The Uncommitted Citizens

Explaining lack of commitment to liberal democracy

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IV

Abstract

Why are some citizens uncommitted to Liberal Democracy? In this thesis, I attempt to explain this with the use of two main arguments. The first is that this democratic detachment is a consequence of deficient democratic knowledge. The second seeks to uncover a possible link between these citizens and the voters of populist radical right parties, thereby opening for the possibility that at least some of these voters are undemocratic. Through the use of statistical analyses, I find superior empirical support for the former, thereby indicating that this is the most important explanation of democratic detachment. I further find that these citizens are unlikely to vote, compared to the rest, substantiating the conclusion that they are indeed detached from the liberal democratic status quo present in Europe.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to underline the importance my family has had on my theoretical curiosity, sense of justice and love for thorough discussions. Numerous heated debates with all members has fueled me to better my vocabulary and helped me to better explain and support claims, as these have of course been dubious on multiple occasions during these discussions. I am further thankful for the guidance provided by my supervisor, Elisabeth Ivarsflaten. While the distance between Oslo and Bergen is substantial, we made it work. I would also like to thank Knut-Andreas Christophersen, who has helped me with software problems along the way, as well as Haakon Thue Lie, for linguistic corrections. Last, but in no way least, I would like to express gratitude for the constant love and support I have received from my partner, Julie Kjetun Dyngeland, which has been instrumental for the completion of this thesis.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Right-wing extremism is again in the forefront of media attention, as well as political science. During the past two decades, nationalist parties in Europe constantly increased their share of votes. These parties are thus promoting their political program to a larger share of the European populations. The research on this phenomenon mostly concerns the electoral success on cross-country basis. Some research conclude that the reason for this success, is the increased normalcy of radical attitudes (Mudde, 2010), i.e. that attitudes formerly perceived as extreme have become more mainstream. Many researchers[1] fear this diffusion, and the increased conventionality of radical attitudes. In the literature on anti-systemic parties, Giovanni Sartori (In Capoccia, 2005, 28) links these parties to the opposition of liberal democracy. Their success could therefore prove detrimental to the liberal status quo.

Simultaneously, a drop in support of democracy as the ideal system of governance is seemingly observed around the world (Taub, 2016), and a decline in voter turnout in most countries is evident (Dassonneville and Hooghe, 2017, 184). Furthermore, some researchers[2] point to the fact that political parties have declined in their role as the democratic linkage between government and the people (Dalton in Norris, 2011, 61). The decline again leads to a decay in trust of political actors. The lower trust, and the declined voter turnout, suggests an alienation, or detachment from democracy.

From the democratic literature, Ferrín and Kriesi (2016) recently published a comprehensive collection of analyses derived from the democracy module, featured in the sixth wave of the European Social Survey. Among their findings, they show that democracy as a system receives an almost universal support by Europeans. However, Kriesi et al. (2016, 86) uncovered that a surprising 26.9 per cent of the respondents did not consider more than one of the twelve democratic elements included as required for democracy. They called this

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[1] Mudde (2016a) and Klandermans and Mayer (2006), among others.
[2] As Redondo (2014), and Schmidt and Holmberg (1995).

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group *uncommitted democrats*, as they seemingly carry, at best, a deficient view of what it takes to make a democracy. They also carry a lower average level of support for democracy as an ideal (Ferrín, 2016, 295), indicating that these citizens might in fact be undemocratic.

1.2   The research question and its relevance

This thesis aims to uncover the profile of these citizens, uncommitted to liberal democracy. How can their attitudes toward democracy be explained; Do they lack the democratic knowledge needed, or is it a conscious choice? Thus, the research question is as follows:

Why are some citizens less committed to liberal democracy?

Drawing on the populist radical right literature, I expect the uncommitted citizens to share characteristics commonly associated with these parties' voters. A leading hypothesis is therefore that lack of commitment to liberal democracy is related to radical right voting. Alternatively, I expect that this lack of commitment is a result of democratic apathy, or detachment from democracy, and its principles[3].

This thesis situates itself in the cross-section of the literature on attitudes toward democracy and the field studying the populist radical right. It therefore serves to advance the literature on democratic opposition and extremism: My results confirm that the uncommitted citizens should in fact be considered extremists[4]. In the struggle to find a reliable measure of individuals opposing democracy, this operationalization of the uncommitted citizens might serve as a template, or inspiration, to further research dedicated to cross-country analyses involving undemocratic respondents.

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[3]Attributing this to political parties is beyond the scope of this thesis. Consequently, I will make no assumptions regarding this relationship.

[4]The results confirm this presupposition.

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1.3   The structure of the thesis

This section serves to walk the reader through the thesis. Starting with relevant concepts, I define liberal democracy, extremism and populism. The former includes the various elements normally included in the multi-faceted and ambiguous concept that is liberal democracy. In further define extremism as the opposition to liberal democracy. Thereafter, I show that the populist vision of democracy is in direct conflict with the paradigm of liberal democracy.

Chapter three details the theoretical framework, starting with the original conceptualization of the uncommitted democrats[5] by Kriesi et al. (2016). Relevant literature on democratic knowledge, and the populist radical right, serve to derive hypotheses, attempting to explain the attitudes of this group. A review of Norris' (2011) empirical discoveries, concerning variation in democratic knowledge, suggests that the uncommitted citizens show this view of democracy because of a deficiency in democratic understanding. Norris (2011) further found an empirical relationship between degrees of democratic knowledge, and multiple characteristics. Drawn from her findings, these are the resulting hypotheses:

H_1: New democracies are more likely to contain uncommitted citizens.

H_2: Independent media systems are less likely to contain uncommitted citizens.

H_3: The lower educated are more likely to be uncommitted.

H_4: Low consumers of news media are more likely to be uncommitted.

H_8: The uncommitted citizens are less likely to vote.

The three subsequent hypotheses are derived from the literature describing populist radical right voters. If I can find attitudes and characteristics common for these voters and the

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[5] Synonymous with uncommitted citizens in Kriesi et al. (2016).

uncommitted citizens, it would indicate that these two groups are indeed related. Empirical findings[6] from this tradition led me to these expectations:

H5: Men are more likely to be uncommitted citizens.

H6: Individuals opposed to immigration are more likely to be uncommitted.

H7: The uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties.

Reviewing Schwartz' (2007) work on basic human values provided me with an additional hypothesis. Nationalists are commonly associated with values of conservation, more specifically tradition, national aspirations and security, and right-wingers with the value dimension of self-enhancement. If the uncommitted citizens are indeed populist radical right voters, or at least adherents of this party family, they should share some of these values. This results in the last hypothesis:

H9: The uncommitted citizens are more likely to share values associated with nationalist right-wingers.

Moving on to the fourth chapter, it is dedicated to present the choices I made, concerning design and methods. Here, I consider equivalence in terms of case selection and measurement validity. I also present the relevant populist radical right parties, before embarking on the operationalizations. In this section, I uncover a problem with Kriesi et al.'s (2016) uncommitted democrats, as these show high means on all democratic elements. I therefore narrow down the conceptualization, resulting in the operationalization of the *uncommitted citizens*, drawing on, but distinct from, the uncommitted democrats described by Kriesi et al. (2016). Moving over to the relevant methods, I introduce logistic regressions, both binominal and multinomial. Closing this chapter, I address methodological challenges, both in general, and specific to this thesis.

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[6] Findings by Ivarsflaten and Stubager (2013), Bos et al. (2017), Coffé (2013), among others.

The tripartite fifth chapter presents the analyses, and their results. The first section covers the testing of the country-level hypotheses, while the second segment seeks to reveal the uncommitted citizens' socio-demographic background. The latter serves to test hypotheses three through six. The third line of analyses will uncover the uncommitted citizens' voting behavior, effectively testing the two hypotheses related to this. Forth, I test the remaining hypothesis, concerning the basic human values. Concluding this chapter, I review the predictive power of the explanatory variables[7], as well as evaluating the robustness of the results.

1.4 The results

When testing the hypotheses, I find empirical support for some of them. Among the supported hypotheses is the confirmation of the relationship between democratic experience and commitment to democracy. I also find support for the expectations involving education level, and opposition to immigration. I further show that the uncommitted citizens are far more likely of abstaining from elections, rather than to vote for any other party, including the populist radical right. Consequently, these citizens are indeed uncommitted to liberal democracy, as they do not engage in the most common democratic practice.

Therefore, the socialization thesis goes a long way in explaining the lack of commitment to liberal democracy[8]. The findings concerning immigration attitudes and the value dimensions further indicate that the uncommitted citizens are right-wingers, as I also find an empirical relationship between the values of the two groups.

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[7] This section is in the fifth chapter's appendix.
[8] It could also serve to explain the falling voter turnout that is observable across Eastern Europe. Following a decade of high democratic hopes in this region, these voters seem to have become increasingly disillusioned by various political scandals (Dahlberg and Solevid, 2016, 507). The complete explanation for this is of course more complex, but exceeds the scope of this thesis. This confirmation of the socialization thesis could therefore serve as an additional explanation for this phenomenon, and least in the post-communist states.

2 Key concepts

This chapter includes concepts relevant to the thesis. The first section will cover conceptualizations of liberal democracy, and the elements related to these. The second section will cover the opposition to liberal democracy, defined as extremism. The third section will elaborate on the concept of populism, covering the different variations and incarnations, as well as the populist vision of democracy.

2.1 Liberal democracy

Liberal democracy is a multi-faceted and ambiguous concept, often used synonymously with democracy in a European context. Consequently, democratic countries can be organized in any number of differing ways (Lijphart, 2012, 1). Commonly associated with representative democracy, the range of countries perceived as liberal democratic include a wide variety of institutional designs: From constitutional monarchies to parliamentary and presidential systems (Frankenberg, 2012, 255). As to the elements necessary to consider a system liberal democratic, these also vary in the literature. However, there seems to be a consensus around some common features. Charles Tilly (2007, 7-9) presents four approaches to identify these elements. First, the *constitutional* approach includes the laws a regime promotes and enacts. Nonetheless, Tilly (2007, 7) considers this to be misleading in defining democracy, as there often exists large variations between constitutions and actual practices. Second, a *substantive* method considers the conditions that a regime promotes, i.e. improving quality of life. He further shows that this definition is also troubled, especially when considering trade-offs between the elements. E.g. if all citizens of a country are equally poor, they are equal, yet struggle with day-to-day survival. Concentrating on outcomes is therefore problematic. Third, a *procedural* definition mostly concerns electoral processes, in Schumpeterian tradition. The fourth approach, the *process-oriented*, demand a minimal set of processes as necessary for democracy. Considering the problems associates with the first two conceptualizations, it therefore seems more useful to consider the procedural and the process-oriented methods of defining liberal democracy.

When reviewing the democratic literature, one of the most, if not *the* most, influential theorists is Robert Dahl (Crick, 2002, 107; Tilly, 2007, 9; Ferrín and Kriesi, 2016, 4).

Further developing a set of procedural and process-oriented elements of democracy, he views a wide variety of these as necessary for democracy. Starting with the procedural elements, conceptions of democracy usually include a *competitive multiparty system, universal adult suffrage*, as well as *regular, free and fair elections* (Crick, 2002, 107). This further requires the existence of some process-oriented elements, as *inclusiveness of all adults in elections, effective participation in democratic processes, equal voting rights, enlightened understanding of democracy* and *equal share in the control of the public agenda* (Ferrín and Kriesi, 2016, 3; Tilly, 2007, 9).

To further secure these elements, Dahl underlines the importance of *accountability* and *responsiveness* in the relation between governments and citizens. The latter represents a link between the citizens' preferences and the actions of the policy-makers, while the aforementioned represents the elected representatives' responsibility towards the citizens for the policies they implement (Ferrín and Kriesi, 2016, 3), and thus their exclusion from public offices if they fail to observe their electorates' preferences. The chain of accountability is implemented through *vertical accountability*. This involves the governments being accountable to their citizens, through *answerability*, explaining and justifying decisions to citizens, and *transparency*, citizen access to information. Thus, in an ideal democracy, there is an ongoing discourse between representatives and those being represented. The chain of responsiveness is four-staged and includes formation, mobilization, aggregation and implementation of citizen preferences, and describes the path from the citizen's creation of preferences to representative policy-making. This includes an enlightened understanding of the issues at hand, often made from a process of *deliberation*, i.e. conversing with fellow citizens before making decisions (Held, 2006, 234). It is related to the formation of preferences, and is likely to enhance effective participation and voting equality. The chain also presupposes *distinctive and viable political alternatives*, as this is required to provide a political choice close to their own preferences. Lastly, this chain requires that the formation of government is made according to the citizens' preferences in elections (Ferrín and Kriesi, 2016, 3-4).

In addition to these, it is common to include some *liberal* elements, aspects regarded as essential for free electoral competition to exist. According to Dahl (in Ferrín and Kriesi, 2016, 5) it is necessary to include *freedom of expression, freedom of association* and *access to information*. Yet another tradition that has contributed to the democracy literature is republicanism (Ferrín and Kriesi, 2016, 5; Held, 2006, 304-5). This tradition states the

obligations of governments, and the institutional mechanisms made to ensure that these obligations are met, known as *horizontal accountability*. This includes *the rule of law*, i.e. that all, government officials included, are treated as equals before the law.

Summing up Ferrín and Kriesi's (2016) framework in the creation of their operationalization of the uncommitted citizens, the twelve elements included in the definition of liberal democracy throughout the volume are as follows: Free and fair elections, multiple party choices, parties are free to criticize, retrospective accountability, justification by government, participation in deliberation, and responsibility to other governments make up the electoral elements. The rule of law, horizontal accountability, minority rights, press freedom and media reliability are the five liberal elements (Hernández, 2016, 54). Together, they make up the framework and variables for the democracy module completed in the sixth round of the European Social Survey. The next section will cover opposition to these elements, and why this is considered extremism in the context of contemporary Europe.

2.2 Extremism

In many publications on extremism and related subjects, the fear of its detrimental effects on liberal democracy is the most outspoken (e.g. Mudde, 2016; Klandermans and Mayer, 2006). Mudde (2016, xxii) even states that "the challenge to liberal democracy is the main reason for the long-standing academic and public obsession with the far right". He also points out that there is a distinction between democracy, and *liberal democracy*. Capoccia's (2005) definitions of anti-system parties further this view. With references to Satori (in Capoccia, 2005, 28), Capoccia (2005) states that anti-system is often used synonymously with antidemocratic. A review of his framework will show why.

Capoccia (2005) draws on Sartori when he proposes a two-fold definition for categorizing the anti-systemic: A relational and an ideological criterion. The former is a relativist approach. Parties are thus defined as anti-systemic by their ideological distance from the political center, according to issues of fundamental importance to the regime they operate within. Using this approach, the categorization of these parties is therefore constrained by the ideological center of the party system (Capoccia, 2005, 28). It therefore allows for variation in the definitions of two ideologically similar parties as anti-systemic. E.g., the NSDAP is likely to be considered an extremist party in almost all modern systems, but within the Third Reich, they were the system and the ideological center. Drawing on

this definition, the extreme parties all possess an extraneous ideology, deviating considerably from the rest, as well as contributing with delegitimizing propaganda on the system within which they operate (Capoccia, 2005, 29).

The ideological criterion, on the other hand, defines the anti-systemic party according to the content of their actual ideology. Parties in different systems are therefore alike if they possess the same inherent ideological character. Sartori (in Capoccia, 2005, 32) further defines these parties as those that "would change, if they could, not the government, but the system of government". The opposition to the regime, and the values associated to it, is therefore central to this approach. This leaves the question of what the system is. This may overlap with the relational criterion, depending on the definition of said system, and the scope of it. Further to the center of Capoccia's interpretation, we find a higher degree of generality. Reviewing the existing literature on the anti-systemic parties, he finds two major interpretations of *the system* they challenge. One consists of some democratic ideal and the other of a "territorially bounded unit" (Capoccia, 2005, 33). The latter suggests a wish to secede from a larger state, i.e. separatism. More interesting in this context and more commonly used, the former suggests that liberal democracy characterizes the system, at least in a European context. To be ideological anti-systemic therefore means to be a challenge to democracy itself. This again begs the question of definition, as providing one to democracy is not an easy task. In this context, Capoccia (2005, 33) states that the minimal procedural definition proves insufficient. Our conception of democracy has exceeded those bounds, and has expanded to include additional aspects, like racial and gender equality, as well as rights to minorities and immigrants. The rejection of the liberal elements cited in the section above is therefore sufficient to be considered anti-systemic, or extreme. He also underlines that this kind of party need not be opposed to *any* vision of democracy per se, as is exemplified in the section on the populist vision of democracy. The opposition to liberal democracy is sufficient (Capoccia, 2005, 34).

Actively using relevant literature, the core of Capoccia's framework therefore holds that any beliefs and values that contradicts the core of liberal democracy is anti-systemic, or extreme, in a system defined by liberal democracy. Combining the two criterions, they suggest that opposing liberal democracy an extremist position, in a European context. Thus, any challenges to the Western paradigm of liberal democracy is regarded as undemocratic and extreme.

2.3 Populism

Populism is among the most disputed and vague terms in political science (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013; Jupskås, 2016). The most common definition of this party family is made through an 'ideational approach' (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013), although some view the phenomenon as predominantly a mobilization strategy or a form of political communication (Jupskås, 2016).

The mobilization approach emphasizes charismatic populist leaders recruiting a heterogeneous group of voters, in a plebiscitary manner. It is the opposite of a bottom-up mobilization and recruitment style used by social movements. This conceptualization usually entails a very vague ideological position, exemplified in the early incarnation of Berlusconi's Forza Italia. However, this view has been hugely criticized for not limiting the scope of what could be considered populist, as this is a strategy also used by the typical catch-all party (Jupskås, 2016, 188-189). The view of populism as a form of political communication underlines a rhetoric characterized by a simple language, direct approach and calculated provocative statements. It is often made clear through a frequent use of hyperbolic rhetoric and spectacular actions designed to draw attention to their causes and present themselves as a viable and independent alternative to the established political elite. The challenge to this approach is the variation in style of communication among politicians commonly defined as populists, as well as the common use of a simple language among most politicians come election time. Therefore, it is in the view of an apparent conflict between the people and the elite that we find the true ideological center of populism (Jupskås, 2016, 189; Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013).

Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013) draw on Freeden and Canovan's *ex positivo*-definition of populism. As indicated above, the interpretation of the "pure people" facing the power-abuse of the "corrupted elite" is in the core of this understanding. In this narrative, the elites are presented as antagonists, not observing the needs of the people, and ignoring the general will. The variation exists in the differing views of who exactly constitute the people, as well as the elite. It is therefore thought of as a "thin-centered" ideology, not representing a full ideological profile, but rather attaching itself upon other ideologies that further define answers to the larger political questions (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2013). The most common historical combinations are related to the socialist, neoliberal and nationalist traditions. The former have been a more common phenomenon in Latin-American politics, with Hugo Chavez, Evo Morales and Rafael Correa as modern examples. This form of populism defines

the socio-economic elite, the bourgeoisie, as adversaries, and the common people, or the proletariat, are the protagonist victims. The neoliberal incarnations defined some European populist parties in the 1980s and 90s, often in the form of anti-taxation parties. The heroes and victims in this narrative are usually independent small business-owners, *the petite bourgeoisie*, who suffers under heavy taxation by an inflated bureaucratic state. Notable examples include the French Poujadist movement, the Tea Party Movement in the United States, and an earlier form of the Norwegian FrP. The third group, the nationalist populists, have seized the largest share of the current spotlight, as well as electoral success. The European contemporary parties originated from a wide variety of traditions, including anti-taxation, mostly in the 1980's and 90's. Their conception of the people is usually defined in an ethnic or cultural sense, thereby promoting opposition to immigration. Often combined with an emphasis on law and order (Jupskås, 2016, 192), this group of parties are most often referred to as *The Populist Radical Right* (PRR), but is also known as *the radical right* (Knutsen, 2018), *extreme right* and *radical right wing-populi*sts, among others (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). The party family is further characterized by cultural protectionism, fearing the loss of national identity, which they want to defend against foreigners (Schmidt, 2017, 6). Notable examples are French *Front National*, Belgian *Vlaams Belang* and Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*.

Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013) also define populism *ex negativo*. Non-populism is therefore defined as either elitism or pluralism. While elitism is characterized as rule of the few, especially in an economic sense, pluralism withhold that diversity strengthen society. This view also posits that the rule of a specific group, be it ethnic communities, intellectuals, army generals or political elites, is detrimental to the people. The main idea is that power ought to be distributed throughout society, therefore promoting a consensus form of democracy, akin to Dahl's model of polyarchy. Populism, while being contradictory to both, could therefore be placed somewhere in between. Rejecting the rule of few, but retaining the dictatorial power of the majority. While the likelihood of a successful political party promoting elitism in a democratic system is extremely small, if at all existent, pluralism is often at the core of the New Left parties' visions[9]. Drawing on Kitchelt's model, the nationalist version of populism can therefore be considered as the opposite of pluralism on a

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[9] The liberal left, defined by cleavages of *New Politics*, where the PRR are the antipode. Read more about New Politics in Knutsen (2018).

vertical line in a two-dimensional political space, where the left-right schema make out the horizontal line (Häusermann and Kriesi, 2015).

2.3.1 The populist vision of democracy

There is an ongoing debate in the field studying the PRR parties, concerning whether these should be viewed as a corrective or a threat to democracy (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012; Kaltwasser, 2012; Muis and Immerzeel, 2017). Taking this duality a step further, Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten (2016) propose that the challenge posed by the PRR on European democracies can be interpreted in two ways: As an alternative democratic vision, or as a fundamental rejection of core democratic principles.

The populist vision of democracy is defined as conflicting with a Madisonian ideal of democracy (Kriesi, 2014, 363). The division of power adjacent to this liberal conception is viewed as too big of a constraint on the people's sovereignty. It is precisely regarding this point that the populist vision diverge from the liberal model, focusing on an unchecked rule of the people, or rather *their* people, in lieu of protecting minorities from "the tyranny of the majority". This represents an illiberal element, as the general will of the majority is always to be prioritized, which is conflicting with minority protection. It is this conception of the "pure" people (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012), juxtaposed against the "elite rule" of representative democracy, which lies at the center of the populist ideology (Jupskås, 2016). Their main message is that the ruling of the state has escaped the people, and that this control has to be reinstated, forwarding a "romantic impulse of directness, spontaneity and the overcoming of alienation" (Canovan in Kriesi, 2014, 363). This involves the deterioration of all intermediaries between the people and decision-makers, leaving a populist leadership as the spokesperson of the *vox populi* (Kriesi, 2014, 363). Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten (2016) further describes it as a majoritarian vision, equaling the will of the majority to what is normatively right. Using the module on democracy from the sixth round of the European Social Survey, they prove empirically that PRR voters support this majoritarian view of democracy. Compared to others, their supporters view direct involvement, through the active use of referendums, as more important for democracy. Consistent with their negative view on constrained sovereignty, they also regard the protection of minority rights and responsibility to other European governments as less important, compared to others (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). This opposition to liberal democratic elements, and

support for an unchecked rule of the majority, show that their vision of democracy is incompatible with liberal democracy.

2.4 Chapter summary

Concluding this chapter, I have defined the basic elements of liberal democracy, as well as the dangers facing it. These dangers are represented by extremism, defined as the opposition to the liberal democratic status quo. It is further shown that the populist vision is antagonistic in its relation to the liberal conception of democracy. I will therefore move on to the relevant theoretical approaches in an attempt to explain why some citizens are uncommitted to liberal democracy.

3   Theoretical framework

This chapter will introduce the theoretical approaches to explain why some citizens are uncommitted to liberal democracy. These include theories of democratic knowledge, literature on the populist radical right, and Schwartz' (2007) theory on basic human values. First, a thorough introduction to the uncommitted democrats is in order.

3.1   The Uncommitted Democrats

This section will cover an introduction to, and discussion of, Ferrín and Kriesi's (2016) *uncommitted democrats.* All contributions are made by various authors in *How European View and Evaluate Democracy,* edited by Mónica Ferrín and Hanspeter Kriesi.

3.1.1 The liberal democracy scale

The democracy module included in the sixth wave of the European Social Survey (ESS) includes a duplicate set of all twelve democratic elements presented in the liberal democracy-section. One set cover respondents' views of which elements considered important for democracy, while the second covered their evaluations of their respective governments' performance in delivering those elements. In an analysis studying whether the quality of democracy affect the relationship between views and evaluations, Kriesi and Saris (2016, 205) found that this relationship was negative for citizens in low quality democracies. The empirical evidence show that they generally carry a more maximalist conception than those from high quality democracies, usually coupled with negative evaluations. In high-quality democracies, on the other hand, evaluations are typically higher than the conceptions, i.e. citizens carry a more minimalist conception, while being less critical of the state of their democracies. Kriesi and Saris (2016, 205) call this a "relative lack of attention to democratic principles in these countries" (Kriesi and Saris, 2016, 205)[10]. This apparent deficiency in democratic knowledge is also visited upon when Kriesi et al. (2016, 84) creates a typology for various levels of commitment to democratic ideals.

Processing the data gathered, Kriesi et al. (2016, 72-77) created a scale including all twelve elements of democracy[11], dubbed the *liberal democracy scale.* After checking for

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[10] These findings indicate that there is no democratic deficit in European high-quality democracies, but this is largely because of the low demands made by citizens in these countries.
[11] Precisely how this was done, will be presented in section 4.2.2.

scalability, they found that the scale could predict how many elements the respondents found extremely important for democracy. This way, they could uncover how many elements the average European consider important, the value zero indicating that no elements are extremely important, and twelve representing all components as vital for democracy. They further used the differing scores on this scale to create a typology.

Based on the various scores on the index, they proposed the creation of a typology of democrats. Those with extremely low values on the liberal democracy scale were classified as *uncommitted democrats*, and the other groups range from *minimal liberal democrats* (least demanding democrats) to *fully committed democrats* (most demanding). They further found that over a quarter of the respondents fell in the former group (Kriesi et al., 2016, 86). Using this typology, it would be interesting to study the differences between the "uncommitted" and the rest. It is noteworthy that the Kriesi et al.'s uncommitted democrats are not necessarily undemocratic. However, they clearly have a deficient view of what it takes to make a democracy (Kriesi et al., 2016, 84). They furthermore show a lower average level of support for democracy as an ideal, compared to all other types of democrats[12] (Ferrín, 2016, 295). In a regression analysis measuring democratic commitment, Alonso (2016, 141-146) also show that the liberal democracy scale, used as an explanatory variable, has a positive effect on attitudes concerning the importance of living in a democracy. This means that the less demanding citizens place less value on a democratic system, compared to the more committed. This pattern in also shown with populist radical right voters (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). It is therefore possible that these uncommitted democrats are related to the success of the PRR, and thus PRR voters, but it could also be the result of democratic ignorance. I will now present the two theoretical approaches, starting with theories of democratic knowledge.

3.2 Democratic knowledge

Pippa Norris (2011, 142) reports that democracy as a system receives an almost universal support. However, this does not imply an equivalent vision of democracy. The staggeringly high amount of positive evaluations of how democracy works in one-party regimes like Vietnam and China show this to be true. She further points out that all evaluations could in

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[12] A mean of 7.0 versus 8.4 for the rest.

fact rest upon "irrational, inflated, uninformed or inaccurate expectations" (Norris, 2011, 142), therefore relying upon the extent of each individuals' political knowledge.

Drawing on Norris' (2011) work, this section will first include four perspectives on individuals' ability to make informed and rational choices on their preferred system of government, as well as evaluations of their current system of government. Second, it will present three approaches for measuring democratic knowledge. Third, it will present Norris' (2011) empirical findings. Forth, this review will serve to make hypotheses as to why some European citizens are seemingly uncommitted to liberal democracy, which will be tested using statistical analyses. Norris (2011) will therefore be used as guidance when creating the explanatory variables.

