The Composition of Political Culture—A Study of 25 European Democracies

**Thomas Denk · Henrik Serup Christensen ·
Daniel Bergh**

Abstract *The Civic Culture* by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba is a path-breaking work within political science. Although *The Civic Culture* still provides inspiration for studies, new approaches to political culture have identified alternative citizen orientations that may be replacing the value orientations identified at the time. The more recent studies have examined specific attitudes such as political trust, party identification, and political efficacy or types of political subcultures such as critical citizens, stealth citizens or disenchanted citizens. These studies provide insights into the developments of specific attitudinal orientations, but do not discern the mix of political orientations among the population, which *The Civic Culture* suggests is central for democratic stability. The implications of these changes for the composition of political cultures are therefore still unknown. In this article, we, as suggested by *The Civic Culture*, examine the composition of political cultures to shed new light on the differences in political culture between old and new democracies. We use the fourth round of the European Social Survey to examine this question in 25 European democracies. The results suggest that there is a need to revise some of the main conclusions of *The Civic Culture* when it comes to the connection between political culture and democratic stability. Although civic citizens are widespread in old democracies, there is no single political culture sustaining a stable democracy. We also find considerable heterogeneity in the composition of the political cultures within old and new democracies alike, suggesting that there may be considerable variation in the cultural conditions for creating a stable democracy.

T. Denk · H. S. Christensen (✉)
Department of Political Science, Åbo Akademi University, Fänriksgatan 3A, 20500 Åbo, Finland
e-mail: henrik.christensen@abo.fi

T. Denk
e-mail: tdenk@abo.fi

D. Bergh
Centre for Research on Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Karlstad University,
Karlstad 651 88, Sweden
e-mail: Daniel.Bergh@kau.se

Introduction

The Civic Culture (1963/1965) by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba is still today one of the path-breaking works within political science. Methodologically, the study established the use of survey methods for comparative studies in political science, since Almond and Verba used comparative survey data to identify three types of citizens' political orientations: parochial, subject, and participant. Theoretically, the authors established the idea that a balanced mix of these political orientations or subcultures promotes democratic stability, thereby emphasizing the importance of the composition of the political culture for democracies. Consequently, the publication of *The Civic Culture* promoted a notable expansion of research on political culture. The establishment of several international survey programs with data on political attitudes and values in several countries has enabled comprehensive comparative studies of the topics involved. Together with more advanced statistical methods, this has caused an increase in the number of comparative studies on political cultures as well as the diversity of the theoretical approaches.

Although *The Civic Culture* still provides inspiration for studies, new approaches to political culture have identified alternative citizen orientations that may be replacing the political orientations identified at the time of its publication. The implications of these changes for the composition of political orientations are still largely unknown, since few studies have analyzed the composition of political cultures in democratic systems despite the improved conditions when it comes to data, methodology, and theory. Several studies have examined specific political values such as political trust, party identification, and political efficacy (Barnes et al. 1979; Klingemann and Fuchs 1995; Inglehart 1997; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Dalton 2006) or types of political subcultures such as such as critical citizens (Norris 1999), stealth citizens (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002) or disenchanted citizens (Stoker 2006). Consequently, our knowledge about the present composition of political orientations in democratic systems is limited.

This issue is particularly important when it comes to differences in the composition of the political cultures in old and new democracies. As mentioned, Almond and Verba claim that the composition of the political culture is related to the stability of the democratic regime. Since several of the European countries have recently become fully fledged democracies, it is important to examine the composition of the political cultures in these countries. Previous studies of political values and cultures in Central and Eastern European countries have found that citizens in these countries generally have negative evaluations of the political authorities and the possibilities to influence the political decision-making (Rose et al. 1998; Pollack et al. 2003; Whitefield 2005). Based on this, we can expect that there are differences in the composition of the political cultures. However, while previous studies have provided insights into the developments of specific attitudinal orientations in both old and new democracies, they do not examine the mix of political orientations in the population, which according to Almond and Verba is of particular importance for the stability of a democratic regime.

For this reason, we, in this article, investigate differences in the composition of the political cultures in old and new European democracies.

This article is organized as follows: In the next section, we present the main contributions from *The Civic Culture*. Following this, we present recent research on political cultures, which we integrate with *The Civic Culture* into a typology of political subcultures. The next section is devoted to presenting our empirical approach to measuring this framework, before we in the empirical part examine the composition of the political cultures and in particular the differences between old and new democracies. In the final section, we summarize our results and relate them to the debate on political cultures in old and new democracies.

As contended by Almond and Verba, the results show that there are important differences in the composition of the political cultures in old and new democracies. Nevertheless, there are important differences within these two groups of countries, which may have important implications for the stability of the democratic regimes in these countries. Additionally, there are significant differences within the countries in the concentration of the political subcultures, suggesting that there is greater diversity in the political cultures than previously assumed. By examining the composition of the political cultures, we thereby nuance previous findings concerning political culture in both old and new democracies.

The Legacy of *The Civic Culture* 50 Years Later

Almond and Verba's *The Civic Culture* is still a seminal study for research on political culture (Almond and Verba 1963/1965). In their work, Almond and Verba present novel concepts, theoretical ideas and empirical research, all of which have inspired multiple studies since the first publication. Three contributions are of particular importance for research on political culture.

First, Almond and Verba present a clear and consistent *definition of political culture* of a nation: "the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation" (Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 13). With this definition, they connect the political culture to the cognitions, feelings, and evaluations of its population and thereby provide the political culture with a micro level basis, which can be examined empirically with survey research.

