

# Surrogate Representation by Parties: A Cross-National Perspective

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## Abstract

The vast majority of representation studies and theories have focused on the dyadic relationship between an elected individual representative and her constituency. However, democratic political systems are comprised of multiple representative agents. Thus, even though a citizen can usually vote for only one representative, she may feel represented by multiple representatives. How do voters perceive representation by multiple agents? What affect these perceptions and what are the implications for democratic attitudes? Recognizing that in many advanced industrial democracies parties are the main carriers of political representation, this study draws on Mansbridge's concept of surrogate representation and puts forward the concept of *party* surrogation - a voter's sense of representation by a party she did not vote for, instead or beyond the party she did vote for. Taking surrogate representation beyond the American context in which it was conceived and studied, our theoretical framework posits that party surrogation is shaped by the electoral system, and especially the number of parties in a system, and can add representation – and not only compensate for a deficit in it. Utilizing CSES module 3 (2006-2011), we establish cross-country variation in party surrogation, examine the effect of electoral systems, and its role in citizens' support for democracy. Our findings show that party surrogation is more common in systems with higher number of parties and that are prone to insincere voting (i.e., FPTP). It also impacts citizens' support for democracy, compensating when electoral representation is in deficit, and adds to this support when electoral representation does exist.

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## Introduction

Over the years, representation has been conceptualized and studied mostly as the dyadic relationship between an elected individual representative and their constituency (Miller and Stokes 1963; Dovi 2018; Mansbridge 2020). However, democratic political systems are comprised of multiple representative agents. Thus, even though a citizen can usually vote for only one representative, she may feel represented by multiple representatives. We ask: Do voters indeed feel represented only by their elected representative, or do they feel represented by a variety of agents? How do they perceive representation by multiple agents? What affects these perceptions? And what are the implications of these perceptions for their democratic attitudes?

These questions draw from recent conceptualizations of “surrogate representation,” defined by Jane Mansbridge as representation “by a representative with whom one has no electoral relationship—that is, a representative in another district” (2003, 522). In Mansbridge’s conceptualization, inspired by the American context, constituents may feel represented by a legislator from another district or state, on the basis of policy issues or their interests as a group (e.g., minority group, workers). However, in many advanced industrial democracies, parties - and not individuals - are the main carriers of political representation. In these democracies, surrogate representation may be achieved not only by individual representatives but also by parties. Taking a closer look at surrogate representation by parties is therefore crucial for understanding representation across different electoral systems. Our study focuses on parties as surrogate agents, examining party surrogation in various contexts and assess the meaning of this representation for voters.

Surrogate representation by parties have been scarcely studied. Most of the research on surrogate representation have focused on individual representatives (Angevine 2017; Clark Wilson and Curtis Ellis 2014; Tate 2004; Tillery 2011). Recently, Wolkenstein and Wratil (2021) identified *partisan* surrogation “which occurs when a constituent considers as her representative a specific elected representative of a party for whom she did not vote” (p. 869). Still, the representative agent in this conceptualization is the individual elected representative, rather than the party. Parties have yet to be conceptualized as surrogate agents of representation and no study, to the best of our knowledge, has examined this type of surrogate representation.

We address this gap and contribute to the literature of parties and representation in several important ways. First, we move away from the focus on dyadic representation by an elected individual. Weissberg (1978) identified that representation takes place at the collective level by “institutions collectively representing a people” (p. 535). More recently, studies have established that representation is often achieved by “many representatives” (Golder and Stramski 2010). We continue this line of research, putting forth the party as the representative agent and highlighting that in democracies there are multiple representatives – politicians and parties. Thus, representation is not restricted to electoral relationship with one individual. Second, developing a theoretical framework of parties as surrogate agents and testing it empirically, we add to the growing interest in representation as a multidimensional phenomenon that goes beyond electoral, dyadic relationship (De Mulder 2022; Wolkenstein and Wratil 2021). In addition, we contribute to the understanding of the role of parties in democracies and their meaning for voters. Parties have suffered declined public support for the past 50 years and saw fundamental changes in their representative roles with the rise of technological and personalization trends. Taking a broader view on parties as representative agents, we look beyond their electoral relationships with voters.

In this study, we conceptualize surrogate representation by parties and examine citizens’ perceptions of representation by parties - the ones they have voted for and those they have not. We draw theoretical expectations regarding variation in party surrogation across different electoral systems, how citizens perceive it, and the implications of these perceptions for their satisfaction with democracy. We utilize CSES module 3 (2006-2011) to identify party surrogate representation in 37 elections across 31 countries. We find that despite the decline in public trust in parties, most citizens in a majority of countries feel there is a party that represents their views. We also find variation in party surrogation across countries, with up to 20% party surrogation among voters in some countries. Zooming in on the macro-level determinants of party surrogation, we find that larger effective number of parties contributes to party surrogation but that surrogate representation by parties decreases in electoral systems that incentivize sincere voting. Furthermore, our findings show a compensating effect of party surrogation: voters with surrogate representation by a party are more supportive of democracy than those who do not feel represented, but less supportive than those who feel represented by the party they voted for. Furthermore, among voters with a surrogate party, those who also have electoral representation by a party they like are more supportive of democracy. Taken together, our findings show that surrogate representation by a party

compensates for representation deficit when electoral representation is lacking and adds when electoral representation exists.