3.2.1 Theories of democratic knowledge

Socialization theories holds that democratic knowledge and values are acquired through democratic experience. The process of socialization is further conditioned by experiences made during the formative years, i.e. the involvement in democratic practices during childhood. The type of regime in power, and the general political conditions during an individual's early years will therefore define the extent of their democratic mindset. As such, citizens in old democracies are expected to carry more informed attitudes towards democracy and familiarity with how it works (Norris, 2011, 144). Likewise, the attitudes of individuals from failing autocracies are likely to persist, even after a democratic transition, concurrent with theories claiming the stability of human values (See Rokeach, 1973). Norris (2011) also points out that the extent of political knowledge is constrained by the type of media system, i.e. the extent of media independence. Unsurprisingly, reports furthermore show that knowledge gaps within societies are related to variation in levels of formal education (Norris, 2011, 145).

If the existence of uncommitted democrats were to be explained by this theory, it would imply that highly educated respondents from old democracies where media independence is strong would consistently show a higher democratic knowledge compared to others. Indeed, it would also imply that old democracies have a lower likelihood of containing uncommitted citizens, compared to the newer, and that these citizens would show consistently lower levels of education, irrespective of their countries' democratic experience.

However, socialization theories do not stand unchallenged. The more *skeptical theories* of democratic knowledge posits that survey questions on system preferences, evaluation of the system, and the general importance of living in a democracy could prompt answers that are perceived as politically correct and acceptable to the interviewer (Norris, 2011, 145). Interviewer effects might therefore lead to over-reporting. Philip Converse famously stated that many citizens lack coherent beliefs and enduring political preferences (Norris, 2011, 145; Schaeffer and Presser, 2003, 79). Still, in fear of being perceived as ignorant or foolish, they pretend to possess these, providing the interviewer with "non-attitudes". This is contrasted to elites, who are believed to carry an abstract and coherent belief system. Zaller (in Norris, 2011, 146) challenges this perception. In his view, ordinary people go through different considerations using 'top-of-the-head responses'. These answers are therefore not necessarily deeply meaningful, but instead conditioned by the wording of the questions and their specific context. Questions that are comparatively similar, yet not precisely the same, will therefore garner different answers in different context. It is therefore imperative to evaluate potential wording- or interviewer effects in all survey questionnaires.

These theories therefore imply that the general population does not possess clear and deep-seated convictions on complex and multifaceted concepts like democracy. This limited understanding further encompasses the politically disinterested and the less educated. Expectations also indicate that the problem might be worse in autocratic countries with limited or no access to independent media (Norris, 2011, 146). In the context of this thesis, the variation in political knowledge can therefore again be attributed to different levels of formal education, although this might not present us with consistent results in the use of survey data[13].

The *relativistic* approach emphasizes the culturally specific meanings attributed to democracy. According to this school of thought, the language, institutions and various visions of democracy adapts to the existing norms and practices specific to each country. Keane (in Norris, 2011, 148) calls this process "indigenization" of democracy. In the European context, this claim is refuted by Hernandez (2016, 63), who concludes that Europeans do in fact hold a similar, and wide, conception of democracy. This inference, however, relied on the use of close-ended questions in the sixth ESS round. In their analysis of open ended question where respondents were asked to describe democracy, Dalton, Shin

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[13] An unanswerable question therefore stands: Are expressions of support for democracy based on surveys even meaningful?

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and Jou (in Norris, 2011, 149) found that popular response associated democracy more closely with ideas of freedom and civil liberties, rather than institutions and procedures. Moreover, the analysis used Global Barometer, drawing on results from over fifty countries, and differs from Hernandez' results. In spite of ESS' well-documented high quality data (Van Deth, 2009, 91), the close-ended questions might have resulted in over-reporting, as illustrated in the section on skeptical theories.

Lastly, the *instrumental support for governance* suggest that people stand behind democracy as long as it yields results in form of jobs, prosperity and social services, i.e. economic security. Therefore, the backing of democracy as system of government depend on the quality of governance. If this were true, high evaluations of democratic performance would be systematically coupled with high democratic aspirations, as well as high importance being placed on living in a democracy. Norris' *critical citizen* imply otherwise. These dissatisfied democrats have a maximalist vision and high aspirations for democracy, but evaluate the performance of their democratic government as poor, and does not place the highest importance on living in a democracy (Linde and Dahlberg, 2016).

3.2.2 Approaches to measuring democratic knowledge

Similar to the different theories presented above, the literature also disagree on the most appropriate way of operationalizing democratic knowledge. First, the *factual knowledge* approach expect citizens to be familiar with the institutional composition in their countries, as well as detailed information on the political alternatives and their political platforms. As Norris (2011, 151) points out, this method may not be the most accurate. The high standards of knowledge it places on the general citizen causes most of them to fail the test, even in the most consolidated and highly educated democracies.

Second, the *relativist* approach accepts the limited knowledge most citizens carry. Therefore, it expects that decisions are made by cognitive shortcuts, like using a coherent ideology. Through this, voters can give comprehensible answers in spite of their relatively low information level. Norris (2011, 152) calls this approach more realistic, as it places lower demands on citizens. Still, it is not unproblematic, as these cognitive shortcuts might be based on false knowledge.

Third, the *practical knowledge* approach assumes that the accumulation of information, mostly through the news media, determines citizens' ability to assess the quality of their

democracy. This view places itself in the middle of the two aforementioned, as one cannot expect the general citizen to be democratically omniscient, nor assume that respondents use possibly false cognitive short cuts. Instead, it implies that rational assessments are based upon sufficient practical information, gathered through various informational sources. In this way, they can associate their preferences for living in a democracy to how well their actual government meets democratic aspirations.

3.2.3 Norris' empirical findings

Using the practical knowledge approach, Norris (2011, 152) operationalizes *enlightened democratic knowledge*. It is understood as the ability of citizens to accurately pinpoint a few of the core principles, institutions, and processes that are most closely related to liberal democracy, as well as distinguishing characteristics that cannot coexist with this vision. Citizens are therefore expected to be able to define democracy *ex positivo* and *ex negativo*. The ex positivo elements are the procedural definitions of democracy, while both an instrumental and an authoritarian vision should not be included, and are therefore ex negativo. Hence, enlightened democratic knowledge is construed as the positive elements minus the negative elements (Norris, 2011, 159). This conception differs from the one used in the ESS, who only addresses the different levels, maximalist to minimalist, of an ex positivo definition.

Her empirical evidence is based on the 2005-7 wave of World Values Survey, therefore establishing the findings using a wide array of systems. She further uses multilevel regression models to estimate the effects. At the individual level, she regards age, gender and income as standard factors commonly associated with attitudinal research. Because of expectations gathered through the different approaches, she further includes education and news media use, as well as historical experience with democracy as a country-level variable.

Of the micro-level variables, education proved a stronger predictor for enlightened democratic knowledge than all the others (Norris, 2011, 159). Moreover, historical experience of democracy proved an even stronger indicator. Although, this variable proved more helpful for the negative definitions. More comparable with the ESS definition, the results from the procedural definition of democracy showed that it does not predict a correct

understanding. Historical experience therefore proves more helpful in the definition of what democracy is, rather than what it is[14].

In Norris' analysis, the socialization theory proves a great predictor for the procedural perceptions of democracy's characteristics. Formal education and affiliation to the older generation, as well as higher media usage and belonging to a household with higher income therefore strengthen this minimal understanding of democracy (Norris, 2011, 159).

3.2.4 Hypotheses derived from democratic knowledge theory

I will now concretize the hypotheses found in this section. The first two hypotheses concern the aggregate level, and prompts country-level comparisons. The two subsequent hypotheses are based on individual level expectations derived from Norris (2011), and will feature in the second leg of analyses, set to uncover the individual level explanations for uncommittedness.

H_1: New democracies are more likely to contain uncommitted citizens.

H_2: Independent media systems are less likely to contain uncommitted citizens.

H_3: The lower educated are more likely to be uncommitted.

H_4: Low consumers of news media are more likely to be uncommitted.

H_8: The uncommitted citizens are less likely to vote, than to vote for any party, compared to other types of democrat.

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[14] Since the data material used in this thesis is provided by ESS, the positive definition could therefore show comparable results. However, as Norris' analysis includes over forty countries from around the world and the positive definition being much more limited, the outcomes may not be the same.

I will now move on to the populist radical right voters, and the attitudes and characteristics that are empirically related to them. This will serve to make further hypotheses concerning explanations of the uncommitted citizens.

3.3   Populist radical right voters

This section will cover a review of the PRR literature, aiming to develop an alternative perspective as to why some citizens are uncommitted to liberal democracy. It will further clarify why populist attitudes are illiberal, before summing up which explanatory variables that are empirically related to PRR voters.

3.3.1   Radical populist attitudes, and the rejection of liberal principles

The ESS democracy module uncovers some interesting patterns. In an analysis including Western European countries with PRRf success, Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten (2016) found that voters of these parties show a significantly weaker attachment to liberal democracy, compared to the rest. Unsurprisingly, the uncommitted citizens also show the same pattern, albeit even stronger (Ferrín, 2016, 295). This lack of commitment to democratic principles suggests that there might be a connection between the two groups, or at least that the uncommitted citizens are potential PRR voters. Hogg and Blaylock (2012) point out that the path to radicalization does not entail a drastic attitudinal change. As Rokeach (1973) taught us, attitudes are rather markers of deep-seated values. Though they may be compatible with some conception of democracy, the rejection of liberal values are shown to be differing from the views of most Europeans[15]. A deficit in understanding what it takes to make a democracy work does not imply an opposition against it, but it may be that these uncommitted citizens are a group easily swayed by illiberal rhetoric.

Bjåsenøy and Ivarsflaten (2016) prove empirically that PRR voters are less committed to democratic principles, compared to other voters. Studying the democracy module from the sixth ESS round, they studied the strength of voters' democratic beliefs through the analysis of three core principles: The importance of living in a democracy, the importance of free and fair elections, and the importance of free press. The pattern is clear; PRR voters show significantly lower scores on all three elements. An important clarification is that these numbers are not catastrophically low, and does therefore not imply a strong

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[15] Elaborated by Hernández (2016) in section 4.1.3.

rejection of democracy in itself. They further underline the fact that most PRR voters seem to support these principles, but are not as attached to them as other voters. Coupled with their vision of democracy (see section 2.3.1), this makes for a thought-provoking challenge to the European liberal democracies. In their study, they further found that a substantial subset of PRR voters in the oldest democracies are in fact undemocratic.

3.3.2 Explaining uncommitted citizens with the emergence of the PRR

The similarity of the patterns showed to exist for the uncommitted citizens and the populist radical right voters, has led me to believe that these groups might be related. If the uncommitted democrats show a higher likelihood to vote for PRR parties, this might be the case.

If the uncommitted citizens do not show a higher likelihood of voting for the PRR, this does not exclude the possibility of them being a potential source for the future electoral success of these parties. As both groups show a lack of support for central democratic principles, this could be a possibility. A lack of connection to PRR parties might also be the result of the uncommitted citizens having a higher chance of being abstainers compared to others, because of their weak attachment to democracy. I will therefore test this in the analyses. In any case, the findings of Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten (2016) indicate a similarity between these two groups. PRR voting is furthermore proven to be predicted by anti-immigrant attitudes[16] (Bos et al, 2017; Coffé, 2013; Knutsen, 2018, 238), low levels of education (Ivarsflaten and Stubager, 2013; Knutsen, 2018, 268), and are shown to be predominantly male (Spierings and Zaslove, 2017; Coffé, 2013).

3.3.3 Hypotheses derived from the populist radical right literature

I will now concretize hypotheses derived from this section. All concern individual-level explanations for the lack of commitment to liberal democracy, and will therefore be included in the second leg of analyses. While the expectations derived from Norris (2011) does not make assumptions as to which gender is more likely to be uncommitted[17], theory derived from this section expects men to be more likely. In addition to Norris (2011), PRR theory

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[16] Hauggjerd (2013, 71) has furthermore found an empirical relation between negative attitudes toward immigration and trust in democracy as a system.
[17] Her findings does however indicate that men have a slightly superior knowledge of democracy (Norris, 2011, 159).

also point to the less educated being more likely to be uncommitted, strengthening the expectation of confirming H₃. The third section of analyses will cover their voting behavior. As such, I will also test if the uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for PRR parties. These are the resulting hypotheses:

H5: Men are more likely to be uncommitted citizens.

H6: Individuals opposed to immigration are more likely to be uncommitted.

H7: The uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties, compared to other types of democrats.

3.4   A theory of basic human values

Further building on the PRR-framework, I will also perform analyses measuring basic human values. If there is a similarity in the values between the two groups, this will substantiate the expectation that the uncommitted citizens are PRR voters, or at least represent a potential voter group for these parties.

The psychologist Shalom Schwartz (2007) has released seminal works on basic human values, building on Rokeach's (1973) framework. His theory recognizes ten distinct, universal values, organized on four dimensions. Figure 3.1 shows the relation between these values, as those close to each other are more likely to co-exist in individuals. E.g. stimulation and tradition are an unlikely match, as they represent opposite dimensions, openness to change versus conservation. The dimensions can consequently be regarded as two sets of opposites: Openness to change versus conservation, and self-enhancement versus self-transcendence (Van Hiel, 2012, 173).

Openness to change include *self-direction*, involving creativity and freedom, *stimulation*, expressing the value of leading an exciting life, and *hedonism*, indulging in acts that give one pleasure. Self-enhancement comprise the values of *achievement*, involving ambitions of success, and *power*, the longing for authority and wealth. The self-transcendent values are *benevolence*, i.e. helpfulness to the individuals surrounding you, and *universalism*, the belief in social justice and equality. Lastly, the conservation values are *security*, yearning

social order and physical security, *tradition*, including humility and devotedness to tradition, and *conformity*, i.e. obedience to social norms and rules.

Figure 3.1   Schwartz' ten basic human values, and the dimensions associated
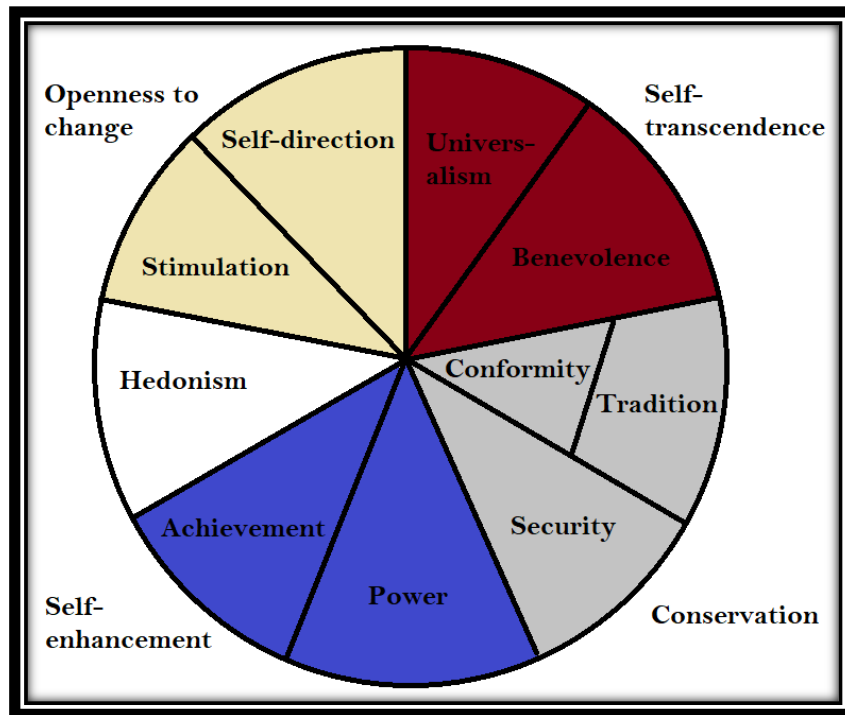
Notes: Own figure, based on Schwartz (2007, 175).

Underlying values are essential for the formation and change of attitudes, and has to be taken into account when studying this. Schwartz' (2007) contribution will therefore prove useful for creating an additional hypothesis to further fill the profile of the uncommitted citizens.

If these citizens are indeed associated with populist radical right attitudes, they should share some common values. Previous studies has concluded that there exists a relationship between values of self-enhancement and the right side of the political spectrum (Van Hiel, 2012, 173; Schwartz, 2001, 280). Schwartz (2001, 280) further point out that nationalists strongly emphasize tradition, national aspirations and security, while the liberals are clearly supportive of tolerance, civil liberties, and individual freedom. The latter therefore place importance on universalism and self-direction values[18]. This results in the following hypothesis:

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[18] Knutsen (2018, 237) further show that authoritarian values are associated with the radical right, but also the conservative and Christian party families, i.e. parties commonly associated as rightists.

H9: The uncommitted citizens are more likely to share values associated with nationalist

right-wingers, compared to the committed democrats.

If this hypothesis is confirmed, it will indicate that the uncommitted citizens carry nationalist, right-wing values, which are further indicative of likelihood to vote for PRR parties. In establishing the values most likely to be connected to these citizens, I can therefore more accurately place them in a competitive political space, indicating whether they could be inclined to vote for PRR parties, or other party families. Considering that the literature on value orientations in European countries[19] details the associations with party families, this can be assessed. These values are furthermore linked to socio-structural values.

3.5   Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the reader to the theoretical expectation derived from the literature on democratic knowledge, the populist radical right, and Schwartz' (2007) theory on basic human values. It has further served to create hypotheses to be tested in the fifth chapter of the thesis. However, before embarking on the analyses, I will introduce the reader to the choices made regarding design, herein case selection, and the methods used.

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[19] Like Knutsen (2018) and Schwartz (2001).

4 Design & Methods

This chapter seeks to inform the reader about the choices made regarding the research design, the operationalizations of the relevant variables, and the methods used. It also includes a simultaneous discussion of equivalence, and is concluded with a review of the methodological challenges present in a thesis of this kind.

4.1 Research design

This section will present the thesis' research design, starting with an introduction to the dataset used, and the units of analysis, followed by the design of the analyses. I will then move on to thoughts and conclusions on equivalence, which is necessary when conducting cross-country analyses using European data. The subsequent part introduces the reader to decisions made regarding case selection for respective analyses.

4.1.1 Dataset and units of analysis

The dataset in use is the sixth round of European Social Survey (ESS6)[20]. The ESS is a cross sectional biannual survey covering more than thirty countries. The unit of analysis are furthermore individuals. Which countries that are best suited for the analysis will be elaborated below. The final choice is based on considerations both empirical and methodological. Knowing that the uncommitted citizens are a minority of the respondents, the variable differentiating between them and the committed democrats will consequently be significantly skewed.

4.1.2 Designing the analyses to fit the theoretical framework

The analyses will be tripartite, containing three segments with logistic regressions. The choice of method was based upon the dichotomous and highly skewed nature of the dependent variable measuring type of democrat.

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[20] Available at: http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/download.html?file=ESS6e02_3&y=2012.

The first section seeks to test the country-level hypotheses. This will be done by categorizing the countries by democratic experience, as well as type of media system representing degrees of independence. These two variables are used as independent variables, and type of democrat as dependent, in two separate models (Model 1.1 and 1.2), before combining them in a simultaneous analysis (Model 1.3[21]). In order to make the inferences safer, I calculated clustered standard errors, and controlled for country effects by introducing country dummies.

The second line of analyses is designed to uncover the individual-level explanatory variables that are associated with the uncommitted citizens, testing hypotheses three through six. Still using a dichotomous dependent variable, binominal logistic regression was the method of choice for these analyses. Model 2.1 will feature the independent variables derived from the literature on democratic knowledge, education and news media consumption, while model 2.2 also includes the indicator from the populist radical right literature, immigration and gender. I used age, income[22] and country dummies as control variables. Clustered standard errors were also provided in these models.

The third segment of analyses are designated to expose the uncommitted citizens' voting behavior, or lack thereof. It will therefore confirm or deny hypotheses eight and nine. Model 3.1 will introduce a binary categorical variable, comparing the outcome of voting for populist radical right parties, with all others parties. Model 3.2 will also include a category for abstention, resulting in a three-partite categorical variable, necessitating the use of multinomial logistic regression in lieu of binominal. The third model in this section will use a dependent variable comparing the likelihood of voting versus abstention in all twenty-nine countries, reintroducing the use of binominal logistic regression. I also calculated clustered standard errors for improved accuracy.

The last leg of analyses will measure the basic human values associated with the uncommitted citizens, confirming or refuting the remaining hypothesis. These will therefore include all ten values in the first model, before comparing the results on the dimension in the second model. Both analyses included age, gender, income, and country dummies as control variables.

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[21] This model could also have included the individual-level explanatory variables in a multilevel analysis, but I instead opted for a separation into different models.
[22] Norris (2011, 157) point out that this is conventional when studying social phenomena.

Especially important for the design is the selection of cases. Choosing countries fit for analyses is also a question of equivalence, as different systems might present varying explanations of why the empirical findings were found, or differing relations between variables altogether. The next part is therefore dedicated to establishing equivalence.

4.1.3 Establishing equivalence: Measuring across Europe

Kriesi and Ferrín (2016) edited a volume featuring comprehensive analyses of the democracy module featured in the sixth wave of the ESS. This module was designed to uncover Europeans' views and evaluations of democracy. Its aim was to analyze the state of democracy as well as capturing the various conceptions Europeans could have of the multidimensional concept. The relevance to this thesis is mostly regarding the views of democracy, as evaluations concerns itself with whether respondents are satisfied with the current condition of democracy in their respective countries[23].

Regarding the normatively assessed views of what democracy should consist of, and what is necessary to consider a system democratic, it might be expected that these differ across Europe according to specific cultural zones. However, as Hernández (2016) shows, Europeans does in fact share a relatively similar conception of democracy:

In the ESS questionnaire, respondents were asked to rank all twelve elements of democracy according to which they considered to be the most and the least important for the existence of democracy. Researchers can therefore ascertain which aspects of democracy are considered the most and least essential for European citizens. By studying country-means, Hernández (2016, 54) found that *the rule of law* and *free and fair elections* were considered most essential for democracy. A staggering twenty-six of the twenty-nine countries involved in the survey considered the rule of law as the most important feature of democracy, while all twenty-nine countries considered the element as being among the three most important. Free and fair elections was ranked among the top three in seventeen countries, and as the most important in only two countries. At the other end of the scale, *participation in deliberation* and *responsibility towards European governments* were almost consistently ranked among the three least important features, in twenty-three and twenty-eight of the countries, respectively. Hernández (2016, 55) states that he was not surprised by

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[23] Although Linde and Dahlberg (2016) emphasize that low levels of regime evaluation may cause more dissatisfaction with democracy in general, this goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

this fact, as these two are elements are only included in the most demanding conceptions of what is necessary for democracy.

The respondents were also asked to reveal their views on the absolute importance of the various elements[24]. Again using country-means, Hernández (2016, 56) found that the absolute importance was related to the relative importance, as the rule of law and free and fair election showed the highest overall means (9.2 and 9.0, respectively). Participation in deliberation (7.4) and responsible government (6.6) again figured as the least important, with the lowest overall means. Rather interestingly, all the other features showed overall means of 7.9 and higher. Furthermore, six of the elements gained a mean score of 8.7 or higher. Coupled with the fact that all components showed relatively low cross-country and within-country variations[25], led Hernández (2016, 63) to the conclusion that:

"Europeans mainly conceive democracy as a political system in which free and fair elections are regularly held, the courts treat everyone, including political authorities, in the same way, the government takes measures to alleviate poverty[26], and as a system in which it is crucial for governments to explain their decisions, for citizens to be able to obtain reliable information about these decisions, and for courts to monitor and control them".

In light of these results, it appears that the word democracy does not hold culturally specific meanings across Europe[27]. Furthermore, in the subsequent chapter, Kriesi et al. (2016) find that Europeans' view of democracy has a clear structure, which is coherent across Europe. They show that the relationship between the more minimalist (the basic liberal democratic model) and the more demanding models are complimentary, i.e. that the Europeans demanding a large number of the elements to consider a system democratic, incorporate all the elements of the minimalist model. Using dichotomized variables of all the element to

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[24] The scale varied from 0, not at all important for democracy in general, to 10, extremely important for democracy in general.
[25] Standard deviations of the country level means were between .36 and .73 and average within-country standard deviations were between 1.6 and 2.6.
[26] This element concerns itself with a model of democracy going beyond the liberal democratic model. It is therefore not be included in this thesis.
[27] Although this could be the result of interviewer effect, discussed in the skeptical theories of democratic knowledge.

create a scale (10=1 and 1-9=0), they checked for scalability (using a Mokken Scale Analysis[28]) and reliability (using Cronbach's alpha). They confirm that there is indeed a hierarchical structure of the features, and that it is consistent across Europe. Europeans therefore share a common notion of which elements are more demanding, and which are less demanding. The structure is as follows (from least to most demanding; Kriesi et al., 2016, 73): Equality before the law, free and fair elections, horizontal accountability, reliable media, explanation by government, retrospective accountability, minority protection, media freedom, freedom of opposition, alternative offer, citizens' discussion and responsibility to other governments. They further use the acceptable coefficients of scalability and reliability[29] to justify the creation of a *liberal democracy scale*[30]. The authors further show that this scale is strong and consistent across Europe, which means that Europeans share a common conception of the basic liberal democracy model. This relatively strong, hierarchical structure also ease the interpretation of scores on the liberal democracy scale. A respondent with the score of 0 is thus a respondent who does not consider any of the elements as necessary for democracy, and a respondent with the score of 12 consider all elements as necessary for a system to be regarded as democratic (Kriesi et al., 2016). This implies a configural measurement equivalence across Europe (Ariely and Davidov, 2011), as the configuration between the latent variable, liberal democracy, and the factor loadings, the liberal democratic elements, are consistent.

Hernández (2016) therefore concludes that the concept democracy does not seem to diverge across Europe. Democracy, and opposition to it, is therefore measurable across Europe, as most Europeans share the same view of it. In his view, the usage of a single item indicator is therefore justified. This seems to imply a challenge to the socialization theory of democratic learning[31], but a deeper delve into the numbers show that this conclusion might be a rushed one.

Operationalizing democratic awareness by "don't know" answers, Hernández (2016, 52) finds that historical experience of democracy shows a positive linear correlation with the

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[28] This is originally used to assess whether various items measure the same underlying concept, and is based on the assumption that the items are hierarchically ordered (Mokken, 1971). Provides the Loevinger H, with results over .5 indicate strong scalability (Kriesi et al., 2016, 70).
[29] Loevinger H= .62. Cronbach's alpha= .91.
[30] On this scale, they find the mean to be 5.2. This signifies that on average, Europeans require the rule of law, free and fair elections, horizontal accountability, reliable media and government explanation to be necessary for a system to be considered democratic.
[31] See literature review

share of complete answers. The variation is substantial: From over fifty per cent of "don't know" answers in the Ukraine, to under ten per cent in Norway, the correlation is 0.67 (p<0.001). Furthermore, the subsequent countries with the biggest share of complete answers are France, Belgium, Germany, Finland and Netherlands. All having around a ninety per cent share of complete answers, and all considered old democracies[32]. In the original study, "don't know" answers were recoded as equivalent to the lowest possible response (0) in the creation of the liberal democracy scale (Kriesi et al., 2016, 67). Therefore, a high share of these answers are expected to significantly affect the number of uncommitted citizens in countries with more restricted historical experience of democracy. Since this share is linked with historical democratic experience, it therefore seems beneficial to study within-country results, as well as for new and old democracies.