The second major contribution is the *typology of political subcultures*, which Almond and Verba develop from their definition of political culture (Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 16). According to Almond and Verba, citizens hold different orientations toward political objects and the combinations of these orientations constitute different categories of political subcultures. In the first category, individuals have positive orientation toward the political system and active roles within the systems. These individuals represent the *participant culture*. The second category—the *subject culture*—includes individuals who have positive orientations toward the political system, but are oriented toward political passivity. The third category—the *parochial culture*—includes individuals who are indifferent toward the political system and tend to be politically passive. According to Almond and Verba, these subcultures blend to create the political culture of a society, and the composition of the political culture therefore becomes a central question for analyzing political cultures.

The third major contribution concerns the link between the *political culture and democratic stability*. Almond and Verba claim that a convergence between the structures of the political system and the political culture of citizens is a prerequisite for achieving a stable democratic system. Almond and Verba found the civic culture to be predominant in the stable democracies of the USA and Britain, while the less stable democracies Germany, Italy, and Mexico deviated from the civic culture in different ways (Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 364). Almond and Verba propose that the political culture will be a significant factor in determining how the future unfolds for democracy and emphasize the difficulties new democracies face in quickly developing the civic culture that emerged over centuries in the old democracies.

They argued that a specific blend of the three subcultures, where the participatory culture is the dominant culture, promotes democratic stability. This is what they refer to as the civic culture. According to Almond and Verba, democratic systems need to balance contradictory demands, since they should simultaneously allow the political elites the freedom to make decisions independently while remaining responsive to citizens' demands. To achieve this balance, citizens should combine two sets of political orientations (Almond and Verba 1963/1965:347). First, they need to have an active orientation toward their own political role within the political system. This entails that they should be politically engaged and have a high level of subjective political competence to ensure that citizens develop political preferences and communicate the political preferences into the political processes. However, citizens should also allow the political elites room for taking decisions to ensure that the political system is not overloaded with demands. Almond and Verba therefore contend that the active orientation needs to be counterbalanced by a strong attachment to the political system. Rather than being constantly involved, citizens should most of the time leave the decision-making to the political elites (Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 343–344). Hence, citizens should have a high level of trust for the political structures to ensure a functioning division of labor between citizens and political elites (Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 354). When revisiting *The Civic Culture*, Almond (1980:16) spells out this principle by stating that the active aspect of democratic citizenship needs to be balanced with passivity and system trust to achieve stability for democratic systems.

Subsequent studies building on Almond and Verba's work have generally assumed that political cultures in stable democracies consist of citizens who combine a favorable notion of their own abilities to take an active role in the political system with a positive evaluation of the functioning of the political system and the political actors (Diamond 1999; Norris 1999; Pollack et al. 2003). Through this, the subsequent literature has studied mixes of attitudes at the individual level rather than the composition of the political culture. Figure 1 shows how this principle functions when combining two dimensions of political attitudes.[1] The citizens in the upper-left corner combine an active orientation toward their own political role with a positive evaluation of the political system. This mix of attitudes corresponds to the subculture Almond and Verba refer to as "participant culture". However, since we here want to call attention to the

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[1] The typology of political subcultures presented by Almond and Verba is based on four dimensions (orientations toward system in general, political role of the self, objects related to input and output, system), while our typology is based on only two dimensions capturing the essential differences for the present purposes. Our labels of the political subcultures differ from Almond and Verba to acknowledge these differences.

Dimension 2: Orientation towards political role

		Orientated toward active role	Orientated toward passive role
Dimension 1: Orientation towards political system	*Positive evaluations*	*Civic citizen*	
	Negative evaluations		

Fig. 1 Two dimensions of the civic culture

differences between *The Civic Culture* and recent studies, we here use the label *civic citizens*, since this combination ensures the balanced mix between activity and deference that underpins a functioning democracy at the individual level.

Although following in the footsteps of *The Civic Culture*, recent studies have claimed that citizens with more negative political attitudes evaluations are replacing the civic citizens, as explained in the next section.

The Current Debate on Political Culture and Civic Orientations

Even if *The Civic Culture* inspired a considerable amount of research, newer contributions tend to identify specific types of citizens as pivotal in democratic systems rather than to examine the composition of national political cultures. Although the contributions generally acknowledge the existence of different citizen orientations (Dalton 2004: 23), they contend that the political orientations of citizens are converging into different types of citizens that all differ from the civic citizen ideal outlined above by espousing more negative evaluations of the political authorities and the possibilities to influence political decisions (Norris 2011; Hay 2007: 46–49). Three ideas in particular have challenged the expectation that civic citizens are predominant in democracies. In the following, we present these ideas and explain differences and similarities compared to Almond and Verba's approach.

The first, and arguably the most influential of these ideas, concerns the *critical citizen* (Inglehart 1997; Norris 1999, 2011; Dalton 2004; Rosanvallon 2008). Although different labels are used, these contributions share the idea that the rising affluence in the Western world has caused a fundamental value change meaning citizens have grown increasingly negative in their evaluations of political authorities and the performance of the political actors. However, these scholars contend that the critical attitudes have positive effects for democracy, since the critical citizens maintain a strong belief in democratic principles as such but are disappointed with the current practices of democracy (Inglehart 1999; Norris 2011). The critical citizen is politically interested and involved in elite challenging or protest activities (Inglehart 1997: 307; Norris 1999: 258–263). This preparedness for political activity suggests that the critical citizens retain a belief in their capacity to influence political decisions (cf. Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 139). Through these activities, the critical citizens may help keep the

decision-makers accountable by scrutinizing the actions of the political elites (Rosanvallon 2008), and critical attitudes can therefore be beneficial for democracy (cf. Hardin 1999; Levi and Stoker 2000: 484). Almond and Verba also noted that very high levels of commitment to the political system and elites might have adverse effects for democracy (Almond and Verba 1963/1965: 355). Nevertheless, the specific mix of attitudes associated with critical citizens does not correspond to any of the three subcultures identified by Almond and Verba. Critical citizens differ from civic citizens on the first dimension in that they are critical of the political system and the political elites. On the second dimension, they are similar to civic citizens since they are oriented toward an active role in the political system. However, Almond and Verba assume that political participation occurs through conventional channels, and they therefore overlook the possibility for critical action through non-conventional activities such as protest (cf. Barnes et al. 1979; Inglehart 1997). Almond and Verba hereby conflate critical citizens with the parochial subculture since both groups appear politically indifferent.