### **Surrogate representation by a party – a theoretical framework**

Surrogate representation highlights that citizens may be represented by multiple representatives, including ones they did not elect (Mansbridge 2003, 2020). Mansbridge stresses that surrogate representation can take place in the absence of electoral representation, i.e., when one is not represented by the elected representative in her district and finds representation in a representative from another district. Conceived in the context of American democracy, the concept of surrogate representation focuses on territorial-based representation by an individual representative and does not pertain to a party as a representative.

The empirical research of this concept had similarly focused on individual representatives in the American context. Some of these studies have focused on the representatives' side (Angevine 2017; Clark Wilson and Curtis Ellis 2014; Tate 2004; Tillery 2011). They found that representatives from minority groups (e.g., women, Black) are more likely to represent out-of-district and even out-of-country constituents who belong to their group. While there are no formal electoral relationship and accountability, these surrogate representatives sometimes feel responsible for their surrogate constituency. A woman representative, for example, may feel she represents the interests and perspectives of women in and outside of her district (Tremblay 2006). Other studies have focused on the citizen side of surrogate representation. Schildkraut (2016) examined whether Latinos in the United States feel they are represented by co-ethnic surrogate representatives. She found that surrogate attitudes are not based merely on descriptive representation. Rather, perceptions of linked fate, identification with one's national origin group, and less acculturation enhance perceptions of surrogate representation. Departing from group-based surrogate representation, Baker (2020) found that Americans donate to surrogate representatives outside of their state to substitute for losing in their own district and to gain additional representation (beyond the representation by their elected Congress representative).

Even studies that examined surrogate representation outside of the United States – some of them do not make use of the term explicitly – have remained focused on individual representatives. Wigginton (2021) brings to the fore Nova Scotia's protected electoral districts as a case of institutional surrogate representation for Blacks and Acadians. These non-proportional districts

allow for better representation of members from these communities across the country. Also taking up on the Canadian case, Blais and Daoust (2017) find that 9% of the electorate experience “incongruent representation,” favoring a local candidate that is not from their preferred party.

Recently, Wolkenstein and Wratil (2021) called to further develop and study surrogate representation beyond its American-inspired territorial form, as other electoral systems give rise to other types of surrogate representation. They identify one such type as *partisan* surrogation “which occurs when a constituent considers as her representative a specific elected representative of a party for whom she did not vote” (p. 869). This type of surrogate representation, they proclaim, can be found in both proportional (PR) and first past the post (FPTP) systems. Partisan surrogation acknowledges that a representative belongs to a party but is, too, trapped in the Burkenian delegate/trustee model of representation by an individual representative. However, such electoral connection between a voter and an individual representative does not exist in all electoral systems. In closed-list PR systems, for example, voters vote for parties, not candidates, and therefore there is no direct *electoral* representation by individual representatives in such systems at all. This idea is partially reflected in Wolkenstein and Wratil’s aforementioned partisan surrogation, and their concept of *party list* surrogation by a representative from the party for which the voter did vote but who is not the head of the party. Yet, these types of surrogation focus on individual representatives and do not treat the parties as representative agents for themselves.

In this paper, we aim at filling this gap and broaden the scope of surrogate representation by theorizing the concept of *party* surrogation – surrogate representation by parties. Party surrogation occurs when a voter feels represented by a party she did not vote for and, therefore, has no electoral relationship with. Party surrogation highlights that representation can be achieved by multiple agents. For example, if a constituent voted in her district for candidate X from party A, then party A is the electoral representative of this constituent in the parliament. However, if at the same time this constituent feels represented by party B, then she also has a surrogate party. Insofar as both parties are in the parliament, the constituent has multiple representatives- the elected representative (party A) and the surrogate representative (party B). Surrogate representation may come instead of- or in addition to- electoral representation by the party the constituent voted for. Surrogate representation by a party can take place in cases of insincere voting (strategic voting, for example) or when voters feel represented by one party but prefer to vote in

their district to a candidate from another party. Thus, in some cases, party surrogation is suboptimal, compensating for the lack of electoral representation, while in other cases it creates a surplus of representation by multiple representatives on different issues.

Multiple representative parties – elected and surrogate – at the parliament is possible in different types of electoral systems. Parties are especially prominent as representative agents in closed-list PR systems, but party surrogation is not limited to such systems, nor to PR systems in general. Studies of party representation have highlighted that in most advanced industrial democracies, regardless of their electoral system, the party is the main representative (Thomassen 1994). In this *responsible party model* of representation, citizens are represented by- and vote for- parties, and not (only) individual representatives (e.g., Adams 2001; Dalton 1985; Ezrow 2008; Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Even in electoral systems where citizens vote directly for individual representatives, national parties play a major role in political identification (Campbell et al. 1960), representation (Blais et al. 2003), and voting (Bartels 2000). Thus, party surrogation is relevant to various electoral contexts. The electoral system and especially the number of parties, can impact the occurrence of surrogate representation by a party.

Voters on their part, may perceive this situation as undesirable, preferring to feel represented only by the party they voted for. Alternatively, as voters usually have various voting considerations but can only vote for one representative, they may prefer having multiple representatives, allowing for their representation on different issues and dimensions. These perceptions of surrogate representation can affect their attitudes toward representation and democracy. In what follows, we discuss the effects of electoral systems on party surrogation and the role of party surrogation on democratic attitudes.