Moreover, new and old democracies differ on many aspects, e.g. dominant cleavages, party system stability, electoral volatility and political participation (Linde and Dahlberg, 2016). Linde and Dahlberg (2016) also state that inhabitants of new democracies seem more focused with their government's capability of delivering social and economic goods, implying a more instrumental understanding of democracy in these countries. These finds are mirrored in Norris (2011, 158)[33]. Furthermore, they find that the share of dissatisfied democrats[34] are consistently lower in established democracies. All these differences are relevant when establishing equivalence across diverse contexts. Adcock and Collier (2001, 535) further present two possibilities when seeking this: Either assess the implications for establishing equivalence across contexts, or adopt context-sensitive measures. While the latter option is unavailable as an ex-post strategy, Van Deth (2009, 89) describe other methods for correcting biases.

While ex-ante strategies include possibilities of *definition* and *specification*, the only opportunity remaining after the data-gathering process is *correction*. It can correct for (1) construct bias, (2) method bias and (3) item bias. A method to correct for construct bias is through reassessment and reinterpretation of concepts, as is done in my operationalization of liberal democracy[35]. Method bias can be adjusted for by introducing weights, as is readily available in the ESS dataset. They provide a weight for both design, post-stratification and

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[32] Norris (2011, 161) uses a 60 year cut-off to define an extensive historical experience.
[33] As the ESS democracy module did not demand a negative definition of the respondents, this cannot be controlled for.
[34] Operationalized as those scoring 0-4 on the variable "Importance of living in a democracy".
[35] In section 4.2.3.

population. Among other reasons, this is to adjust for the equivalent sample sizes, contrasted by the inequivalent population sizes in the various countries. As the unit of analysis is individuals, and their country of origin is of less importance, weights were not introduced prior to the analyses. Another correction of method bias include index construction, as is done with the variable measuring attitudes towards immigration. Item bias can be regulated with psychometric scaling techniques, which transgresses the scope of this thesis. Having established the requirements for equivalence, I will now move on to selecting the relevant cases (Van Deth, 2009).

4.1.4 Case selection

The first series of analyses will test the country-level hypotheses. All cases are included in this section, as all countries are either old or new democracies, and are either free, partly free or unfree media systems. In the second line of analyses, I will also include all countries. However, as commitment to democracy is expected to vary according to democratic experience, the results from within each country will have to be carefully examined.

The third section of analyses are three-fold. One consisting of a binominal logistic regression analysis measuring the UC's voting behavior, comparing likelihood of voting for populist parties with other parties (Model 3.1). This section will therefore contain countries with a relevant PRR party included in ESS6. The second part will test whether the uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for the PRR compared to abstaining, also using a binomial logistic regression on all European countries (Model 3.2). The third part will compare the likelihood of these citizens' voting, with this group's likelihood of abstention, and can consequently include all countries.

As previously stated, model 3.1 and 3.2 will analyze the voting behavior of the uncommitted citizens. Considering that there are very few of these citizens, the probability of empty cells[36] (Fields, 2013, 769), or at least cells with few respondents, is high. Reviewing table A4.2 (in the appendix), two conclusions are apparent. First, there are very few uncommitted citizens voting for populist radical right parties. In some countries, they are indeed non-existent. As a rule of thumb, ten respondents is the minimum requirement for each cell. This indicates that I cannot perform the analyses within each country, which is lamentable. However, in treating all countries as one case, I will be able to fill the acceptable

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[36] A danger to correct estimates in logistic regression, covered in the thesis' section on methods, 4.3.

amount of respondents in each cell. The countries viable for inclusion is still limited to those with a relevant PRR party. The decisive number for relevance varies somewhat in the literature. Norris (2005) considers all over 3 % as relevant parties, while Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten (2016) state that it is conventional to limit analyses to parties exceeding 5 % of the national vote. Table A4.3 (in the appendix) includes all European PRR parties that have achieved a recent electoral success, who are also part of ESS6[37]. The countries viable for this analysis is therefore Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Ukraine. Model 3.3 will include all countries, as the only criterion for inclusion is valid responses on the variable measuring vote, or abstention. The fourth segment of analyses will also include all countries, but as I expect human values to vary according to cultural context, I will review the results within each country, as well as for Eastern and Western Europe.

Table 4.1   The countries included in the respective analyses[38]

Country	Analysis 1	Analysis 2	Analysis 3		Analysis 4
			Party preference	*Abstention/Vote*	
Albania	X	X		X	X
Belgium	X	X	X	X[39]	X
Bulgaria	X	X	X	X	X
Cyprus	X	X		X	X
Czech Republic	X	X		X	X
Denmark	X	X	X	X	X
Estonia	X	X		X	X
Finland	X	X	X	X	X
France	X	X	X	X	X
Germany	X	X		X	X
Hungary	X	X	X	X	X
Iceland	X	X		X	X
Ireland	X	X		X	X
Israel	X	X		X	X
Italy	X	X	X	X	X
Kosovo	X	X		X	X
Lithuania	X	X	X	X	X
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	X
Norway	X	X	X	X	X

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[37] This excludes several countries with relevant PRR parties, like Austria, Greece and Latvia.
[38] When performing the analyses for each model within each country, there is no recognizable pattern suggesting that the inclusion of cases should have been more conservative.
[39] Belgium proves a problematic case when analyzing patterns of abstention, as they introduced compulsory voting in 1893 (Jaitman, 2013). I will still include these respondents in the analysis, but the results within this country will have to be carefully examined.

Poland	*X*	*X*	X	*X*	*X*
Portugal	*X*	*X*		*X*	*X*
Russia[40]	*X*	*X*	X	*X*	*X*
Slovenia	*X*	*X*		*X*	*X*
Slovakia	*X*	*X*		*X*	*X*
Spain	*X*	*X*		*X*	*X*
Sweden	*X*	*X*	X	*X*	*X*
Switzerland	*X*	*X*	X	*X*	*X*
Ukraine	*X*	*X*	X	*X*	*X*
United Kingdom	*X*	*X*		X	X
Total	***29***	***29***	**15**	***29***	***29***

4.1.5 The relevant Populist Radical Right parties

This segment will cover an introduction to all PRR parties included. They have all obtained at least three per cent in the last national election preceding ESS6, and is classified as PRR by notable theorists. As Mudde (2007) stresses, this distinction is not easily made. Various political scientists have included and excluded different parties in their analyses. A noteworthy example being Ignazi's consistent exclusion of the Italian Lega Nord from his analyses (Mudde, 2007, 32). Still, there exists a consensus around the inclusion of most parties in the Western European studies of the radical right. As we will see later on in this section, this process is further complicated when moving the scope eastwards.

Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest; VB), known as the Flemish Block from the late seventies until 2004, has since their inception been represented in the Belgian parliament. However, in was not until 1991 they significantly increased their number of representatives. Because of racist statements, they have been the victims of a *cordon sanitaire* ever since[41]. However, this growth remained until 2010, peaking with 12 per cent of the votes in 2007.

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[40] Both Polity IV (http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm), Freedom House (https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018) and Norris (2011, 49) consider Russia and unfree autocracy, indicating that they should not be included in any of the analyses. On the other hand, the uncommitted citizens is this country are still lacking commitment to liberal democracy, irrespective of their type of government. However, the explanation of why the Russian uncommitted show a lack of democratic commitment might differ from the other countries, considering their autocratic government. Table 4.1 (in the appendix) reveal that Russia has the second highest share of uncommitted, behind the United Kingdom. Nonetheless, I will include the country in the analyses, as results from this country could be interesting. Consequently, the Russian results will have to be carefully examined, and compared with the others. I will also perform the analyses excluding this country, to see they significantly affect the results.
[41] Coined after this case, this signifies the political establishments' conscious exclusion of wing-parties (Peuwels, 2011, 61).

After this, they electoral performance has faltered, obtaining only 3.7 per cent of the votes in to most recent election[42] (Nordsieck, 2017). Their position as far-right party is widely accepted, as well as their threat to liberal democracy (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016, De Lange and Akkerman, 2012; Van Heute and Pauwels, 2017, 49). While their original position initially focused on separatism, they have increasingly built their party program around anti-immigration and anti-establishment attitudes. On the French side of Belgium, *Parti Populaire* (The People's Party; PP) started out as neo-liberal populists proposing tax-cuts and stricter laws on immigration. After a shift in party leadership, it has increasingly focused on the immigration issue, becoming a national populist party with the French Front National as role models (Pauwels, 2013). While not exceeding the three per cent-threshold on their own (Nordsieck, 2017), they will still be included, as they will be coupled with VB.

Front National (the National Front; FN) was established in 1972 by Jean-Marie Le Pen. The party received little electoral recognition until the 1986 parliamentary election, when they garnered 9.6 per cent of the vote. With a notable exception in the 2007 parliamentary election, they have performed steadily ever since. They have also reached the second round of the presidential election twice, first by Jean-Marie in 2002, then by his daughter and successor, Marine, in 2017. The party is characterized by their focus on anti-immigration, law and order, and a strong Eurosceptic position (Minkenberg, 2013; Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016; Ivaldi and Lanzone, 2017).

In Finland, *Perussuomalaiset* (the True Finns; PS) succeeded the Finnish Rural Party in 1995, performing moderately in election up until 2011. Gaining 19.05 per cent of the vote, they followed this success in 2015. Led by the charismatic Timo Soini, they are considered a nationalist, Eurosceptic, conservative, right-wing populist party, focusing on anti-immigration, as well as law and order (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016).

The Dutch *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (the Party for Freedom; PVV) was founded as a one-man party by Geert Wilders, and is seen as the successor for the populist *Lijst Pim Fortuyn*. After the latter collapsed following the assassination of their namesake, Fortuyn, Wilders became the new Dutch face of anti-Islamism (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). Expanding to a general anti-immigration policy, the PVV peaked in 2010 at 15.5 per cent of the vote, subsequently providing electoral support for the first Rutte cabinet. The party has

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[42] However, opinion polling for the upcoming election suggests that this downturn in only temporary.

since stabilized, gathering 10.1 per cent in 2012, followed by 13.0 per cent in 2017 (Nordsieck, 2017).

The Swiss People's Party (*Schweizerische Volkspartei*; SVP) evolved into a PRR party in the 1990s, following a power struggle between the moderate and radical faction. The party quickly adopted nationalist and isolationist policies (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016; Mazzoleni and Rossini, 2017). Their parliamentary power subsequently grew, becoming the largest party by 1999. Retaining that position ever since, they peaked at the last general election with 29.4 %.

Established in 1995, *Dansk Folkeparti* (the Danish People's Party; DF) was the result of a split from the anti-tax, anti-immigration PRR party *Fremdskridtspartiet*. Inheriting their predecessor's electoral success, they have been represented in the Danish parliament since their inception, also providing parliamentary support to the center-right coalition on several occasions. This has led to stricter policies on immigration, honoring their position as a nationalist, anti-immigration party (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). Their electoral performance has increased steadily, peaking in the 2015 general election with 21.1 % of the vote (Nordsieck, 2017).

The Norwegian *Fremskrittspartiet* (the Progress Party; FrP) was known until 1977 as the aptly named "Anders Lange's Party for a Strong Reduction in Taxes, Duties and Public Intervention". Following Anders Lange's death, Carl I. Hagen became the face of the party after gaining leadership in 1978, introducing anti-immigration and Eurosceptic positions (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016; Jupskås, 2017). They established themselves as a relevant political force in 1989, and has mostly retained their seats in parliament ever since. Now led by Siv Jensen, they peaked in 2009 with 22.9 per cent (Nordsieck, 2017), and eventually entered a coalition government with the conservative party in 2013, adding the liberal party in early 2018.

Founded in 1988, *Sverigedemokraterna* (the Sweden Democrats; SD) did not attain parliamentary representation until 2010. Effectively moderating their extreme right origins, the election of Jimmie Åkesson as party leader represented a shift towards a cleaner image. However, their strong stance on immigration remains, reflecting their general authoritarian policies (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). Unlike their Scandinavian counter-parts, they have been victims of a cordon sanitaire, in addition to being banned from party advertisement by several newspapers (Jungar, 2017).

Additionally, *Lega Nord* (LN) is featured on Mudde's (2007, 306) somewhat outdated list of PRR parties, but are still very much in play. Originally founded as a separatist party by multiple northern regional parties, they remain Eurosceptic, but have since included anti-immigration policies and a populist position (McDonnell and Vampa, 2017). They are also notable for becoming the third-largest party in the 2018 elections (Nordsieck, 2018). *Fratelli d'Italia* (FDI) represent the core of the former right-wing *Alleanza Nazionale* and neo-fascists *Movimento Sociale Italiano*, leader Giorgia Meloni being former member of. Both FDI and LN are furthermore part of an electoral alliance with Berlusconi's *Forza Italia* (Sylvers, 2017).

When crossing over to the newer democracies in Eastern Europe, Minkenberg (2013, 14) claim that nationalism is naturalized as a part of the mainstream, defined in terms of ethnicity. Consequently, this would significantly downgrade immigration as a relevant political issue[43]. Most of these parties are instead characterized by anti-minority sentiments. Moreover, as with the party system itself, radical right parties are electorally unstable. Furthermore, Minkenberg (2013) suggests a fourfold categorization for these parties (relevant parties in parentheses). First, the fascist autocratic right, notable in Russia (LDPR), Romania and Bulgaria (ATAKA). Second, the ethnocentric, racist right, identified in Hungary (Jobbik). Third, the religious fundamentalists, formerly notable in Poland, have been made increasingly irrelevant. The fourth group are less extreme, but still very much populist and nationalist, labeled the populist right. Notable examples being the now defunct Slovakian HZDS, the Polish parliamentary majority-party PiS and the Latvian NA. Minkenberg (2013) also underlines the fact that parties from these four groups make up more than twenty per cent of the electorate, which is saying a lot in countries with extremely low voter turnout[44]. He further concludes that the radical right in Central and Eastern Europe can in fact be regarded as mainstream rather than marginal, while also being a more extreme incarnation than their Western European counterparts (Minkenberg, 2013, 5)[45].

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[43] This is also because of lower immigration levels to Eastern European countries.

[44] With 39.8 per cent in the 2016 Romanian election being the lowest.

[45] The reason for their success also differ. Ignazi (in Minkenberg and Pytlas, 2013, 207) attributed the Western European success to a *silent counter-revolution.* Alluding to Inglehart's theory (see Inglehart, 1987) of the post-material value change that created demand for both New Left- and New Right-parties. In the Eastern European cases, Minkenberg and Pytlas (2013, 207) claim that these

Of the relevant Bulgarian PRR parties, *Bulgarsko Natsionalno Dvizhenie* (Bulgarian National Movement; VMRO-BND), was the first to be established. Originating from a cultural organization of the same name, the political party was founded in 1999. Claiming to be successors to a national liberation movement that fought against the Ottomans, they primarily direct their rhetoric against Turk and Roma minorities. *ATAKA* was founded in 2005 by journalist Volen Siderov. Regarded as the most extreme of the Bulgarian mainstream parties (Mudde, 2007), they offer an ideologically diffuse economic policy coupled with ultranationalist stance. In 2011, the *Natzionalen Front za Spasenie na Bulgaria* (National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria; NFSB) split from ATAKA, and gained 3.7 per cent of the vote in the 2013 parliamentary election. ATAKA gained 7.3 per cent in the same election, a step down from the 9.4 they received in 2009. For the 2014 election, VMRO-BND and NFSD formed an electoral alliance, which also included ATAKA by 2017 (Nordsieck, 2017).

Hungarian Gábor Vona's *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (Movement for a Better Hungary; Jobbik) are notorious far-right agents. Frequently labeled as both neo-nazi, anti-semitic and anti-ziganist (Mareš and Havlík, 2016, 328), they are viewed as a substantial threat to liberal democracy. Overtaking the Hungarian Justice and Life Party's (MIÉP) role as dominant far-right party, they have performed much better in elections. In 2014, they saw an increase to 20.2 per cent from 16.7 four years prior (Nordsieck, 2017). The *Magyar Polgári Szövetség* (Hungarian Civic Union; Fidesz), while more moderate than Jobbik, has definite populist tendencies, as well as an illiberal inclination. After obtaining a super-majority in the parliament following the 2010 election, they modified the constitution in their own favor. This included changing the number of electoral districts to better fit their demographic support, as well as effectively overtaking the courts, weakening the *trias politica*-principle of separating the state powers (Bánkuti et al., 2012). They have since their inception taken constant steps towards a more right-wing and illiberal position, and is therefore considered as a populist radical right party by Bohlen, Jungwurth and Rupnik (Mudde, 2007, 32).

parties also need to be seen as a modernization-related phenomenon. In this region, however, the shift is made from processes of post-communist consolidation, included in a continuing discourse concerning how the rebuilding of the states should be organized.

In the Polish case, both the League of Polish Families (LPR) and the Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland represented clear-cut examples of PRR parties receiving substantial support in former elections. However, they both faltered electorally in the 2005 election, and has yet to recover. They further represent two of three right-wing parties to succeed in the 2001 elections, the third being *Prawo i Sprawiedliwosc* (Law and Justice, PiS). As the name would suggest, both Minkenberg (2007, 265) and Norris (Fomina and Kucharczyk, 2016, 58) categorize this party as authoritarian-populist, as well as soft Eurosceptics (Minkenberg, 2007, 265).

Established in 1991 as the Social-National Party of Ukraine, the Ukrainian *Vseukrayinske obyednannia "Svoboda"* (All-Ukrainian Union "Freedom"; Svoboda) moderated from their neo-Nazi past when Oleh Tyahnybok became chairman. Still remaining ultranationalist and socially conservative far-righters (Rudling, 2012, 200), they present on their website that they do not allow members that are atheists, former communist party members or individuals who are not ethnically Ukrainian (https://www.rferl.org). From sparse electoral beginnings, the party rose to 10.4 in 2012, before falling to 4.71 in the 2014 snap elections (Nordsieck, 2017).

The Lithuanian *Partija tvarka ir teisingumas* (Order and Justice; TT) achieved immediate electoral success when founder and former prime minister, Rolandas Paksas, won the presidential election in 2003. The success was replicated in the subsequent parliamentary elections, peaking at 12.7 per cent in 2008. They have since faltered, but remains relevant, receiving 5.3 per cent in the 2016 election (Nordsieck, 2017). They are characterized by an anti-establishment and socially conservative profile, and is further labeled as populist radical-right (Balcere, 2011).

Centered around the charismatic ultranationalist Zhirinovsky, the *Liberal'no-Demokraticheskaya Partiya Rossii* (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia; LDPR) is categorized as populist and extreme right-wingers by Parland (2005 ,74). Usually performing rather well in election, they started out as the largest Russian party in the first general election of 1993, gaining 22.9 per cent of the vote. Their share has since diminished moderately, accounting for 13.24 per cent in 2016 (Nordsieck, 2017).

As this segment clarifies, the term populist radical right is rather ambiguous in terms of which parties could and should be included in analyses. Reviewing the ideological core of Norwegian FrP and Russian LPDR will likely provide quite deviant results. While both

parties represent a nationalist sentiment, their approach is far from identical. This is also represented by the various names associated with this party family, from Extreme Right to Radical Right-Wing Populists and Anti-Immigrant parties, among others (Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten, 2016). In most cases, this leaves it up to the author to choose cases according to research question. However, a case can be made for the comparative similarity of these parties. They all represent what they perceive to be a popular demand for national conservatism, and thereby promote exclusionary policies, although to a different extent. The policies vary cross-country, as do indeed the electorates' demands for these. Therefore, although they might not be entirely ideological comparable, they occupy a relatively similar placement in Kitschelt's competitive political space[46], in addition to employing analogous communicatory techniques. They all represent authoritarian positions, although varying on economic policies. I will now give the reader insight into the choices made in the operationalizations of all variables included in the thesis.

4.2 Operationalizations

This section will cover the operationalizations and revisions of the variables included in the analyses. All questions are taken from the ESS questionnaire[47]. The first segment of analyses use two country-level indicators: Democratic experience and type of media system. The indicators from the second line of analyses include education level, income, news media consumption, and a variable measuring attitudes towards immigration. Gender and age are also included as control variables. The third section of analyses will include a party preference variable with three categories: Populist radical right voters, voters of other parties, and abstainers. It will also include a vote variable, measuring whether or not respondents voted in their last national election. The fourth section of analyses will test the hypothesis concerning the basic human values. But before embarking on these operationalizations, it is important to address measurement validity.

4.2.1 A question of measurement validity

In the process of operationalizing concepts, assessing measurement validity is essential. Starting with a background concept (level 1), the first step is to conceptualize it. Adcock and

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[46] See Kitschelt (1995).
[47] Available here:
https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/round6/survey/ESS6_appendix_a7_e02_2.pdf

Collier (2001, 531) underline that this is first and foremost "a conceptual concern", and therefore not specifically related to measurement validity, but in this context important none the less. They define this task as "systematizing the concept through reasoning, in the light of the goals of research" (Adcock and Coller, 2001, 531). This brings us to level 2, the systematized concept, which is more specifically formulated than the abstract background concept. The next task is operationalization, where the goal is to develop indicators for classifying cases, based on the systematized concept. These indicators represent the third level. The last task remaining is therefore to give score to cases on the variables created. This leads us to level 4, which in this case represents numeric scores for cases on indicators, leaving us with a dataset to analyze (Adcock and Collier, 2001).

While all these steps and decisions were taken by the team behind the ESS6, they are not irreversible. In order to obtain the best possible measurement validity, it is necessary to revise all the steps taken. Still using the steps and levels, but now going backwards. The first task is therefore to refine the indicators in light of observed scores. This is done extensively in this thesis, where no variable were left unchanged for the analyses. It is important to note that the variable's core remained unchanged, but the number of categories were fine-tuned to better suit the analyses. Concerning the last two steps, modifying the systematized concept and revisiting the background concept (Adcock and Collier, 2001), the use of an existing dataset made this possibility rather narrow. Using an extensive dataset like the ESS, my choices and refinings are pretty much limited to the choice of indicator to represent a different, but related concept, or the use of a proxy variable to measure a concept not included in the dataset. The exception to this limitation concern multi-faceted concepts, such as the case of liberal democracy in this thesis. As will be evident later on, the background concept is evaluated, and systematized concept is revised, to produce a more valid concept of undemocraticness, or extremism, than provided by Kriesi et al.'s (2016) uncommitted democrats[48].

Adcock and Collier (2001) also address the problem of contextual specificity, related to equivalence. This specifically concerns the domain to which a systematized concept applies, e.g. is the conceptualization of democracy equivalent across Europe? The example was not randomly chosen, as it arguably represents the thesis' biggest challenge to measurement equivalence and validity. The two upcoming segments are dedicated to this

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[48] To be sure, this is not meant as a critique of Kriesi et al. (2016), as they had different intentions for this measure. The alterations are simply a necessity for the validity of this thesis' arguments.

question, covering the original operationalization of the uncommitted citizens, followed by a thorough problematization of the elements included in the liberal democracy scale.

4.2.2 The uncommitted citizens: Operationalization by Kriesi et al.

This segment covers the original operationalization of the uncommitted citizens by Kriesi et al. (2016, 73). The first step was the recoding of all the basic elements of liberal democracy into dichotomous variables. This was done by coding responses from 0[49] to 9 into 0, and responses of 10 into 1. The second step was to create an additive scale of the twelve elements by simply adding them to each other[50]. All the variable names and labels of the liberal democratic elements included in the scale are included in the table below.

Table 4.2   All the variable names and labels of the liberal democratic elements

Variable name	Variable label
Fairelc	National elections are free and fair
Dspplvt	Voters discuss politics with people they know before deciding how to vote
Dfprtal	Different political parties offer clear alternatives to one another
Oppcrgv	Opposition parties are free to criticize the government
Medcrgv	The media are free to criticize the government
Meprinf	The media provide citizens with reliable information to judge the government
Rghmgpr	The rights of minority groups are protected
Imvtctz*	Immigrants only get the right to vote in national elections once they become citizens
Cttresa	The courts treat everyone the same
Ctstogv	The courts able to stop the government acting beyond its authority
Gptpelc	Governing parties are punished in elections when they have done a bad job
Gvexpdc	The government explains its decisions to voters
Pltavie	Politicians take into account the views of other European governments

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[49] Item-specific non-responses were treated as 0.
[50] For a more specified description of the operationalization, see Kriesi et al. (2016, 72-77)

4.2.3 Problems regarding the operationalization of uncommitted citizens

Their operationalization of the uncommitted leaves some important questions unanswered. The decision of dichotomization in order to create the index may have been made entirely out of statistical considerations. Furthermore, operationalization and analysis of uncommitted citizens was not a top priority in Ferrín and Kriesi's (2016) edited work. This suggests that the definition might need revision to fit my conceptual framework. Two problems must therefore be addressed. First, is their definition of the basic of elements of liberal democracy too broad and maximalist? To establish this, one must consider the reality of European democracy, and what elements that mirror this reality. It is therefore important whether most citizens perceive them as elements commonly associated with democracy. Therefore, an examination of the democratic literature and the dataset is needed, and might reveal some interesting results. Second, is their operationalization of the uncommitted citizens on the liberal democracy scale too inclusive to find citizens actually uncommitted to liberal democracy?

In Ferrín and Kriesi's edited work, Hernández (2016, 45) concede that including deliberative and cosmopolitan components of democracy, as well as granting migrants voting power[51], might be too broad when operationalizing the electoral elements of liberal democracy. Moreover, their operationalization of deliberation is limited to citizens participating in these processes, despite the full model of deliberative democracy clearly stating the importance of this phenomenon at the decision-making level as well (Held, 2006, 234). The element included in the liberal democracy scale therefore represents an incomplete version of deliberative democracy. In his presentation of the deliberative model of democracy, Held (2006, 234) draws on Fishkin when he points out that voters in general "exhibit a clear disconnection from the political process, suffering alienation, disengagement or complacency". While this fact is lamentable, Fishkin (in Held, 2006, 235) does present a more realistic view of the current state of liberal democracy than his thesis of deliberative democracy does. The fact that he himself is aware of this distinction between the desirable and the actual, points to the exclusion of deliberation processes as a basic element of liberal democracy. Moreover, the distribution of this variable in the dataset substantiate this.

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[51] This element is not included in their liberal democracy scale. This exclusion is not justified, nor even mentioned in detail, in the creation of the scale. A descriptive analysis of the variables show that the variance of this indicator is very high (6.269, see table A4.4 in the appendix), while its mean is only higher than the two other problematic elements.

Compared to the other elements, it enjoys a significantly lower mean, as well as a lower median and higher variance.

Whether politicians take into account the views of other European governments represents a thought analogous to that of another model of democracy. This partial version of cosmopolitan democracy accounts for consequences of increased European integration. Thereby signifying the responsibility of national governments towards the supranational European Union, as well as fellow European governments. The backdrop of this model is the need of international governance in an increasingly globalized world. The growth of multilateral interaction, as well the need of regulations of international commerce, has made this model more relevant. Its supporters therefore advocate the necessity of democratic procedures exceeding, but not replacing, that of the nation-state (Held, 2006, 304-305). However, is it an essential part of liberal democracy? Even Held (2006), a notable supporter of this model, admits that it is not part of the current reality. Furthermore, the indicator garnered the lowest mean and median, as well as the highest variance, of all elements included in the dataset. This therefore suggest that it is not a part of liberal democracy, nor popularly perceived as such. It therefore seems that Kriesi et al. (2016) drew a hasty conclusion when regarding all these elements as part of a basic model of liberal democracy. The operationalization of the liberal democracy scale will consequently exclude the elements of deliberation and responsibility towards European governments. I will now address whether their inclusion of respondents in the category of uncommitted citizens is too wide.

