP Stefan Liebich, Die Linke)

> The most important thing in the district is to work off the citizens' requests—concrete requests that are brought forth during office hours or in personal talks with me. (German MP Jens Ackermann, Freie Demokratische Partei, FDP)

> I am responsible for the people here, in all their facets, mostly with a federal point of view, but also very much in concrete counseling. (German MP Dieter Wiefelspütz, SPD)

In the German federal system with much responsibility for policy implementation resting in the states and municipalities, there are not many issues where this is to be expected. Often, MPs could easily "pass the buck" and confer requests to some other level of representation such as members of the Landtage (state parliaments) or city councils—but apparently they do not. Instead, MPs seem ready to take up the task, as has been witnessed during our observations, too: Some MPs were providing legal counsel—even picking up the phone to call a citizen's lawyer; some were

lending a helping hand in filling out social insurance or unemployment forms; others were giving advice about a visit to the immigration authority or on applying for subsidies.

Similarly, French MPs put great emphasis on casework, but they are not all happy with this task and with the idea of becoming a kind of social worker. Some excerpts illustrate the tensions:

> I accept absolutely all requests for appointments. Not necessarily the individual ones; they are too numerous: I delegate those to my assistants. But every week, I devote half a day to meet people that want to discuss personal concerns. (French MP A3, SRC)

> All the people that have a problem turn to their MP, for very various matters: jobs, housing, with the administration, with official documents. (French MP A2, UMP)

> I would say that between two-thirds and three-quarters of interview requests come from constituents that want to talk about their personal problems. (French MP A49, UMP)

> Sometimes, we are really confronted with socially disabled people, or even sick people. Very often, I would like to be able to write a medical prescription rather than to give advice. There are many people that are deeply depressed or even psychotic. [This MP is a Medical Doctor.] (French MP A34, SRC)

Apparently, the casework load is even higher in France than in Germany, leading to greater involvement of MP staff in it—not only in the "back office" but in "front office" contacts with citizens, too. Most French MPs have at least two assistants in the district that take care of such contacts. They often do the talks with citizens while the MP focuses on meetings with organizations—local authorities, companies, associations, trade unions and so on.

In general, the uses and pitfalls of casework deserve further investigation, considering recent warnings that this activity can be overwhelming and needs a much more strategic approach by parliaments and individual MPs than is often taken (IPU and UNDP 2012, 7).

That casework load is higher in France than in Germany can be due to the more immediate electoral connection. But it may also be a conse-

quence of the widely practiced "cumul des mandats". Not only the frequency but also the organization of conducting casework varies a lot between the two countries. Apparently, both institutional and cultural expectations play a role for the differences.

Activities in the District

Judging by the observations, it is quite clear where German MPs go if they want to meet the people in their districts (see Fig. 3.2). Visits to public agencies are the most frequent and make up about a fifth of all events observed: meetings with mayors, visiting schools and kindergartens, military facilities and social insurance agencies and many others. This is followed by internal party meetings and visits to private enterprises.

Comparing what German MPs said and what they actually do, the role of party work seems to be withheld in the interview statements, more so than in earlier studies (Patzelt 1996, 484; Patzelt and Algasinger 2001, 514). Looking not at the number or percentage of events (as in Fig. 3.2) but at the share of time they occupy, internal party meetings actually score highest: 18.8 percent of the time was spent in internal party meetings, just short of visits to public agencies (19%). To be sure, the strong party orientation of MPs is not surprising in a parliamentary democracy where parties provide an important linkage between society and the political system. It supports the formulated expectation (2) based on the role local parties have in (re)nominating MPs. That MPs are reluctant to admit to the high share of their party work is equally unsurprising: Germany has a tradition of contempt towards parties and a strongly declining number of party members in the past decades.

Summing up the observations in the French districts, the results are different in some respects: Overall, French MPs do the same things as German MPs but with another emphasis. The main activity is office hours, during which MPs meet all kinds of constituents and representatives. The other key actions are participation in social and political events, and visits to associations and public agencies (see Fig. 3.2). Meanwhile, their involvement in party meetings is very limited, clearly illustrating the relative weakness of local party organizations and the independence of French MPs from them. This fits with expectation (2).

Communication is a major part of French MPs' constituency work: participating in inaugurations, public events, conferences and direct contacts with constituents, civil society representatives and local leaders—be
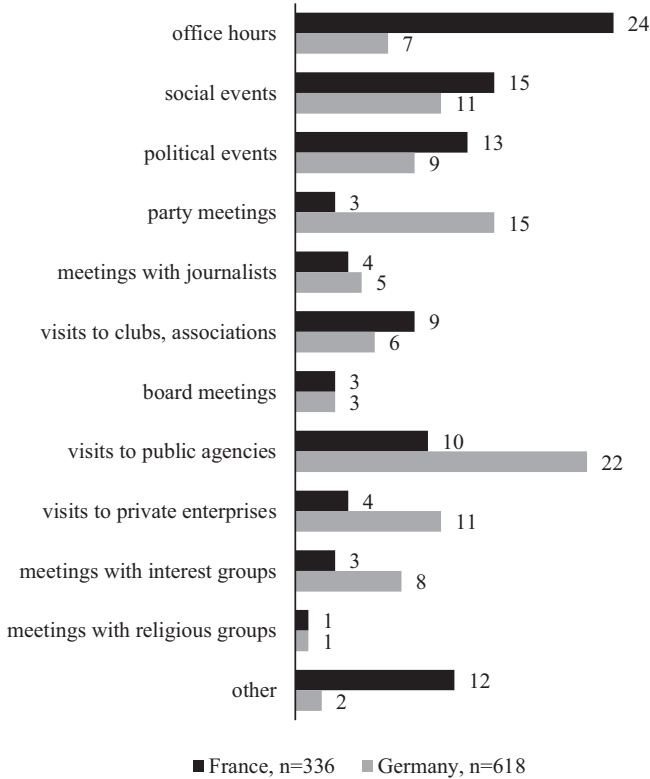
Fig. 3.2 Type of events attended by French and German MPs

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Observations of MPs

Notes: Entries are percent of the events attended by MPs

they politicians, businesspeople or trade unionists. It is more difficult for French MPs to communicate their activities in the chamber: To do so, they are encouraged to focus on those issues that are relevant for the district.

> I try to handle national issues in a local way by talking with people. I give some conferences, organize thematic meetings. (French MP A47, UMP)

It is also clear that French MPs are far less involved than Germans in visits to public agencies. The members of the Bundestag often play a

protocol function as representatives of the federal state; those of the Assemblée nationale are acting more like individual entrepreneurs, "notables" strongly established in their district.

The role behavior of MPs in France and Germany varies quite a bit. German MPs extend the style of working parliamentarians to their district activities—albeit with a broader policy focus beyond their immediate field of parliamentary specialization. French MPs, however, conduct a more ceremonial and presidential style of district work.

Duration and Content of District Events

German MPs neither rush in and out nor do they usually sit back and relax in district events: The average duration of the observed events is 1.6 hours, and a quarter of them last more than two (see Fig. 3.3). After staying for only 20 minutes at a neighborhood association's summer party on a day with a very crowded schedule, one German MP explained her view on this:

■ France, n=336   ■ Germany, n=618
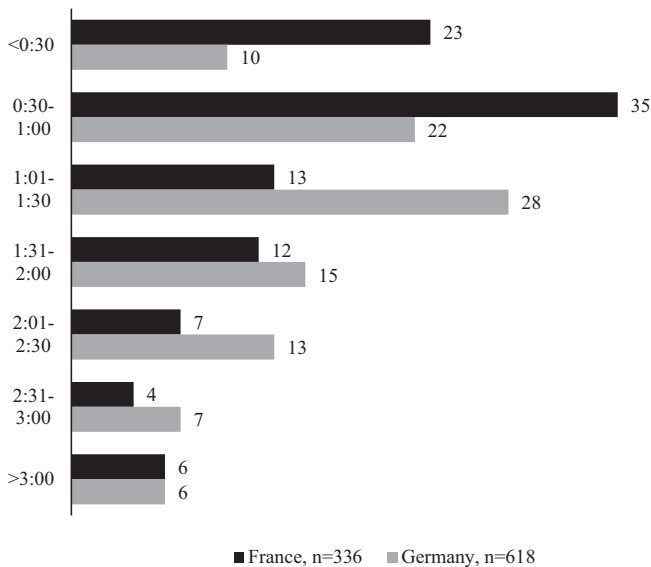
Fig. 3.3   Duration of events attended by French and German MPs

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Observations of MPs

Notes: Entries are percent of the events attended by MPs

Usually, I don't stay so briefly. If you don't take the time, it looks like you are only stopping by—just like the cliché politician. (German MP, SPD)

There is great variety in the duration of different types of events attended by German MPs. For example, party events and political events take 50 percent longer—on average more than two hours—than visits to public and private sector organizations, which take a little over 80 minutes on average.

The time French MPs devote to each event in the district is more limited: In most cases, it is less than one hour. Complaints about the lack of time appear as a common thread in many testimonies:

I would like to have more time. I feel that the time passes too fast, but I must manage that; it is a question of organization. We are always on the go and there is always time that goes inexorably; we always have the feeling that we are not able to do all the things we would like to. (French MP A10, UMP)

What takes me more time, in the district, is what I will do this evening: I will go to the general assembly of a sports association. There will be hundreds of people; I will go there just to be there. This takes time, because in ceremonies, in receptions, people come to talk to you about their problems, but there is not necessarily somebody to take notes. Thus, I have to set up appointments and meet them again privately … And, when it's professionals, I cannot limit the meeting to half an hour. (French MP A47, UMP)

French MPs need to find a balance between their wish to save time and the necessity to be respectful with their constituents; thus, events rarely last less than half an hour—only in 23 percent of the cases.

The share of different subjects discussed during each observed event with a political content was ranked on a five-point scale. The analysis shows that German MPs put a lot of attention on the local situation while in their district (see Fig. 3.4): 49 percent of the observations had a large or very large portion of them. This is followed by what was expected to be the number one subject: national affairs (35 percent).

In all, MPs of the German Bundestag work to a great extent beyond their immediate formal competencies—thus acting as multilevel representatives in the German federal system. At the same time, data show that
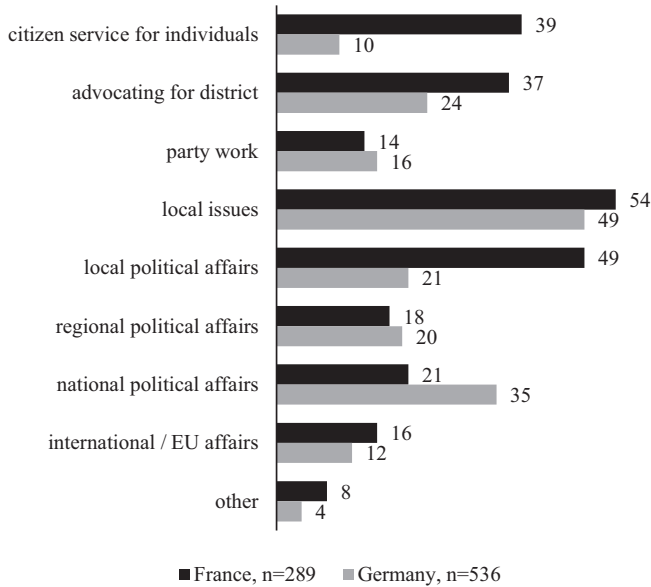
Fig. 3.4 Subjects covered during events with a political content in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Observations of MPs

Notes: Entries are expressed as a percentage of the political issues discussed by MPs (large share, very large share)

they take their role as representatives of a geographically defined district seriously and pay attention to the special issues there. This fits expectation (1) based on electoral incentives.

For French MPs, the focus on the local situation (i.e., regarding events that are specific to the district, such as construction projects or requests for funding) is even stronger in their district communication. The local situation is predominant among the political topics addressed in public events. This is followed by local affairs, i.e., the way the district is impacted by general phenomena such as unemployment, insecurity or pollution. MPs are more or less constrained to focus on their constituency, since their constituents consider them as resource persons and political entrepreneurs who have solid political, economic and social networks.

Both in France and in Germany, MPs spend a lot of their district time on local issues. They can thus be understood as actors in multilevel processes of representation.

Work in the District and Work in Parliament

An interesting result comes up when looking at how work in the district and the MPs' specialization in parliament are related. District work was expected to have little importance for the policy experts' legislative work in a system with a highly differentiated division of labor, as expressed in expectation (3). But surprisingly, German MPs do not want to miss district work: When asked, how important it is for their work in parliament, 66 percent of MPs classified it as very important, 20 percent said it was of medium importance and only 14 percent said it was not all that important. The follow-up question about the reverse direction of influence ("How does your expertise in parliament influence your district activities?") was answered ambiguously and shows a less clear pattern: 47 percent replied that their specialization in parliament has a strong influence on their district work, 31 percent said it has little influence and 23 percent saw a medium influence.

Apparently, in Germany contacts in the district provide an important source of knowledge and expertise for MPs and their parliamentary work—it may confront MPs with new information, broaden their horizon generally and give important clues about the emergence of new problems and challenges in policy implementation (Siefken and Schüttemeyer 2013). With regard to their district work, MPs have been called "input specialists" (von Oertzen 2006, 254) as they bring information and impulses into parliament. This can also play into the parliamentary control function by equipping individual MPs with the information to challenge the policy experts and the leadership of their own party (Schindler and Siefken 2013). Empirically however, little is known about the importance of district work in developing policy expertise and exercising the parliamentary control function.

When asked about their priorities, French MPs ascribe much importance to constituency service. This led Costa and Kerrouche (2009) to propose a "dual typology" of French MPs' representational roles. Based on variables such as political and social capital, personal ambition, expertise and the conception of general interest, each MP plays two roles: one at the local level and one at the national level. These appear quite disconnected, since MPs' resources at the local level are not always convertible into the Assembly, and the other way around. This local tropism of French MPs was also obvious in comparative work about French, Belgian and Portuguese MPs (Pilet et al. 2012). French MPs, like Germans, insist that

their district work provides them with an important source of knowledge and expertise for their parliamentary work. 71 percent regarded it as very important, 23 percent as of medium importance and only six percent as of little importance. It can be seen as a way to legitimize their focus on the local level and, especially, to justify the "cumul des mandats". According to many MPs, being elected at the local level is the only way to get information on what citizens think and expect. The data show MPs say that there is a strong connection between their local and national activities.

> As an MP … you can sometimes discover inconsistencies in the law we have enacted, and problems in the way it is implemented. It is important, since nobody else than us can say to the ministries that the law cannot be implemented in that way … We are really an essential link between citizens and the ministries and departments, and can say 'wait, we did not want that' [when we wrote the law]. (French MP A12, UMP)

It is noteworthy that only six percent of the French MPs regard their parliamentary work as having little importance for their district activities, while in Germany the number is five times higher. This difference may be explained by a higher orientation among French MPs towards "bringing home the bacon", i.e., using parliamentary work to procure benefits for the district.

In both countries, district work and parliamentary work are somewhat separated from each other. The strong policy specialization in Germany does not directly extend to the district where MPs have to serve as generalists with a much broader focus. Yet, they do gather a lot of information and feedback on policy issues which they channel into the parliamentary process. In France, MPs concentrate more on the district in general, and this also extends to the focus on their parliamentary work.

Media Use in the District

MPs' media contacts in the district are not as frequent as expectation (5) had posited (see Fig. 3.5). When asked how often they use different communication channels, newspapers are only mentioned by about half of the German MPs as frequent or very frequent, radio by 9 percent and television by 6 percent. There may be different reasons for this, as some statements from the interviews show:
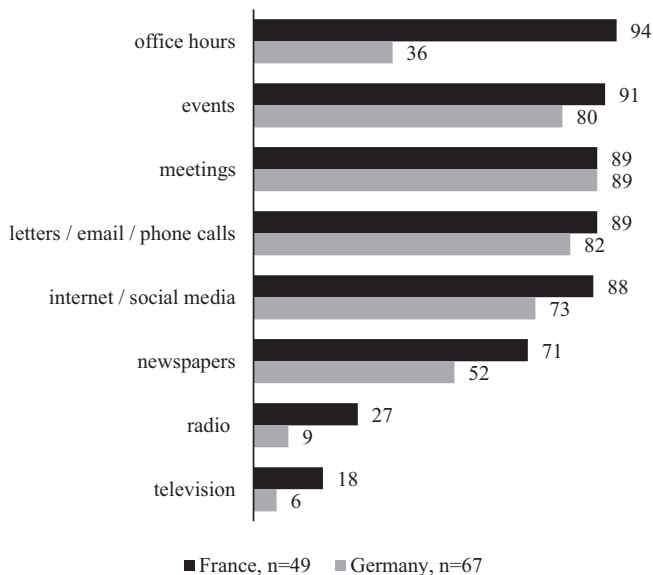
Fig. 3.5 Channels for French and German MPs' district communication

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs

Notes: Entries are percentage points (very often, often)

Item wording: "How do you communicate in your district? Please rate the following channels on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very often)"

> I try to place a short press release of around 20 lines for all appropriate appointments and events. The newspapers usually publish nine out of ten of them … occasionally one might not be printed, but generally they are. (German MP Stephan Thomae, FDP)

That statement was made by the member of a small party in a rural district of Bavaria. Meanwhile a CDU MP from Baden-Württemberg described a very different experience:

> In principle, the newspaper is the central point; but it is very difficult to get mentioned there. I am not happy with this … The newspapers have to fulfill their duty and inform the people. But they do this poorly. Even in local newspapers the focus on entertainment is very high and the information content often low. That has all gotten worse during the last few years. (German MP Josef Rief, CDU)

There might be a relationship with the ongoing concentration of media in Germany, which particularly concerns local newspapers (Röper 2012), but it could also be a consequence of the way MPs organize their media work. Whether the small overall use of media for communication is a conscious decision by MPs, a consequence of lack of professionalization in local press work or follows from characteristics of today's media system is a matter of grave democratic concern and will need to be investigated more.

Most French MPs say that they make very systematic use of the media in their districts, with a clear focus on newspapers and social media. TV and radio are generally less important—and even more so in Germany than in France. This is clearly a result of the difficulty for German MPs to access those media. Constituencies are small, much smaller than the area covered by local and regional TV and radio channels. By contrast, there are many regional newspapers in France that develop several local editions or local pages, and it is quite easy for an MP to access them.

Data on the use of new media show that German practice does not live up to expectation (5), either. When asked about the role of the different communication channels, 98 percent of the interviewed MPs said that they do use new media (homepage, social networks) sometimes, frequently or very frequently. But only 40 percent of MPs explicitly mention Facebook, only 15 percent Twitter and only 6 percent their own blog (see Fig. 3.6). Therefore, while new media are an established element of today's MPs' communication toolkit, they do not replace classical face-to-face interactions in the district.

In the last ten years, French MPs have developed the communication tools that are provided by new technologies: personal websites, social network accounts and electronic newsletters. Like in Germany, there is a discourse on the use of the Internet and social media that seems a bit disconnected from the real behavior of MPs. They all know about the importance and popularity of new media: They consider them as tools of communication that are as important as letters, attending meetings, organization of events or office hours. However, as the interviews show, many MPs are not directly involved in using social media and delegate this task to their assistants. The proportion of MPs who mention that they have a website, Facebook account or Twitter account is quite low (see Fig. 3.6): In France, only 66 percent of MPs declare to have a personal website, which is quite surprising; it seems that many respondents were not even aware that
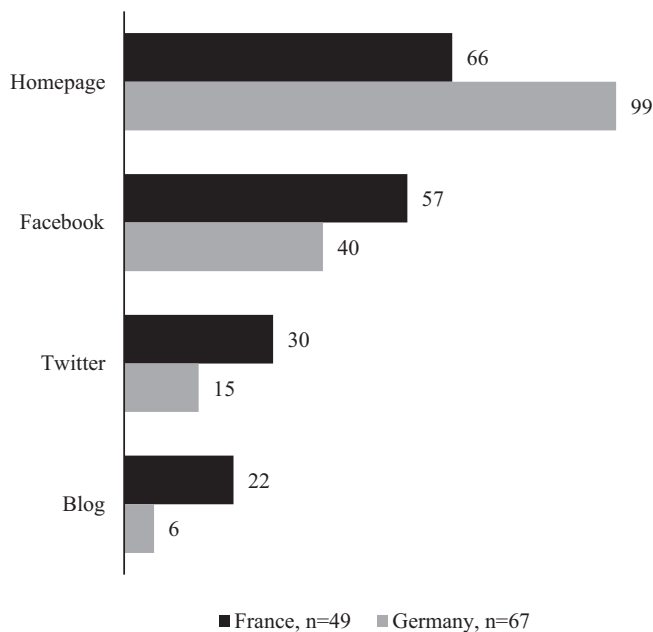
Fig. 3.6 Use of new media mentioned by French and German MPs

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (open question): "Which media are especially important for your district work?" Multiple answers were possible

they had one (nearly all of them do). Even when they have one, it is obvious that only a minority of MPs are personally active on the Internet.

The population survey conducted shows that citizens also make little use of those tools: 94 percent (France) and 89 percent (Germany) say they never use Twitter to get information about politicians and their work; 82 (France) and 85 percent (Germany) say this for Facebook.[2] The lack of citizen use of these new tools has also been shown for election campaigns in Germany (Faas et al. 2011, 185). This does not mean that new media are completely irrelevant for MP communication: They might play a very important role in the two-step flow of political communication to reach and connect with opinion leaders, party members and journalists (see Chap. 6 in this book).

For now, new media do not replace, in any way, traditional forms of communication of MPs in France and Germany or personal interactions with constituents. They are just supplementary tools, used in a complementary way.

COMPARING FRANCE AND GERMANY: EXPECTATIONS MET, DIFFERENCES FOUND

Since the seminal work of Richard Fenno (1978), numerous researchers have shown that district work is a crucial dimension of the parliamentary mandate, at least in non-PR systems. It helps MPs to design "good policies" and it is a condition for them to get reelected or to continue their political career in another institution (Cain et al. 1984; Norton and Wood 1990). Very often, MPs live in their district and have personal ties with their constituency. Several international studies have analyzed how electoral system features influence MPs' constituency orientation in both their attitudes and behaviors. For decades, there have been discussions on whether the central determinant of more attention paid to the constituency is district magnitude (i.e., size of the district) (Mayhew 1974; Fenno 1978; Crisp et al. 2007) or the structure of the ballot (systems allowing or not permitting intraparty choice) (Carey and Shugart 1995; Pilet et al. 2012). The involvement of MPs in their district has also been explored by the literature on parliamentary roles (Blomgren and Rozenberg 2012; Searing 1994; Müller and Saalfeld 1997), which underlines the classical dilemma MPs face to define themselves as representative of their constituency or of the nation as a whole. Several comparative studies have examined what stands behind MPs' focus of representation by looking at the explanatory strength of various factors, such as political goals, career patterns and socialization within the party.

However, there is no universal explanation to account for the degree of involvement of MPs in their constituencies. Brack et al. (2012) have shown that the same variable is present in varying ways in different countries, depending on the institutional and cultural context. And Heitshusen et al. (2005) have underlined the importance of the electoral context. There is thus no typical or standard MP, and no common rules regarding MPs' approaches to representation.

There are indeed too many factors at play, and especially a "cultural" one, which is very difficult to analyze in a systematic way. The only point of consensus in the literature is that institutions play a key role in explaining

the degree of MP involvement in their constituency (Gallagher et al. 2006; Miller et al. 1999; Müller and Saalfeld 1997; Shapiro et al. 2009). Its variations can be referred to numerous institutional factors: the electoral system, the configuration of representative institutions, the multilayered structure of the state, the role and organization of political parties, the electoral context and the type of party system. International comparisons (see for instance Pilet et al. 2012) show that the influence of these factors is, above all, a matter of national configurations. They may have a different, and even contradictory, impact in different countries because of the way they interact with other institutional factors, or even cultural ones—like citizens' perception of parliamentary representation or of citizens' general interest (Shugart et al. 2005).

If the literature predicts a common interest of French and German MPs for constituency work, as well as some differences regarding its degree, it does not help to make predictions regarding the kind of activities undertaken at the local level. Our data show that district work is crucial for both German and French MPs as posited by our first expectation. As professional politicians, they seek reelection, and the electoral systems in both countries provide a strong incentive for district work in order to maximize vote share in the next election. After all, in France it is only the vote in the district that counts for the final result. And in Germany, whoever wins a district has a parliamentary seat for sure.

One way to get in touch with local people in the district is by participating in functions, receptions and ceremonies and to visit local clubs and associations. These activities take place in both countries but are somewhat more pronounced among French MPs. Another very personal approach is office hours where citizens can meet their MP to discuss matters of importance to them. This is also done in both countries, but more so in France than in Germany. Yet while French MPs often delegate this to their district staff, German MPs usually conduct office hours themselves. Both the differences in number and organization of MPs' district office hours might be a consequence of a much higher demand for them in France, which in turn can result from the "cumul des mandats". A member of the national parliament who is also a local city mayor may be perceived by citizens as a legitimate contact person on all kinds of issues. French MPs often purposefully blur their functions (do they speak as MP, as mayor or as regional councilor?) in order to realize economies of scale in the search for a personal vote (Brouard and Kerrouche 2013). Even if district events also strongly deal with local issues in Germany, the overall focus on meeting individual (potential) voters is more pronounced in France.

The higher share of party-related activities in German district work reflects the stronger role of local parties in the nomination process (expectation (2)). In France, local parties play more of an advisory role and are much less important than the national party committee; MPs' behavior in the Assemblée nationale and their involvement with the central organs of the party are thus more vital. For instance, if a party would like to prevent a popular mayor from also running for parliament, the mayor would have to fight that decision by acting at the national level. The observations show that French MPs indeed put little emphasis on local party work, even if they hold a local office and are very influential in their district.

But to be involved at the district level is not only a matter of electoral strategy: MPs in both countries have the feeling that they can be useful in the district to help constituents or support projects, and that their day-to-day contacts with citizens and all kinds of actors provide them with very beneficial information for their parliamentary work. In Germany, MPs are very active as policy specialists in parliament. It was thus expected that MPs would mostly see the district as not directly related to their parliamentary focus (expectation (3)). Yet the observation data—and especially the interview statements—point in another direction: German MPs have a high share of events with public agencies and private enterprises in their districts. Of course, this may also be a means of getting in touch with employees as possible voters, but most meetings are conducted with the leadership personnel and in rather small groups; information seeking is clearly predominant there. Asked directly, German MPs say that they value the information they gather in the district as highly relevant for their parliamentary work.

French deputies meanwhile act mainly as entrepreneurs or "honoraries". They have fewer connections with parties' local organizations and rarely act as representatives of the Assemblée nationale. The share of visits to private or public enterprises is much smaller than events with direct citizen contact. For France, this does support expectation (3) that there are no systematic policy connections between work in parliament and in the district.

In both the German and the French case, the media do not seem to play a key role in MPs' activities. With the exception of some renowned MPs, who can access the national media, most of them focus on meetings, local visits, participations in events, letters, emails and phone calls to communicate with their constituents. They pay little attention to TV and radio—especially in Germany. Newspapers seem more important for MPs,

because they are more accessible, but interviews show that MPs are often frustrated by the difficulty in getting media coverage and by how journalists report on events.

In both countries, there is a very stereotyped discourse on the usefulness of the Internet and social media. The reality is different, and MPs are far less active on social media than expected. They admit that they often delegate this task to their staff, or have Facebook and Twitter accounts or blogs that are not up to date. In sum, the media and new media are tools that do not replace the direct communication of MPs with constituents. Expectations (4) and (5) are not supported.

Overall, most of the expectations based on the institutional incentives of the political systems are met by the observations and interviews. Two factors stand out in particular to explain the difference between France and Germany: the role of party organization and the "cumul des mandats".

However, beyond all these differences that can be tracked back to the variations in the institutional setting of the two countries, there are commonalities that should be noted in aiming to understand representation in modern democracies:

- MPs in France and Germany are active in their district work and spend a substantial amount of time there on a regular basis—and not just during election campaigns.
- This also applies to high-ranking office holders in parliament and government, even though their district time is more limited.
- MPs are usually quite accessible to citizens in their district. Of course, they cannot reach everybody personally, but whoever tries to get in touch with them, seems to get easy access.
- Service responsiveness is not only high in terms of accessibility but also relating to the topics of discussion. Many MPs readily help with any issue, be it in their jurisdiction or not.
- MPs frequently interact with members of parliament and administration across the multiple levels of the states, so they are better understood as multilevel representatives and not just as those at the national level.
- Much of the time in the district is spent by MPs in gathering information rather than presenting their own opinions or providing leadership.

In times when criticism grows about the reach of parliamentary democracy, and there are calls for instruments of more direct participation as a "remedy", coupled with general worries about trends towards post-democratic societies (Crouch 2008), it is helpful to see that, on the ground, MPs are available, accessible and ready to listen. To understand our political systems, these activities ought not to be neglected.

NOTES

1. Some data and arguments from this chapter on the German case have been reported in Siefken 2013.
2. Survey of 1553 citizens in Germany, random sample, for this question in Germany: $N = 1016$.

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Where Is the Party? Party Work and Party Representation in the District

Elisa Deiss-Helbig, Danny Schindler, and Laure Squarcioni

THE ROLE OF PARTY FOR DISTRICT WORK

District work is a complex phenomenon, and there is little room for "the folly of the unitary constituency" (Miler 2010, 16) in deputies' as well as scholars' minds. As pivotal institutions for modern representative democracy, political parties play a crucial role in this respect, too. A special subset of MPs' work on the ground is, therefore, related to their party. Using Fenno's terms, the local party branch can be labeled their "primary constituency", i.e., his or her "strongest supporters" (Fenno 1977, 887). This holds true for a multitude of reasons. First, the local party branch is particularly important as it can have a say in the selection process.

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Moreover, before elections it is part of MP-related campaigning activities—not least by providing human resources. Consequently, deputies ought to be interested, from a strategic point of view, in maintaining good relations to their party in general and its organization at the grassroots level in particular.

Besides, parties are important from a broader systems perspective. Irrespective of the popular thesis of their declining role in contemporary politics, they continue to substantially shape politics (predominantly in countries that can be characterized as "party democracies"). They still perform the function of coordination within the state, within society and between the two; they are the major forces in shaping elections by running campaigns and providing candidates (Katz 2008, 298ff). Specifically, in electoral politics a candidate's party affiliation is seen as one of the most important information shortcuts for voters (see for example Rahn 1993, 473), and candidates or MPs can, therefore, actively take advantage of their party's "brand name" (Müller 2000, 313). In sum, political parties are pivotal actors in elections as well as in the time between elections. Again referring to MPs' district work, it is mostly relevant from that perspective that deputies appear to be the parties' representatives on the ground. Accordingly, they can contribute to the parties' vital linkage function and their key role in the political chain of delegation in Western Europe (Müller 2000, 312, 330).

In light of the continuing prominence of parties in modern democracies this chapter succinctly asks: Where can political parties be located within the reality of MPs' district work? Picking up the two perspectives mentioned at the outset—that is the local party branch as primary constituency and MPs as representatives of their parties who can locally contribute to their linkage function—in the following sections the focus will be on two aspects of the MP-party relationship: First, how MPs are rooted in their local party branches; thus, we will have a closer look at their local party work, i.e., their communication with the party at the grassroots level. Secondly, light will be shed on party representation in the district, which means MPs acting as representatives of their party at the local level. Efforts to deal with these topics are especially relevant since research on (national) MPs and their local parties is slight in France (Sawicki 1988, 13) as well as in Germany, not to speak of comparative analyses of the two countries under observation here.

Parties and District Work: A Theoretical Perspective

Germany and France differ both institutionally and culturally. Consequently, these differences can also shape the contours of the party game on the ground. For instance, Germany's overall institutional design strengthens the role of parties by the fact that they are heterogeneous actors with different subunits that productively link various arenas within the federal state (Renzsch 2000)—which is not as necessary for the French unitary state. Furthermore, in France the president (directly elected by the people) is the most important executive and representational actor, whereas the German chancellor electorally as well as institutionally depends on his or her party and parliamentary party group(s). As concerns cultural factors, there are historic paths of anti-party thinking in both countries (Vaillant and Vogel 2009, 23; Gabriel and Holtmann 2010). Yet, in Germany twice as high a percentage of the electorate are party members (Mair and van Biezen 2001, 9), which should result in a stronger organization on the ground for German parties than their French counterparts. In a nutshell: Using Mair's (2003) differentiation, parties are more important in Germany than in France both as governing actors (organizing and managing government and the institutions of the polity) and as agents of representation (linking society and polity by aggregating and articulating interests).

Electoral System

It is widely known that electoral system effects can shape MPs' political behavior (see, e.g., Mitchell 2000). For our purposes, one question is particularly important: What role does the party play in the deputies' reelection efforts?

The German Bundestag consists of 299 MPs regularly elected by relative majority in single-member districts, plus 299 MPs elected from closed party lists in the states (Länder). This mixed-member proportional system (MMP) provides every voter with two votes (the first ballot to elect a candidate in the district, the second ballot to elect a state party list). Seats in the Bundestag are allocated according to the second ballot by proportional representation. However, most candidates run for office in both ways and pursue both types of mandate simultaneously (see below). As one result, MPs also elected through their party list (but running in the

district) are well advised to be present at the grassroots level. Moreover, it is of utmost importance to notice that district candidates are not known very well as persons when it comes to election campaigns. As Nohlen puts it strongly: "It is not decisive […] who campaigns but the party for which a person campaigns" (Nohlen 2014, 381). From this angle the electoral system provides solid incentives to use and care for the party label but few incentives to cultivate a personal vote (though individual MPs might over-rate their own personal role and use personal vote-getting strategies, e.g., in highly competitive districts). Succinctly, elections in the district (first ballot) are "first and foremost party elections" (Nohlen 2014, 381).

In France, deputies are elected according to a two-ballot majority-plurality system in 577 single-member districts. The absolute majority suffrage is one central reason why the personal character of voting plays an important role and forces MPs to have strong local roots (Thiébault 1988, 85). It should be emphasized, though, that no consensus exists among scholars about the (ir)relevance of party identification to voting behavior in France. Therefore, the benefit of playing the party ticket in electoral campaigns is not clear. Related to that point, Costa and Kerrouche (2009, 227) underscore that the French voting system makes campaigning by MPs "a clear matter of people, rather than just ideas". Yet, at the same time scholarly debate points to the strong bipolarization of the party system of the Fifth Republic which also influences the relationship between deputies and their (at least national) party (Pütz 2000, 91). Additionally, the type of "notable" who does not need his party because of his strong local roots is challenged by the partisan type who has to move up the party hierarchy in order to pursue a successful political career (Pütz 2000, 91ff). Regardless of such recent developments, however, from an electoral system's perspective, French MPs are not necessarily encouraged to have a strong relationship with their (local) party as long as their nomination does not depend on local/county party organizations.

Candidate Selection Procedures

Candidate selection is one of the main functions parties perform in most contemporary democracies (Gallagher 1988, 3). In particular two features of candidate nomination can have an impact on the role of party in this regard: the inclusiveness of the entity that selects the candidates (on a continuum from the whole electorate to one single leader) and the level at which the selection takes place (centralized or decentralized) (Rahat and

Hazan 2001, 301, 304). For instance, the effect of open primaries could be that, while in office, elected candidates are more oriented towards the whole electorate and not necessarily (only) towards their party members. Additionally, local party ties are strengthened when the candidate selection procedure is decentralized or loosened if candidates can be imposed by the national party organization.

In Germany, the two candidate types can hardly be separated one from another since MPs usually run for office in the district and on the party list simultaneously. In fact, a district candidacy is usually regarded as precondition for promising list positions (Schüttemeyer and Sturm 2005; Reiser 2014, 59). Not least, even small parties hope that a locally rooted and accessible MP will have positive effects for the nationally decisive second vote (Cox and Schoppa 2002, 1031). As nomination for the district candidates takes place at the district level, either by a convention of delegates or an assembly of all party members, there are clear incentives for MPs to build and maintain close linkages to the local party organization. In contrast, attempts to intervene in the selection business by the federal party are usually counterproductive (see Schüttemeyer 2002, 151; Reiser 2011, 251).[1] In a nutshell, virtually all candidates have to undergo selection at the district level, and intraparty approval usually requires time-consuming activities within local and regional party structures. Thus, caring not only for the district but also for the district party becomes part of an MP's performance record.

While the general framework for candidate selection in Germany is defined by federal laws (Parteiengesetz, Bundeswahlgesetz), respective rules in France are mainly defined in the party statutes. Candidate selection is, therefore, considered to be the parties' internal affair (Thiébault 1988, 73). This is also due to the fact that French parties legally do not play a role since, formally, persons apply for mandates (Kempf 2007, 259–260). As a consequence, parties differ considerably regarding the selection and nomination procedures (Murray 2010, 47), including the degree of involvement by the local party organization. As the vast majority of French MPs in our sample are affiliated to the Socialist Party (PS) and the conservative party Union pour un mouvement populaire (UMP), we will briefly contrast the selection procedures in these two parties: Within the PS, party members at the district level can vote for their candidate. This correlates with the party's strong tradition of party activism. Nevertheless, the final decision is taken at the national level either by a "convention [of delegates] […] or by the national committee" (PS-statute

of October 2012, article 5.2.2). Usually it confirms the decision taken at the local level. However, it may not be validated "if the national committee disagrees with the choice of a candidate for a particular reason" (Murray 2010, 52). Within the UMP party members do not have the possibility to vote for their candidates. As stipulated in article 40 (UMP-statute of June 2013), "the national nomination commission draws up a list of the selected or supported candidates by the UMP for legislative elections" which is "given for approval to the National Council". However, according to the internal rules of the UMP, the national commission *can* decide to consult party members in the respective district (article 35.3 UMP internal rules of June 2013). Yet, it is not specified how this consultation should take place.

To sum up, notwithstanding some differences regarding the inclusion of the local party, the decision on who will run for parliament is, in the French case (UMP and PS), ultimately taken at the national and not the local level. We can, therefore, conclude that even though the non-regulation of the selection process (by law) renders generalizations for the French case difficult,[2] nomination procedures are more decentralized in Germany.

Cumul des mandats

A widespread practice in France, which can be traced back to the nineteenth century (Marrel 2003), has been until June 2017 that deputies hold multiple additional offices at the local level (as mayor, regional or general councilor, etc.). It can first and foremost be seen as rational strategy to deter opponents and safeguard one's reelection: As several studies have shown, it goes along with higher financial campaign contributions, a lower number of candidates within the district and further resources to satisfy constituents (François 2006; Costa and Kerrouche 2009). While the "cumul" contributes to the MPs' deep involvement on the ground, it also weakens the relationship between MP and party. First, it adds to the MPs' workload (Bach 2012; François and Laurent Weill 2014), i.e., imposes time constraints on them. Second, through their additional offices, MPs are well known as persons in politics and, thus, can benefit from their comparatively high reputation when it comes to (personal) vote seeking. Third, their offices provide MPs with party-independent resources in terms of finance, support, staff and (local) knowledge.[3] Meanwhile it is forbidden to hold executive offices and a parliamentary mandate simultaneously (see Chap. 2

in this book). But during the time of data collection for the CITREP project 76 percent of those MPs elected in 2012 accumulated local offices and a seat in the Assemblée nationale (Brouard et al. 2013, 52).

Based on this brief overview, our overall expectation is that dissimilar incentives will lead to differently intensive party activities in both countries. More precisely: Germany's party democracy should lead to more party-related district behavior than in France.

Party Work in the District

France and Germany in Comparison

Attending party meetings is, at least in Germany, strongly demanded if deputies want to be renominated in the district. Moreover, German MPs have to "serve" comparatively stronger organizations at the grassroots level. In France, incentives are more diffuse since the party at the national level has a greater say in the nomination process and parties are organizationally less strong (at least in terms of membership). Yet, party work in both countries also means an opportunity cost: With regard to elections, attending internal party meetings can reduce the amount of time for more electorally relevant activities (to which might belong the efforts of the "cumul des mandats" in France). In sum, however, we can infer a clear expectation: While there is a general incentive to tend to the district in both countries, incentives to take part in party meetings are stronger in Germany.

Our empirical data confirm these assumptions. They show remarkable differences as to the role local parties play for the MPs' activities in the district. While only about 3 percent of the observed 336 events in France can be qualified as internal party meetings, this is the case for 15 percent of all 618 events in Germany (see Chap. 3 in this book for empirical data as to other types of activities during district work). Even though the amount of party-related district work doubles to 6 percent for France when all political events organized by the (local) party are also taken into account, it still stays low in comparison with Germany where internal party meetings scored the second highest number of all events. If we add party-organized political events, more than every fifth activity of the German MPs in the district (21%) is related to party. Looking at the duration of events (instead of their number) the picture is further supported: Internal party meetings make up 19 percent of the observed German

MPs' district work (France: 4%). With political events organized by party added, they spent more than every fourth hour of their representation activities (27% of observation time) with party-related events (France: 8%). Thus, while MPs in both countries meet and visit a lot of different people at the grassroots level, their patterns of party work diverge. In Germany, local networking by MPs is most strongly connected with party, while in France party affairs play a comparatively marginal role for MPs.

To some degree, those behavioral differences are mirrored in our questionnaire data. Asked how often MPs communicated with their local party,[4] most German MPs (92%) said that they did so frequently or very frequently while less than two-thirds (63%) of their colleagues in France answered that way.[5] Admittedly, this percentage is surprising since it is neither in accordance with our observations nor with the picture painted by the qualitative interviews. In our interviews, several French MPs (from UMP and PS) mentioned that their party plays a role (in the district) only before legislative elections (nominations) and during the electoral campaign. As one MP stated, for example:

> Your party, you need them for nomination but once nominated, you know, your party does what it wants and it does not do a lot for you. (French MP A47, Union pour un mouvement populaire, UMP)

One explanation for the gap between observational and questionnaire data might be a response bias by social desirability. Some indication can be found for this in the interviews, as French MPs pointed to the social pressure among the party members to be present at party meetings:

> Yesterday evening, there was a meeting of my local party branch. I went there; otherwise they would say that once you are elected, you do not come anymore… But I was so tired… (French MP A6, Parti socialiste, PS)

Another reason could be that MPs frequently interact with representatives of their party (and answer our questionnaire in that respect), but do so primarily outside of formal party meetings. The observational protocols as well as the qualitative interviews reveal that many deputies meet in a regular way with the municipal councilors or mayors in their district (who are probably also of the same political party). In addition, the deputies' assistants often are (or become in the course of their chief's mandate) secretary of the local party section (a leading local position). This allows MPs to be in touch with party activists indirectly via their assistants. However, the differences between what French MPs say and do remain puzzling.

A Closer Look at Party Events in Germany

While the number of party events in France, nine, is too small for further analyses, the assortment of 94 party meetings in Germany permits a closer look at the data and yields some interesting findings (see for details Schindler 2013). To begin with, local party networking is part of the job for *all* MPs. There are virtually no differences between MPs from smaller and catch-all parties or between deputies from governing and oppositional parties. The same holds true regarding their type of mandate which features particularly prominently in current representational and electoral studies (see e.g., Sieberer 2010; Manow 2013). Accordingly, with respect to the MPs' local party activities our data do not back on the assumption that there is a mandate divide. It can be plausibly explained by the vast majority of dual candidacies, which lead to some adjustment in incentives. In particular, (small) parties hope for positive second ballot effects by a locally accessible deputy (Cox and Schoppa 2002, 1031). Hence, the necessity to run in a district enables parties to induce district work, which includes party work. After all, we can infer that a lack of formal incentives (e.g., for MPs of small parties with no chance for direct mandates) can be compensated by informal incentives controlled by the party. The biggest differences in our data can be found between those 22 German MPs with a mandate in local politics (13% of all events are party events) and their 42 colleagues without (16%)—indeed a rather small difference of three percentage points.

In general, party events contain manifold contact patterns. The two largest groups account for board meetings at city or county level, followed by general meetings of party members. Additionally, there are festivities, specialized workshops, or meetings with internal party groups (like youth organizations).

When we compare party meetings with other events on the ground or district work in general, some peculiar characteristics emerge. First of all, looking at the direction of communication reveals that the component of providing orientation (distinctive or very distinctive in 52 percent of party events) outweighs that of gathering information (43%). Considering all of the MPs' district activities, the picture is just the reverse (35 vs. 60%). In addition, party events are one of only three types of events (beside political events and contacts with journalists) in which the explaining component dominates. One might conclude that they provide a grassroots arena for the "legislator as educator" (Fulbright 1979). This view is further buttressed if we go beyond Fenno's approach (1978,

136ff.) and distinguish not only between explaining *policy* (the MP's or the party's policy positions) and *power* (the MP's own activities in parliament) but add explaining *purse* (financial restrictions on political maneuvering space) as a more concrete (sub)category. Not only do we find above-average values for both of the first two categories: Explaining policy played a (very) big role in more than every second party event (54%) and explaining power in almost every third party event (32%) while district work averages 38 percent (policy) and 18 percent (power). When we compare all types of district events, explaining policy and explaining power were most important within party meetings. One might wonder why since MPs can win voters first and foremost outside internal party events. Yet, explaining always bears the danger of alienating potential voters. It can be a matter of conflict and, as such, electorally costly. Even more important is a demand-side argument: Since coming forward with policy positions and being active in parliament are parts of the MP's performance record, it is all the more plausible to provide proof vis-à-vis the selectorate. Speaking in principal-agent terms, the monitoring and reporting mechanism to contain agency loss (see, e.g., Strøm 2000, 271) particularly comes into operation in party work. In contrast, party activities belong to the group of events for which explaining *purse* was least relevant: It played a big role in 6 percent of party meetings while all district events average 12 percent. This is presumably a matter of anticipated reactions since the party base should not be keen on confrontation with challenges to their policy wishes.

Again following Fenno's delineation (Fenno 1978, 57ff.) we can also find remarkable figures for the MPs' presentation of self during party events. While conveying a sense of *empathy* matches the average for all district activities (playing a big or very big role in about one-quarter of events), proving one's *qualifications* was more important within party work (52 vs. 40% for all types of events). Most notably, Fenno's third component of presentation of self, showing *identification* with constituents, was nowhere more visible than during party events (47 vs. 27% for all activities in the district). Enunciating the message "I am one of you" understandably makes most sense in front of the group re-selecting you.

Exploring Functions of Local Party Work

Exploring the functions of party work might further explain the obvious differences between France and Germany. As befits an exploration we can-

not systematically examine the explanatory power of functional arguments but can illustrate their general relevance by means of our interview and observational data (concerning the MPs' party events). Screening all data, they suggest that nursing the party particularly serves five interrelated functional purposes (two mainly from the MPs' and two from the party's perspectives, another one lies in-between).

Most obviously, MPs cannot neglect their local party since it is involved in their *renomination* as district candidates. In that respect, the tightly knit connection between German MPs and their local parties evidently contributes to the fact that most of those who seek renomination succeed without intraparty competition (Reiser 2011, 250). In France, this functional argument is not as strong since the national party level has a greater or even the final say. Nevertheless, almost all deputies in the interviews highlighted the importance of being supported and nominated by their party when seeking (re)election. However, they did not disclose which party level they meant or even explicitly mention the party at the local level.

