



Does Affective Polarization Undermine Satisfaction with Democracy? The Evidence from European Countries*

Czy polaryzacja afektywna osłabia zadowolenie z demokracją? Dane z krajów europejskich

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Abstract

What is the effect of affective polarization on vote satisfaction? Previous studies have investigated various consequences of affective polarization, such as support of democratic norms, democratic backsliding, voting turnout, or ideological radicalization. However, the impact of affective polarization on attitudes toward democracy is limited to the acceptance of democratic norms rather than overall satisfaction with the system. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy. I propose that moderately polarized people are more likely to be satisfied with democracy than those who have low and high levels of affective polarization. However, I expect that this relationship is contingent on voting for the

Abstrakt

Jaki jest wpływ polaryzacji afektywnej na zadowolenie z głosowania? Wcześniejsze badania analizowały różne konsekwencje polaryzacji afektywnej, takie jak poparcie dla norm demokratycznych, odchodzenie od demokracji, frekwencję wyborczą czy radykalizację ideologiczną. Jednakże dyskusje wpływu tego typu polaryzacji na postawy wobec demokracji ogranicza się do akceptacji norm demokratycznych, a nie do ogólnego zadowolenia z systemem. Dlatego niniejsze badanie ma na celu analizę związku między polaryzacją afektywną a zadowoleniem z demokracją. Wyniki pokazują, że osoby o umiarkowanie spolaryzowanym podejściu powinny być bardziej zadowolone z demokracji niż osoby o niskim i wysokim poziomie polaryzacji afektywnej. Dodatkowo,

* The present research was funded by NCN grant 2022/45/B/HS5/03493.

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governing party. To test this, this paper relies on the CSES survey data from 24 European countries. This study contributes to a better understanding of the effect of affective polarization on democratic attitudes.

Keywords: affective polarization, democracy, opposition–government, partisan identity

ta relacja zależy od głosowania na partię rządzącą. Aby to zweryfikować, niniejszy artykuł opiera się na danych z badania CSES z 24 krajów europejskich. Badanie to przyczynia się do lepszego zrozumienia wpływu polaryzacji afektywnej na postawy demokratyczne.

Słowa kluczowe: polaryzacja afektywna, demokracja, opozycja–rząd, identyfikacja partyjna

Introduction

Affective polarization, characterized by the division of society into mutually antagonistic partisan camps, poses significant threats to democratic stability. This phenomenon goes beyond mere political disagreement; it engenders deep-seated animosity between groups, which can erode trust in democratic institutions and processes. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the Brexit debate sharply divided the nation into “Leave” and “Remain” camps, each viewing the other with profound distrust and hostility. Such polarization is not confined to the UK; in Italy, the rise of populist parties like the Five Star Movement and Lega Nord has led to increased partisan division, affecting national cohesion and political discourse. Moreover, the two main parties in Poland – Law and Justice and the Civic Coalition have produced strong emotional divides that shape how citizens view institutions and democratic performance. Similarly, in Hungary, long-term dominance of Fidesz and a fragmented opposition have intensified partisan hostility and deepened disagreements over the state of democracy.

While substantial literature exists on affective polarization within the American two-party system, there is a notable gap concerning its effects in multiparty systems, particularly in Europe. Previous studies have primarily focused on its influence on democratic norms, voting turnout, and ideological radicalization. However, the nuanced relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy remains underexplored, especially in diverse political environments where multiple parties vie for power.

The central hypothesis of this study is that individuals with moderate levels of affective polarization exhibit higher satisfaction with democracy compared to those with low or high levels of polarization. This is because moderate polarization might indicate a healthy level of political engagement without the extreme negativity that erodes democratic satisfaction. Additionally, the study posits that this relationship is moderated by whether the individuals who voted

for the governing party, are, as partisan winners, likely to perceive the political system more favorably.

To test these hypotheses, the research utilizes data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) covering 24 European countries. This extensive survey data enables a robust analysis of the patterns of in- and out-group feelings and their correlation with democratic satisfaction across different political environments. For example, in Spain, the political landscape has witnessed significant polarization between supporters of the traditional parties (PP and PSOE) and newer entities like Podemos and Vox, reflecting broader societal divisions. Examining how these dynamics influence satisfaction with democracy in such a multifaceted political context can offer valuable insights.

The findings reveal a significant, but complex, relationship between affective polarization and democratic satisfaction. Moderate levels of polarization are associated with higher satisfaction. In addition, this relationship is contingent upon voting for the governing party. This suggests that a certain degree of political division might foster democratic engagement and satisfaction, provided it does not reach levels of extreme hostility. This study contributes to the broader understanding of affective polarization's implications for democratic attitudes, offering critical insights into maintaining democratic health in polarized societies.