In the creation of the liberal democracy scale, Kriesi et al. (2016) justifies the dichotomization of the elements (see section 4.2.2) by claiming that only those that gave the maximum value on an item really consider it as necessary under *all* conditions. According to Kriesi et al. (2016), giving any other score therefore implies that it would be possible that a system could be democratic without the specific element. This indicates a theoretical consideration anchoring their decision. On the other hand, they underline that when including those with maximum score of 9, and even 8, the scalability and reliability is diminished (Kriesi et al., 2016, 73). This therefore points to the possibility that this decision was made out of statistical considerations. Furthermore, the implication made in the theoretical justification is unlikely to have been communicated to the respondents. Yet, the respondents were presented with show cards clearly stating that a value of zero represented "not at all important for democracy in general", while a response of ten represented "extremely important for democracy in general". Giving an element anything less than ten

therefore gives the implication that it is *not* extremely important for democracy. However, citizens cannot be categorized as undemocratic, or extremists, on this basis. Is it furthermore very problematic to treat respondents answering 1 on a democratic element as equally committed to the element as respondents who placed themselves at the value 9. This is evident when reviewing the means on the elements of democracy that this operationalization yields: They are consistently too high to justify the label of extremism[52].

To increase the validity of the conceptualization, I use the elements considered by most Europeans to be necessary for democracy. Ultimately, drawing only on theoretical considerations might ultimately yield the perfect definition of democracy in the eyes of highly educated researchers, but holds no guarantee to fit the respondents' conceptions. Using their liberal democracy scale, Kriesi et al. (2016, 76) found that the average value was 5.2. The high scalability thereby implies that the five most important elements are included in the average European's conception of democracy[53]. These elements are the rule of law, free and fair elections, horizontal accountability, reliable media, and governments explaining their decisions to voters. After excluding the other elements, I recreated the scale. Although decreased, the means for the supposed uncommitted citizens still proved too high to justify the description[54]. Consequently, I made further steps toward a more conservative and valid measurement.

When initially reading about the liberal democracy scale, I was skeptical to the operationalization. When thinking of the possibility that a respondent consistently giving a score of nine on every element would be considered uncommitted to liberal democracy, this definition did not seem wholesome. I therefore changed the liberal democracy scale to include far fewer values. Drawing on Linde and Dahlberg's (2016) dichotomization of the variable "importance of living in a democracy", I dichotomized the elements to separate between the respondents giving values 1 through 4 on the elements, indicating lack of commitment, and those responding with the values 6 through 10, indicating commitment to the element. Following advice from Converse and Presser (1986, 36), the middle category was first omitted from the dichotomization. This operationalization significantly improved the justification of the uncommitted citizens as undemocratic. In order to accrue more respondents in the group of uncommitted, I tested out a version where the middle category

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[52] A table A4.5 in the appendix reports the means.
[53] This is also supported by Hernández' (2016) review of the relative importance of the elements.
[54] Included in table A4.6 in the appendix.

was included in the uncommitted section. This did not alter the means considerably, but successfully increased the amount of respondents in this group.

Table 4.3   Means in the ten democratic elements for the uncommitted citizens

Element	Means for uncommitted citizens	Means for committed democrats	Mean difference
Fair and free elections	3,88	9,01	5,13
Political alternatives	4,07	8,02	3,95
Opposition free to criticize	4,17	8,34	4,17
Media free to criticize	4,22	8,28	4,06
Media reliability	3,85	8,80	4,95
Minority rights protected	4,16	8,36	4,2
Rule of law	3,91	9,28	5,37
Horizontal accountability	3,85	8,84	4,99
Badly governing parties punished in elections	4,12	8,44	4,32
Vertical accountability	3,89	8,90	5,01

Notes: Uncommitted citizens operationalized as 1-5 on rule of law, free and fair elections, horizontal accountability, reliable media, and governments explaining their decisions to voters.

Reviewing the distributions of the included elements (figure A4.1-A4.5 in the appendix), it is clear that very few respondents gave low scores on these. As a consequence, the type of democrat variable is extremely skewed, excluding OLS as an unbiased estimator of parameters (Christophersen, 2013, 132). The operationalization ultimately gave the following distribution on the variable measuring type of democrat:

Table 4.4   Distribution on the variable measuring type of democrat

Type of democrat	Frequency	Percentage
Committed democrat	53328	97,5
Uncommitted citizen	1345	2,5

Although extremely skewed, the uncommitted citizens are still sufficiently represented to perform analyses. Still, this results in several problems, addressed in section 4.4.

4.2.4 The country-level variables

Using Norris' (2011) cut-off point of sixty years for considering a democracy as old, it generated an uncontroversial partition, viewable in table 4.6. Reviewing table 4.5, the distribution of uncommitted citizens is larger in the new democracies, compared to the older, indicating the confirmation of the first hypothesis.

Moving over to the media systems, degree of media independence was categorized according to Freedom Press' Freedom of the Press[55]. Looking over the table below, one pattern is immediately apparent: The partly and not free media systems are far fewer than the free, ultimately making the variable based on this dichotomization very skewed[56]. The distribution of types of democrats in the two systems are according to expectations, as the share of uncommitted citizens is smaller in the free media systems. This therefore indicates the confirmation of the second hypothesis.

Table 4.5 Distribution of committed and uncommitted citizens in old and new democracies, and type of media system

Variable	Uncommitted citizens		Committed democrats	
	Percentage	*N*	*Percentage*	*N*
Democratic experience				
New democracy	3,1 %	830	96,9 %	26142
Old democracy	1,9 %	512	98,1 %	26073
Type of media system				
Unfree/Partly free	3,0 %	366	97,0 %	12026
Free	2,4 %	976	97,6 %	40189

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[55] The full map is found here: https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2012.
The year 2012 was chosen to mirror the year of the data-gathering process.
[56] This mirrors the liberal status quo in Europe.

Table 4.6   Categorization of countries by democratic experience

New democracies	Old democracies
Albania (1991)	Belgium
Bulgaria (1989)	Switzerland
Czech Republic (1991)	Cyprus
Estonia (1991)	Germany
Spain (1978)	Denmark
Hungary (1989)	Finland
Lithuania (1992)	France
Poland (1989)	United Kingdom
Portugal (1975)	Ireland
Russia (1991)	Israel
Slovenia (1990)	Iceland
Slovakia (1990)	Italy
Ukraine (1991)	Netherlands
Kosovo (1991)	Norway
	Sweden

Table 4.7   Categorization of media systems into partly/not free and free

Partly/Not free	Free
Albania	Belgium
Bulgaria	Switzerland
Hungary	Cyprus
Italy	Czech Republic
Russia	Germany
Ukraine	Denmark
Kosovo	Estonia
	Spain
	Finland
	France
	United Kingdom
	Ireland
	Israel
	Iceland
	Lithuania
	Netherlands
	Norway
	Poland
	Portugal
	Sweden

4.2.5 The individual-level variables

The first model in this section of analysis will include the socio-demographic variables, as to uncover the uncommitted citizens' background. It will also include news media usage. Like the dependent variable, most of the independent variables are unevenly distributed.

In reviewing the news media consumption variable, the fact that this variable only measures this intake through television is problematic. Ipso facto, both the use of newspapers and internet is excluded, hereby only measuring a subset of news media consumption. The question posed to the respondents is: "And again on an average weekday, how much of your time watching television is spent watching news or programmes about politics and current affairs?". This question involves multiple categories, as *news, programmes about politics* and *programmes about current affairs* are three separate types of broadcasting. Including multiple categories in a closed question is not advisable, as the response might vary according to the respondents' individual interpretation of the multi-faceted question (Fink, 2003, 33). The latter category is furthermore very inaccurate, dependent on each respondents' definition of these kinds of programs. Current affairs could therefore vary from including concentrated political debates, to celebrity and entertainment programmes. Thus, it possiblt covers a broad range of television programs, and furthermore represents an incomplete measure of news media consumption. However, as there does not exist a variable better suited to measure this concept, it remains the best alternative. Consequently, the results based on this variable will have to be carefully interpreted. The possible answers for this variable was seven-fold[57]. To facilitate the analyses, it was dichotomized by the average, amounting to the same as the mode. The distribution remained relatively unchanged for the entire dataset, as for uncommitted citizens and the committed democrats, where three quarters are below average.

Moving the scope to education level, this variable is far less problematic. The question is: "What is the highest level of education you have successfully completed?". It was thereafter coded by the ESS personnel into standardized categories provided by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). This taxonomy features detailed levels of education, including sub-groups, totaling twenty-four categories, ranging from no education at all to a doctoral degree. However, it does not differentiate between

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[57] 0: No time at all; 1: Less than 0,5 hour; 2: 0,5 hour to 1 hour; 3: More than 1 hour, up to 1,5 hours; 4: More than 1,5 hours, up to 2 hours; 5: More than 2 hours, up to 2,5 hours; 6: More than 2,5 hours, up to 3 hours; 7: More than 3 hours. The mode value for the entire sample is furthermore 2.

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subgroups and groups, constantly rising with each subcategory. Consequently, this poses a problem as to the interpretation of the indicator. I therefore recoded the variable to only incorporate the seven main levels of education[58], as well as the incompletion of any of these. It was further dichotomized by the average, which was 3.28, representing upper secondary education. Among the committed democrats, approximately two thirds of the respondents have only completed the upper secondary level or less. The uncommitted citizens, however, are significantly more represented in the below average-category, with only twenty per cent having a higher education level than upper secondary.

The household income variable is also unproblematic. The question is as follows:

"Using this card, please tell me which letter describes your household's total income, after tax and compulsory deductions, from all sources? If you don't know the exact figure, please give an estimate. Use the part of the card that you know best: weekly, monthly or annual income."

To make it comparable across countries, the numbers reported were divided into deciles. E.g. if a household makes as much as the wealthiest ten percent of a country's population, it belongs in decile 10, and the next ten percent are in decile 9, et cetera. The question presupposes that the respondents have a knowledge of their household's income. This does of course open up for the possibility of some respondents giving a very rough, or inaccurate, estimate. The respondents not in charge of their household's economy have hopefully given this consideration and refrained from given a valid response. To facilitate the analyses, it was furthermore dichotomized with the average income as the cut-off point, amounting to 5.06, representing the middle decile. The distribution for the committed democrats' amounted to fifty-six per cent stemming from a household with below average income. It is significantly more skewed for the uncommitted citizens, where four fifths of them fall into the below average-category.

The gender variable is unevenly distributed in all three groups, in favor of female respondents. However, an interesting pattern is the fact that the uncommitted citizens have an even more skewed distribution, compared to the entire dataset, amounting to almost

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[58] 0: Not completed primary education; 1: Primary education; 2: Lower secondary; 3: Upper secondary; 4: Post second non-tertiary and short cycle tertiary; 5: Bachelor; 6: Master; 7: Doctoral degree.

sixty per cent. The committed democrats' distribution, on the other hand, show the opposite relation, but is still skewed in favor of women. The age variable was dichotomized by the average, which was forty-eight years. It shows an almost perfect normal distribution, mirroring the sample procedures' intricate selection system. Compared to the entire dataset, the committed citizens are somewhat more uneven, in the direction of above averagely aged, fifty-three per cent of them falling into this category.

Table 4.8   Distribution of the independent variables included in model 2.1

Variable	Uncommitted		Committed	
	Percentage	*N*	*Percentage*	*N*
News media consumption				
Below average	2,34 %	911	97,66 %	37962
Above average	2,29 %	303	97,71 %	12928
Education level				
Below average	2,97 %	1046	97,03 %	34131
Above average	1,39 %	265	98,61 %	18831
Household income				
Below average	2,85 %	711	97,15 %	24281
Above average	0,95 %	181	99,05 %	18808
Gender				
Men	2,18 %	544	97,82 %	24385
Women	2,69 %	800	97,31 %	28927
Age				
Below average	2,28 %	628	97,72 %	26904
Above average	2,62 %	707	97,38 %	26301

Notes: In all countries. Averages on the variables: News media= 2.02; Education level: 3.28; Income= 5.06; Age= 48,31.

The subsequent model in the second section of analyses will also include a variable measuring attitudes towards immigration, in addition to the variables from model 2.1. There

are six variables in the dataset measuring attitudes towards immigration[59]. Three of them are ordinal, while the rest are metric. The ordinal variables ask for the respondents' view of how many immigrants, with differing origins, should be allowed to enter their respective countries. The metric variables ask the respondents' whether immigrants are good or bad for the economy, whether they undermine or enrich their countries' cultural life, and whether they make their countries a better or worse places to live. The ordinal variables are approximately normally distributed, while the metric are show a significant overrepresentation for the neutral, middle-value. Converse and Presser (1986, 37) states the middle-category should be omitted, to secure more information about direction. Although they were originally referring to ordinal measures, it is likely that this value represents over-reporting in this case as well. Schaeffer and Presser (2003, 78) report that continuous variables without labels for each category prove less reliable than those with. As a consequence, many respondents might be reporting non-attitudes, a concept famously introduced by Philip Converse[60] (in Schaeffer and Presser, 2003, 79) to describe the general population's act of answering survey questions without actually possessing an attitude on the subject. If the contested argument is in fact valid, this is reported to be more problematic when the "don't know"-category is excluded or not offered, as is not the case with these questions. Blair et al. (2014, 201) still posits that a significant portion of respondents is expected to flock around the middle value, if offered. As this provides little information of interest to the analysis, it will therefore be omitted.

To establish whether an immigration-index is justifiable, I ran a principal axis factoring with all six indicators. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling concluded that the indicators are suitable for factor analysis, as the value of 0,853 significantly supersedes the cut-off value of 0,5 (Christophersen, 2013, 98). Bartletts test of significance also proved that the correlations of all indicators are of satisfactory strength (p<0.05). Using Kaiser's criterion, only one factor surpassed an eigenvalue of 1, also

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[59] 1. IMSMETN: "Now, using this card, to what extent do you think [country] should allow people of the same race or ethnic group as most [country] people to come and live here?"
2. Imdfetn: "How about people of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people?"
3. Impcntr: "How about people from the poorer countries outside Europe?"
4. Imbgeco: "Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries?".
5. Imueclt: "And, using this card, would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?".
6. Imwbcnt: "Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?".
[60] Covered in section 3.2.1.

exceeding the fifty per cent of common variance (Christophersen, 2013, 100). All factor loadings are furthermore between 0.653 and 0.805, demonstrating a moderate strength. Christophersen (2013, 104) underlines that the indicators should not be too highly or lowly correlated, as the former can result in erroneous impressions and the latter can uncover an irrelevant indicator or the omission of a relevant aspect. Moreover, the reliability analysis showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.890, indicating internal consistency. In sum, an immigration index is justified. In the creation of the index, all variables were dichotomized, following Christophersen's (2013, 106) advice of having equal scales on all indicators. For the ordinal four-value variables, this was done by recoding the two values indicating skepticism or opposition into 0 and the rest into 1. For the metric eleven-point variables, the more skeptical (1-4) were recoded into 0, and the rest (6-10) into 1. Thereby making all six variables dichotomous. I then made the index using the sum-function. It was further dichotomized, 1 through 3 representing negative attitudes towards immigration, and 4 through 6 representing positive attitudes. This construction also serves as a form of ex-post strategy correcting for method bias (Van Deth, 2009, 89), and increases the validity and reliability of the measurement (Hellevik, 2011, 309). The distribution of this index is very even among the whole sample, as well as the committed democrat's. However, the uncommitted citizens show attitudes a higher percentage of negative attitudes, only a quarter of holding positive views of immigration. This suggest a confirmation of the hypothesis involving this variable[61].

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[61] However, when crossing over to the newer democracies in Eastern Europe, Minkenberg (2013, 14) claim that nationalism is naturalized as a part of the mainstream, defined in terms of ethnicity. This significantly downgrades immigration as a relevant political issue[61]. He further concludes that anti-immigration sentiments are rather part of the mainstream, than belonging to the fringes of the political system. Consequently, this presents uncertainty as to whether this hypothesis will be confirmed.

Table 4.9   Distribution of the immigration variable included in model 2.2

Variable	Uncommitted citizens		Committed citizens	
	Percentage	*N*	*Percentage*	*N*
Attitudes toward immigration				
Negative attitudes	2,58 %	567	97,42 %	21388
Positive attitudes	2,87 %	206	97,13 &	21003

Notes: In all countries.

4.2.6 Variables measuring voting preferences

The third section of analyses seeks to uncover the uncommitted citizens' voting behavior, and will be three-fold, thus containing three differing dependent variables. Model 3.1 will analyze the likelihood of these citizens voting for PRR parties, versus other parties, and will therefore include a dichotomous dependent variable.

Model 3.2 will also include a category for abstainers, totaling three possible outcomes. These variables were made with the country-specific voting preference variables, where I separated the respondents into PRR voters, and others, in addition to a category for respondents who did not vote in their last national election[62]. Reviewing table 4.20, the PRR voter variable is equally skewed among the two groups of democrats. As to the variable including non-voters, this group is significantly more represented among the uncommitted citizens. Also notable is the distribution of PRR voters, indicating the rejection of the hypothesis involving these parties.

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[62] Using the vote variable. The operationalization of this variable is elaborated below.

Table 4.10 Distribution of the variables included in model 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3

Variable	Uncommitted citizens		Committed democrats	
	Percentage	N	Percentage	N
Party preference				
Other party	1,28 %	208	98,72 %	16057
PRR voter	1,31 %	32	98,69 %	2418
Party preference/abstention				
Other party	1,28 %	208	98,72 %	16057
PRR voter	1,31 %	32	98,69 %	2418
Non-voter	4,69 %	566	95,31 %	11503
Voted in last national election				
Yes	1,60 %	613	98,40 %	37581
No	4,69 %	566	95,31 %	11503

Notes: In Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and the Ukraine.

Model 3.3 will compare the likelihood of the uncommitted citizens voting versus abstention, and will therefore be dichotomous. Consequently, I will use the vote variable as a dependent variable. It is based on the survey question asking respondents the following: "Some people don't vote nowadays for one reason or another. Did you vote in the last [country] national election in [month/year]?". The formulation is unproblematic and it is easy to understand its content and intention. It also includes a third category, for the non-eligible. As the analysis seeks to uncover patterns of conscious abstention, I coded the non-eligible as missing.

4.2.7 The variables measuring basic human values

This section will cover the operationalization of the variables measuring human values. As these measurement are part of the Portait Value Questionnaire (PVQ), which have been featured in every round of ESS, they are considered reliable measures of values. Introduced with "Now I will briefly describe some people. Please listen to each description and tell me

how much each person is or is not like you. Use this card for your answer". The questions are included in table A4.7 in the appendix, and all seem rather unproblematic, having already been tested for reliability and validity on multiple occasions since the value module's inclusion in the first round of ESS. In order to create the variables, I combined the questions designed to measure the individual values. To further craft the dimensions, the individual values associated with these were combined. The distributions indicate a refutation of the last hypothesis, as the uncommitted citizens have percentages of highest scores on the conservation values.

Table 4.11 Distributions of the value dimensions

Variable	Uncommitted citizens		Committed democrats	
	Percentage	*N*	*Percentage*	*N*
Openness to change				
Low	2,2 %	849	97,8 %	38743
Highest score	2,0 %	268	98,0 %	12996
Self-enhancement				
Low	2,1 %	851	97,9 %	39048
Highest score	2,2 %	289	97,8 %	12696
Conservation				
Low	2,3 %	726	97,7 %	31404
Highest score	1,8 %	372	98,2 %	19774
Self-transcendence				
Low	3,7 %	599	96,3 %	15409
Highest score	1,5 %	540	98,5 %	36354

Notes: Valid percentage on max score, compared to other scores.

Table 4.12 Distributions of the values

Variable	Uncommitted citizens		Committed democrats	
	Percentage	*N*	*Percentage*	*N*
Self-direction				
Low	3,52 %	527	96,48 %	14446
Highest score	1,66 %	638	98,34 %	37828
Stimulation				
Low	2,22 %	765	97,78 %	33736
Highest score	2,16 %	407	97,84 %	18472
Hedonism				
Low	2,46 %	625	97,54 %	24811
Highest score	2,0 %	563	98,0 %	27475
Achievement				
Low	2,6 %	630	97,4 %	23941
Highest score	1,9 %	534	98,1 %	28273
Power				
Low	2,1 %	805	97,9 %	26801
Highest score	2,4 %	378	97,6 %	15468
Security				
Low	3,3 %	395	96,7 %	11508
Highest score	1,8 %	758	98,2 %	40733
Conformity				
Low	2,5 %	584	97,5 %	22334
Highest score	1,9 %	582	98,1 %	29685
Tradition				
Low	2,6 %	548	97,4 %	20190
Highest score	1,9 %	638	98,1 %	32143
Benevolence				
Low	5,5 %	387	94,5 %	6693
Highest score	1,7 %	798	98,3 %	45776
Universalism				
Low	4,0 %	539	96,0 %	13098
Highest score	1,6 %	621	98,4 %	38929

Notes: Valid percentage on max score, compared to other scores.

4.3 Methods

This section will include the methods applied in the thesis. The first part explains the logic underlying logistic regressions in general, and binominal logistic regression specifically. The second section presents the alterations when using multinomial logistic regression.

4.3.1 Binominal logistic regression

Logistic regression is favorable to ordinary least squares method (OLS) when the dependent variable (DV) is non-metric, and the prerequisites of normally distributed residuals, homoscedasticity and linearity is violated[63]. It is used to create a linear predictor for a categorical DV. Furthermore, there exists three main varieties: Binominal, multinomial and ordinal. In binominal logistic regression (BLR), the DV is dichotomous. This means that all respondents either hold the value 0 or 1. Consequently, this violates the OLS-requirement of normally distributed residuals, as no respondents can carry values between 0 and 1 (Christophersen, 2013). When the variable holds three or more nominal values, multinomial logistic regression is preferable.

Probability, odds and logits

The technique is useful to predict the *odds* of respondents being associated with the value of interest, compared to the other. In the case of this thesis, the odds is defined as the probability of being uncommitted divided by the probability of being committed to liberal democratic ideals (Christophersen, 2013).

$$Odds(\text{uncommitted}) = \frac{\text{p (uncommitted)}}{\text{p (committed)}}$$

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[63] If the DV is fairly equally distributed, the use of OLS can be justified (Christophersen, 2013, 132). Hellevik (2007) furthermore advocates the use of OLS even with a heteroskedastic distribution of residuals.

Moreover, to give exponential predictions, BLR takes the odds of being uncommitted for every level of an independent variable (IV) to make an *odds ratio*. Continuing the example related to the thesis, this step is expressed as such:

$$Odds\ ratio(\text{uncommitted}) = \frac{\text{odds (uncommitted)}}{\text{odds (committed)}}$$

To make a continual, linear criterion of the DV, the *logarithm* of that ratio is then taken. The estimates derived from this process is further called logits, shown in this equation:

$$Logit = \ln(odds\ ratio)$$

The expression shows how it is now possible to use linear regression[64].

Figure 4.6: The road from probability to logit.

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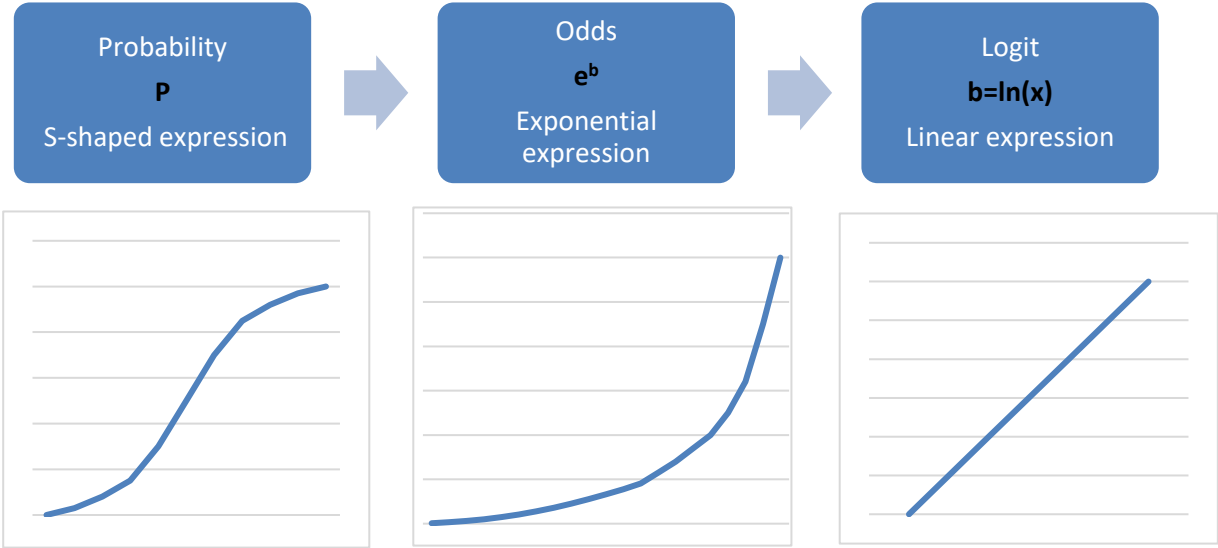
[64] To further illustrate the nature of logarithms, exemplification through the use of mathematical functions might help. Logarithms can be understood as the inverse operation of exponentiation. Furthermore, in a mathematical function, the odds represent an exponential expression to the s-shaped curve of the probability function. The logit-process therefore makes the expression linear (Christophersen, 2013).

The theoretical limits of probability distribution is between 0 and 1. This is a reported problem when using OLS with a dichotomous DV, as the model can make invalid predictions, falling outside this area (Hellevik, 2007). In the process of making the function exponential, the minimal value remains 0, but the roof is lifted, making the maximum value infinite. By taking the logarithm of the odds, and thereby inversing the exponential function, the expression is made linear. This process makes the minimal possible value minus infinite[65] (Christophersen, 2013).

Estimation method, interpretation of parameters and practical use

Using a dichotomous DV, the distribution of residuals will most likely not be normal[66], nor homoscedastic. Violating the BLUE[67]-requirements needed for OLS, the parameters are therefore estimated using maximum likelihood (ML). It is based on a *likelihood* function. The ML method selects a set of values of the model parameters that maximize the likelihood function. The parameter values are therefore those that make the data most probable.

A significant problem caused by this method is to the interpretational possibilities, especially across models (Hellevik, 2007). The only measure based on odds and logits that can be compared across models is a *y*-standardization (Mood, 2009, 80), the use of which is disputed (Christophersen, 2013, 141), and is furthermore not available in SPSS. Hellevik (2007, 72) further notes that "the use of log-linear measures is restricted to prediction analysis; they cannot be used for causal purposes". Moreover, the parameters in logit-form are not intuitively interpretable, and is therefore more useful to predict direction, and not size. Mood (2009, 67) also stress that these coefficients reflect unobserved heterogeneity, i.e. they are affected by omitted variables. This indicate that interpretation will have to be done carefully, and not deterministically. Using the odds ratio, or calculating the probability using specific values on the independent variables, is more useable to interpret size of statistical effects.

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[65] The logarithm's base is the natural number e (≈ 2.718), making it a natural logarithm.
[66] If the respondents were equally distributed among the two possible values on the DV, this would the case.
[67] Best Linear Unbiased Estimator.

$$Pr\,(Y = 1) = \frac{\exp(b0 + b1X1 + b2X2)}{1 + \exp(b0 + b1X1 + b2X2)}$$

When implementing BLR with multiple IVs, the bivariate connection between the DV and the individual IVs cannot be decomposed in the same way as with OLS-regression (Spierings and Zaslove, 2017, 829; Christophersen, 2013, 141). Which IV has the largest influence on the DV must therefore be established in another way. One technique is a simple, *simultaneous analysis*. This involves including all IVs concurrently in the same analysis, and interpreting the parameters. As mentioned above, measures of probability, calculated from the odds ratio, is the most intuitive and interpretable. One can thereby estimate the probability of having a high value on the DV. This calculation has to be done for different combinations of values on the IVs[68]. Another method is a *controlled effect analysis*. This technique uses the inclusion of all IVs but one, changing the explanatory variable to be excluded. This way, it is possible to uncover the IV with largest controlled effect by comparing the log-likelihood-levels[69] of the different models with the full model (where all IVs are included). By comparing this instead of interpreting the coefficients, it is possible to disregard the eventuality of scale-differences across the IVs (Christophersen, 2013).