The second function local party work fulfills is *informing* MPs about what is going on in the district. In the interviews, we asked deputies an open-ended question regarding the channels they used to get informed about opinions on the ground. In Germany, MPs named their party as their third-ranking reference point after the local media and conversations with ordinary citizens (that might be a response induced by social desirability). As two deputies observed:

> A local party organization has a strong communication function for MPs. It is informed about the discussions in the community and about which problems arise. (German MP Norbert Geis, Christlich-Soziale Union, CSU)

> If I really want to know what is going on [at the grassroots level], I have to go to my local association. (German MP Bettina Herlitzius, Die Grünen)

In France, the local party organization was not even mentioned once when French MPs were asked about sources of information. In general, the "cumul" can be regarded as functional equivalent in that respect as it automatically raises the MPs' awareness of local problems and opinions. In support of this view, one MP explained the additional value of being a mayor like this:

> Being closer to everyday life in order not to goof up in parliament. Being
> aware of the local situation and, you can say, collecting data at the local level
> to be a less party dependent representative. (French MP A25, Parti Radical
> de Gauche, PRG)

A third function that serves MPs and their parties alike is to link the
party on the ground and the party in public office (especially its parliamen-
tary group). *Intraorganizational linkage* is not only provided by explain-
ing politics and policy to party members but also by taking up opinions
and critique responsively. As an illustration, German MPs occasionally
asked party fellows to write things down for them or took notes on their
own during party events. They also pointed to this functional facet of
party work in the interviews, as one deputy highlighted:

> The party members can signal agreement or clear critique. That is the most
> direct and undisguised critique, since you can speak out 'in private'. (German
> MP Michael Groschek, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD)

Another one exemplarily underscores that local intraparty coordination
is heavily occupied by two questions:

> How does what is done in Berlin affect [the district]? And what expectations
> [towards Berlin] exist conversely? (German MP Britta Haßelmann, Die
> Grünen)

Intraorganizational linkage is also important since elections are primar-
ily party elections. Accordingly, German MPs point out that networking
with local parties is important for the representativeness of the whole
system.

Overall, this function might be again of less importance in France
because of the parties' weaker role as representative actors (compared to
Germany).

From the party's perspective an *accountability* function can be added,
at least in Germany. As seen above, German deputies frequently justify
their positions and conduct within party meetings, i.e., the principal-agent
mechanism of reporting comes into play. Our interviews corroborate that
view as the local party, in the MPs' words, is the "forum to present your-
self" (MP Günter Krings, Christlich Demokratische Union, CDU) and
the place "to give an account of yourself with respect to political issues

relevant in Berlin and, of course, my own topics" (MP Bettina Herlitzius, Green Party). This function might not be as relevant in France because of the local party's more diffuse role as selectorate and its lower membership rates. In particular, MPs can also be held accountable as mayors or in other local posts by their local party.

A fifth function, again from the party's angle, is that of *membership integration*: Taking care of the party also meets party members' needs for physical proximity (with MPs as quasi-celebrities) and social integration which in turn contribute to the party's cohesion (see, for a psychological explanation, Brown 2000, 64). This should not be discounted as irrelevant as German MPs' presence at party festivities shows. Not least, interaction with prominent party figures does make participation within parties more attractive. As one German representative explained:

> A local branch is only important for ordinary members if they can debate and hear about things which are perhaps not part of the normal daily news. That is why this party work is relatively important for me. (German MP Burkhard Lischka, SPD)

Good illustrations for aspects of social integration can also be found in numerous observation protocols. For instance, MPs almost always make salutation rounds through party events and go from table to table for rather non-political talks (about the participants' kids, etc.). Such communication clearly also serves the MP's presentation as a person and is strategically motivated. Yet, MPs also have to live up to their party's expectations. Again, the different role of local parties in terms of candidate nomination and membership strength decreases the relevance of this function on the French side. As one French interviewee makes clear:

> I am very independent. And, therefore, I am not really an activist leader of my political party. They know who I am here, in my district. I think I'm a better MP than an active party member. (French MP A47, UMP)

As all MPs stated, party work in the district serves different functions in different settings. This is one reason why district work in general should not be deprecated as mere errand running. Yet, the functional logic of local party work comes into play differently in both countries. On a more general note: On the one hand, the parties' differences as to candidate nomination and membership strength make some functions less important to

MPs in France. On the other hand, the French "cumul" provides a functional equivalent (as can be seen by the party's less important role in the information function). Hence, differences in party work are structurally (i.e., institutionally) caused and underpinned by functional equivalents.

REPRESENTATION OF PARTY IN THE DISTRICT

Communication as Representative of Party

In both countries, parties are key actors in, as well as in-between, elections and, accordingly, shape politics. Another avenue by which to look at the party's role in district work is to investigate whether MPs communicate as party representatives. In general, a deputy can contribute to a positive image for his or her party through engagement as party player on the ground. Consequently, parties should advocate and encourage corresponding activities. Moreover, taking the role as party agent is also influenced by the people's demand, i.e., by citizens approaching MPs as a party man or woman in the district. After all, deputies are local contact persons of their (parliamentary) parties. According to CITREP mass-survey data, a slightly higher proportion of French citizens stated that MPs should represent their party compared to their German counterparts (49 and 41% respectively agree strongly or very strongly).[6] However, we again expect that German MPs more often take the party role than their French colleagues as party votes in sum play a bigger role for their reelection. Aside from that, German citizens should approach their deputies more often as representatives of their party because of the latter's overall importance within the political system, while their French counterparts are frequently addressed because they also serve as mayors, regional officials and the like.

Not surprisingly, German MPs took the role of party representative often or very often in every third event (32%). In almost one-quarter of all district events, they did not communicate as party agent at all (23%). In France, proportions are reversed: MPs heavily communicated as party representative in nearly one out of four district events (24%) and never took this role in 53 percent of the observed cases. This clearly modifies the image about the party's role for district work in France. It also shows that MPs in both countries can be held accountable as agents of their party and contribute to its linkage function at the local level. However, in clear contrast to Germany, representation of party does not play any role at all in

more than half of all French events. Again, the overall picture reveals that the patterns of party activities on the ground diverge in France and Germany.

It is noticeable that those German MPs who hold local offices (e.g., in the county council) show some "role shopping" behavior, i.e., they switch between party and local roles not only from one event to the other but even within a specific meeting. For instance, one female MP visiting a local company alternates in her communication often by saying: "We as parliamentary party group take the position…" or "We have decided as city council…" This indicates the role local mandates can play for district work even in Germany. It points all the more to their formative effect in France where the "cumul" is widespread.

Additionally, we can again draw on questionnaire data as to whether MPs in both countries see themselves as representatives of their party. One might expect that the somewhat lesser importance of party in France should not only be reflected in actual role taking but also in lower self-perceptions as party agent. Yet, just as has been shown above for the MPs' party events on the ground, a comparison of observation and questionnaire data shows some differences, especially for France. In general, when asked whom they represent, German and French deputies answered almost the same way with regard to party (see Fig. 4.1): About seven out of ten MPs in both countries strongly or very strongly see themselves as a party man or woman. The figures for France are even slightly higher.
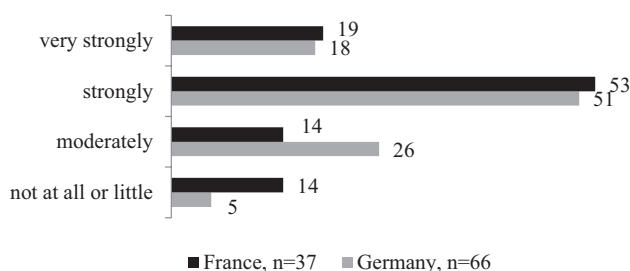
Fig. 4.1   French and German MPs' self-perception as party representatives

Source: CITREP, 2011-2013. Interviews with MPs

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording: "As MP do you perceive yourself as representative of your party—very strongly, strongly, moderately, little or not at all?"

They are all the more surprising in light of our observational data. While 72 percent of French MPs see themselves strongly or very strongly as party representatives, they did not actively take this role in 53 percent of their events in the district.[7] We can only speculate anew about reasons why words and deeds (or role orientation and role behavior) do not match each other. On the one hand, the "cumul" again should be a crucial factor. Even if the MPs personally stress or value their party affiliation, their district communication might be captured by other time-consuming obligations on the ground. Thus, their functions as local officials minimize the chances to communicate as party agent. At the same time, they reduce the necessity to do so since people approach them in these other roles (meaning lesser role expectations towards party representation). On the other hand, we can guess that MPs primarily thought about their parliamentary activities in answering the CITREP questionnaire, i.e., we have to take into account some problems of validity. This explication can be underlined by the following quotation:

> I have always been uncomfortable with the gap between words and deeds. Those people who are very involved in party affairs when they are in Paris, but once in the district they deny any party affiliation. Regarding myself, that is absolutely not the case. (French MP A3, PS)

Distancing from Party

The opposite of communication as representative of party is distancing oneself from party. Certainly, there are limits for doing so in light of citizens' expectations that MPs be loyal to the party and the unpopularity of intraparty conflict. Accordingly, as the CITREP mass-survey data show, nearly two-thirds of French citizens (65%) and more than three-quarters of Germans (76%) said that MPs in general *should* attach importance to party loyalty (albeit this regards their work in general, and not district communication specifically).[8] However, one might argue that some weakening of parties in contemporary democracies leads to more personal representation (Colomer 2011). In our context, party-related criticism can be used by MPs to attract attention to one's name and to gain local recognition, i.e., to become known as person (Schindler 2013, 510–511). If a party's policy positions or parliamentary decisions are unpopular, MPs can even strengthen their profile and build up individual reputation by disassociating themselves from their party. In addition, there is ample opportunity for distancing since it can usually be monitored only with difficulty by the national party organization or the parliamentary party group. Thus, incentives to take a

critical stance on one's party create a classical public good problem: MPs (might) profit from the party's general reputation and policy profile. Yet, the two characteristics can also be regarded as public goods to whose production MPs need not always contribute. They can free ride on some good works of their party while, at the same time, criticizing it if appropriate. Since it is not possible to effectively monitor deputies on the ground (and consequently to sanction them by whatever means), this problem cannot be fully overcome by the higher party branches.

Admittedly, a clear-cut expectation for one country cannot be formulated easily. On the one hand, party distancing should play a bigger role for French MPs if cultivating a personal vote is a more prominent feature than in Germany (whose MPs in the aggregate might feel more dependent on their party). On the other hand, distancing can be in some way structurally induced since parties in the German federal state are rather heterogeneous multilevel actors with multiple centers and different voices. Besides, a more or less party-unfriendly political culture could encourage affronts against party in France as well as in Germany.

Distancing is more common in France. French MPs (almost twice as often as their German colleagues) criticize their party substantially through a district event (9 vs. 5%). At the same time, distancing was not evident at all in six out of ten French events while being absent from eight out of ten German events (62 vs. 79%).

The observation protocols report that MPs primarily criticize specific policies and, to a lesser extent, the party's strategic positions. In particular, the parliamentary party group is singled out for targeting. As two policy-related examples, one deputy runs down his party group for adopting a rather unpopular tax law while another criticized the party for enacting a health policy reform that may lack sustainability. Another MP states during his party's board meeting (council level) more generally: "I am too honest for business in Berlin. I take on too many people there." Occasionally, there is also criticism of the party organization at the federal level and the Land level (in Germany). Sometimes distancing even emerges as harsh polemic as the following examples suggest: Visiting a regional company, one German MP compared his party to "Pandora's box" vis-à-vis the chief executive officer. He also welcomed his comrades at a local party meeting with the following words: "This week, I only meet fellow party members I really like. This will change next Monday [back in parliament]." Thus, what Fenno (1977, 914) found for Congressmen disassociating themselves from their legislature could be observed for our MPs with regard to their parties (and their parliamentary groups): MPs polish their reputations at

the expense of parties and parliamentary groups. Yet, we have to stress that distancing is not a formative factor in the MPs' district work. As the previous section showed, deputies in general do not abdicate their responsibility for acting as party representative.

Overall, a juxtaposition of the French data as to representation of party in the district reveals some noteworthy results: While the French MPs do not communicate as representatives of their party in more than every second event, they also distance themselves from their party in about four out of ten events. At the same time, almost three-quarters of them see themselves (very) strongly as party men or women. This surely draws scholarly attention to the French side and shows the need for further studies tackling the complex relationship between district work and party.

Conclusion: Two Different Kinds of Rootedness?

To sum up: Parties play a stronger role for the MPs' district activities in Germany than in France. First, as can be seen both by observational and questionnaire data, German MPs devote a lot more efforts than their French counterparts to interactions with their local party. Second, while deputies in both countries communicate as party men or women during their district work (and thus contribute to the party's linkage function), they clearly adopt this role more often in Germany. However, looking at role orientation rather than actual behavior shows similarities since the deputies' self-perception as a party agent is equally high in both countries. Third, even though lodging critiques about one's party is not a formative factor of the MPs' district communication, party distancing is more common in France than in Germany. In general, therefore, dissimilar incentives in both countries lead to visible differences regarding internal party work and representation of the party at the grassroots level.

Besides, as the more exploratory efforts show, the French "cumul" can to some extent be regarded as functional equivalent to party networking on the ground. From that angle, thus, it is tempting to see the holding of local mandates and ties to the local party as two different kinds of rootedness (which constitute as ideal types a continuum instead of a dichotomy). Accordingly, it is highly interesting to investigate the effects of the cumul's abolition, which entered into force at the 2017 election. Now it is legally forbidden (by loi organique no 2014-125) for deputies and senators to hold local executive offices as mayor but also as chair of a Conseil Régional or Conseil Général (which are counted as executive offices). Hence, law

puts an end to the député-maire typical for the Fifth French Republic. Currently, it is premature to evaluate implications for the relationship between MPs and parties. Yet, if MPs cannot rely on executive mandates in order to get informed about problems on the ground, reach to the public and feed their own popularity, they have to look for some compensatory mechanisms. While deputies can still be ordinary members of the Conseil Régional or Conseil Départemental, those offices do not provide resources and possibilities as prominent executive offices do. One consequence might be that MPs concentrate more on their party, which could lead to increasing party work and role adaptations towards party representation. Thereby, the partisan MP type who moves up the party hierarchy to pursue a successful political career could be promoted. However, given that parties in France are comparatively weak (at least in contrast to Germany) it is an open question to what extent the loss of local roots provided by the "cumul" can be compensated by focusing on party.

Some results of this chapter remain puzzling. For instance, French MPs hardly participated in internal party meetings but declared on a quantitative questionnaire that they are (very) often in contact with their party at the grassroots level. Such differences in words and deeds of French MPs all the more indicate the importance of observational studies. Yet, in light of some inevitable shortcomings of our empirical data (possible biases by composition of the sample, the specific moment in the electoral cycle, etc.), they also point to the need for further analyses. Quantitative studies have to examine whether some of our findings hold generally for MPs in France and Germany.

One of the many aspects deserving additional research is distancing from party. The party unity literature is greatly focused on behavior in parliament and, in particular, on roll-call votes for which unity scores approach 100 percent in most parliamentary democracies. (This leaves hardly any variance in the dependent variable). In fact, the district provides a different and special context for deviations from one's parliamentary party group since such distancing behavior is, in most cases, invisible for the party's leadership and a low-cost activity for its MPs.

Until now, little was known in the French-German context about the role of MPs' party work and party representation in the district. The information presented here is based on a very broad database collected by systematic participant observations. That is why the picture painted by this study deserves closer inspection by future research even though our results cannot be generalized due to the fact that we do not rely on a random sample.

Notes

1. Moreover, the ranking of candidates on the party list is determined (almost exclusively) by delegates of the local party organizations in conventions at the Land level. Usually, the final list emerges from informal negotiations in which the local and regional party elites are key actors.

2. It is worth highlighting that the state of the art regarding candidate selection in France, and in particular recent literature, is very poor. Besides some studies focusing on legislative candidates (Laurent and Wallon-Leducq 1998; Sineau and Tiberj 2007; François 2009), works on the candidate selection process are almost non-existent (but see Thiébault 1988; Murray 2010). In Germany, nomination procedures have not yet been the subject of extensive research either. They reentered scholarly debate only recently (Schüttemeyer and Sturm 2005; Reiser 2011; Steg 2016).

3. Yet, two aspects should not be overlooked. First, multiple office-holding is not a French exclusivity (Navarro 2009, 201): About three out of ten German MPs are elected to local offices, mostly in the county council (Patzelt and Algasinger 2001, 195, 515). However, it is unthinkable to be a deputy in the Bundestag and mayor of a mid-sized town simultaneously. Second, local mandates in both countries can also provide party contacts, i.e., while performing their local offices, MPs can interact with other representatives of their party.

4. The wording was: "In your district, how often do you communicate with (your party)—very often, often, sometimes, rarely, never?"

5. However, parties are seldom mentioned when MPs were asked in an open question for "the most important things" they do in the district. For instance, in Germany only seven out of 64 deputies referred to party work. This illustrates that district work is a multifaceted phenomenon. One explanation why parties are rarely mentioned might also be their not very positive image with the public.

6. Admittedly, citizens' evaluation of whether MPs "should" represent party does not refer to district work specifically. Moreover, the citizenry in both countries attributes more importance to voters, district and nation as foci of representation than to party (see Chap. 7 for a closer look).

7. According to CITREP mass-survey data, French citizens expect that MPs heavily focus on their voters, their district and all citizens but clearly less on their political party. However, the same holds true for their German counterparts (see Chap. 7 in this book).

8. The wording was: "What should be central in the political work of MPs? For each of the following statements, please tell me on a seven-point scale whether MPs should attach great importance or whether they shouldn't attach great importance… Item: MPs should be loyal to their party."

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Show or Substance? The Exchange Between District and Parliamentary Activities

Corentin Poyet and Sven T. Siefken

Practitioners and political scientists alike often use the word "legislature" as a synonym for parliaments in modern democracies (Polsby 1990). Referring to the US Congress, this may be appropriate because of its functional focus on legislation (Steffani 1990, 273). But in parliamentary systems, these elected bodies have a more complex role. Their functions have been compiled in various catalogues (Schindler 1999, 2834–47) and boil down to the electoral function, the legislative function, the control function and the functions of articulation of interests and generating publicity—or broadly: communication. None of these can be understood in isolation: They strongly influence each other and it is sometimes hard to distinguish them. But for a proper understanding of representative democracy, studying parliament must take all of them into account.

This horizontal broadening of perspectives must be complemented by an extension beyond the parliament building. As representatives of the

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people, members of parliament spend a substantial amount of their time outside it. One important place to interact with the represented is the electoral district. Other chapters in this book show that while MPs are "back home" they tend to their party networks, gather information and generally take care of their home base, often by dealing with issues of a very local character.

The political systems provide various institutional incentives for this kind of district work, most notably through electoral rules and nomination procedures (see Chaps. 3 and 4 in this book). This has led to a strong focus among political scientists on how the strategic use of district work may help garner a personal vote and secure reelection (Cain et al. 1987; Dolezal and Müller 2001; Fenno 1978; Russo 2011). However, through the CITREP empirical material, it has become clear that MPs do much more in the district than election-related activities. This chapter sets out to sketch how input from the district connects with work in parliament and to what ends it is used there. More specifically, it discusses what role the district work of MPs plays in fulfilling the various parliamentary functions. It sheds light on how working in the district is a substantial source of information in modern representative democracies.

One caveat must be formulated upfront: The analysis is based on observation data and interviews from the CITREP project that did not include systematic observation of activities *inside* parliament. Because of these limitations, part of the analysis can only be exploratory in nature, and the chapter may set the ground for further research.

GATHERING INPUT FOR LEGISLATION

As noted above, legislation is often seen as the primary function of parliaments. However, the logic of parliamentary democracy has it that the executive plays a very important role in the process. In fact, the pre-parliamentary phase of the legislative process is when most key decisions are usually made in the cabinet and the ministerial bureaucracies. MPs from the parliamentary majority are involved in this early phase: They may give important impulses and ideas and serve as sparring partners to the specialists of the civil service. In Germany, around 60 percent of the bills in parliament and around 80 percent of those that eventually become law are initiated by the government (Schindler 1999, 2388; Feldkamp 2014, 12). This does not mean, however, that the bills pass the parliamentary phase of legislation untouched. A popular one-liner in Berlin, often (wrongly) attributed to

the former head of the parliamentary party SPD, Peter Struck (2010, 46), goes: "No bill ever leaves the parliament as it entered."

In the French policy-making process, parliament is considered as rationalized (Huber 1996); the Assemblée nationale has only a small role in preparing legislation. Despite the constitutional revision in 2008 that reinforced the role of the committees in the legislative process, the government is still predominant, and the argument of a "presidential imbalance" (François 1998, 61) remains valid. MPs may have an informal influence through individual access to members of the cabinet. However, the consequences of such meetings are hard to measure, but studies do show empirical evidence of this influence (Huber 1996; Cole and John 2001; Poyet 2016). In France, the importance of government can be further observed by its constitutional capacity to control the agenda in the Assemblée nationale. MPs' right of amendment is limited by the constitution. Yet the number of amendments is quite high and attests to a real willingness of MPs to act in the policy-making process even if only few are finally adopted (Kerrouche 2006).

Parliamentary work in Germany is highly specialized along policy domains. In over 20 committees, the Bundestag replicates the structure of the ministerial bureaucracy, adjusted in each electoral period to the often-changing executive organization. To prepare and coordinate, parties in parliament also mirror these committees in their own working groups. So in essence, the modern German parliament is a "parliament of experts"; real "backbenchers" do not exist (von Oertzen 2006, 92). Every MP has a specialized task either in one or more committees, in the organization of parliamentary work or in government. Thus, it could be expected that district work is only a secondary activity.

The parties strongly influence the legislative function of the French parliament (Brouard et al. 2013; Brouard and Guinaudeau 2015; Converse and Pierce 1986; Lazardeux 2015). However, as in the case of Germany, the predominance of the executive and of parties does not mean that individual MPs do not matter. During the debates within the party group individual MPs express their opinions and try to convince their colleagues to follow their positions. The growing professionalization of French MPs leads to a certain degree of policy specialization, even if it is not comparable to what we observe in Germany. It is most visible in the permanent committee system which is a mirror of the policy interest and expertise of MPs (Navarro et al. 2012, 616). This is true despite the low number of committees, as recent studies show that MPs may specialize in a specific domain *within* the scope of the committee (Poyet 2016).

It has been argued that district features have an influence on committee assignment (Baron 1991; Cox 2010; Crisp et al. 2004; Strøm 1998). As in most countries, in France and Germany committee preference is only an initial wish to the party groups' leadership. Whether they come true depends on many factors, one of them being MP seniority (Achin 2005). District work can be important for carrying out the legislative function if an MP's area of specialization has a "correspondence" with the district. In France, this is particularly true for MPs elected from rural areas who focus on issues related to their district: agriculture, land-use planning, and rural life generally (Poyet 2016).

Two thirds of German MPs and 71 percent of French MPs said that their district work was very important for their parliamentary activities (see Chap. 3 in this book). Clearly, the question may have spawned effects of social desirability in the replies; after all, saying that the district activities have no importance would sound quite cynical. But the observation data show that information seeking is, in fact, predominant in MPs' district work.

German MPs focus on visits to local public agencies in their district (see Chap. 3 in this book). This is where policy decisions are implemented after they have trickled down through the federal multilevel system. MPs stress this as an opportunity to check the implementation of policy:

> I think that it is of utmost importance to get to know the consequences of our political decisions 'on the ground' and to learn how the debates in Berlin are taken locally. Loaded with these experiences, we return to Berlin and discuss them there. That is the reality check. (German MP Stephan Kühn, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen[1])

> District work … can provide usable knowledge. Legislation is working on a frame–and the frame can fit or it can be too narrow or too large. The daily application of rules … shows how good or bad the laws are; it highlights the need for action. Only the one that hears about these practical experiences will realize and understand … where there is need for readjustment. (German MP Annette Widmann-Mauz, Christlich Demokratische Union, CDU)

In the system's theory of David Easton (1965), these statements would relate to the feedback function of district work (Siefken 2013b, 498): Reactions from society are looped back into the political system, thereby creating new input. Easton does not specify the actors but only writes

about feedback "to the authorities" (Easton 1965, 372). In democratic systems, MPs play an important role in this process. In fact, when asked about the importance of district work for their parliamentary activities, the concept of feedback as a reality check is mentioned most often by the interviewed MPs in Germany and tied for second place by French MPs (see Fig. 5.1).

Fresh input not related to previous political actions can also be collected in the districts. An MP described the information gathering and learning processes as follows:

> The task is to take topics from the district to Berlin. In discussions with mayors, interest groups and companies, I try to see where the shoe pinches. What do we have to regulate in Berlin so that things will run more smoothly in the district? (German MP Ingbert Liebing, CDU)

How exactly this input process works—or what the "feedback loop" looks like—is hard to say, because there is wide variation and much of it is handled in informal and individual ways. After an event, where an MP
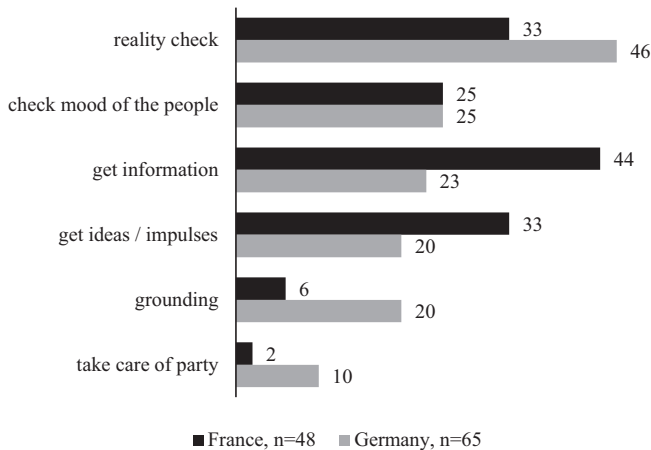
Fig. 5.1 Importance of district work in France and Germany according to MPs

Source: CITREP 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (open question): "How important is your work in the district for work in parliament?" Multiple answers were possible

had taken a lot of notes and repeatedly stressed that she will bring up suggestions in Berlin, we asked her, what exactly would she do with this information. She replied with a shrug: "That is a very good question" (anonymous German MP). Others said that in a similar situation they would forward them to the policy experts of their own parliamentary party or bring them up in the internal meetings of the parliamentary party:

> Of course, I take the results from the discussions in the district with me to Berlin. In case they do not relate to my own specialization there, I will hand them over to the colleague responsible for it. (German MP Angelika Graf, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD)

> The experiences I have in the district and the topics that I am confronted with are brought into the discussions we have with colleagues in parliament, mostly inside our own party. (German MP Stephan Thomae, Freie Demokratische Partei Deutschlands, FDP)

> In the general discussions on all issues that we have inside our parliamentary party, we take many of the positions from the district into our decision process. (German MP Florian Hahn, Christlich-Soziale Union, CSU)

Another category of answers refers to the mood of the people. District work creates a channel to directly check—at least part of—public opinion, or what has been called the national mood (Kingdon 1995, 146) and societal wants (Easton 1965, 70):

> District work is the foundation of our work in parliament. Only one who has firm roots with the citizens outside knows what is going on in the different societal groups. (German MP Eduard Oswald, CSU)

> It is important to see: Are the topics we deal with [in parliament] the right ones or are there other pressing issues for the electorate? (German MP Eva Bulling-Schröter, Die Linke)

In France, the pattern is similar but MPs remain more generic than their German counterparts when considering districts as impulses. Figure 5.1 shows that district work is important as a source of information for the legislative function. But MPs say it is hard to measure it concretely.

I think that district work is useful for me because it allows me to be fed by what I see, what I hear. It allows me to become aware of difficulties for which I can find a legislative translation. (French MP A35, Socialiste, républicain et citoyen, SRC)[2]

District work is major. Everything I do in Paris depends on what I hear, I feel here, on what would be positive for local firms. (French MP A10, Union pour un mouvement populaire, UMP)

We use district work to illustrate a position for an amendment. [For example,] on Thursday night, we worked on a bill on banks and mainly on an amendment asking that households can change the insurance they contract with a loan […]. I illustrated this principle with [the story a citizen in the district told me who] tried to change his insurance because of its exorbitant cost. (French MP A16, Europe Écologie—Les Verts, EELV)

Evidence from the observations in France backs up those interview statements. References to MPs' objectives in terms of public policy are rare but more frequent when the event is collective (local celebrations, etc.). This is not surprising because office hours are dedicated to the resolution of individual problems that are not directly related to the national policy-making process. For social events, the pattern is different but the consequence is the same: absence of content, with notable exceptions, related to the national political debate. The national agenda may cause MPs to participate in or initiate the event in order to gather information on a particular bill. Many of the meetings with local politicians and visits to companies follow this pattern. Two examples illustrate this.

First is a company visit during the preparation of the "écotaxe" (tax of heavy goods vehicles travelling on state-financed roads). The MP visited a road transport company and met the employees who explained to him their reservations against such a tax. The fastest route to join the highway would be taxed and the truck drivers would make a detour to avoid it. This would lead to more pollution and, thus, work directly against the objective of the tax. The MP accepted that he could learn about the concrete situation of truck drivers and the financial implication of the tax for their employers. The objective of this visit was to "learn" more about the expected consequences of this policy. However, before the visit, he told us he would support the tax regardless of the opinion of the company manager. He did not explain why he did not follow the local input, but his

position was clear before and did not change. Hence, more than to learn about the impact of the tax, the goal of the visit was symbolic. He wanted to show that he worries about the opinion of his constituents.

Second, in 2012, the government launched new projects to tackle youth unemployment. Among several actions, it proposed a specific working contract ("emploi d'avenir") allowing unskilled young workers to gain work experience. During the plenary session, several MPs argued that the proposed law would not function in rural areas. So, they suggested several amendments. One MP said:

> The project was only written for urban areas. I proposed an amendment that was supported by both the left and the right, by MPs that know what a rural territory is. The amendment aimed to allow several municipalities to collaborate to create a work place. (French MP A13, EELV)

These examples show the importance of district work when a bill has a particular resonance in the district. MPs may initiate or participate in an event to gather information for the short or medium term and to solidify their knowledge of issues in the district.

However, a greater importance of district work can be observed when the committee in which an MP sits also relates to his district. If there is a strategic reason to seek to influence a committee, an MP's district work constitutes an important source of information for his legislative work. As two MPs say:

> District work can be important depending on the topics. I will speak about the army. You know, we have two important regiments in the department, and what I say in committee depends only on what I can see and experience here [in the district]. That is very important. (French MP T22, Radical, républicain, démocrate et progressiste, RRDP)

> I am member of the committee for social affairs. I work on health issues and, more widely, on social and solidarity-based economy. I am specialized on these technical topics, and it is true that I tend to meet the actors of this sector when I am in my district. (French MP A44, SRC)

If districts matter for carrying out the legislative function, it is also because they can provide arguments and illustration for MPs that are not necessarily translated into legislative acts. District work information is reshaped by party leaders to propose a common position. As "this takes

place behind the closed doors of party meeting rooms", it cannot be observed (Thomassen and Andeweg 2004, 50). MPs reported such inputs:

> We use the traditional channels: cabinets and party groups… They follow us or not–but that is another story. (French MP A42, SRC)

In consequence, district work should not be neglected as a source of information. In France, its influence depends on the bills and the districts themselves and is very important when local consequences of a bill are expected or when MPs' specialization in committee overlaps with district work. But because of the gatekeeper role of the parliamentary party, the legislative translation of information gathered in the district is a complex process involving multiple steps.

In Germany, district work influences legislation in three phases: the early phase when concrete demands are formed, the programming phase when policies are formulated and the feedback phase after the implementation when reality checks are performed. While information from the district may not be the most relevant compared to other sources on the national level (such as the ministerial bureaucracy, interest groups, the media, policy advisors), it should certainly not be forgotten when studying the legislative process. In fact, it may provide a strong corrective instrument to those other channels and serve as a "sounding board for what is possible" (Steffani 1973, 37).

Ringing Alarms for Exercising Control

Parliaments and their members put a high value on the parliamentary control function as both parliamentary websites and surveys of MPs show (Herzog et al. 1990, 67; Schüttemeyer and Siefken 2008, 488). But deputies are often unhappy with their actual control performance (Weßels 2005, 8; Patzelt 1996, 467). In France, the constitutional revision of 2008 formally adopted parliamentary control as one of the functions of the French parliament in the Constitution. According to recent analyses, this function has grown while the legislative function has declined (Brouard 2013; Lazardeux 2009, 290).

Parliamentary control has numerous dimensions. Apart from preliminary work before bills are proposed, parliamentary control includes the ongoing oversight of the executive as well as scrutiny and investigation after the fact. Various instruments are available for exercising control.

Only when all of them are taken into account in their particular configuration can a realistic understanding emerge (Siefken 2013a, 59). There is a huge variation among the resulting "accountability regimes" (Biela and Papadopoulos 2014, 9) not only between political systems but also within them. For a full picture, it is necessary to include the (often invisible) coordination and control within the governing majority, as well as the anticipated reactions of the executive to the potential use of control instruments (Siefken 2018, 403).

Both in Germany and in France, district work plays into control activities because it provides feedback about the performance of the executive from across the country. This is relevant on two levels: both for the individual MP, and for the party group.

To exercise meaningful control, a certain degree of knowledge of the issues at hand is required. This can be gained through previous training and a separation of labor among policy specialists within parliament. In Germany, the individual MP has (at least) two different modes of operation: specialist in parliament, generalist in the district. MPs' statements illustrate the tension resulting from this:

> The parliamentarian is a generalist. He makes decisions about everything. From military intervention to saving the Euro, he is responsible for it all. But in his committee, he is only active in one policy area. Thus, outside he is mostly seen as a policy specialist. But in his district, he has to answer questions on all topics ... Thus, the MP is a generalist and must be a specialist in parliament at the same time. (German MP Eduard Oswald, CSU)

> Work in the district is important. In parliament, you are often limited to the committee work and, thus, in danger of becoming too much of a specialist. In the district, however, the whole range of topics is brought to you. (German MP Andreas Jung, CDU)

MPs have to consolidate the divergent expectations resulting from these tensions through different role behavior in their various surroundings. But this does influence the relationship among MPs inside each parliamentary party: District work can thus lead to control of the policy experts by their party peers (Siefken 2016, 483).

Most of the interaction in this relationship happens behind closed doors. In fact, it is not formalized and depends greatly on individual networks and personal style. Only in extraordinary circumstances do conflicts between the members of the parliamentary parties of the coalition and the

government become visible. During the labor market reforms of 2003 ("Agenda 2010"), Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (SPD) often had a hard time in meetings with MPs from his party, especially after they were loaded with the negative feedback from their district weeks. In a similar way, the recent troubles of Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) to defend her policy on refugees can be attributed to criticism from the party base of her MPs in the districts.

Our observations in the districts showed a lot of information gathering by German MPs. It is hard to differentiate whether this information is used for controlling the government, to prepare legislation—or not at all. But it is clear that district work follows largely the "fire alarm" mode of oversight (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984, 168). It is not a systematic survey of all issues that may need attention ("police patrol" oversight) but rather a reaction to imminent problems that are brought to the attention of MPs.

The same pattern is observed in France. Like for the legislative function, district work is a source of information for purposes of control. One event we observed was initiated in the context of parliamentary oversight. In December 2012, several newspapers published pictures of the conditions in a prison in Marseille: The building was dilapidated and dirty. This led to a national scandal involving the government and the parliament. The event put the spotlight on a "mission d'information" (parliamentary commission) that had started its work earlier the same year. Composed of 15 MPs, it was dedicated to the fight against overcrowding in jails. After the publication, other MPs started to focus on this topic and posed several questions to the government. During the plenary discussion of the report emerging from the commission, some MPs requested more information from the government. We had observed one of them a few weeks before: He had used his constitutional right of access to jails and visited the prison in his district, meeting the director and employees as well as prisoners. He asked them about their working and living conditions in jail and suggested improvements. His objective was to prepare his speech for the plenary and he wanted to see everything possible. Because he was not a member of the parliamentary commission, this MP had to use district work to carry out his control activities.

This illustrates how control and district work can be strongly connected. The control tools tend to be used for strategic reasons to link the local and national levels. Almost all MPs explain that among the available instruments, parliamentary questions are the best way to transfer local issues into the national debate:

I think that when I focus on these topics [education, social affairs, mobility] in Paris, mainly through the cabinet [during question time], it is … directly for my district work. (French MP A44, SRC)

We are rooted in a region with voters. Necessarily, we are here to relay the preoccupations of this territory. With written questions, with oral questions and mainly by controlling the government, we act for this region. (French MP A1, UMP)

As mentioned by the first MP quoted, another form of control is also present in the French parliament: direct contacts with the cabinet and the national administration. These are mainly used by MPs from the majority. Many MPs told us that these direct contacts are very important to inform the cabinet about local issues. MPs stress that this way to inform government is particularly efficient:

We can transfer this information directly to the cabinet. We ask for an appointment with a minister or send him mails. But first, I ask my colleagues to see whether they have the same problem. It is easier to contact a cabinet member if the problem is not limited to my constituency. (French MP T12, SRC)

For me, the main way to transfer local issues is the mail to the cabinet. … Of course, being a former minister helps. It is easier to contact someone we know. They reply when I call them on the phone. (French MP T27, UMP)

During office hours and meetings with local politicians, the MP frequently proposes to write a letter to the cabinet or try to "talk to a minister." This specific form of control may have more effect than others, but it largely depends on the personal relationship between the MP and the cabinet. It can lead to substantial policy changes as illustrated by one MP:

[Meeting with the cabinet] is a part of an MP's work. As you can see from my windows, we can hear the highway, the one that goes to Bordeaux and Hendaye. It cuts the city … in two. … It is an urban disaster. … The mayor [of XYZ] has asked for several years to bury this road and to repair the urban tissue. During the last days, you know, the government accepted this proposal. With the mayor, we had an appointment with the cabinet and now, the problem is solved. (French MP T17, SRC)

In France, district work matters for the control function and the pattern is close to the one observed for the legislative function. Sometimes it provides information for a specific issue. In this case, the starting point is the control procedure itself. A second pattern is observed when the procedure of control (mainly parliamentary questions) is the consequence of what MPs see and hear in their districts. It allows MPs to sound the alarm and mobilize the government.

In Germany, district work can play an important role in three ways for exercising the parliamentary control function: First, in providing information and feedback on the success of policies and the quality of executive behavior; second, by providing a direct channel of information from citizens to MPs beyond parties, media and interest groups; third, by offering the opportunity to control the policy experts of each party. How and where exactly these processes take place is well worth investigating.

Receiving and Sending Communication

It is obvious that district work plays an important role in the communication function in both countries: Direct and indirect interactions of MPs with citizens, social groups and local politicians take place there.

The observations show that communication is a main activity of German MPs in the district. Contrary to expectations, much of this communication is conducted in personal direct interaction between MPs and individual citizens. The old and new media play a less important role here (see Chap. 3 in this book), and events in the districts usually have a rather small audience. Overall, district work in Germany is still largely a retail rather than a wholesale business—with MPs going from (office) door to (office) door rather than from stage to stage.

Communication consists of receiving and sending information. Interview statements and the observed district behavior of German MPs have shown that they focus more strongly on listening to the people than on providing leadership and giving explanations. So, at first glance, district work seems to be more about receiving than sending information (Siefken 2016, 477). In talking about the most important things they do in the district, only a third of MPs mention their leadership function as explaining policy and politics (see Fig. 3.1 in Chap. 3). Yet, when asked specifically whether it is more important for an MP to provide leadership or to take in information, 23 percent stress leadership and 20 percent stress

information gathering. An absolute majority of MPs (56 percent) say that they are equally relevant.[3] One MP summed this up:

> Both are important. Taking up problems are 60 percent [of my district work], political leadership 40 percent. (German MP Andrea Wicklein, SPD)

Others explained how the two are impossible to separate, illustrating a complex tension for the MP in modern democracies:

> To be a representative means to lead and to listen. And develop new leadership from that. (German MP Ernst Dieter Rossmann, SPD)

> You should not only do what is popular at the moment, but try to make popular what you think is right … They are two approaches that run simultaneously. (German MP Stephan Thomae, FDP)

District work does indeed play an important role for the communication function. While MPs are certainly not able to reach all or even a sizable majority of the people in their district, they do make themselves accessible. Yet their use of new and old media could be intensified. The content of communication is not dominated by MPs' policy specialization in parliament but rather cuts across all policy areas on all federal levels in Germany. In their district work, they are generalists.

In France, the same pattern is visible. In addition to the importance (and the primacy) of gathering new information, French MPs indicate that many events are dedicated not only to justifying their positions or votes but also to explaining how parliament functions. They say:

> It is interesting, in the constituency, to import national debates. During the deliberation on same-sex marriage, I invited Hervé Mariton [main spokesman from the UMP party group for that bill] to host a debate in my constituency. (French MP A2, UMP)

> I told the mayor of [XYZ] to ban the bisphenol from the baby bottles used in public cribs. He replied that it was already banned but I verified everything. Then, we accepted the bill and I had to transfer the information and tell him: 'see we voted on the law' … The objective was not to be nasty but there was a problem. (French MP A34, SRC)

The observations show that to carry out this function, French MPs use specific events: information meetings (such as "bilan de mandat"[4]) and

events where MPs explain what being an MP means (mainly in schools). But other events that are more social in character may also be relevant for communication.

First, information meetings are organized by MPs on a regular basis, to inform citizens and members of the party of their activities both in parliament and in the district. Communication is the main objective of such events and often the only one. One MP we observed organizes information meetings every month in a different part of his district to present himself and his work to his constituents. The topics are varied and the MP's objective was to explain what the parliament or the government has done or will do for citizens and local companies. A similar event was organized by another MP to celebrate her first year at the Assemblée nationale. On the leaflet she distributed, all her accomplishments in the field of agriculture policy and regional development were listed. During the event, she also pointed out that she chaired a permanent committee and what this can bring to the district.

In the second form of events, the MP is invited to or initiates an event to present the Assemblée nationale and its workings in schools or other educational institutions. In two observed events, there was a question and answer session about parliament and the political system. In the third type of event, communication was not the main objective, but the discussion allowed MPs to talk about the functioning and the accomplishments of parliament. One illustration took place a few months after the publication of the conclusions of the parliamentary inquiries on storm "Xynthia." The objective of the event was to celebrate the new year with the firemen of a city in the MP's district that had been hit by the storm. During her speech and later with the local politicians, the MP extensively evoked this report and its consequences for the district.

About the communication function, French and German MPs do not differ much. Our observations show that in both countries they put a strong focus on gathering information during their district work (Germany: very strong or strong in 60 percent of the observed events, France: 68), and presenting their own political positions is less frequent (Germany: 36, France: 33 percent[5]). As explained in the previous sections, a majority of MPs consider district work to be a means to gather information. Yet MPs explain policy and, thereby, the actions they take as a local political leader. This occurs to an important—albeit smaller—degree in both countries. Hence, district work is a major feature of both facets of the communication function.

A Limited Role in the Elective Function

The elective function of the parliaments under study lies primarily in determining the prime minister in France and the chancellor in Germany. More important than bringing him into office is the chance to take him down (Steffani 1979, 39). In Germany, an absolute majority in parliament can remove an incumbent chancellor by replacing him anytime. This has strong consequences for how parliament and the executive interact in all other aspects. It leads to a vital connection between the majority in parliament and the government it supports and welds them into a strategic unit: the governing majority.

In France, this connection has a different form. The French political system of semi-presidentialism (Duverger 1980; Elgie 1999) is defined by three main features: (1) A president elected by citizens; (2) a president with a considerable constitutional authority; (3) a prime minister who is subject to the confidence of parliament (Shugart 2005, 324). This leads to a dual executive where the president has political authority without being the head of the government. Formally, the prime minister is not a subordinate of the president. The president can appoint—but not directly remove—the prime minister, yet parliament can exercise a no-confidence vote. This means that, at least on paper, the prime minister is responsible to parliament only.

In practice, the prime minister is a member of the coalition that won the parliamentary elections or, at least, has its favor. But unlike the procedure in Germany, a formal investiture vote in parliament is not required. The Assemblée nationale can only remove the cabinet and influence the president's choice of a potential prime minister. If the majority and the elected president are from the same political family, both cabinet and parliament are factually subordinate to the president. Yet if the majority is opposed to the president, a situation known as "co-habitation", he will in fact have to appoint as prime minister the candidate of the strongest party.

In Germany, all sides—governing majority and the opposition parties—are keen on presenting a unified picture to the outside. The necessary agents to create this unity in parliamentary systems are political parties. Inside parliament they are the key units of organization (Schüttemeyer 1998). Separation of labor within them follows policy domains while party discipline ensures that they can act coherently. Among voters, parties are the guiding post for making decisions; over 60 percent of German voters still have a party identification and its steady but gradual decline has recently slowed even further (Arzheimer 2017, 52).

German parliament's electoral function is relevant for only a few executive offices, except chancellor. Most important, all Bundestag MPs are members of the federal assembly ("Bundesversammlung") to elect the president of Germany. Parliament also elects half of the members of the Constitutional Court. The choice of the ministers, however, is formally at the discretion of the chancellor. In reality, these decisions are made within the respective coalition parties. Very few heads of independent agencies are elected by parliament, as are the members of many advisory councils (Siefken 2018, 105).

Looking at these basic settings shows that in Germany the electoral function of parliament is largely concentrated on the chancellor. Parliamentary influence on the election of most other offices can only be exercised through informal networks, and the political parties play an important role in it (Siefken 2013a, 62). In line with this institutional setting, neither observations nor interviews with MPs in their district showed much mention of the electoral function. All in all, district work plays no immediate role in exercising the electoral function of parliament in Germany.

The elective function of the French parliament is limited: It has no formal role in the election of the prime minister or of the president. But since the 2008 constitutional revision, parliament is involved in the nomination of public agency managers. However, there is an indirect influence that also plays out in the district events during campaign times: Preceding the parliamentary election, giving a parliamentary majority to the president and creating a unified government is a matter of campaigning (Fauvelle-Aymar et al. 2011). For example, after the victory of François Hollande in 2012, voters were asked to "confirm their vote" by supporting the socialist candidates in their districts. We observed a socialist MP visiting a farmers' market. The leaflet he handed out stressed both the importance to elect François Hollande and to "give him a majority." Another MP interviewed after the election said:

> I was the candidate of the PS ... I wore the PS colors. I defended the politics of François Hollande. It was a contract with the French citizens and I wanted his program to be implemented. (French MP A44, SRC)

In neither France nor Germany did MPs mention the electoral function as relevant for their activities in the district. Except during election campaigns, in France ideological content is largely absent in constituency work (Poyet 2014).

In France, the president selects the prime minister in accordance with the parliamentary majority. MPs may have an indirect influence if they encourage votes for a particular candidate at the presidential election and then for themselves at the parliamentary one (Cox 1997). However, once elected, parliament's influence in cabinet formation is rarely invoked, as is shown by parliament's failure to dismiss prime ministers despite several attempts (the exception is the successful vote against Georges Pompidou in 1962). Hence, in exercising this function, district work has no direct relevance either.

Conclusion: District Work Influencing Most Parliamentary Functions

MPs' district work contributes to fulfilling three of the four core parliamentary functions in France and Germany (see Fig. 5.2). It has only a small relevance for the electoral function of parliament, which is largely dominated by party politics on the national level. But for legislation, district work provides an important channel of direct information. It enables MPs to check the general mood of the population, listen to concrete demands and learn about implementation challenges of policies. Bringing this information back into the highly specialized policy making process in parliament is a challenge that is understudied. That the role of district work for the legislative function in France is smaller than in Germany is a likely consequence of the general limitation of the Assemblée nationale in the French political system with its "rationalized" parliament. The legislative process being more dominated by the executive, French MPs may put a stronger focus on communication instead.