### **Party surrogation in context – electoral systems and democratic attitudes**

#### *Electoral systems*

The abundant literature on comparative representation highlights the effect of electoral systems on representation. This scholarship shows that proportional (PR) systems provide broader representation to ethnic, gender, and other minority groups compared to majoritarian systems (Blais 1991; McAllister and Studlar 2002). Powell's (2000) seminal study on elections as instruments of democracy has established that proportional systems produce better representation

than majoritarian system in terms of ideological congruence between citizens and governments (See also Huber and Powell 1994; Lijphart 1999). Specifically, studies suggest that congruence between parties and constituents is stronger in proportional electoral systems with diversity in party choice (Dalton 1985).

Electoral systems could have similar implications for party surrogation. Tremblay (2006) argues that proportional systems are especially suitable for creating a ‘critical mass’ of surrogate representation for women, one that will ensure their substantive representation. However, with regard to party surrogation, the picture might be more complicated. On the one hand, party surrogation can be more prevalent in cases where voters are motivated to vote strategically, i.e., in FPTP systems (Cox 1997). In these cases, voters may vote for a party other than the one that they feel best represents them out of concern that this party will not make it into parliament. As PR systems incentivize more sincere voting, citizens may be more prone to vote for the party they feel best represents them (hence, less party surrogation). On the other hand, PR systems usually have a larger effective number of parties (ENP) (Herron, Pekkanen, and Shugart 2018), providing more opportunities for voters to have multiple parties which they feel represent them, thus increasing the likelihood of surrogate parties.

We thus hypothesize two distinct effects: First, that surrogate representation by a party will vary across electoral systems, with less party surrogation in PR systems compared to FPTP (H1a). Second, with regard to ENP, we hypothesize that controlling for the electoral system, the number of parties will affect surrogate representation, with more parties creating more opportunities for surrogate representation (H1b).

### *Democratic attitudes*

How does party surrogation impact voters’ attitudes toward democracy? In the original conceptualization, Jane Mansbridge assigned surrogate representation a key role in compensating for the shortcomings of American democracy: “The situation has changed from the time when territorial representation captured many of a voter’s most significant interests,” she observes, “but in the United States the representational system has not changed with it” (Mansbridge 2003, 522–23). Normatively, argues Mansbridge, surrogate representation is “crucial to democratic legitimacy” because it provides representation to voters whose candidate lost in their own districts or voters whose preferred policies attract a minority in their districts (p. 523). Surrogate

representation by an individual representative thus offers non-territorial options for representation and may give citizens – especially from minority groups – the feeling that they are being represented beyond electoral representation (Mansbridge 2020, 38–39). In this case, surrogate representation *compensates* for conditions where the preferred candidate lost in the district, or when a preferred candidate runs in a different district.

A similar compensating effect can be drawn from Wolkenstein and Wratil’s (2021) conceptualization of partisan surrogation. They observe that while Mansbridge highlights surrogate representation in cases where the voter is not able to vote for a candidate outside her district, in partisan surrogation, “the constituent may have had the opportunity to vote for the representative” (p. 869). Voters may not vote for the party that they feel best represents them due to electoral calculations (e.g., strategic voting) and then a surrogate party may compensate for the lack of representation by the elected party. In such cases, surrogate representation results from voters’ considerations and vote choice.

Our theoretical framework of party surrogation at the parliament level offers an alternative perspective on the role of surrogate representation in democratic legitimacy. Namely, that surrogate representation can add – rather than compensate – for legitimacy for democracy. The aforementioned constituent voted for candidate X from party A but feels represented by party B she did not vote for. This constituent can feel that she is represented in the parliament by party B *in addition* to its elected representative – party A. Even in the American context, surrogate representation may be additive since both parties comprise the Congress and voters may vote for a candidate from one party based on some issues and feel represented by the other party on other issues. While the current study focuses on party surrogation, we acknowledge that this is true not only for party surrogation but also to individual representatives. In Mansbridge’s (2003) example of Barney Frank, who considered himself a surrogate representative for gays and lesbians across the U.S., surrogation can add to electoral representation (and not necessarily replace it). Gay and lesbian voters may feel represented by Frank on issues related to the LGBT community *and* by the elected candidate in their district on other issues (e.g., housing). In Baker’s aforementioned study (2020), donation-based surrogate representation substitutes or adds to donors’ representation. Thus, surrogate representation – by politicians and parties – can add representation and potentially increase citizens’ support for democracy.

We thus pose the question (RQ1): How does party surrogation affect attitudes toward democracy? If surrogate representation by a party compensates for representation shortcomings, we expect citizens who have surrogate representation to be satisfied with democracy more than citizens who do not feel represented but less than citizens who feel represented by the party they voted for (H2a). If, however, party surrogate representation adds more representation, we expect citizens with surrogate representation to have surplus of representation and hence to be more satisfied with democracy than other – represented and non-represented – citizens (H2b).

### **Data and measures**

We utilize the CSES data module 3 (2006-2011), which includes the question on feelings of representation by a party. We excluded countries with no available data on this item, and cases with no data on voting for the lower house. All in all, we include 37 surveys from 31 countries in the analyses (a list of all cases can be found in List A in the Appendix).