Prerequisites and model assessments

Even though BLR can look past the requirements of normally distributed and homoscedastic residuals, there still are some statistical demands that have to be met. First, the data needs to be independent. When the analysis is not made over time, this is achieved by a simple random sample. The data gathering method of ESS meets these standards (Van Deth, 2009, 91; Koch, 2016). Second, the model needs to be well specified, i.e. include every relevant IVs and exclude all the irrelevant. This is difficult to assess, but if all IVs are theoretically grounded, and log-likelihood-levels decrease with the inclusion of every IV, this requirement is met[70]. Third, the variables needs to be independent of each other. This can be checked

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[68] When using many variables, as well as metric, continual ones, Christophersen (2013) recommend to limit the calculation to the few that highlights the main findings of the analysis.

[69] Indicates the extent to which a model fits the data, although only comparable and does not show anything substantial per se. Expressed as -2LL to make a positive coefficient. This measurement is also known as deviance (Fields, 2013, 763).

[70] Additionally, a Wald test showing a coefficient significantly different from zero indicates a contribution made from an IV on the prediction of the DV (Field, 2013, 766)

through measures of autocorrelation, like a Durbin-Watson test[71], and check for collinearity, measuring tolerance. Fourth, possible outliers cannot be too influential. This can be tested with measures like Cook's distance and DfBeta (Christophersen, 2013). Fifth, the relation between the DV and IVs needs to be best described with a logistic function, being S-shaped on the probability-scale and linear after the logit-transformation. The shape can be controlled for with a Hosmer-Lemeshow (H-L) test, checking the goodness-of-fit. If the test is insignificant, this means the curve has the appropriate shape. Sixth, there are problems unique to logistic regression: empty cells and complete separation. Separation occurs when values for the DV are determined by an IV. If the latter is continuous and the former is dichotomous, this may create a discontinuity, e.g. when values 1-3 on the predictor equals 0, and 5-7 equals 1 on the DV. Consequently, if there is no overlap, this can seriously bias the estimators and the standard errors. If the parameters show values way beyond expectation, this might therefore indicate complete separation.

Lastly, the quality of the model need also be assessed. This can be done by checking the log-likelihood-levels (-2LL) before and after the inclusion of IVs, i.e. also assessing the hierarchical relation of the models. Fit-indexes can also be evaluated, like Nagelkerke's R^2 (R_N^2). This measure varies between 0 and 1, where the former value indicates a total incompatibility between the model and the data in use, and the opposite for the latter case. This measure can also be used as an indicator of explaining variance in the dependent variable (Knutsen, 2018, 24) Both R_N^2 and $-2LL$ only provide assessments of models compared to other models, and cannot be interpreted independently (Christophersen, 2013). *Percentage of correct hit* is yet another interpretation method. This involves comparing the predictions based on the DV alone with predictions made with one or more IVs. However, Christophersen (2013, 140) notes that this method is better suited when DV is relatively normally distributed, as is not the case in this thesis.

4.3.2 Multinomial logistic regression

As the name suggests, when the DV includes more than two nominal values, multinomial logistic regression (MLR) have to be administered instead of BLR. The basis for this method is the same as in BLR, estimating likelihoods (using ML) for an outcome compared to another possible outcome. In MLR, the results are based on a reference category, i.e. the likelihood for this outcome is compared to all other outcomes, calculated separately for each

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[71] As the data used are not from multiple points of time, this is not expected to be a problem.

other category on the DV. In the case of this thesis, the third section of analyses will apply this method (Christophersen, 2013).

When evaluating the model, R_N^2 is still relevant. However, Pearson x^2 is used instead of the Hosmer-Lemeshow test as goodness-of-fit assessment, and is based on deviance between observed and expected frequencies. A small discrepancy indicate a wholesome model, while the opposite is true for bigger deviances. One reason for greater divergences is the presence of empty cells. The interpretation of the test is furthermore similar to Hosmer-Lemeshow. Parallel to BLR, the model also needs to be well specified, contain independent data, and include no influential observations or a strong tendency of collinearity (Christophersen, 2013). As logistic regressions in SPSS does not have the option to check for multicollinearity, I will have to perform an OLS regression to assess this (Field, 2013, 795).

4.4 Methodological challenges

This section will assess the challenges that need to be addressed before making inferences based on the analyses. This includes assessments of internal and external validity, as well as reliability, causality, and general methodological problems created by my dependent variable.

Internal validity concerns itself with whether or not we measure what we intend to measure (Fields, 2013, 12). I have dedicated discussions related to this in the section on operationalizations. Moreover, the internal validity of the thesis is reliant on whether the questions involving the democratic elements were posed in the right manner, and equivalently across languages (Hellevik, 2011, 350; Van Deth, 2009, 89; Blair et al., 2014, 172. I have already reviewed the wording of the questions[72], and introduced doubt over the choice of close-ended questions only including an ex positivo definition of democracy. An open-ended questionnaire might produce a different set of democratic elements, considered by the respondents to be necessary for democracy (Hellevik, 2011, 350). The only way to accurately evaluate this is by performing a survey where open-ended questions and ex negativo democratic elements are included, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. This is

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[72] A thorough evaluation of the questions in the democracy module was made by Winstone et al. (2016).

however an interesting question for the future waves of the ESS, especially when reviewing the democracy module for inclusion in a future survey.

External validity is related to the power of the conclusions, and whether they are applicable to a larger group of people than the ones actually included in the analyses, i.e. *generalizability*. This is reliant on a *representative* selection of respondents (Hellevik, 2011, 114), which is furthermore dependent on the sample selection processes of the ESS producing a random selection of respondents with an even distribution on socio-demographic variables. The ESS sampling procedure is acknowledged as superior to most surveys (Van Deth, 2009, 91; Koch, 2016), indicating that this is unproblematic. Hellevik (2011, 355) express the importance of considering the possibility that the inferences made are based on a skewed sample. However, by introducing probability sampling, *systematic sampling errors* are removed from the equation. Furthermore, the effect of possible *random sampling errors* skewing our results can be assessed by looking at the strength of the results, and how many respondents they are based on. The analyses were also performed with a sufficient amount of respondents, the smallest number being 30784, largely exceeding the recommended minimal N. Moreover, all coefficients used to draw the conclusions were clear in their direction. Based on these assumptions, I therefore believe the results to applicable to all Europeans who lack commitment to liberal democracy, and therefore valid through (a limited) space. Considering predictive validity, it concerns whether or not these conclusions can be generalized to European citizens in a different point in time (Fields, 2013, 12). Whether or not the conclusions made in this thesis can safely predict the citizens uncommitted to democracy in the future, it is reliant on the stability of European's conception of democracy across time, as well as the systemic stability of both the democracies and the party systems. However, predicting is not a major concern in this thesis.

Reliability is related to whether or not an instrument can be interpreted consistently across different situations (Fields, 2013, 12). High reliability is furthermore a necessary condition for high validity (Hellevik, 2011, 53). Assessing this is usually done by a performing a *test-retest* evaluation. All questions, except the democratic elements, have been included in previous waves of the ESS. This was most likely not performed on the exact same respondents, but a relatively equivalent distribution on an equivalent sample will confirm this. The ESS procedures further includes rigorous pretesting of all questions. In the case of the democracy module, this process is documented by Winstone et al. (2016),

where they find no significant problems that remained unedited. Addressing causality, this concerns the relation of an observed effect (Fields, 2013, 14; Hellevik, 2011, 290), i.e. whether it is possible to make assumptions as to the direction of the effect. This is less relevant for this thesis, as the directional relation of the variables are less interesting than their empirical relation. Futhermore, Hellevik (2007, 72) underline that logistic regressions limit the interpretations to predictions, and are not appropriate for causal inferences.

A major problem specific to this thesis is the extremely uneven variable describing the type of democrats, separating the uncommitted citizens from the committed democrats. While skewness above 1 indicate a highly uneven distribution, the indicator's value on this measure is a whopping 6,138 (S.E.= 0.010). In these cases, Christophersen (2013, 83-84) prescribe the log-transformation of variables. This is done by using logistic regressions, but I will still have to consider the validity of the results in light of this extreme skewness.

4.5 Chapter summary

Concluding this chapter, I have introduced the reader to the relevant choices made in regards to research design. This included considerations of equivalence, upon which the case selection is based. I have furthermore given a short introduction of the populist radical right parties, thereby justifying their inclusion in the relevant analyses. Choices made in the operationalization of the variables were thereafter presented, before evaluating the methodological challenges. I will now perform the analyses, and present their results.

5   Analyses

This chapter covers all the analyses. The first section is dedicated to analyzing country- and system-differences, testing the country-level hypotheses. The results indicate that the first hypothesis is confirmed, while the second is inconclusive. The second segment seeks to confirm or deny the seven subsequent individual-level hypotheses. Through the use of binomial logistic regression on various models, the section confirms the hypotheses involving education and attitudes towards immigration. The other hypothesis, involving news media consumption, is inconclusive, as the variable used is shown to be problematic, and the size of its coefficient not significantly larger than the standard error. In the third piece of analyses, I wish to uncover the uncommitted citizens' voting behavior, testing the two last hypotheses. The results assert that the uncommitted citizens are more likely to abstain from elections, rather than voting for any other party. These results are supported by a wider analysis covering all European countries. Lastly, the fourth section reveals that the uncommitted citizens are not more likely to share values commonly associated with nationalists, compared to the committed democrats, refuting the last hypothesis.

5.1   Country- and system-level differences

This section is dedicated to analyzing country- and system-level differences. First, it identifies the countries' share of uncommitted citizens. Second, I categorize countries by democratic experience and type of media system, to ready the first line of hypothesis testing. Thereafter, I present the results, confirming the first hypothesis, while the second hypothesis remains inconclusive.

5.1.1   Distribution of uncommitted citizens across Europe

There are significant differences when comparing the percentages of uncommitted citizens in the various countries[73]. Most notable is perhaps the Cypriot case, only 0.3 per cent of their citizens being uncommitted. There are furthermore twelve countries with percentages of uncommitted exceeding the aggregated European of 2.5 per cent. These countries are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Kosovo. Of these, the Lithuanian case show the

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[73] See table A4.1 in the appendix.

highest percentage, of 5.5 per cent, while the United Kingdom have the highest absolute concentration, with 123 respondents being uncommitted.

Of the countries with above average uncommitted citizens, only Ireland and Portugal lack an easily identifiable populist radical right (PRR) party. For the remaining cases, it would therefore be interesting to look at possible explanations for this congestion. While Hernández (2016) showed that democracy could be measured across Europe, Norris' contribution has led me to believe that the reasons for the respondents' degree of commitment to liberal democratic ideals could vary across Europe according to democratic experience and type of media system. I will now use logistic regressions to test the two first hypotheses.

5.1.2 Testing the country-level hypotheses

This section will establish whether the aggregate-level hypotheses derived from Norris (2011) can be confirmed or refuted. According to these hypotheses, I expect respondents from new democracies, as well as citizens of partly free and unfree media systems, to show a higher likelihood of being an uncommitted citizen.

To test these hypotheses, I will run binominal logistic regressions on three models. The first includes a dichotomized variable differentiating between old and new democracies[74]. The second model contains a similar variable, now separating free from partly free and unfree media systems[75]. The third model will include both these explanatory variables, to control for each other's effect.

5.1.3 The results

Reviewing the table below, the results are clear. First, the Hosmer-Lemeshow tests indicate that all three models represent a good fit to the data, while R_N^2 does not support this conclusion[76]. Second, the third model produced an insignificant coefficient for media system. Third, democratic experience's ninety-five confidence interval for exp(b) show that the significant coefficient is unambiguous in its implication.

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[74] See table 4.6 categorization, and 4.5 for distribution.
[75] See table 4.7 categorization, and 4.5 for distribution.
[76] Probably a result of omitted explanatory variables. This will be revisited in section 5.5.

Table 5.1 Logistic regression analyses testing the country-level hypotheses

	Model 1.1[77]	Model 1.2[78]	Model 1.3[79]	
	B (S.E.)	B (S.E.)	B (S.E.)	Exp(b)
Democratic experience	-1,244*** (0,249)		-1,041*** (0,259)	0,353
Media system		-0,203 (0,208)	-0,203 (0,192)	
Constant	-3,450*** (0,227)	-3,492*** (1,147)	-3,461*** (0,227)	
N	53557	53557	53557	
R_N^2	0,038	0,038	0,038	
-2LL	12114,370	12114,370	12114,370	
Hosmer-Lemeshow, sig.	1,000	1,000	1,000	

*p<0,1 %; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.
Df=1.

Notes: Negative coefficients indicate that the less democratically experienced and those from unfree or partly free media system are more likely to be uncommitted citizens. Clustered standard errors were calculated for increased accuracy, and country dummies included to control for country effects.

Addressing the hypotheses, the first is clearly supported by the analyses. The first model reveal that it is far more likely that citizens of new democracies are uncommitted, compared to old democracies. After controlling for media system variable in model 1.3, the coefficient is curtailed. The second model yielded an insignificant coefficient, while the third model revealed that when controlling for democratic experience, the coefficient remained insignificant. The evaluation of the second hypothesis is therefore inconclusive. Therefore, the results show that respondents from less democratically experienced countries[80] are more likely of being uncommitted citizens. Moreover, respondents from old democracies have 0,647[81] lower odds of being uncommitted citizens, compared to respondents from new democracies, and controlled for type media system. This mirrors the distribution of the type

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[77] When excluding Russia, the coefficient is -1,346 (sig. 0,001), fortifying the results.

[78] When excluding Russia, the coefficient is -0,305, but remains insignificant.

[79] When excluding Russia, the coefficients is are -1,041 (sig.: 0,001) for democratic experience, and -0,305 (insignificant) for media system. The indication is therefore that Russia does not considerably affect the results.

[80] Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Spain, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Ukraine and Kosovo.

[81] 1- exp(b).

of democrats in the new democracies, versus the old democracies. The distributions is somewhat similar in the types of media systems, but the analyses indicate that this might be because the less free media systems are usually new democracies[82].

5.2 Individual-level explanations for the uncommitted democrats

This section of analysis seeks to uncover the uncommitted citizens' socio-demographic background, as well as indicating whether they fit the profile of a populist radical right voter. Reviewing the means of both types of democrats on the individual-level variables[83], I expect confirmations of all hypotheses including these. Considering that the countries included in the analyses differ in democratic experience and type of media system, a closer look at the results within each country is therefore warranted. The distribution of the dependent variable is significantly skewed, indicating that OLS regression is unsuitable. I will still assess the prerequisites for this method, as it will also provide information on multicollinearity and influential observations, the absence of which is required for logistic regressions.

5.2.1 The uncommitted citizens' democratic knowledge

Using Norris' (2011) framework and findings, I expect uncommitted democrats to carry certain socio-demographic characteristics. According to her findings, education levels, degree of news media usage and age are expected to affect democratic knowledge. If the uncommitted citizens are in fact democratically unknowledgeable, these results will be mirrored. Consequently, they are expected to show lower levels of education, a lower amount of news media consumption and lower age.

There is a clear absence of multicollinearity and influential observations[84], but as expected, the distribution of residuals are far from normally distributed, and the relation is definitively heteroscedastic. OLS is therefore not the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator, and cannot, in good conscience, be used to estimate the parameters.

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[82] With the notable exception being Italy.
[83] See table A5.1 in appendix.
[84] Tolerance= 0,897-0,988. Cook's d=0,002.

Table 5.2 Logistic regression analysis explaining the uncommitted citizens, model 2.1

Variable	B (S.E.)[85]	Confidence intervals for exp (B)	
		Lower bound	*Upper bound*
News media usage	0,024 (0,204)	0,840	1,164
Education level	-0,693*** (0,117)	0,415	0,603
Household income	-1,022*** (0,181)	0,298	0,435
Gender	0,188** (0,090[a])	1,040	1,399
Age	0,000 (0,107)	0,860	1,164
Constant	-3,666*** (0,324)		

*p<0,05; ** p<0,01; ***p<0,001.
Df=1; Hosmer-Lemeshow, sig.= 0,214; R_N^2= 0,084; -2LL= 7188,503; N=41786.
a. The range of the confidence interval for this standard error is from 0,074 to 0,442.
Notes: Clustered standard errors were calculated for increased accuracy, and country dummies

included to control for country effects.

5.2.2 Results from the first model

The first model produced four significant coefficients: For education, income, gender and the constant. This suggests that the respondents with higher education levels are more likely to be committed democrats, compared to being uncommitted citizens[86] However, the constant implies that a below averagely aged man with below average education level and news media consumption, stemming from a household with below average income, is far more likely to be committed democrat. This could be a result of the effects stemming from the three variables with insignificant coefficients. The highly skewed nature of the dependent variable, as well as the unevenness of the gender variable might also have produced this constant. I will now add immigration attitudes to the model.

5.2.3 The uncommitted citizens' attitudes

Following to the hypotheses derived from the populist radical right literature, I expect men and those opposed to immigration, to show a higher likelihood of being uncommitted

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[85] When excluding Russia, the coefficients for education (-0,723) and income (-1,145) were somewhat amplified. Both retained their level of significance.
[86] The same holds true for high household income. Respondents from households with higher income are thus more likely to be committed democrats.

citizens. In order for the logistic regressions to support these hypotheses, the coefficients for gender and immigration needs to negative and significant.

5.2.4 The results from the second model

In the second model, the implications made from the first model remained mostly unchanged. The only exception is news media usage, now producing a significant coefficient. It suggests that those with an above average news media consumption are more likely to be uncommitted citizens, compared to being a committed democrat. The requirements for OLS-regressions were not met, but there was a clear absence of multicollinearity and influential observations[87]. The within-country analyses furthermore confirmed all aggregated results[88], as no significant coefficients gave contradictory results. The constant remains negative, retaining the implications made in the first model. The immigration coefficient were according to expectations, but this was not the case for gender.

5.2.5 Concluding the results of the individual-level explanations

Addressing the third hypothesis, the analysis show a clear indication: The lowly educated are more likely to be uncommitted. The highly educated show a 0,432 lower odds of being an uncommitted citizen, compared to the lower educated, ceteris paribus. This hypothesis is therefore confirmed.

The fourth hypothesis expected that the respondents with low media usage were more likely to be uncommitted citizens. The results from the third model indicate a refutation of this hypothesis. However, the standard error is larger than the coefficient, indicating that this conclusion might be hasty. Moreover, considering the uncertainty associated with this variable, and if it actually measures news media consumption[89], it is not easily refuted. The lower part of the confidence interval further show that the odds is not significantly different from one. The implication made from this variable is more accurately pertaining to citizens getting some, or all of their news media input through television. Also bearing in mind the extreme unevenness of the dependent variable, this could have produced the coefficient. The upper range of the standard error's confidence interval was furthermore

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[87] Tolerance= 0,901-0,989. Cook's d=0,004.
[88] See table A5.2 in the appendix.
[89] See section 4.2.5 for this discussion.

larger than the coefficient. Thus, the hypothesis cannot be confirmed, nor refuted, and its evaluation remains inconclusive[90].

Table 5.3 Logistic regression analysis explaining the uncommitted citizens, model 2.2[91]

Variables	B (S.E.)[92]	Exp(b)	Confidence intervals for exp(b)	
			Lower	*Upper*
News media usage	0,283** (0,238[a])	1,266	1,077	1,635
Education level	-0,565** (0,086)	0,568	0,451	0,717
Immigration	-0,955*** (0,115)	0,385	0,307	0,482
Household income	-1,004*** (0,213)	0,366	0,288	0,467
Gender	0,194* (0,085[b])	1,214	1,001	1,472
Age	-0,169 (0,120)	0,845	0,695	1,029
Constant	-3,560*** (0,311)	0,028		

*p<0,05; ** p<0,01; ***p<0,001.

Df=1; Hosmer-Lemeshow, sig.= 0,182; R_N^2= 0,112; -2LL= 4354,406; N=33510.

a. The range of the confidence interval for this standard error is from -0,252 to 0,724.

b. The range of the confidence interval is from 0,084 to 0,433.

Notes: Clustered standard errors were calculated for increased accuracy, and country dummies included to control for country effects.

Gender also produced a significant coefficient, indicating that women are more likely to be uncommitted citizens. However, the lower range of the confidence interval indicate the

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[90] I leave it up to future research to find a better measure for news media consumption in the ESS.

[91] The model yielded a larger pseudo R², and a significantly smaller log-likelihood measure, compared to model 2.1. This indicates a better fit to the data, attributed to the inclusion of immigration.

[92] When excluding Russia, the coefficients for income (-1,174) and gender (0,213) were somewhat amplified, immigration remained almost identical (-0,956), while education's effect was slightly curtailed (-0,544). All coefficient retained their level of significance. However, this did not change the basis for inferences.

odds might be extremely close to 1, and the standard error's upper confidence interval is significantly larger than the coefficient. Consequently, the hypothesis involving gender cannot be confirmed. The analysis further show that individuals opposed to immigration are more likely to be uncommitted citizens. The variable is significant, and the upper confidence interval is considerably dissimilar to 1. Moreover, respondents positive toward immigration have 0,615 lower odds of being an uncommitted citizen, compared to those opposed to immigration, ceteris paribus. This hypothesis is therefore confirmed.

Reviewing the results within each country, the significant coefficients were comparable across Europe. I also performed the analysis in Western and Eastern Europe, still finding the same results. This therefore supports Hernández' (2016) conclusion, that democracy can be measured safely across Europe.

Furthermore, the controlled effect analysis[93] show that attitudes towards immigration and household income holds the greatest explanatory power among the independent variables.

5.3   The uncommitted citizens' voting behavior

This section will explore the uncommitted citizens' voting behavior, or their lack thereof. Because of the limited amount of uncommitted respondents, there exists some empty cells, while the other cells show an extremely low N[94]. The cells not filled are the uncommitted citizens voting for PRR parties. This could be explained by the fact these citizens are very few in numbers, and the PRR are usually not the dominant parties. However, by treating all the countries with relevant PRR parties as one case, it is still possible to perform the analyses.

5.3.1 Model 3.1: The uncommitted citizen's voting behavior

The first model will explore the likelihood of the uncommitted voting for PRR parties, compared to voting for all other parties. I will therefore performs this analysis in countries where the PRR is a relevant force. Before embarking on the analysis, I first checked the prerequisites for OLS-regressions. The relation is clearly heteroskedastic, but there was a clear absence of multicollinearity and influential observations[95].

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[93] See table A5.3 in the appendix.
[94] See table A4.2 in the appendix.
[95] Tolerance= 1,000. Cook's d= 0,014.

Reviewing table A5.4 (in the appendix), the results indicate a refutation of the seventh hypothesis. While the party preference variable is insignificant, the constant show that the uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for other parties, than PRR parties[96]. As stated above, this is most likely because of the empty cells previously mentioned. Although this usually proves a major methodological problem, it only strengthens the refutation of this hypothesis, as there apparently is a very low amount of uncommitted citizens voting for these parties.

5.3.2 Model 3.2: Including abstainers

The second model will include a third category, representing non-voters. By this inclusion, I can compare the likelihood of the uncommitted citizens voting for other parties or PRR parties, respectively, with the likelihood of abstention. The inclusion of a third nominal category necessitates the use of multinomial logistic regression, in lieu of binominal. OLS is therefore not usable under these circumstances, but I still need to check for multicollinearity and influential observations, which was absent from the model[97].

Table 5.4 Logistic regression analysis uncovering the uncommitted citizens' voting behavior, model 3.2

Variable	B (S.E.)[98]	Confidence interval for exp(b)	
		Lower bound	*Upper bound*
Party preference/Abstention			
Other party	1,148*** (0,141)	2,582	3,850
PRR party	1,026*** (0,142)	1,889	4,116

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.

N= 30784; Pearson, sig: 0,963; -2LL= 342,787. R_N^2=0,517.

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[96] This did not change when excluding Russia from the analysis, producing an insignificant coefficient of 0,060, while the constant remained unchanged.
[97] Tolerance= 1,000. Cook's d= 0,001.
[98] Excluding Russia resulted in somewhat amplified coefficients for both other party (1,205) and PRR party (1,069), while both retained their level of significance. The basis for inferences is therefore unchanged. Excluding Belgium resulted in almost identical results.

Notes: The reference category is non-voter. Positive coefficients indicate a higher likelihood of abstention. Clustered standard errors were calculated for increased accuracy, and country dummies were included to control for country effects. SPSS reports three empty cells, amounting to 3.3 %. This is an acceptable level (Christophersen, 2013, 152).

The coefficients from model 3.2 indicate that the uncommitted citizens are more likely to be abstainers, compared to committed democrats. The results are consistent when compared to the likelihood of voting for PRR parties, and other parties. I will now explore if these findings remain for the entire dataset.

5.3.3 Model 3.3: The uncommitted non-voter

I will perform the analysis with the type of democrat as an independent variable, and the variable measuring whether or not the respondent voted in the last national election as the dependent variable.

The distribution of the variables indicate the same pattern as for the first model. While more than two thirds of the committed democrats voted in their national elections, the uncommitted citizens are evenly distributed between the two categories. It therefore shows that the uncommitted citizens are more likely to abstain from voting, compared to the committed democrats. Prior to performing the analysis, I first checked for multicollinearity and influential observations using OLS-regression. The results confirmed an absence of both[99].

The results confirm that the uncommitted are far less likely to vote in elections, paralleled to the committed. In fact, these citizens have 1,584 higher odds of abstaining, compared to the others. It further reflects the distribution on this variable, the uncommitted being largely more represented among the abstainers, compared to the distribution for voters. The eighth hypothesis is therefore supported. Moreover, it supports the presupposition that the uncommitted citizens are less committed to liberal democratic ideals, as they do not engage in the most common democratic practice.

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[99] Tolerance= 0,991. Cook's d= 0,000.

Table 5.5 Logistic regression analysis measuring likelihood of voting, model 3.3

Variable	B (S.E.)[100]	Exp(b)	Confidence interval for exp(b)	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Type of democrat	0,950*** (0,088)	2,584	2,294	2,912

*p<0,001.
H-L test, sig.: 1,000; R_N^2= 0,069. Df=1; N=50263.

Notes: Positive coefficient indicate higher likelihood of a non-vote outcome for the uncommitted citizens. I calculated clustered standard errors for increased accuracy, and country dummies were included to control for country effects.

Reviewing the results from within each country[101], all significant coefficients retain the comparable direction and strength, most countries even exceeding this value[102]. The strongest coefficients stem from Denmark, the Netherlands and Italy, and the weakest from the Russia and Kosovo. Still, the coefficients from Hungary, Slovenia, France, Norway, Sweden, Albania, Portugal, Iceland, Israel and Cyprus are insignificant, indicating that this might not be the case for all European countries. Moreover, it is interesting that the Belgian case also produced a positive and significant coefficient, considering that they have a compulsory voting system (Jaitman, 2013). Furthermore, the statistical effect supersedes the aggregated coefficient, indicating that the Belgian uncommitted citizens does not differ from the other nationalities.

5.4 The uncommitted citizens' value profile

This section will uncover the human values associated, and not associated, with the uncommitted citizens. The first model will include the individual elements: Self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and

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[100] When excluding Russia, the coefficient was somewhat amplified (0,980), and retained its level of significance. Consequently, including Russia in the analyses did not change the basis for inferences. Excluding Belgium resulted in almost identical results.
[101] See table A5.5 in the appendix.
[102] Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Spain, Finland, United Kingdom, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland, Ireland and Germany.

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universalism. The second will use the dimensions in lieu of the values, measuring openness to change, self-enhancement, conservation and self-transcendence. Drawing on the literature on human values, I expect the uncommitted citizens to show a higher likelihood of conservation and self-enhancement values.