The second idea challenging the predominance of civic citizens contends that citizens do not want to be involved in politics, they are more than happy to leave it to politicians. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse advance this position in *Stealth Democracy* (2002), where the authors argue that citizens do not want to be involved in politics, but to have capable and not just self-interested political leaders who can make the political decisions for them. Accordingly, the ideal political system is one where democratic procedures exist but are non-visible most of the time. Hence, these *stealth citizens* need a high degree of trust in the political elites and their capabilities to make more informed choices than citizens would do themselves. Although they are not necessarily perfectly satisfied with every aspect of the current practices, they fundamentally have a positive orientation toward the political system on the first dimension. They combine this view with an orientation toward a passive role on the second dimensions as they display a lack of willingness to be involved and question their capabilities to be a part of the political process. Hence, stealth citizens, as civic citizens, have a positive orientation toward the political system, but contrary to civic citizens, they combine this with low scores on the second dimension concerning their own role in this system. By mixing a positive orientation toward the political system with political passivity, the stealth citizens resemble Almond and Verba's *subject subculture*. According to Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, stealth citizens do not constitute a democratic problem despite the differences from civic citizens. Instead, it is necessary to adopt a realistic view of how involved citizens want to be, and build a functioning political system that does not rest on constant involvement of citizens to maintain the support of stealth citizens.

The third challenge to the civic citizen ideal involves a more pessimistic assessment of the developments in attitudes. It claims that a growing feeling of political disenchantment means that citizens display a negative conception of the political system and the possibility of influencing political matters (Stoker 2006, 2010; Hay 2007; Hay and Stoker 2007). This political disenchantment entails a deep-rooted cynicism and disillusion about politics and the democratic system (Stoker 2006: 32), where politics has increasingly become a dirty word used to question the integrity of actors (Hay 2007: 1). Stoker (2010: 50) points out that the surge of political disenchantment is not due to a lack of trust in politicians and institutions—which has been low for a long time—but a loss of belief among citizens in the ability to influence decisions and in the capacity of

the system to respond. Hence, the *disenchanted citizens* are negative toward the political system on the first dimension like critical citizens. However, they combine this with an orientation toward a passive role on the second dimension that resembles the stealth citizens. Hence, disenchanted citizens constitute the opposite to the civic citizens on both dimensions, and resemble the mix of attitudes Almond and Verba refer to as the parochial culture. There is little doubt that a political culture dominated by disenchanted citizens would pose a serious challenge to the legitimacy and stability of the democratic system.

Although these three types of citizens have affinities with the categories developed by Almond and Verba, the new studies differ in how they study the political orientations of citizens. For example, the empirical studies of the critical citizen generally follow Easton (1965) and mainly examine measures of political support such as trust in government and the political system (cf. Stoker 2010). This entails that they examine the first dimension outlined above (how citizens orientate toward the political system), but neglect the second dimension (how citizens perceive their own political role). An example is provided by Dalton (2004: 25–54), who in his otherwise comprehensive review of the available survey literature for all established democracies does not include measures that gauge the subjective political competence of citizens. In a similar manner, Norris (2011) examines the support of the political system but does not include subjective measures of how citizens perceive their own political role. This is to some extent due to a lack of appropriate data, since Norris predominantly relies on the World Value Survey, which does not include a suitable measure for internal political efficacy and thereby gives limited possibility for examining the second dimension. For this reason, much of the debate on the developments in political attitudes has only focused on part of the story, as noted by Stoker (2010: 50).

Furthermore, the studies have frequently considered these different descriptions to be mutually exclusive. This is most clearly pronounced by Hay (2007: 4), who in his treatment of the critical citizens' thesis states that the political disenchantment of today is something more significant and less benign than the development of a healthy dose of realism among a previously all too deferential electorate. In this description, there is no room for the possibility that critical and disenchanted citizen co-exist in society.

Consequently, later studies following in the footsteps of *The Civic Culture* have not examined the distribution of citizens among political subcultures with the aim of studying the composition of the national political culture. Instead, the studies have exclusively examined the constitutive aspects of a single category of citizens, thereby bypassing one of the central contributions from *The Civic Culture*: that different subcultures together compose the political culture. It is therefore still unclear whether the political orientations of citizens have actually converged around a single political subculture as suggested by the new contributions.

In our approach, we emphasize the composition of the political culture by conceptualizing the four alternatives as different political subcultures in line with *The Civic Culture*. Figure 2 visualizes the differences among these groups of citizens with the help of the typology from Fig. 1. The three descriptions differ systematically on the two dimensions to form alternatives to the civic citizens in the upper-left cell. The lower left cell corresponds to the critical citizens, who also have a positive orientation toward their political role, but combine it with a negative view of the political system (Inglehart 1997; Norris 1999; Rosanvallon 2008). The upper right cell corresponds to the stealth citizens

Fig. 2 Two dimensions and four cultural ideal types

(Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002), who have a positive view of the political system but a negative orientation when it comes to their political role. The final lower right cell contains the disenchanted citizens who are negative on both dimensions (Hay 2007; Stoker 2006).

By incorporating the political subcultures into a common typology, we avoid focusing on what description of the developments in the political attitudes is correct. Instead, we move the focus to the composition of political cultures in democracies in line with Almond and Verba's approach to explore what proportions of each citizen profile we can find in different countries.