We use several items in our analysis as follows.

#### *Feelings of representation by a party and party surrogation*

We first use the item that asks: “Would you say that any of the parties in [country] represents your views reasonably well?”. The answers to this question are “yes” (1) or “no” (1). Then, there is a follow-up question that asks the respondent which party represents her views best. For those who answered “yes” to the first question, we compare the identity of the party that the respondent mentioned in the follow-up as represents her, to the party that the respondent voted for as indicated in the vote-choice item. Party surrogation is defined as discrepancy between the party one voted for and the party she mentioned best represents her. For mixed systems with two ballots, we considered full representation if the respondent feels represented by either the party on the list or the district ballots.

#### *Country-level variables*

We use the following measures from the CSES dataset: *Freedom House Index*, *Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties (ENPP)*, *Electoral system* (Majoritarian, Proportional or mixed), and *Age of current regime*.

### *Individual level variables*

#### *Demographic controls*

*Education* is measured on a nine-point scale. *Household income* is based on five-point scale denoting five income quantiles. *Female* indicates a female (1) versus male (0) respondent. We also include a control for the respondent's *Age*.

#### *Satisfaction with democracy and democratic attitudes*

CSES is poor on indicators for support for democracy. We use satisfaction with democracy, a question which asks: "On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in [COUNTRY]?"

We also use two questions that we interpret as indicators for the principles of representative democracy. The first question asks: "Some people say that no matter who people vote for, it won't make any difference to what happens. Others say that who people vote for can make a big difference to what happens. Using the scale on this card, (where ONE means that voting won't make any difference to what happens and FIVE means that voting can make a big difference), where would you place yourself?"

The second question asks: "Some people say that it doesn't make any difference who is in power. Others say that it makes a big difference who is in power. Using the scale on this card, (where ONE means that it doesn't make any difference who is in power and FIVE means that it makes a big difference who is in power), where would you place yourself?"

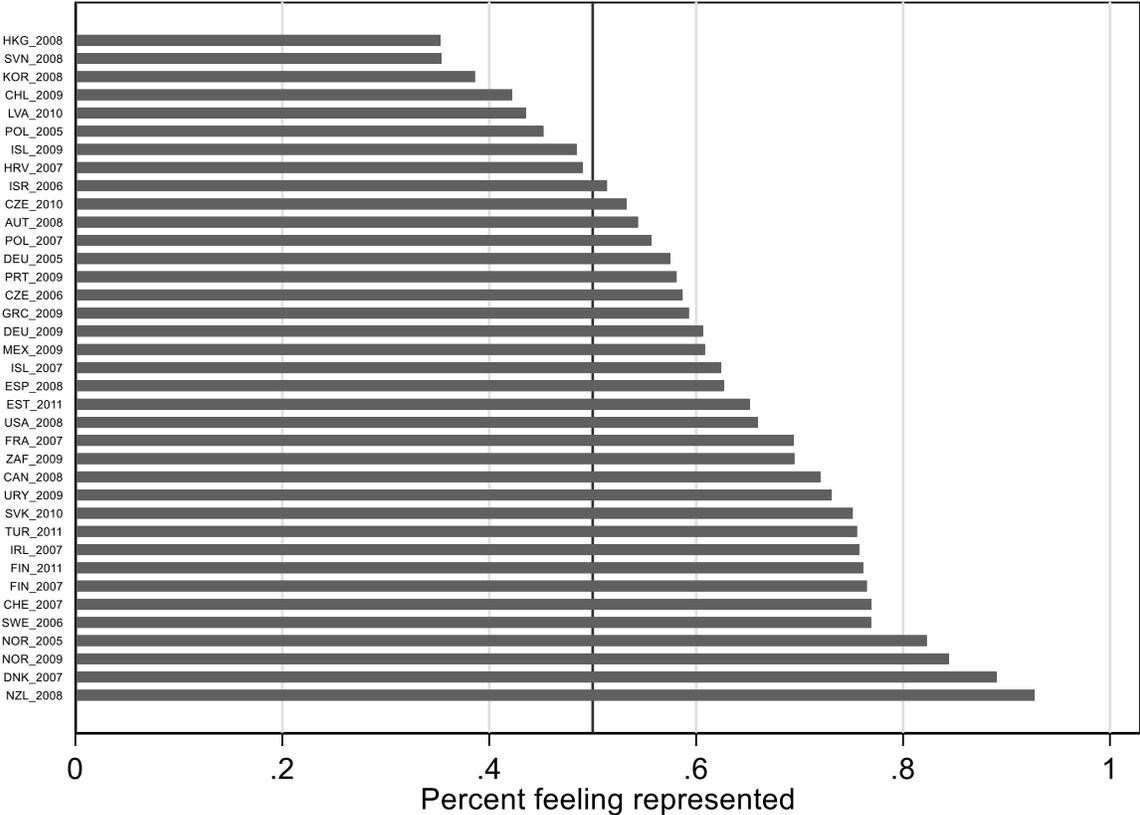
### **Results: How does party surrogation look like and what are its implications?**