Affective Polarization and Satisfaction with Democracy

Partisan identity is a fundamental concept in understanding affective polarization. According to social identity theory, partisanship can be seen as a social identity where individuals categorize themselves and others into in-groups (co-partisans) and out-groups (opposing partisans) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Importantly, partisan identities vary in strength and can develop not only from long-term political socialization, such as family or community influence, but also from short-term political experiences. In multiparty systems, individuals may hold several overlapping partisan attachments, expressing different levels of closeness or distance toward multiple parties rather than forming a single exclusive loyalty. This categorization influences electoral decisions and broader political engagement and attitudes toward other citizens (Greene, 1999; Iyengar et al., 2019). Affective polarization manifests in two main ways: positive feelings towards one's party and its supporters, and negative feelings towards opposing parties and their supporters (Medeiros & Noel, 2014; Abramowitz & Webster, 2016). While social identity theory suggests a binary approach, attitudes towards other parties can vary in intensity (Weisberg, 1980; Richardson, 1991). Affective polarization can be measured at aggregate and individual levels. This paper

focuses on the aggregate level of affective polarization, showing a country-level average of patterns of in- and out-group feelings (Reiljan, 2020).

While affective polarization has been mostly investigated in the case of the American two-party system (Iyengar et al., 2019; Druckman & Levendusky, 2019), recent studies have expanded this research to include multiparty systems, where the dynamics of affective polarization can be more complex (Lauka et al., 2018; Reiljan, 2020; Wagner, 2021). In multiparty systems, the measurement and conceptualization of affective polarization become more nuanced. For instance, in Europe, evidence shows significant out-partisan hostility (Reiljan, 2020). Studies have also linked affective polarization in these contexts to various factors. The affective polarization is often tied to partisan competition in terms of political campaigns during elections (Sood & Iyengar, 2016; Sheffer, 2020; Öhberg & Cassel, 2023). Using CSES data from 42 countries between 1996 and 2016, Hernandez et al. (2021) show that affective polarization increases during elections. Along the same line, Harteveld & Wagner (2023) show a positive effect of affective polarisation on turnout in elections. Some other comparative studies show that affective polarization is associated with lower satisfaction with democracy (Wagner, 2021), higher perceptions of ideological polarization (Ward & Tavits, 2019), and decreased interpersonal trust (Westwood et al., 2018), ideological polarization, economic inequality, media consumption, and the type of electoral institutions (Sood & Iyengar, 2016; Harteveld & Wagner, 2023; Riera & Madariaga, 2023; Gidron et al., 2020; Levendusky, 2013). Finally, others tie affective polarization to elite ideological polarization (Riera & Madariaga, 2023; Andreadis & Stavrakakis, 2019), but also economic inequality (Gidron et al., 2020), media consumption (Levendusky, 2013), and majoritarian electoral institutions.

Furthermore, the literature emphasizes affective polarization as a key factor in explaining the causal mechanisms behind democratic decline. According to this perspective, while the average citizen may accept essential democratic principles (such as free and fair elections, basic civil rights, and horizontal checks and balances), the willingness to set aside party affiliation or political orientation to uphold these principles is often weak, especially among those with high levels of affective polarization (Kingzette et al., 2021).

According to Orhan (2022), when there is a high level of affective polarization, citizens are less likely to hold their leaders accountable and more likely to restrict individual liberties that can benefit opposing groups. In addition, increased affective polarization is linked to a decline in consultation and deliberation among political elites, hindering the ability to find common ground and address societal issues effectively. In the same vein, Kingzette et al. (2021) demonstrate that affective polarization can create biases that motivate voters to restrict the rights of the opposing party, even if it means undermining democratic norms. On the other hand, Broockman et al. (2023) show that affective polarization may not necessarily undermine support for democratic norms. However, the support for democratic

norms may not be equivalent to whether partisans are satisfied with democracy. A high level of affective polarization may lower the threshold of what makes them content with how the regime functions. In addition, partisans with strong feelings toward in-group and out-group partisans may consider democratic norms as something exclusive to co-partisans and thus still be satisfied with a potential democratic decline. While affective polarization has not been empirically tested in the context of satisfaction with democracy, Russo et al. (2023) have shown that the polarization of the party system may be negatively associated with satisfaction with democracy.