In much the same fashion as for making laws, district work provides an internal check on the policy specialists in the German parliament and its parties. As part of the control function, district work does not serve as a systematic surveillance of the executive but rather follows the *ad hoc* model of "fire alarm" oversight by bringing to the fore problems in the performance of agencies and departments. District work is not limited to topics of national policy; much of the time of national MPs in the district is spent dealing with local affairs in both countries. Thus, members of the Assemblée nationale and the Bundestag also indirectly control local, regional or state administration.

Finally, district work has a high relevance for the communication function in France and Germany, providing the most direct, targeted and personal way of communicating between the represented and their

Function	Relevance in France	Relevance in Germany
Legislation	Medium (depending on the bill) Relevant in case of expected impact on MP's district and if the MP's specialization overlaps with district issues	High Providing insights into "mood of the people", feedback about existing legislation and the need for new laws
Control	High District is a source of information. Control is also used as a means to transfer local issues into the national debate	High Evaluating implementation and performance of public administration on a casework basis ("fire alarm"), controlling the policy specialists inside parliament
Communication	Very high District work is important in order to gather information and to explain personal positions	High Taking in information, explaining policies and political processes in a personal and targeted way
Election	Small or indirect (during the electoral campaign)	Very small

Fig. 5.2 Relevance of district work for parliamentary functions in France and Germany

representatives. In France, the communication approach of MPs is broader, in Germany more individual. This is caused by the different roles of MPs in parliament, but probably also by different prevalent cultural styles of communication in the two countries.

The transparency of the underlying processes varies greatly for strategic political reasons. In both countries, much of the effective input from district work does not go directly into plenary or committee work but is forwarded through the parliamentary parties' policy experts (Germany) or the cabinet (France). These processes are informal and depend not only on the parliamentary settings but on individual MPs' style and their personal networks. That is why its contribution to legislation and parliamentary control is often hard to see.

MPs can learn something from nearly all meetings, conferences and office hours, but they cannot translate everything into action because of the national policy agenda. This means that information from the district

might matter only several weeks or months later—or not at all. It is hard to trace this both for observers and even for MPs themselves.

Despite far-ranging institutional differences between the political systems of Germany and France, many commonalities have become evident: District work provides input and feedback for legislation; it serves as a "fire alarm" for control and as an important forum for communication. Conversely, all of these functions will not be fully understood if the district perspective is forgotten. Yet, differences in how district work is influenced, the strength of this work and its styles have also become apparent: The mechanisms for translating findings into legislation and the control functions are different in the two countries, as is the style of communication. To some degree, these variations are influenced by the political systems. But cultural styles, traditions and individual preferences of MPs also seem to play a role.

The findings open the perspective on parliamentary representation to a more complex picture: In Germany (and also to some extent in France), the study of parliamentary work with its strong and predominant role of both policy expertise and party politics must also include individual MPs and their activities. In this way, district work is an important component of the process of representation that needs to be integrated into the analysis of (parliamentary) policy making.

Notes

1. The interviews have been authorized for citation by the German MPs.
2. French MPs are quoted anonymously. This follows the general regulations of the CNIL (Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés) in order to guarantee the privacy of individuals.
3. Source: CITREP 2011–2013, 64 interviews, answers to the question: "An MP has to fulfill different tasks. From your point of view, is it more important to provide orientation and leadership to the citizens or is it more important to take in their suggestions?"
4. A "bilan de mandat" event is often held by MPs in their district to talk about their achievements as well as future plans and discuss them with constituents. These events come in many forms; some are public, some are held behind closed doors with party members only.
5. Source: CITREP 2011–2013, 479 (Germany) and 336 (France) observed events; the numbers include the share of coding as very strong/strong in presenting their personal political position and gathering information ranked on a five-point scale by the observer.

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Can You Hear Me? Political Communication Between MPs and Citizens

Luisa Schittny and Tinette Schnatterer

The Necessity to Communicate

Political communication plays a key role in debates about the state of democracy (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995; Denton and Woodward 1990) and is seen as particularly conducive to the quality of representative democracy since appropriate representation of the electorate by the elected presupposes institutionalized linkages between these two groups of actors (Schüttemeyer 1998, 22ff, 325; Fenno 1978; Mayhew 1974; Oberreuter 1984; Kühne 2013, 468). This position holds true at the national as well as the district level of the political system and manifests itself in top-down and bottom-up patterns of communication. Regarded from a systematic perspective, political decisions require explanation in order to generate the general support necessary for a political system's performance, legitimacy and stability (Easton 1975; Sarcinelli 2011). A growing body of literature

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is, therefore, dedicated to the possible interaction between public opinion and public policy making (Hobold and Klemmensen 2008; Soroka and Wlezien 2010; Wlezien and Soroka 2012). In the interchange between the represented and their representatives, particularly at the district level, assuming that members of parliament (MPs) pursue re-election and citizens expect them to act responsively, it is understood that MPs need to communicate at all stages of their career: before they get elected, to satisfy citizens' informational requirements to cast their vote accordingly, and once they are in office to convince citizens that they are the best for the job (Lilleker 2006; Patzelt 2003; Bagehot 2001 [1867]).

All assumptions of how the represented and the representatives interact are based on the postulate that both sides act in an informed way. MPs can only be responsive if they know about citizens' preferences, and citizens need at least some information about what their representatives do so that citizens can evaluate their work. The profound changes in the communication landscape during recent decades, especially its broader geographic scope and the comprehensive presence of TV and digital media, have strongly impacted MPs' and citizens' communication opportunities. In addition to studies of direct and mediated political communication, growing attention, therefore, has been paid to the influence of digital media on the interaction of deputies and citizens (e.g., Zittel 2008, 2009; Tenscher and Will 2010) as well as its potential to bypass intermediaries such as journalists and editors, but also political parties (Zittel 2003, 2010). In this context, Norton (2007) even considers the Internet to be a challenge to existing forms of responsible party government.

While previous studies of individual political communication mainly focus on either the citizens' or the representatives' behavior and often concentrate on one specific communicative situation, the data of the CITREP-project allow for both perspectives and several situations of political communication. Broadly viewed, the different aspects of political communication can be distinguished by Lasswell's formula: "Who says what to whom via which channel with what effect?" (Lasswell 1927). Following the Lasswell framework, CITREP data will be used to inquire in five directions: Which roles do the media play in the exchange of information between citizens and MPs? Which role does direct communication play and how do citizens evaluate these encounters? To what extent do both sides use the Internet and social media? Finally, how do MPs differ in their individual use the of available communication channels?

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MPs AND CITIZENS: STRATEGIES AND REACTIONS

The importance of communicative action between representatives and represented is obvious. But which strategies do German and French MPs apply to actively create these vital interactions, and to what extent? And how does the electorate respond to these strategies?

The interviews carried out with French and German MPs clearly demonstrate that communication is central for the exercise of their mandate. Asked to explain the meaning of representation, a German deputy used the following metaphor:

> [For me, representation is] like being a fish in the water, to get the most possible oxygen out of discussions, contacts and reports from people. But also 'to provide respiration' for people. That means to give them an understanding of democracy and of my proper work, as well as justifications for decisions, etc. (German MP Rossmann, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD)

The German deputy Jung (Christlich Demokratische Union, CDU) described "communication with the citizens of the district" as the most important task of his district work. Similarly, a French MP described the role of a deputy as being a

> broker of information between government spheres and the regions. (French MP A15, Parti socialiste, PS)

Both countries offer numerous possibilities for this exchange. Generally speaking, these channels differ in their (1) directness (direct vs. mediated), (2) their character (offering information vs. interaction), (3) their range (large vs. small potential audience) and (4) their access conditions (free vs. closed). This study focuses on three specific communicational situations: direct communication, communication by the mass media and communication channels offered by the Internet. Using the criteria mentioned above, all these channels can be described by a unique combination of characteristics as shown in Fig. 6.1.

While the first two communicative situations both constitute an obvious combination of the characteristics and differ in all four categories, online communication presents itself in a more ambiguous manner. Firstly, it includes both types of directness (direct and mediated) as well as character (informing and interactive). Secondly, access to the Internet can only

Characteristics/ Communication Chanel	**Directness**	**Character**	**Potential Audience**	**Access**
Interpersonal Communication	Direct	Mainly Interactive	Small	Free
Communication by Mass Media	Mediated	Mainly Informing	Big	Limited
Internet	Direct and Mediated	Informing and Interactive	Big	(Relatively Free)

Fig. 6.1   Qualitative characteristics of communication channels

be described as being relatively free, since certain requirements must be met before the Internet can be used as a communication channel in the first place (e.g., physical access to a connection, monetary costs). Problems that arise with limited access will be discussed later in this chapter. Concerning the criteria of character, it is also necessary to mention that both direct communication and exchange via mass media are not positioned statically on either pole, but rather they must be (somewhat arbitrarily) characterized by their overall tendency. Direct communication tends to be interactive and communication mediated by the mass media tends to be informing, but obviously both situations also include aspects of the other.

Whether these theoretically based assumptions on the communicational situations can be confirmed or whether alterations are necessary will be addressed in the following empirical analysis sections.

Direct Communication with (a Small Fraction of) Citizens

Although most communication between citizens and the political elite is conveyed through some intermediary (e.g., mass media, political parties, interest groups, etc.), direct communication can, for example, take place at the district level during political events, during visits to companies, schools or associations, during office hours, as well as by phone, mail and e-mail. Both MPs and citizens participating in the CITREP survey were, therefore, asked how often they use these communicational situations.

The importance of direct communication for representatives in both countries is evident: A huge majority of French and German MPs reported that they communicate often or very often during events (France: 94%, Germany: 80%), visits (France: 83%, Germany: 89%) and by phone/mail/e-mail (France:

83%, Germany: 83%; see also Siefken 2013, 491 and Chap. 3 in this book). Overall, French MPs use the different opportunities of direct communication more often than their German counterparts, but most of the differences between them are not statistically significant at the level of p 0.05. The only statistically significant and substantially meaningful difference between both countries (Fisher's Exact Test, p = 0.000) concerns the frequency by which the deputies cited office hours: While 91 percent of the French MPs reported that they communicate often or very often with citizens this way, this was only the case for 36 percent of their German counterparts (3% of the German MPs answered "never", 2% "rarely" and 37% "sometimes").[1]

The specific character of office hours as an arena for finding pragmatic solutions for individual problems through networking has often been pointed out (King 1991; Le Lidec 2008; Kerrouche 2009) and is, again, confirmed by MPs' statements within the CITREP study:

> Many citizens who contact me during my office hours do so because they have a specific, individual problem. (German MP Bartholomäus Kalb, Christlich-Soziale Union, CSU)

Two factors could explain the greater willingness of French MPs to adapt to this function: an electoral dimension, given the nature of the French uni-nominal electoral system (Costa et al. 2012; Blais and Loewen 2009), but also the French specificity of the "cumul des mandats" (which allows MPs to hold several offices), as MPs holding several mandates sometimes use their national mandate as a means to secure or defend local posts (Abel and Navarro 2013; Costa and Kerrouche 2007).

While the interviews showed that direct communication plays a key role for the MPs' work in their districts, these channels can only reach a fraction of their constituents (Siefken 2013, 502 and Chap. 3 in this book). Results from the mass-survey confirm this view, showing that only 14 percent of German and 16 percent of French citizens had contact with their constituency's MP at least once during the last five years. Even fewer citizens claim to have this contact on a more regular basis: Only 7 percent in Germany and 9 percent in France said they communicated once or several times per year with their deputies. If they do so, in Germany a majority uses the one situation that allows for spontaneous interaction: talking to the MP during an event (65%). As the following citation shows, MPs are aware of these limitations that direct communication inflicts:

> I think I hear a lot in my constituency, I am present, I speak to many people, and I am considered to be approachable. Yet, there is a lot I am not aware of. My constituency has more than 260,000 inhabitants; of course you can only meet a small fraction …. (German MP Günther Krings, CDU)

Even though French MPs offer office hours significantly more often, this does not necessarily lead to a higher acknowledgement by their constituents. Only 20 percent of those French who communicated directly with their MP during the last five years did so by visiting him in his office, compared to 30 percent of the Germans. Whether citizens use direct links to their representatives obviously depends on more than MPs offering such possibilities. Further research, therefore, is necessary on the question why citizens choose a particular format for communicating with their political representatives.

Nice to Meet You!

Talking to one's representative is a rare thing to do for citizens. Those who do so are highly satisfied with these encounters though. In both countries a broad majority (56% in Germany and 66% in France) report they are very or rather satisfied after having met their MP.[2] These numbers clearly correspond to the generally shared feeling that MPs are not only interested in citizens' requests (France: 70%, Germany: 86%), but that they also were (France: 57%, Germany: 51%) or will be able to help with the matter at hand (France: 58%, Germany: 73%).[3] All the country differences reported here are highly significant (χ^2, $p = 0.000$).

Considering this positive evaluation of the individual MP's work, it is quite reasonable to assume that such personal experiences can also reflect on citizens' judgment of political representation. The CITREP data includes several questions concerning citizens' feeling of being represented: one asking for citizens' general feeling in regard to their values, beliefs and interests as well as two more specifically targeted at citizens' political interests as well as at their feeling of being represented by the MP of their district.

Naturally, citizens' assessment of political representation depends on more than just the amount and evaluation of direct interaction with one's political representatives. However, the results shown in Table 6.1 indicate that citizens who interacted with their deputy in the past indeed feel better represented in all three situations. While German citizens all in all feel better

Table 6.1 Feeling of being represented in various respects in France and Germany

		Very well/well represented		Neither well nor badly represented		Badly represented/ not represented at all	
		F	G	F	G	F	G
Representation in general	All citizens	8	18	28	49	65	33
	Contactors	16	33	31	44	53	23
Representation of interests	All citizens	10	18	27	48	63	34
	Contactors	22	34	27	41	50	26
Representation by district MP	All citizens	18	20	29	42	53	38
	Contactors	44	43	29	38	27	19

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, Germany: *n* = 1553 (all citizens); *n* = 217 (citizens having contact with their MPs during the last five years). France: *n* = 1009 (all citizens); *n* = 153 (citizens having contact with their MPs during the last five years). Contactors are respondents having contact with their MPs during the last five years

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording: Representation in general: "In your opinion, how well are your values, beliefs, and interests represented within the political system of your country?" Representation of interests: "In your opinion, how well are your political interests represented within the political system of your country?" Representation by district MP: "In your opinion, how well do you feel represented by the MP of your district?"

represented than their French counterparts, the overall rate of satisfaction with representation is rather low in both countries, with representation by the districts' deputies scoring the highest. However, citizens' satisfaction with being represented shoots up in all three situations if they interacted with their MPs during the last five years. This effect is especially strong on their feeling of being represented by the MP of their district. In both Germany and France the percentage rates more than double, adding 23 percentage points in Germany and 26 percentage points in France. The other two categories also clearly benefit from such interaction, although to a lesser extent. The assumption that such positive experiences citizens of both countries had when communicating with their MPs in person also positively influences their feeling of being well represented is supported by the results shown in Table 6.2. Clearly, MPs' expressing interest in their visitors' problems, as well as being able to help with the matter at hand, both have positive effects on citizens' feeling of being well represented by their MPs. Interestingly, French citizens seem to value their MPs' willingness to help them in the future even more than getting actual help on the spot.

Table 6.2   Feeling of being represented by district MP in France and Germany

	Very well/well represented		Neither well nor badly represented		Badly represented/not represented at all	
	F	G	F	G	F	G
All citizens	18	20	29	42	53	38
MP was interested in the matter	61	52	29	39	10	10
MP could help	65	66	23	28	12	5
MP will be able to help	67	62	22	30	11	7

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, Germany: n = 1553 (all citizens); n = 217 (citizens with contact to their MPs during the last five years). France: n = 1009 (all citizens); n = 153 (citizens with contact to their MPs during the last five years

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording: see Footnote 3

Encouraging citizens more strongly to actively engage in direct communication with their political representatives could, therefore, lessen their overall dissatisfaction with political representation itself. However, direct interaction is not free of costs for both MPs and citizens. The necessity of resources for political engagement has already been confirmed by earlier studies (e.g., Verba et al. 1995), and it is reasonable to believe that similar resources are required to enable citizens to actively engage with their political representatives: They must not only know about their MPs' offers for direct interaction (knowledge) but also need to have the time to do so (time). Keeping in mind that most direct communication takes place during situations that allow for spontaneous action (talking to the MP during an event) further supports this assumption. Similarly, MPs also need to invest time to be able to get in touch with citizens directly. This direct contact probably poses the highest costs for MPs, considering the deputies' average weekly workload. Both MPs and citizens, therefore, clearly depend on additional channels for political information, such as the institutions of the mass media—television, radio or press.

Almighty Media? The Media-Dependent Citizen

Mass media can be considered to be the most important agents for political communication. Due to their huge range[4] they dominate the public sphere in modern democratic nation states. Without them the "modern democratic state with its pluralistic power rivalries would not be functional" (Ronneberger

1964, 295). Mass media channels enable political actors to reach (almost) the whole citizenry and, simultaneously, offer citizens the information they need for gaining what Dahl (1989, 1998) calls "enlightened understanding." Mass media, therefore, constitute a broader link between representatives and represented than direct communication can achieve. For CITREP, both citizens and MPs were asked about their use of journalistic media for political communication purposes. Due to differences in the item wordings a direct comparison between the two countries is not possible. Therefore, the results will be presented for each country separately.

In France, citizens were asked to evaluate which of the three communication channels (newspapers, TV programs or radio broadcasting) they considered most and second most important for political information, followed by a question of how often during an average week they used this particular channel for getting political information.[5] The results show clearly that television (64% "most important channel") and, though to a lesser extent, radio broadcasting (15% "most important channel"), as well as newspapers (11% "most important channel"), are important sources of political information for French citizens. The importance of radio and television becomes even more obvious with the answers the French gave to the question of how often they use these channels for political information purposes, with radio being even more often used than TV. While 60 percent of the French use newspapers always or often, the proportions of regular users of TV (85%) and radio broadcasts (90%) exceed that share considerably.

Slightly more than two-thirds of those French who consider radio broadcasting as the most or second most important source for political information also listen to it every day ("always"); another 23 percent listen to it four to six times a week ("often"). Newspapers, by contrast, are distinctly less popular, whereas TV programs also play an important role but still fall behind radio. One explanation for these results could be that it is easy to listen to the radio while doing other things, such as driving, and thereby catching up on political information on the run, compared to watching television and, especially, to reading newspapers (Strohmeier 2004, 50).

In Germany, citizens were also asked how often during an average week they used each channel for political information but were not asked about each channel's individual relevance for political information purposes. Additionally, due to country specifics, television programs were differentiated more broadly while radio broadcasting was omitted. Our results clearly show that neither political magazines nor political talk shows are broadly used when it comes to political communication on television

(magazines 9% regular users; talk shows 4%). In addition, news programs on private TV channels are distinctively less important than those offered by public ones: Only 31 percent reported that they watch private TV news often or always, while for public TV news the rate was 71 percent. As in France, newspapers are less frequently used as a source of political information than electronic media (55% "often"/always). The findings concerning political magazines and talk shows are particularly surprising since they differ from Latzer et al. who found that political magazines and talk shows reach 72.6 percent of Germany's total population (Latzer et al. 2012, 8).

MPs and the Media: Between Wishes and Reality

Contrary to the importance traditional news media have for citizens' political information, MPs in both countries use these media channels rather moderately (see Chap. 3 in this book). Only five percent of German and 15 percent of French MPs reported that they communicate "often" or "very often" via television, and 10 and 18 percent respectively via radio.[6] Findings are different for newspapers, with a majority of the representatives (52% of German and 62% of French MPs) communicating regularly with the help of this medium. Meanwhile, the Internet has become by far the most important communication tool among the mass media for French (83%) and German MPs (73%).[7]

Explanations given by MPs during the qualitative CITREP interviews shed some light on these results. Numerous deputies expressed their frustration about their limited access to the mass media:

> There is a wide gulf between wishes and reality. I would, for instance, love to communicate much more via newspaper, TV or radio but it's not always attainable. (German MP Dieter Stier, CDU)

> The relation with the media is difficult. It is not you who approaches the media, it is the media who approach you. I send them a certain number of elements which they publish or not. We are sometimes surprised what they publish and what they do not publish. (French MP A24, PS)

> If you are not in a permanent attitude of protest, public TV and radio do not listen to you; it is the same for the newspapers. I also want the newspapers or the TV to talk about me. (French MP A08, Union pour un mouvement populaire, UMP)

Even though mass media offer the advantage of reaching a huge number of citizens, MPs underline the fact that they simultaneously come with severe disadvantages for their communication purposes. These mainly lie within the mass media's inherent criteria of selecting, editing and presenting a particular piece of information. Political actors, therefore, have relatively little influence on what, when and how information is published (Hube 2008), even though the political sphere has tried to adapt to these structures (e.g., by introducing PR sections, spin doctors, pseudo-events, etc.) (Schulz 2008).

This situation is especially complicated as the representatives have the impression that citizens are not aware of the difficulties they face in accessing the media, and, consequently, blame them for being inactive:

> Yesterday I received a furious message concerning the new electricity meters. The question was: Why did we not hear the PS [French Socialist Party] in the media on this issue? This happens even among the party activists. And we are unable to make them understand that we do not have access to the media. That TF1 [French public TV channel] does not belong to us. (French MP A06, PS)

> As stupid as it sounds, what is not written in the newspaper simply does not take place for many people. (German MP Ernst Dieter Rossmann, SPD)

The MPs thereby refer to the acknowledged fact that "everything we know about our society, about the world we live in, we know through the mass media" (Luhmann 2004, 9).

Most difficult to get but also promising the greatest publicity are appearances on television:

> The most spectacular way to reach the masses is when you are mentioned on TV. It is obvious that … people approach you more often about TV appearances, than when you are mentioned in the newspaper. (German MP Ernst Dieter Rossmann, SPD)

> the day you are in the news bulletin on France3, everybody will tell you 'I've seen you on France3' for two weeks. It is important and unusual at the same time. (French MP A19, PS)

That MPs report they communicate more frequently via the press can be explained by the existence of regional newspapers. These assure the

continuity of the MPs' coverage in the news, even though the deputies' appearances are often limited to a photo of an inauguration or a similar event. In the words of German MP Rossmann (SPD):

> Regional newspapers prove to be the most continuous and sustainable informant.

The analyses above show that both representatives and the represented consider mediated communication to be more important than direct communication. An explanation for this ranking can be found in the particular characteristics of each communication channel as shown in Fig. 6.1. For the political elite, the mass media hold the obvious advantage that by communicating via newspapers, television or radio they can reach a large share of the electorate, while direct communication is characterized by its rather small audience. Simultaneously, as the interviews with the MPs of both countries show, communication via mass media has the disadvantage that MPs have little to no control over what is printed or broadcasted and in which manner. For citizens, content selected, edited and presented by the mass media seems to be the easiest way to get political information. Offers made by MPs to communicate directly with the local electorate are hardly ever accepted, as they demand more of citizens' resources. While citizens in both countries consider television broadcasting as the most important source for political information, MPs acknowledge the importance of television stations for MPs' communicative behavior, but simultaneously face the big challenge of getting access to the programs. Television and, to a similar extent, radio stations impose very high barriers of access for the MPs, which explains MPs' more frequent use of newspapers as well as online channels. The latter especially offer the opportunity to circumvent journalistic gatekeeping. By turning to online communication, MPs thereby not only regain some control over the presentation of their political messages, they can also reach a similarly broad audience—or so they think. Hence, online channels are mentioned regularly as promising alternatives.

Online Communication—Chance or Overrated?

The rapid development of the Web with its seemingly countless and easily accessible low-cost channels, including both unidirectional (homepages, blogs, online presence of "offliners", etc.) and bidirectional (forums,

Facebook profiles, Twitter profiles, e-mail, etc.) communication opportunities, had raised hopes for a new era of political communication (e.g., Grossmann 1995). The Internet, it is believed, can combine the positive effects of both the mass media (range) and direct communication (full control over unaltered information). As Schulz explains, the World Wide Web allows political actors "to bypass the journalistic gate keepers and at the same time the filtering and modification of messages by the journalistic media" (2008, 24). This effectuates "change in the three major areas of the everyday work of legislators: as electorate representative; as party representative; and as national legislator" (Ward et al. 2007). As Leston-Bandeira (2007) has shown, MPs in Portugal have already reacted to these promises by communicating increasingly to constituents collectively (via e-mail, online newsletters, websites or blogs) and individually (via e-mail) online. Contrary to this positive view, a more negative one apprehends a "digital divide" between members of society with and without access to online information (Bonfadelli 1994; Norris 2001; Marr 2005; Marr and Zillien 2010). For Germany, the CITREP data show that only 61 percent of the participants claimed to use the Internet at least occasionally.[8] The French questionnaire did not include this question. According to data from Eurostat the gap between onliners and offliners has begun to close, with 79 percent of the German population now being online at least once a week. Similar numbers describe the relationship within French society: 78 percent of the French population report using the Internet regularly (Eurostat 2013). Nevertheless, with still about 20 percent of both the German and French populations being offline, the notion of a digital divide in these countries does not seem too far-fetched.

Citizens 2.0?

The numbers stated above, however, do not allow for a reliable account of the political usage of the Internet. The fact that "the Web encourages active, rather than passive, use" (D'Alessio 1997, 489), in the sense that users must actively visit websites to access (political) information[9], distinguishes the Internet from television or radio broadcasting. Especially with the latter, it is possible that information is absorbed "along the way", for example, by listening to the news while driving or watching the news during halftime of a soccer match.

By asking in detail how often citizens use online communication channels for pursuing political information and actively getting in touch with a

Table 6.3   Use of the Internet by German and French citizens

	Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G
For political information in general (includes reading on the Internet)	24	11	31	18	18	23	27	49
To get political information from websites	7	3	16	12	25	20	52	65
To contact political institutions online	1	1	6	4	8	8	85	87
To read political blogs	6	2	13	8	14	14	67	76
To get political information from Facebook	2	2	9	4	10	9	80	86
To get political information from Twitter	2	1	2	2	3	8	93	89
To find and send humoristic content about politics	7	–	21	–	14	–	59	–

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, Germany: n = 286 (Internet usage for general political information); n = 142 (To get political information from websites); n = 50 (To contact political institutions online); n = 97 (To read political blogs); n = 51 (To get political information from Facebook); n = 28 (To get political information from Twitter), France: n = 139 (Internet usage for general political information); n = 58 (To get political information from websites); n = 17 (To contact political institutions online); n = 47 (To read political blogs); n = 26 (To get political information from Facebook); n = 10 (To get political information from Twitter); n = 70 (To find and send humoristic content about politics)

Notes: Cell entries are percentage points

Item wording: "People can use the Internet for gathering political information. What about you—do you use the Internet…?"

political actor or institution, CITREP has collected data that helps to shed light on the actual relevance of the Internet for political communication.

Table 6.3 clearly shows that, overall, the Internet proves to be rather unimportant in these contexts. In France, a small majority of 55 percent uses the Internet regularly (24% "often", 31% "sometimes") for general political information purposes. However, this category also includes the reading of news content put online by genuine "offliners" such as newspapers. Considering that in France only 11 percent mentioned newspapers as the most important source for political information, but more than fifty million visits per month[10] have been counted for the websites of *Le Monde* or *Le Figaro* (Latzer et al. 2012), it is reasonable to assume that this behavior covers at least some of those 55 percent of regular Internet users. German citizens do not even employ this category regularly (73% "rarely"/"never"). Additionally, citizens are especially less likely to access those online channels which promise a greater chance of interaction (such as contacting political institutions online or getting political information

via social networks). In general, irrespective of its use as a source for general political information, the Internet is used only by small minorities of the French and German public, with the French being more active. It seems that for both countries the advantage of range ascribed to the Internet is more hope than reality when it comes to political communication. This observation is in line with findings for the UK: Based on evidence from the 2005 Oxford Online Survey, Di Gennaro and Dutton have shown (2006, 311) that "online political participation among Britons was amongst the less frequent uses of the Internet and was less common than offline political participation."

An interesting detail concerns the relatively small number of French citizens reporting visits to political blogs (19% "often"/"sometimes"), as this seemingly contradicts the observation of Zielmann and Röttger (2009, 82) who emphasize blogs' importance in France compared to other European countries: "[In France] you cannot be elected president without having a blog."

Additionally, the vast majority[11] of those people who actively use online communication channels also read newspapers and/or watch news on TV regularly. It can, therefore, be concluded that the services offered online by political actors and institutions are mainly used as an additional source of political information by those people who already use TV and print media for political information. CITREP thereby supports findings by Saalfeld and Dobmeier (2012) who show that even though a large majority of MPs use social media networks for direct political communication, most of these profiles do not gain a big audience. One possible explanation could be that it is not the ordinary citizen who engages with a political actor on his social media profile, but rather that these platforms instead serve as rallying points for people already supporting this particular politician, party or institution. Once again these findings recall the observations of other authors. Di Gennaro and Dutton (2006) were able to show that online participation mainly increases the engagement of those already engaged, while the observations of Coleman (2005) proved that there is a tendency among Internet users to communicate with like-minded people and to seek information that confirm preexisting beliefs.

Further research, therefore, is necessary on (1) who these "friends" and "followers" are and (2) the relation between them and the owner of the profile. The fact that more than 80 percent of German and more than 70 percent of French citizens who use the Internet to contact their MP claim to have a party identification further supports the assumption that the Internet mainly intensifies communicative actions of those already engaged.

The MP 2.0!

Contrary to the results stated above, MPs in both countries report the Internet as having become indispensable for their communication with citizens: 83 percent of the French and 73 percent of the German deputies claimed to use the Internet often or very often during their everyday communication. The German MP Halina Wawzyniak (Die Linke) stated:

> The only moment I do not use the Internet is when I sleep. It is the most important medium for communication and information.

The Internet is also clearly presented as a possibility to compensate for the difficulties political actors experience with access to journalistic media. As one French MP explained:

> The Internet allows supplementing the insufficient echo in the media to my solicitations, to my press releases. (French MP A19, PS)

And the German MP Eva Högl (SPD) explicitly points to the special difficulties for deputies elected in Berlin to access the media and the need to compensate by online communication.

However, not always knowing who receives the message is characteristic of online communication. While MPs did not speculate about who they think the visitors of their homepages are, they are aware of their Facebook and Twitter friends' specific profile:

> I use these means of communication a lot; they allow you to communicate with observers more than with citizens. On Twitter, you mainly find political journalists, other politicians, etc. (French MP A14, UMP)

MPs thereby adopt what Fenno (1978, 237) has described as a two-step flow of communication: "The operative assumption is that if you can reach some people, they will reach others and your effort will multiply itself", adding new tools offered by the new media that enlarge Fenno's initial vision. This corroborates with Siefken's (2013) observations about German MPs' use of social media.

The way MPs use the Internet differs widely (see also Chap. 3 in this book). While some cover the entire spectrum of possibilities, others use the Internet in a very conservative way. Nearly all MPs in both countries claimed to communicate by e-mail, and many cite the importance of the

financial savings e-mails provide compared to traditional mailing. This capacity to reduce the cost of communication has also been identified by Zittel (2003, 36) as an important feature of online channels. Deputies are, however, aware of the fact that not all parts of society are connected equally to the Internet (digital divide). The German MP Franz Obermeier (CSU) stated that when he switched from letters to online newsletters, some of the elderly did not have access to his publications any longer.

> but the savings reach several thousand euros and now it is working out really well.

He also reports that the response rate to online newsletters is higher:

> People read [the newsletter online] and then it is relatively easy for them to respond with a few thoughts. This is not comparable with letters sent by post.

MPs also mentioned the archive function of a website being a positive aspect of digital communication, allowing information to be to stocked for several years:

> [This] allow[s] people to confront me with what I said nine years ago. (German MP Günter Krings, CDU)

A minority of deputies in both countries reported making very intensive use of the new media. Apart from his homepage, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter profiles, the German MP Vogel (FDP) explained that he communicates also via Flickr, 'Wer-kennt-Wen" (who knows whom) and a social media platform specially dedicated to students (StudiVZ). One French MP told us that he had to open a second Facebook account because

> the first [account] was full; I have more than 5000 friends. (French MP A14, UMP)

MPs in Search for Citizens' Attitudes

The bidirectional character of communication has already been pointed out. MPs do not only do their best to inform citizens about their positions and activities but also seek to gather information on the wishes, attitudes

and opinions of the represented. Again, mass media play an important role for this side of political communication and are followed attentively by the MPs:

> [My day] always begins by grabbing the remote. I watch the morning maga-zine on ARD and ZDF and sometimes I follow up with [the news on] RTL and SAT1. On my IPad, I read the newspapers …. (German MP Michael Groschek (SPD), but similar descriptions by the French MPs A34, PS; A22, PS; A23, PS)

Others rely on press reviews prepared by their parliamentary assistants (German MPs Petra Ernstberger, SPD and Valerie Wilms, Bündnis90/Die Grünen).

The observation that MPs attach a lot of importance to media reports is in line with studies showing that the mass media are important players when it comes to setting the political agenda and (even if not intention-ally) the public opinion (McCombs and Shaw 1972; McCombs 1977, 2000; Walgrave 2008).

However, numerous MPs stated how difficult it is to get hold of reli-able information about what citizens think and want, stressing the need for sources of information other than those provided by the mass media. On the one hand, these difficulties result from a certain mistrust deputies feel towards the way public opinion finds expression in the published media:

> I think the most important task is to be a political translator—that means … to take up everyday worries of people. Because these differ very often and clearly perceptibly from the public opinion as it is published by the media. (German MP Michael Groschek, SPD)

On the other hand, the MP's status also seems to determine which information MPs get from citizens directly. As the German MP Ernst Dieter Rossmann (SPD) explained:

> When we are in government, the economically powerful contact us more often; when we are in opposition, our voters. Therefore, we have an incom-plete—that's a too strong expression—let's say an uneven picture of the population's needs.

As a consequence, MPs develop different and sometimes very unique strategies to obtain information on citizens' attitudes. One French deputy illustrated:

> I can't go out on the street and ask people what they think. Therefore, I composed a staff of twelve people, so I have twelve people who discuss from 9.30 to 12.30 every Monday. This is my think tank. (French MP A47, UMP)

He explained that this team is composed of representatives of companies, experts on media and the Internet, one person with good contacts to the army and one person representing social associations. Similarly, the German MP Stephan Kühn (Bündnis90/Die Grünen) stated that he (always) reads carefully

> the letters to the editor in the newspapers to get an idea of what people care about.

Not all deputies show this kind of commitment though, but rather rely on individual "explorers or scouts" as the German MPs Dieter Wiefelspütz and Petra Ernstberger (both SPD) put it. These "explorers" can be collaborators, (political) friends and, especially in the French case, often local politicians (see German MP Günter Krings, CDU, and French MPs A40, PS, A25, PRG, A21, PS, A09, PS, A26, UMP).

In addition, MPs underlined the importance of personal contacts within the citizenry:

> I do not carry out representative surveys to catch the mood in my constituency, but with approximately 250 events in the constituency per year, you get in contact with a lot of people. (German MP Reinhard Brandl, CSU)

In the same vein, the German representative Carsten Schneider (SPD) said that he sometimes asks citizens directly what they think:

> This is certainly not representative, but sometimes a discussion in the margins of an event is more important than a representative survey.

The clear disadvantage of these personal discussions in the constituency is that they are often focused on individual problems (German MP Reinhard Brandl, CSU). As the German MP Marina Schuster (FDP) put it:

It is rather unusual that information about the human rights situation in Belarus or Eastern Congo come from people in the constituency. It is more that the information I get in the constituency cover completely different topics than those of my committee work.

This tendency to focus on individual problems is especially noticed by MPs when they talk about the (e-)mails they receive from their constituents. French deputies were especially likely to have reported receiving a considerable number of such letters ("we receive about 70 mails a day" [A11]; "this morning when I left home I had already received around 30 personalized mails; I don't even talk about petitions [A8])." They are, therefore, considered less as reliable indicators of the general mood within the population but more as personal nuisances from individual voters who seek help. In this regard, those (e-)mails could be considered as the written counterpart to office hours. Some MPs report that they feel overwhelmed by the flood of e-mails and even express a certain irritation about this kind of communication. One French MP explained:

We are inundated by letters. If I would not be ashamed, I would say that my primary tool is the waste bin. (French MP A08, UMP)

And another stated:

I have, often enough, the opportunity to listen to crap; I don't need to spend my evenings reading crap and [learning the] states of mind of people who have nothing else to do on the top of that. It's my assistant who checks those mails and deletes 150 of them twice a day. (French MP A37, PS)

Overall though, the interviews draw a picture of MPs actively trying to get a hold of citizens' attitudes and opinions and facing this challenge by using several, sometimes very creative, indicators to "take the [citizens'] temperature".

DIFFERENCES AMONG MPS WITHIN ONE COUNTRY

As shown above, most MPs would prefer a broader presence within the classical news media. Previous international studies, however, suggest that political actors are not equal in their ability to access these channels. Executive power (Gans 2003; Bennett 1990), a higher standing, seniority,

institutional responsibility as well as a younger age (Van Aelst and Van Dalen 2010) have all been found to positively affect a politician's status in the view of the mass media. As political parties are pivotal institutions for both countries' political systems, it is reasonable to assume that party affiliation also influences the MPs' communicational position. For Belgium, Van Aelst et al. (2008) have shown that parliamentary deputies of the opposition parties receive more attention from the classical mass media, being of more interest for journalists than MPs from government parties. Additionally, Hacket (1991) found, that bigger parties receive more media coverage than smaller parties. A series of significance tests for the MPs interviewed for CITREP reveal, however, only minor differences among the various profiles of the MPs in France and Germany. In Germany, MPs with seniority (χ^2, df = 1, $p = 0.032$) and, in France, members of the parliamentary opposition (Fisher's Exact Test, $p = 0.013$[12]) report that they communicate significantly more often via newspapers than members of the parliamentary majority. All other factors turned out to be of no significance.

Against the background of the previous international studies, it seems surprising that the other factors did not turn out to have a significant effect on MPs' frequency of communicating via classical news media. Some insight in how the communication practice differs can be gained by the answers deputies gave to open-ended questions. MPs of both countries stress the huge impact local media have on their individual capacities to communicate. While some explicitly called themselves lucky because of a strong presence of local media in their constituency ("We are lucky to have two daily local newspapers; the [name of the region] is a region where local newspapers are often read," A48), others complained about their specific region. Even within their constituency, MPs report differences in their capacity to obtain media coverage:

> I have a good resonance in the district [Schwerin—Ludwigslust-Parchim I—Nordwestmecklenburg I] and a less fantastic resonance in the city of Schwerin. The success rate is 30 percent in the latter and around 70 percent in the first district. (German MP Hans-Joachim Hacker, SPD)

With online communication, younger MPs belonging to the so-called "digital natives" or "generation @" (people who grew up with the Internet and new social media) can be expected to use these communication channels more extensively than MPs who do not belong to this "generation." Zittel (2010) has shown for Germany that younger MPs are using personal

websites more often for political communication than their older colleagues. While Zittel focused on MPs' websites, the CITREP interviews aimed at finding out how often deputies use the Internet with all its possibilities to communicate with citizens, and, interestingly, the findings are different. Neither in France nor in Germany did older MPs turn out to be more reluctant concerning the use of online communication. One possible explanation for this finding is the technical help many MPs reported receiving from their parliamentary assistants, as shown earlier in this chapter.

Instead, Internet usage seems to vary among MPs from different political parties. Since parties play a crucial role for representatives' communication (Sartori 1976), this is not surprising. With regard to new media, the Internet has been shown to be "especially useful for smaller and less established parties, parties that do not receive as much attention in the mass media and that have a difficult time obtaining the financial means needed for direct mailing" (Römmele, 2003, 9). If this is true for political parties as a whole, differences between the individual MPs can also be expected, with those who belong to smaller parties or to parties that are in opposition using online communication channels more widely. In Germany, members of small parties (especially MPs belonging to Die Linke [Left Party], followed by the members of the FDP and Bündnis90/Die Grünen [Green Party]) use online media substantially more often for communicating with citizens (Fisher's Exact Test $p = 0.022$). Among MPs of the two bigger parties, members of the SPD, who were in opposition during the CITREP survey (government formed by CDU/CSU and FDP), also reported communicating more frequently via the Internet than members of the Union parties (CDU and CSU). Being in opposition indeed leads to more online communication in Germany (Fisher's Exact Test, $p = 0.019$) but, as shown earlier in this chapter, not to more communication via traditional media. This again underscores the MPs' perspective that they are able to avoid journalistic gatekeeping by going online. Members of the CSU are the only MPs belonging to a small party who communicate rarely via the Internet. This might be due to their status as part of the government or their special place in the party landscape that is marked by a close proximity to the CDU. An alternative explanation for the differences in the use of online communication might be found in a rather skeptical attitude among conservative politicians towards social change, making them more reluctant to use new communication channels.

For France, explanations are less obvious due to the small number of participants for some of the political parties.[13] One interesting observation, however, concerns the impact of the majority-opposition status on French MPs. As the government majority in France changed while the CITREP survey was carried out, some MPs of UMP and PS participated in the survey while still being in opposition/government, while others participated after the parliamentary majority had changed. However, a significant difference can neither be observed between all members of the opposition and those of the majority, nor between the MPs belonging to the same party (UMP or PS) but having a different status (majority or opposition). While further tests, including surveying a higher number of MPs, are required to confirm these observations, these findings already raise some questions for the German case. It can, in fact, not be ruled out that the differences between members of the CDU and the SPD are due to other factors than their opposition-majority status. One possible explanation is, for instance, that left-wing parties, who are known to be more open to societal change, are more inclined to use new media than conservative parties.

MIND THE GAP!

The analyses of representatives' as well as citizens' communication practices clearly show a certain gap between the two groups' approaches. This is especially obvious regarding MPs' strategies of top-down communication and citizens' reactions to these: Citizens in both countries continue to rely almost exclusively on mass media for political information without paying much attention to other channels offered by their political representatives, namely direct and online communication. They prefer the easier and least resource-intensive means for getting political information, and hence rely on the pre-selected and edited information offered by the mass media, especially by television and radio that can be absorbed "along the way." The individual MP, however, faces rather high barriers when trying to appear in the mass media. For them it is easiest to access (local) newspapers, which, at the same time, are the mass medium used least by citizens for political information purposes.

MPs actively try to circumvent the barriers imposed by the mass media's gatekeeping function by increasingly turning to the communication opportunities offered by the Internet. However, the information put online mainly misses the target group since citizens seem to use the

Communication channel	Directness	Character	Access	Potential audience	Real audience
Direct Communication	Direct	Mainly interactive	Free	Small	Small
Journalistic Media	Mediated	Mainly informing	Limited	Big	Big
Internet	Direct and mediated	Informing and interactive	(Relatively free)	Big	Small

Fig. 6.2   Potential and real audience of the different communication channels

Internet for everything but political information purposes. Again there is an obvious gap between MPs' efforts to communicate to the citizens of their constituency and citizens' habits of consuming political information. With regard to the characteristics of the different communicational situations, as presented in Fig. 6.1, some clarifications must be made. Figure 6.2 indicates that in order to fully understand the characteristics of online communication, a distinction between their *potential* and their *real* audience is necessary.

On the basis of this observation, it can be concluded that, as long as the gap between the potential audience and the real audience is not closed, the Internet will not be able to develop its full potential for communication between MPs and citizens. In other words, before online media can play the role of bypassing the gatekeeping function of journalistic media, efforts have to be undertaken to interest broader layers of the population in the Web presence of MPs and other political actors.

Concerning the third top-down situation analyzed in this chapter, it becomes obvious that direct communication poses rather high barriers for both MPs and citizens. For MPs, direct communication is very time consuming while simultaneously only reaching a very small fraction of their constituency's citizenry. Citizens not only need to know about the communication offers their political representatives make, but they also need to invest time to actively take advantage of them. Even though direct interaction proves to have positive effects on citizens' feelings that they are being politically well represented, it is no surprise that this communication form is used least among the forms surveyed.

That political communication always includes top-down as well as bottom-up practices is something about which MPs in both countries are aware. Concerning the informing function media have for MPs about their constituents' needs, opinions and wishes, it can finally be stated that MPs in both countries find it rather difficult to be up to date about citizens' opinions. While most MPs report to rely on multiple indicators, all have their specific disadvantages. Journalistic media represent one of the most important sources of information for MPs; however, MPs do not feel they can rely fully on the way public opinion finds expression in the media. Therefore, they mention the need for additional sources of information. Personal contacts in the constituency, on the other hand, have the disadvantage of being very problem centered and, thereby, more like the written counterparts of office hours than a reliable sensor of the temperature of the public opinion. The importance of "explorers" in the constituency who provide MPs with information on citizens' attitudes was underlined by several deputies.

Finally, in the case of France and Germany, and contrary to findings in other countries, different communication practices among MPs of the same country could hardly be explained by their different profiles. The only exceptions were that, in Germany, MPs with seniority and, in France, members of the parliamentary majority communicate far more often via newspapers than "new" members of parliament or members of the opposition, respectively. Instead, the interviews suggest that it is the characteristics of the local media landscape that, at least partly, explains the different conditions under which MPs seek to access journalistic media. Further analyses, as well as a higher number of participants, are required to better understand these findings.

All in all, the observed difficulties for both top-down as well as bottom-up political communication lead to a picture of a rather distorted communication relationship between the politically represented and their representatives that is more characterized by gaps and barriers than by mutual understanding.

Notes

1. The exact wording of the question was: "Could you please tick all channels you use for communicating with your district?"
2. The question wordings were as follows: "How satisfied were you with how the contact/the contacts passed? Very satisfied, rather satisfied, neither

satisfied nor dissatisfied, rather dissatisfied or not at all satisfied." Data reported above refer to percentages of choosing the categories very satisfied or rather satisfied.

3. "Do you believe the MP was interested in the matter you saw him/her for/could help you with the matter you saw him/her for/will be able to help you with the matter you saw him/her for? Yes/No." Data reported above refer to percentages of choosing the category yes.

4. The only other communication channels that might gain a comparable range are those provided by the World Wide Web.

5. The exact wording of the question was: "How often during an average week do you get political information out of the press/by watching TV/by listening to the radio?" The answering categories were recoded as follows: seldom: 1 to 3 days a week, often: 4 to 6 days a week.

6. Differences between France and Germany are not significant at the level of p 0.05.

7. Question Wording: "Could you please indicate how often you use the following communication channels within your district? Radio, Newspapers, TV, Internet; answering categories: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often." $n = 64$ (Germany), $n = 46$ (France).

8. More than 83 percent of households had access to the Internet in 2011 (Eurostat 2015).

9. Although it can be argued that, regarding social media networks, this no longer holds true. Here the user indeed can "stumble" upon political information posted by his acquaintances ("friends" on Facebook, "followers" on Twitter).

10. The counting took place for July 2012 (Latzer et al. 2012).

11. Germany: 68 percent of those who use the Internet for political communication also read newspapers regularly (four to seven times a week); 74 percent watch the news on public TV regularly (four to seven times a week). France: 71 percent of those who use the Internet for political communication also read newspapers regularly (four to seven times a week); 80 percent watch the news on TV regularly (four to seven times a week).

12. Fisher's Exact Tests have been conducted instead of χ^2 tests when the number of observations in one category was smaller than 5.

13. One member of the PCF: using the Internet rarely; one member of the PRG: using the Internet often; three members of the Greens (EEVL) using the Internet sometimes, often, and very often respectively; two MPs without party affiliation: using the Internet very often.