#### 1. Patterns of feeling represented by parties: A cross-country examination

Party surrogation exists when citizens feel represented by a party they did not vote for. We begin with descriptive analysis of citizens' feelings of representation by parties in different countries and the share of party surrogation among them. Using the CSES item described above, we examine how many voters see parties as representative agents. The analysis shows that when asked if there is any party in their country that represents their views reasonably well, 60% of respondents said "yes", 34% said "no", and 6% said they do not know. Thus, when asked about parties as representative entities, most voters identify them as such. Of course, the share of voters who feel represented by parties varies between countries. Figure 1 presents the share of respondents saying

that there is a party that represents their views (out of those who answered “yes” or “no”) for each survey-year. The highest numbers of citizens reporting that they feel represented by a party are found in New Zealand, Denmark and Norway, while the lowest share of respondents saying that they are represented by a party are in Hong-Kong, Slovenia and South Korea. Overall, in most countries in our data, more than half of the respondents state that they feel represented by a party in their country. Even in countries like the U.S., where the number of parties is small and voting is for candidates, a majority of respondents feel represented by a party.

**Figure 1. Percent feeling representation by parties, CSES Module 3**

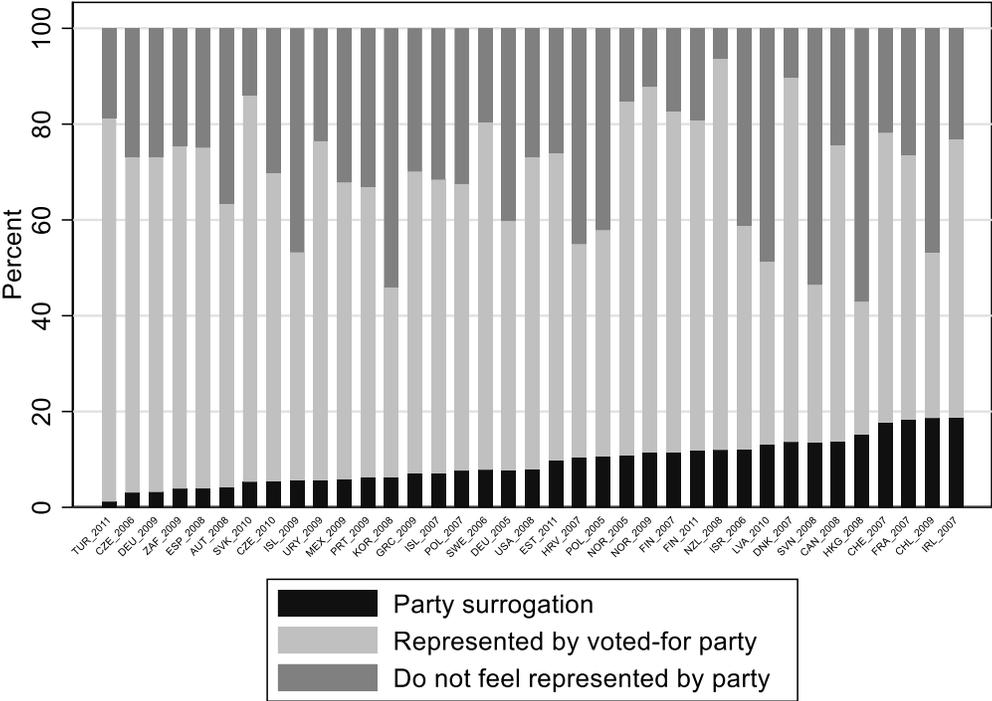


*Note.* Source: CSES Module 3.

After establishing that citizens view parties as representing agents, the question now is: by which parties do they feel represented? As defined in the theoretical section, voters can either feel represented by the party for which they voted (electoral representation), or by another party, which we define as a case of party surrogation. In the following descriptive analysis, we focus on voters who reported casting a ballot in the last elections, and divide them into three categories: (a) voters

who do not feel represented by a party, (b) voters who feel represented by the party they voted for, and (c) voters who feel represented by another party, namely, party surrogation. Figure 2 presents the share of the three groups in each country-year. Black bars indicate party surrogation, while light are the bars for those who feel represented by the party they voted for, and the dark gray denotes those who say there is no party that represents them. The graph is sorted by the share of party surrogation. On average, 9.4% of voters experience party surrogation, that is, they feel represented by a party they did not vote for. In some countries, such as Switzerland and Chile, the share of party surrogation reaches the level of 17-18% of voters, while in other countries, such as Austria and Spain, only 3-4% of the voters are represented by a surrogate party.

**Figure 2. Percent of party surrogation, CSES Module 3**



*Note.* Source: CSES Module 3.

Citizens thus see parties as representative agents in a majority of countries, regardless of the electoral system. Indeed, most voters feel represented by the party they voted for. However, in some countries a considerable amount of voters experience party surrogation, as they feel better

represented by a party they did not vote for. With the three groups of voters – full representation, surrogate representation, and no representation – and their variation across countries we now turn to explore the country-level determinants and democratic consequences of party surrogation.