Reviewing the preconditions for both OLS and logistic regression, there is a clear absence of multicollinearity and influential observations in both models[103]. Conclusive with the requisites for the other models in this thesis, the highly skewed dependent variable violates the OLS-assumptions of homoscedasticity and normally distributed residuals. Binominal logistic regression in therefore the method of choice for these two models.

5.4.1 The results from both models

Reviewing the results from the two models, some coefficients stand out. The uncommitted citizens show low likelihood of having values of self-direction, security, benevolence, and universalism. This again produces a low likeliness of scoring high on the value dimensions concerning conservation and self-transcendence. On the other end of the spectrum, they show a higher likelihood of placing importance on stimulation and power. This bring about the higher likelihood of self-enhancement values. It also creates an insignificant coefficient describing openness to change, because of the conflicting values within this dimension[104].

Addressing the hypothesis related to human values, the uncommitted citizens are clearly not associated with values usually coupled with liberals. Nor do they show a higher likelihood of placing importance on conservation values, commonly associated with nationalists. They do however show a higher likelihood of valuing self-enhancement, compared to the committed democrats, which is empirically related to right-wingers (Schwartz, 2001, 280). The coefficient on conservation is in large part made by low values on

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[103] Model 1: Tolerance= 0,658-0,973; Cook's d= 0,004. Model 2: Tolerance= 0,711-0,977; Cook's d= 0,005.

[104] Delving deeper into the value items (see table A5.6 in the appendix), the self-direction coefficient is made by low scores on "important to make own decisions and be free". Stimulation is made by "important to seek adventures and have an exciting life". Power is supported by both questions, while the security score relies on the item "important that government is strong and ensures safety". Security is solely based on "important that government is strong and ensures safety", which might indicate a lack of trust in government. The conformity outcome thusly because of the item "important to behave properly", while all items concerning the self-transcendence supports this inference.

Table 5.6 Results from logistic regressions analyzing human values[105]

	Model 4.1	Model 4.2	
	B (S.E.)	B (S.E.)	Exp(b)
Openness to change		-0,028 (0,110)	0,973
Self-direction	-0,336*** (0,120)		
Stimulation	0,153* (0,113)		
Hedonism	0,029 (0,109)		
Self-enhancement		0,143*** (0,106)	1,153
Achievement	-0,103 (0,088)		
Power	0,413*** (0,109)		
Conservation		-0,122*** (0,164)	0,885
Security	-0,322*** (0,185)		
Conformity	-0,006 (0,133)		
Tradition	-0,081 (0,152)		
Self-transcendence		-0,441*** (0,146)	0,643
Benevolence	-0,485*** (0,173)		
Universalism	-0,326*** (0,092)		
Constant	-1,167*** (0,332)	-1,293*** (0,352)	
H-L	0,693	0,462	
R_N^2	0,141	0,130	
N	41003	41003	

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.

Notes: Positive coefficients indicate higher likelihood of being "uncommitted" value. Both models include age, gender, income and country dummies as control variables. Moreover, I calculated clustered standard errors for increased accuracy.

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[105] Excluding Russia from the analyses resulted in somewhat amplified coefficients for self-direction (-0,398), stimulation (0,172), power (0,504), benevolence (-0,559) and universalism (-0,379), and slightly curtailed the statistical effect of security (-0,245). On the dimension, openness to change (-0,082; Also gained statistical significance), self-enhancement (0,222) and self-transcendence (-0,510) were moderately enlarged. Consequently, including the Russian case in the analyses did not change any basis for inferences.

the two value items measuring importance of government strength to ensure safety[106], and the importance of behaving properly.

Consequently, the results cannot support the expectation of the uncommitted citizens sharing values commonly associated with nationalists. However, a case can be made for the indication that the uncommitted citizens are more likely to be right-wingers, as they share high values on the dimension measuring self-enhancement. Moreover, these citizens are clearly not associated with liberal values, as they show a low likelihood of placing importance on both values commonly associated with liberals[107], compared to the committed democrats. Reviewing the results of the analyses within each country[108], there are no significant coefficients that contradicts these inferences[109]. Concluding this segment, there is not sufficient basis for concluding that the uncommitted citizens might be a potential PRR voter group. I will now assess the robustness of the results.

5.5   Assessing the robustness of the results

When performing analyses based on complex social phenomena, one must always consider the possibility of the results being a consequence of arbitrary and/or irrelevant properties, e.g. only depending on a specific research design or operationalization. This concerns a lack of theoretical accuracy. The inferences might furthermore be based on methodological requirements that were not met, i.e. a lack of statistical accuracy. These two groups of possible deficiencies might therefore result in flawed inferences on the relationship between variables, and needs to be evaluated.

5.5.1 Meeting the statistical requirements for valid inferences

Prior to each analysis, I assessed the presence of multicollinearity and influential observations. All tests concluded with absences of these, thereby establishing independent

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[106] This result might in turn be because of low trust in the government (which might further explain their absence from elections). However, I leave it up to future research to establish this.
[107] Self-direction and universalism (Schwartz, 2001, 280).
[108] See tables A5.7 and A5.8 in the appendix.
[109] However, in Denmark, Hungary, and Poland, the committed democrats show a higher likelihood of placing importance on openness to change, while contradictory results are found in the Czech Republic. Moreover, achievement is found to be related to committed citizens in Eastern Europe, stimulation with uncommitted citizens in the same region, and hedonism with the uncommitted in Western Europe.

explanatory variables and the nonexistence of outliers affecting the results. The tables further include fit-measures, indicating whether logistic regression should be the method of choice. As Hosmer-Lemeshow test had an insignificant outcome, there was no identifiable problem with the selection of method. There was furthermore no indications of complete separation, a problem associated with logistic regressions (Christophersen, 2013).

Nagelkerke's pseudo R squared gives an impression of the percentage of explained variance in the dependent variable produced by the explanatory variables (Nagelkerke, 1991, 691), indicating the quality of the models. In the various analyses, this measure varied considerably. The fact that these numbers are not close to 1 indicate that the various explanatory variables does not correlate highly with the dependent variable. On the other hand, if the figures are too low, they indicate that there might be an omitted variable bias, as the explanatory variables does not explain a sufficient amount of the variation in the dependent variable. This might be the case in model 1.3 and 3.3, explaining less than ten per cent. However, 3.2 is better specified than 3.3, as well as involving abstention. Consequently, concluding with an omission of explanatory variable(s) in the uncommitted's voting behavior is an over-statement. In the case of the country-level model, this could be a result of not including the usual control variables, income, gender, and age. The controlled effect analysis of model 2.2[110] further indicate that at least income should be included. Moreover, as democratic experience in model 1.3 produced a significant coefficient, I expect type of democrat to be conditioned by this. The inferences made by model 2.2 is based on the assumption that it is not, so I will have to control for this by performing a multilevel analysis.

Performing the multi-level analysis, with democratic experience as level 2-variable, and model 2.2 as level-1 variables, substantiated the inferences made by model 1.3 and 2.2, as no contradictory results are observable[111]. However, the multilevel analyses cannot conclude with an increase in pseudo R squared measure. Thus, I cannot refute the possibility of omitted variable bias. Mood (2009, 67) emphasize that coefficients found by using logistic regressions could as well be a results by omitted variables. Consequently, this presents an uncertainty to the validity of the inferences based on these models.

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[110] See table A5.3 in the appendix for the results of the control effect analysis.
[111] See table A5.9. It is however noteworthy that the constant now implies the opposite as model 2.2, now going in the expected direction.

Table 5.7 Nagelkerke's pseudo R square for various models[112]

Model	R_N^2	Percentage of explained variance
1.3	0,038	3,8 %
2.2	0,112	11,2 %
3.2	0,517	51,7 %
3.3	0,069	6,9 %
4.1	0,141	14,1 %
4.2	0,130	13,0 %

5.5.2 Effects of design and operationalizations

Another possible problem to the inferences is the inclusion of Russia in the analyses. As the country are by multiple observers considered an unfree autocracy (Polity IV; Freedom House; Norris, 2011, 49). Yet, I chose to include the country, as its results might prove interesting. To check the consequences of this choice, I consistently revisited the analyses with a filter excluding Russia[113]. The results reveal comparable coefficient is all cases, indicating that this inclusion was rather unproblematic. Another possible bias was the inclusion of Belgium in the analyses measuring voting preference, as this country has compulsory voting practices, illegalizing abstention. However, the results of excluding Belgium proved that this choice was also unproblematic.

The variables I included in the analyses were inspired by the literature. I only revised the individual-level explanatory variables to fit the analyses, and they remained otherwise unaltered. Their operationalization is furthermore unproblematic[114]. However, in the case of type of democrat, it was revised to fit the thesis' conceptual needs. Whether it represents the superior measurement of citizens lacking commitment to liberal democracy remained

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[112] Model 3.2 received the highest R_N^2, indicating the uncommitted citizens' habit of abstention is best suited to explain their existence.

[113] The results are included in footnotes, adjacent to each table of results. This is also the case for Belgium in the vote preference-model.

[114] A notable exception is the news media consumption variable. However, there does not exist a variable in the dataset better suited to measure this concept.

uncertain, at least prior to the analyses. I will therefore use an alternative operationalization, and check whether the results are comparable.

Upon performing the analyses with the operationalization used by Kriesi et al. (2016), the media system coefficient changes direction, and is made significant[115]. However, this is the only such change. Income and immigration is made insignificant, and the size of conservation and self-enhancement are curtailed. Otherwise, the directional effect of all variables remains. These results remains when excluding deliberation and responsibility towards European governments from the liberal democracy scale. Considering the fact that the alternative operationalizations provided the so-called "uncommitted" with regularly high means on the democratic elements, the resemblance of the results is somewhat surprising.

Yet an alternative to my operationalization is found in Chirumbolo et al. (2006, 150). They operationalize extremists by a respondents' self-positioning on the extremities on the left-right scale[116]. In reviewing the results[117], they are comparable across most variables, except for immigration attitudes, and regarding the voting behavior. It therefore seems that Chirumbolo et al. (2006) have obtained a better measure for finding populist radical right voters, although this is rather unsure, as the immigration coefficient is insignificant. However, this group's means on the democratic elements are much too high to justify the label of extremist[118]. Therefore, the alternative operationalization does not weaken my results, but instead challenges the inferences made by Chirumbolo et al. (2006) when using this measurement of extremism, even though they use a different conceptualization of extremism. Consequently, even if some of my results are comparable with the alternative operationalizations, the suboptimal measures that I have shown these to be, indicates a support for my own operationalization.

The results from this chapter show a support for the socialization thesis, as well as confirming the uncommitted citizens' detachment from democracy, as they are not

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[115] See table A5.10 in the appendix.

[116] This question leaves it up to the respondents to interpret the meaning of left and right. While this would arguably measure an economic position in most Western European countries, this conclusion in unsure. Therefore, the use of this scale as a unified measure is highly problematic. Moreover, extreme placement on the left-right scale could instead indicate extreme responding tendencies (Van Hiel, 2012, 181).

[117] See table A5.10 in the appendix. Moreover, this operationalization yielded a distribution of 9.8 per cent uncommitted, and 90.2 per cent committed democrats.

[118] See table A5.11 in the appendix.

committed to it, nor participate in its practices. This indicates that my operationalization is valid, and thereby satisfactory to measure what I set out to measure.

Moving over to the country-level variables, it is evident that alternative operationalizations for democratic experience are rather limited. I could change the cut-off point, but this would only affect Spain and Portugal, all others being post-communist countries that introduced democracy in 1989 or later[119]. In operationalizing the independence of media system, I chose to use Freedom House's index. I will therefore check the results using Reporters without Borders' index and map as an alternative[120]. The results from both alternative operationalizations reveal the exact same coefficient, indicating the robustness of these results[121].

Upon performing the analyses within each country for each model I based inferences on, they confirmed the aggregate-level results, as far as the significant coefficients go. A substantial amount of these coefficients were insignificant, most likely a consequence of the extremely skewed type of democrat-variable, resulting in few cases of uncommitted citizens in many countries. Nevertheless, these results indicates the robustness of the aggregate-level inferences.

5.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented all results from the analyses testing all hypotheses. It has concluded with a confirmation of the hypotheses including democratic experience, education level, opposition to immigration, and abstention. Moreover, the expectation that the uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties was not empirically supported, nor was the hypothesis involving the basic human values. It has furthermore reviewed the predictive power of the explanatory variables[122], as well as the

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[119] This was done by Norris (2011, 49), although this was only the case for Portugal, as Spain was not included in her analyses.
[120] This index was first published in 2016. However, considering that no countries changed their score radically on Freedom House's map between 2012 and 2016, it is still usable. This index categorizes the countries into four different colors, varying according to degree of press freedom. I further categorize the two lightest colors as free media systems, and the others as "less free". The less free countries are Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Poland, Russia and the Ukraine. The map can be found here: https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2016.
[121] See table A5.12 in the appendix.
[122] See section A5.7 in the appendix.

robustness of the results. The subsequent chapter will therefore conclude and discuss the findings.

6 Conclusion and discussions

This chapter will draw conclusions based on the findings from the preceding chapters. I start with reviewing the problems I faced in the process of writing this thesis. Thereafter, I remind the reader of the arguments, before summing up and discussing the results. I then assess the relevance of the results, before reviewing their robustness. Conclusively, I review the future possibilities.

6.1 Problems faced in writing the thesis

Multiple problems arise when attempting to locate extremists, or undemocratic respondents, in datasets. First, if successful, there is usually an extremely low N involved (Van Hiel, 2012, 182; Van Hiel et al, 2006, 771). Even in a large dataset like the European Social Survey, the final operationalization of the uncommitted citizens only provided 1345 respondents in this group[123]. This ultimately led to an extremely skewed variable, which in turn presented me with multiple methodological challenges. Second, is finding a group of *actual* extremists, i.e. a reliable measurement of undemocratic respondents. Embarking on this thesis, I initially started out with an idea of studying attitudinal similarities between left- and right-wing extremists. After the realization that this task was not possible to perform, it soon became apparent that finding extremists of any kind would be a challenge in itself. Some researchers rely on self-placement on the left-right scale (Van Hiel[124], 2012, 166; Chirumbolo et al, 2006, 250), but these fail to perform analyses of reliability to ensure that they have actually found extremists, and treat their measurements as fait accompli. Skeptical toward their operationalization, I instead opted for a measurement based on the operationalization by Kriesi et al. (2016). As the publication of the dataset is still quite recent, this provided me a new method of findings extremists, previously unexamined. The results further show that this operationalization succeeded in findings extremists, i.e. undemocratic citizens. The next sections will first remind the reader of the arguments central to this thesis, before concluding and discussing the results.

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[123] Of total 54673 respondents with a valid value of this variable.

[124] Does not rely solely on the left-right scale, and uses a more complex measure of extremism than Chirumbolo et al. (2006), also including measures of human values and anti-immigration attitudes (Van Hiel, 2012, 174).

6.2 The arguments

This thesis has sought to uncover *why some citizens are less committed to liberal democratic ideals.* I operationalized these based on the uncommitted democrats found in Kriesi et al. (2016), using the sixth wave of the European Social Survey. Using a more conservative measure, I found respondents who can be considered undemocratic, or at least less committed to democracy. In reviewing relevant literature, I came up with two possible explanations to my research question.

First, they could be illiberal populist radical right-wingers (PRR), which would imply a comparability between the uncommitted citizens and PRR voters. Existing empiricism suggests that these voters are opposed to immigration, and dominated by men, as well as having values of conservation and self-enhancement. Furthermore, the uncommitted citizens should show a higher likelihood of voting for these parties. However, the refutation of this does not exclude the possibility of multiple similarities between the two groups, as the uncommitted citizens could be a future group of PRR-voters, or alternatively, radical right abstainers. I therefore analyzed the basic human values associated with the uncommitted citizens, to see if they were comparable with the empirical evidence on nationalist's values.

Second, this lack of commitment could represent democratic detachment, or apathy, which could be a consequence of deficient democratic knowledge. The framework for this explanation is drawn from Norris (2011), and her empirical analyses. The implications are thusly: If the uncommitted citizens are democratically unknowledgeable, they should share characteristics that are empirically associated with low democratic knowledge. These include short democratic experience, living in an unfree media system, low levels of education, and low levels of media consumption.

6.3 Summation of results and subsequent discussions

Starting with the descriptive analyses, it uncovered that there exists an above average share of uncommitted citizens in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Kosovo, Lithuania, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom[125]. An interesting question concerns why this is the case for exactly these countries. Most of them are new democracies with a relevant populist radical right (PRR) party, and could therefore fit well

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[125] See table A4.1 in the appendix. It is also noteworthy that the vast majority in these countries are committed democrats.

into both proposed explanations. The Czech Republic, on the other hand, did not have such a party at the time of the data gathering process. However, considering that *Úsvit* made a successful electoral debut the following year, a case can be made for the existence of latent radical sentiments in this country. The United Kingdom did have a relevant PRR party at the time, but this is not the case for the remaining respondents from the British Isles. Arguably, the Irish party system have fared without a relevant PRR party since its inception. It might be despite the existence of radical sentiments. However, it the uncommitted citizens were to be explained as PRR adherents, this would surely result in the electoral success of such a party[126]. I will now review the validity of the two main arguments.

Addressing the country-level hypotheses, citizens from countries with short democratic experience are more likely to be uncommitted to liberal democracy. This supports the socialization thesis of democratic knowledge, derived from Norris (2011). The same model also yielded an insignificant coefficient for the variable measuring type of media system, increasing uncertainty around country-level support for the socialization thesis.

Moving over to the individual-level explanations, I could confirm two hypotheses. The analyses indicate that both the lower educated, and those opposed to immigration[127] are more likely to be an uncommitted citizen, compared to a committed democrat. The controlled effect analysis further showed that the latter was the most important in explaining the uncommitted citizens in this model, and figure A5.2 (in the appendix) reveal that its predictive power is superior to that of education. The first inference clearly support the socialization thesis, while the second lends favor to the PRR explanation. Moreover, news media consumption's statistical effect remained inconclusive and problematic[128]. The confirmation of the gender variable also proved problematic, as the upper range of the confidence interval for the standard error was larger than the coefficient.

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[126] There does in fact exist a modern PRR party, *Identity Ireland*, with focus on immigration, law and order and Euroscepticism (https://identityireland.org). It was however established post-2012, and have not seen electoral success.

[127] This finding also substantiates the operationalization of the uncommitted citizens, as immigration attitudes are empirically related to trust in democracy as a system of government (Haugsgjerd, 2013, 68).

[128] The variable used was shown to be sub-optimal, only measuring news media consumption though television. It even fails to measure this accurately, as a three-edged question is posed to the respondents. As Hellevik (2011, 357) posits: We must always consider the lack of definition validity as an explanation of the pattern the analyses has uncovered. The results based on this variable would therefore highly uncertain, but as the upper range for the confidence interval of the standard error was higher than the coefficient, the results remained inconclusive and uninterpretable.

The third section of analyses showed that the uncommitted are more likely to abstain from voting, than to vote for any party at all. I compared this to two other categories in the second segment: PRR parties, and all other parties. Finally comparing the outcome of voting with abstention for all countries, the results were in most cases substantiated, and never refuted. Thus, the uncommitted citizens are very likely of being abstainers[129]. This supports the idea of them being uncommitted to liberal democracy, and therefore failing to observe their civic duty. As the other findings mostly confirm the socialization thesis, a widely supported theory, this represent the thesis' main finding. These results further substantiate my operationalization of the uncommitted citizens. Consequently, the thesis has successfully generated a reliable operationalization of undemocratic citizens, i.e. extremists, and furthermore found that they are unlikely to vote in national elections. However, it is noteworthy that this does not necessarily imply garden-variety extremists, i.e. a popular conception of extremists found in neo-Nazi groupings, or revolutionary leftists, among others. These could instead be more accurately described as extreme activists with violent tendencies.

Even considering that the uncommitted citizens show a higher likelihood of abstaining than voting for the PRR, this does not leave out the possibility of them being a potential voter-group for these parties in future elections[130], or simply being radical right abstainers. Especially considering the fact that they are empirically related to two characteristics shown to be connected to PRR voters, namely low education level and opposition to immigration. I therefore analyzed which basic human values can be associated with the uncommitted. I uncovered that these citizens are related to the value dimension of self-enhancement, and that they furthermore show low levels of conservation values[131]. The former is empirically related with right-wing voters, while the latter is likewise associated with nationalists. The results therefore show that the uncommitted citizens does not share values with nationalists, but do in fact share right-wing values. Consequently, this substantiates the conclusion made in the former paragraph, and indicate that the

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[129] The predictive power of this measure is furthermore well within the acceptable range, as viewable in figures A5.5 and A5.6 in the appendix.

[130] A time-series analysis of the uncommitted citizens would more accurately uncover this, but this would require a reintroduction of the democracy module in future waves of the European Social Survey.

[131] I also found that they are consistently associated with low levels of self-transcendence, in both Eastern and Western Europe, as well as most countries. This fact, coupled with their low levels on self-direction (also consistent across Eastern and Western Europe), has led me to believe that they could not be inclined to vote for parties representing a liberal position.

uncommitted citizens might not be likely to vote for PRR parties in future elections. They might however be inclined vote for right-wing parties opposing immigration[132], if they were to become active voters, which they are presently not.

As to establishing the validity of the explanations presented in section 6.2, I show that the uncommitted citizens are unlikely to vote for PRR parties, or share values commonly associated with nationalists. On the other hand, they were empirically associated with opposition to immigration. However, this is not sufficient to confirm the validity of the explanation. They could also have been half-heartedly seduced by radical right-rhetoric, considering that this is increasingly visible in the public arena. Following assumptions derived from Jupskås (2016), this scenario is a possibility. As these parties usually engage in highly controversial acts, they usually garner media attention. Consequently, these parties' stance on immigration is hard to miss. Even though the uncommitted might not be sufficiently convinced to actually vote for these parties, they could have been seduced by the anti-immigration message. Often because of the reductionist populist form of communication, this message is both easily understandable, and provides less politically aware citizens with easy answers. Moreover, existing research show that the populist radical right has successfully created a right-turn in European politics, most notably on immigration issues (Mudde, 2016, 9).

Yet, it is not possible to establish a link between the citizens uncommitted to basic liberal democratic ideals and the populist radical right voters, based on these results. As Bjånesøy and Ivarsflaten (2016, 2) state: Although "extremism refers to a lack of support for the core democratic principles, populism need not do so". Consequently, even though populists are illiberal, they are not necessarily undemocratic. Ultimately, the results lends favor to the socializations thesis, confirming its supposition that democratic experience and education condition democratic knowledge[133].

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[132] There is a conflict between the implications made by the immigration variable, and the tenth hypothesis. The former indicate nationalist sentiments, while the latter imply the opposite. Consequently, their attitudes indicate that they might be a potential voter group for the PRR, while their underlying values imply that they are not. This represents an inconsistency, indicative of lower political awareness, associated with non-elites (Converse, 1964). As lower political awareness is also associated with lower democratic knowledge (Norris, 2011, 145), this indication substantiates the findings. However, I leave it up to future analyses to uncover this in depth.

[133] However, of these variables, only income showed satisfactory predictive power.

Table 6.1 All the hypotheses, and their evaluations

	Hypothesis	Evaluation
H_1	*New democracies are more likely to contain uncommitted citizens.*	Confirmed
H_2	*Independent media systems are more likely to contain uncommitted citizens.*	Inconclusive
H_3	*The lower educated are more likely to be uncommitted*	Confirmed
H_4	*Low consumers of news media are more likely to be uncommitted*	Inconclusive
H_5	*Men are more likely to be uncommitted citizens*	Inconclusive
H_6	*Individuals opposed to immigration are more likely to be uncommitted*	Confirmed
H_7	*The uncommitted citizens are more likely to vote for populist radical right parties, compared to other types of democrats.*	Refuted
H_8	*The uncommitted citizens are less likely to vote, than to vote for any party, compared to all other types of democrat.*	Confirmed
H_9	*The uncommitted citizens are more likely to share values associated with right-wing nationalist, compared to the committed democrats.*	Refuted

My finding that uncommitted citizens are less likely to vote in elections, compared to committed democrats, confirms their detachment from democracy. Their likelihood of abstention could have multiple explanations. It could be that these citizens consciously boycott elections, because of democratic disillusionment or political alienation. Alternatively, it could represent voter apathy, as a result of democratic detachment, further caused by general political apathy. These two explanations situates themselves on different sides of democratic detachment, when trying to indicate causality.

Figure 6.1   Democratic detachment as a result of political alienation or democratic disillusionment

Political alienation/democratic disillusionment	➡	Democratic detachment

Figure 6.2   Voter apathy as a cause of democratic detachment

Democratic detachment	➡	Voter apathy

Democratic disillusionment might further be a consequence of the increased levels of globalization observed in the last century. This is also a popular explanation for the success of the radical right (Mudde, 2016, 8), as many losers of globalization are thought to have become disillusioned with the larger, moderate parties.

The explanations for democratic detachment is furthermore likely to differ in new and old democracies. While the Eastern European cases can be explained by low democratic knowledge coupled with low democratic experience, the Western European cases might be explained by both low democratic knowledge and high levels of formative security. In Inglehart's post-materialist thesis[134], formative security serves to place higher value on self-expression values. While this is not consistent with the values shown to be related to the uncommitted citizens, it does not imply the rejection of this explanation, as low levels of political awareness is commonly associated with less consistency (Converse, 1964). The less politically aware are furthermore more likely to base their attitudes, and consequently their actions, on past experiences, rather than cognitive reflection (Converse, 1964). Additionally, Inglehart's thesis does not imply that the self-expression values can be associated with all individuals that experienced formative security. I leave it up to future research to assess this

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[134] See Inglehart (1987). In brief, it holds that increased economic prosperity brings forth an increased importance placed on non-material goals, such as self-expression, autonomy, freedom of speech, gender equality and environmentalism. Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 63) further show that the post-communist countries score higher on survival values, as the inhabitants does not have the same levels of formative security as Western Europeans.

connection, and which of the two models, if any, that can explain democratic detachment resulting in abstention[135].

While the results lending favor to the socialization thesis might seem rather mundane, they go a long way in confirming that the group of respondents that I found are a homogenous group of undemocratic respondents, i.e. that my uncommitted citizens are indeed uncommitted to liberal democratic ideals[136]. It furthermore implies that the citizens in question are detached from, or apathetic to, democracy because of a deficiency in democratic knowledge. This explanation is therefore superior to the one that implied a connection with PRR voters. I will now review the robustness of the results, before embarking on concluding remarks, and recommendations for future research.

6.4   The robustness of the results

As I show in section 5.5, the inferences are based on mostly robust results. Of the statistical prerequisites, there was an absence of multicollinearity and influential observations from all models, the Hosmer-Lemeshow tests indicating good fit, supporting the choice of method. A multilevel analysis of model 2.2, controlling for democratic experience further substantiated the inferences based on the analysis. However, I could not prove that the results had not been biased by one or more omitted explanatory variable(s). Consequently, this represents uncertainty to the validity of the inferences.

Regarding the effects of design and operationalizations, they supported the robustness of the results, as well as the validity of my operationalization of the uncommitted citizens. Herein, I found that including Russia, commonly regarded as an autocracy, did not affect the results considerably. Neither did including Belgium, a compulsory voting system, in the analyses uncovering voting preferences. Moreover, the alternative operationalizations of uncommittedness to democracy, or extremism, did not yield any contradictions to inferences made, and further substantiated the validity of my own operationalization.

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[135] My analyses are furthermore unfit for causal inferences, as I use logistic regressions (Hellevik, 2007, 72).

[136] Concurrent with recommendations from this theory, a diffusion of democratic knowledge is clearly needed, especially in the newer democracies.