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"Oh, That Is a Big Word." MPs' and Citizens' Perspectives on Parliamentary Representation

Mirjam Dageförde and Danny Schindler

For decades, parliamentary representation has been a key issue of theoretical as well as empirical political science (see e.g., Eulau et al. 1959; Pitkin 1967; Andeweg and Thomassen 2005; Rehfeld 2009). One reason for its prominence is that parliament is the only actor (as in Germany) or one of only a few actors (as in France) directly elected by the people and thus vested with the highest democratic legitimation. Another reason for its prominence are persistent signs of distance between citizens and politics, or citizens' discontent with representative democracy. These phenomena are discussed in the scope of a presumed "crisis of representation" (Dalton et al. 2001; Grunberg et al. 2002; Dalton 2006, 2007; Cain et al. 2008; Gabriel 2013; Rosanvallon 2015). However, this harsh interpretation is

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challenged by some authors (e.g., Norris 2011; Zmerli and Hooghe 2011; Zmerli 2012).

As parliamentary representation is a multifaceted process, empirical research focuses on a variety of different aspects (see e.g., Loewenberg 2011; Kühne 2012). On the one hand, it examines the representatives' side: This string of research considers MPs' attitudes towards the process of representation and their behavior in parliament and beyond (e.g., Patzelt 1993; Costa and Kerrouche 2009; Blomgren and Rozenberg 2012; Siefken 2013). On the other hand, citizens and their attitudes or demands towards parliamentary representation are in the center of investigation. Those studies have recently reentered the research field but mainly refer to only one country each (Carman 2006, 2007; Bengtsson and Wass 2010; Bengtsson 2011; Dageförde 2013; Esaiasson et al. 2013; Oñate 2016; von Schoultz and Wass 2016). Scholarship that explores citizens' evaluation of representation comparatively in a large number of countries (like Rohrschneider 2005; Whitefield 2006) is rare. A third line of research assesses representation in terms of policy positions or ideological orientations. Studies on congruence explore the accordance of positions between citizens and political institutions or political actors. Analyses of responsiveness investigate whether citizens' interests are considered in the representational process (Miller and Stokes 1963; Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2004; Golder and Stramski 2010). Fourth, research contrasts both actors' views about their understanding of and attitudes towards representation (e.g., Méndez-Lago and Martinez 2002; Esaiasson and Narud 2013; Campbell and Lovenduski 2015; von Schoultz and Wass 2016).

This chapter contributes to a growing field by examining citizens' and MPs' understandings and perceptions of parliamentary representation. The analysis is conducted comparatively. Thus, our main questions are (a) whether and how MPs in both countries differ in their views on representation and (b) whether and how the views of citizens differ. Not least, our interest is also directed to comparing the views of representatives and the represented.

ASSESSING REPRESENTATION: CLASSICAL ROLE THEORY, RECENT RESEARCH ON INTERACTION, AND OPEN QUESTIONS

Classical Role Theory

While representation includes a variety of aspects that can be investigated by numerous approaches, classical research on the representational relationship is based on role theory following the seminal works of Wahlke

and colleagues. They defined roles as a "coherent 'set of norms' of behavior" and postulate "that legislators are aware of the norms constituting the role and consciously adapt their behavior to them in some fashion" (Wahlke et al. 1962, 8). Most prominent have been differentiations between representational focus and style. Focus concerns the question whom (nation, district, voters, party, etc.) MPs represent. MPs' respective role orientations are not necessarily mutually exclusive, i.e., they can be held simultaneously (Eulau et al. 1959, 745). Style refers to the ways in which MPs arrive at their decisions. It contrasts two ideal types: In their representative functions, trustees are considered independent actors who follow their own convictions. Delegates, instead, should not use their own judgment as criterion of decision-making but follow instructions from their district or their voters respectively. Moreover, both types are thought of as poles of a continuum with a middle range that constitutes an intermediate role: that of "politico" who takes the role of trustee and delegate simultaneously or serially (ibid., 750). By combining focus and style, those authors also found that delegates are primarily district oriented while trustees primarily focus on all citizens making up the national political community (ibid., 755).[1]

However, there are several difficulties as to the style concept. To mention the most important points: As part of a normative debate (mandate-independence controversy), the distinction can be regarded as misleading since representation means taking the demands of the represented seriously, but not being just a mouthpiece of their will (Pitkin 1967, 154). In parliamentary democracies, parties are focal actors which regularly influence their deputies' judgments and decisions, be it in terms of party discipline (Thomassen 1994) or cognitive division of labor. According to Converse and Pierce (1986, 497) nearly all representatives should be empirically classified as politicos who varyingly follow their own or their voters' judgment depending on the given context. Style-related role orientations could also hardly be connected to actual behavior (Searing 1991, 1249). At least, if MPs are urged to eventually choose between alternatives, "the distinction does not seem to provide meaningful insights into the relationship between the represented and the representatives" (Andeweg and Thomassen 2005, 509).

Yet, to be fair, it is probably not the style concept as such which is problematic or even obsolete but the ways of investigating it empirically. Most importantly, research has not been guided appropriately by its pioneers' emphasis that representatives can hold trustee or delegate orientations

seriatim and "depending on circumstances" (Eulau et al. 1959, 750). We thus need data on which and how context matters for style of representation, i.e., when and how role switching between trustee and delegate takes place (see also Andeweg 2012, 81).

As such context-oriented measurement is lacking, the classical distinction of representational styles will not be followed up here. Even though the concept of representational focus is not without caveats either, it aroused less criticism and figures prominently to this day (see e.g., Zittel 2012; von Schoultz and Wass 2016). Hence, the classical focus question was used in our interviews of both, citizens and MPs.

Representation as Interactive Relationship

Following Pitkin (1967), contemporary political theory conceptualizes representation as an interactive and dynamic relationship between its main actors (see Mansbridge 2003; Urbinati 2006). On the one hand, citizens communicate their demands and attitudes. Concerning the representational link, this involves efforts of representatives to be informed about citizens' views, i.e., to take in their suggestions and opinions. On the other hand, MPs lead and make decisions that have to be explained to those represented by MPs. In a nutshell, interaction in terms of responsiveness and leadership can be seen at the core of representation (see Pitkin 1967; Patzelt 1993).

This perspective has also been taken up by a more recent line of empirical research. It is reflected by Esaiasson and Holmberg's distinction between representation from above and from below: In one case, the process of representation starts with citizens' views being translated into policies. In the other case, representation starts with active MPs who bring their views to the citizens (Esaiasson and Holmberg 1996, 5). Andeweg and Thomassen (2005) pick up this differentiation empirically. In addition, together with the dimension of popular control (*ex ante* or *ex post*), it is part of their typology of modes of political representation which is devised as an alternative to classical trustee/delegate models. Elsewhere, Andeweg also describes the differentiation from above/below as "two distinct role orientations" (Andeweg 2012, 69).

Theoretically, this approach is confronted with the same caveats as is traditional role theory. In particular, it deals with representation as a complex phenomenon by classifying actors according to dichotomized roles or types. However, Andeweg's empirical test for the Netherlands shows that

it at least performs better than the classical trustee/delegate typology when used as an independent variable to explain actual behavior (ibid., 81). Furthermore, related studies also disclose divergences between MPs and citizens since citizens emphasize the bottom-up perspective more frequently while deputies attach more importance to representation from above (Andeweg and Thomassen 2005, 515). We pick up this line of research which puts a strong emphasis on non-electoral interactions between representatives and the represented (see also Esaiasson et al. 2013, 21; Mansbridge 2003, 516ff.).

What Does Representation Mean Anyway?

To ask MPs or citizens closed questions about various aspects of representation has become a regular and highly valuable practice in research on representation. However, studies that explore representatives' view on representation openly, i.e., by giving them latitude to fully articulate their responses, are missing. To our knowledge, no previous study has explored what deputies understand by parliamentary representation. While it is certainly more difficult to question citizens openly (who are not concerned with politics on a daily basis), investigating the mind-sets of deputies (whose profession is to represent) should profoundly enrich research on representation. Accordingly, we asked MPs: "Talking about the issue of representation, what do you understand by parliamentary democratic representation?"

Yet, two important comments must be made. On the one hand, we can assume that it is difficult to grasp MPs' conception of representation since the latter is a complex phenomenon. At least representation is a somewhat amorphous term even for political scientists. However, while we could not expect systematic definitions, responses can be based on a kind of "everyday theory" of representation (Patzelt 1993, 221). Furthermore, it might be argued that asking openly increases response validity since deputies could organize their answers within their own frameworks (see Aberbach and Rockman 2002, 674). On the other hand, by exploring MPs' understanding of representation we did not aim at predicting behavior. Yet, their answers might be related to actual behavior in at least one respect: If dissatisfaction with representative democracy spurs critical public debates about representation as an organizing principle, deputies can—or maybe have to—take part in those debates (be it by defending or by criticizing

representation). In sum, an exploratory approach can be regarded as complement to standard account questioning.

The Representatives' Perspective on Parliamentary Representation

The data we draw on were gathered from face-to-face-interviews with 42 French and 67 German MPs (see Chap. 1 in this book for details). Importantly, deputies were not randomly selected but belong to a purposive sample based on both district and MP criteria (e.g., party, age and seniority). Regarding the MP-related criteria, we attempted to get a sample that mirrors the German Bundestag and the French Assemblée nationale as far as possible. However, the small number of cases and limitations as to sample composition must be acknowledged. If we point to variables that might explain intra- and inter-country differences,[2] such efforts are exploratory.

Our study relies on responses to three questions: First, we explore MPs' mind-sets by asking openly for their understanding of representation.[3] The analysis is restricted to aspects that have been mentioned by at least 10 percent of respondents in France or in Germany. Second, a supplementary questionnaire requested deputies to assess whether they see themselves as a representative of their party, their voters, the district or the whole population (thus dealing with representational focus). Third, we asked interviewees the following closed question referring to listening (representation from below) and leading (representation from above): "As representatives, MPs may emphasize different tasks. Which of these two is more important vis-à-vis the people: to take in the people's suggestions and opinions; to provide leadership and guidance?" (see Andeweg and Thomassen 2005, 514, who used a similar wording).

Representation as Authorized Advocacy of Interests and Decision-Making

What does parliamentary representation mean to MPs? To begin with, some French deputies (almost all first termers) surprisingly admitted their lack of knowledge and frankly said: "I do not know (exactly)." Most of them nonetheless gave comprehensive answers that are in line with their

colleagues' responses. Besides, MPs in both countries made clear that parliamentary representation is a somewhat elusive concept as the following quotes show: "There is no clear definition." "That is a difficult question." One German representative began his answer saying: "Oh, that is a big word."

In general, deputies gave multiple answers (see Figs. 7.1 and 7.2). The two aspects most often pointed to are the MPs' task to advocate interests and their democratic legitimation. Roughly every second deputy mentioned these two, with slightly higher numbers for France than for Germany. It is noteworthy that French newcomer MPs refer to their electoral legitimation less frequently than their (reelected) colleagues with more seniority (45 vs. 71%). In general, representation is seen as an issue of legitimized political agency in both countries.
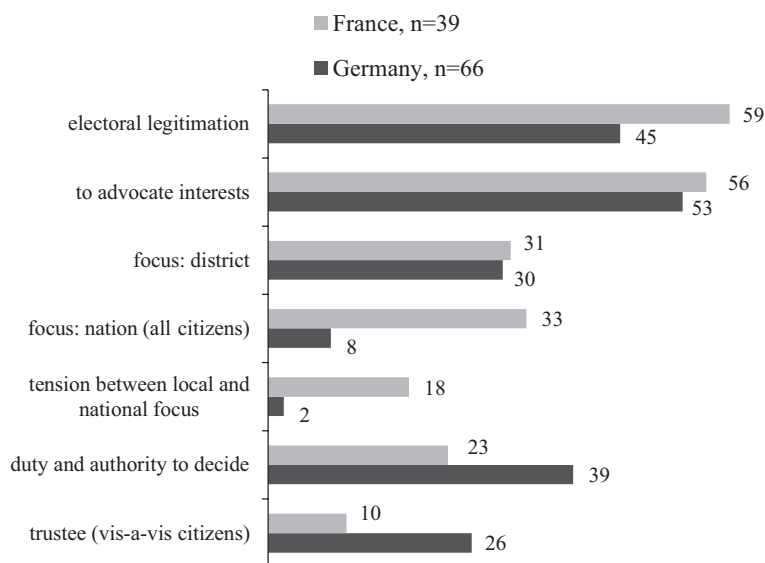

Fig. 7.1 MPs' understanding of parliamentary representation in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs

Note: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (open question): "Talking about the issue of representation: What do you understand by parliamentary-democratic representation?"
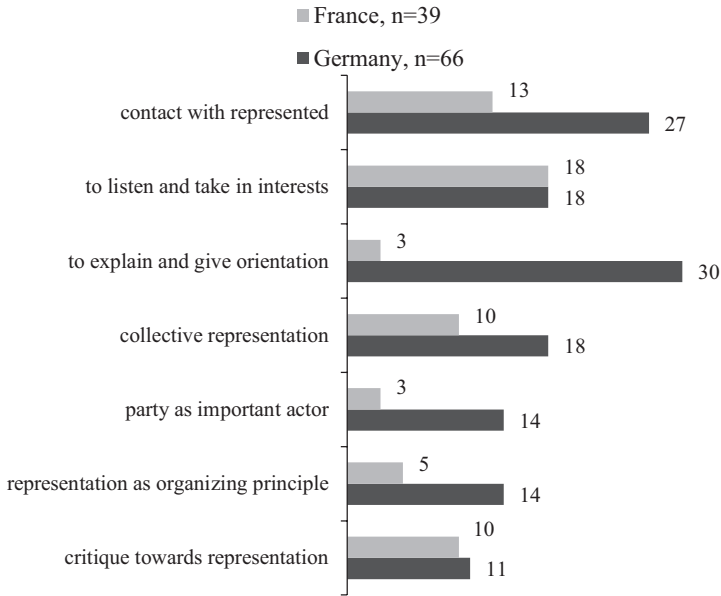
Fig. 7.2 MPs' understanding of parliamentary representation in France and Germany (continued)

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (open question): "Talking about the issue of representation: What do you understand by parliamentary-democratic representation?"

A closer look reveals some country differences as to whose interests are advocated. This is surprisingly not the case regarding *district*: Almost one-third of deputies in both countries refer to it when openly asked for their understanding of representation. At least, since electoral systems partly diverge, a more dissimilar picture could have been expected. In the German sample, MPs elected in the district strongly stress that focus, but hardly any deputy elected via party list mentioned the role of district (44 vs. 6%). Nation (or all citizens) as focus plays a bigger role in France in two respects: On the one hand, it is more often mentioned than the district (although only marginally). On the other hand, its relevance is accentuated by comparison with Germany. In Germany, it is rather negligible notwithstanding the fact that the German constitution characterizes MPs as

"representatives of the whole people" (article 38). Obviously, the French picture is influenced by cultural legacies which promote "a 'national' view of representation" (Costa et al. 2012, 295). Hence, in a comparative perspective, cultural legacies (French political philosophy) seem to trump institutional factors (constitutional incorporation in Germany). Other foci (party, voters, specific interests) are mentioned by MPs only as rare exceptions.

Concerning representational focus, we can also rely on questionnaire data. Table 7.1 primarily reveals some country differences: Representing all citizens (or the whole nation) clearly plays a bigger role on the French side where 81 percent opted for the categories strongly or very strongly, while this is the case for only 53 percent of their German colleagues. Moreover, in France almost all MPs said that they (very) strongly represent their district (95%) and their voters (89%), whereas the respective German groups are not as big (district: 77%, voters: 73%). In contrast, the picture is more similar regarding party (72 vs. 70%). MPs' views are also much more differentiated than citizens' demands (see below). Besides, for all four foci the differences between French and German representatives are bigger than between both countries' citizenry (see below).

There are also some clear discrepancies when we juxtapose questionnaire and open question data. In particular, when asked for their understanding of representation, MPs hardly ever mentioned party and voters as foci, while when responding via the questionnaire format they stated that

Table 7.1 MPs' focus of representation in France and Germany

Focus		Very strong	Strong	Moderate, at best
All citizens	France	43	38	19
	Germany	29	24	47
District	France	64	31	6
	Germany	30	47	23
Voters	France	65	24	11
	Germany	29	44	28
Party	France	19	53	28
	Germany	18	52	31

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs, France n = 36, Germany n = 66

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (open question): "As MP do you see yourself as representative of …? Please tell me if you agree very strongly, strongly, moderate, little or not at all." The last two categories are combined with "moderate" because of low numbers of respondents

they are strongly oriented towards both groups. However, the question-naire reflects our open question data in at least one respect: Representing all citizens (nation) in both cases plays a smaller role in Germany than in France. It also scores the lowest responses in German MPs' standardized answers.

If we take an exploratory look at questionnaire subgroup variances, German representatives from the big catch-all parties (CDU, CSU and SPD) have a clearly stronger orientation towards the district than those from the smaller ones (FDP, The Left and The Greens). Among the catch-all parties, 88 percent opt for "strongly" or "very strongly", but only 57 percent of the smaller parties' MPs do so. Regarding nation and party, there are similarly strong differences for party size and type of mandate. Both MPs from big parties and those elected in the district are more inclined to see nation as the object of representation than their colleagues from small parties (60 vs. 39% chose strongly or very strongly) or those elected through party list (64 vs. 41%). Regarding party, patterns are reversed: 87 percent of small party MPs and 88 percent of list MPs stress party (very) strongly, but only 60 percent of their counterparts from catch-all parties and 53 percent of district winners do so. Admittedly, since both MP characteristics analyzed above (party size and type of mandate) overlap to a huge extent, we cannot disentangle the respective effects appropriately in our small sample. In France, differences are rather low with one exception: Nearly all deputies (94%) elected in the second round by a margin of less than 10 percent (competitive district) see themselves strongly or very strongly as representative of party, while only half of their colleagues representing safe districts (53%) do so.

In general, the questionnaire data show that MPs hold several orientations at once. However, going back to our open question, data (Fig. 7.1) disclose one French peculiarity (concealed by the questionnaire): Almost every fifth deputy highlights some tension between the local and national focus of their mandate. As one MP frankly explains:

> This mental transformation between being locally elected and national rep-resentation [entre élu local et représentation nationale] is something I did not expect. National representation became something very important for me. I feel I'm from my district but I don't represent it. I represent the nation. It is something I keep in mind when I work in the National Assembly. (French MP, A06, Parti Socialiste, PS)

Again, this view can be attributed to cultural factors (see above). It is in line with the idea that French MPs play two different, in part contrasting roles in the district and in the National Assembly, which might be caused by a very restricted transferability of resources and diverging demands between both spheres (see Costa and Kerrouche 2009). In accord with that, French citizens state that it is the most important task of their MPs to solve problems in the district (as our mass survey data show, see below).

Another aspect reflected in the MPs' answers to our open question is that representation implies the authority and duty to decide for the represented. Almost four out of ten German deputies and every fourth French MP answered accordingly. Several deputies also point to the fact that they are not bound by the people's instructions and instead act independently as trustees. This indicates that the trustee-delegate distinction indeed plays some role in MPs' mind-sets. Accordingly, it should not be left aside in representation studies. Instead, this topic should be investigated by interview questions that uncover in which specific contexts or situations deputies either follow their own judgment on the one hand, or the preferences of their constituency on the other. There are again country differences since the trustee notion is clearly more relevant on the German side (as is also the case in both the citizens' perceptions and demands, see below). This might also be explained by its constitutional entrenchment by which German deputies are "not bound by orders or instructions" (article 38). However, one might wonder that the equally constitutionalized norm to represent "the whole people" obviously is not reflected to the same extent in German MPs' answers (as we saw above).

Representation as Communicative Relationship

Representation can also be conceptualized as an interactive relationship involving responsive listening and providing guidance on the MPs' side (see above). When thinking about representation, deputies also state that it entails interactions with the represented (see Fig. 7.2). Once again, respondents differ. German MPs mention that representation generally involves contact or communication more than twice as often as their French counterparts. The citizen survey data hardly reflect this country difference since contacting voters is given only slightly more importance on the German side (see below). There is an almost equally strong group in both countries that specifically associates representation with listening

to the people or with taking in their interests, getting information about their wishes and needs. This also applies to responsiveness and representation as a process from below. However, it is striking that three out of ten German MPs point to the aspect of explaining and providing orientation to the represented while almost none of their French counterparts do so. Interestingly, almost half of these German deputies also stress both aspects (listening and providing orientation to citizens) at the same time, hence framing representation as dynamic two-sided process.

More specific results can be provided by the closed question of whether MPs rank communicative guidance or responsive listening as a more important part of their role as representative vis-à-vis the people. Strikingly, Table 7.2 discloses that a clear majority in both countries can be classified in-between the "from below/above" distinction, even though this intermediate category was not mentioned in our question wording. Accordingly, we can infer that plenty of MPs clearly see representation as an indissolubly bidirectional relationship. The two following quotes sum it up explicitly:

> To be a representative means both: leading and listening—in order to develop new leadership from there. (German MP Ernst Dieter Rossmann, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD)

> The question is hard to answer that way. These are two approaches that take place simultaneously. Both play their role. (German MP Stephan Thomae, Freie Demokratische Partei Deutschlands, FDP)

Table 7.2 Leading and listening as part of the representatives' role in France and Germany

	France	*Germany*
Leading more important	14	23
Both equally important	75	56
Listening more important	11	20

Source: CITREP, 2011–2013. Interviews with MPs, France $n = 36$, Germany $n = 64$

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording: "As representatives, MPs may emphasize different tasks. Which of these two tasks do you think is more important vis-à-vis the people: to provide leadership and guidance; to take in the people's suggestions and opinions?"

Although the structure of answering is similar in both countries, it is noteworthy that German deputies prioritize providing guidance almost twice as often as their French colleagues. On the one hand, this goes along with the stronger emphasis German MPs put on explaining activities in the open question data. On the other hand, this corresponds to the finding that German citizens attach greater importance than the French to leading as an aspect of representation (see below).

However, the prevailing intermediate classification in Table 7.2 also shows that the underlying concept is an oversimplification or, at least, that our approaches to measure it empirically are far too rough (as is the case with representational style, see above). In other words, context matters. Thus, further studies should use nuanced questions and strive for data that include other information regarding issues (e.g., high or low politics, area of MPs' specialization or not) and settings (e.g., closed party meetings in the district or parliamentary party meetings) which can reveal when some changes occur between the roles of providing guidance and listening to the represented. As Andeweg (2012, 82) has rightly advocated, such a "more realistic approach will relate context-specific roles to behavior in that same context, rather than assuming that one role fits all contexts."

Looking at factors that could account for the differences in Table 7.2 yields some notable, though exploratory findings, at least for Germany[4]: MPs from governing parties stress leadership more often than opposition deputies (33 vs. 15%), while opposition deputies attach more importance to listening (32 vs. 7%). It is interesting that Andeweg and Thomassen's data on Dutch MPs point in the opposite direction (2005, 519). However, the German picture is plausible as governing parties shape public policy and, consequently, have to explain and justify more often than their counterparts in opposition. In contrast, opposition parties might listen more strongly to citizens in order to use citizens' policy preferences to control government. The same pattern can also be found for party size and representation from below since deputies from small parties (FDP, The Greens, The Left) assign more importance to listening than their counterparts from big or catch-all parties (CDU/CSU, SPD) (32 vs. 14%), while both groups are equal regarding the feature of leadership. Not least, MPs holding top positions (in parliament, their party group or government) emphasize representation from above more strongly than their colleagues who do not belong to the management level (33 vs. 18%). In sum, structural factors like governmental status, party size and leadership position seem to

influence whether representatives stress communicative leadership or responsive listening as a more important part of their role.

Further Aspects and Critique of Representation

For the sake of completeness, there are several other facets of representation mentioned in the deputies' answers to our open question—in all cases more often on the German side (see Fig. 7.2 again). First, several respondents (every fifth in Germany and every tenth in France) note that they are part of the representational process, but it is, in the end, the parliament as a whole which represents or has to represent the people. Hence, they refer to the notion of collective representation which asks whether an institution collectively represents the people instead of or in addition to approaching representation as dyadic relationship (see Weissberg 1978). Interestingly, in France only first-term MPs point to collective representation.

Besides, no uniform picture can be found regarding parties. While parties are occasionally mentioned by German MPs as an important collective actor, only one French deputy refers to them. This divergence certainly derives from the different relevance parties have within both political systems (see Chap. 4 in this book). However, even the small number of references in Germany is surprising given the pivotal role parties play within representational politics.

Furthermore, some—mainly German—interviewees expressed the view that parliamentary representation is a basic organizing principle of one's political system. As such, it belongs to a certain "type of government" (MP of German Green Party as well as French UMP deputy) and is "one of the pillars of our political system", according to a CSU MP.

Another interesting finding is that every tenth French and German deputy also took a critical stance on parliamentary representation and its functioning—not as fundamental critiques but as suggestions for improvement. These come as pleas for a better descriptive representation (see Loewenberg 2011, 28ff.) in terms of gender, age and pre-parliamentary occupation, as requests for complementary forms of direct democracy and for proper communication with citizens. However, given the broad perception of a "crisis" of representation, we might infer from the interviews that this "crisis" has barely reached MPs' minds. Importantly, in Germany it is mostly newcomer deputies who take a critical stance.

CITIZENS' PERSPECTIVE ON PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

As in the case of legislative studies, empirical research addressing citizens' understanding and perceptions of representation is less pronounced in France. Several studies investigated citizens' attitudes towards the Bundestag, the representatives and politicians in Germany so far (e.g., Boynton and Loewenberg 1973; Schüttemeyer 1986; Patzelt 1998, 2005; Dageförde and Deiss-Helbig 2013). French scholarship attached minor importance to it (Bréchon 2006; Bréchon et al. 2000; Rozenberg 2013). Analyses of the political culture or citizens' attitudes towards politics in general indicate that the French are more skeptical and distant from politics than Germans. With regard to representational agents and institutions in particular, comparative studies in Europe show that trust in politicians is much lower than trust in the national parliament (Norris 2011; Dalton 2013; for national studies e.g., Costa et al. 2012; Gabriel and Schöllhammer 2009). In this context, it is particularly remarkable that trust in the French assembly declined most in the 1980s and 1990s, compared to other West European countries (Mayer 2002; Bréchon 2006) and is rooted in a culture of distrust (Schild 2006). However, the results of subsequent studies are contradictory: Some confirm the "sphere of distrust" hypothesis; others challenge the conventional wisdom (Dalton 2006, 2007; Newton and Norris 2000; Gabriel and Walter-Rogg 2008; Dageförde and Deiss-Helbig 2013).

A focus on citizens' representational judgments and citizens' subjective perception of representation offers more precise insight into the subject in question (e.g., Thomassen 1994; Rohrschneider 2005). These days, a large part of the German citizenry judges as neither very bad nor very good the representation they receive through a political party, the Bundestag or the representative of their district. Most citizens feel neither well nor badly represented. German citizens feel better represented by their representative and the government than by the Bundestag, followed by a political party.[5] Simultaneously, the largest variation among citizens' representational judgments about the political system occurs between those who identify themselves as upper class (who view representation quite positively) and those who see themselves in the lower social classes, who judge more negatively. When distinguishing between citizens' feelings of being represented with regard to their values, their economic interests, issues or interests as a member of a social group, there are only minor differences (Taidigsmann 2000; Gabriel and Holtmann 2010; Gabriel 2013).

A comparison of feelings of being represented in France and Germany reveals differences: In France, citizens are more disassociated from their politicians than in Germany, and this difference becomes even more pronounced when investigating representational judgments about the national parliament (see Chap. 8 in this book).

Following our theoretical framework, the next sections analyze citizens' demands and perceptions in terms of (1) focus of representation and (2) listening or leading as representational tasks. Aiming to assess the process of representation from the perspective of the citizen, we contrast expectations towards MPs with the perceived behavior of representatives. The differentiation is crucial as already stated by Patterson et al. (1969: 62): "A severe crisis of support should occur for legislative systems in which there is a wide gap between what citizens expect it to be and how they actually perceive it operating." The closing section (3) analyzes aspects that concern the representational task in general and assesses the importance that citizens attach to distinct criteria when being urged to rank the tasks. The forced-choice method format of questioning enables us to detect more detailed patterns and country-specific variation in citizens' understanding of representation.

The data presented rely on a battery of items introduced by Wahlke et al. (1962). The items depict distinct aspects that concern citizens' demands towards their representatives. In the survey, citizens had to rate the importance of each of these diverse aspects. Subsequently, a factor analysis was conducted to explore the citizens' understanding of representation. Indeed, the results replicate, to a large extent, the theoretical distinction proposed above. Obviously, citizens' attitudes are structured in accordance with the theoretical distinction between the trustee and delegate, but also between listening and leading.

Focus of Representation

The importance that French and German citizens attribute to distinct foci of representation differs slightly (see Table 7.3). For the French, it is most important that their MP focuses on his own voters, followed by the focus on the district and all citizens. This finding might reflect the special institutional context that exists in France: All MPs are elected in the district and the "cumul des mandats" implies an additional local link (Costa et al. 2012). However, in contrast to French MPs (see above), the importance that citizens attach to these criteria varies only slightly (mean scores

Table 7.3   Focus of representation—citizens' demands and perceptions in France and Germany

Focus of representation	France		Germany	
	Demand	*Perception*	*Demand*	*Perception*
All citizens	0.78 (0.21)	0.51 (0.28)	0.72 (0.25)	0.48 (0.26)
District	0.80 (0.20)	0.57 (0.27)	0.72 (0.24)	0.53 (0.25)
Own voters	0.83 (0.20)	0.54 (0.28)	0.72 (0.25)	0.54 (0.25)
Party	0.54 (0.31)	0.71 (0.25)	0.54 (0.28)	0.77 (0.20)

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France *n* = 1009, Germany *n* = 1553. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East- and West-Germany

Notes: Entries are mean scores and standard deviations (in parentheses)

Item wording: (demand) "There are different opinions about whom a representative should represent. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, do not agree, do not agree at all with the following statements." (perception) "And how does it take place in reality? Please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, do not agree, do not agree at all. The representative of the national parliament should above all represent/represents (a) the district (in France: territoire), (b) the own voters, (c) the whole nation, (d) the political party." Scale (5-point): recoded to 'disagree strongly' = 0 to 'agree strongly' = 1"

ranging from 0.78 to 0.83). More pronounced is the difference that the French attach to the focus on the own party: As the mean score of 0.54 indicates, the citizenry expects that representatives focus significantly less on the political party.

French citizens believe that representatives do not fulfill citizens' demands. Contrary to their demands, citizens remark that deputies attach great importance to their political party (0.71), but less importance to the citizenry as a whole, to the district or to their voters (mean scores ranging from 0.51 to 0.57).

Germans, on the other hand, state that the MPs should represent all citizens, the district and their own voters. Again, in contrast to German MPs, German citizens do not tend to differentiate much between these categories, as there is no variation with regard to the importance (mean scores around 0.7). MPs' focus on their political party is less important to German citizens. Surprisingly, party figures are just as low as in France despite different institutional contexts. This points to cultural factors in explaining skepticism vis-à-vis parties in both countries.

Contrasting citizens' demands and perceptions reveals large gaps once again: The Germans perceive that MPs give less importance to all citizens, to the district and to their own voters as prime objects of representation

than German citizens expect (0.48 to 0.54). On the contrary, they think that the political party is of high importance to representatives, which confirms results of previous empirical analyses (Dageförde 2013).

In both countries, the citizenry expects representatives to care about all citizens, the district and their own voters without a clear hierarchy between these three objects. Yet, perceptions of MPs' behavior are in contrast to citizens' understanding of representation. More precisely, it is striking that citizen perceptions in France and Germany lag behind their expectations with regard to district, voters and nation, while the pattern is just the reverse for party. Although citizens in both countries have low expectations that their MPs be party representatives, they perceived that MPs are principally representatives of their parties.

Comparing MPs' and citizens' attitudes towards representation, there is some overlap for France: French deputies state that they see themselves above all as representatives of the district and their own voters (see above). This is in accord with citizens' demands. Furthermore, both sides attach (slightly) less importance to nation and party. In Germany, the picture is similar as deputies and citizens strongly stress district and voters but put less emphasis on party. However, both diverge on the question of "nation" as a representation focus. For German citizens, it is highly important that MPs represent a national focus, while this receives relatively low support among German MPs.

Finally, both sides' demands are closer to each other than MPs' views and citizens' perceptions. In general, differences grow if we look on the citizenry's perceptions rather than demands. Paradoxically, the strongest overlap between representatives and the represented can probably be found as to party as focus. Though, the party focus that citizens perceive (and also MPs state) clearly contrasts with their demands.

Representation as Listening and Leading

Investigating citizens' demands and perceptions about listening or leading reveals again differences between both countries and additional representation gaps. For the French, it is most important that representatives contact voters. Listening to voters is almost equally relevant. "Leading" is slightly less important to the French. There is no differentiation on the aspect of "following own judgment" and "deciding on own convictions." If we contrast these findings with the MPs' answers to the questionnaire, the picture is rather similar, since most deputies stress that

listening and providing guidance are equally important. However, the aspect of explaining to the represented and the notion of trustee were hardly mentioned by French deputies when directly asked about what representation means (see above).

The German citizenry has a slightly different understanding of representation than the French. Unlike their French counterparts, Germans attach the highest importance to leading as an aspect of representation (for MPs to follow their own independent judgment, mean score of 0.89). Apart from this, the listening aspect is relevant to German citizens to nearly the same degree—while deciding on the basis of own convictions is considered least important. Nevertheless, it is interesting that both facets of leading play a more crucial role for the German citizenry, which is also in accord with their MPs' attitudes. More often than their French colleagues, German MPs point to the trustee notion and emphasize more strongly their role in providing guidance (see above). In general, the mean scores for all four aspects in Table 7.4 are slightly higher on the German side.

The results indicate that citizens' understanding of representation diverges between France and Germany: Whereas the most important MP task in France is the listening aspect of representation, the Germans opt more strongly for leading as a representational task (see also national studies for style preferences and independent judgment: Dageförde 2013 for Germany; Rozenberg 2013 for France). However, given the debate about dissatisfaction with representative democracy, we could have expected even lower figures for citizens opting for independent judgment in both countries. It seems that independent decision-making is obviously accepted among the citizenry as an important feature of representative democracy, even in times of disaffection.

If we contrast these demands with citizens' perceptions of representatives' behavior, the analysis reveals gaps once again. With regard to every single aspect, deputies tend not to fulfill citizens' demands. The largest divergences concern the criteria "contacting voters" and "listening to voters." In comparison, differences between demands and perceptions towards the leading aspects of representation are clearly smaller. Hence, citizens think that their deputies do not sufficiently listen to them. The patterns are similar in both countries. However, while the Germans are more demanding concerning all four relevant aspects (see Table 7.4) they are more satisfied at the same time and, thus, they show lower differences between demands and perception in each case. Altogether, citizens' expectations are best met for the leading facet "deciding on basis of own convictions" on the German side.

Table 7.4 Listening and leading—citizens' demands and perceptions in France and Germany

	France		Germany	
	Demand	*Perception*	*Demand*	*Perception*
Listening				
Listening to own voters	0.76 (0.22)	0.36 (0.25)	0.81 (0.19)	0.43 (0.27)
Contacting voters	0.81 (0.21)	0.38 (0.27)	0.83 (0.18)	0.44 (0.28)
Leading				
Following own independent judgment	0.73 (0.27)	0.45 (0.26)	0.89 (0.15)	0.56 (0.25)
Deciding on the basis of own convictions	0.73 (0.23)	0.49 (0.26)	0.78 (0.22)	0.63 (0.24)

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Notes: Entries are mean scores and standard deviations (in parentheses)

Item wording: "Which tasks are especially important for the political work of a member of the national parliament? Please tell me on a scale from 1 to 7 whether an MP should attach great importance or should not attach great importance. 1 indicates that they should not attach great importance, 7 indicates that they should attach great importance. MPs should (a) always be responsive to voters, (b) be active in contacting voters, (c) build their own independent judgment concerning political issues, (d) follow their individual convictions when making decisions. And now please tell me whether the MPs fulfill these demands. Please refer again to the scale from 1 to 7 where 1 indicates that they don't fulfill these demands at all, 7 indicates that they fulfill these demands completely. Scale (7-point) recoded to: 'shouldn't attach great importance' = 0 to 'should attach great importance' = 1"

In addition, the findings contain, implicitly, a general critique of the functioning of representative democracy which is also manifested in preferences for elements of direct democracy: More than half of the citizenry in both countries tends to prefer direct democracy over representative democracy.

Representational Tasks and Their Importance

To give a more nuanced insight into citizens' understanding of representation, French and Germans were asked to reassess the importance of distinct tasks of representatives via a forced-choice method. Table 7.5 depicts MPs' most important and second most important task.

Table 7.5 Most and second most important task of the MP in France and Germany

	Most important		Second most	
	F	G	F	G
Influence governmental work	17	29	16	26
Help voters in their relation with the administration	13	4	14	4
Do a good job in parliament	20	29	15	24
Defend interests of the district in parliament	18	26	28	28
Solve problems in the district	33	11	27	18

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France *n* = 971, Germany *n* = 1506 (first choice), France *n* = 941, Germany *n* = 1504 (second choice). Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East- and West-Germany

Notes: Entries are percentage points

Item wording (forced choice question): "Which of the following tasks is the most important one for an MP?" and "Which of the following tasks is the second most important one for an MP?"

For the French citizenry, the most important task of an MP is to solve problems in the district (33%), followed by a preference for doing a good job in parliament (20%) and defending interests of the district in parliament (18%). While the French have a clear preference regarding the most important task, Germans do not have such a singular preference: Large parts of the citizenry expect deputies to do a good job in parliament (29%), to influence governmental work (29%) or to defend the interests of the district in parliament (26%).

We find similar patterns regarding the second most important task. Again, the Germans do not attach great importance to problem-solving in the district, but it remains an important category for more than a quarter of French respondents. While citizens in both countries expect MPs to defend district interests in parliament to the same extent, Germans emphasize the tasks of influencing government work and doing a good job in parliament more strongly than the French. Obviously, there is variance with regard to the importance that citizens give to the district-link that is more pronounced in France than in Germany. This is in accord with French MPs' emphasis on the district as their focus (see above). Simultaneously, the understanding of representation among Germans refers more strongly to work in parliament and influencing governmental policy.

To sum up, the analysis of citizens' understanding and perception of representation indicates several gaps in representation. Above all, these gaps exist because citizens expect MPs to focus more on the entire citizenry, on voters or on the district, and less on political parties. In addition, there are huge differences between demand and perception as to the listening and the leading components of representation. The largest divergences, however, concern the criteria "contacting voters" and "listening to voters." Hence, gaps are especially pronounced concerning the communicative linkages between representatives and the represented. The patterns differ slightly between France and Germany. In general, the German citizenry is more demanding but also more satisfied. Not least important, the definition of the most important tasks of representatives reveals differences: As the institutional context (two-ballot majority-plurality system in single-member districts, "cumul des mandats", etc.) would suggest, French citizens put the most weight on solving problems in the district. In the parliamentary system of Germany, on the contrary, MPs' work in parliament, the transfer of district-interest into the parliament and the influence of governmental work are more important aspects to the citizenry.

Representatives and Citizens: Accordance and Dissent

Our exploration into MPs' perceptions of parliamentary representation yields some general findings. First, MPs point to multiple facets of representation; however, their thoughts are most often focused on representation as an issue of electorally legitimized political advocacy. Second, using both sorts of data (open questions and questionnaire) proves important. For instance, the questionnaire shows French MPs' strong orientation towards nation *and* district. Yet, it conceals that MPs in France see a strong tension between both foci, as became evident by their answers to open questions. Third, given some intra-country differences, factors like party size, type of mandate or seniority seem to influence the representatives' view on representation. However, in view of some shortcomings of our data, future studies are needed to substantiate the exploratory results presented here. Fourth, it is not trivial that some of our discipline's theoretical concepts (e.g., style, representation from above/below, collective representation) do play a role in the representatives' minds when they are explored via an open question. Some aspects might also be included in closed questions (e.g., the tension

between the national and the local dimension of French MPs' mandates) and tested in quantitative surveys. Fifth, our findings regarding the closed question for representation from above and below indicate that future research should strive for information to identify context-specific roles or areas of role switching (as is the case with style of representation). Our concepts might need improvement. More likely, they need a more nuanced, i.e., context-specific, measurement.

Asking whether MPs in both countries differ in their views on representation also brought to light several comparative results. The data resting on open questions reveal noticeable differences in deputies' focus on representing the whole nation and in perceiving some tension between national and local foci: Both aspects are clearly more relevant in France than in Germany. Regarding the focus questionnaires, nation plays a more prominent role in France, again, as does district. On the other hand, deputies tend rather to agree on their focus on party. Moreover, in their answers to the open question, German MPs emphasize more strongly their role as trustee and decision-maker for the represented than do their French colleagues. In accord with this picture, they also attach more importance to providing explanations and orientation to citizens. However, using the closed question to rank guidance and listening shows convergence as plenty of MPs in both countries see representation as a bidirectional communicative relationship.

Citizens' understanding of representation is structured by a clear preference for a focus on the district, on voters and the citizenry as a whole. By contrast, French and Germans attach lower importance to a focus on political parties. Besides, French and German citizenry largely agree that deputies should make decisions based on independent judgment and that they should keep contact with constituents. However, contrasting citizens' demands and perceptions of MPs' behavior gives evidence for several gaps: On the one hand, citizens think that MPs actually focus more on political parties than citizens demand. On the other hand, they perceive that there is a lack of contact and a lack of focus on district or voters. These patterns exist in both countries.

With regard to the most important task of an MP, the results for France and Germany differ: Whereas French citizens mainly define problem-solving in the district as most important task (one third), Germans highlight the importance of influencing government and conducting good parliamentary work (almost one third each). This might reflect the institutional context of both countries: The German system with its strong role

of the Bundestag contrasts with the French semi-presidential system, its weak parliament and strong emphasis on the district-link.

Importantly, our findings also indicate that representation is perceived very differently from what citizens expect it to be, especially in France whose citizenry is less demanding and at the same time less satisfied. Apparently, there are defects in the representational link (from citizens' perspectives) that might foster the debate about a presumed "crisis of representation." Moreover, these gaps might be a cause for the increasing demands for direct democracy.

Finally, due to different methods of data collection it is not easy to compare the citizens' and deputies' perspectives on representation. However, contrasting both sides cautiously, areas of convergence or dissent can be described. In France, there are some similarities, since citizens as well as MPs put strong emphasis on district and voters as foci. Nation is slightly less important and party least important for both sides. However, huge differences between representatives and the represented occur when we look at perceptions instead of citizens' demands. They concern all four foci. Besides, listening as well as leading seem to be fundamental parts of the representatives' job in the citizens' as well as the deputies' view. Though, if we again rely on perceptions of the represented, both sides diverge: Above all, French citizens perceive that the listening component of representation is not adequately fulfilled by their deputies who, in contrast, stress this facet of representation as important for their work as MP (see Table 7.2).

It is striking that the same patterns mostly hold true for Germany. There is some overlap between MPs' attitudes and citizens' demands: Both sides, by and large, agree on the representatives' task to represent district and voters. Yet, while nation as focus seems to play a stronger role for citizens than for MPs, the picture is reversed concerning party (which was least mentioned by citizens). However, when we look at the citizenry's perceptions, representational gaps stand out for all four foci. Regarding representation as communicative relationship, deputies and citizens underline the importance of the listening as well as the leading facet of representation. Yet, again, differences between both sides grow when we draw on the citizenry's perceptions rather than demands.

Comparing citizens and MPs in France with their counterparts in Germany, we can eventually contour two country differences. On the one hand, French citizens as well as their deputies put more emphasis on the district-link than do representatives and the represented in Germany. On

the other hand, both German citizens and MPs seem to attach greater importance to the trustee notion and the leading aspects of representation than actors on the French side.

Taking up the debate about a presumed "crisis in representation," it is the gap between the citizens' demands and perceptions that might be interpreted as further evidence. Clearly, it can emerge in different variants, for example, as disagreement concerning the understanding and worth of representation or as disagreement in perception of its actual functioning. Our findings lend support to the latter. How the substantial gap between the citizens' representational norms and their reality-based perceptions arises is one of the "puzzles" that is still to be unraveled by our discipline (see Loewenberg 2011; Kühne 2012).

Notes

1. We should add two important points regarding role theory in general. First, while there is no shortage of representation studies relying on role approaches, its usage concentrates mainly on European scholars (see Andeweg 2014). Second, while the approach of Wahlke et al. is related to normative institutionalism (Peters 2005, 31), the literature starting with Searing (1991) also emphasized some choice-based underpinnings of roles. Further developing that line, there is a recent rational-choice-oriented conception of roles which treats them as "strategies" to reach individual goals based on given institutional rules (Strøm 2012).

2. Within the German sample we looked at the following dichotomized factors: party size (big vs. small), governmental status (majority or opposition), holding a top position (in parliament, party group or government) or not, seniority (newcomers vs. MPs with more seniority), type of mandate (list vs. district). For France we included governmental status, seniority and electoral competition (safe or competitive district). French subsample sizes for party size and leadership position are too small to provide substantial information. This is also true for subsample sizes concerning party affiliation in both countries.

3. The question was asked in the beginning part of the interviews. However, we should be aware of the fact that the questioning usually was conducted on the ground during the deputies' district work (and not in parliament). Thus, we cannot exclude the possibility that location and context, to some extent, influenced MPs' answers. Importantly, representatives in both countries gave almost equally long answers (123 words on average in France, 115 in Germany), thereby facilitating comparisons. Regarding data analysis, we proceeded as follows: Reading the empirical material again and again

(first step), we constructed a subtle and structured coding scheme (second step). It aimed at keeping the richness of responses. For the purpose of this article with its comparative perspective, however, we summarized categories with coherent contents (third step). Coding (fourth step) was performed by using the software MAXQDA. As such, we conducted a qualitative content analysis which included quantitative comparisons (see e.g., Mayring 2008; Schmidt 2008). Instructions for quality control, given for instance by Flick et al. (2008) or Bailer (2014), have been observed.

4. Looking at France, differences are, in general, rather low, which is also due to a smaller variance in our dependent variable.

5. Feelings of being represented by the church, a labor union, a professional association or a citizens' initiative fall in-between the judgments concerning the representative (highest score) and a political party (lowest score).

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Substance or Behavior as Links? Explaining Representational Judgments

Mirjam Dageförde, Eric Kerrouche, and Corentin Poyet

The principle of representation is the organizing norm of modern large-scale democracies, but it faces more and more critics: There is an ongoing discourse about a presumed "crisis of representation" (e.g., Rosanvallon 2015); there are demands for an increase of elements of direct democracy; and citizens are assumed to be disaffected from politics. Each of these elements concerns the representational link. This link is mainly analyzed in terms of congruence or responsiveness or in terms of MPs' attitudes and behavior (referring to the "substantive" and the "acting for" component in Pitkin's [1967] terminology). By contrast, the

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exploration of citizens' perspectives is limited and remains a desideratum for research on representation—regarding both, theoretical approaches and empirical research. Up to now, the relevance of citizens' attitudes towards representation has been widely underestimated, even though its importance was already emphasized decades ago. A negative evaluation of the performance of political authorities and institutions is considered to produce, in the long run, "spill-over" effects on diffuse support, on support for the political authorities and institutions and, finally, on the political system in general (Easton 1975).