## 2. Country-level analysis: What explains the share of party surrogation in a country?

As Figure 2 shows, there is considerable variation in the share of party surrogation between countries. What factors can explain such cross-country variation? To examine this question, we performed an analysis at the country level, with the share of voters with party surrogation in each country as the dependent variable. We examine the effect of several country-level factors: The electoral system (majoritarian, proportional or mixed), the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP), the age of the current regime (logged), and the level of democracy using Freedom House index. For ENPP, the idea is that the more parties in a system, the more voters have opportunities to find parties that represent them. While having multiple considerations when casting a ballot, sometimes idiosyncratic ones, the rule of thumb is that the more parties there are on the political menu, the more voters are likely to consider other parties as representing them. At the same time, the electoral system might have a separate effect on party surrogation. Systems that put strategic pressures on voters, namely, majoritarian systems, are more likely to inhibit party surrogation, controlling for the number of parties in that system.

Table 1 presents the results. Model 1 shows a positive effect of ENPP on party surrogation ( $p < .05$ ), so that the more parties in the parliament, the greater the share of party surrogation among voters in that country. When adding the electoral system to the model (Model 2), the effect of ENPP remains. At the same time, controlling for ENPP, PR and mixed system lead to lower levels of party surrogation compared to Majoritarian systems, which usually pose greater strategic pressures on voters. These findings support our theoretical assumptions regarding the institutional effect of the electoral and party system on the party surrogation phenomenon (H1a and H1b). It is important to note, though, that the sizes of these effects are rather small. Table 1 also presents the results for models using the age of the regime (logged) and the level of democracy in predicting country-level of party surrogation. Model 3 shows that the older the current regime in a country is, the more party surrogation there is. Older regimes have more established parties that may represent voters on various issues and hence elicit a sense of representation by parties one did not vote for. Freedom House Index (model 4) does not matter for party surrogation at all. This lack of

effect by an objective macro-level indicator for the quality of democracy is an important finding, as we will later connect party surrogation with individual perceptions of the quality of democracy.

**Table 1. Factors affecting the level of party surrogation at the country level**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
ENPP	0.014*	0.018**		
	(0.006)	(0.006)		
PR		-0.066*		
		(0.027)		
Mixed		-0.080*		
		(0.031)		
In(age of regime)			0.021*	
			(0.009)	
Freedom House				-0.007
				(0.013)
Constant	0.042	0.089**	0.022	0.103***
	(0.023)	(0.028)	(0.033)	(0.019)
<i>N</i>	37	37	34	37
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.140	0.298	0.142	0.008

*Note.* Source: CSES Module 3. OLS regression models with the share of party surrogation as the dependent variable. Reference category for electoral system: Majoritarian. Standard errors in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

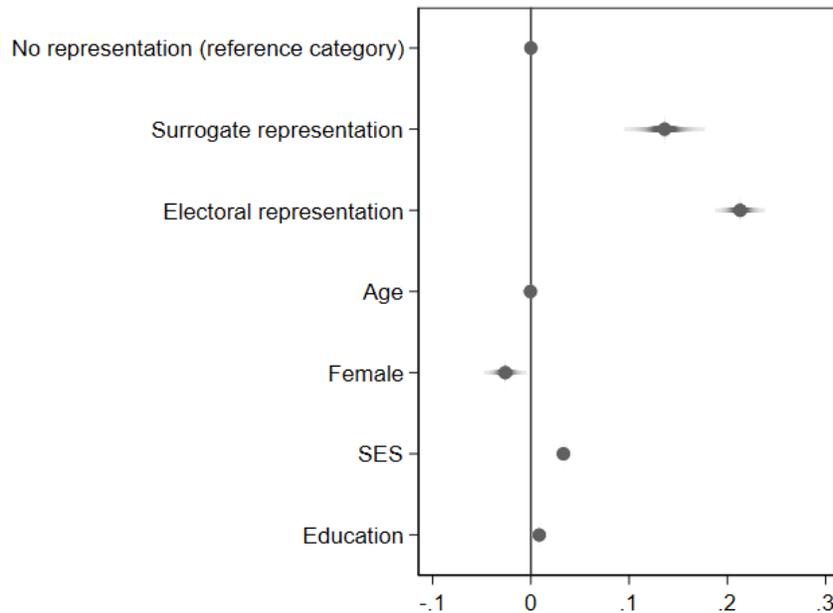
### 3. Voters' perceptions of party surrogation and its implications for democratic attitudes

What are the consequences of party surrogation for citizens' democratic attitudes? What is the relationship between feeling represented by a surrogate party to the level of satisfaction with democracy? Who is more satisfied, those who feel represented by the party they voted for, or the ones that have representation connections with two parties, their electoral choice and the surrogate party? To answer these questions, we ran an OLS regression model (reported in Table A1 in the online Appendix) predicting the level of satisfaction with democracy and the two other indicators of democratic attitudes. The main independent variable is the three groups of voters by their representation type: those who do not feel represented (reference category), those who feel represented by the party they voted for, and those who feel represented by a surrogate party. The models include demographic controls for age, gender, SES and education, as well as country-year fixed effects. Based on the results of Model 1, Figure 3 presents the effect of each of the groups on their level of satisfaction with democracy. The graph shows

that those who feel represented by the party they voted for, are significantly more satisfied with democracy compared to those who feel represented by a surrogate party. On the other hand, those who do not feel represented by a party are significantly less satisfied with democracy compared to those who feel represented by a surrogate party.

The same pattern holds for support in the principles of democracy (Table A1, Models 2 and 3 in the online Appendix). Voters who feel represented by a surrogate party support these principles to a higher degree compared to those who do not feel represented by a party at all, but less so than those who feel represented by the party they voted for. These results answer RQ1 and support H2a. In terms of democratic support, party surrogation does not add to citizens' representation beyond electoral representation but rather compensates for not voting for the party that one feels represents her.