A pertinent question in connection to this concerns the political cultures in old and new democracies. Almond and Verba emphasize that the composition of the political culture can be expected to differ between stable and unstable democracies. To achieve democratic stability, new democracies face a challenge in developing a political culture displaying the proper mix of activity and deference. Previous studies have shown that political attitudes are more negative in the post-communist new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe (Rose et al. 1998; Pollack et al. 2003; Whitefield 2005). Inglehart and Welzel (2005) claim that a particular cultural heritage from the communist era exists in the post-communist democracies. This claim is supported by socialization theories arguing that political orientations developed during previous non-democratic regimes can be expected to remain stable even when the state are democratized, since it is difficult to change political orientations developed during youth (Fuchs 1999). All these findings suggest that the new democracies may well have problems in building a civic culture. However, although some studies have explicitly examined the relevance of the political culture of the new democracies (Pollack et al. 2003; Whitefield 2005), no studies have examined the composition of the political cultures in the new democracies. Since these contributions often follow in the footsteps of *The Civic Culture*, this omission is unfortunate considering the emphasis Almond and Verba place on the composition of the political culture. In the empirical part, we therefore examine the differences in the composition of the political culture between old and new democracies. This allows us to shed new light on the political attitudes in these countries and the implications for democratic stability.

Data, Variables, and Methods

The data for this study come from the fourth round of the European Social Survey (ESS Round 4, 2008). Since the study is restricted to European democracies, we exclude

Israel (outside Europe), Turkey, Russia, and Ukraine (not democratic countries). In total, the data consist of 47,489 respondents from 25 countries. Fifteen countries are old or stable democracies, which have been democratic for at least 25 years, while the 10 remaining countries are new Central Eastern European democracies established following the end of the Cold War. Since the new democracies became democracies around the same time, we group these countries with a dichotomous distinction between old and new democracies, thereby leaving aside the question of the exact number of years the country has been democratic. We also exclude the question of the quality of the democratic regime since there is limited variation among the countries in this regard.[2]

We use four sets of questions to measure the orientations toward the political system and toward the citizen role within the political system. All four sets of questions are recoded to vary between 0 and 1 with '1' indicating the highest level of the attitude in question.

The first set of questions includes three questions in which the respondents rate their level of political trust in the national parliaments, the politicians, and the political parties on a scale from 0–10. These questions are combined to form an index of political trust (Cronbach's alpha=0.91). The second set includes a single question where respondents indicate their evaluation of how well democracy functions on the national level (satisfaction with democracy) on a 0–10 scale. These first two sets of questions evaluate the individual's orientation toward the political system.

The latter two sets of questions gauge the orientation toward the role of the citizen. The third set consists of a single question where the respondents indicate their level of political interest. The fourth set of questions concerns the internal political efficacy of the respondents and includes two questions concerning how complicated the respondents find politics and how easy it is to make mind up about political matters. Based on these two items, we construct an index measuring internal political efficacy.[3]

We examine the extent to which the typology of four subcultures developed in the theoretical chapter can help structure the variation in these four variables. However, we do not test the applicability of alternative typologies or number of groups in the analyses. Even if it is a central research question to examine the applicability of cultural groups other than the ones identified in previous research, this is also a comprehensive research task, which would include a different research design and different statistical

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[2] While this dichotomy neglects disruptions of democratic rule in the old democracies, which occurred in several countries such as Spain and Portugal, it makes it possible to examine differences between new and more mature democracies. An empirical analysis supports the decision to use the dichotomy instead of number of years since the differences between old and new democracies are stronger than the correlations between years of democracy and shares of subcultures (Years of democracy from the database *Democracy and Dictatorship*, Cheibub et al. 2010). For the quality of democracy, the values on Polity-index for the countries in year 2008 were between eight and ten with a mean value of 9.56, which clearly shows the lack of variation in this regard. For more on this, see Table 2.

[3] The construction of the two indexes (political trust and political efficacy) has been evaluated using the Rasch model (Rasch 1960/1980), which examines the psychometric structure of the composite measures (e.g., if adding raw score values are justified by the data). Additionally, we have examined the assumption of invariance of responses across groups, i.e., that the items or index means the same in different countries using the *Rumm2030* software (Andrich 1988; Andrich et al. 2008). These analyses confirm the construction of the two indexes and indicate that the constructed indexes function similarly across countries, meaning the indexes are invariant across countries and function in a similar manner in all countries. The results of these analyses are available upon request from the authors.

methods (e.g., latent class analysis). For the present purposes, we focus only on the usefulness of the current model, leaving the applicability of alternative models to future research.

Empirical Analysis

The following sections contain four empirical analyses that in consecutive steps examine the composition of political cultures in old and new democracies. We first classify the respondents into four groups corresponding to the subcultures outlined in Fig. 2. In the second analysis, we explore the differences among the countries of the study in the distribution of these four groups. Following this, we in the third analysis examine the differences between old and new democracies. In the fourth and final analysis, we examine the composition of the political cultures in all countries. All of this results in a "map of cultures" showing the contours of the political cultures in the European democracies to demonstrate the considerable diversity of the compositions of the political cultures in Europe.

Classification of Citizens

To classify the respondents according to the political subcultures developed in the typology, we use a two-step cluster analysis grouping the respondents according to their political attitudes.[4] We interpret the mean scores presented in the table according to two thresholds. One is the absolute mean of 0.50 for all four variables. Being above this score is a clear indication that the respondents have a positive orientation on the variable in question. Another important threshold is the relative mean, which is the average score for all respondents. Although a less clear indication, being above this threshold shows that the respondents hold more positive evaluations than the population at large (Table 1).