This subject is addressed by developing a subjective approach for analyzing representation. Thus, we use the indicator "citizens' feeling of being represented," i.e., French and German citizens' attitudes towards the quality of representation in their countries. By focusing on the subjective *evaluation* of representation, a crucial phenomenon will be highlighted that is relevant for the investigation of the quality of political systems. As pointed out by Holmberg (2014, 139), "It is positive for a system if many of its citizens perceive that they are well represented by their politicians. The opposite … is more negative." Consequently, we examine citizens' representational assessments regarding the national parliament and their representative(s). Moreover, variations in citizens' representational judgments will be explained with two rival models that are driven from theories on representation: the substantive aspect and the acting aspect. The first explanatory approach emphasizes the relevance of substantive representation, i.e., the perceived representation of important civic concerns, for citizens' evaluation of MPs and the national parliament. The second covers the citizens' perception of MPs actions as an explanatory variable.

The more positively citizens perceive themselves to be represented in a substantive way, namely regarding their values, issue preferences and the concerns of their social group, the more positively they will evaluate institutions and actors in the representational process. The second approach highlights the perception of the MPs' representational fiduciary behavior and their performance. It investigates whether MPs are perceived as acting responsively, being up to their tasks, and doing the right things in general. By analyzing the impact of these two sets of civic attitudes on representational judgments, we account for two facets of the representational link that are seen as important in assessing the quality of representation.

Judging Representation: Substantive Representation Versus Representation as "Acting for"

The structure, development and determinants of citizens' support of and trust in political institutions and actors in modern democracies have broadly been investigated, e.g., in terms of political predispositions (as interest in politics, party identification, sociodemographics) or sophistication (most recently Zmerli and van der Meer 2017). Roughly the same applies to support of political institutions and actors (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 1995; Patterson et al. 1969; Schüttemeyer 1986) and satisfaction with democracy (Armingeon and Guthmann 2014; Ferrin 2016). Irrespective of the importance of representation in democratic systems (Dahl 1971), it is only recently that citizens' attitudes towards representation have been increasingly explored. Most of these studies focus on citizens' expectations towards representation, especially towards representatives (Bengtsson and Wass 2010; Carman 2007; Dageförde 2013; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000).

Subsequently, we investigate citizens' feelings of being represented by their MPs—the most important individual actors—and by the national parliament—the main institution in the representational process. The differentiation between judgments about parliament and MPs is central as there are theoretical reasons and empirical evidence that citizens' attitudes towards institutions and actors might differ (Gabriel and Schöllhammer 2009; Parker and Davidson 1979). Moreover, a distinction gives more insight into the crucial elements in the scope of the discussion about the presumed "crisis of representation."

In *The Concept of Representation*, Pitkin developed different views on representation in order to establish a coherent theoretical framework. She distinguished between formalistic representation (which refers to the context in which representation takes place), symbolic representation (which envisages in what ways representatives stand for their constituents), descriptive representation (which highlights that a representative shares social characteristics with the represented) and substantive representation (which concerns the actions of representatives and the policy outcomes of their actions). Since Pitkin's work, several new ideas on this concept have been developed in the literature (Mansbridge 1999; Dovi 2007), reassessing the

concept of representation and following the important structural changes that appeared at the end of the Cold War (Warren and Castiglione 2004).

Notwithstanding these later developments, Pitkin also made a seminal distinction when defining representation itself. According to her (1967, 209), representation means "acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them." This definition—which is used as a guideline in the subsequent analysis—integrates two aspects that have to be investigated in order to understand citizens' feelings of being represented: (1) substantive representation, i.e., the representation of citizens' values, interests and concerns, and (2) representation as "acting for", i.e., performing activities as representatives of the citizens and the political community.

Consequently, we adopt an explanatory approach by referring to these two aspects and explore how perceptions of substantive representation and actors' behavior correlate with feelings of being represented. Pitkin's assumptions derive from the Burkean model of representation which links an MP's representational task with the interest of the people or the district he represents.

Empirically, there are few studies that explain citizens' representational judgments. These exceptions focus on macro-indicators as well as micro-level indicators as independent variables (Rohrschneider 2005; Whitefield 2006). With regard to the evaluation of MPs' work, the few studies mainly highlight a gap between citizens and MPs that leads to a lack of information making it hard for citizens to evaluate representatives' work (Bastedo and Gidengil 2014). Besides, for the case of Germany, there is a wide gap between citizens' expectations towards MPs and their behavior as perceived by citizens (Dageförde 2013). Moreover, congruence of interests is also highlighted as an important factor in the process of subjective evaluation (Vivyan and Wagner 2012).

Substantive Representation

Implied in the idea of substantive aspects of representation is the assumption that the interests of citizens need to be articulated and accommodated in parliamentary debates and, eventually, to be translated into policy proposals or into policy outcomes. As our approach follows a strictly subjective perspective—the perspective of citizens—we have to address the way "interests" are structured in the minds of individuals.

According to Converse (1964, 42), citizens' issue preferences are structured by a belief system, a "configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence." The "ideas" are more abstract, general and fundamental than

concrete attitudes towards policies but—according to Converse—are relevant to the formation of concrete policy preferences. Despite the importance of these abstract "ideas", parts of society are not capable to correctly perform these cognitive processes (for limitations, see e.g., Sniderman et al. 1991; Zaller 1992). Studies which assess the quality of representation in an objective manner—be it in terms of congruence or in terms of responsiveness—follow this differentiation implicitly and distinguish between ideological and issue dimensions (e.g., Miller and Stokes 1963; Powell 2009; Dalton 2017). Although we will not analyze how the various components of an individual's belief system are related to each other, we conceive abstract ideas (value orientations) and issue preferences as important civic concerns that need to be taken into account separately when analyzing the substantive dimension of representation.

Besides values and issues, scholars have focused on the interests of social groups. According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967), societal cleavages affect citizens' interests. However, societal structures change over time and class categorization does not remain the only category of reference. On the contrary, there are societal groups which vary not only in terms of traditional cleavages, the consequences of processes such as (im)migration, Europeanization, international mobility or the rise of post-materialist values lead to new structures in society that can hardly be depicted by socioeconomic criteria alone (Kriesi 2010). Consequently, the interests that a citizen has due to his or her societal group (socioeconomic, religious, regional, etc.) become another major category under investigation (e.g., Enns and Wlezien 2011).

Thus, we distinguish between three different aspects of substantive representation from citizens' perspectives: (a) feelings of being represented as a member of a certain social group, (b) feelings of being represented regarding value orientations, (c) feelings of being represented concerning issues. We assume that perceptions of being represented on these different dimensions correlate positively with citizens' representational judgments about the national parliament and their own MP.

H1:   *When citizens feel well represented concerning their interests they will judge more positively the national parliament and their MP.*

Representation as "Acting for"

As a second element, Pitkin's conceptualization introduces the actions of representatives as a component of representation; it "implies that the wishes of the represented and the actions of the representatives will

converge" (Pitkin 1967, 163). This dimension refers to the behavior of representatives taken in order to defend the interests of the represented. In their deconstruction of the "puzzle of representation", Eulau and Karps (1977) argue that acting in a responsive manner is much more complex than the unique translation of interests in the policy-making process. Being responsive also means acting outside the parliamentary arena by bringing benefits to the represented through pork-barrel politics (Weingast, Shepsle and Johnsen 1981) or solving individual problems (mainly providing administrative assistance, Kerrouche 2009).

Since the beginning of the 1960s (Miller and Stokes 1963; Fenno 1973, 1978; Mayhew 1974), scholars have developed a large body of literature investigating MPs' activities both in parliament and outside in their districts. In the aftermath of the "individualist turning point" (Thomassen and Andeweg 2004) in research on representation, European scholars started to focus on individual MPs' behavior, highlighting the importance of non-legislative tasks in nearly all European legislatures. In many countries, district activities assume a crucial role for the responsive MP. As shown in more detail in other chapters of this book, these actions are mainly surgeries (personal contact with citizens in order to solve an individual problem) but can also be an engagement in community life (local celebrations, etc.). Hence, accountability is no longer measured only on policy matters, but is also linked to MPs' activities in their local constituencies. While the mainstream of research has explained local activities from a rational choice perspective and, thus, emphasized MPs' efforts to get reelected (Strøm 1997; see also: Costa and Kerrouche 2007; Dolezal and Müller 2001; Dudzinska et al. 2014; Kerrouche 2009), our concern is with the relationship between MPs' activities and citizens' attitudes towards the quality of representation.

However, in this chapter, we are not interested in analyzing MPs' factual actions, but how citizens perceive them. Because MPs' actions are not only limited to the legislative process, we will refer to citizens' assessment of MPs' behavior regarding the distinct aspects described above. Citizens have expectations about MPs' behavior, about how they should perform their tasks. They do not directly evaluate MPs' performance (accepted bills, successful casework, etc.). Their representational judgments are based on the fit of MPs behavior with the formal (lawmaking process, control, communication with the represented) and informal (service to individuals) requirements of MPs' work (what MPs must do to "act for"). Citizens feel well represented when MPs fulfill these expectations. Hence, our three "actors' dimensions" are thus examined through the question of citizens' feelings about: (1) the appropriateness of MPs' actions, (2) the frequency

of contacts MPs have with citizens, and (3) MPs' capacity to consider what citizens think and whether citizens think MPs can perform the tasks assigned to them. We assume that the more positively citizens evaluate these activities, the more positively they will feel about how well they are represented by their own MP and by the national parliament.

H2: *The more positively citizens evaluate an MP's performance as a representative, the more positively they will judge the national parliament and their MP.*

How Citizens Judge MPs and the Parliament: A French-German Comparison

As shown by the limited number of empirical studies, citizens' assessment of politicians as open and responsive to the citizens' concerns has never been high in France and in Germany and, moreover, has declined during the last decades (Gabriel and Neller 2010 for Germany; for France Boy and Mayer 1997; Grunberg et al. 2002). The results in Table 8.1 confirm these previous findings and indicate that French citizens are

Table 8.1 Citizens' feelings of being represented by their own MP and by the national parliament in France and Germany

	MP		Parliament	
	F	*G*	*F*	*G*
Very well represented	1	2	1	1
Well represented	17	18	11	19
Neither/nor	29	42	35	47
Badly represented	23	26	28	26
Not represented at all	29	12	25	7
Mean	1.37	1.71	1.35	1.80
N	789	1149	916	1471
Eta	0.17[a]		0.23[a]	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Notes: Cell entries are percentage points and mean values. [a]F-Test for country difference $p = 0.000$

Item wording: "For each of the following institutions, please indicate if you think that your concerns are very well, well, more or less, not, not at all taken into account. Parliament, own MP(s)"

more dissociated from their politicians and their parliament than the Germans. Especially when stating their feelings of being represented by their own MP, the difference becomes striking: 52 percent of the French citizenry feel badly or not at all represented by their MP. Only 38 percent of German citizens share this feeling.

The attitudes towards the national Assembly follow the same pattern: More than half of the French respondents and around a third of the Germans fall into the negative categories. In sum, the Germans hold mainly neutral attitudes towards both their MPs and the Bundestag, while the French are predominantly negative in their views. These results give further evidence that the French are more critical than the Germans and confirm the results of previous studies.

When evaluating the differences in terms of the representation of the citizens' concerns (see Table 8.2), the pattern is very similar. The indicators of the substantive dimension show clear differences between French and German citizens. About 60 percent of the French respondents feel badly represented in most of the respects under observation here.

Table 8.2 Citizens' feelings of being represented regarding their values and concerns in France and Germany

	Value orientations		*Interest as a member of a certain group*		*Important issues*	
	F	*G*	*F*	*G*	*F*	*G*
Very well represented	0	1	1	1	0	1
Well represented	10	21	14	22	10	17
Neither well nor badly represented	31	47	24	45	27	48
Badly represented	33	25	29	24	33	27
Not represented at all	25	6	31	8	30	8
Mean	1.27	1.87	1.24	1.83	1.18	1.77
N	978	1483	978	1483	903	1471
Eta	0.31[a]		0.28[a]		0.30[a]	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Notes: Cell entries are percentage points and mean values. [a]F-Test for country difference $p = 0.000$

Item wording: "In the French/German political system, do you think the following elements are (1) very well, (2) well, (3) more or less, (4) not, (5) not at all taken into account?" Values; interests as a member of a certain group; important issues. The values were recoded to a range from 0 (not at all represented) to 4 (very well represented)

By contrast, the share of German citizens who do not feel well represented does not exceed a third.

Regarding citizens' views on how MPs interact with them (see Table 8.3), the evaluations do not greatly differ between France and Germany, but do with regard to various components of the MPs' behavior.

In both France and Germany only a minority of the respondents think that MPs do the right thing in general, take into account what citizens want, try to maintain contact with citizens and are up to the tasks assigned to them. As shown in Table 8.3, the share of positive answers to these questions never exceeds 30 percent in both countries and is considerably lower in some instances. In line with our previous findings, Germans are mostly ambivalent in their views on MPs' conduct of affairs while negative judgments prevail in France.

Table 8.3 Citizens' views on MPs' performance in France and Germany

MPs...	Do right things		Take into account what citizens think		Maintain contact with citizens		Are up to their tasks	
	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G
Extremely negative	9	10	16	19	20	20	8	7
Negative	30	26	37	31	41	37	29	20
Neither negative nor positive	35	42	26	36	20	26	31	42
Positive	25	20	18	12	17	13	31	28
Extremely positive	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2
Mean	1.80	1.79	1.53	1.46	1.41	1.45	1.91	2.03
N	952	1484	961	1496	959	1486	933	1416
Eta	0.01 n. s.		0.03 n. s.		0.02 n. s.		0.06[a]	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Notes: Cell entries are percentage points and mean values. [a]F-Test for country difference $p < 0.01$, n. s. F-Test $p > 0.05$

Item wording: "I will now read several statements about MPs. Please tell me if you (1) agree strongly, (2) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) disagree, (5) disagree strongly: (a) We can generally be confident in the fact that MPs do the right things in Parliament; (b) When they take decisions, MPs do not take into account what citizens think; (c) MPs do not make an effort to maintain contacts with citizens; (d) Most MPs are up to their tasks." All the items were recoded to a range from (0) very negative evaluations of MPs to (4) very positive evaluations of MPs behavior

FEELING OF BEING REPRESENTED:
A MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

In a next step, we will examine in more detail which set of variables has a stronger impact on citizens' representational judgments—indicators of substantive representation or representational activities. To test our hypotheses we estimated three different OLS-regression models. The first one tests hypothesis 1 and investigates how perceptions of substantive representation correlate with citizens' feelings of being represented by the national parliament and their own MP. The second model attempts to explain representational judgments through perceptions of political actors' behavior. Combining both approaches, model 3 analyses the relevance of both approaches if they are integrated into one model.

Feelings of Being Represented by MPs

The multivariate analyses confirm the descriptive findings by highlighting different explanatory patterns (see Table 8.4).

Regarding the substantive dimension, the results are in line with the first hypothesis in both countries. The three indicators are significant and positive, meaning that the better citizens feel represented concerning values, issues and as a member of a group, the better they feel represented by their own MP. However, the standardized coefficients show that the indicators do not have the same importance. In France, the feeling of being represented as a member of a group is less important than the other indicators. In Germany, the variable which depicts perceived value representation is the least important contributor to the model. By contrast, issue representation appears as the most important factor in both countries, except if we control for sociodemographic variables in France. In France, as in Germany, the models are robust ($R^2 > 0.30$). Adding the controls leads only to a marginal increase in the explanatory power of the model and, moreover, does not strongly depress the size of the regression coefficient. In other words, a large variance in the dependent variable is explained by the substantive dimension alone.

The results displayed in model 2 are also in line with the theoretical expectations. In Germany, this model gives strong support for our second hypothesis. The four indicators are positive and significant and the R^2 is rather high. The most important factor is the evaluation of the appropriateness of MPs' actions. The same pattern is observed in France. However, it should be noted that the relation is not very pronounced and should be

Table 8.4 Feeling of being represented by district MPs in France and Germany

| | Model 1 | | | | Model 2 | | | | Combined Model | | | |
| | F | | G | | F | | G | | F | | G | |
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Value orientations	0.24[a]	0.21	0.16[a]	0.15					0.17[b]	0.16	09[c]	0.08
Interests as member of group	0.15[b]	0.15	0.22[a]	0.21					0.14[b]	0.14	0.17[a]	0.16
Important issues	0.29[a]	0.27	0.36[a]	0.33					0.26[a]	0.24	0.28[a]	0.25
MP doing right things					0.16[a]	0.14	0.28[a]	0.29	0.07	0.06	0.16[a]	0.16
MP takes care					0.16[a]	0.15	0.18[a]	0.19	0.09[c]	0.09	0.13[a]	0.13
MP seeks contact					0.16[a]	0.15	0.10[a]	0.12	0.15[a]	0.14	0.10[a]	0.11
MP is up to tasks					0.12[c]	0.11	0.09[c]	0.09	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.00
Incumbency	0.12	0.04	0.15[c]	0.08	0.38[a]	0.13	0.34[a]	0.10	0.08	0.03	0.06	0.03
Political interest	−0.08	−0.06	0.05	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.11[a]	0.10	−0.07	−0.06	0.06[c]	0.06
Left-right-self-placement	−0.03	−0.06	0.00	0.07	−0.02	−0.05	−0.01	−0.02	−0.03	−0.05	−0.01	0.07
Age in years	0.01[c]	0.10	0.00	−0.02	0.03	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.05	−0.01	−0.01
Education	0.07	0.06	0.07[c]	0.00	0.05	0.04	−0.05	−0.04	−0.01	−0.01	0.00	0.03
Constant	0.30[b]		36[b]		0.17 n. s.		0.46[a]		0.14		0.12	
R² adjusted	0.32[a]		0.38[a]		0.19[a]		0.51[a]		0.37[a]		0.44[a]	
N	564		962		661		980		536		907	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Item wording: For all attitudinal variables see Tables 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3. Incumbency: "To which party do you feel the closest?" France: UMP (1), All Others, including not close to any party (0), Germany: CDU/CSU and FDP (1), All Others, including not close to any party (0). "How strongly are you interested in politics?" (3) Very interested; (2) Quite interested; (1) Hardly interested; (0) Not at all interested. Left-right self-placement: In politics, we often talk in terms of "left" and "right." About you, where are you situated on a scale from 0 (left) to 10 (right). Education: "What is the highest diploma you got?" (France); (0) left school without graduation, (1) Certificat d'études primaires, (2) Ancien, Brevet, BEPC, CAP/BEP. (3) Bac, University degree (Bac+2), University degree (Bac+3/Bac+4), DEA/DESS/Doctorat; Germany: (0) Left school without graduation, (1) Volks-/Hauptschule, (2) Mittlere Reife, (3) Abitur, University degree

[a]T-Test p = 0.000, [b]T-Test p < 0.01, [c]T-Test p < 0.05, other T-Test p > 0.05

interpreted with caution: The R^2 is quite low and growing when controlled for sociodemographic factors (not displayed here). Moreover, the four independent variables have more or less the same impact on the assessment of the MP as a representative.

Regarding the combination of the two models, the patterns also highlight the differences between the countries. In Germany, the feeling of being represented by MPs is improved mainly by the actor dimension. This can be observed through the comparison of the R^2 that is higher in model 2 than in the other models. On the other hand, the case of France gives support to our theoretical argument since the combined model is the most robust: Good evaluation of MPs is more a matter of perceptions which concern aspects of representation theory than of political predispositions.

Differences between countries might be explained by differences in institutional structure, particularly by the relations between the parliament and the government. In France, the limited (or rationalized) role of parliament in the lawmaking process and the importance of the executive—especially the directly elected president (Elgie 2013)—explains the low relevance of the actor-based model: Individual MPs have only limited influence when designing policies. By contrast, German members of parliament are more influential than the French in the processes of representation and in lawmaking. This explains why German citizens are more concerned over the concrete actions of their MPs than are their French counterparts.

Feelings of Being Represented by the National Parliament

Regarding citizens' representational judgments about the national parliament (Table 8.5), the explanatory model which comprises substantive dimensions is much stronger than the model which concerns the perceived behavior of MPs in France as well as in Germany. The results for model 1 illustrate that perceptions of substantive representation explain a large variance of citizens' representational judgments about the parliament, as the R^2 of 0.38 (France) and 0.47 (Germany) indicate.

Among the items in this model, value representation is the most important component, particularly in France. This indicates that the most profound category in citizens' belief systems has the highest relevance for explaining representational judgments. Consequently, social categories are of less relevance than categories that concern individual interest, referring to respondents' values and issues. The patterns are similar for both countries.

Table 8.5 Feeling of being represented by parliament in France and Germany

	Model 1				Model 2				Combined Model			
	France		Germany		France		Germany		France		Germany	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Value orientations	0.29[a]	0.28	0.30[a]	0.30					0.25[a]	0.24	0.23[a]	0.23
Interests as member of group	0.19[a]	0.20	0.16[a]	0.16					0.15[a]	0.16	0.12[a]	0.12
Important issues	0.16[a]	0.16	0.28[a]	0.27	0.21[a]	0.21	0.34[a]	0.37	0.17[a]	0.17	0.19[a]	0.19
MP doing right things					0.03	0.03	0.12[a]	0.14	0.08[c]	0.08	0.20[a]	0.22
MP takes care					0.11[a]	0.12	0.02	0.02	-0.04	-0.04	0.07[b]	0.08
MP seeks contact					0.12[a]	0.13	0.14[a]	0.15	0.08[c]	0.09	-0.00	-0.00
MP up to tasks					.35[a]	0.13	0.24[a]	0.11	0.09[c]	0.09	0.06[c]	0.07
Incumbency	0.06	0.02	0.17[a]	0.08	0.14[a]	0.13	0.08[b]	0.08	0.06	0.02	0.09	0.04
Political interest	0.06	0.05	0.00	0.00					0.05	0.05	0.02	0.02
Left-right-self-placement	0.03	0.06	0.03[a]	0.07	0.02	0.05	0.03[b]	0.07	n.s.		0.03[b]	0.07
Age in years	0.00	-0.01	0.00	-0.02	-0.00	-0.07	-0.00	-0.03	-0.00	-0.05	-0.00	-0.02
Education	0.06	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.09[c]	0.09	0.02	0.02	0.05[c]	0.04	0.01	0.01
Constant	0.29[b]		0.32[a]		0.19		0.46[a]		0.14		0.07	
R^2 adjusted	0.38[a]		0.47[a]		21[a]		0.39[a]		0.40[a]		0.52[a]	
N	626		1165		755		1208		590		1075	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Item wording: see Table 8.4

[a]T-Test $p = 0.000$, [b]T-Test $p < 0.01$, [c]T-Test $p < 0.05$, other T-Test $p > 0.05$

In France, these results could be expected due to the traditional conception embedded in the Fifth Republic that does not admit to having subgroups (France shall be an indivisible Republic, as it says in Article 1 of the constitution of 1958). It is thus expected that the parliament primarily represents the whole nation and not a specific group and, similarly, the interests of subgroups are less widespread than in Germany.

By contrast, the relevance of perceived MP behavior differs between France and Germany: Whereas the explained variance is low in the case of France (0.21), the result for Germany (0.39) is significantly better. At this, the general assessment of MPs' behavior ("MPs do the right thing") is the strongest predictor for citizens' feelings of being represented by the German Bundestag. In France, the coefficients are low and one of them does not show significance.

The combined model explains a large variance in representational judgments among French and German citizens. In both countries, but mainly in France, perceived value representation is the strongest predictor. In Germany, this is followed by the general assessment of MPs' behavior, which comes close to the influence exerted by the perceived representation of values. The importance of other items in the actor dimension decreases. In the case of France, all the items of the actor dimension remain less important than those which are integrated into the substantive dimension. A possible explanation for this circumstance is the "cumul des mandats" in France. Due to multiple office-holding, citizens might not only link their representative to the national parliament, but also to other (local) mandates or institutions. Consequently, the cognitive link between the MP and the parliament might be weaker in the case of France (Costa et al. 2012). Hence, the results support our theoretical models: Citizens' perceptions of substantive representation are especially important factors in explaining their representational judgments regarding the national parliament.

Our models are better for Germany than for France. This might be caused by (a) the skepticism of French citizens and a resulting small variance of the dependent variables and (b) the weak institutional power of the Assemblée nationale, leading to more indifference and less French citizen attention to MPs and the national parliament. Furthermore, the predominant role of the president, who is not considered in this study, might affect citizens' representation assessments about their MPs and the national parliament. Our results emphasize the relevance of citizens' perceptions of

substantive representation and of perceptions of representatives' behavior when analyzing political attitudes. There is also a need to integrate these aspects into both, public opinion research and legislative studies.

Conclusion: What Matters, Action or Substance?

The objective of this chapter was to reassess the process of representation by investigating the subjective evaluation citizens made of MPs and parliament. Our goal was to go beyond traditional explanatory models which consider political predispositions such as interests, party identification or sociodemographic factors. In addition to existing approaches which concern the explanation of citizens' representational judgments based on macro-factors, ideological explanations, regime type or institutions, we built explanatory models which are closely derived from the origins of representation theory. In doing so, we developed two approaches: One referred to citizens' perceptions of substantive representation, and one concerned perceptions of actors' behavior.

The first descriptive results show that French citizens feel more poorly represented by both MPs and parliament than Germans who are more neutral. Our results tend thus to confirm the results of previous studies indicating that the French hold more negative attitudes toward politics than the Germans. With regard to representational judgments, the empirical findings mainly support these theoretical expectations. In Germany, model 3 is statistically robust and shows that good evaluations are dependent on a combination of the two dimensions of representation. In France, the findings indicate a more important role for the substantive dimension whereas the perceived MP behavior turns out to be less relevant, but by no means irrelevant, to citizens' judgments of how well they feel represented by MPs and parliament. In both countries, a positive perception of MPs' actions enhances the feeling of being represented by both the parliament and MPs—as does the perception of being represented when it comes to important concerns.

Clearly, citizens' perception of representatives' responsiveness and actions matters in explaining the subjective evaluation they make of MPs and parliament. However, further research should also integrate citizens' expectations of MPs' work. In both countries there seems to be a mismatch between citizens' considerations of the role of an MP and the concrete activities of the representatives. This point appears to be crucial for

the functioning of the democratic system because our findings show that French citizens are more critical about how this system works in concrete terms. More than MPs themselves, French citizens seem to primarily disagree with the tasks attributed to MPs by the institutional structure.

Investigating the subjective evaluation of representational agents allows scholars to test the numerous concepts of representation to determine which one is "the best." As argued by Mansbridge (1999), citizens evaluate representation on their own criteria, and some groups (as in the case of marginalized ones) may favor descriptive representation. In other words, the evaluation made by the members of these groups is more a matter of who the representative is than of the actions the MP takes.

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CHAPTER 9

Participation and Representation: Background and Beliefs of Activists and the Inactive

Oscar W. Gabriel

THE DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Before the so-called "participatory revolution" swept over the democratic world, most theorists thought of participation and representation as complementary elements of a democratic regime. In line with Schumpeter's view, political participation was largely equated to casting one's vote on election day. Thus, it served as a means of selecting a group of representatives who were entrusted by voters with the power of making authoritative political decisions (Schumpeter 1950). At the end of the electoral term, voters assessed whether or not the conduct of governmental affairs had conformed to their expectations. Depending on their judgments, they either confirmed the incumbent political leaders or threw them out of office. In the time span between two succeeding elections, political leaders acted freely as representatives of the political community. The prevailing

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equation of democracy with representative democracy went alongside a corresponding view of political leaders as trustees of the political community (see Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, 298–299). Political freedom and competition, the rule of law, a functional and temporal limitation of elite power, and responsive political leadership served as the crucial devices ensuring the idea of democracy as government by the citizens and for the citizens (Dahl 1971). With the exception of a handful of nations, civic demands for direct influence on political decisions did not greatly challenge the elites' authority.

At present, many scholars no longer share the traditional view of the division of labor between the elected and the electorate. Instead, the expansion of direct civic involvement in public affairs has become the magic formula for reforms aimed at improving the quality of democratic government. Alongside the assumption that there is a decline in government accountability in representative democracies, advocates of democratic innovations regard broadened and more meaningful citizen participation as a key for making politics more responsive to the needs of the entire civic community (see for example: Cain et al. 2008; Geissel and Newton 2012; Smith 2009; Smith and Tolbert 2004). At first glance, there are good reasons to follow that line of reasoning. In the period since the end of the Second World War, modern societies have witnessed an unprecedented increase of mass education and strongly improved access for ordinary citizens to political information. Social and political modernization have stipulated a process of cognitive mobilization of the citizenry and an increase of political aspirations, in a material and procedural sense. People not only expect high quality public policies and public services, they also claim an active voice for themselves in the conduct of public affairs (see, for example: Inglehart 1990, 212–247, 335–392; Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 210–230; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, 315–320; Norris 2011, 119–215).

Objectively, the preconditions for active citizen participation in politics are better nowadays than in any previous period in the history of modern democracy. In line with the view of citizens as the best advocates for their own interests, giving the average citizen more influence in the political process could contribute in several ways to strengthening the principle of responsive government. Citizens could articulate their political demands more effectively and, thus, broaden the political agenda. Moreover, they could use their individual and collective resources to strengthen the impact of their preferences on public policies. Regarded from this point of view,

citizen participation could make political representation more effective and, thus, improve the quality of representative democracy.

The optimistic view of the role of (direct) citizen participation as a driving force in the struggle for improved quality of democracy has always been contested (for example: Esaisson 2010; Merkel 2015). In practice, political participation, i.e., the activities of private citizens aimed at influencing the selection of political leaders and the decisions about political issues, does not always work as assumed by normative theorists. In pluralist societies, different activist groups raise different—and sometimes opposite—political demands. All of them expect political leaders to satisfy their concerns, but also to lead and to govern effectively. In a situation like that, the government and the parliamentary majority face the dilemma that conforming to the demands of one of these groups is often equivalent to rejecting the wishes of others. The more citizens are engaged in favor of the implementation of a specific political issue, the more strongly they are frustrated when their activity does not lead to the outcome they sought. Moreover, as shown by a plethora of empirical studies, members of various social groups use their right to participate in the political process differently. Ample empirical evidence confirms Schattschneider's (1960, 35) classical statement that the heavenly chorus (of activists) sings with a strong upper class accent (for example: Hooghe and Quintelier 2013; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1978, 1995; Schlozman et al. 2012). For that reason, simply satisfying the demands of the activist strata of the political community cannot be equated with being responsive to the entire political community. First, it is questionable whether and to what degree the demands of activists mirror the concerns of the entire political community; and second, homogeneous political preferences shared by all members of a political community—and even by a majority of them—simply do not exist in many instances. For these reasons, broadening citizen participation will not lead necessarily to a more responsive policy output than do parliamentary decisions. As stated by Dahl (1994, 30–31),

> Democracy cannot be justified merely as a system for translating the raw, uninformed will of a popular majority into public policy.

Sometimes, political leadership and political representation may be needed in order to counterbalance the bias of civic engagement (see also: Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, 297–324).

Although a great deal of research on the effects of political participation on the quality of democracy is normative rather than empirical, two different approaches have developed in empirical research addressing the complicated relationship between participation, representation and democracy from different angles. One line of research aligns to the findings on the social bias of political engagement. It starts, therefore, from the assumption that the unequal level of participation among lower and higher status groups—apart from violating the democratic norm of political equality—can easily distort the input of political demands received by the political leaders in favor of the higher status groups. Since it is easier for political leaders to react to the voices of the active than find out the hidden preferences of the inactive, unequal participation may indeed endanger the need to take into account the concerns of the inactive (see Verba and Nie 1972, 125–173; Verba et al. 1978, 1995, 163–185, 334–368; Schlozman et al. 2012). Verba et al. (1995, 163) describe a basic characteristic of the linkage between participation and representation:

> Through their political activity, citizens have an opportunity to communicate their concerns and wishes to political leaders and to influence public outcomes. Those in public life are more likely to be aware of, and pay attention to, the needs and preferences of those who are active.

A similar logic underlies the second approach to the problem of distorted representation. It rests on the assumption that a direct link between citizens' social background and their policy preferences does not necessarily exist and that the same applies to policy makers (Verba et al. 1995, 166–168). Thus, inferences from the differing social characteristics of activists and the inactive to the representation of their demands in policy outcomes may prove to be erroneous. Instead of focusing on the social background of participants, assessments of the quality of political representation should directly consider citizens' issue preferences. Taking up the idea of issue congruence, which has played an important role in research on political representation from its beginnings (Miller and Stokes 1963), some studies have analyzed the congruence of the issue preferences of the active and the broader public or between the active and inactive segments of the political community, respectively. In this line of arguing, a discrepancy between the issue preferences of the respective groups could potentially endanger the democratic norm of equal representation of all

citizens' concerns (Dalton 1985; Gabriel 2000, Kirkpatrick 1975; somewhat differently: Verba et al. 1995, 463–508).

In the subsequent exploration of how well the French and German systems of participation perform the democratic function of representation, we integrate these two approaches to the relationship between participation and representation. Taking into account the findings on the differing social backgrounds and issue preferences of the activist and inactive segments of the public, we divide this general question into two more specific ones. We first ask whether and to what degree the different social strata in the two countries equally take part in the political process. Having analyzed that, we compare the issue preferences of politically active French and Germans with the preferences of the whole citizenry. These findings shed light on some objective conditions of equal representation. However, the question of whether and to what degree political participation contributes to a more favorable view of the process of political representation should also be taken into account. Active political engagement, especially if it is seen as successful, may perform integrative functions by enhancing citizens' satisfaction with the process of representation. In the light of the findings that differentiate the system of participation into several subsystems (see Verba and Nie 1972; Barnes et al. 1979), we will not limit the analysis to a comparison of the active, the inactive and the broader public. Moreover, we will highlight how different forms of participation perform in involving citizens in the political process, in the shaping the flow of political demands from citizens to representatives and in enhancing citizens' satisfaction with the process of representation.

Patterns of Political Participation

At first glance, France and Germany have appeared as master examples of different styles of political participation (Gabriel et al. 2012). Compared to other European countries, Germans have always broadly participated in parliamentary elections at various tiers of their federal system, while electoral participation has not been particularly high in France (Gabriel and Völkl 2008; Völkl 2012). Even turnout in presidential elections is mostly lower in France than participation in parliamentary elections in Germany. Moreover, French political parties never have had membership rates coming close to the respective German figures (van Biezen and Poguntke 2014, 5). By contrast, France is a nation of protestors, whereas taking part in demonstrations, writing petitions and joining political

strikes is not well rooted in the German political tradition and became a relevant part of political life in the 1970s (see for more details and references: Gabriel et al. 2012; Schild 2000, 33–80; differently: Hooghe and Quintelier 2013, 223–225).

As shown in Table 9.1, the overall level of participation in the two countries was high in 2010. In the broadest sense of the term, nine out of ten Frenchmen and Germans are politically active. They take part in, at least, one type of political activity, such as working in a party, contacting political leaders, joining demonstrations, casting their votes in a parliamentary election or working actively in a social organization. The picture does not change substantially if we exclude social participation. Even then, around 90 percent of the two publics take an active role in political life. Two-thirds of the Germans and three-quarters of the French participate in at least one of the political activities that go beyond merely voting in elections. Moreover, a larger share of French people tend to engage in a broad spectrum of political activities than do Germans. While more than half of the French report having participated in three or more activities, the respective proportion is around ten percentage points lower in Germany. On the other hand, more Germans than French confine their political engagement to two or fewer activities.

The difference in the overall level of participation between France and Germany results from the varying role played by legal and illegal protest activities in the two political communities. As found in some of the empirical studies mentioned before, traditional forms of activity such as voting, contacting and working in a political party are more widespread in Germany than in France. Conversely, far more French than Germans are ready to use the available means of legal and non-legal protest in order to make their voices heard (Rivat and Stauer 2012). Participation in unauthorized strikes shows the most striking difference between the countries, but there is also a considerable gap in joining legal demonstrations, blocking traffic and seizing buildings. Thus, the data in Table 9.1 largely confirms the traditional findings on participation in France and Germany.

There exists broad evidence in empirical research on political participation as a multidimensional activity. As found by Verba and Nie (1972, 44–81; Verba et al. 1978, 46–62) before political protest became a widespread element of political life in contemporary democracies, different forms of political participation were used by different people for different reasons and in the pursuit of different goals. Voting needs to be distinguished in these respects from campaigning and from party activity.

Table 9.1   Participation in various political activities in France and Germany

	F	*G*
Single activities		
Voting in parliamentary election	64	77
Signed a petition	59	51
Took part in a demonstration	37	20
Contacted administration	34	40
Took part in an unauthorized strike	29	2
Worked in a civic action group	26	15
Contacted politician	16	20
Blocked traffic	8	2
Seized a building	7	1
Worked in a political party	6	8
Groups of activities		
Contacting	39	43
Legal protest	64	53
Civil disobedience	30	3
Voting for a protest party	20	9
Level of activity		
Participated in no activity	10	9
Participated in one or two activities	36	45
Participated in three to five activities	38	36
Participated in more than five activities	16	11
N	1009	1553

Source: CITREP 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany are weighted according to the population size of East and West Germany

Notes: Cell entries are percentage points

Item wording: *Voting*, France: "Let us suppose that a parliamentary election would be held next Sunday. For what party candidate would you vote?" *Voting*, Germany: "At the election of the Bundestag you can cast two votes, one for a candidate in your electoral district and one for a party. Here you see a ballot like you will get it at a Bundestag election. What would you mark if there would be an election next Sunday? … And now please tell me for which party would you vote?" (Party vote counted). Other forms of participation: "There are different ways to improve how things run in (France/Germany) or to take care that they don't run worse. Please tell me for each of the following activities whether you have done it or not during the last five years"

Contacting: Contacted administration/Contacted politician; *Legal Protest*: Signed a petition/Took part in a demonstration; *Civil Disobedience*: Took part in an unauthorized strike/Blocked traffic/Seized a building. *Protest Vote*, France: Parti de Gauche, Lutte Ouvrière, Parti Communiste, Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste, Front National, Other; *Protest Vote*, Germany: Die Linke, Republikaner, NPD, DVU, Other

All indices were formed by counting the numbers of activities that were carried out by respondents. Indices of Contacting, Legal Protest and Civil Disobedience were recoded to 0 (not done) and 1 (done) and thus adjusted to the one-indicator measures of party activity, voting and protest voting

Contacting politicians and administrators is also not the same as electoral forms of participation. Finally, legal or illegal forms of exerting political influence need to be distinguished from engaging in more traditional forms of participation. Although the systems of participation identified in various studies differ in detail, the distinction between voting, conventional participation and political protest is commonplace (see, for example Armingeon 2007; Barnes et al. 1979; Parry et al. 1992). In principle, the CITREP data for France and Germany replicate previous findings by having identified contacting politicians and administrators, party-related activity, and legal and illegal protest as separate but related clusters of political engagement. And as often, voting did not fit into this pattern of political activity what underlines the distinctive role of voting—and protest voting—in peoples' relationship to politics (table not shown here).

Political participation in general and the various types of political engagement in particular relate differently to the process of representation (similarly Verba and Nie 1972, 45–55; Verba et al. 1995, 168–169). Voting in elections embodies the core participatory right and form of exerting influence in a representative democracy. By casting their votes on election day, citizens entrust political leaders with the power and duty to act on behalf of the political community. However, voting cannot be seen as an appropriate means for articulating specific policy preferences. Contacting political representatives is situated at the other pole of the continuum. By getting in direct touch with politicians or administrators, citizens can raise very specific individual or collective concerns, and they normally do so. Party activity, legal protest and civil disobedience function also as an effective means of interest articulation. As forms of collective action, they primarily serve the purpose of expressing the demands of a larger segment of the public, but not of individual citizens and also not of the whole political community.

Regarded from this background, the patterns of political participation prevailing in France and Germany generate favorable conditions for a well-performing flow of demands from citizens to political leaders. A broad majority of both publics, at least occasionally and in a timely fashion, take part in political life—mainly if they feel a need to do so in order to make their voices heard. Many of them use the ways of articulating their individual demands by contacting political or administrative decision-makers, and many are involved in forms of collective actions like party-related activities and protest. As will be shown below, the broad dispersion of political participation in France and Germany sets a necessary condition

for a well-performing system of representation in the two countries. It does not, however, assure that the majority of the citizens perceive the quality of representation as satisfying their demands.

The Social Background of Active and Inactive Citizens

Even from the beginning of empirical research, scholars identified citizens' social background as a crucial determinant of political participation. The role of factors such as gender, age, education, income, socioeconomic status and residence in enhancing political engagement has been highlighted from different theoretical perspectives, for example, in the framework of theories of political socialization or of socioeconomic equality. Whatever specific approach has been chosen, studies have yielded broad empirical evidence that men are more active than women; that participation increases with education, income and status; and that age also makes a difference for the level and type of political participation (for an early report on the state of research, see Milbrath 1965; more recently Hooghe and Quintelier 2013). From the perspective of political representation, socially biased political participation may distort the input of group concerns into the political process in favor of the activist segments of the public. Consequently, the transformation of the respective needs into policy outputs may also be biased.

In many analyses of the social background of political activists, education, income, and occupation have been seen as indicators of a person's socioeconomic resource level. Sometimes, subjective social status, being employed in the civil service or having a full-time occupation or being unemployed are added. Although gender and age are other prominent social antecedents of political participation, they are not parts of the individual's equipment with socioeconomic resources (Armingeon 2007; Brady et al. 1995; Hooghe and Quintelier 2013; Verba et al. 1978). Since most of the common indicators of an individual's social position are available in the CITREP data, we can examine whether and in what respects the French and German systems of participation are socially biased.

Overall, the results of an OLS regression of the impact of citizens' social background on levels of political participation in France and in Germany confirm existing empirical evidence (see Table 9.2). In both countries, social background matters as a determinant of people's political engagement but— as shown by the coefficients of determination—slightly more so in France.

Table 9.2 Social background and level of political participation in France and Germany

	F		G	
	B	Beta	B	Beta
Gender: male	0.21	0.05	0.37[a]	0.11
Primary education	−0.69[a]	−0.16	−0.20[c]	−0.06
Tertiary education	0.66[a]	0.14	0.82[a]	0.21
Fulltime occupation	0.23	0.06	0.16	0.05
Part-time occupation	0.52[c]	0.09	0.25	0.05
Unemployed	0.40	0.05	0.00	0.00
Retired	0.08	0.02	0.10	0.03
Civil servant	0.82[a]	0.18	0.44[a]	0.11
Age 26–35	−0.29	−0.06	0.26	0.05
Age 36–45	−0.02	−0.00	0.53[b]	0.13
Age 46–55	0.40	0.08	0.46[c]	0.11
Age 56–65	0.15	0.03	0.73[a]	0.16
Age > 65	−0.34	−0.07	0.11	0.03
Constant	1.66[a]		0.70[a]	
R^2	0.18[a]		0.13[a]	
N	967		1519	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: T-Test [a] $p = 0.000$, [b] $p < 0.01$, [c] $p < 0.05$

For item wording and indices see Table 9.1. A count-index of participation including voting and being active in a social organization is used as dependent variable. All independent variables are dummies coded as 1 (done) and 0 (not done)

Having completed a tertiary education turns out to be the most important determinant of the level of political activity in Germany and ranks third in France. Low education shows the opposite effect in the two countries and depresses the level of political participation, with a stronger effect in France. Apart from education, being employed in the public sector is the only factor consistently exerting a positive influence on the degree of political participation in both countries. Once more, a more marked effect is observed in France. Apart from education and occupation in the public service, being employed part-time promotes political participation in France. By contrast, socialization and life cycle effects come into play as antecedents of participation in Germany. As has been often found, men are more active than women, and people in the middle age groups, from 36 to 65 years, show higher levels of engagement than their younger and older compatriots.

These various social characteristics show an additional impact on civic engagement. Therefore, by using the parameters of the regression model, we can estimate the average number of activities carried out by French and German citizens who combine the social characteristics that are least and most conducive to political engagement. In France, respondents having completed a tertiary education, being part-time employed and holding a job in the public sector participate in 3.66 activities on average, while people with primary education who do not hold a job in the public sector and are not employed part-time perform only one activity (0.97) on average. In Germany, the average level of activity amounts to a score of 3.06 for men with a tertiary education in the age group of 56 to 65 years who are employed in the public sector. For people lacking these characteristics, the estimated score is only 0.70.[1] That means that the average level of political participation for citizens possessing the social characteristics most conducive to participation is almost four times higher in France and four-and-a-half times higher in Germany than the engagement levels of their fellow citizens who possess the attributes least favorable for political engagement.

A binary logistic regression analysis of the social background of voting and protest voting, party-related participation, contacting political representatives and engaging in legal protest and civil disobedience confirms this pattern. However, none of the specific forms of participation depends strongly on the citizens' social characteristics. Only for legal protest and civil disobedience in France does Nagelkerke's R^2 exceed the 0.20 threshold (data not shown in detail here). In all remaining cases, knowing the citizens' social background does not greatly improve the prediction of the type of their civic engagement. At first glance, neither the French nor the German system of participation shows a strong social bias.

Nevertheless, some specific forms of political participation depend on specific status attributes. In both countries, half of the respective relationships are statistically significant at the 0.95 level, with education as by far the most important predictor of political participation. For the most part, primary education reduces the probability of becoming politically active instead of remaining passive, and the opposite holds true for tertiary education. In Germany, protest voting deviates most clearly from this general pattern. While being more politically active than others in most instances, highly educated French and German citizens are least likely to cast a protest vote.

However, people having only a primary education are also less inclined to vote for a protest party; this is not what we would expect at first glance. In France, low educational attainment normally goes alongside inactivity, but increases the probability of being a protest voter. This is not the case in Germany.

The remaining variables included in the estimate display a less uniform relationship to political participation in France and Germany. Compared to their German counterparts, French public sector employees tend to be more strongly involved in all activities, with the only exception being party work. In view of their privileged position in the labor market and their presumed professional ethos, it comes as a real surprise that civil servants are more strongly involved than others in actions of civil disobedience and more inclined to casting a protest vote. In Germany, being employed in the public sector is conducive to party activity—that is not a surprise—and in legal protest. Age is less relevant for political participation in France than in Germany. In line with other hypotheses, middle-age Germans are the most active voters, contactors of political representatives, and legal protestors. Moreover, for Germans above the age of 65 voting in an election is more probable than abstaining. The same applies to contacting political representatives, which is also relatively high in the group between 26 and 35 years. On the other hand, the 26- to 35-year age group is less engaged in party activity than younger and older people. Neither civil disobedience nor protest voting are related to age in Germany. While age is unrelated to voting in France, people in the middle-age and the oldest cohort are more likely than others to work actively in political parties. By contrast, French people beyond age 65 are less likely than others to join legal or non-legal protests in order to exert political influence. Civil disobedience does also not appear to be an attractive form of behavior for younger French citizens. Unemployment is not systematically related to political participation in France, whereas the German findings show that unemployed people are less likely to vote than others; however, they do resort to civil disobedience and to casting a protest vote more often. A final point refers to gender. Men are more likely to engage in party activity than women in France, whereas this is the case with all conventional forms of political participation in Germany. As expected, political protest is unrelated to gender in both countries (Fig. 9.1).