In addition, the literature on satisfaction with democracy has established that government performance affects citizens' attitudes toward the entire regime, as lower output is strongly associated with lower satisfaction and trust (Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014; Torcal & Trechsel, 2016). The extensive literature also shows that winning party voters are more satisfied with democracy than those who voted for opposition parties (Blais & Gélinau, 2007; Van der Meer & Steenvoorden, 2018). Loveless (2021) advances these results by showing that the effect of winners' and losers' satisfaction and the gap between them lasts beyond the election period, lasting almost five years.

Therefore, the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy could be more nuanced. As affective polarization is tied to the idea of partisanship as a social identity, it is important to look at the relationship between partisanship and democracy satisfaction. While Aldrich et al. (2020) show that positive party identity significantly improves citizens' evaluation of their democracy's functioning, according to Ridge (2022), negative partisanship towards the major party is associated with lower satisfaction with democracy. As Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018, p. 9) write, "The weakening of our democratic norms is rooted in extreme partisan polarization—one that extends beyond policy differences into an existential conflict over race and culture. And if one thing is clear from studying breakdowns throughout history, it's that extreme polarization can kill democracies." Regardless of whether partisanship affects democracy participation, the debate on that issue was one-sided and focused on the emotional affiliation toward a specific party. In contrast, affective polarization requires both types of feelings.

Theoretical Considerations

In this study, I test the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy. I argue that affective polarization may have different effects on being content with democracy depending on its levels, and that this

relationship is not entirely linear. I expect that people who have less affected feelings toward in-group and out-group parties may be less satisfied with democracy, as their perspective is mainly driven by policy outcomes rather than being filtered by their emotional affiliations. This means that such a group of citizens focuses on the output of democracy, such as the quality of bureaucracy (Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014) or economic outcomes (Magalhães, 2017; Nadeau et al., 2022). On the other hand, those people who have the most polarized emotional stands toward partisans of different parties may also not be that likely to be satisfied with democracy due to expectations that the opposing party and their supporters may threaten democratic values and rights of the in-group partisans (Gessler & Wunsch, 2023). Therefore, I expect those people with moderate levels of affective polarization may be the most likely to be satisfied with democracy. Therefore, my prediction is that *people with low and high levels of affective polarization are less likely to be satisfied with democracy than people with moderate levels of affective polarization*.

However, the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy may be context-dependent. As partisan identity plays an important role in affective polarization, and satisfaction with democracy may be related to policy outcomes (Ferland, 2021), to better understand this relationship I test whether this relationship is contingent on voting for an outgoing government party. The expectation is that voters of the outgoing governing party may be hostile toward opposition parties, as they want to preserve the status quo and their party in power. As their emotional affection is oriented towards the governing party(s), they may be more satisfied with democracy at the level of how favorable their stands toward the in-group partisans and hostile toward the out-group partisans. While one can expect that voting for an outgoing government party that lost elections may underlie the reduction of satisfaction with democracy, voters of the outgoing government party can filter their satisfaction with democracy through partisanship and the positive perception of the term of the outgoing government (Loveless, 2021; Tuttnauer, 2022). On the other hand, those who did not vote for the governing party may be less likely to be satisfied with democracy along the levels of affective polarization, as their potential hostility towards partisans of the governing party can be associated with perceiving that individual rights and the quality of democratic institutions may be violated. Thus, I expect that *the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy is contingent on voting for the governing party*.

Data and Measurement

In this article, I focus on the impact of affective polarization on satisfaction with democracy. This study relies on the data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES), which is an international collaborative project in which national post-election surveys are conducted using standardized questionnaires. Participating countries collect data independently according to CSES guidelines, and then they are integrated into comparable cross-national datasets. Modules 1 to 5 of the CSES, which cover the period between 1996 and 2021, are used in this study. All modules include standardized feeling thermometer (“like–dislike”) items used to measure respondents’ evaluations of multiple parties. This is the most common measure of affective polarization in the literature (Wagner, 2021; Reiljan, 2020). As the primary focus of this study is a better understanding of the relationship within the multiparty systems, I limit the sample to the European countries (excluding the UK). This leaves us with 98 post-election surveys and 24 countries.

Dependent Variable: Satisfaction with Democracy

For this purpose, I obtained the question in the survey: *On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in [country]?* However, as the purpose of this study is to account for the move from being not satisfied to being satisfied, this variable is transformed into a binary one.¹

While there are significant differences in the satisfaction with democracy measurements across different surveys (i.e., ESS, Eurobarometer, WVS) and regions, measures tend to be consistent in indicating comparative levels of satisfaction between countries and over different periods (Valgarðsson & Devine, 2022). As this draft study uses the CSES measure, it is important to replicate this analysis with other existing measures for robustness checks.