   The cluster analysis classifies the respondents in four clusters. Interpreting the results with the two thresholds shows that the characteristics of the four clusters largely correspond to the four types of citizens outlined in theoretical sections, although there are variations within the clusters.

   In cluster 1, the average level of political trust is 0.59 while the average level of satisfaction with democracy is 0.73. These scores are both above the absolute mean of 0.50 and the relative mean scores for all respondents and shows that these individuals

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[4] We used exploratory factor analysis to ascertain that the variables constitute two separate dimensions in accordance with the structure of the typology (see Table 6). The results support the results since two dimensions are extracted, where 'Political trust' and 'Satisfaction with democracy' load strongly onto the first dimension (Orientation toward political system) while 'Political efficacy' and 'Political interest' load strongly onto the other dimension (Orientation toward political role). Furthermore, both the strengths of the factor loadings and the amount of variance explained (76.23%) indicate that the four variables load onto two separate latent dimensions in accordance with the typology. A possibility would be to use the factor loadings rather than the four variables in the subsequent analyses. However, this option is not chosen since it is an inherent assumption of the typology that the two dimensions are independent of each other, whereas the factorial solution allows partial dependency between the dimensions. The underlying variation would also be reduced by using the factor values. For more on methods of classification for these purposes, see Denk and Christensen (2014).

Table 1 Cluster analyses of the pooled data

| | | Centroids | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Political trust | | Satisfaction with democracy | | Internal political efficacy | | Political interest | | | |
		Mean	St.d.	Mean	St.d.	Mean	St.d.	Mean	St.d.	N	% of Total
Cluster	1	0.59	0.13	0.73	0.14	0.63	0.18	0.71	0.19	11,076	23.3
	2	0.27	0.16	0.36	0.21	0.55	0.20	0.72	0.14	10,722	22.6
	3	0.45	0.16	0.62	0.16	0.36	0.18	0.24	0.16	11,381	24.0
	4	0.15	0.13	0.26	0.17	0.42	0.24	0.21	0.17	10,055	21.2
All included respondents		0.37	0.22	0.50	0.25	0.49	0.23	0.47	0.29	43,234	91.0
Excluded cases										4,255	9.0
Total										47,489	100.0
eta^2 (individual level)		0.55		0.55		0.22		0.69			

The entries are the results of a two-step cluster analysis with log likelihood distance measure and Schwarz's Bayesian criterion as clustering criterion. All variables coded 0–1 with 1 indicating a high positive attitude

tend to be supportive of the political system. At the same time, the mean scores of 0.63 for internal political efficacy and 0.71 for political interest show that the respondents in this category also tend to perceive themselves as active citizens who are able to influence political matters. This cluster then corresponds to the *civic citizens* of Almond and Verba (1963/1965), who combine an active perception of the individual political role with an adequate extent of deference to the political system.

For the second cluster, the mean scores for political trust (0.27) and satisfaction with democracy (0.36) show that these respondents have negative beliefs in the functioning of the political system. Furthermore, the scores for internal political efficacy (0.55) and political interest (0.72) both indicate that this group values an active political role in the political system. Hence, this group corresponds to the *critical citizens* (Norris 1999; Inglehart 1997), who combine a negative orientation toward the political system with an active orientation toward their citizen role.

The respondents in the third cluster have an average score of political trust (0.45) above the mean score of all respondents (0.37) but slightly below the absolute mean (0.50), while the mean score for satisfaction with democracy of 0.62 is above both the absolute and relative mean scores. Hence, this cluster consists of individuals who tend to be supportive of the political system, but have less assertive individual political role since they have scores below both the absolute and relative means for internal political efficacy (0.36) and political interest (0.24). This combination of support of the political system with a negative view of their own role resembles the *stealth citizens* introduced by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002).

The fourth and final cluster consists of individuals with low scores compared to both the absolute and relative mean scores on all four parameters. They have the lowest level of political trust (0.15) and satisfaction with the democratic system (0.26), but also low political interest (0.21) and internal political efficacy (0.42) compared to both the

absolute mean value and the average value. As these respondents both distrust the political system and have negative orientations toward an active political role, they resemble the *disenchanted citizens* of Stoker (2006) and Hay (2007).

The eta values show that the four categories of political subcultures capture a substantial amount of the variation in political orientations among citizens (cf. Cohen 1988). Additionally, the groups of citizens are virtually equally distributed among the four clusters, since each category includes between 21 and 24 % of all respondents, which contradicts the suggestion that a single subculture is becoming dominant in Europe. Nevertheless, different types of citizens may dominate in different countries, which we examine in the succeeding paragraphs.

Country Comparison

The subsequent question concerns how these different cultures co-exist in the countries of the study. In Table 2, we see the distribution of the four subcultures across countries, and it reveals a number of important findings.

In the old democracies of Denmark (69.2 %), Switzerland (54.3 %), and Netherlands (53.0 %) a majority of citizens are *civic citizens*. These civic citizens also constitute a considerable minority in Cyprus, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, which are also old democracies. At the same time, the category includes less than 10 % of the citizens in the new democracies Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Czech Republic, and Croatia, as well as the old democracy Portugal. The values of the standard deviation suggest that the differences are largest when it comes to the civic citizens.

There are also considerable differences in the shares of *disenchanted citizens*, which is the contrasting category to the civic citizens in the typology. More than 35 % of the respondents are disenchanted citizens in the new democracies Latvia (47.7 %), Hungary (46.2 %), Croatia (44.8 %), Bulgaria (43.2 %), and Czech Republic (37.5 %), but also in Portugal (40.1 %). Contrary to this, the corresponding share is below 10 % in the old democracies Denmark (1.9 %), Netherlander (4.2 %), Norway (4.2 %), Switzerland (4.4 %), Sweden (6.8 %), Finland (7.3 %) and Cyprus (8.5 %).