In line with our hypotheses and the findings of previous research, well-educated middle-age people are overrepresented among French and German political activists in general, and they are also more inclined than others to

	Voting	Contacting	Party activity	Legal protest	Civil disobedience	Protest vote
France	Tertiary Education, Civil Service	Primary Education (-), Tertiary Education, Unemployed, Civil Service, Age 26 to 35, Age 36 to 45, Age 46 to 55, Age 56 to 65, Age > 65	Men, Tertiary Education, Age 46 to 55, Age 56 to 65, Age > 65	Primary Education (-), Tertiary Education, Civil Service, Age > 65 (-)	Primary Education (-), Civil Service, Age 26 to 35 (-), Age 36 to 45 (-), Age > 65 (-)	Tertiary Education (-), Civil Service, Age 56 to 65 (-), Age > 65 (-)
Percent Significant Factors	20	90	50	40	50	40
Germany	Men, Tertiary Education, Unemployed (-), Age 46 to 55, Age 56 to 65, Age > 65	Men, Tertiary Education, Age 26 to 35, Age 36 to 45, Age 46 to 55, Age 56 to 65, Age > 65	Men, Primary Education, Civil Service, Age 26 to 35 (-)	Primary Education (-), Tertiary Education, Civil Service, Age 26 to 35, Age 36 to 45, Age 46 to 55, Age 56 to 65	Unemployed	Primary Education (-), Tertiary Education (-), Unemployed
Percent Significant Factors	60	70	40	70	10	30

Fig. 9.1 Sociodemographic background of various types of political participation in France and Germany

Source: CITREP 2010. Population Survey, France *n* = 1009, Germany *n* = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries based on the results of a multiple binary logistic regression analysis

For item wording and indices see Table 9.1

engage in many specific forms of political participation. This pattern becomes most obvious in the cases of contacting political representatives and legal protest. Thus, the upper-status groups—and in Germany, middle-age people—are most inclined to participate in only those activities that are most suitable for articulating individual and collective demands. Since the politically active social groups have a better chance to communicate their concerns to political leaders than inactive citizens, the output of a democratic political process could indeed become biased in favor of the demands raised by well-educated middle-age people. On the other hand, social characteristics

do not very strongly impinge on political participation in general and on the specific political activities analyzed here. This renders extreme social distortions in the participatory input rather unlikely. Whether or not this assumption conforms to French and German realities will be examined below.

The Political Preferences of Active Citizens and the Broader Public

In modern societies, being a member of the same social group does not automatically imply sharing all the concerns, issue preferences or values of other members of the group (see also Verba et al. 1995, 163–185). For example, the interests of the well educated may vary with their family status, age, ideological predispositions and other social and political characteristics. For that reason, inferring a person's political preferences merely from her or his social status or group membership would be inappropriate. This might also hold true for different levels or types of political participation that do not automatically coincide with more or less homogeneous group preferences. Political participation is often aimed at mobilizing specific issue publics that may display homogeneous preferences, but do not recruit members from the same social group. What unequal participation means for the input of demands into the political process can only be assessed by comparing the preferences of activists and the entire political community.

So far, only a few empirical studies, most of them conducted in the United States, have examined how representative the demands of activists are for the political community as a whole. Regarding voting in elections, most studies did not yield substantial differences in the policy preferences of voters and nonvoters (for example: Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). According to "The Special Law of Curvilinear Disparity", American party activists are more radical in their policy preferences than are inactive party members and the party elite (May 1973; Verba et al. 1995, 172–173). Other comparisons of the policy preferences of activists, inactive citizens and the broader public conveyed inconclusive findings (for more details, Gabriel 2000; Verba et al. 1995, 463–508). Cross-national comparative evidence on the congruence of the policy preferences of different types of political activists and the broader electorate is largely missing.

The congruence of the policy preferences of activists and the political community as a whole can be investigated in different ways. In the subsequent analysis, we will use the approach developed in the research of Sidney Verba and his associates. This approach rests on a comparison of the distribution of the policy preferences of the activist and the total population. First, the ratio of activists and the public at large supporting a specific policy is computed, and then the natural log of this ratio is calculated. This measure can be interpreted analogously to b-coefficients in an OLS regression. A complete congruence in the policy preferences of activists and the broader public is indicated by a coefficient assuming the value of 0. A positive sign of the coefficient means that activists prefer an issue more strongly than the whole public does, while a negative sign indicates that they have a weaker preference for the respective issue than the public (for a more detailed description, see Verba et al. 1995, 466–470).

As a basis of comparing the policy preferences of activists and the entire political community, we examined attitudes towards eight different political issues, including maintaining jobs, advancing the economy, fighting crime, reducing the national deficit, protecting the environment, promoting social equity, providing good education and taking care of the integration of foreigners. In exploratory factor analyses conducted for France and Germany, these issues grouped to two separate, but related, dimensions. One of these dimensions, made up by the first four issues mentioned above, represents dimensions of the so-called "old (materialist) politics", while the second consists of the last four issues; it represents preferences for "new politics" (data not presented here; see also Baker et al. 1981, 136–159; Miller and Levitin 1976).

According to the data in Table 9.3, French and German citizens assess most of these issues as very important. Maintaining jobs ranks highest in the two publics, particularly among the French. By contrast, the issue of integrating foreigners gathers the lowest degree of support, with only a minority of Germans considering this issue as very salient. Regarding the degree of support and position in order of preference of the French and Germans, the remaining six issues vary only slightly.

When we first compare the issue preferences of the most politically involved group of French and Germans (three and more activities) to the broader public, the issue congruence appears as surprisingly high (see Table 9.3). The rank-order coefficients indicate almost identical preference orders between the two groups in France and a strong agreement in Germany. The ratios of divergence in issue preferences confirm this

Table 9.3 Issue congruence between political activists and the public in France and Germany

N of activities	F					G				
	0	1 or 2	3 and more	All	Log (Ratio)	0	1 or 2	3 and more	All	Log (Ratio)
Maintaining jobs	80	80	85	82	0.04	84	80	75	80	−0.07
Social equity	70	71	73	71	0.02	76	76	73	75	−0.04
Good educational policy	74	73	77	74	0.03	75	76	87	78	0.10
Fighting crime	83	75	70	75	−0.07	76	71	60	70	−0.16
Advancing economy	72	64	67	67	−0.01	72	65	57	65	−0.14
Integration of Foreigners	47	50	54	51	0.07	46	42	53	46	0.15
Reducing national deficit	60	64	57	60	−0.06	64	62	65	63	0.02
Environment protection	50	47	56	51	0.09	66	62	66	64	0.02
Spearman`s rho				0.94					0.79	
Left	23	34	44	35	0.22	22	22	29	24	0.20
Center	55	49	43	48	−0.10	59	60	46	56	−0.20
Right	23	18	13	17	−0.27	18	17	25	20	0.23

Notes: Cell entries are percentages of respondents attributing a high salience to the respective policy issues. Log Ratio is the natural log of the quotient of the percentages of most active citizens (3 and more activities) and the public as a whole. Spearman's rho refers to the preference orders of the broader public compared to the most active citizens (3 and more activities). In the calculation of the coefficients, digits were taken into account in order to minimize the number of ties

Item wording: For participation see Table 9.1; for issues: "Now I would like to present you some important political issues. Please tell me for each of them, how important you assess it. Do you assess it as very important, rather important, partly important/partly unimportant, rather unimportant, or very unimportant?" (A) Maintaining jobs, (B) Guaranteeing Social Equity, (C) Good Education, (D) Fighting Crime, (E) Advancing the Economy, (F) Integration and Immigration, (G) Reducing the National Deficit, (H) Environment Protection"; for ideology: "In politics, people sometimes speak of 'right' and 'left'". Where would you place yourself on a scale where 0 stands for left and 10 for right?"

finding. They vary between $\|0.02\|$ and $\|0.16\|$ in Germany and $\|0.01\|$ and $\|0.09\|$ in France, which amounts to an extremely small difference when we keep in mind that a value of 0.00 indicates complete policy agreement. In other words, neither in France nor in Germany does the level of political participation induce any kind of policy distortion. If it makes sense to point to some of the small differences in issue preferences at all, German and French activists show a slight affinity for new politics issues by emphasizing measures aimed at integrating foreigners and by giving less priority to fighting crime than the public as a whole. In Germany, advancing the economy fits into this pattern as does protecting the environment in France. The ideological positions of active citizens and the public as a whole show more variation, although the differences between these groups remain also modest in size. In France, the most activist group shows a stronger affiliation to the left than the public as a whole and is less close to the center or to the right. In Germany, activists are less centrist than the public and more aligned to the left and the right. Even if the active and inactive citizens differ more strongly in their ideological and policy orientations, the data do not similarly indicate strong policy distances between these groups.

The picture changes only gradually when we highlight the connection of various types of political participation to policy preferences (data not shown here). Well in line with previous findings, the issue preferences of voters are largely representative whole the political community. In France, the same picture is obtained for all types of political participation, with only the exception of party activity. In Germany, the issue congruence of activists and the political community is generally weaker than in France.

Regarding voting and contacting political representatives as traditional forms of political participation, the preferences and ideological orientations of active citizens are almost the same as those of the citizenry as a whole. When we consider the limited role of voting in signifying specific policy preferences, this result does not come as a surprise. Voting is not a particularly effective means of articulating specific policy demands, but rather serves for the selection of political leaders standing for broad political programs. Contacting politicians and administrative personnel appears more appropriate for this purpose, and this function seems to be performed by French and German contactors, since their policy views and the left-right self-placements do largely resemble those of the other members of the political community.

The policy preferences of the French protest voters are also completely congruent with those of the general public. Though the German data do not show a similarly high level of issue congruence, the issue agreement of protest voters and the German public nevertheless remains strong. At a minimum, the German findings on the ideological dispositions of protest voters stand in sharp contrast to the results obtained in the analysis of issue preferences. The German protest voters find themselves in a more marked ideological distance from the electorate as a whole. Compared to the public, they display a stronger affiliation to leftist positions and see themselves as more distant from the center and right of the left-right continuum. The ideological positions held by French protest voters deviate only gradually from the general public. Moreover, protest voting in France goes alongside leftist as well as rightist positions and is less common among centrists. This ideological configuration is clearly mirrored in the partisan composition of this group in the two countries. While rightist protest parties were negligible in Germany at the time of our survey, the French National Front was supported by a visible part of the French electorate at that time.

As forms of collective action, participation in legal protest activities and civil disobedience aim to bring collective issues to the fore that have been neglected by decision-makers. In France, the policy demands of protestors are largely in accord with the preferences of the broader public; in Germany, this is less the case. In this country, legal protestors give slightly more emphasis to the integration of foreign immigrants than the broader public, but the difference between these two groups is small. In the case of civil disobedience, the French pattern does not markedly deviate from the patterns described so far. However, the situation turns out to be different in Germany. Even if the social background of the small group of people choosing civil disobedience as a form of participation resembles the German public as a whole, their issue preferences and ideological orientations differ from the demands of their fellow citizens. Compared to average citizens, they are less concerned with old politics issues, but give a stronger emphasis to the issues of new politics. Moreover, their preference order only generally corresponds to the priorities of the German public. Ideologically, they tend to view themselves more on the left, and they show a greater distance to the center and to the right than their fellow citizens.

In representative party democracies, political parties perform an important role as linkages between society and the political elite. Thus, they

should participate actively in the process of organizing the input of demands into the political process (Dalton et al. 2011). Regarded from that perspective, the findings about a congruence of the policy profiles of party activists and the citizenry as a whole give more cause for concern than the results presented above. In France, the preferences of party activists deviate more strongly from the policy positions of the broader public than do those of any other type of activist. In Germany, only the policy views of participants in civil disobedience are more remote from the issue agenda of the citizenry as a whole than those of party activists. Compared to all other groups of activists, the demands raised by French party activists are less representative for society, and this applies also to most forms of political participation in Germany. In general, French party activists hold higher political aspirations than does the public. Their preferences show the largest distance from the public in the areas of integration of foreigners, environment protection, the demand for social equity and the reduction of the budget deficit, i.e., mostly in new politics issues. When compared to the citizenry as a whole, German party activists show a somewhat different pattern of preferences. While they give more emphasis to the new politics issues of integrating foreign immigrants and providing good education, they are less favorable than the public to the old politics issues of fighting crime and promoting the economy. Apparently, these differences in policy orientations can be traced back to the ideological orientations of the party activists that deviate more or less strongly from the respective views of the general public. Centrist positions are less popular among the French and German party activists than among the broader public, while leftist and rightist positions are more common among them (see also: Kirkpatrick 1975; May 1973).

Irrespective of policy distortions turning up in several areas of the system of participation, the policy preferences of the French and German participants resemble the agenda of the whole citizenry with surprising strength. Though there exist indications of issue and ideological incongruence, these are rather small. However, we should keep in mind that our analysis covered only a small set of policies, with most of them belonging to the category of valence rather than to position issues (for more details see: Aardal and van Wijnen 2005). If a division on the policy goals themselves existed in the political community instead of merely different views on the relative priority that political leaders should give to a particular policy, a larger policy distance between activists and wider society could emerge. A comparison of the left-right self-placement of various

types of political activists and the French and German publics gives some support to this assumption, whereas the relatively strong pattern of policy agreement between activists and the public in domains such as integration of foreigners and fighting crime contradicts it. Thus, we need to be careful with generalizing the results presented so far on the issue agenda as a whole.

Political Participation and Satisfaction with the Quality of Representation

In the preceding sections of this chapter, we have highlighted the role of political participation in the process of political mobilization and interest articulation. In terms of equal mobilization of social groups to take an active role in politics and of the preference congruence of active citizens and the public as a whole, the analyses did not yield strong evidence that the input set by political participation shows a strong bias in favor of the politically engaged. Although these findings shed a positive light on the objective quality of participation as an instrument of equal representation of civic concerns, they should not readily be assumed to indicate that political representation performs well in the eyes of the citizens. In a democratic regime, the quality of representation can hardly be assessed objectively. It depends also essentially on citizens' beliefs and evaluations of how the process of representation performs. Hence, the question of whether and how strongly political participation contributes to improving the quality of representation should not be answered without having a closer look at respective attitudes of the active and the inactive strata of the political community.

For many reasons, analyzing the interplay of political participation and the assessment of the quality of representation is not an easy task. First and foremost, the expectations about the way participation and representation are linked together are by no means self-evident. A first—and serious—problem refers to the causal order between participation and attitudes towards representation. On the one hand, we can assume that negative or positive views on political representation may induce people to become active in politics. From this perspective, the respective attitudes are among the motivations leading to political activity (Verba et al. 1995, 269–289). On the other hand, we can emphasize the role of participation as a way of learning about politics and assume that taking an active role in politics would lead activists to a more positive view about the political process (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, 318–320).

Even if the problem of causality could be settled (which can hardly be expected), this would not be the end of the story, since different assumptions about the substance of the relationship between participation and representation appear equally plausible. People can become active in politics because they perceive the quality of representation as contradicting their expectations. Attitudes of this type may induce them to engage in legal political protest, civil disobedience or protest voting, but also in party activity or in contacting political representatives. By contrast, a positive view on political representation may be seen a prerequisite to consider political activity as worthwhile or promising and, thus, may promote supportive types of political participation, such as voting in elections or party-related engagement. Even if there are good reasons to regard citizens' attitudes towards representation as a determinant of political participation, the relationship between these two variables can be positive or negative, depending on the particular attitudes and activities under observation (for more details: Gabriel 2015).

The assumption of participation as an outcome of citizens' views on the quality of representation is only one side of the coin. A core argument in the actual debate on democratic innovations rests on the supposition that broadened civic involvement in the political process might improve the quality of representation (see previous references). Although this argument refers to the systemic level of politics at first sight, it rests implicitly on the assumption that individual participation would bring about a more positive view about political representation than would inactivity. Again, this assumption should take the broad range of political activities into account. While activities such as voting, party activity and contacting representatives are supportive in nature and should have a positive bearing on citizens' attitudes towards politics, this does not necessarily hold true for legal protest, civil disobedience and protest voting. A higher level of protest does not necessarily lead to a more favorable assessment of the process of political representation.

Lots of other problems are implied in the relationship of political participation and the attitudes towards representation that cannot discussed in detail here. What consequences would we expect for the assessment of the quality of representation by activists, for example, when participation does not lead to the outcomes the respective citizens had demanded? Is successful participation alone conducive to a more positive view on representation or does political involvement per se promote satisfaction with the democratic process? Not only may activists' views on political participation differ

in many respects, but inactive citizens may also differ on their understanding of political representation. Some of them may have remained inactive or withdrawn from political engagement because they feel disenchanted by the process of representation. But some of them may feel that taking care of the daily political business is not up to them and should be left to elected representatives. Still others may be inactive because they feel satisfied with the process of representation. Considering the methodological problems and the substantial ambiguities in the relationship between participation and attitudes towards political representation, the subsequent sections of this chapter are primarily exploratory in nature. We will not state assumptions on the causal relationship between the variables under observation here but, instead, will describe how various types of participation and a variety of attitudes towards representation are linked together.

For that reason, the use of multivariate statistics does not provide deeper insights into the problem under scrutiny here. Instead, asymmetrical correlation tests seem to be a more appropriate form of data analysis. As in other contributions to this book, we distinguish between citizens' assessments of the quality of representation in their political systems in general, their views on the performance of the core representational agencies (government, parliament, district MP and particular political party) and their attitudes towards the representation of important political concerns (values, economic interests, group needs and political issues). As indicators of participation, we highlight again the level and various types of political activity.

As the data in Fig. 9.2 show, the overall level of political participation is weakly related to French and German attitudes towards political representation. In France, no statistically significant relationships exist between the attitudes towards the quality of representation in general and the level of political activity. By contrast, Germans' perceptions of being well represented in politics become less critical and more favorable as political engagement increases. When we change the observational perspective by looking at whether the level of satisfaction with political representation in general makes a difference for the level of political activity, we again find a weak relationship in Germany, but no statistically significant association in France. In the group of Germans holding a negative attitude towards representation, 35 percent are inactive; among the satisfied, inactive citizens account for 26 per cent of the total. Among the strong activists, the shares of the satisfied versus dissatisfied are reversed. While around a fifth of the people who criticize the process of political representation participate in at

	F: System in General	G: System in General	F: Pol. Institutions	G: Pol. Institutions	F: Important Concerns	G: Important Concerns
■ Inactive	0.95	1.76	1.16	1.81	1.01	1.89
■ 1 or 2 Activities	1.18	1.85	1.37	2.02	1.21	2.08
■ 3 and more activities	1.12	1.98	1.41	2.15	1.28	2.04

Degree of Activity
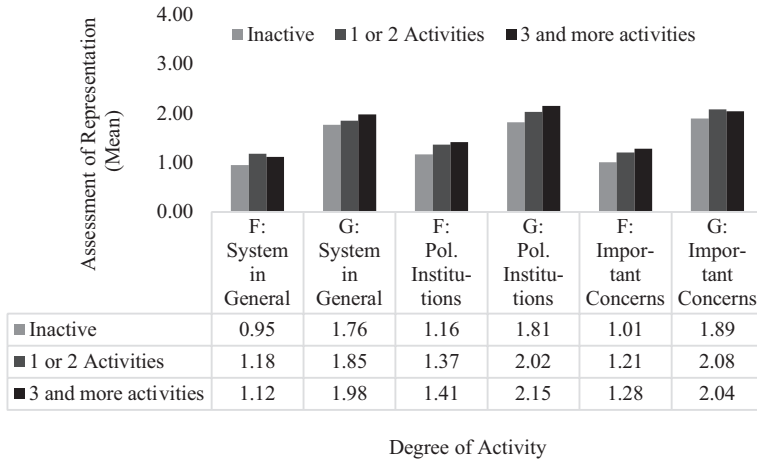
Fig. 9.2   Level of political participation and attitudes towards representation in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are mean values. Somer's D was calculated on the basis of cross tabulations. The respective values are: Level of participation and attitudes towards representation in general: F 0.04; G 0.08[a]; level of participation and attitudes towards the performance of representational institutions: F 0.08[c]; G 0.13[a]; level of participation and attitudes towards the representation of important concerns: F 0.09[b]; G 0.06[c]; [a]p = 0.000; [b]p < 0.01; [c]p < 0.05

Item wording: For participation see Table 9.1; for attitudes towards representation in general: "How well do you think your values, ideas and interests are represented in our political system? Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3) neither well nor badly (2) badly or (1) not at all (0)?"; for the attitudes towards agencies of representation: "Many institutions of public life take care of the concerns of the citizens. Please tell me now for each of these institutions how well you feel your personal ideas and concerns are represented by these institutions. (A) The government, (B) The German Bundestag/Assemblée nationale, (C) your own MP, (D) a political party? Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3) neither well nor badly (2) badly or (1) not at all (0)?"; for the attitudes towards the representation of important concerns: "Now we would like to know how well you feel represented or not in our political system in the following domains: (A) Your Values, (B) your economic interests, (C) your interests as a member of a particular social group and (D) in political issues you regard as important. Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3), neither well nor badly (2), badly (1) or not at all (0)?" For the indices, the scores of items were added and divided by the number of valid items. Decimals were rounded. No missing value was allowed

least three political activities, the share amounts to a third of the people holding positive views.

The statistical relationships between attitudes towards the performance of representative agencies and the level of political engagement turn out to be statistically significant, but weak, in both countries. As their level of

activity increases, both French and German citizens exhibit a more posi-tive view of the agents of representation. The same applies to the assess-ment of the representation of important concerns in France. In Germany, however, the moderate and strong activists do not differ much in their respective attitudes, and the less active of the two groups assesses the rep-resentation of their concerns slightly more positively than is the case with strong activists. Parallel to the attitudes towards representation in general, strong activists are more numerous among people holding a positive view towards representative institutions than among their cynical counterparts. The same pattern can be observed in the relationship between the level of political participation and the belief that representatives care about citi-zens' important concerns. However, the relationship between these two variables is not statistically significant in France.

As previously shown, the level of participation does not relate strongly to attitudes towards representation, but the links between these variables turn out to be slightly higher when the perceptions and evaluations of representation are treated as dependent variables and level of participation as independent variables. Analysis of the relationship between the assess-ment of representation quality on the one hand and specific forms of par-ticipation on the other indicates roughly the same tendency. Moreover, they underline how complex this relationship is. Instead of going too much into the descriptive details of Table 9.4, we will highlight the most relevant results of the analyses.

Somewhat surprisingly, people joining legal protests and acts of civil disobedience do not differ from passive citizens in their view of the quality of political representation in general, as well as of the specific aspects it displays. The same can be said when we compare the flipside of this rela-tionship, the behavioral patterns of people who hold positive versus nega-tive views on representation. Conventional political activities such as working in a political party and contacting political and administrative leaders are consistently, though weakly, related to perceptions of the qual-ity of representation in Germany, but this is not the case in France. Only those forms of political activity that are embedded in the electoral process, voting and protest voting, are systematically linked to the perceived quality of representation. Voters display more positive attitudes towards represen-tation than nonvoters, while the opposite applies to protest voters and people not casting their votes for a protest party. When looking from the other side of the relationship between protest voting and the perceived

Table 9.4 Relationship between various forms of participation and attitudes towards political representation in France and Germany

	General assessment		Attitudes to representative institutions		Attitudes to representation of various concerns	
	F	G	F	G	F	G
Patterns of action	Attitudes towards representation dependent					
Voting	0.11[a]	0.27[a]	0.18[a]	0.41[a]	0.21[a]	0.27[a]
Party activity	0.11	0.11[c]	0.07	0.19[a]	0.21[c]	0.13[c]
Contacting	0.05	0.10[a]	0.08	0.14[a]	0.12[a]	0.10[a]
Legal protest	0.03	0.02	0.08	0.09[b]	0.07	0.03
Civil disobedience	−0.02	−0.10	−0.03	−0.06	−0.01	−0.11
Protest vote	−0.29[a]	−0.42[a]	−0.34[a]	−0.46[a]	−0.35[a]	−0.42[a]
Patterns of action	Attitudes towards representation independent					
Voting	0.09[a]	0.14[a]	0.11[a]	0.18[a]	0.14[a]	0.13[a]
Party activity	0.02	0.03[c]	0.01	0.05[a]	0.04[c]	0.03[c]
Contacting	0.03	0.08[a]	0.05	0.11[a]	0.08[a]	0.08[a]
Legal protest	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.07[b]	0.04	0.03
Civil disobedience	−0.01	−0.01	−0.02	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01
Protest vote	−0.18[a]	−0.14[a]	−0.21[a]	−0.15[a]	−0.21[a]	−0.14[a]

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are Somer's D Coefficients. [a]p = 0.000; [b]$p < 0.01$; [c]$p < 0.05$

Item wording: For participation see Table 9.1; for attitudes towards representation see Fig. 9.2

quality of representation, we can state that voters are less numerous among the disenchanted than among the satisfied, but protest voters are more frequent in the former than in the latter group. This observation holds true for both France and Germany.

For many reasons, we cannot conclude with a concise summary of the relationship between participation and attitudes towards representation. Indeed, we found some evidence that participation can strengthen French and German citizens' perception of being well represented in politics (similarly: Dageförde and Deiss-Helbig 2013; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, 318–320). However, favorable attitudes towards the quality of representation are also conducive to becoming engaged in various types of participation. Moreover, not all forms of participation matter equally for citizens' views of political representation. Whereas our data did not support the assumption that dissatisfaction with the process of representation is closely

related to participation in legal protest and in civil disobedience, we found some evidence confirming the assumption that citizens' perceptions of the quality of political representation are primarily linked to electoral forms of political participation in the narrowest sense. Well in line with the role of democratic elections as the core element of a representative democracy, voters feel better represented politically than nonvoters and—conversely—voting in elections is most widespread among those citizens who feel appropriately represented in politics. Following the same logic, the dissatisfied are more inclined to use their voting rights in order to express their negative feelings by giving their vote to protest parties. Regarded from a different angle, protest voters are far more cynical than others regarding the quality of political representation. Thus, political participation and attitudes towards representation are linked together, but the relationship is a complex one.

Representation: Does Participation Matter? Summary and Conclusions

The ideas on how the principles of participation and representation can be brought together in a democratic political regime have changed considerably over time. Nowadays, some observers hold the belief that opening the political process to broader and more meaningful citizen participation could be a cure for the malaise of representative democracies (Geissel and Newton 2012). In many instances, however, this assumption is based on normative aspirations rather than on sound empirical evidence. Indeed, there exists only limited empirical research exploring how participation and representation are related to each other. In this chapter, we have explored the link between these two elements of democratic government in France and Germany from three different perspectives. First we have analyzed the aspect of political mobilization and asked whether variations in the levels and forms of political participation among social groups make a difference for democratic representation. This is an important problem for the democratic idea of responsive government, since politically active groups have a better chance to make their voices heard than the inactive. As we found, the heavenly chorus of the activists does not sing with a strong upper class accent in France and Germany. However, in line with numerous other empirical studies, middle-aged and well-educated French and Germans are politically more engaged than their fellow citizens.

The second aspect of our exploration of the relationship of participation and representation raised the role of participation as a means of articulating political preferences. The focus was on the question of whether the weak social bias in political participation, nevertheless, would go alongside a distorted inflow of demands into the political system. When comparing a set of selected policy preferences and ideological orientations of the French and German political activists to the respective attributes of the broader public, we found hardly any support for the view that activists' preferences differ strongly from the views prevailing in the wider political community. If there are any problems at all with the congruence of the views of activists and the public as a whole, three points deserve to be mentioned. First, in line with previous findings, French and German activists appear as ideologically less moderate than average citizens. Secondly, activists in both countries are slightly more favorable to new politics issues than the public as a whole. Thirdly, just two of the political activities that are most suitable to interest articulation (working in a political party, civil disobedience) show the weakest degree of congruence between activists and the citizenry as a whole. Regarded from the perspective of "objective" measures of representation, the findings do not lend support to the view that participation could lead to systematically distorted political representation. As a caveat, we cannot exclude the possibility that comparing more contested issue orientations could have yielded different results. But on the other hand, fighting crime and integrating foreigners are contested issues in both French and German public discourses.

Irrespective of the patterns described above, German and—more so—French respondents in general, and the activists in both countries in particular, are far removed from highly appraising the quality of representation in their nations. If there exists a statistically significant and substantially meaningful relationship between the level and forms of citizens' political engagement and their attitudes towards representation at all, both characteristics tend to reinforce each other. The more politically active citizens are, the more positively do they assess the process of representation and vice versa. Among the various forms of civic engagement, the analysis of the electoral forms of political participation yielded the most conclusive and most interesting findings. Voting in elections—a traditional and declining form of political participation—and protest voting (as a more recent form) show the most consistent and strongest link to attitudes towards participation. By contrast, legal protest, party activity and contacting representatives, which seem to be more suitable as means of interest articulation, are less weakly related to the perception of the quality of representation.

The patterns of relationship between participation and some aspects of political representation that we found in France and Germany resemble each other in most respects. This is a surprising finding given the different distributions of attitudes towards representation and the variations in the systems of participation existing in the two nations. Even if the respective attitudes and behaviors in the two countries differ, the aspects of participation and representation analyzed here are structurally related to each other in a similar way.

What then, in light of our findings, can be concluded about the soundness of the widespread assumption that strengthening civic participation could alter perceptions about the quality of representation? In dealing with this problem, we have, first, to admit that our findings do refer to the micro-level of political life and, thus, cannot directly be used in the assessment of representation as a systemic characteristic. How political elites deal with the inputs produced by civic activities and whether, and to what degree, the systemic outputs and outcomes conform to the demands of the public were beyond the scope of this chapter. Our focus was on political participation as a precondition for a well-performing system of representation (group mobilization, interest articulation by political participation) and on activists' and the public's perceptions of how well representation performs. Even if we have to admit that valid conclusions on the impact of participation on attitudes towards the represented can only be drawn from the results of panel analyses, our findings on selected aspects of the problem do not lay the groundwork for excessive optimism that strengthening civic participation can strongly alter citizens' views on the process of representation—at least not in France and Germany.

NOTE

1. These scores are estimated from the sum of the unstandardized OLS-regression coefficients reported in Table 9.2.

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Can We Trust Our Representatives? Attitudes Towards Representation and Political Trust

Oscar W. Gabriel and Lena Masch

The Relationship of Representation to Political Trust and Democracy

Within the broader framework of a vivid democratic constitution, responsiveness of the governing to the governed is a crucial characteristic of representative democracy. Only if the conduct of governmental affairs corresponds largely to the expectations of the members of a political community does a political regime deserve to be called "democratic" (Dahl 1971, 1). Accordingly, together with the rule of law, participation and competition, freedom and equality, horizontal and vertical political accountability, and responsiveness are among the prime criteria used to measure the quality of contemporary democracies (Diamond and Morlino 2005).

Although responsiveness is not contested as a key element of representative democracy, the question of how it affects the conduct of daily political affairs cannot always be answered unambiguously. In the populist view

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of democratic government, responsiveness is often misunderstood by viewing political leaders as mere executors of a fictitious public will. Such a concept of responsiveness, however, falls short in a modern society characterized by a plurality of—often incompatible—interests that cannot fully and equally be incorporated in authoritative political decisions.

According to the pluralist theory of democracy, responsiveness requires that all citizens and groups have free and equal access to the political process, are treated equally, are heard and have their concerns seriously taken into account by political leaders when they make authoritative decisions (Dahl 1998, 37–40). Moreover, leaders should not only react to the demands of the activist strata of the public, but also consider the preferences of inactive citizens and protect the rights of minorities. In addition, they should try to decide in a way that conforms to the expectations of the largest possible number of citizens. They should make the process of choice among the competing demands as transparent as possible. They need to deal with objections made by opposing parts of the public, give sound reasons for their decisions and ask the public to support them (see also: Pitkin 1967, 209–210).

Even if decisions are made in line with these normative requirements, normally they cannot equally satisfy the needs of all social groups. Due to the plurality of—in principle equally legitimate—values, interests and demands in the public, the idea of political leaders who are responsive to the whole public cannot be realized in a pluralist democracy. Necessarily, most political decisions generate a group of winners—whose demands are more or less fulfilled—and a group of losers who were not completely successful in their attempts to receive a desired political good at that time. In view of the serious problem of whose preferences political leaders shall satisfy in a situation of competing and sometimes incompatible political demands, the idea of responsiveness should be seen as entailing political leaders taking the initiative in policy making, seeking for compromise between competing claims and mobilizing public support for the policies they have eventually chosen. As stated by Almond and Verba (1989, 341) several decades ago, maintaining the balance between the systemic needs of power and responsiveness is one of the most serious challenges of democratic rule.

In this situation, political trust comes into the play. It is understood as an attitude resting on the assumption that a trustee—the political leader—will not willingly harm the position of those granting their trust (Newton 1999, 170). As described in detail by Gamson (1968, 40–48), political trust induces people to accept or at least tolerate decisions not conforming

to their specific preferences. It can be seen as a short-term buffer for a perceived discrepancy between what is expected from and received by authoritative decisions. Due to these characteristics, political trust serves as a cultural prerequisite for effective political leadership. In a representative democracy, trusting political leaders means that this group of people is endowed with the power to make authoritative decisions for a clearly defined time span without having specified in advance what these decisions will look like in practice. Thus, trusted political leaders or institutions can rely on a reservoir of goodwill enabling them to make political decisions that will not always conform to all demands raised by citizens all the time.

In turn, political trust will not be generated and accumulated without effective and responsible political leadership over the long haul (see: Miller and Listhaug 1990, 358; Putnam 1993, 148–162; Tyler 1998, 269–272). Misztal (1996, 14) conceives social and political trust as societal resources that can be used by actors and institutions in order to achieve collective goals. According to Chanley et al. (2001, 60–62) the expectations of effectiveness and fiduciary obligations are essential components of political trust and lead people to transfer power to the elite. As shown by several empirical studies, political trust becomes particularly relevant in high-risk situations when government feels compelled to make decisions that change the life conditions of a larger part of the public and redistribute individual and collective goods. Retrenching the system of social security or opening national borders to refugees from foreign countries are typical policies perceived as high-risk situations by many people that require people's trust in politics as a precondition of governmental efficiency (see for example: Hetherington 2005; Trüdinger and Gabriel 2013).

This chapter focuses on the question of whether and how strongly citizens' assessment of being adequately represented in political life promotes political trust. Since attitudes towards representation and political trust are multifaceted orientations, it also becomes necessary to clarify how various attitudes towards the quality of representation shape people's trust in the agencies of representative democracy.

The State of Research and Hypotheses

Political trust and confidence have been prominent topics of political research since the 1970s (see, among others: Miller 1974a, 1974b; Citrin 1974). Since then, many contributions to various aspects of political trust have been published (most recently: Norris 2011; Quandt et al. 2015;

Torcal 2014; Zmerli and Hooghe 2011; Zmerli and van der Meer 2017). Although a general theory of political trust does not exist, many empirical studies treat political trust as an attitude reflecting peoples' positive experience with political leaders and institutions on the one hand and a sense of identification with common values and norms on the other hand (see Braithwaite and Levi 1998; Uslaner 2002).

From the beginning, empirical research has raised questions of whether political trust has declined over the years and what a perceived failure in political responsiveness has contributed to the supposed crisis of political trust. Jacobs and Shapiro have pointed to a "record proportion of Americans who distrust politicians—convinced that they no longer listen to them" (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000, 5). According to the authors, the parallel decline of political trust and perceived leadership responsiveness in the United States did not occur accidently. Rather the two developments are systematically related to each other.

Other scholars underline the strong role of perceived political responsiveness in shaping citizens' trust in politics. As shown by the respective studies, citizens' conviction that politicians, parties or parliaments behave responsively is among the most important antecedents of trust in political institutions and actors. This holds true even if crucial determinants of political trust, such as closeness to one of the governing parties (incumbency), satisfaction with governmental performance or a positive evaluation of the state of the economy, are held constant (for example: Gabriel and Walter-Rogg 2008, 232–239; Torcal 2014, 12–17; Zmerli 2004, 244–247). In a comparative study of the determinants of political trust in European democracies, Denters, Gabriel and Torcal concluded: "Citizens assessments of democratic performance and institutional responsiveness are the best predictors of political confidence" (Denters et al. 2007, 78). By contrast, Chanley et al. (2001, 71) did not find a causal relationship between perceived government responsiveness and political confidence in a cross-sectional study. However, in an analysis of panel data, perceived past responsiveness affected the actual level of trust in government. The belief that the government has acted responsively induces citizens to give credit to political leaders and institutions in the future (Chanley et al. 2001, 71–74). Thus, research on the relationship between perceived responsiveness and political trust has not yielded conclusive findings. While some studies support the null hypothesis that the two attitudes are unrelated to each other, others emphasize that trust in political institutions and actors will increase alongside perceived political responsiveness.

In the studies outlined above responsiveness was not used as an objective state measured as congruence between the preferences of the public and the policy positions or the legislative behavior of the elected (see, for a good summary, Thomassen 1994). Instead, the focus was on the perceived degree of correspondence between the representatives' actions and the demands of the represented. Although conceptualizing responsiveness as perceived quality of representation does not resolve all relevant theoretical problems, focusing on the attitudinal aspects of representation and responsiveness takes into account that the quality of representation is a matter of perspective in a pluralist democracy. Some people may feel better represented than others in some respects—for example their value orientations, but not in others—for example their demand for economic growth. Moreover, civic attitudes towards being represented by the parliament, the government, political parties or the district MP may differ. Similarly, people may feel that their basic values are respected when representatives make authoritative decisions, whereas the same decisions do not conform to their specific issue preference. Finally, we can assume that different views on the quality of political representation will bear differently on political trust.

Regarded against this background, we can state two competing hypotheses on the impact of perceived responsiveness on political trust. On the one hand, it can be expected that the perception of responsiveness generally promotes political trust, irrespective of the particular dimension of responsiveness under scrutiny. On the other hand, there are good reasons to suppose that the various attitudes towards representation exhibit differing effects on political trust.

This latter view rests on the assumption that different agents of representation, different political concerns and different styles of representation may yield varying reactions among citizens. A long-lasting failure of representation by the parliament as a whole does not provide an exit option for citizens and thus will probably mar citizens' trust in this institution. By contrast, in cases where citizens perceive poor performance of individual members of parliament or of the incumbent government, the electorate can "throw the rascals out" and terminate a period of rising distrust. As a consequence, the assessment that there is a lack of parliamentary responsiveness could translate more strongly into distrust than the corresponding attitudes towards the incumbent government, towards a particular political party or towards an MP.

Roughly the same applies to the perception of how different civic concerns are represented. Disregarding citizens' value orientations could bear stronger political consequences than a failure to take into account the

various and heterogeneous issue preferences of citizens. Probably, the representation of economic interests and specific group concerns take an intermediate position between value orientations and issue preferences in this respect. Finally, the perception that an MP or an institution is mainly concerned with enforcing party positions instead of the interests of their voters may negatively impact on political trust. By contrast, the view of an MP as representative of the interests of the whole electorate and individual constituencies may promote peoples' trust in politics.

Political Trust in France and Germany

Investigating political trust in democratic regimes has become a prominent topic of empirical research over the last few decades. Most comparative analyses of data on France and Germany yield a mixed picture of the levels and trends of trust in the two countries. Sometimes and regarding some institutions, trust is higher in France than in Germany, but most of the time the opposite holds true. According to Norris, trust in government, in the parliament and in political parties was generally higher in West Germany than in France during the period from 1997 to 2009. At some points in time, East Germans were also more trustful than their French counterparts. Moreover, political trust varied considerably over time in Germany as well as in France. For example, the lowest level of trust in parliament reported by Norris was 34 percent in West Germany (2003) and 31 percent in France (2006). At the opposite pole, trust in parliament reached its peak in West Germany and in France in fall 2001 with values 60 and 52 percent, respectively (Norris 2011, 70–77).

In recent years, the confidence gap between France and Germany has widened considerably: While trust in parliament was around eight percentage points higher in Germany than in France in 2001, the distance between the two countries had increased to 28 percentage points in 2015. A similar pattern exists for trust in the incumbent government. These actual figures are due to a strongly different development of political trust in the two countries. While trust in parliament as well as in government has grown in Germany since the mid-2000s, an overall decline occurred in France. In both countries, the trend was not monotonic. The growth of trust in Germany was interrupted by short periods of decline, while short periods of recovery appeared during the general rise of distrust in France (see Fig. 10.1).

Additional data from the European Social Survey show even more clearly how differently trust in politics has developed since 2002. In the time span from 2002 to 2010, the levels and trends of trust in parliament,
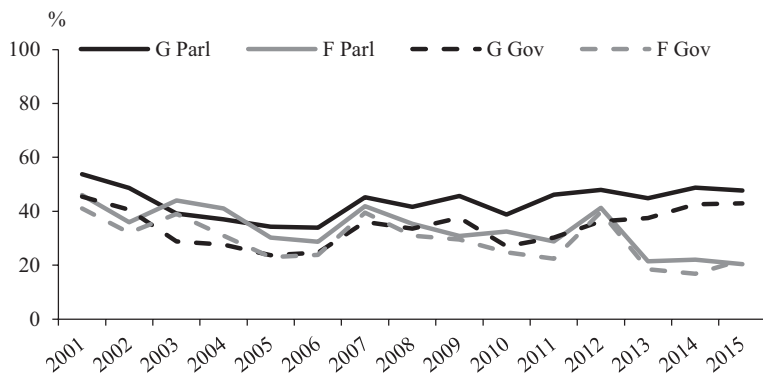
Fig. 10.1 Trust in parliament and government in France and Germany, 2001–2015

Source: Eurobarometer, 2001–2015

Notes: Entries are percentage points of citizens trusting in their representative institutions

Item wording: "Now I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in a certain institution. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it. The National Parliament; the National Government"

politicians and political parties were roughly similar in France and Germany. Over the last half decade, however, political trust developed differently in these two countries. While increasing in Germany, political trust declined considerably in France. As a result of these varying developmental patterns, political trust was more widespread among Germans than in the French electorate (see Fig. 10.2).

Well in line with these recent findings, the data in Table 10.1 show that trust in the core institutions and actors of representative party democracy is consistently higher among German than among French citizens. Although most Germans hold an ambivalent position towards the trustworthiness of their parliament, the government, the political parties and the MPs in general, they tend to trust rather than distrust these institutions and actors of representative democracy. Only trust in the district MP and in political parties deviates from this general pattern. Political parties are facing considerably more distrust than trust. The relationship of Germans to their district MP is characterized by trust rather than by ambivalence. By contrast, a climate of distrust in almost all political institutions and actors prevails in France. More than half of the French respondents distrust the government and the political parties. Distrust in parliament is also more widespread than trust. The attitudes towards MPs in general can be characterized as ambivalent, since most French respondents stated that they partly trust the MPs while at the same time
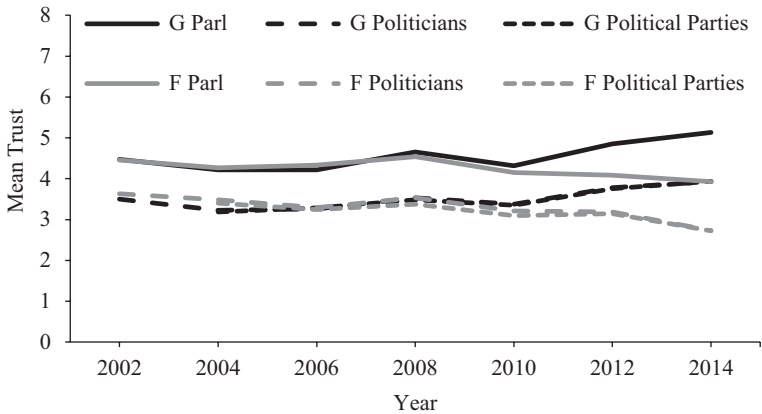
Fig. 10.2 Trust in parliament, political parties and politicians in France and Germany, 2002–2014

Source: European Social Survey, 2002–2014

Notes: Entries are mean values ranging on a scale from 0 (not trusting at all) to 10 (completely trusting)

Item Wording: "Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0–10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Firstly: … [country]'s parliament? … politicians? … political parties?"

Table 10.1   Trust in political institutions and actors in France and Germany

Object	Country	Distrust	Ambivalent	Trust	Mean	Eta Cramér's V	N
Parliament	F	30	39	25	1.86	0.15[a]	2468
	G	21	42	35	2.13	0.20[a]	
Government	F	55	26	18	1.36	0.30[a]	2526
	G	29	39	31	2.00	0.33[a]	
Political parties	F	50	35	13	1.44	0.12[a]	2507
	G	38	47	13	1.67	0.16[a]	
MPs in general	F	27	41	27	1.90	0.08[a]	2460
	G	20	49	28	2.05	0.14[a]	
District MP	F	19	34	29	2.07	0.09[a]	2080
	G	16	31	34	2.23	0.11[a]	

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France $n = 1009$, Germany $n = 1553$. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are percentage points and mean values on a scale from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 4 (very satisfied). [a]T-Test and χ^2-Test $p = 0.000$

Item wording: "I will now read out several institutions of public life. Please tell me for each of them whether you trust them completely (4), to a good extent (3), partly (2), rather not (1) or not at all (0). What about (A) the National Parliament, (B) the Government, (C) the Courts, (D) the Police, (E) the Public Administration, (F) the Political Parties, (I) your own MP, (M) The National MPs in General"? For the subsequently used Political Trust Index, the scores of items A, B, F, I and M were added and divided by the number of valid items. Decimals were rounded. No Missing Value was allowed

signaling that they partly distrust MPs. Well in line with this view, the shares of distrusting and trusting citizens are equally high. As in Germany, district MPs are rather trusted than distrusted. The differences between the two publics are particularly marked regarding trust in government. By contrast, trust in the district MP and MPs in general do not differ strongly between the French and the Germans. Trust in parliament and in the political parties ranges in between.

In order to put trust in the institutions and actors of a representative democracy in a broader context, it should be mentioned that trust in the police, the courts and public administration exceeds by a large amount trust in the institutions analyzed here (data not shown here, see also: Catterberg and Moreno 2005; Denters et al. 2007).

The question of whether and to what degree the differences in political trust are due to varying attitudes towards representation will be answered in the subsequent sections of this chapter. Furthermore, we will explore whether being represented by political institutions and actors or being represented regarding one's ideas, values and concerns is more important for someone's trust in political institutions and actors.

Political Trust and Attitudes Towards Representation

In most surveys, citizens' attitudes towards the quality of political representation are tapped by general questions that do not distinguish between various terms such as the representing agencies, the focus of representation and so on. This makes sense for a first approximation of the problem. However, a more differentiated view of the normative conceptions, agents, dimensions and objects of representation seems to lead to a fruitful extension of investigations about what people have in mind when they assess the quality of representation. They may indeed regard themselves as being well represented by a particular interest group, but not by a political party or by the government. Moreover, some citizens may feel that their economic interests are well taken into account, but not other group concerns. Finally, it cannot be taken for granted that all those various facets of the perceived quality of political representation show the same impact on political trust. In order to account for the ramifications of the attitudes towards representation, we distinguish between the following subdimensions of the concept: (1) generalized attitudes towards representation, (2) concerns to be represented, (3) agents of representation, and (4) main objects of representation.

Political Trust and the Perception of the General
Quality of Representation

Since the question of how well and in what respects French and German citizens feel represented in their political systems is analyzed in detail in other chapters of this volume, the respective data can be summarized here rather briefly. Evidently, neither the French nor the Germans are enthusiastic about how well they are represented in the political system in general. In both countries, negative attitudes towards the quality of political representation in general are more widespread than positive views. Nevertheless, the distribution of attitudes in the two publics differs considerably. Half of the Germans are ambivalent in their attitudes and feel neither well nor badly represented. Among the remaining respondents, negative feelings outnumber positive feelings by a margin of ten percentage points. By contrast, a broad majority of more than two-thirds among the French is disenchanted by the quality of representation in their country. Less than ten percent of the respondents assess the quality of political representation positively. Even ambivalent judgments occur rarely with a share of around one-fourth of the public.