Independent Variable: Affective Polarization

The main predictor variable is the level of affective polarization based on feeling thermometer (“like–dislike”) items in post-election surveys. In these items, respondents are asked to rate multiple political parties on a 0–10 scale, where 0 means the least liked and 10 represents the most liked. These items form the basis for measuring in-party and out-party affect and allow for consistent measurement

¹ Results for the original version of the variable are reported in the Appendix.

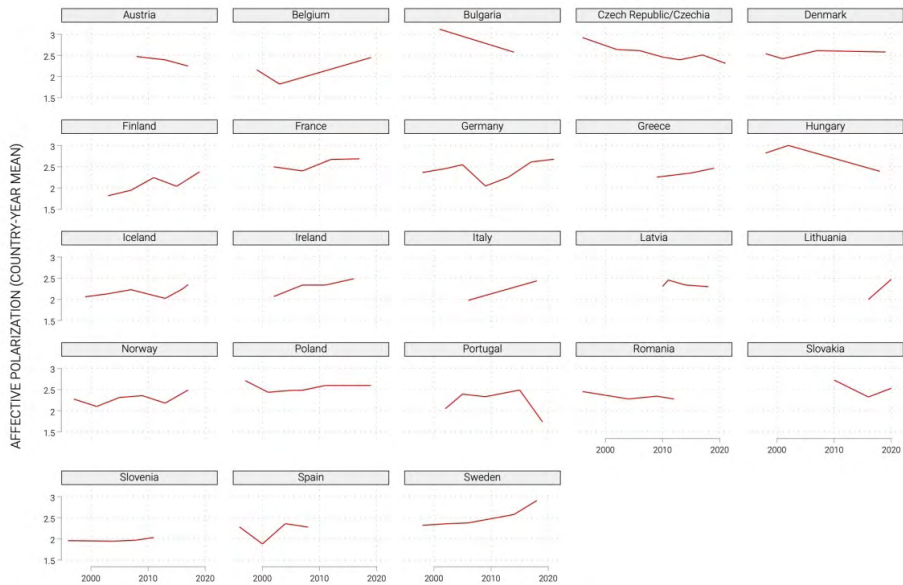
of affective polarization across time and countries. For this purpose, I rely on Wagner’s (2021) weighted mean distance from the most liked party (like–dislike item). According to this operationalization, the in-party value corresponds to the score of the most liked party on the feeling thermometer, whereas, for a respondent who rated n political parties on the feeling thermometer, the out-party variable is: where p denotes each non-voted party and i is the individual respondent, v corresponds to the party vote share, and $like$ is the party score on the feeling thermometer. The weighted ratings of each party ($v_p like_{ip}$) are averaged across the total number of non-voted parties. Based on this formula, both the in-party affect and out-party affect variables vary from 0 to 10.

(1)
$$Out-party = \frac{\sum_{p=1}^P v_p like_{ip}}{n_p}$$

In addition, Figure 1 provides a visual representation of how affective polarization has changed in each of the sample countries over approximately two decades. We can observe a reasonable variation in affective polarization across the sample.

Figure 1

The Average Level of Affective Polarization Over Time



Control Variables

To capture a potential trend in satisfaction with democracy, I include socio-demographic variables such as gender, age, and education at the individual level. In addition, I control for the effective number of parliamentary parties (Hoerner & Hobolt, 2020) and the ideological self-placement on the left-right scale.

Model Specification

To understand the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy while controlling for a battery of individual-level predictors, we employ logistic (binomial) regression. We express the simplified estimations to test the hypothesis as follows:

$$(2) \quad P(Y = 1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{AffectivePolarization} + \beta_k \text{Controls} + v_i + \epsilon_i$$

$$(3) \quad P(Y = 1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{AffectivePolarization} + \beta_2 \text{VotingForGov} + \beta_3 \text{Interaction} + \beta_k \text{Controls} + v_i + \epsilon_i$$

Where the probability of being satisfied with democracy in each country-year ($P(Y = 1)$) is explained by *AffectivePolarization* and a number k of control variables (*Controls*), v_i represents year and country fixed effects, and ϵ_i is the error term. In equation (3), *VotingForGov* represents voting for a government party, and *Interaction* stands for the interaction between *AffectivePolarization* and *VotingForGov*.

Results

Table 1 shows the results for the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy. Models 1 and 2 demonstrate results for a logit regression for H1. Models 3 and 4 include interaction effects with voting for a government party. The models control for individual effects of socio-demographics, partisanship, the effective number of parliamentary parties, and left-right ideology.

As is evident, affective polarization is positively associated with the likelihood of satisfaction with democracy and is significant for both bivariate and multivariate specifications. In addition, we can observe that the magnitude of the coefficients significantly drops between bivariate and multivariate models. The magnitude of coefficients drops from 0.400 (SE=0.072, $p < 0.001$) to 0.215

(SE=0.078, $p>0.001$). However, in terms of H2, the magnitude of the interaction effect remains at the same level.