The standard deviations show that the differences among the countries are less pronounced for stealth citizens and critical citizens. The stealth citizens do not form a majority in any country, but relatively high shares occur in Spain (48.1 %), Czech Republic (40.9 %), Finland (38.5 %), Norway (38.1 %) and Cyprus (35.1 %). The new democracies Bulgaria (5.3 %), Hungary (12.9 %) and Latvia (14.1 %) have the lowest shares of stealth citizens. The situation is similar for the critical citizens, where Bulgaria (47.1 %), Hungary (35.0 %), Ireland (35.0 %), and Latvia (35.0 %) all have at least 35 % critical citizens. The share is lower than 15 % in eight countries: Denmark (8.8 %), Norway (11.2 %), Finland (11.6 %), Switzerland (11.9 %), Cyprus (12.3 %), Czech Republic (12.6 %), Spain (13.8 %), and Sweden (14.9 %). Hence, despite the relatively low standard deviations, substantial differences still exist among the countries.

Previous studies have at least implicitly assumed that citizens' attitudes tend to move in a similar direction, meaning either critical, stealth, or disenchanted citizens dominate the political culture. In combination with the previous results, these results show instead that no political subculture is growing dominant in European democracies, since none of the three more recent subcultures forms a majority in the countries under scrutiny. The results also show that the civic citizens rarely form the majority

Table 2 Country level distribution of subcultures in European democracies

	Old/new democracy	Years as democracy	Polity-value 2008	Number of respondents	Civic citizens	Stealth citizens	Critical citizens	Disenchanted citizens
Belgium	Old	90	8	1,705	26.2	33.7	23.8	16.4
Bulgaria	New	19	9	1,811	4.5	5.3	47.1	43.2
Croatia	New	18	9	1,281	9.0	20.5	25.7	44.8
Cyprus	Old	26	10	1,105	44.1	35.1	12.3	8.5
Czech Republic	New	16	8	1,862	9.0	40.9	12.6	37.5
Denmark	Old	108	10	1,543	69.2	20.0	8.8	1.9
Estonia	New	32	9	1,431	19.6	24.8	29.3	26.3
Finland	Old	65	10	2,106	42.6	38.5	11.6	7.3
France	Old	134	9	2,001	21.2	25.7	32.4	20.7
Germany	Old	60	10	2,642	33.5	21.3	31.2	13.9
Great Britain	Old	98	10	2,211	26.6	21.8	33.5	18.1
Greece	Old	35	10	2,002	11.5	28.0	21.4	39.1
Hungary	New	19	10	1,349	5.9	12.9	35.0	46.2
Ireland	Old	88	10	1,682	20.6	18.7	37.1	23.6
Latvia	New	18	8	1,718	3.2	14.1	35.0	47.7
Netherlands	Old	139	10	1,705	53.0	25.9	16.8	4.2
Norway	Old	124	10	1,511	43.9	38.1	11.2	6.9
Poland	New	20	10	1,403	13.4	22.5	33.9	30.3
Portugal	Old	83	10	2,044	9.3	27.5	23.1	40.1
Romania	New	19	9	1,756	17.3	20.1	30.2	32.4
Slovakia	New	16	10	1,641	21.2	30.6	25.9	22.3
Slovenia	New	18	10	1,142	21.5	26.8	32.5	19.2
Spain	Old	18	10	2,242	19.2	48.1	13.8	18.9
Sweden	Old	91	10	1,736	49.2	29.1	14.9	6.8
Switzerland	Old	139	10	1,605	54.3	29.5	11.9	4.4
Average		59.7	9.6		25.7	26.4	24.4	23.2
Total *N*				43,234	11,076	10,722	11,381	10,055
	Standard deviation				18.0	9.5	10.4	14.8
	Highest value				69.2	48.1	47.1	47.7
	Lowest value				3.2	5.2	8.8	1.9

Entries are weighted percentages belonging to the four groups of citizens. N refers to the unweighted number of respondents

even among the old democracies, suggesting that this is not necessary for democratic stability. What we find instead is considerable differences among the countries in how large the four cultures are. When examining the composition of the political cultures, heterogeneity rather than conformity is the general pattern. In the following, we examine whether this pattern differs between old and new democracies, as suggested by Almond and Verba.

Differences Between Old and New Democracies

As explained in the theoretical section, it is a central idea for Almond and Verba (1963/1965) that the political cultures differ between stable democracies and newly democratized states. The previous results also suggest that there are notable differences between the old and new democracies in Europe. We explore these differences in more detail in Table 3.

At a first glimpse, the results reveal significant differences between old democracies and new democracies. The general pattern is that the share of civic citizens and stealth citizens are higher in old democracies, while the share of critical citizens and disenchanted citizens is higher in new democracies. The average share of civic citizens is 12.46 % in the new democracies compared to 34.76 in the old democracies. In Table 2, we see that the highest share among the new democracies exists in Slovenia, where they constitute about 21.5 % of the population while the lowest share is 3.2 % in Latvia. The largest group in the new democracies is the politically disenchanted with about 35 % followed by the critical citizens who constitute about 31 %. The eta^2 values for old/new democracies also indicate that the distinction between old and new democracies has a strong impact on the distribution of the four citizen cultures. If Almond and Verba were correct in pointing to the importance of the civic culture for a stable democracy, these results seem to spell troubles for the new democracies, where the presence of large shares of disenchanted citizens is especially worrying.

However, even if there are differences between the old and new democracies, the analyses also indicate that the differences *within* the two groups are larger than the differences *between* the groups as the eta^2 is lower than 0.50.[5] Hence, even if there are significant differences between old and new democracies, the general pattern is a heterogeneous distribution of the four political subcultures within both of these categories. The results therefore show that neither the old nor the new democracies share a common composition of the political culture. In the following, we explore this further by examining the degree of concentration in the composition of the political cultures.