As found in previous studies, citizens' feelings of being well represented in the political system impacts on political trust in both countries, but the correlations are stronger in Germany. Moreover, trust in different political institutions is not affected to the same degree by attitudes towards political representation in general. In France as in Germany, the parliament is most strongly blamed for failures of systemic representation. This looks plausible in view of the prominent role of parliament in the process of representation. More than most other institutions, parliaments explicitly perform the function of representing the whole political community. In Germany, the relationship between trust in the federal government and the assessment of the quality of political representation turns out equally strong, but in France it is slightly weaker. In view of the very small difference between the two countries in this regard, it would go too far to suggest that this pattern is a reflection of varying institutional designs in the two political systems. As expected, trust in political parties and the district MP correlates slightly less with the attitude towards political representation in general. Trust in MPs in general is somewhat differently related to the feeling of being well represented in politics. In Germany, trust in MPs in general correlates even more strongly with attitudes towards political

representation in general than trust in parliament and trust in government. In France, this is not the case, although both of these attitudes also show a moderately strong correlation. Not surprisingly, an additive index of trust in the core institutions and actors of a representative democracy is most strongly related to the feeling of adequate representation in the French and German political systems, while the perceived quality of representation impacts least on trust in executive and judicial institutions (data not shown here).

Whatever variant of trust in institutions is under observation, the hypothesis on the impact of attitudes towards representation is confirmed. Obviously, citizens do not blame only the core institutions and actors of representative democracy for poor representation, but these perceptions spill over to political institutions that are not directly involved in the process of political representation (detailed data not presented here). Although analyzing the carryover processes from representative to non-representative institutions would be an interesting problem, this is not at the core of our study and thus will not be investigated in the subsequent parts of this chapter (Table 10.2).

Table 10.2 Trust in politics and feeling of being politically well represented in general in France and Germany

	F	G
Parliament	0.39[a]	0.51[a]
Government	0.36[a]	0.51[a]
Political parties	0.31[a]	0.46[a]
MPs in general	0.33[a]	0.54[a]
District MP	0.29[a]	0.49[a]
N	775–972	1197–1463

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are Pearson's Correlation Coefficients. [a]T-Test p = 0.000

Item wording: For political trust see Table 10.1; for the feeling of being well represented: "How well do you think your values, ideas and interests are represented in our political system? Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3), neither well nor badly (2), badly (1) or not at all (0)?"

Political Trust and the Assessment of Different Agents of Representation

As with the general quality of political representation, the performance of various representative agencies is assessed more critically by the French than by the German respondents. Regarding the perception of being well represented by the institutions and actors of party democracy, the pattern of attitudes fits nicely into the picture displayed above. While Germans have an ambivalent view and perceive both strengths as well as weaknesses in their system of representation, the French once more turn out to be thoroughly critical. Again, the differences between the two publics are sizeable in most instances. Only when assessing the role of the MP from their own district does the gap between the Germans and the French become a little smaller. Germans seem to be somewhat more confident in their representation by parliament as a whole than by individual MPs (Gabriel and Schöllhammer 2009). By contrast, French citizens are as critical towards their parliament as they are towards the representative of their district.

Table 10.3 shows the correlations between the French and German citizens' attitudes towards the performance of the representative function by four key agents of party democracy (government, parliament, district MP, and a specific political party) on the one hand and trust in these institutions and actors as well as MPs in general on the other. The data convincingly support the hypothesis that the feeling of being well represented by the agencies under scrutiny promotes peoples' trust in these agencies. All reported correlation coefficients are highly significant and at least moderate in size. As this data makes clear, citizens' perception that the agencies of representation are performing poorly undermines trust, while a positive assessment of their role strengthens trust in each of these institutions. The attitudes towards the performance of a particular agency of representation relates most strongly to trust in the same agency. If, for example, the French and German citizens' view of the national government as their representative becomes more favorable, trust in government strongly increases. However, remarkable carryover effects from one representing agency to trust in other institutions do also exist. A perception of the government as acting responsively correlates with trust in parliament, the political parties and the district MP, and the same pattern is typical of the attitudes to all other representative agencies. Positive attitudes towards the French National Assembly and the German Bundestag as institutions of representation

Table 10.3 Trust in politics and feeling of being politically well represented by various agencies in France and Germany

Feeling of being represented by… Trust in…	Government		Parliament		Political party		District MP	
	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G
Government	0.56[a]	0.67[a]	0.43[a]	0.56[a]	0.40[a]	0.47[a]	0.26[a]	0.45[a]
Parliament	0.42[a]	0.56[a]	0.47[a]	0.61[a]	0.37[a]	0.50[a]	0.35[a]	0.50[a]
Political parties	0.28[a]	0.37[a]	0.37[a]	0.44[a]	0.44[a]	0.46[a]	0.29[a]	0.41[a]
District MPs	0.30[a]	0.41[a]	0.40[a]	0.45[a]	0.39[a]	0.42[a]	0.56[a]	0.57[a]
MPs in general	0.38[a]	0.55[a]	0.41[a]	0.57[a]	0.39[a]	0.46[a]	0.44[a]	0.46[a]

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are Pearson's Correlation Coefficients. [a]T-Test p = 0.000

Item wording: For political trust see Table 10.1; for the attitudes towards the agencies of representation: "Many institutions of public life take care of the concerns of citizens. Please tell me now for each of these institutions how well you feel your personal ideas and concerns are represented by these institutions. (A) The government, (B) The German Bundestag/Assemblée nationale, (C) your own MP, (D) a political party? Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3), neither well nor badly (2), badly (1) or not at all (0)?"

show a strong trust-building capacity also for the government, the political parties and the district MP. The strongest spillovers are generated by the attitudes towards the representative capacity of the German Bundestag and the weakest ones by attitudes towards political parties in France. These findings reflect the strong linkages between the agencies of party democracy and underline the view of trust as an attitude mirroring citizens' experience with the perceived performance of an institution or actor (Braithwaite 1998; Chanley et al. 2001, 60; Uslaner 2002; see also: Denters et al. 2007, 75–78). In a cross-national comparison, all correlation coefficients turn out stronger in Germany than in France.

Citizens' perception of being well represented in the political system in general promotes political trust, and the same applies to a positive assessment of the quality of representation by specific agencies. Even if the impact of the attitudes towards representation on political trust varies between the institutions under observation here, poor performance of any representative agency undermines trust, not only in this institution, but in others as well.

Political Trust and the Assessment of Representation of Different Concerns

The generation and maintenance of political trust may not only depend on people's assessment of the agents of representation, but it might also be important in what respect citizens feel represented. The distinction between performance-based (strategic) and community-based (moralistic trust) trust (Braithwaite 1998; Uslaner 2002) refers to the specific reasons leading people to trust others. One set of reasons has to do with values, norms and identities, and the other one with interest and performance. As hypothesized above, representing people's fundamental values may play a stronger role for giving or withdrawing political trust, but there are also good reasons to assume that all civic concerns count equally in this respect.

Regarding the representation of civic concerns such as value orientations, economic interests, group concerns as well as political issues, the French again show a far more negative view than the Germans. In Germany, the mean values of the attitudes on the four distinct matters are close to the neutral point of the scale. In France, they are clearly located in the negative half of the scale and thus indicate widespread popular discontent with the way important problems are taken into account by political leaders. In all four domains under scrutiny, a relatively strong gap exists between the French and German publics, with French citizens far more dissatisfied than their German counterparts (data not presented here).

Not only are Germans' beliefs of being well represented regarding various concerns more favorable than those of their French counterparts, but these attitudes also impact more strongly on political trust in Germany than in France. Again, all correlation coefficients reported in Table 10.4 are highly significant and are at least moderately strong. It can hardly be said that French and German citizens' attitudes towards the representation of various substantive concerns differ systematically in their impact on trust in political institutions and actors. But attitudes towards the representation of values matter a little more for political trust than the other attitudes, particularly regarding trust in parliament and government and—only in Germany—trust in all MPs. By contrast, the view of the representation of group concerns seems to be slightly less related to political trust than is the case with the other concerns. In general, trust in various institutions and actors is similarly linked to citizens' attitudes towards the representation of their various concerns.

Table 10.4 Trust in politics and feeling of being politically well represented in various concerns in France and Germany

Feeling of being represented in …	Value orientations		Economic interests		Group interests		Important issues	
Trust in…	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G
Government	0.41[a]	0.53[a]	0.38[a]	0.43[a]	0.21[a]	0.37[a]	0.30[a]	0.43[a]
Parliament	0.42[a]	0.47[a]	0.37[a]	0.44[a]	0.26[a]	0.42[a]	0.36[a]	0.40[a]
Political parties	0.36[a]	0.40[a]	0.30[a]	0.43[a]	0.27[a]	0.40[a]	0.33[a]	0.40[a]
District MP	0.26[a]	0.42[a]	0.31[a]	0.40[a]	0.26[a]	0.35[a]	0.27[a]	0.40[a]
MPs in general	0.35[a]	0.51[a]	0.31[a]	0.46[a]	0.31[a]	0.43[a]	0.35[a]	0.46[a]

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are Pearson's Correlation Coefficients. [a]T-Test p = 0.000

Item wording: For political trust see Table 10.1; for the attitudes towards the representation of important concerns: "Now we would like to know how well you feel represented in our political system in the following domains: (A) Your Values, (B) your economic interests, (C) your interests as a member of a particular social group and (D) in political issues you regard as important. Do you feel represented very well (4), well (3), neither well nor badly (2), badly (1) or not at all (0)?"

Political Trust and the Assessment of Different Styles of Representation

As shown before, French and German citizens differ slightly in their assessment of the performance of the district MP as a representative agencies on the one hand and the corresponding roles of the parliament, the government and the political parties on the other. Even if MPs perform very well as representatives in the eyes of citizens, this contributes less to generating political trust than in the case of the political institutions mentioned above. Trust in individual MPs is also less affected if citizens blame the political system for not sufficiently taking into account important civic concerns, particularly values. These differences, even if they are only gradual, can be read as underlining the view that citizens look somewhat differently on individual and institutional representation.

In the next section, we will analyze whether and how an MP's style of representation contributes to political trust. One important component of this style refers to the priorities set by the MP when deciding whom or what to represent in first instance. They can strive for representing the

concerns of all citizens, they can emphasize their role as representatives of their constituency or of their voters in the constituency, or they can see themselves as agents of their parties or of particular interest groups. This distinction corresponds to a certain degree to the well-established concept of representational roles developed by Pitkin (1967), but with a different focus. It does not refer to the representatives' definition of their political roles as trustee or instructed delegates, but it relates to citizens' expectations about what people or what political community should primarily be represented by parliamentarians (see also: Bengtsson 2011).

The attitudes of the French and German publics on the normative idea as well as the practice of the MPs representational behavior differ to a certain degree. Normatively, most German citizens expect their district MP to act as a representative of all citizens. However, representing their constituency and their own voters are also seen as desirable by many respondents. By contrast, the idea of MPs as representing party positions and the interests of special groups is rejected by most Germans. This latter view also prevails in France, but regarding the representation of all citizens, their MPs' voters or the constituency, the French declare preferences differing from the Germans. For them, MPs should first and foremost represent their voters. The representation of the constituency ranks next and the demand for representation of all citizens follows. This French-German difference could mirror the view of the President as the representative of all citizens, while the MP is seen as an agent of a particular segment of the electorate.

The reality of representation as perceived by the French and the Germans is strongly at odds with the normative ideal: Both publics see MPs as representatives of their parties in the first instance; the constituency and the MP's own voters take the subsequent positions. In Germany, MPs are least regarded as representatives of all citizens and particular interests. In France, these two referents are similarly placed, but MPs are perceived more often as representing all citizens than particular interests. When comparing the idea and practice of MPs' styles of representation, many citizens in France and Germany think of their district MP as feeling far too strongly obliged to the parties they represent in parliament, while giving less emphasis to the concerns of all citizens, their voters and their district (data not shown here).

The perception of MPs' representational behavior affects trust in political institutions and actors less strongly and consistently than the attitudes analyzed above (see Table 10.5). Nevertheless, perceptions of the way

Table 10.5 Trust in politics and assessment of different styles of representation in France and Germany

MP represents…	All citizens		Constituency		Own voters		Own party		Specific social group	
Trust in…	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G	F	G
Government	0.29[a]	0.33[a]	0.19[a]	0.27[a]	0.27[a]	0.23[a]	0.07[c]	0.02	0.03	-0.08[b]
Parliament	0.23[a]	0.30[a]	0.23[a]	0.28[a]	0.31[a]	0.27[a]	0.11[a]	0.04	0.03	-0.11[a]
Political parties	0.24[a]	0.32[a]	0.18[a]	0.27[a]	0.06	-0.03	0.22[a]	0.26[a]	0.00	-0.02
District MP	0.35[a]	0.26[a]	0.36[a]	0.32[a]	0.10[b]	0.02	0.06	-0.03	0.05	-0.01
MPs in general	0.29[a]	0.33[a]	0.29[a]	0.26[a]	0.33[a]	0.28[a]	0.11[a]	-0.01	0.09[b]	0.05[c]

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France n = 1009, Germany n = 1553. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Notes: Cell entries are Pearson's Correlation Coefficients. T-Test [a] p = 0.000, [b] $p < 0.001$ [c] $p < 0.05$

Item wording: For political trust see Table 10.1; for the attitudes towards MPs representational practice: "(A) MPs represent primarily their constituency; (B) MPs represent primarily their Own Voters; (C) MPs represent primarily all German/French citizens; (D) MPs represent primarily their own party; (E) MPs represent primarily a certain social group. Agree strongly (4), rather agree (3), agree/disagree partly (2), rather disagree (1), disagree strongly (0)"

local representatives perform their roles bear on citizens' trust in politics. Those styles of representation that are seen as most appropriate by the public—i.e., MPs representing all citizens and their constituency—are most strongly related to trust in all political objects under observation here. The view of the MP as a representative of their own voters is conducive to trust in the incumbent government, in parliament and in MPs in general, but not to trust in political parties or the district MP. The belief that MPs mainly represent their party bears positively on trust in political parties, whereas it has a weak and inconsistent impact on trust in the other institutions and actors. The latter pattern is also typical of the relationship between the perception of MPs as representatives of special groups and political trust.

Contrary to the previous findings, the way local MPs perform their role as representatives has a different bearing on political trust. A consistent impact on trust is only given if representatives' behavior conforms to citizens' expectations on what a representative should do, i.e., when they are seen as representing the political community as a whole and their constituency. Representative behavior not fitting into these two role models only has an impact on trust in some institutions, but not in others, or has no consistent impact on trust at all. This pattern can be observed in France as well as in Germany.

POLITICAL TRUST AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS REPRESENTATION: AN EXPLANATORY MODEL

As shown in the previous sections, several aspects of perceived quality of representation are closely related to trust in the core institutions and actors of a representative democracy. The belief among French and German citizens of being politically well represented in general promotes trust in the incumbent government, the national parliament, political parties, district MPs and MPs in general. The perceived performance of the core agents of representation is also consistently related to all these forms of political trust. Moreover, citizens' belief that their values and concerns are taken into account by the institutions and actors of the political system strengthens trust in these agencies as well. Finally, all forms of political trust analyzed here increase if citizens regard district MPs as primarily representing all citizens and the constituencies of the MPs, while other forms of representative behavior are less relevant to the formation and maintenance of trust in political institutions and actors.

Taken together with the stronger relationship between attitudes towards representation and political trust in Germany, the different distribution of these attitudes in France and Germany explains a good deal about why trust in politics is markedly higher in Germany than in France. Nevertheless, the findings reported so far remain incomplete in several respects. First, the various attitudes towards representation should not be considered as independent from each other. Thus, we need further information on how strongly they overlap in the explanation of political trust. Second, citizens' attitudes towards representation are not the only determinants of political trust (see for example: Denters et al. 2007; Torcal 2014; Zmerli 2004). Hence, it is necessary to examine whether the described relationships persist if other relevant predictors of political trust are controlled for. The most important ones are the strength of party identification, positive attitudes towards the state of the economy, the performance of political institutions, the respondents' closeness to the governing parties, their left-right self-placement, their subjective political competence and various forms of political participation. Finally, these variables should not be considered as similarly close to political trust. While some of them may bear directly on trust, others will have an indirect effect. In view of the lack of an explanatory theory of political trust, we can explore these questions only approximately.

The most elegant approach to clarifying the problems sketched out above is estimating a structural equation model. In the first step, we will test a measurement model for the relevant theoretical constructs (see Fig. 10.3). Thus, we conceptualize trust in the core agents of a representative democracy as a latent variable, related to trust in parliament, government, political parties, MPs in general and district MPs. The various dimensions of the attitudes towards the quality of political representation are measured as described in the bivariate analyses presented above. We distinguish between the following subdimensions: (1) Positive attitudes towards the agents of representation (parliament, government, political parties and district MPs), (2) the feeling of being appropriately represented in important concerns (values, group concerns, economic interests and issue preferences), (3) the view that district MPs represent all citizens and (4) the belief that district MPs represent their own voters and their electoral district in first instance. Moreover, we include the following well-established predictors of political trust in the explanatory model: (1) a positive assessment of the performance of parliament and government, (2) the feeling of internal efficacy and (3) the strength of party identification. Other variables were included in a preliminary step of the analysis, but they turned out to be irrelevant to the
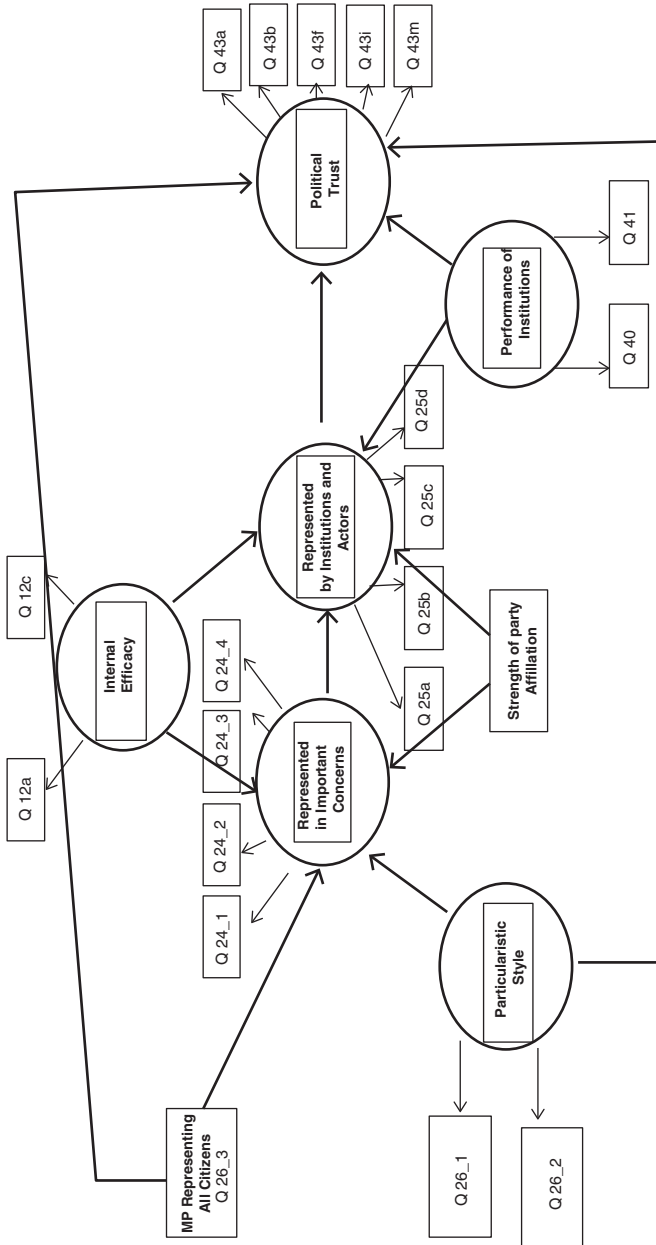
Fig. 10.3 Structural equation model of political trust in France and Germany
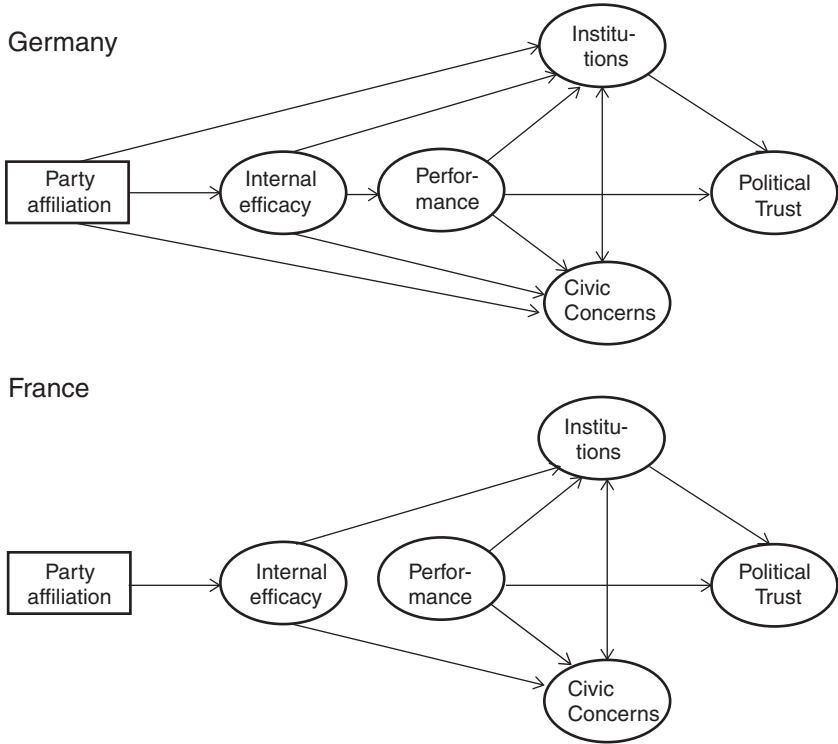
Fig. 10.4 Modified causal models for France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Item wording: For political trust see Table 10.1; for institutions see Table 10.3; for civic concerns see Table 10.4; for Performance: "If you think about the performance of the government in general: How well has it performed since the (last) election? As very good (4), good (3), partly good/partly bad (2), rather bad (1) or very bad (0)." "And how do you assess the performance of the German Bundestag/Assemblée nationale since the (last) election? As very good (4), good (3), partly good/partly bad (2), rather bad (1) or very bad (0)." For the Index, the scores of the two items were added and divided by 2. No Missing Value was allowed. For party affiliation: "Is there any party you feel closer to than to all others? Yes (1), No (0). How close do you feel to this party? Very close (3), quite close (2), not very close (1) or not at all close/no party affiliation (0)." For internal efficacy: "Here are some often heard opinions about politics. Please tell me for each of them whether you agree strongly (4), rather agree (3), agree/disagree partly (2), rather disagree (1) or disagree strongly (0). (A) People like me don't have any influence on government (Values reversed); (C) The citizens have many possibilities to influence the German Bundestag/Assemblée nationale." For the Index, the scores of the two items were added and divided by 2. No Missing Value was allowed

explanation and were removed from the final estimation of the model. According to our assumptions, the same measurement model can be applied to France and Germany:

The assumptions on the causal structure of the model are as follows: Consistent with our main research question, political trust is regarded as the dependent variable, although we cannot exclude an influence running back from trust to other political attitudes. At the other end of the causal chain, we place the attitudes towards the representational behavior of the district MP as the most specific referents. Positive attitudes towards role-conforming behavior of the local representatives may spillover to more generalized attitudes towards representation. Moreover, we conceive the attitudes towards the representation of important concerns as situated between the assessments of the representational style of the MP on the one hand and the attitudes towards the agents of representation on the other. All of these variables are seen as having a direct and an indirect positive impact on political trust. Three additional variables (attitudes towards institutional performance, internal efficacy and strength of party identification) are regarded as impacting directly and positively political trust and the attitudes towards the agents of representation and the represented concerns. The assumptions on the causal sequence of these variables are presented in Fig. 10.3.

Unfortunately, this initial model did not fit the data sufficiently well.[1] As a consequence, it was necessary to give up the idea that the same model could be estimated for France and Germany and to re-specify the two separate explanatory models in several respects. First, the observed role of the attitudes towards the district MP did not conform to the theoretical assumptions, neither in France nor in Germany. For that reason, this attitude was removed from the final model. Moreover, party identification did not turn out to be a relevant explanatory variable in France (data not shown in detail here). Thus, citizens' affiliation to a political party is assumed to play a different role in France and Germany. In France, it becomes relevant as a direct antecedent of internal efficacy, but is not directly linked to other variables included in the model. By contrast, party identification is supposed to be related directly to attitudes towards representation (agents, concerns) in Germany.

A final modification refers to the attitudes towards the representation of important civic concerns. On the basis of the test of the initial model, we do not assume a causal path any longer, but instead a correlation between this variable and the attitudes towards the agencies of representation.

Additionally, the attitudes towards the representation of civic concerns are not seen as directly related to political trust, but only affecting trust indirectly, mediated by their relationship to the assessment of representing agencies (see for details Table 10.4).

These modified structural equation models are largely appropriate to the French and German data. There is an acceptable statistical fit for both models, although the model performs slightly worse for France than for Germany.[2] The measurement and explanatory models also largely conform to our theoretical expectations. The measurement model developed for France, particularly for political trust and for attitudes towards representation, fits the data somewhat better than the German one. By contrast, with a few exceptions, the causal effects estimated for Germany are stronger than for France.

Figure 10.5 presents the fitted structural equation model for Germany. The measurement model shows the expected results. Regarding the variables in the focus of our interest, all manifest indicators of political trust
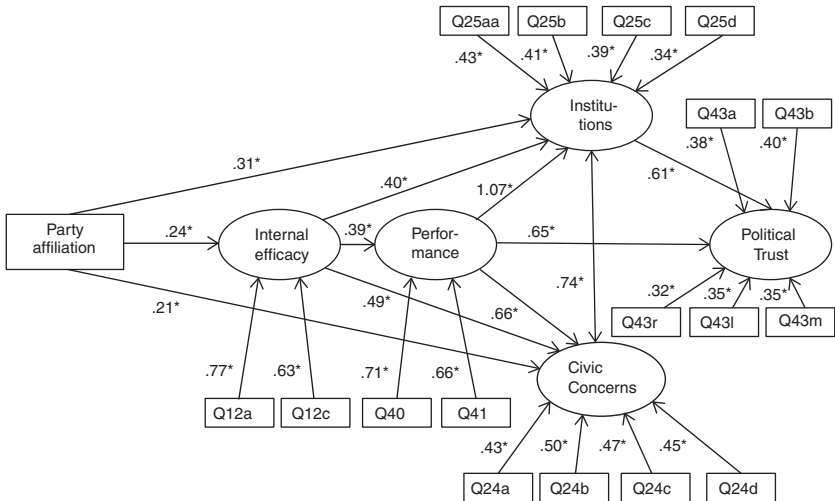
Fig. 10.5 Determinants of political trust: structural equation model for Germany

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France *n* = 916, Germany *n* = 1471. Data for Germany weighted according to the size of the East and West German population

Note: Maximum likelihood (MLR) parameter estimates. Pairwise exclusion of missing data. * *p* < 0.05

For item wordings see Fig. 10.4

show loadings on the latent variable, with trust in government and trust in parliament most strongly linked to the overall construct and trust in political parties least strongly related. A similar pattern turns out in the loadings of the items measuring attitudes towards the performance of representative agencies. Again, the view of the parliament and the government is most strongly related to the overall assessment of institutional representation, while attitudes towards a party represent the respective belief least well. As far as the perceived representation of civic demands is concerned, economic interests matter most and values matter least.

The results of the causal analysis reveal that the strength of citizens' party affiliation impacts on political trust via three different paths. It has an indirect effect on how well respondents feel represented by institutions and how well they see their concerns represented within the political system (0.31/0.21). Furthermore, the strength of party affiliation has a moderate, but significant, effect on internal efficacy (0.24). This attitude, in turn, affects people's assessment of the performance of the government and parliament (0.39). Moreover, internal efficacy relates to the attitudes towards the agents of representation (0.40) and to the concerns to be represented (0.49). However, it shows no direct impact on political trust. Hence, we can conclude that internal efficacy and party identification are indirectly relevant to the generation and maintenance of political trust. They promote the feeling of being well represented in politics which, in turn, is conducive to political trust. The assessment of the general performance of government and parliament turns out to be an important direct and indirect antecedent of trust. The indirect path runs via the perception of the quality of institutional representation and via the view on the representation of civic concerns (1.07[3]/0.66). The attitudes towards institutional performance appear as the strongest immediate antecedents of trust identified in the model (0.65).

Finally, a high covariance exists between attitudes towards the institutions and agents of representation and the perceived representation of important civic concerns (0.74). According to the previously stated theoretical assumptions, feeling represented by political actors and institutions is particularly relevant to generate, establish and sustain political trust (direct effect: 0.61), whereas the view that citizens' concerns are appropriately represented in the political system is only indirectly relevant to political trust, namely mediated by the assessment of representative agencies (0.24).

In line with previous research, positive attitudes towards the performance of parliament and government turn out to be the most important direct determinant of political trust in Germany, but the perception of
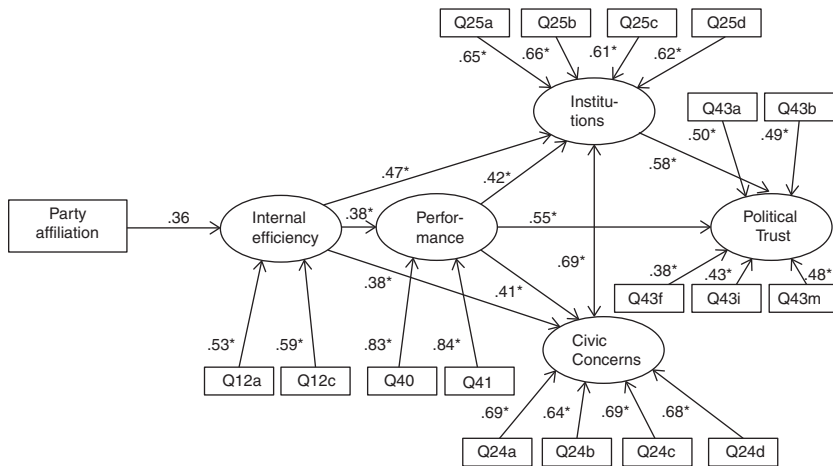
Fig. 10.6 Determinants of political trust: structural equation model for France

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population Survey, France *n* = 916, Germany *n* = 1471

Note: Maximum likelihood (ML) parameter estimates. Pairwise exclusion of missing data. $p < 0.05$

For item wording see Fig. 10.4

being adequately represented by political institutions and actors plays also a crucial role in generating and maintaining political trust. Moreover, attitudes towards representation perform an important function as intervening variables in explaining political trust in Germany (Fig. 10.6).

The results obtained in the estimation of the model for France deviate from the pattern described for Germany in some important respects. The measurement model yields similar substantial findings as in Germany, but the loadings of the items used for measuring the attitudes towards representation show higher loadings on the latent variables in France. In the measurement model developed for France, trust in MPs in general turns out as a similarly good indicator as trust in parliament and government.

The most striking difference to the causal model tested for Germany is that party affiliation has no impact on political trust in France: no single statistically relevant path runs from party identification to any other variables included in the model. Citizens' assessment of the agents of representation also plays a slightly different role as a determinant of political trust in France and in Germany. Attitudes towards the agents of representation influence political trust the most in France, while in Germany the evaluation of the

general performance of political institutions is a little more influential. All other effect coefficients differ more or less strongly in size between France and Germany, but they move in the same direction in the two countries. Thus, the findings do not need to be commented upon in detail.

As expected, positive attitudes towards the agents of representation and the assessment of institutional performance appear as the two strongest predictors of political trust across the two political systems under observation here. The more specific attitudes towards representation contribute differently to the explanation of political trust: While attitudes towards the agents of representation play a strong role in this respect, the citizens' view of the district MP's behavior is irrelevant. The belief that important civic concerns are appropriately represented in politics did not appear as a direct antecedent of political trust, but has a strong indirect effect that runs mainly over the attitudes towards the agents of representation.

How the Perceived Quality of Representation Shapes Political Trust—Summary and Conclusions

In the debate about the crisis of representative government in the modern world, the relationship between the governed and the governing has been a key issue from the beginning. As assumed rather than empirically proven in the first studies, an ongoing process of alienation of citizens from their representatives—and vice versa—was a main reason for the crisis of confidence in modern democracies. Ironically, although the *social* distance between citizens and their representatives was never as narrow in the history of the modern constitutional state as it is now, the *attitudinal* distance seems to have increased over the years.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, some contributions to the development of political trust have cast doubts on the statements about an increasing confidence gap in representative democracies. Rather than observing a deep and widespread crisis of trust in political institutions and actors, we found that parts of the French and German publics display trust in politics, other parts show distrust and still others are partially trusting and partially distrusting. Moreover, not all institutions and actors are trusted or distrusted to the same degree. If there is a crisis of confidence in France and Germany, it pertains primarily to the political parties, to the politicians as a "class" and—in France—to the incumbent government. However, it cannot be denied that French citizens have become considerably more politically distrustful than their German counterparts over the last few years.

Regarding the complex relationship between citizens' views on representation and their trust in politics, similarities between France and Germany clearly outweigh the differences. First and foremost, attitudes towards representation and political trust are strongly interrelated. As shown by the structural equation models, the linkages between these attitudes can be seen as causal relationships persisting even if other important determinants of trust, particularly attitudes towards the performance of political institutions, are controlled for. Given this finding, it also needs to be stated that not all aspects of people's views on political representation are equally important in generating and maintaining political trust. The view of district MPs' representative behavior vanishes as a determinant of political trust if embedded in a complex explanatory model. Moreover, it matters only indirectly—in France as well as in Germany—whether people see their values, economic needs or group concerns taken into account. But it is very important for both publics that citizens view the institutions and actors of representative democracy as adequately representing them. Moreover, this attitude is strongly related to the perception of having one's concerns taken into account in the political system.

The variations of political trust among countries can thus be attributed to the different perceptions among citizens in each country regarding how well they feel represented in the political system by particular institutions and actors of representative democracy. The negative view of the French regarding the trustworthiness of their institutions and actors—in contrast to a rather ambivalent assessment by the Germans—is rooted to a good extent in varying public perceptions of being represented in political life. French citizens display a thoroughly negative perception of all aspects of the complex process of representation while the Germans feel less negatively in this respect. Some explanations of this difference between the two publics can be found in the results of the structural equation models. Obviously, party identification strengthens citizens' belief in being politically well represented in Germany while having no direct impact on attitudes towards representation in France. Moreover, the perceived performance of government and parliament in the two countries makes a difference for the perceived quality of representation. Not only are the Germans far more positive in their respective assessments than the French, the evaluation of performance is also more strongly related to the attitudes towards representation in Germany. Other variables not included in the explanatory model (such as far more negative media reporting in France) may also play their role in generating the climate of political discontent and distrust in France.

Notes

1. Germany: X^2 = 1929.437, df = 158, p < 0.001, CFI = 0.81 RMSEA = 0.10; France: X^2 = 2313.414, df = 158, p < 0.001, CFI = 0.85, RMSEA = 0.11.
2. Germany: X^2 = 970.51, df = 126, p < 0.001, CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.08; France: X^2 = 1318.50, df = 128, p < 0.001, CFI = 0.88, RMSEA = 0.10.
3. Typically standardized coefficients should not exceed a value of 1.00, however, they can occur and can nevertheless be valid estimates (Jöreskog 1999).

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Do Candidates' Ethnic Background and Gender Matter? An Experimental Approach

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At first sight, the political elite in Germany as well as in France seems to reflect more and more the ethnically diverse population: Aydan Özoguz (minister of state in the German chancellery), Yasmin Fahimi (former general secretary of the Social Democratic Party) or Cem Özdemir (co-chairman of

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the German Greens). In France, about 20 percent of the members of the Ayrault government (2012–2014) had either an immigrant background or came from the Départements et Territoires d'outre-mer (DOM-TOM) the overseas counties and territories.[1] At the same time, having a closer look at the composition of parliament, the population of immigrant origin in both countries is still strongly underrepresented in terms of overall numbers. In the 18th German Bundestag (2013–2017), 37 MPs (5.9%) could be identified as having an immigrant background, amongst them 19 (3%) who can be defined as visible minorities (Deiss-Helbig 2014, 160); this compares to about one-fifth and between 10 and 12 percent,[2] respectively, within the overall German population. In the current French National Assembly, visible minorities make up about 6.4 percent of all deputies, compared to about 10 percent in the overall population in France.[3] Women remain also underrepresented in both parliaments. Even though either legal or party-internal gender quotas exist in both countries (see, e.g., Krook and O'Brien 2010), both parliaments are still significantly male: 61.2 percent of all MPs in the Assemblée nationale elected in June 2017 were men; the 18th Bundestag had 63.9 percent male deputies.[4]

The empirical fact of a numerical underrepresentation of certain societal groups has given rise to an intense normative discussion within the scientific community about the idea of mirror or descriptive representation (Pitkin 1967, 61). On the one hand, the concept is strongly contested (see for a summary of the critique, e.g., Phillips 1995, 21; Mansbridge 1999, 629). On the other hand, normative arguments regarding fair representation (Phillips 1995, 25) as well as the accessibility and democratic legitimacy of the political system (Mansbridge 1999, 641) or risks of democratic malfunction (Avanza 2010) have been put forward in the scholarly debate. In past years, additional empirical questions about the relationship between minority representation and political trust (e.g., Abney and Hutcheson 1981; Gay 2002) or between minority representation and the advancement of minority interests (e.g., Wallace 2014; Wüst 2014) have gained increasing importance within the discussion about political representation.

But what explains this gap in ethnic minority and gender representation? While their political underrepresentation in terms of numbers is uncontested, the reasons for this phenomenon are very much up for debate. The current literature trying to explain the numerical underrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities has focused on three primary areas. First, scholars have examined legislative recruitment processes as well as supply-side (motivation, political capital of the aspiring candidates)

and demand-side (attitudes and priorities of the party gatekeepers) factors which influence this process (e.g., Norris and Lovenduski 1993, 1995). They found supply-side explanations to account the most for the general social bias in parliament (Norris and Lovenduski 1995, 247). Nevertheless, in particular regarding women and ethnic minorities, party gatekeepers' concerns about the electability of such candidates seem to play a role when (not) nominating minority candidates (Norris and Lovenduski 1995, 248). A second, related approach has thus studied more broadly the openness and accessibility of the political system for minority groups by drawing, in particular, on the concept of political opportunity structures (e.g., Bird 2005; Bird et al. 2011). A third approach focuses on political parties and their role in minority inclusion (e.g., Kittilson and Tate 2005; Kittilson 2006). In the latter, a combination of pressures from the societal level affecting parties in a bottom-up process, as well as changing attitudes and behavior of partisan elites, together with a favorable political opportunity structure (legal environment, intra-party organization, ideological climate) are supposed to explain cross-national differences in the receptivity of political parties to minority demands.

To sum up, all three approaches mention voters, at least in an indirect way, as affecting the political representation of ethnic minorities or women (e.g., via party gatekeepers' fear of losing votes when having run minority candidates). Additionally, a body of literature has developed that focuses strictly on whether voters discriminate against candidates based on their sex (e.g., King and Matland 2003), race or ethnic background (e.g., Terkildsen 1993; Highton 2004; Philpot and Walton 2007). However, it is only recently that this research area has received attention outside the US and, in particular, in the European context (e.g. Stegmaier et al. 2013; Zingher and Farrer 2016; Fisher et al. 2014). In particular, this holds especially true for the French-German context where the role of candidate gender or ethnic background regarding vote choice is, up to now, a rather under-researched topic (but, see Brouard and Tiberj 2011; Bieber 2013; Street 2014).

Nonetheless, France and Germany provide two particularly interesting examples in this matter. First, in Europe, they are among the countries with the highest number of citizens with immigrant origins. However, they differ a lot regarding their conceptions of nationhood and, until recently, regarding their citizenship regimes. While in Germany nationhood is historically conceived as an ethno-cultural fact, France has a political understanding of nationhood (Brubaker 1992, 1). According to this latter

conception, becoming a member of the nation is a political choice that people make. The idea of citizenship, therefore, involves a commitment to the principle of republican universalism which, in turn, highlights, on the one hand, the necessity of cultural assimilation (Brubaker 1992, 5) and, on the other hand, the idea of a color-blind society (Brouard and Tiberj 2011, 165). Germany's ethno-cultural understanding of nationhood, on the contrary, entails a differentialist self-understanding (Brubaker 1992, 5). This conception is also reflected in the German concept of citizenship, which was (until the liberalization of the citizenship regime in 1999) almost exclusively based on ethnic descent ("ius sanguinis") (Rensmann 2014, 63). The French citizenship regime, on the other side, is characterized by a mixture of "ius soli" and "ius sanguinis" (Bird 2005, 433). Second, the electoral systems in France and Germany differ a lot (see Chap. 1 in this book). Regarding voter choice, this should be reflected in the weight that is given to candidate characteristics compared to party identification.

To contribute to new insights into this only poorly researched topic in both countries, the following research questions shall be addressed: Do candidate ethnic and gender characteristics affect electoral choice? And if so, how do they influence voters' choices?

Candidate Characteristics and Vote Choice

We know from research on voting behavior that candidate orientation, besides voters' party identification and issue orientation, constitute an important factor in voter choice (Campbell et al. 1954; Campbell et al. 1960; Stokes 1966). For several reasons, research on electoral politics has given more and more importance to candidate orientation (Wattenberg 1991). First, the debate about the rise of candidate-centered politics makes candidates more important subjects of research. Second, partisan de-alignment processes (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000) and the decline of party identification are said to increase the importance of candidate and issue orientation regarding voting behavior (Dalton et al. 2000, 49). However, it is worth noting that due to institutional differences, amongst others, these developments that are observed, in particular, in American politics cannot be transferred directly to the European and, in our case, the French-German context. On the one hand, the continuing importance of party identification, in particular in Germany, at least raises some questions about the observation of the rising importance of candidates' personal characteristics in German electoral politics (Kaase 1994; Brettschneider

and Gabriel 2002). In the French case, scholars differ about the importance of party identification regarding voting behavior—not so much with respect to candidate evaluation, but rather to ideology (for a discussion of this issue see, e.g., Converse and Pierce 1986; Fleury and Lewis-Beck 1993). More recent studies, however, also point to the relevance of candidates' personal attributes concerning vote choice in presidential but also parliamentary elections (Pierce 2012; Brouard and Kerrouche 2013). Additionally, one can assume that, even in professionalized, party-centered campaigns due to increasingly targeted electoral strategies, parties more and more focus also on candidates and their personal characteristics (Saalfeld and Kyriakopoulou 2011, 232).

Scholarly debate mainly focuses on two ways in which candidates can be evaluated. First, experiences with the candidate herself or himself through media, but also personal contact, are said to influence evaluations of candidates. A second variant of research highlights the importance of cognitive heuristics or stereotypes (Schoen and Weins 2014, 296). Concerning the latter, scholars argue that the information voters have is often limited and that is why they rely on cognitive heuristics as well as on schemata in order to make decisions (King and Matland 2003, 596–597) that are reasonable without being fully competent (Kriesi 2005). Cognitive heuristics[5] are often automatically or unconsciously employed as problem-solving strategies or cognitive shortcuts (Lau and Redlawsk 2001, 952). Schemata can be defined as "road maps in our memories, based on socialization and prior experiences" (King and Matland 2003, 597). Candidates' personal characteristics, such as gender, race or ethnic background, can serve as such cognitive shortcuts or road maps in order to evaluate political candidates and to choose between them (Norris and Lovenduski 1995, 14; McDermott 1998, 912).

There has been considerable debate in the discipline about whether candidate gender matters in candidate evaluation and, if so, in which ways (Sanbonmatsu 2002, 20). A significant body of research finds no empirical evidence for differences in the electoral success of male and female candidates and, therefore, concludes that voters are not biased against female candidates (e.g., Darcy and Schramm 1997; Murray 2004; Bieber 2013; Campbell and Cowley 2014).[6] Others, however, find support for an electoral penalty for female candidates depending on voters' party identification—with conservative or right-wing voters being more reluctant to vote for women candidates (McDermott 1998, 904; King and Matland 2003, 604; Sineau and Tiberj 2007, 182). These contradictory

findings point to the relevance of controlling for voters' party identification when analyzing the impact of candidates' gender on voter choice. Irrespective of the (non)existence of a negative gender impact on voter choice, another body of research finds clear support for the hypothesis that gender stereotypes matter regarding vote choice (e.g., Sanbonmatsu 2002, 31; Campbell and Cowley 2014, 750). According to this literature, women candidates are evaluated differently from their male counterparts. They are seen as less experienced but more approachable than male candidates (Campbell and Cowley 2014, 750), as less competent in some policy fields and more competent in others (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993, 140) and, in general, as being more liberal than men (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993, 140; King and Matland 2003, 606).

There is also a large literature on the role of candidate race and, to a lesser extent, ethnic background regarding voting behavior (e.g., Highton 2004; Philpot and Walton 2007; Brouard and Tiberj 2011; Stegmaier et al. 2013; Street 2014). However, taken together, the empirical findings regarding the question of whether (ethnic) minority candidates suffer an electoral penalty from majority voters are mixed; they do not tell a consistent story. On the one hand, some studies have found, at first glance, evidence for an (negative) impact of candidate ethnic background on voting behavior, but once intervening variables are controlled for (candidate's party affiliation, voters' party identification, incumbency) the statistically significant relationship vanishes (e.g., Highton 2004; Philpot and Walton 2007; Street 2014). Others, on the other hand, have detected no statistically significant effect of candidate ethnic or racial background on voter choice (e.g., Black and Erickson 2006). And, finally, a third group of studies found empirical support for a negative effect of race or ethnic background on voting behavior even after controlling for further independent variables (e.g., Terkildsen 1993; Bieber 2013; Zingher and Farrer 2016).

Several factors can be identified that may account for these different and sometimes even contradictory results. First, different research designs can lead to different results (e.g., aggregate vs. individual level). Second, scholars within this research field have employed a variety of methodological approaches to assess how majority voters react to minority candidates, for instance real election data, survey data and (survey-) experiments. Third, analyzing questions of race or ethnicity always implies problems of social desirability effects (Hopkins 2009, 770). The size of these effects can be related to the method used in the study. And, finally, particularly

when using real election data, the small sample size of ethnic minority candidates (mainly a problem in Western European countries) can lead to inaccurate empirical results.

When it comes to detecting the mechanisms that explain voter bias against minority candidates, the current literature has revealed two primary factors. First, literature points to the impact of more general negative attitudes towards specific minorities on the evaluation of candidates of particular minority groups (Terkildsen 1993; Greenwald et al. 2009; Street 2014). In the German case, Street (2014) has found for particular voter groups[7] empirical evidence for an impact of xenophobia on voting behavior (see also for the U.K. Fisher et al. 2014, 15). Second, voters can also discriminate against minority candidates because, as mentioned above, they "make political estimations using nonpolitical information" (King and Matland 2003, 599). That is, for example, voters can make decisions through the use of cognitive heuristics inferring a candidate's ideological position from his or her sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., Bieber 2013, 116; Fairdosi and Rogowski 2015, 9), her or his appearance (Lawson et al. 2010), or his or her behavior (Dumitrescu et al. 2015).

Scholars also agree that partisan stereotyping is (still) the most important information shortcut when casting a vote. A candidate's party affiliation usually helps voters to deduce certain policy preferences (McDermott 1998, 898). Scholarship, therefore, argues that voters believe that their interests will be represented best when they vote according to their party identification (Dalton et al. 2000, 38). That is why it is particularly important to control for party affiliation when analyzing the impact of candidate gender and ethnicity on voting behavior.