**Figure 3. The effect of surrogate representation on satisfaction with democracy**



*Note.* Source: CSES Module 3. The graph presents the coefficients for OLS regression predicting the level of satisfaction with democracy per Model 1 in Table A1 in the online Appendix. The model includes survey fixed-effects which are not presented in the graph.

Lastly, to gauge more nuanced characteristics of party surrogation, we examine whether the compensating effect we find is true for all voters with party surrogate representation or rather

varies within this group. We compared the party thermometers of voters with surrogate representation for both the party they voted for and the surrogate party.<sup>2</sup> Who do these voters prefer, the party for which they casted their ballot or the one that they feel represents them? Or maybe they like the two parties to the same degree? If these voters like more the party that best represents them, this would indicate that their vote is a compromise (e.g., insincere voting). However, if they like better the party they voted for or like both parties to the same degree, this would indicate that the party surrogation adds to their representation.

It is important to note that the CSES asks respondents to rate the 5-9 largest parties in the country on the feeling thermometers, and therefore the following analysis is limited to voters who are represented by a surrogate party, and that both the voted-for and the surrogate party are included in the list of 5-9 for which the party thermometers were asked in that country. All in all, among this group of voters with party surrogation, 25% like the two parties to the same degree and 21% of voters like the party they voted for more than the party that they feel represents them. For these two groups, party surrogation adds to their representation since they already like best (or at least to the same degree) the party they voted for. The other half of surrogate voters, 53%, like the surrogate party more than they like the party they voted for. For these voters, it could be said that their electoral representation is lacking (because they like another party better), and surrogate representation may compensate for this deficiency. This group is especially prevalent in majoritarian systems, with 71% of voters with party surrogation like the surrogate party more than the party they voted for, while only 49% of voters with party surrogation in PR systems like the surrogate party more than the one they voted for. This is another indication for the strategic incentives within majoritarian systems which lead voters to vote for a party that does not best represent their views and results in higher levels of party surrogation (Table 1).

What are the implications of these categories of party surrogation – and the compensation vs. addition of representation – for democratic attitudes? Figure 4 shows the effects of the three groups of surrogate voters on satisfaction with democracy.<sup>3</sup> Surrogate voters that party surrogation adds to their representation – i.e., who like the voted-for party more – are satisfied with democracy. Voters who like the surrogate party more, however, are significantly less satisfied with democracy,

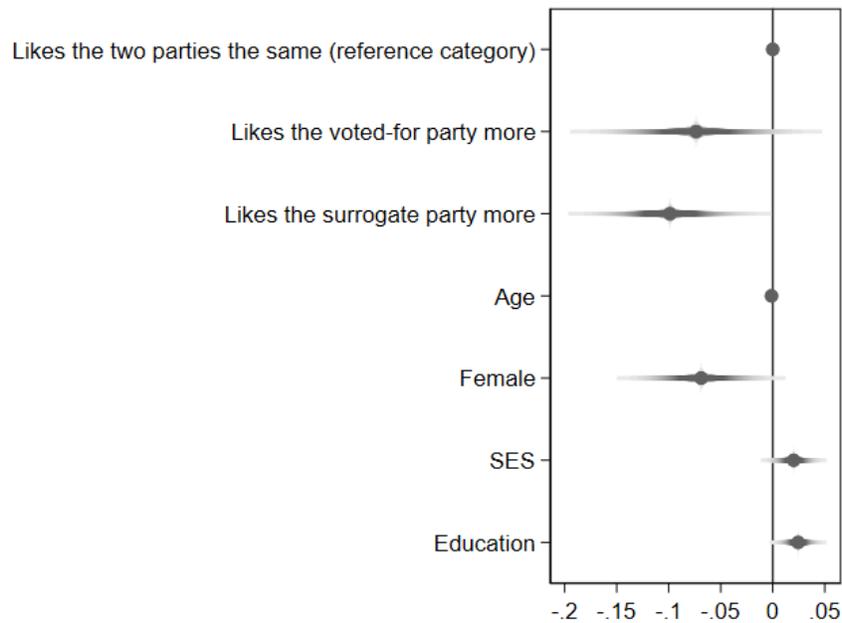
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<sup>2</sup> We exclude voters in mixed systems from this analysis to avoid complication.

<sup>3</sup> The model is detailed in Table A2 in the online appendix. The effects in the other two indicators are not significant.

compared to surrogate voters who like both parties. These findings corroborate the two types of voters with party surrogate representation- the first are the “compromisers,” who like better the party that they feel best represents them but voted for another party. These voters are less satisfied with democracy. The second type are the “multipliers,” who enjoy representation from multiple parties- the one they voted for and the one that they feel represents them. These surrogate voters are more satisfied with democracy.

**Figure 4. Voters with party surrogation: which party they like more and the effect on democratic attitudes**



*Note.* Source: CSES Module 3. The graph presents the coefficients for OLS regression predicting the level of satisfaction with democracy per Table A2 in the online Appendix. The model includes survey fixed-effects which are not presented in the graph.