Degree of Cultural Concentration

The previous results provide important information about political subcultures in European democracies. However, even if we found a considerable heterogeneity in the distribution of the four cultures in the previous section, there may well be countries where we can say that the distribution is concentrated around a single political subculture. To determine the differences between countries in this regard, we need to measure the degree of concentration of political subcultures.

To measure this, we use the *Herfindahl-Hirschman Index* (HHI), which was originally developed to indicate concentration in industry markets (Carlton and Perloff 1990; Herfindahl 1950). This index measures the size of units (originally firms) in relation to

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[5] The eta^2-measure is defined as the variation between groups in relation to the total variation. Hence, if the eta^2 score is below 0.5 it indicates that most of the variation is found within the groups. The differences may still be statistically significant, since this only concerns whether the differences between the groups are sufficiently large in comparison to the total variation, not whether the differences within the groups are larger.

Table 3 Country level distribution of subcultures in new and old democracies

		Civic citizens	Stealth citizens	Critical citizens	Disenchanted citizens
Old democracy	Mean	34.76	29.40	20.25	15.39
	Standard deviation	17.52	8.09	9.46	11.89
New democracy	Mean	12.46	21.85	30.72	34.99
	Standard deviation	7.07	9.96	8.80	10.39
	eta^2	0.390	0.159	0.252	0.439
	Sign	0.010	0.048	0.011	0.000

the system (originally markets) and is a commonly accepted measure of the degree of competition. We here adapt this measure to compute the degree of cultural concentration. HHI is calculated by squaring the share of each unit (s_i) and then summing these values (HHI=$\sum s_i^2$). This means that the values of HHI are proportional to the average

Table 4 Degree of concentration in European democracies

Country	HHI	Normalized HHI
Belgium	0.27	0.03
Bulgaria	0.41	0.21
Croatia	0.32	0.09
Cyprus	0.34	0.12
Czech Republic	0.33	0.11
Denmark	0.53	0.37
Estonia	0.25	0.00
Finland	0.35	0.13
France	0.26	0.01
Germany	0.27	0.03
Great Britain	0.26	0.01
Greece	0.29	0.05
Hungary	0.36	0.15
Ireland	0.27	0.03
Latvia	0.37	0.16
Netherlands	0.38	0.17
Norway	0.36	0.15
Poland	0.28	0.04
Portugal	0.30	0.07
Romania	0.27	0.03
Slovakia	0.26	0.01
Slovenia	0.26	0.01
Spain	0.32	0.09
Sweden	0.35	0.13
Switzerland	0.40	0.20

share weighted by the share and the index takes into account the relative size distribution of the units. HHI can be normalized with the formula $(HHI-1/N)/(1-1/N)$, where N is the number of units. When measuring the share of units as a percentage, the normalized HHI varies from 0 to 1, where a higher value indicates a decrease in competition and an increase of domination. This entails that the HHI score for a country should be higher when a single subculture is dominant. In Table 4, we present HHI-values and normalized HHI-values for all countries.

The HHI-values show that there are substantial differences in the concentration of the political subcultures among the countries. When combining the results in Table 4 with the data presented in Table 2, we find three groups of countries. In the first group are countries with a dominant culture where a majority of citizens belongs to a single cultural category. As a result, these countries have relative high degrees of concentration with HHI-values over 0.38. In this group, we find the old democracies Denmark, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, where the civic citizens form an absolute majority. In the second group, which mainly consists of new democracies, two subcultures comprise more than 75 % of the citizens, although the combinations of subcultures differ among the countries. These countries all have a medium degree of concentration (HHI-values between 0.33 and 0.38). In Bulgaria, the critical citizens together with the disenchanted citizens exceed 90 % of the population, and even if Bulgaria has a HHI-value above 0.38, it is therefore most appropriately considered a country where two cultures dominate. The same combination of a dominant pairing of critical and disenchanted citizens is found in Hungary and Latvia. In the Czech Republic, the dominant combination is between stealth citizens and disenchanted citizens, while

Table 5 Composition of political cultures in European democracies

Degree of concentration					
	Low level	Medium level			High level
	Mixed cultures	Dual cultures			Dominant culture
Dominant subculture	No dominant subculture	Disenchanted citizens Stealth citizens	Critical citizens Disenchanted citizens	Civic citizens Stealth citizens	Civic citizens
	Belgium Croatia Estonia France Germany Great Britain Greece Ireland Poland Portugal Romania Slovakia Slovenian Spain	Czech Republic	Bulgaria Hungary Latvia	Cyprus Finland Norway Sweden	Switzerland Denmark Netherlands

stealth citizens together with civic citizens dominate in Cyprus, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. In the third group of countries, citizens are distributed more or less equally among the four categories, meaning no category is prominent. Instead, there are different mixes of cultures in the countries. Most of the countries ($n=14$) are found in this group, where all countries have a relatively low degree of concentration.

In Table 5, we integrate the results from Table 2 and Table 4 to highlight the considerable differences in the composition of the political cultures. Hence, we can see that the composition of political cultures in European democracies is more complex than expected from the typology presented in Table 2. Instead of a single political subculture being dominant, most countries have a citizenry divided among different political subcultures. The exception to the general pattern is Denmark, Netherlands, and Switzerland, where there is a majority of civic citizens complemented by minorities of other cultures. Otherwise, the analyses indicate political cultures in the countries that differ from the expected patterns based on previous research.