Moreover, the alternative operationalizations of the country-level variables produced comparable results, indicating robustness of the inferences based on these.

I also checked the within-country results for all analyses on which inferences was based, to see if the aggregate results could be supported. This was the case for almost every country on every analysis, lending favor to Hernández' (2016) argument that democracy can indeed be measured across Europe. When performing the alternative analyses with the tweaked variables, the significant coefficients retained their direction. This indicates robustness of the results, as they were not sensitive to differing operationalizations.

As results from all statistical analysis featuring extremists in Europe, the results cannot be handled with deterministic accuracy. This is because of the extremely skewed variable the results are based on. Considering that the European extremists, or the undemocratic, are indeed very few in numbers, it therefore seems impossible to isolate a larger group in conventional datasets. An option could therefore be to strategically interview self-identified extremists on a large scale, as well as a normal sample of respondents. However, this would violate the important statistical requirement of a random sample. Consequently, a need for new methods of identifying extremists in datasets is present, and the democracy module in the ESS6 does indeed represent a significant contribution to fill this. A reprise of this module would therefore be quite welcome.

6.5   Concluding remarks

Looking towards future research possibilities, it would be interesting to further examine other characteristics that could be related to the uncommitted citizens', in the process of compiling an increasingly comprehensive profile of these. It would also be interesting to look at different definitions of democracy, and how they affect these results. A notable example being the line of questioning used in the Norris' (2011, 159) analysis, where respondents are asked to define democracy in both inclusionary *and* exclusionary terms. Not including the separation of powers as an element of democracy is also noteworthy. It would furthermore be interesting to view results based open questions concerning democracy, effectively removing the prompt that is arguably present in the current questionnaire. I have thereby made a case for the replication, revision, and expansion of the democracy module in future editions of the European Social Survey. After all, upholding liberal democracy will most likely never cease to be relevant or important.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Tables and figures for design & methods

Table A4.1 Share of uncommitted citizens in all countries

Country	Share of uncommitted citizens
Albania	0,7 %
Belgium	1,6 %
Bulgaria	*2,52 %*
Cyprus	0,3 %
Czech Republic	*3,5 %*
Denmark	1,4 %
Estonia	*3,2 %*
Finland	1,4 %
France	1,1 %
Germany	0,7 %
Hungary	*3,1 %*
Iceland	0,5 %
Ireland	*4,2 %*
Israel	1,6 %
Italy	1,1 %
Kosovo	*4,0 %*
Lithuania	*5,5 %*
Netherlands	1,1 %
Norway	1,2 %
Poland	1,4 %
Portugal	2,3 %
Russia	*4,4 %*
Slovenia	*3,1 %*
Slovakia	*3,3 %*
Spain	2,0 %
Sweden	1,2 %
Switzerland	2,3 %
Ukraine	*2,9 %*
United Kingdom	*5,4 %*
All countries	2,46 %

Notes: Countries in bold have an above average share of uncommitted citizens.

Table A4.2 Number of uncommitted citizens voting PRR parties in relevant countries

Country	PRR voters
Belgium	1
Bulgaria	1
Switzerland	3
Denmark	1
Finland	2
France	1
Hungary	1
Italy	1
Lithuania	4
Netherlands	2
Norway	2
Poland	1
Russia	4
Sweden	-
Ukraine	1

Table A4.3 The countries in ESS6 with relevant PRR parties

Countries	PRR party	Party included in ESS6	Performance in last national election (Year)
Belgium	VB; PP	YES	3,7 %, 1,5 % (2014)
Bulgaria	ATAKA; NFSB & VMRO-NBD	YES	9,1 % (2017)
Czech Republic	SPD	NO	10,6 % (2017)
Denmark	DF	YES	21,1 % (2015)
Estonia	EKRE*	YES	8,1 % (2015)
Finland	PS	YES	17,6 % (2015)
France	FN	YES	13,2 % (2017)
Germany	AfD	NO	12,6 % (2017)
Hungary	Jobbik; Fidesz	YES	19,1 %; 49,3%** (2018)
Italy	LN; FDI	YES	17,4 %; 4,4 % (2018)
Kosovo	VV	YES	27,5 % (2017)
Lithuania	TT	YES	5,3 % (2016)
Netherlands	PVV	YES	13,0 % (2017)
Norway	FrP	YES	15,2 % (2017)
Poland	PiS, Kukiz '15	YES; NO	37,6 %; 8,8 % (2015)
Russia	LDPR	YES	13,1 % (2016)
Slovakia	SNS, L'SNS	NO	8,6 %; 8,0 % (2016)
Slovenia	SNS	YES	2,2 % (2014)
Sweden	SD	YES	12,9 % (2014)
Switzerland	SVP	YES	29,4 % (2015)
Ukraine	SVOBODA	YES	4,7 % (2014)
United Kingdom	UKIP	NO	1,8 % (2017)

*Did not exceed the threshold in the elections prior to the ESS6, and is therefore not included.

**In an electoral alliance with KDNP.

Notes: Some of these parties did not succeed in elections until after the data-gathering process. This is the case for Czech SPD, German AfD and Polish Kukiz '15. However, the exclusion of the Slovakian PRR-parties is rather curious. Source: Nordsieck (2017).

Table A4.4 Means, medians and variances of the elements of democracy, all respondents

Elements	Mean	Median	Variance
Free and fair elections	8,95	10	2,878
Deliberation	**7,47**	**8**	**6,002**
Political alternatives	7,98	**8**	4,391
Opposition free to criticize	8,3	9	4,186
Media free to criticize	8,24	9	4,594
Media reliability	8,74	10	3,256
Minority rights protected	8,33	9	4,225
Immigrants' voting rights	**7,90**	9	**6,269**
Rule of law	9,21	10	2,416
Horizontal accountability	8,78	10	3,490
Badly governing parties punished in elections	8,37	9	4,246
Vertical accountability	8,85	10	2,756
Government responsible to European governments	**6,62**	**7**	**6,356**

Table A4.5 Means on the ten democratic elements for the uncommitted citizens based on ten elements

Element	Means for uncommitted citizens	Means for committed democrats	Mean difference
Fair and free elections	7,36	9,51	2,15
Political alternatives	6,67	8,43	1,76
Opposition free to criticize	6,72	8,84	2,12
Media free to criticize	6,68	8,78	2,1
Media reliability	7,03	9,33	2,3
Minority rights protected	6,82	8,84	2,02
Rule of law	7,62	9,78	2,16
Horizontal accountability	7,20	9,33	2,13
Badly governing parties punished in elections	6,93	8,89	1,96
Vertical accountability	7,34	9,37	2,03

Notes: The ten elements free and fair elections, clear electoral alternatives, freedom of opposition, media freedom, media reliability, minority group protection, rule of law, horizontal accountability, vertical accountability, and government explains decisions to voters

Table A4.6 Means in the ten democratic elements, for uncommitted citizens based on five elements

Element	Means for uncommitted citizens
Fair and free elections	7,06
Political alternatives	6,59
Opposition free to criticize	6,66
Media free to criticize	6,63
Media reliability	6,87
Minority rights protected	6,72
Rule of law	7,30
Horizontal accountability	7,03
Badly governing parties punished in elections	6,87
Vertical accountability	7,11

Notes: Uncommitted citizens is operationalized as 1–9 on five democratic elemets rule of law, free and fair elections, horizontal accountability, reliable media, and governments explaining their decisions to voters.

Figure A4.1-A4.5: Distributions on the five democratic elements included in the operationalization of the uncommitted citizens
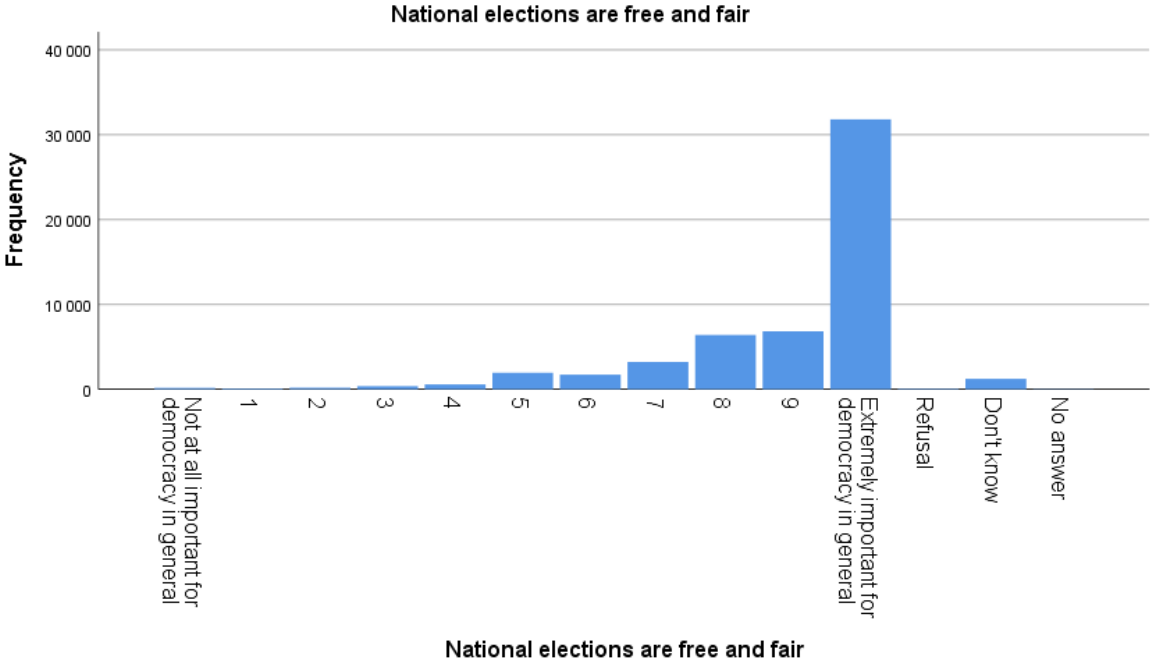
Figure A4.1 Distribution of free and fair elections.

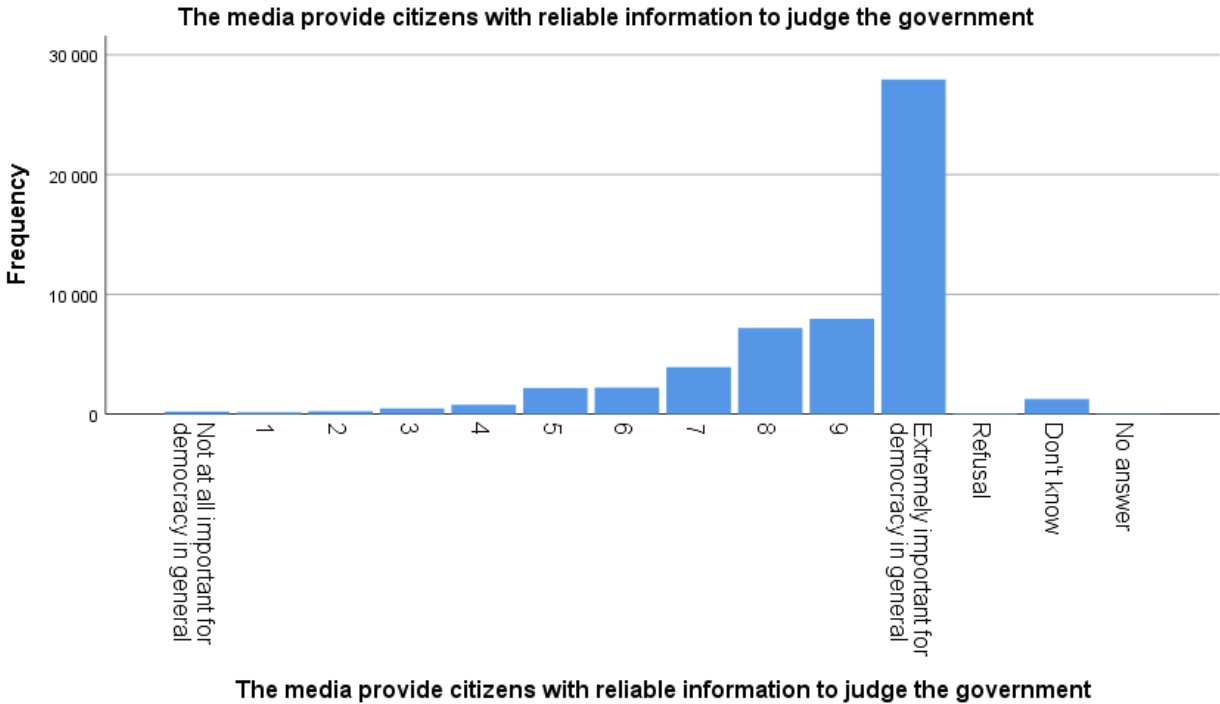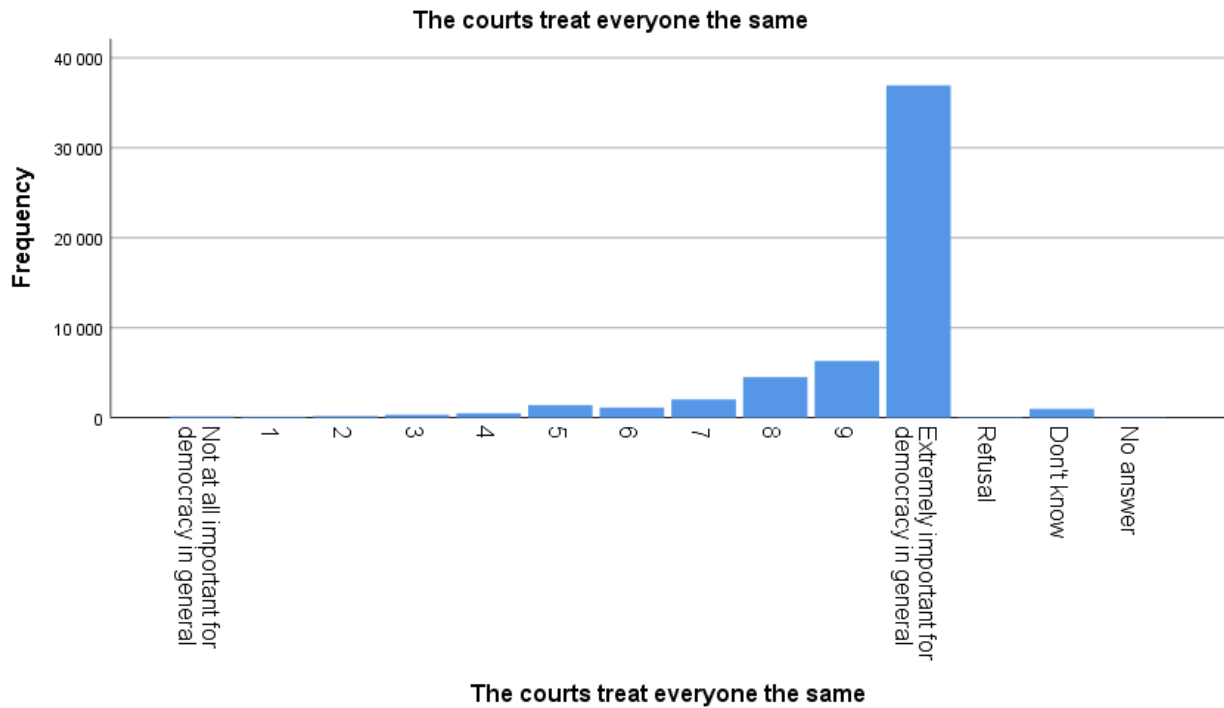*Figure A4.2 Distribution of reliable media.*

The courts treat everyone the same

Figure A4.3 Distribution on the rule of law.

The courts able to stop the government acting beyond its authority
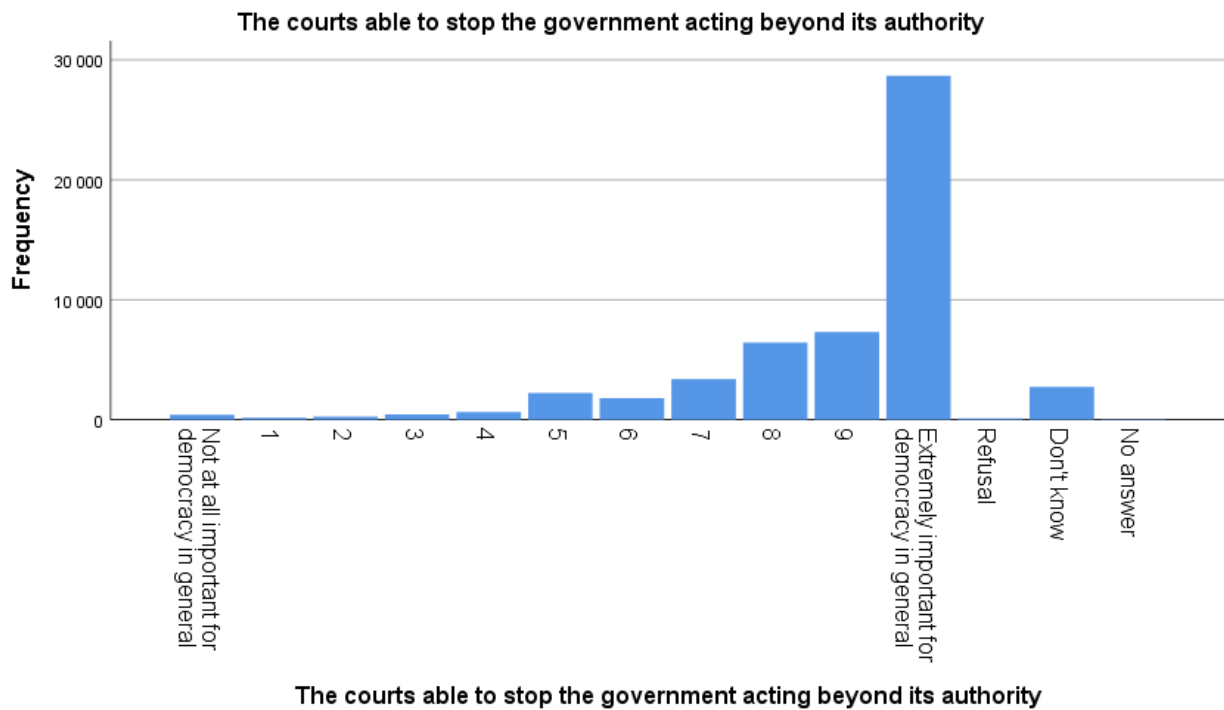
Figure A4.4 Distribution on horizontal accountability.
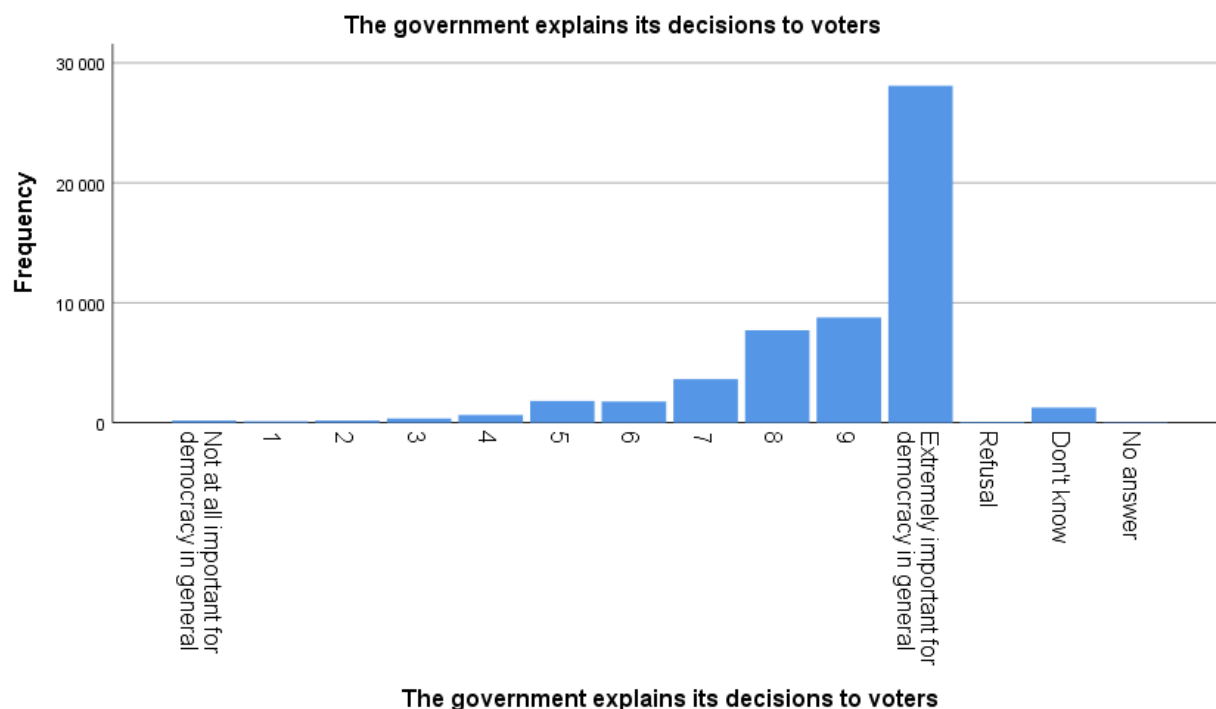
Figure A4.5 Distribution on government explanations.

Table A4.7 The questions on basic human values

Question H a-u: Now I will briefly describe some people. Please listen to each description and tell me how much each person is or is not like you. Use this card for your answer.
Values and categories: 1 Very much like me 2 Like me 3 Somewhat like me 4 A little like me 5 Not like me 6 Not like me at all 7 Refusal 8 Don't know 9 No answer

Ha Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to her/him. She/he likes to do things in her/his own original way. Variable name and label: IPCRTIV Important to think new ideas and being creative

Hb It is important to her/him to be rich. She/he wants to have a lot of money and expensive things. Variable name and label: IMPRICH Important to be rich, have money and expensive things

Hc She/he thinks it is important that every person in the world should be treated equally. She/he believes everyone should have equal opportunities in life. Variable name and label: IPEQOPT Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities

Hd It's important to her/him to show her/his abilities. She/he wants people to admire what she/he does. Variable name and label: IPSHABT Important to show abilities and be admired

He It is important to her/him to live in secure surroundings. She/he avoids anything that might endanger her/his safety. Variable name and label: IMPSAFE Important to live in secure and safe surroundings

Hf She/he likes surprises and is always looking for new things to do. She/he thinks it is important to do lots of different things in life. Variable name and label: IMPDIFF Important to try new and different things in life

Hg She/he believes that people should do what they're told. She/he thinks people should follow rules at all times, even when no-one is watching. Variable name and label: IPFRULE Important to do what is told and follow rules

Hh It is important to her/him to listen to people who are different from her/him. Even when she/he disagrees with them, she/he still wants to understand them. Variable name and label: IPUDRST Important to understand different people

Hi It is important to her/him to be humble and modest. She/he tries not to draw attention to herself/himself. Variable name and label: IPMODST Important to be humble and modest, not draw attention

Hj Having a good time is important to her/him. She/he likes to "spoil" herself/himself. Variable name and label: IPGDTIM Important to have a good time

Hk It is important to her/him to make her/his own decisions about what she/he does. She/he likes to be free and not depend on others. Variable name and label: IMPFREE Important to make own decisions and be free
 Hl It's very important to her/him to help the people around her/him. She/he wants to care for their well-being. Variable name and label: IPHLPPL Important to help people and care for others well-being

Hm Being very successful is important to her/him. She/he hopes people will recognise her/his achievements. Variable name and label: IPSUCES Important to be successful and that people recognize achievements

Hn It is important to her/him that the government ensures her/his safety against all threats. She/he wants the state to be strong so it can defend its citizens. Variable name and label: IPSTRGV Important that government is strong and ensures safety

Ho She/he looks for adventures and likes to take risks. She/he wants to have an exciting life. Variable name and label: IPADVNT Important to seek adventures and have an exciting life

Hp It is important to her/him always to behave properly. She/he wants to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong. Variable name and label: IPBHPRP Important to behave properly

Hq It is important to her/him to get respect from others. She/he wants people to do what she/he says. Variable name and label: IPRSPOT Important to get respect from others

Hr It is important to her/him to be loyal to her/his friends. She/he wants to devote herself/himself to people close to her/him. Variable name and label: IPLYLFR Important to be loyal to friends and devote to people close

Hs She/he strongly believes that people should care for nature. Looking after the environment is important to her/him. Variable name and label: IMPENV Important to care for nature and environment

Ht Tradition is important to her/him. She/he tries to follow the customs handed down by her/his religion or her/his family. Variable name and label: IMPTRAD Important to follow traditions and customs

Hu She/he seeks every chance she/he can to have fun. It is important to her/him to do things that give her/him pleasure. Variable name and label: IMPFUN Important to seek fun and things that give pleasure Self-direction

Source: ESS6 questionnaire, page 156. Available at:

https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/round6/survey/ESS6_appendix_a7_e02_2.pdf.

Appendix B For analyses

Table A5.1 The means for both types of democrats on the individual-level variables

Variable	Uncommitted citizens (std. dev.)	Committed democrats (std. dev.)
Education level	2,53 (1,434)	3,30 (1,511)
Household income	3,43 (2,533)	5,09 (2,810)
Immigration attitudes	1,7995 (1,81158)	2,8463 (2,10340)
News media consumption	1,87 (1,87)	2,02 (1,402)
Age	50,24 (21,449)	48,26 (18,512)

Table A5.2 Logistic regression analysis of model 2.2 within each country included

Country	Immigration	Age	Gender	Education	News media	Income
Albania	-0,870	-1,361	0,949	1,260	16,994	-15,917
Bulgaria	-1,117	-0,312	-0,332	-0,320	-0,727	-0,382
Cyprus[a]						
Czech Republic	-1,175	0,345	0,254	0,367	0,647	-1,583
Estonia	-0,790	-0,231	0,220	-0,633	-0,119	-1,472
Hungary	-0,937	0,946	0,404	-1,266	0,478	-0,789
Kosovo	-1,498*	0,451	0,310	-0,226	-0,237	-17,803
Lithuania	-0,659	-0,288	0,288	-0,351	0,279	-0,775*
Poland	-2,256*	0,519	0,992	-15,553	0,079	-1,019
Russia	-0,729	-0,271	-0,030	-0,761*	1,065**	0,411
Slovenia	-1,170	1,000	0,367	-16,678	-0,244	-0,866
Slovakia	-0,129	-0,372	-0,471	-0,469	0,603	-0,726
Ukraine	-0,140	-0,756	-0,013	-0,751	0,197	-0,943
Eastern Europe	-0,896***	-0,048	0,200	-0,292*	0,208	-0,673***
Belgium	-1,777*	-0,164	0,456	0,235	-1,194	-2,073**
Denmark	-2,337*	-0,686	-0,964	0,756	-1,328	-2,327*
Finland	-0,389	15,414	0,984	1,281	0,801	-1,488
France	-0,370	0,299	-0,035	-16,511	-0,297	-0,855
Germany	-2,415*	-0,195	0,048	-1,381	-0,732	-1,862
Italy	-1,215	-16,862	-0,349	0,890	0,890	-16,417
Iceland	-16,302	1,099	-16,213	-15,443	-16,081	-14,980
Ireland	-1,374***	-0,539	0,171	-0,373	1,628***	-1,639**
Israel	-0,640	-0,280	1,856	-0,650	-0,369	-1,044
Netherlands	-0,969	0,052	-0,885	-1,003	-16,146	0,039
Norway	-0,431	-0,018	0,129	-0,256	-0,057	-1,394
Portugal	-0,755	0,824	-0,213	-15,615	-1,637	-16,436
Spain	-1,241	0,457	-0,214	-15,798	0,211	-1,158
Sweden	-0,646	-1,298	-0,294	-1,196	-0,701	-1,071
Switzerland	-0,328	0,581	0,651	-1,020	-0,264	-1,062
United Kingdom	-0,827	-0,641	1,578*	-0,872	-0,397	-1,406*
Western Europe	-1,171***	-0,291	0,280	-0,429*	0,294	-1,571***

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.
a. SPSS could not assess parameters because of too few uncommitted citizens.