Hypotheses

Two sets of hypotheses will lead the following analyses: The first set addresses the question whether or not candidate gender and ethnic background have an effect voter choice in France and Germany (H1–H3). The second set of hypotheses focuses on the causes of these effects (or lack of effects) (H1a–H3c).

First, if the argument holds for the ongoing importance of parties in electoral politics (in particular, for the case of Western European countries), then candidates' party affiliation should influence their electoral record regardless of his or her ethnicity or gender (*H1 Party cueing*

hypothesis). To model the causes of this party effect, we hypothesize, based on theoretical assumptions about interest or preference matching, that voters choose those candidates who are, according to their party affiliation, the closest to the voters' ideological position (*H1a Political logic hypothesis*).

Second, given that research has found at least some empirical evidence for a negative impact of candidate ethnic background on voting behavior, we theorize that, all other things being equal, ethnic minority candidates will perform more poorly in the polls than their non-ethnic minority counterparts (*H2 Ethnic penalty hypothesis*). In order to test the causes of this ethnic penalty effect (or lack of effect), we formulate two hypotheses: (1) If the argument for an impact of ideological positioning on voters' open-mindedness towards ethnic minority candidates holds, those voters who position themselves on the right side of the left-right spectrum should be more reluctant to vote for ethnic minority candidates than their left-leaning counterparts (*H2a Ethnic political logic hypothesis*). (2) We also assume country differences in the effects of candidate's ethnic background. Accordingly, we hypothesize that the impact of candidates' ethnic background on vote choice is weaker in countries with an assimilationist model of citizenship (France) than in countries with an ethnic model of citizenship (Germany) (*H2b Citizenship model hypothesis*).

Third, literature has shown that gender stereotypes matter when evaluating candidates. For this reason, we test whether candidate gender also affects candidates' electoral performance regardless of the party affiliation (*H3 Gender hypothesis*). We formulate three hypotheses in order to test for the causes of the gender effect (or lack of effect): (1) In line with our previous hypothesis on the impact of ideological positioning, right-wing voters should be more averse to voting for female candidates than their left-leaning counterparts (*H3a Gender political logic hypothesis*). (2), Candidate gender matters more to women because of their numerical underrepresentation in politics (Sanbonmatsu 2002, 24). From this it follows that women should be more inclined to vote for women candidates than their male counterparts (*H3b Gender solidarity hypothesis*). (3) Due to women's traditionally stronger presence in German politics, the negative impact of candidate gender is assumed to be weaker in Germany than in France (*H3c National gender hypothesis*).

Because of the prevailing dominance of party cueing in electoral politics, voting behavior should depend, first of all, on a political logic (*H4 Voting logic hypothesis*).

DATA AND METHOD

To test our theoretical assumptions about the role of candidate gender and ethnic background in voter choice, we draw on one particular kind of data gathered within the mass survey of the CITREP project: survey experiment data (for more details regarding sample size or sampling method see Chap. 1 in this book).

Survey experiments are a particular kind of experimental method which, in general, have become increasingly prominent in political science (Druckman et al. 2006, 627); this holds particularly true for research on candidate evaluations (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Sanbonmatsu 2002; King and Matland 2003; Campbell and Cowley 2014). In (population-based) survey experiments—mainly introduced to political science by the works of P. Sniderman and colleagues (Sniderman et al. 1991; Sniderman and Piazza 1993)—"experimental subjects (identified by survey sampling methods and, therefore, representative of the target population of interest) are randomly assigned to conditions by the researcher, and treatments are administered as in any other experiment" (Mutz 2011, 2). One important argument for the use of experimental methods in political science (and certainly also for their increasing importance) is that they are assumed to better account for questions of causality than traditional survey data (Morton and Williams 2010, 13). Moreover, using survey experiments in political science is considered to be fruitful in many ways. First of all, they allow researchers to take advantage of the strengths generally attributed to experiments (higher internal validity) and those of public opinion polls (external validity) (Sniderman and Grob 1996, 378). Additionally, using survey experiments in order to assess the impact of candidate characteristics on voter choice makes it possible to model hypothetical election races. In doing so, we can create a low-information environment that allows us to control for the factors that could influence voting choice and, therefore, "track the precise manner in which changes in a variable can affect the decision process" (King and Matland 2003, 598). In particular when analyzing sensitive issues such as the role of race in voting behavior, experiments can help to reduce problems of social desirability bias (Mutz 2011, 64). However, it is worth noting that this kind of experimental design (incorporating survey experiments) also has its limitations. On the one hand, it is easier to make generalizations using a population-based survey experiment than a laboratory experiment (Mutz 2011, 64); on the other

hand, compared to population surveys asking about real elections, generalizations are more difficult because of the hypothetical nature of survey experiments and, in our specific case, of hypothetical election races (Philpot and Walton 2007, 54).

In this chapter, we make use of a survey experiment (more precisely, a population-based vignette experiment[8]) with random assignment of three treatment variables: gender, ethnic background and party affiliation of a hypothetical candidate. In order to test the impact of the treatment variables on the dependent variable (electoral performance of the hypothetical candidate), three manipulated variables are used: first names to introduce candidate's sex, first name and surname for ethnic background and party label for party affiliation. The values of the three manipulated variables were randomly assigned by CAPI procedures.[9]

In the experiment, each respondent heard the following description of a hypothetical candidate (see also King and Matland 2003; Brouard and Tiberj 2011):

> I am going to read you a description of a [*UMP/PS in France—CDU/ (CSU)/SPD/(Die Linke) in Germany*] candidate who runs for legislative elections. [*Guillaume Lachaise/Bilal Yassine/Malika Yassine/Hélène Lachaise in France/Volker Brunner/Katharina Brunner/Melda Yalcin/Bilal Yalcin in Germany*] is about fifty years old and works as a physiotherapist. Never running for office before, [*he/she*] has been active in the community for a long time. [*He/She*] runs for office in order to make things change and to make sure that politicians finally begin to listen to the people.

In a second step, a fictitious race was set up between the hypothetical candidate and an (hypothetical) incumbent MP (named François Dupré in France and Frank Hoffmann in Germany) of similar age and with a similar type of occupation.

> [*Guillaume Lachaise/Bilal Yassine/Malika Yassine/Hélène Lachaise in France/Volker Brunner/Katharina Brunner/Melda Yalcin/Bilal Yalcin in Germany*] runs against [*François Dupré in France—Frank Hoffman in Germany] [UMP/PS in France—CDU/SPD/(Die Linke) in Germany*], the incumbent MP, a doctor aged 55. If this election took place, which candidate would you vote for?
>   1. Rather for [*the hypothetical candidate*]
>   2. Rather for [*the incumbent MP*]

The survey experiment consists, therefore, of a two-by-two-by-two variable design (candidate's gender, ethnic background, party affiliation), with eight conditions in total.[10]

EFFECTS OF CANDIDATE GENDER, ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND PARTY AFFILIATION

It is worth noting that, in order to assess the pure effects of the candidate characteristics in question, we always have to compare the electoral performance of specific types of candidates. That is, to estimate the effect of party affiliation, we have to compare those respondents who have opted for the (hypothetical) male non-ethnic minority candidate running for a *left-wing party* to those who showed a voting intention for the (hypothetical) male non-ethnic minority candidate running for a *right-wing party*. According to the same logic, estimating the effect of gender implies comparing the number of respondents who have chosen the (hypothetical) *male* non-ethnic minority candidate from the left-wing (right-wing) party to the number of respondents who decided to vote for the (hypothetical) *female* non-ethnic minority candidate from the left-wing (right-wing) party. Testing the effect of ethnic background implies comparing how many respondents have chosen the (hypothetical) male *non-ethnic minority* candidate from the left-wing (right-wing) party with the number of respondents who decided to vote for the (hypothetical) male *ethnic minority* candidate from the left-wing (right-wing) party.

Does Candidates' Party Affiliation Matter?

All in all, (hypothetical) socialist or social-democratic candidates perform better in our survey experiment than their right-wing counterparts. This finding holds true for the case of France (difference of 25 points; $p = 0.00$) and of Germany as a whole (difference of 12 points; $p = 0.00$) as well as for the Eastern (difference of 26 points; $p = 0.00$) and, to a less extent, Western parts (difference of 9; $p = 0.04$) (see Fig. 11.1).

However, as mentioned at the outset of this section, in order to assess the pure effect of party affiliation, we have to control for gender and ethnicity while holding everything else constant except party affiliation. Figure 11.2 shows the electoral performance of socialist or social-democratic candidates running against right-wing incumbents
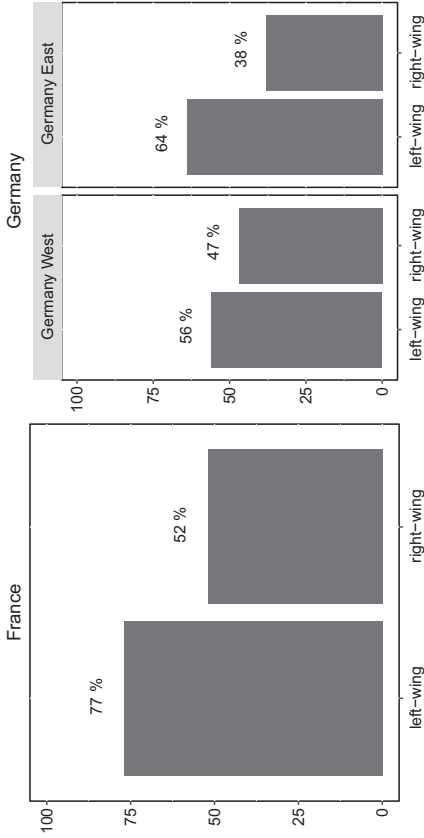
Fig. 11.1 Electoral performance of left-wing candidates in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France $n = 605$, Germany West $n = 625$, Germany East $n = 175$

Notes: Pearson's Chi-square test: France $\chi^2 = 42.43$ ($p = .00$), Germany West $\chi^2 = 4.23$ ($p = .04$), Germany East $\chi^2 = 10.56$ ($p = .00$)

Item wording: see "Data and method"
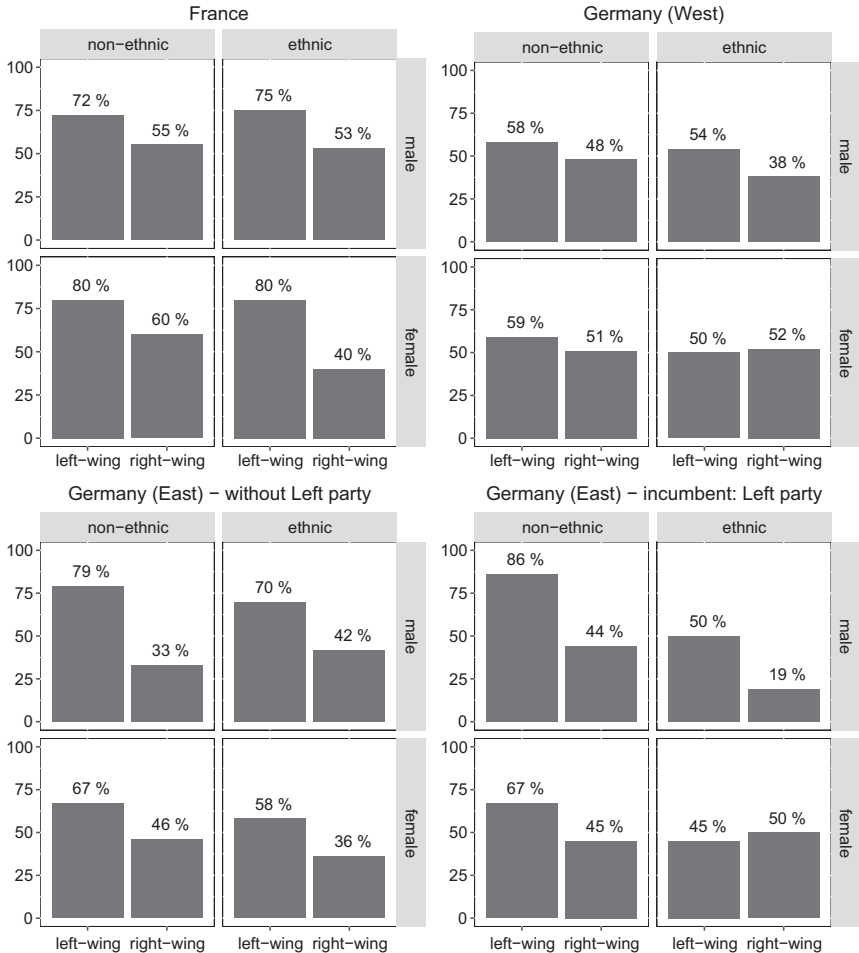
| | France | | Germany (West) | | Germany (East) | | | |
| | | | | | without Left party | | incumbent: Left party | |
	non-ethnic	ethnic	non-ethnic	ethnic	non-ethnic	ethnic	non-ethnic	ethnic
male	17.4	22.5	10.9	16.6	45.3	28.3	41.3	31.2
female	19.5	40.8	7.9	-2.2	20.5	21.9	21.2	-4.5

Fig. 11.2 Electoral performance of left-wing candidates in France and Germany controlled by ethnic background and gender

(compared to right-wing candidates running against socialist or social-democratic incumbents) when gender and ethnicity are held constant.

The analysis confirms our previous results: In 14 out of 16 constellations the socialist or social-democratic candidate is assumed to perform better than his or her right-wing counterpart. However, the differences are statistically significant only in eight out of the 16 constellations (see notes below Fig. 11.2). But this can also be due to the small number of observations, in particular in East Germany, which, in turn, is a result of controlling for gender and ethnicity at the same time (in East Germany the number of observations range from $n = 16$ to $n = 32$, see Fig. 11.2). For the case of France, all results are statistically significant and the difference points range from 17 to 40 in favor of the Socialist candidate (see Table below Fig. 11.2). The results shown in Fig. 11.2 already point to an interesting finding for the French case: If a woman candidate with an ethnic minority background is running for the Socialists, she is perceived to perform much better than if a candidate with the same sociodemographic characteristics is running for the Conservatives (a 40 point difference). For Germany, this holds true for male candidates with ethnic minority backgrounds in West Germany, although the differences are smaller (16 points; $p = 0.04$). Those and the other remaining results in Figs. 11.1 and 11.2 clearly indicate that party matters and, therefore, seems to confirm hypothesis 1 (*Party cueing hypothesis*).

Fig. 11.2   (continued) Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France: non-ethnic male $n = 149$, ethnic male $n = 154$, non-ethnic female $n = 152$, ethnic female $n = 150$; Germany West: non-ethnic male $n = 150$, ethnic male $n = 157$, non-ethnic female $n = 179$, ethnic female $n = 139$; Germany East (without Left party): non-ethnic male $n = 23$, ethnic male $n = 22$, non-ethnic female $n = 22$, ethnic female $n = 23$; Germany East (Incumbent Left party): non-ethnic male $n = 16$, ethnic male $n = 32$, non-ethnic female $n = 20$, ethnic female $n = 17$

Notes: Shown are the percentage points differences, e.g., for the case of France, compared to a male non-ethnic candidate running for the right-wing party (against a left-wing incumbent), a male non-ethnic candidate running for the left-wing party (against a right-wing incumbent) has an electoral advantage of 17 percent; the electoral (dis)advantage of the left-wing candidate is shown in percentage points for all constellations in the table below the figure. Pearson's Chi-square test and/or Fisher's exact test for sub-samples with expected frequencies smaller than 5: France: non-ethnic male $\chi^2 = 4.91$ ($p = .03$), ethnic male $\chi^2 = 8.21$ ($p = .00$), non-ethnic female $\chi^2 = 6.9$ ($p = .01$), ethnic female $\chi^2 = 26.24$ ($p = .00$); Germany West: non-ethnic male $\chi^2 = 1.73$ ($p = .19$), ethnic male $\chi^2 = 4.33$ ($p = .04$), non-ethnic female $\chi^2 = 1.15$ ($p = .28$), ethnic female $\chi^2 = 0.07$ ($p = .07$); Germany East (without Left party): non-ethnic male Fisher's exact test $p = .08$, ethnic male Fisher's exact test $p = .23$, non-ethnic female Fisher's exact test $p = .41$, ethnic female $\chi^2 = 1.11$ ($p = .29$); Germany East (incumbent Left party): non-ethnic male Fisher's exact test $p = .15$, ethnic male $\chi^2 = 3.46$ ($p = .06$), non-ethnic female Fisher's exact test $p = .41$, ethnic female Fisher's exact test $p = 1.0$

Item wording: see "Data and method"

This finding is in line with previous results highlighting the importance of party affiliation regarding voting behavior (Schoen 2008, 330). However, these results also point to the fact that party matters more systematically and consistently in France than in Germany, in particular when compared to West Germany. It can be hypothesized that the stronger party differences observed for the French case are a result of the strong bipolarization of the French party system (Pütz 2000, 91), which is, in the present case, reflected in the evaluation of the hypothetical candidate. Finally, our results show that party seems to matter more when dealing with certain candidate types than with others.

Does Candidates' Gender Matter?

In our binational sample, female (hypothetical) candidates were supported by 59 percent of the respondents compared to 56 percent of the male (hypothetical) candidates. Thus, at least at first sight, being a woman does not seem to be an electoral burden. On the other hand, we cannot say either that being a woman is an advantage electorally. The (small) positive difference in favor of the female candidate is stable across countries and regions—around 3 percent—but never statistically significant (see Fig. 11.3). We can, therefore, conclude that, without controlling for the other candidate characteristics, candidate gender does not seem to matter regarding electoral behavior in France and in Germany.

As we did for party affiliation, we try to assess the gender effect by keeping everything but gender constant.

The findings in Fig. 11.4 indicate that, contrary to party affiliation, candidate gender does not seem to have an effect on vote choice at the aggregate level. They show neither a uniform and statistically significant positive nor negative candidate effect. This result is consistent with most previous studies observing gender effects for candidate evaluation but not regarding vote choice (see, e.g., Campbell and Cowley 2014). However, in the case of the right-wing ethnic minority candidate, the differences are statistically significant in (West) Germany as well as in France. However, while in the case of West Germany this seems to be an electoral advantage, in the French case it can be conceived as an electoral burden (see Table below Fig. 11.4 for difference points in favor/to the disadvantage of the women candidates).
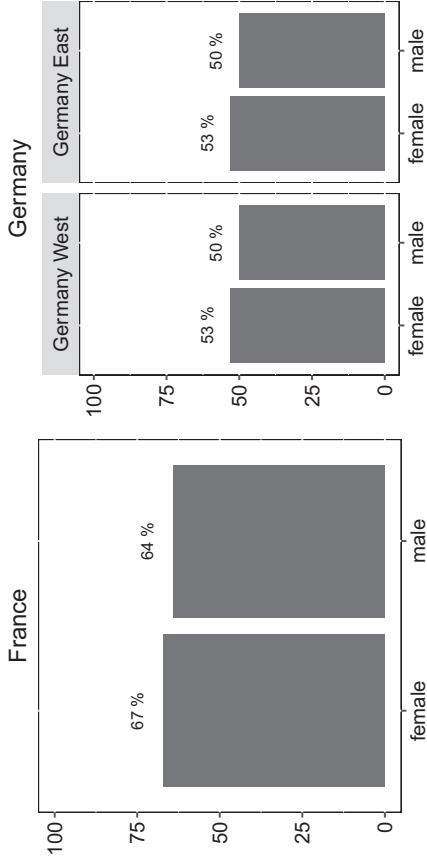
Fig. 11.3   Electoral performance of women candidates in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France n = 605, Germany West n = 625, Germany East n = 262

Notes: Pearson's Chi-square test and Fischer's exact test: France χ^2 = 0.68 (p = .41), Germany West χ^2 = 0.55 (p = .46), Germany East χ^2 = 0.13 (p = .72)

Item wording: see "Data and method"

Fig. 11.4 Electoral performance of women candidates in France and Germany controlled by ethnic background and party affiliation (and incumbent's party affiliation in the case of East Germany)
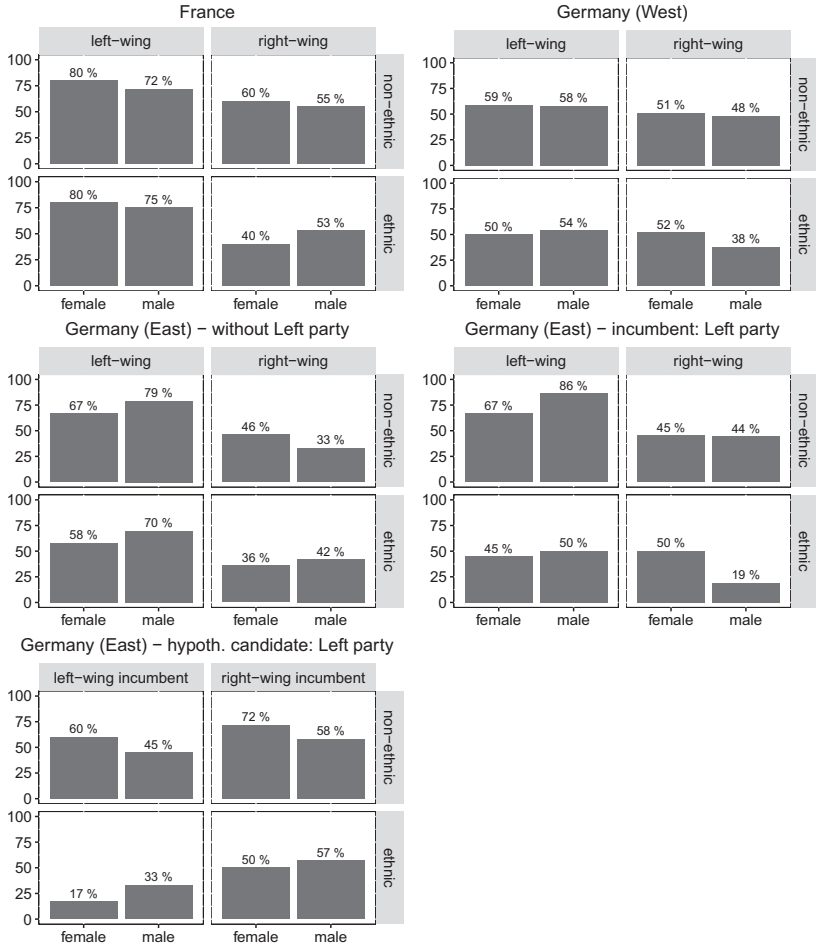
	France		Germany (West)		Germany (East)					
					without Left party		incumbent: Left party		hypothetical candidate: Left party	
	left	right	left	right	left	right	left	right	left	right
non-ethnic	7.3	5.2	0.7	3.7	-11.9	12.9	-19.0	1.1	14.5	13.9
ethnic	5.1	-13.2	-4.1	14.7	-11.7	-5.3	-4.5	31.2	-16.6	-7.1

Without ignoring these two exceptional constellations, we can conclude that the overall message conveyed by the data is that hypothesis 3 (*Gender hypothesis*) cannot be supported by our data.

Does a Candidate's Ethnic Background Have an Effect on Vote Choice?

Previous research on the effect of candidates' ethnic background has shown mixed results (see, e.g., Black and Erickson 2006; Bieber 2013; Street 2014).

Here, at a cross-national level, without controlling for candidate gender and party affiliation, (hypothetical) candidates with ethnic minority backgrounds were chosen significantly less often than their non-ethnic minority counterparts (difference of 7 points; $p = 0.00$). In the German sample, the difference is at 8 points ($p = 0.00$). In the French sample, on the other side, the difference is weaker (6 points) and is not statistically significant ($p = 0.15$) (see Fig. 11.5). There are strong regional differences regarding the distribution of people of immigrant origins in Germany (in

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Fig. 11.4 (continued) Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France: left-wing non-ethnic $n = 169$, right-wing non-ethnic $n = 132$, left-wing ethnic $n = 151$, right-wing ethnic $n = 153$; Germany West: left-wing non-ethnic $n = 182$, right-wing non-ethnic $n = 147$, left-wing ethnic $n = 155$, right-wing ethnic $n = 141$; Germany East (without Left party): left-wing non-ethnic $n = 23$, right-wing non-ethnic $n = 22$, left-wing ethnic $n = 22$, right-wing ethnic $n = 23$; Germany East (incumbent Left party): left-wing non-ethnic $n = 16$, right-wing non-ethnic $n = 20$, left-wing ethnic $n = 27$, right-wing ethnic $n = 22$; Germany East (hypoth. candidate Left party): left-wing non-ethnic incumb. $n = 26$, right-wing non-ethnic incumb. $n = 30$, left-wing ethnic incumb. $n = 12$, right-wing ethnic incumb. $n = 19$

Notes: Shown are the percentage points differences, e.g., for the case of Germany (West), compared to a male non-ethnic candidate running for the left-wing party, a female non-ethnic candidate running for the left-wing party (both running against a right-wing incumbent) has an electoral advantage of 1 percent; the electoral (dis)advantage of the woman candidate is shown in percentage points for all constellations in the table below the figure. Pearson's Chi-square test and/or Fisher's exact test for subsamples with expected frequencies smaller than 5: France: left-wing non-ethnic $\chi^2 = 1.23$ ($p = .27$), right-wing non-ethnic $\chi^2 = 0.58$ ($p = .45$), left-wing ethnic $\chi^2 = 0.37$ ($p = .54$), right-wing ethnic $\chi^2 = 2.66$ ($p = .1$); Germany West: left-wing non-ethnic $\chi^2 = 0.01$ ($p = .92$), right-wing non-ethnic $\chi^2 = 0.19$ ($p = .67$), left-wing ethnic $\chi^2 = 0.26$ ($p = .61$), right-wing ethnic $\chi^2 = 3.07$ ($p = .08$); Germany East (without Left party): left-wing non-ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .64$, right-wing non-ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .67$, left-wing ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .67$, right-wing ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = 1.0$; Germany East (incumbent Left party): left-wing non-ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .58$, right-wing non-ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = 1.0$, left-wing ethnic $\chi^2 = 0.05$ ($p = .82$), right-wing ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .28$; Germany East (hypoth. candidate Left party): left-wing non-ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .46$, right-wing non-ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = .46$, left-wing ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = 1.0$, right-wing ethnic Fisher's exact test $p = 1.0$

Item wording: see "Data and method"

particular between West and East German states)[11] as well as regarding the level of xenophobia (Krumpal 2012, 1399). Our findings seem to support our assumptions about an East/West divide regarding ethnic minority candidates. Respondents in West Germany choose the ethnic minority candidate to a lesser extent than the non-ethnic minority candidate; however, this finding is not statistically significant (6 points; $p = 0.13$). In East Germany, on the other side, the electoral penalty for (hypothetical) ethnic minority candidates seems to be much stronger and statistically highly significant (15 difference points; $p = 0.01$) (see Fig. 11.5).

Research has shown that the (negative) effect of a candidate's ethnic background (or race) differs strongly depending on party affiliation (not just of the voters but also of the candidates) (see, e.g., Street 2014). According to our results, even after controlling for candidates' party affiliation (both the incumbent's and the hypothetical candidate's),[12] the tendency for an electoral penalty for (hypothetical) ethnic minority candidates remains (except for the case of Socialist candidates in France). However, only two constellations reach statistical significance: While ethnic minority candidates do worse at the (hypothetical) polls in France in the case of right-wing candidates and in East Germany in the case of left-wing candidates running against each other, none of the remaining configurations prove to be statistically significant (see Fig. 11.6).

To sum up, our findings show rather weak evidence to support hypothesis 2 (*ethnic penalty hypothesis*). With the exception of socialist candidates in France, ethnic minority candidates suffer electoral penalties compared to their non-ethnic minority counterparts. However, these penalties are statistically significant only for two specific party constellations in France and in East Germany.

CAUSES OF THE EFFECT OF CANDIDATE GENDER, ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND PARTY AFFILIATION

While our findings clearly support the first hypothesis (candidates' party affiliation) and, at least, show some evidence for supporting the second hypothesis (candidates' ethnic background), we did not find any empirical evidence for an impact of candidate gender on vote choice. What we do not know is why we found these effects (or lack of effects) of candidate characteristics on vote choice. In the case of the lack of gender effect, it could be that the gender of respondents neutralizes the impact. While women respondents might have preferred the female candidates, men could have chosen
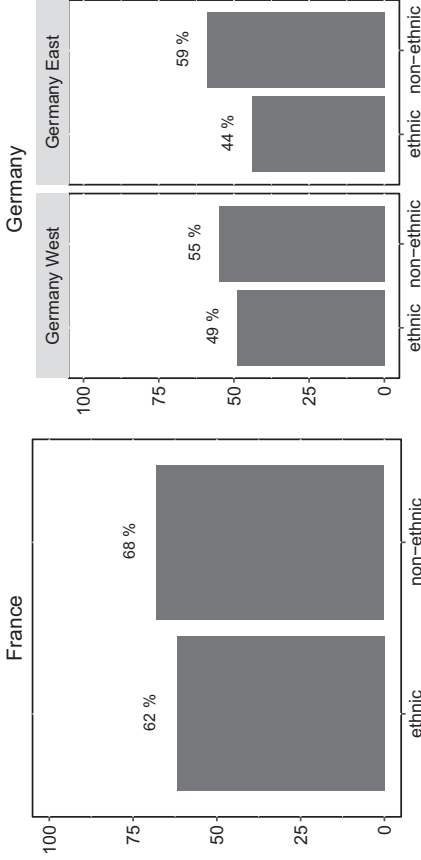
Fig. 11.5 Electoral performance of ethnic minority candidates in France and Germany

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France n = 605, Germany West n = 625, Germany East n= 262

Notes: Pearson's Chi-square test and Fischer's exact test: France χ^2 = 2.1 (p = .15), Germany West χ^2 = 2.29 (p = .13), Germany East χ^2 = 6 (p = .01)

Item wording: see "Data and method"

Fig. 11.6 Electoral performance of ethnic minority candidates in France and Germany controlled by party affiliation (and incumbent's party affiliation in the case of East Germany)

the male candidates (*H3b Gender solidarity hypothesis*). Moreover, our previous results about the effect of candidates' party affiliation (i.e., left-wing candidates win more votes) might be due to the fact that voters decide according to their ideological positioning (*H1a Political logic hypothesis*). Finally, the negative effects observed for ethnic minority candidates could be associated with the ideological leaning of the respondents, that is, right-wing voters are more reluctant to vote for ethnic minority candidates than their left-leaning counterparts (*H2a Ethnic political logic hypothesis*).

In order to examine the causes of the observed effects of candidate characteristics, we used a binomial logistical regression with the vote for the hypothetical candidate as a dichotomous dependent variable and the candidate characteristics (gender, ethnic background, party affiliation), the left-right self-positioning and gender of the respondent as independent variables and a dummy variable for the country. In order to test our hypotheses, we ran six interaction terms (see Table 11.1).

The results are shown in Table 11.1. All three political effects (candidate's party affiliation, respondent's ideological self-positioning, interaction term between the two) have a significant impact on vote choice. When a respondent evolves from the extreme left to a more conservative position, his or her chances to vote for a leftist candidate decrease (the odds ratio being smaller than 1 and highly significant), but when the candidate is conservative (here the interaction term becomes active), the odds are higher than 1 and show a growing and highly significant probability to

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Fig. 11.6 (continued) Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey, France: left-wing $n = 320$, right-wing $n = 285$; Germany West: left-wing $n = 337$, right-wing $n = 288$; Germany East (without Left party): leftwing $n = 45$, right-wing $n = 45$; Germany East (incumbent Left party): left-wing $n = 43$, right-wing $n = 42$; Germany East (hypoth. candidate Left party): left-wing incumb. $n = 38$, right-wing incumb. $n = 49$

Notes: Shown are the percentage points differences, e.g., for the case of Germany East (without Left party), compared to a non-ethnic candidate running for the left-wing party, an ethnic candidate also running for the left-wing party (both running against a right-wing incumbent) has an electoral disadvantage of −10 percent; the electoral (dis)advantage of the ethnic candidate is shown in percentage points for all constellations in the table below the figure. Pearson's Chi-square test and Fischer's exact test: France: left-wing $\chi^2 = 0.15$ ($p = .7$), right-wing $\chi^2 = 3.41$ ($p = .08$); Germany West: left-wing $\chi^2 = 1.45$ ($p = .23$), right-wing $\chi^2 = 0.72$ ($p = .4$); Germany East (without Left party): left-wing $\chi^2 = 0.55$ ($p = .46$), right-wing $\chi^2 = 0.01$ ($p = .9$); Germany East (incumbent Left party): left-wing $\chi^2 = 3$ ($p = .08$), right-wing $\chi^2 = 1.43$ ($p = .23$); Germany East (hypoth. candidate Left party): left-wing $\chi^2 = 2.76$ ($p = .1$), right-wing $\chi^2 = 1$ ($p = .33$)

Item wording: see "Data and method"

Table 11.1 The causes of the effect of candidate gender, ethnic background and party affiliation

	Odds-Ratio	Std. Err.	95 percent Conf. Interval
Left-right scale	0.681***	0.047	0.594–0.780
Party candidate (1 = right-wing)	0.001***	0.001	0.001–0.003
Left-right scale* party candidate	2.833***	0.207	2.455–3.269
Country (1 = Germany)	0.578	0.132	0.369–0.904
Gender candidate (1 = female)	2.500	1.180	0.991–6.305
Gender candidate *country	1.036	0.271	0.621–1.729
Left-right scale *gender candidate	0.880	0.063	0.764–1.013
Gender respondent (1 = female)	1.339	0.241	0.941–1.906
Gender respondent *gender candidate	0.719	0.183	0.435–1.185
Ethnic background (1 = ethnic)	2.529*	1.152	1.036–6.174
Ethnic background *country	0.883	0.231	0.528–1.474
Ethnic background *left-right scale	0.837*	0.061	0.725–0.966
LR chi^2	360.92		
Prob > chi^2	0.0000		
R^2 (Hosmer/Lemeshow)	0.19		
Log-Likelihood	−743.55649		
N	1353		

Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey

Notes: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$

support the hypothetical candidate. Hypothesis 1a (*Political logic hypothesis*) can, therefore, be confirmed. The respondents in the experiment chose between the candidates according to a predictable and understandable pattern. This also confirms the credibility and the quality of the experiment: Voters rely on their traditional heuristics in the decision-making process. We can, therefore, conclude that party is still a strong cue that structures voting behavior in France and Germany.

But what are the reasons for the lack of a gender effect and the effect of ethnic background? Do they also interact with political factors and are there differences between the two countries?

Contrary to the party and ideological variables, candidate gender does not have a statistically significant impact on voter choice, neither alone nor in interaction with other variables. There is no statistically significant gender effect in combination with the country or with ideological self-positioning. The likelihood of voting for a female candidate does not vary significantly between France and Germany (*H3c National gender hypothesis*), nor does it

vary according to the respondent's left-right position (*H3a Gender political logical hypothesis*). The hypothesis of gender solidarity (H3b) cannot be supported by the data. The odds ratio is not in the expected direction (even more, it points to a decrease in the likelihood of voting for a female hypothetical candidate when the respondent is a woman) nor are the results statistically significant. Therefore, amongst the various hypotheses related to gender, none seems very robust. Thus, the lack of gender effect on candidates' results stems from the very weak effect of the gender-related hypothesis at the micro-level.

The results in Table 11.1 also show that ethnic background has a statistically significant (positive) impact on the likelihood of voting for the hypothetical candidate. The interactive variable between ethnic minority candidate and left-right position is significant (0.015) and with the expected effect. Regardless of the country, the left tends to be more open towards ethnic minority candidates than the right. H2a regarding the ethnic political logic is, therefore, supported by the data. Note that the ethnic minority candidate variable becomes highly positive and significant when we control for the relationship between ideology and ethnicity. So, all other things being equal, being an ethnic minority candidate is not a burden when the respondents are from the left, and it starts to be one only when the respondent is located at the center-left. However, the interactive variable for a specific ethnic effect in Germany is not significant. We can, therefore, conclude that hypothesis H2b about an impact of the different models of citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany on the electoral effect of ethnic background cannot be supported by our data.

Gender, Ethnicity? Party Affiliation Matters!

Our results show that, first, a candidate's gender does not seem to have an impact on the likelihood of candidate support. Neither are female candidates perceived to perform better or worse at the polls than their male counterparts. There are also no differences between France and Germany regarding the ideological leaning of the respondents (see Fig. 11.7).

Candidates' ethnic background, by contrast, can come with an electoral penalty. However, in accordance with previous studies (e.g., Street 2014), a statistically significant (negative) effect can only be observed in combination with the ideology of the voters. Unlike the absent gender effect, the ethnic effect occurs regardless of the country. What counts first is the impact of candidates' party affiliation in combination with the respondents' party ideology. This is in line with our expectations and previous

Hypothesis	Empirical support
H1. Party cueing hypothesis	Yes
H1a. Political logic hypothesis	Yes
H2. Ethnic penalty hypothesis	No
H2a. Ethnic political logic hypothesis	Yes
H2b. Citizenship model hypothesis	No
H3. Gender hypothesis	No
H3a. Gender political logic hypothesis	No
H3b. Gender solidarity hypothesis	No
H3c. National gender hypothesis	No
H4. Voting logic hypothesis	Yes
Source: CITREP, 2010. Population survey.	

Fig. 11.7   Overview of the empirical support for the hypotheses

findings, but it is still an important result, particularly for France with its well-known candidate-centered electoral system.

We are aware of a number of caveats about our study. In particular, there is concern that, in experimental methods, the contextual factors of vote choice cannot be taken into account (while, at the same time, this low-information environment is a key aim when using this kind of experimental design). Several scholars argue that, particularly regarding racial voting, the personal attributes of minority candidates and the electoral context influence the reactions of the (ethnic) majority voters (Citrin et al. 1990, 76). However, as already mentioned, using real election data is difficult in the French or German context because of the small number of candidates of immigrant origins. More research is also needed in order to understand, first, why there are so few female MPs (particularly in the French parliament) even though the voters do not seem to be reluctant to vote for women; and, second, why—even within French and German left-wing parties—ethnic minority MPs are underrepresented even though our data points to a negative ethnic effect largely only among right-wing voters. Clearly, the internal workings of political parties must be examined in order to identify possible obstacles and barriers to minority representation.

Notes

1. http://leplus.nouvelobs.com/contribution/552868-gouvernement-ayrault-enfin-une-equipe-socialiste-aux-couleurs-de-la-france.html (04/11/2015).

2. These are the authors' calculations. The calculations for the visible minority population have to be taken carefully as they are only an approximate measure.

3. http://www.france24.com/fr/20170620-legislatives-elus-issus-diversite-plus-presents-jamais-assemblee-nationale.

4. https://www.bundestag.de/bundestag/abgeordnete18/mdb_zahlen/frauen_maenner/260128.

5. Following Lau and Redlawsk (2001, 953–954), there are five heuristics voters can rely on when evaluating a candidate: party-affiliation, ideology, endorsement, viability (through poll results), and appearance (also gender, race). The authors emphasize the fact that these heuristics are in particular helpful for politically sophisticated persons (Lau and Redlawsk 2001, 966).

6. Interestingly, Bieber (2013) found for Germany that while voters did not discriminate against women candidates regarding their voting intention, they attributed significantly lower chances to win for those candidates compared to their male counterparts (Bieber 2013, 119).

7. At a statistically significant level this holds only true for right-wing voters who at the same time feel threatened by ethnic minorities and suppose that the ethnic minority candidate is running for a left-wing party (Street 2014, 7). Nevertheless, this can also be due to the small sample size of ethnic minority candidates.

8. Following Mutz (2011, 54) "[t]he goal of vignette treatments is to evaluate what difference it makes when the actual object of study or judgment, or the context in which that object appears, is systematically changed in some way."

9. CAPI stands for Common Application Programming Interface. The manipulated variables were randomly assigned independently from one another. However, we have to point to some biases in our sample. For the case of West Germany, there is, first, an uneven distribution of cases regarding party affiliation and gender of the hypothetical candidate (Chi² p = 0.006), and, second, regarding ethnic background and gender, but only in the case of the right-wing candidates (Chi² p = 0.021). In the East German sample, there is an uneven distribution of cases regarding, first, party affiliation and ethnic background, but only for hypothetical races between female candidates and SPD opponents (Chi² p = 0.044), and, second, party affiliation and gender in the case of non-ethnic minority candidates against a CDU candidate (Chi² p = 0.021). In the French sample,

however, there is no statistically significant overrepresentation of any combination of the value of the three manipulated variables.

10. For French and West German respondents, the incumbent's party affiliation has not been randomly assigned as a treatment to the challenger. But for the case of East Germany we have, due to regional particularities of the German party system, a two-by-two-by-three-by-two design. The incumbent's party affiliation in this case has been randomly assigned as a treatment to the challenger. For example, if CDU was assigned as the challenger's party affiliation, he or she was placed in opposition to an incumbent either from the Social Democrats (SPD) or Die Linke (party of the far-left). Furthermore, it is worth noting that the hypothetical candidate in Bavaria runs for the Christian Social Union (CSU) and not for the Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

11. https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/ Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/Migrationshintergrund/Tabellen/ MigrationshintergrundLaender.html (10/12/15).

12. As our previous results have shown, the gender effect has proved neither to be uniform nor statistically significant. That is why we do not control for gender effects when analyzing the impact of candidates' ethnic background.

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Some Conclusions on the Relationship Between Citizens and Their Representatives in France and Germany

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The preceding chapters, based on extensive parallel research in two major European democracies, provide evidence on the state of the relationship between citizens and their representatives in France and in Germany at a time marked by public cynicism toward parliaments and by a revival of interest in direct democracy. In view of the importance of the representative relationship for the functioning of parliamentary democracy, it is surprising that systematic comparative research on this subject is so rare. One reason is that the study of representation faces conceptual problems which become obvious only in comparative research. Underlying the concept of representation is the assumption that the decisions of parliament *are* the decisions of the citizens of the nation and that these decisions are therefore legitimate. Today in many countries, including France, Germany and the United States, that assumption is challenged. The equation of parliament

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with the nation has always had an essential implausibility and was often rejected in political theory, most notably by Rousseau. Its justification has always depended on a cultural context, one in which the institution of parliament is venerated and in which there is a consensus on what constitutes a fair process for selecting its members. The value of empirical research on representation across countries is that it confronts variation in these contexts. The contexts themselves are often overlooked because they do not vary within a single country at one moment in time.

Comparative research on the representative relationship raises at least five basic questions:

- To what extent is representation conceived as a relationship between individual citizens and individual representatives?
- To what extent is it conceived as a relationship between citizens grouped geographically or by political parties or by gender or race or class, and representatives similarly grouped?
- To what extent is it conceived as a relationship in which citizens expect their representatives to satisfy their demands?
- To what extent is it conceived as a relationship in which representatives expect their constituents to accept their decisions?
- To what extent is it conceived as a relationship between ordinary citizens and political amateurs, and to what extent is it accepted as a relationship between professional interest groups and professional politicians?

These questions make clear that the representative relationship has many aspects. It is shaped by the institutional setting in which it occurs, by the organization of parliament and its role in government, by the system of political parties and the electoral system, and by the expectations of politics embedded in a country's political history and political culture. Only by comparing representation in different institutional settings can we gain a general understanding of this important relationship. The comparison between citizens and members of parliament in France and Germany, which the foregoing chapters analyze, is therefore exceptionally valuable. It is also exceptionally timely, coming at a moment when even in established democracies such as Germany and France there is skepticism of representative institutions and enthusiasm for various forms of direct democracy.

Parliamentary government in France and Germany exhibits a good deal of similarity, but there are also instructive systemic differences. Members of parliament in both countries engage actively with citizens in their

districts, even more strongly in France than in Germany because all French MPs are elected in small single-member constituencies and, until 2017, often held local offices, notably positions as mayors, in addition to their seats in parliament. Legislation now prohibits most forms of double office holding. It will be interesting to see whether parliamentary careers in France will now increasingly depend on representatives' parties rather than on their local roots, as they long have in Germany.

In both countries, representatives rely on their constituency contacts for information on political issues. The chapter by Siefken and Costa illustrates the effect of the electoral system on the "home style" of representatives and the importance of the geographically defined constituency in both countries. The mass media are overwhelmingly important in providing communication between representatives and citizens in both France and Germany, but they give the average member of parliament and the average constituent only limited opportunity for individual contact. Schnittny and Schnatterer note the limits of communication through mass media, and this makes the representatives' presence in the district important. In both countries, district work gives members of parliament relevant information on the mood of the public and on the effectiveness of national policies. In addition, it gives representatives important opportunities to explain themselves and their positions. Because parliamentary elections are so strongly influenced by the political parties, district work has only limited influence on the election prospect of representatives, but it is an important supplement to communication through mass media.

There are, however, French-German differences. In Germany, MPs spend substantial time with their local party organizations, a reflection of the party-rootedness of German MPs by comparison to their French counterparts. Deiss-Helbig, Schindler and Squarcioni find that French MPs have an incentive to distance themselves from their parties and to emphasize their ties to local organizations. This was particularly true as long as French MPs held significant local offices in addition to their seat in parliament. Such a "double mandate", which is not found in Germany, may become a characteristic of the past in France. Until now, the tradition has been that French citizens had clear expectations that their representatives will deal with local issues, while German citizens are more aware of the role that their representatives play in policy making at the national level. This contrast reflects the accurate public perception that the German Bundestag has a more important role in making public policy than the French National Assembly. Dageförde and Schindler describe the resulting difference between the French and German conceptions of representation.

At the constituency level, a citizen's sense of being represented depends on the degree to which the representative belongs to the voter's preferred party or at least to the voter's left-right preference. The left-right identification is more important in France than in Germany because the French electoral system provides a second-ballot run-off between the leading candidates on the first ballot, often restricting a voters' final choice to a choice between a left- and a right-wing candidate. Identification with the party of the district candidate is less crucial for the German than for the French voter because the German voter is represented both by a member from the voter's local district and by a set of members elected to represent the voter's *Land,* a set likely to include members belonging to every party. Brouard, Deiss-Helbig and Dageförde show that in both countries party identification or identification with the left-right tendency of their member is the most important aspect of the voter's sense of being represented, exceeding other identities such as gender, social class, ethnicity or occupation, identities that were once important.

Increasingly, a parliamentary career is open only to those willing to devote themselves full time to it. Kerrouche and Schüttemeyer discuss the implications of this development. Nostalgia for the citizen politician, a political amateur engaged in politics as an avocation, is unrealistic in France and Germany as it has long been in the United States. Parliamentary representation is its own profession, as Max Weber recognized a century ago. It has taken a long time for citizens to cope with the fact that their representative is not really "one of them."

The citizens' sense that they are represented depends on the link provided by political parties, and that link is stronger today in Germany than in France because of the relative stability of the German party system and the party-centeredness of the German electoral system. After a fine-grained comparison between political activists and citizens with only an average interest in politics, Gabriel concludes that those citizens who are most engaged in politics are most likely to feel represented: political participation and the sense of feeling represented reinforce each other in both countries. The decline in participation, measured by voter turnout and by other forms of political participation, evident throughout Western Europe and the United Sates, may therefore explain the decline in political trust and the decline of confidence in the citizen-representative relationship. It is however unlikely that direct democracy procedures—referenda, internet

voting and voter initiatives—will displace representative institutions for solutions to most political issues. The complexity of contemporary issues, which have generated impatience with the capacity of representative institutions, are unlikely to be resolved without the deliberative processes that representative parliaments make possible and, hopefully, acceptable.

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.