## Discussion and conclusions

This study puts forward a theoretical framework of party surrogation – a voter’s sense of representation by a party she did not vote for, instead or beyond the party she did vote for. Taking surrogate representation beyond the American context in which it was conceived and studied, our

theoretical framework focuses on the party as the representative agent and posits that party surrogation is shaped by the electoral system, and especially the number of parties in a system, and can add representation – and not only compensate for a deficit in it.

Our findings show that in most countries, more than half of the respondents feel represented by a party, and that party surrogation reaches up in some countries to almost 20% of voters (while in other countries it is minimal). In corroboration with our first hypotheses, we find that the number of parties enhances party surrogation, and that surrogate representation by a party varies across electoral systems, with less party surrogation in PR and mixed electoral systems compared to FPTP systems. These findings suggest that in electoral systems that encourage more sincere voting, citizens will tend to vote for the party that best represents them. Thus, while more parties create more opportunities for surrogate representation, when sincere voting is possible, there is less party surrogation.

Our findings with regard to the effect of party surrogation on democratic attitudes square with this conclusion, showing that citizens are more satisfied with democracy when they vote for the party that they feel best represents them. However, surrogate representation by a party increases satisfaction with democracy compared to no representation, supporting Mansbridge's compensation hypothesis. However, further identifying sub-groups among voters with party surrogation, we find that not all voters with surrogate parties deem this representation a compromise. Those who like the surrogate party to the same degree or less than the party they voted for, are more satisfied with democracy. Thus, party surrogation compensates for lack of representation when voters do not vote for the party they prefer. However, when voters do vote for the party they like better, surrogate representation by a party adds to their representation and enhances their support for democracy.

This study shows that party surrogation is an important part of the repertoire of representation in democracies, especially in electoral systems that are prone to insincere voting and with regard to citizens' attitudes towards democracy. Our findings establish that the role of surrogate representation in voters' representation and attitudes toward democracy should be understood in light of the role of electoral representation. We show that electoral representation by a party one feels best represents her is the desirable representation relationship for most voters. In its absence, surrogate representation compensates for the lack of electoral representation; when

electoral representation does exist, surrogate representation adds to voters' representation and contributes to their support for democracy.

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## Online Appendix

### **List A: Surveys used in data (CSES module 3)**

Austria 2008; Canada 2008; Chile 2009; Croatia 2007; Czech Republic 2006; Czech Republic 2010; Denmark 2007; Estonia 2011; Finland 2007; Finland 2011; France 2007; Germany 2005; Germany 2009; Greece 2009; Hong Kong 2008; Iceland 2007; Iceland 2009; Ireland 2007; Israel 2006; Latvia 2010; Mexico 2009; New Zealand 2008; Norway 2005; Norway 2009; Poland 2005; Poland 2007; Portugal 2009; Slovakia 2010; Slovenia 2008; South Africa 2009, South Korea 2008; Spain 2008; Sweden 2006; Turkey 2011; United State of America 2008; Uruguay 2009

**Table A1: The effect of surrogate representation on satisfaction with democracy**

	(1) Satisfaction with democracy	(2) Who's in power makes a difference	(3) Who you vote for makes a difference
Reference category: Party surrogation			
Not represented	-0.136*** (0.016)	-0.380*** (0.026)	-0.361*** (0.025)
Represented by voted-for party	0.077*** (0.015)	0.170*** (0.024)	0.152*** (0.022)
Age	-0.000 (0.000)	0.001** (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Female	-0.026** (0.008)	0.021 (0.014)	0.017 (0.013)
SES	0.033*** (0.003)	0.022*** (0.005)	0.014** (0.005)
Education	0.009** (0.003)	0.029*** (0.004)	0.028*** (0.004)
Constant	2.772*** (0.038)	4.001*** (0.062)	4.237*** (0.058)
<i>N</i>	28722	27706	27010
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.177	0.099	0.087

*Note.* CSES Module 3. OLS regression models. DVs: Model 1: Level of satisfaction with democracy. Model 2: Agreement with the item “who is in power can make a difference”. Model 3: Agreement with the item “who people vote for can make a big difference”. All models include fixed effects for country-election year. Standard errors in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Table A2. Voters with party surrogation: which party they like more and the effect on democratic attitudes**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Satisfaction with democracy	Who's in power makes a difference	Who you vote for makes a difference
Reference Category: Likes the two parties the same			
Likes the voted-for party more	-0.074 (0.047)	0.045 (0.085)	-0.098 (0.074)
Likes the surrogate party more	-0.099** (0.038)	-0.007 (0.069)	-0.038 (0.060)
Age	-0.001 (0.001)	0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)
Female	-0.069* (0.031)	-0.005 (0.057)	-0.004 (0.049)
SES	0.020 (0.012)	-0.023 (0.022)	0.010 (0.019)
Education	0.024* (0.011)	0.069*** (0.018)	0.069*** (0.017)
Constant	2.833*** (0.158)	3.749*** (0.273)	3.987*** (0.250)
<i>N</i>	1892	1707	1906
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.228	0.076	0.103

*Note.* CSES Module 3. OLS regression models. DVs: Model 1: Level of satisfaction with democracy. Model 2: Agreement with the item “who is in power can make a difference”. Model 3: Agreement with the item “who people vote for can make a big difference”. The model includes fixed effects for country-election year. Standard errors in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$