Conclusions

Since the publication of *The Civic Culture* in 1963, subsequent research on political culture has been inspired to examine specific political orientations or subcultures. Contrary to this, we have examined how mixtures of subcultures constitute the composition of the national political culture. The results have important implications for the original ideas of *The Civic Culture* and for the political cultures found in the old and new European democracies. We can summarize our findings into four conclusions about the composition of political cultures in European democracies.

First, we find no single dominant subculture among the European democracies, since citizens are virtually equally distributed among the four subcultures. This result challenges the idea that a majority of civic citizens underpins democratic stability, but also later studies claiming that the civic citizens have been replaced by alternative subcultures, be they critical citizens (Norris 1999), stealth citizens (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002), or disenchanted citizens (Stoker 2006). All of these subcultures exist, but their existence is not mutually exclusive and none of them can claim to be dominant. Hence, the debate on which of these descriptions most adequately describe the developments in citizen attitudes is to some extent misguided. This indicates that Almond and Verba were correct in pointing out the importance of recognizing the existence of several political subcultures and the related emphasis on the composition of the political culture.

Our second conclusion concerns the differences between old and new democracies, and here the results show that there are significant differences between old democracies and new democracies in the distribution of political subcultures. New democracies have higher levels of critical citizens and disenchanted citizens, while the shares of civic citizens and stealth citizens are higher in old democracies. That the new democracies have lower shares of civic citizens fits well with the ideas of Almond and Verba. Other scholars have asserted that a specific culture dominates the post-communist countries (Rose et al. 1998; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). However, even if there are significant differences between old and new democracies, the differences within both these two groups of democracies were larger than the differences between them. Hence, it is too

simple to talk of "old" or "new" democratic cultures since the political cultures within both groups differ widely.

The third conclusion is that the composition of subcultures differs among European democracies. Most importantly, only in a few countries do citizens combine a positive evaluation of the political system with an orientation toward an active political role in accordance with the ideals of the civic citizen. This result contradicts Almond and Verba's idea that only one specific mix of subcultures can assure democratic stability. On the contrary, alternative mixes of subcultures exist in the stable democracies, which indicate that democratic stability can be achieved under a varied assortment of cultural conditions.

The fourth and final major finding is that the degree of culture fragmentation is more prominent than previous studies have noticed. Only in exceptional cases do we find a single subculture that incorporates a majority of citizens. Hence, our study calls into question the idea of a dominant national political culture among citizens. Instead, the general pattern is one of culture heterogeneity where two or more subcultures co-exist.

All of this has both theoretical and practical implications. Our results call attention to the importance of considering the composition of political cultures rather than focus only on one single category of political culture. Future studies ought to examine the composition of political cultures rather than focusing exclusively on a single subtype of citizens. At the very least, it should be acknowledged that neither critical citizens, stealth citizens, nor disenchanted citizens are *the* dominant type of citizen in Europe, even if they all fill parts of the puzzle. A central task in connection to this is examining the applicability of different typologies of political subcultures to see whether it is possible to identify a valid classification of different types of citizens.

By identifying different attitudinal profiles, we can pinpoint important differences in their likely effect on the democratic stability in old and new democracies. Previous contributions have been concerned with the growing political dissatisfaction in the older democracies (Dalton 2004; Hay 2007). However, we find that the disenchanted citizens posing the most direct threat to the legitimacy of the democratic system are rare in most old democracies, although notable exceptions exist for Portugal and Greece. On the contrary, the civic citizens make up the major political subculture in most of the old democracies. Although dissatisfaction certainly exists in these countries, it generally takes a more benevolent guise than the subculture of disenchanted citizens. The worries over the developments in political attitudes in the old democracies may therefore be overstated considering both stealth citizens and critical citizens are seen as being compatible with a functioning democracy.

This is not necessarily the case in the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. In line with previous research, we find that subcultures with more negative attitudes on one or both dimensions are widespread in several of the new democracies. However, it is noteworthy that the critical citizens are the largest subculture in Bulgaria, Estonia, Poland, and Slovenia. Despite their critical stance, these citizens may still help support a responsive democratic regime by keeping the decision-makers accountable. Even if the predominance of critical citizens does not mean all is well, the situation certainly seems bleaker in other new democracies such as Croatia or Hungary, where the disenchanted citizens constitute the dominant subculture. This is likely to have more destabilizing effects since substantial shares of citizens have given up on politics altogether.

This shows that examining the composition of the political cultures can help understand important differences in the political cultures of seemingly similar countries. More research should be devoted to examining the implications of the differences in the composition of the political cultures. Despite some differences with the conclusions of *The Civic Culture*, our results therefore suggest that we are well advised taking seriously some of the central ideas of this path-breaking study.

Appendix

Table 6 Factor analysis of four sets of political orientations

	Component 1: Orientation toward political system	Component 2: Orientation toward political role	Total variation explained
Political trust	0.885	0.139	
Satisfaction with democracy	0.896	0.037	
Internal efficacy	0.001	0.858	
Political interest	0.171	0.882	
Explained variance (%)	40.41	35.82	76.23
Eigenvalues	1.836	1.213	
KMO	0.538		
Bartlett's test of sphericity (significance)	0.000		

The entries are loadings from a Principal component analysis with Varimax rotation where all dimensions with Eigenvalue larger than 1 are extracted

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Thomas Denk is Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer in political methodology at Åbo Akademi University. His research focuses on methodology, political culture, state-formation and democratization.

Henrik Serup Christensen is Academy of Finland Post Doctoral researcher in political science at Åbo Akademi University. His research interests include political participation, causes and consequences of political dissatisfaction in European democracies and the use of democratic innovations.

Daniel Bergh is Senior Lecturer in sociology at Karlstad University. His research focuses on methodological issues, in particular on measurement models applying the Rasch model. He is also interested in the associations between social relationships, school performance and adolescent health.