Notes: Positive coefficient signifies more likely to be element associated with uncommitted citizens.
Age, gender, income and country dummies included as control variables.

Table A5.3 Controlled effect analysis of model 2.2

	-2LL	Reduction in -2LL	Relative reduction in -2LL
w/o Income	6701,287	2112,603	31,5%
w/o Media usage	5056,707	468,023	9,3 %
w/o Education	4658,351	69,667	1,5 %
w/o Immigration	7534,435	2945,571	39,1 %
w/o Gender	4595,953	7,269	0,16 %
w/o Age	4609,185	20,501	0,44 %
Full model	4588,684		

Notes: Higher relative reduction in log-likelihood indicate greater explanatory power.

Table A5.4 Logistic regression analysis uncovering the uncommitted citizens' party preference, model 3.1

Variable	B (S.E.)	Confidence interval for exp(b)	
		Lower bound	*Upper bound*
Party preference	0,065 (0,208)	0,685	1,600
Constant	-2,646*** (0,253)		

*p<0,01; **p<0,001.

N= 18715; Hosmer-Lemeshow, sig: 1,000; R_N^2=0,246; Df=1.

Notes: Negative constant indicates higher likelihood of uncommitted citizens voting for other parties. Clustered standard errors were calculated for increased accuracy, and country dummies included to control for country effects.

Table A5.5 Logistic regression analysis of model 3.3 within each country included

Country	B
Bulgaria	0,939**
Czech Republic	0,973**
Estonia	1,581**
Spain	1,082**
Finland	1,114**
United Kingdom	1,428**
Hungary	0,175
Lithuania	1,003**
Poland	0,905*
Russia	0,653**
Slovenia	0,670
Slovakia	0,852**
Ukraine	1,184**
Kosovo	0,701*
Belgium	1,103*
Denmark	1,762**
France	0,066
Italy	1,957**
Netherlands	1,985**
Norway	1,013
Sweden	0,387
Switzerland	1,884**
Albania	-0,243
Portugal	0,216
Ireland	0,997**
Iceland	-19,311
Israel	0,154
Cyprus	1,410
Germany	1,173*

*p<0,05; **p<0,01

Notes: Positive coefficients indicate a higher likelihood of uncommitted citizens being non-voters, compared to the committed democrats.

Table A5.6 Logistic regression with all value items

The questions	B (S.E.)
Self-direction	
Important to think new ideas and being creative	–0,066
Important to make own decisions and be free	–0,646*** (0,103)
Stimulation	
Important to try new and different things in life	0,011
Important to seek adventures and have an exciting life	0,261** (0,094)
Hedonism	
Important to have a good time	–0,157
Important to seek fun and things that give pleasure	0,023
Achievement	
Important to show abilities and be admired	0,006
Important to be successful and that people recognize achievements	–0,187
Power	
Important to be rich, have money and expensive things	0,601*** (0,088)
Important to get respect from others	0,432*** (0,095)
Security	
Important to live in secure and safe surroundings	0,134
Important that government is strong and ensures safety	–0,505*** (0,104)
Conformity	
Important to do what is told and follow rules	0,167
Important to behave properly	–0,211* (0,102)
Traditions	
Important to follow traditions and customs	–0,140
Important to be humble and modest, not draw attention	0,034
Benevolence	
Important to help people and care for others well-being	–0,343** (0,113)
Important to be loyal to friends and devote to people close	–0,727*** (0,120)
Universalism	
Important that people are treated equally and have equal opportunities	–0,557*** (0,108)
Important to understand different people	–0,260* (0,104)
Important to care for nature and environment	–0,294** (0,110)

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.

Notes: Positive coefficient signifies more likely to be element associated with uncommitted citizens. Age, gender and income are included as control variables.

Table A5.7 Logistic regression analysis of model 4.1 within each country

Country	Self-dir.	Stimul	Power	Secur.	Benevol.	Univers.	Achieve.	Hedon.	Confor.	Trad.
	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Albania	1,32	25,15	12,52	-15,1	-53,1	1,649	1,802	44,576	9,656	64,066
Bulgaria	-,083	-,305	,407	-,02	-,9*	,066	-,879	,036	,247	-,277
Cyprus	-2,062	295,15	409,9	775,9	632,6	-614,7	298,6	-1056,2	1,05	-869,3
Czechia	-,168	,849**	,157	-,82**	,525	-,194	-,033	,042	-,180	,603
Estonia	-,062	,203	,040	-,268	,033	-,388	-,230	,192	-,441	-,342
Hungary	-,538	-,074	-,094	-,746	,215	,033	,277	-,224	,104	,249
Kosovo	1,238	-,177	1,052	-,896	-2,036**	-,073	-1,038*	,823	-,040	-,081
Lith.	-,870	,768	,881	,258	-,134	,068	-,426	-,250	-,581	-,275
Poland	-,193	-,519	,404	-1,81**	-,671	-,033	-,037	-,511	16,5	-,667
Russia	,284	,291	,208	-,342	-,649**	-,298	-,189	-,193	,069	,741**
Slovenia	,030	-,164	,193	-1,110*	1,160	-,813	-,369	-,260	,751	-,234
Slovakia	-,497	,513	,065	-,653	-,315	-,631*	-,206	-,190	,272	-,108
Ukraine	-,246	-,111	,424	-,732	-,513	-,286	-,109	-,037	,047	-,217
Eastern Europe	-,300***	,244**	,327***	-,36***	-,322***	-,157*	-,224**	-,046	-,111	-,009
Belgium	-1,44***	-,208	,888	-,243	,470	-,481	,194	-,027	-,036	-,365
Denmark	,595	,146	-,300	1,189	15,274	-,348	-,196	-,355	-,912	-,170
Finland	,882	-,302	-,715	-,024	,997	-1,36***	-,568	1,182	-,656	,442
France	-,057	,595	,101	,160	-,244	-,801*	-,468	,004	-,716	,410
Germany	-1,384	,170	-,245	-,968	-1,397	,261	1,106	,372	,094	,333
Italy	5,816	11,426	-,744	3,240	7,831	-17,439	-7,594	11,974	-15,141	-13,56
Iceland	-8,848	3,213	,660	5,128	-6,182	-3,960	7,738	-4,808	-7,738	5,757
Ireland	-,568*	-,138	,97***	-,9***	-1,43***	-,451**	,103	,221	,380	-,429*
Israel	-,332	,606	-,304	,746	-,409	-1,17***	-,188	-,607	-,290	,208
Netherl.	,045	-,285	,255	-,517	-,685	-,511	-,163	,754	,305	-,214
Norway	,210	-,042	,128	-,591	-,471	-,371	,489	,296	-,025	-,412
Portugal	,451	1,060*	,172	-,706	-,853	-,212	,296	-,282	-,464	-,172
Spain	-,340***	,176**	,519***	-,25***	-,592***	-,368***	-,076	-,092	-,003	-,060
Sweden	-,745	,603	,365	,580	-1,279	-,327	-,025	1,372	-,234	-,729
Switzerl.	-,692	-,268	,287	,394	16,126	-,253	-,056	,858	,468	-,079
UK	,128	,036	,417	,013	,128	-,364	-,324	,453	,122	-,185
Western Europe	-,398***	,051	,472***	-,297**	-,786***	-,536***	,016	,198*	,083	-,166

*p<,05; **p<,01; ***p<,001.

Notes: Positive coefficient signifies more likely to be element associated with uncommitted citizens. Age, gender, income and country dummies included as control variables.

Table A5.8 Logistic regression analysis of model 4.2 within each country

Country	Openness to change	Self-enhancement	Conservation	Self-transcendence
	B	B	B	B
Albania	1,553	0,637	0,164	-2,093*
Bulgaria	-0,177	-0,260	0,048	-0,294***
Cyprus	-1,140	1,120	-2,148	1,115
Czech Republic	0,278*	0,075	-0,101	-0,140
Estonia	0,134	-0,091	-0,361**	-0,257
Hungary	-0,265*	0,097	-0,044	0,021
Kosovo	0,299	0,121	-0,250	-0,663**
Lithuania	-0,162	0,209	-0,266**	-0,013
Poland	-0,438*	0,244	-0,357	-0,267
Russia	0,094	-0,054	0,202	-0,453***
Slovenia	-0,120	-0,118	-0,020	-0,193
Slovakia	0,006	-0,108	-0,186	-0,529**
Ukraine	-0,117	0,138	-0,296**	-0,403**
Eastern Europe	-0,020	0,038	-0,149***	-0,271***
Belgium	-0,524**	0,525**	-0,232	-0,266
Denmark	0,051	-0,178	0,641	-0,043
Finland	0,440	0,074	0,025	-0,990**
France	0,196	-0,154	0,458	-0,602*
Germany	-0,199	0,298	-0,114	-0,658*
Italy	31,793	105,033	-81,611	-101,222
Iceland	-4,046	7,248	4,034	-15,626
Ireland	-0,134	0,503***	-0,274**	-0,930***
Israel	-0,024	-0,225	0,143	-0,899***
Netherlands	0,091	0,012	-0,069	-0,571*
Norway	0,137	0,253	-0,073	-0,388
Portugal	0,343	0,265	-0,411	-0,534*
Spain	-0,322	0,665*	0,213	-0,570
Sweden	0,390	0,193	-0,126	-0,599
Switzerland	-0,043	0,128	0,340	-0,114
United Kingdom	0,204	0,042	0,013	-0,299
Western Europe	-0,016	0,239***	-0,105*	-0,691***

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.

Notes: Positive coefficient signifies more likely to be element associated with uncommitted citizens.
Age, gender, income and country dummies included as control variables.

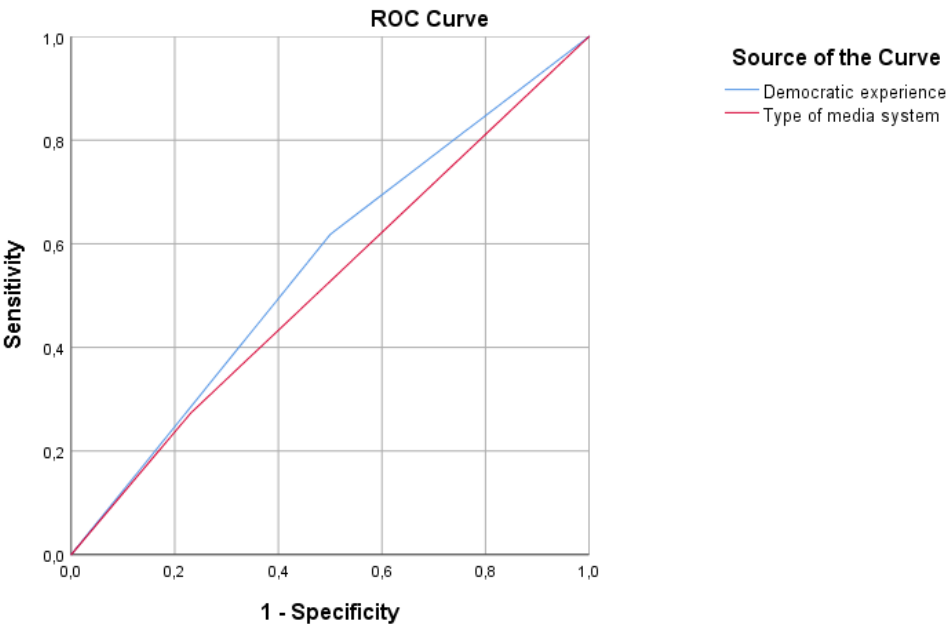## A5.7 Assessing the predictive power of the variables

In this section, I will review the *Receiver Operating Characteristic* (ROC) curves, which is one of the simplest options of establishing predictive power in the case of binary predictors (Gönen, 2007, 2-5). These provide an objective and comprehensive way of summarizing the accuracy of predictions, indicating which variables' effect are to be trusted. The curve is calculated along two dimension, measuring the true positive rate (or sensitivity) and the false positive rate (or specificity). To establish the predictive power of the variable, the area under the curve (AUC) is examined.

Reviewing figures 5.2-5.7 (in the appendix), a great variance in predictive power is apparent. Both the country-level variables garnered suboptimal AUC's (<0.6). This was also the case with the variables measuring education level and news media consumption, as well as the PRR variable. Exceeding this, but still not receiving exceptional scores, we find household income, immigration attitudes, party preference and vote (0.6-0.7).

Reviewing the AUCs for the value dimension, self-transcendence seems to be the better predictor of the four value dimensions, the only one with an adequate coefficient. Concerning the individual values, only benevolence and universalism exceed the acceptable AOC. This would indicate that the uncommitted citizens placing low importance on this dimension, is the best predictor for separating them from the committed democrats.

Consequently, income, immigration attitudes, as well as the lack of voting behavior and self-transcendence values are the variables best suited to predict the uncommitted citizens.
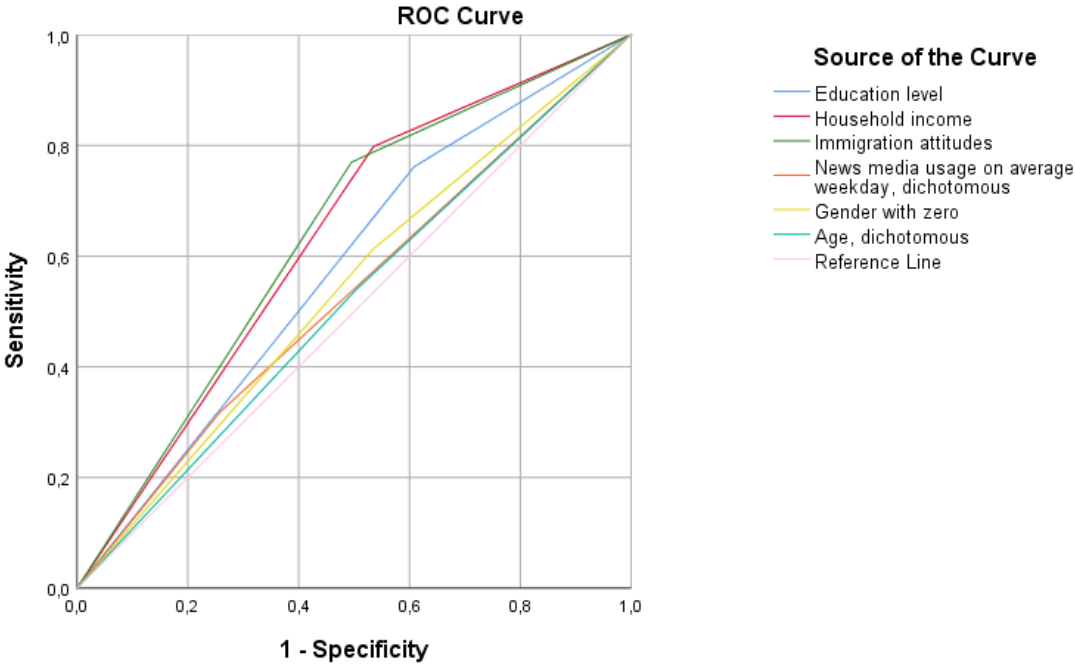
Figure A5.1 ROC curve for the country-level variables

Notes: AUCs; democratic experience=0,559, media system= 0,521.

Figure A5.2 ROC curve for the individual-level variables

Notes: AUCs. Education=0,577; Income=0,631; Immigration=0,637; News media consumption=0,530; Gender= 0,539; Age= 0,518.

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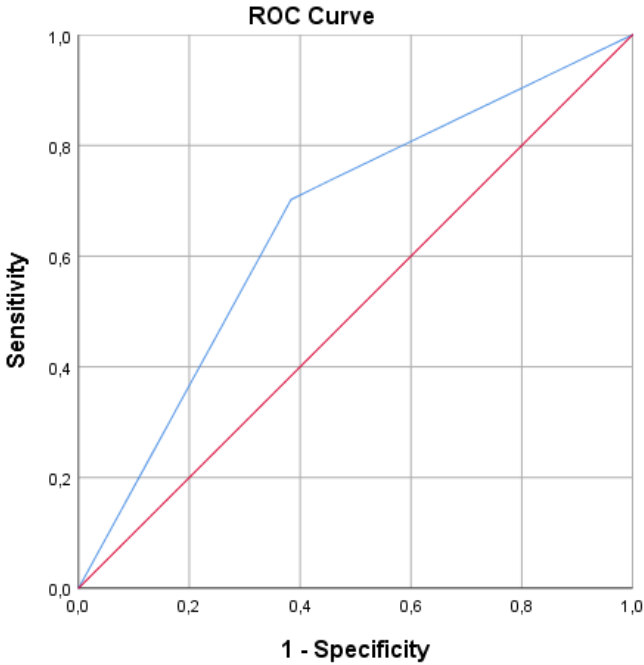**Figure A5.3 ROC curve for PRR voter**

Notes: Red line is reference line. AUC=0,501.

Figure A5.4 ROC curve for party preference

Notes: Red line is reference line. AUC=0,659.

Figure A5.6 ROC curve for vote/abstention
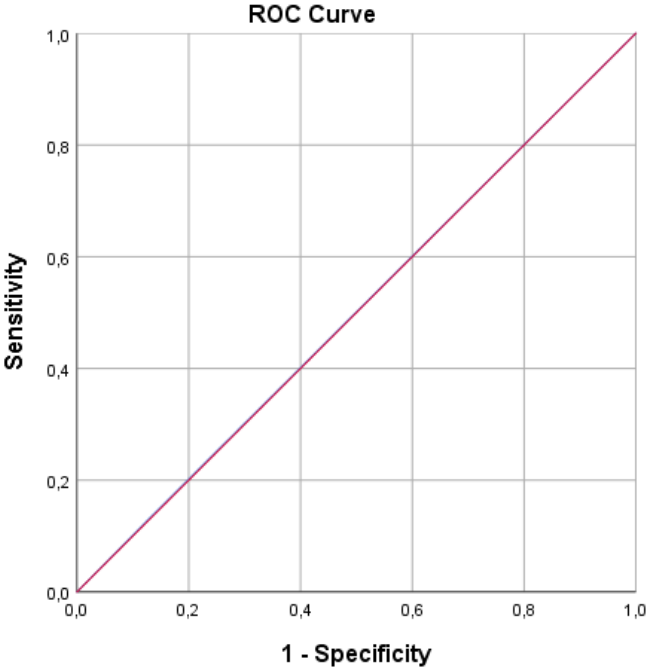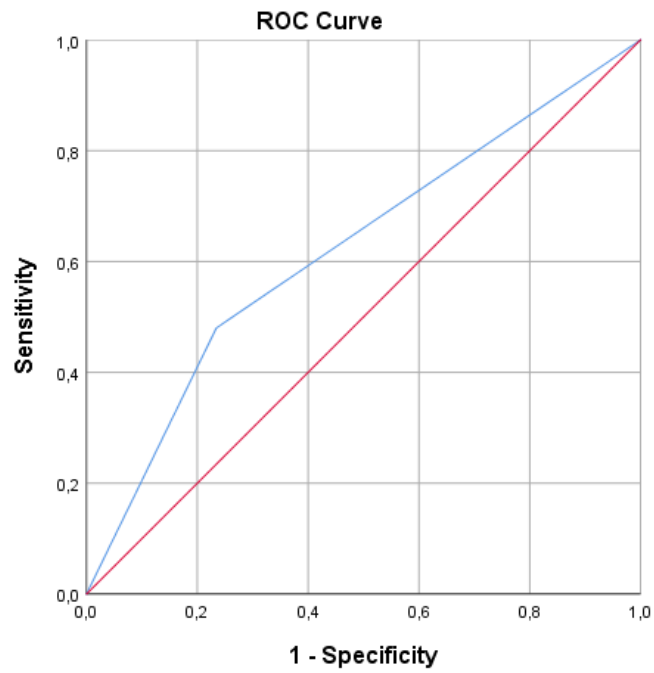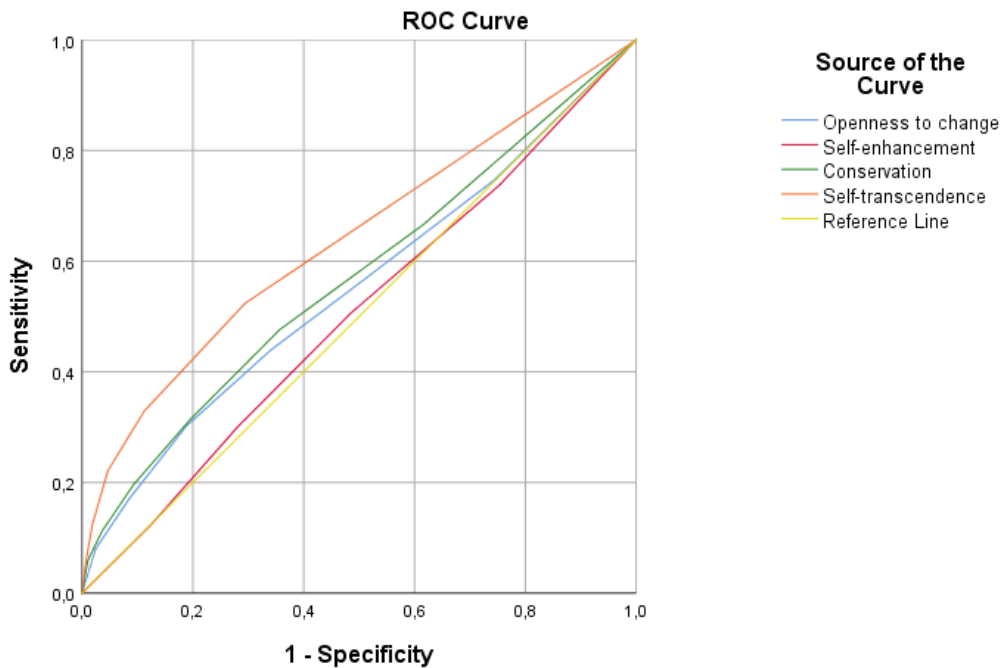

ROC Curve

Diagonal segments are produced by ties.

Notes: Red line is reference line. AUC= 0,623.

Figure A5.5 ROC curve for the value dimensions

ROC Curve

Source of the Curve
- Openness to change
- Self-enhancement
- Conservation
- Self-transcendence
- Reference Line

Diagonal segments are produced by ties.

Notes: AUCs. Openness to change= 0,552; Self-enhancement= 0,504; Conservation= 0,569; Self-transcendence= 0,640.

Figure A5.7 ROC curve for the ten basic human values
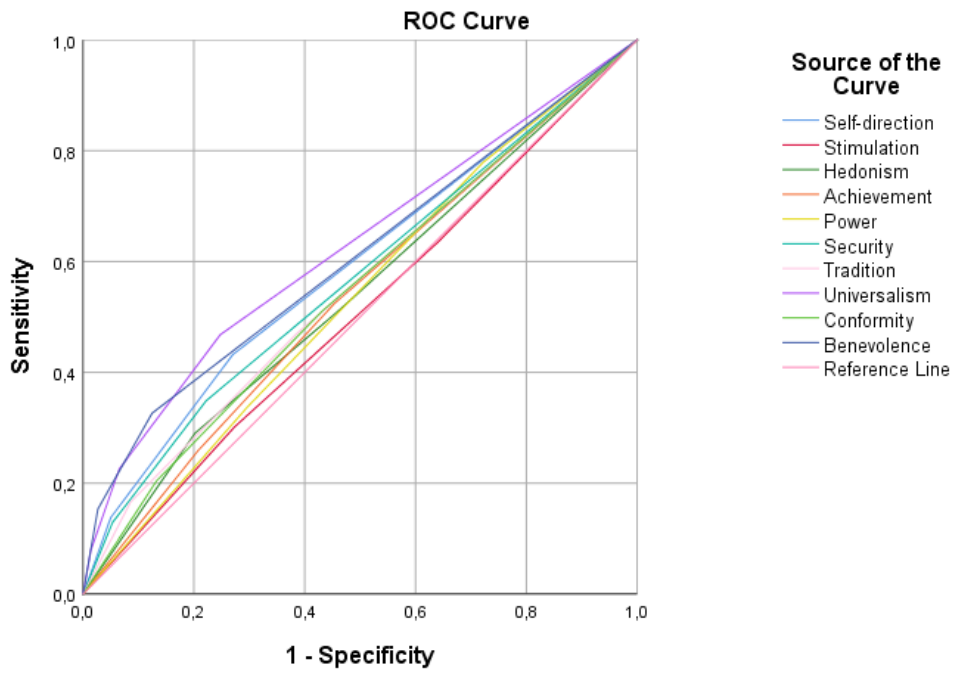
Notes: AUCs. Self-direction= 0,589; Stimulation= 0,507; Hedonism= 0,540; Achievement= 0,540; Power= 0,535; Security= 0,568; Tradition= 0,554; Conformity= 0,550; Universalism= 0,624; Benevolence= 0,606.

Table A5.9 Multilevel analysis of model 2.2 controlled for democratic experience[137]

Estimates	B (S.E.)
Fixed effects	
Constant	0,022661 (0,002194)
Education	-0,006419 (0,001333)
Immigration	-0,013735 (0,001307)
News media consumption	0,003661 (0,001469)
Random effects	
Residual	0,013659 (0,000106)
Covariances	
Education	-0,000003
Immigration	$2,232799^{-7}$
News media consumption	-0,000006

Notes: Democratic experience was level 2-variable. Income, gender and age were included as control variables.

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[137] The intraclass correlation was 0.997, indicating extremely high correlation within each country. This is most likely caused by the extremely skewed dependent variable, as a vast majority of respondents are committed democrats.

Table A5.10 Results from logistic regression using alternative operationalizations of type of democrat

	10-point scale liberal democracy	12-point scale liberal democracy	1 and 10 on the left-right scale
Democratic experience	-1,552**	-1,530**	-0,317***
Media system	0,940**	0,926**	-0,683***
Education	-0,284**	-0,284**	-0,353***
Income	-0,106*	-0,105*	-0,455***
News media usage	0,070	0,085	0,300***
Immigration	-0,059	-0,057	-0,074
PRR voter	-0,040	-0,035	0,443***
Party preference[a]			
Other Party	0,405**	0,456**	-0,582***
PRR party	0,505**	0,502**	-1,054***
Vote	0,427***	0,424**	-0,390***
Openness to change	-0,006	-0,007	0,032*
Self-enhancement	0,075***	0,074***	0,043**
Conservation	0,066***	0,063***	0,102***
Self-transcendence	-0,393***	-0,391***	-0,081***

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; ***p<0,001.
a. Non-voter is reference category.

Table A5.11 The means on the democratic elements for respondents giving 1 or 10 on the left-right scale

Democratic element	Mean
National elections are free and fair	9,28
Voters discuss politics with people they know before deciding how to vote	7,72
Different political parties offer clear alternatives to one another	8,33
Opposition parties are free to criticise the government	8,59
The media are free to criticise the government	8,52
The media provide citizens with reliable information to judge the government	9,02
The rights of minority groups are protected	8,45
The courts treat everyone the same	9,45
The courts able to stop the government acting beyond its authority	8,93
Governing parties are punished in elections when they have done a bad job	8,74
The government explains its decisions to voters	9,17
Politicians take into account the views of other European governments	6,76

Table A5.12 Results from logistic regression using alternative operationalizations of country-level variables

	Alt. op. democratic experience	Alt. op. media system
Democratic experience	-1,041*	-1,041*
Media system	-0,203	-0,203

*p<0,05