However, since coefficients from logistic regressions cannot be interpreted intuitively, we estimate marginal effects. To illustrate the results, we plot predicted probabilities of affective polarization in Figure 2 (based on a multivariate model) and predicted probabilities of the interaction effects in Figure 3. According to Figure 3, we can observe that the probability of being satisfied with democracy is not linear. We can observe that the highest levels of being satisfied with democracy are in the mid-levels of affective polarization (above 60%). However, for both the low and high levels, the probability of being satisfied with democracy is lower (respectively below 55% and 60%).

Secondly, I test whether the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy is contingent on voting for a government party. Figure 2 shows that it has a significant role in whether someone is satisfied with democracy. For people who voted for a government party, the probability of being satisfied with democracy increased with higher levels of affective polarization. In contrast, for people who did not vote for a government party, the probability of being satisfied with democracy decreased with higher levels of affective polarization.

Table 1

The Relationship between Affective Polarization and Satisfaction with Democracy

Model	H1		H2	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Affective Polarization	0.400*** (0.072)	0.215*** (0.078)	0.218** (0.090)	0.110 (0.090)
Affective Polarization x Voting for Government			0.214*** (0.049)	0.234*** (0.056)
Voting for Government (<i>ref</i> – No)			0.191** (0.090)	0.177* (0.092)
Affective Polarization, sq	–0.061*** (0.013)	–0.035*** (0.013)	–0.053*** (0.016)	–0.037** (0.015)
Age		–0.022*** (0.004)		–0.020*** (0.004)
Gender (<i>ref</i> – Female)		–0.020 (0.026)		–0.026 (0.025)
Education (<i>ref</i> – Elementary)				
Secondary		0.168*** (0.048)		0.153*** (0.037)

Higher		0.362***		0.346***
		(0.050)		(0.050)
Partisanship (<i>ref – No Partisan</i>)		0.404***		0.315***
		(0.039)		(0.047)
Ideology Left-Right		0.070***		0.072***
		(0.019)		(0.018)
ENEP		−0.031		0.003
		(0.046)		(0.044)
FE Year	X	X	X	X
FE Country	X	X	X	X
Constant	0.759***	0.584*	0.758***	0.438
	(0.236)	(0.349)	(0.263)	(0.325)
Observations	148,795	112,095	114,203	90,498
Log-Likelihood	−87679	−64971	−64600	−50341
Pseudo R2	0.134	0.140	0.145	0.153

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Figure 2

Predicted Probabilities of Satisfaction with Democracy for the Levels of Affective Polarization

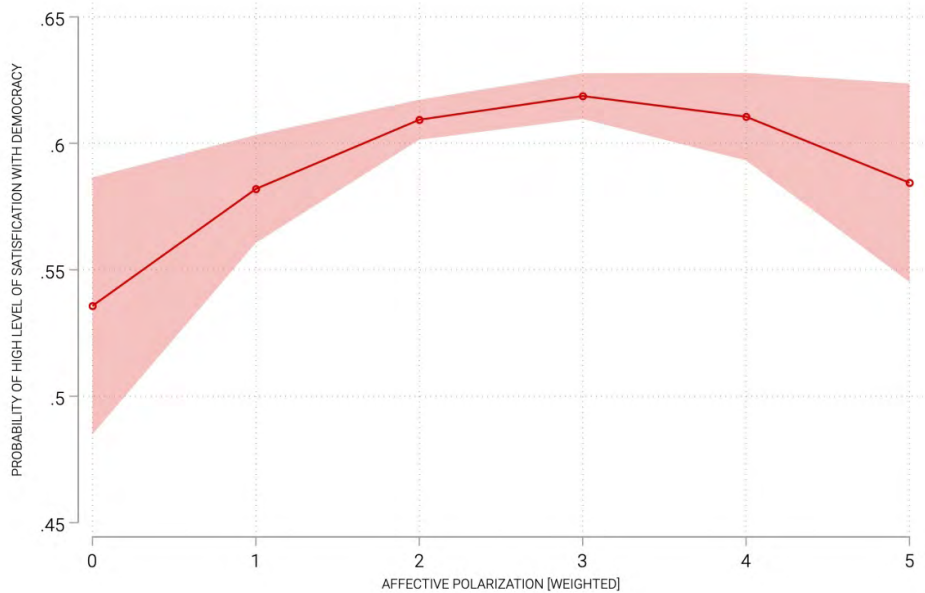
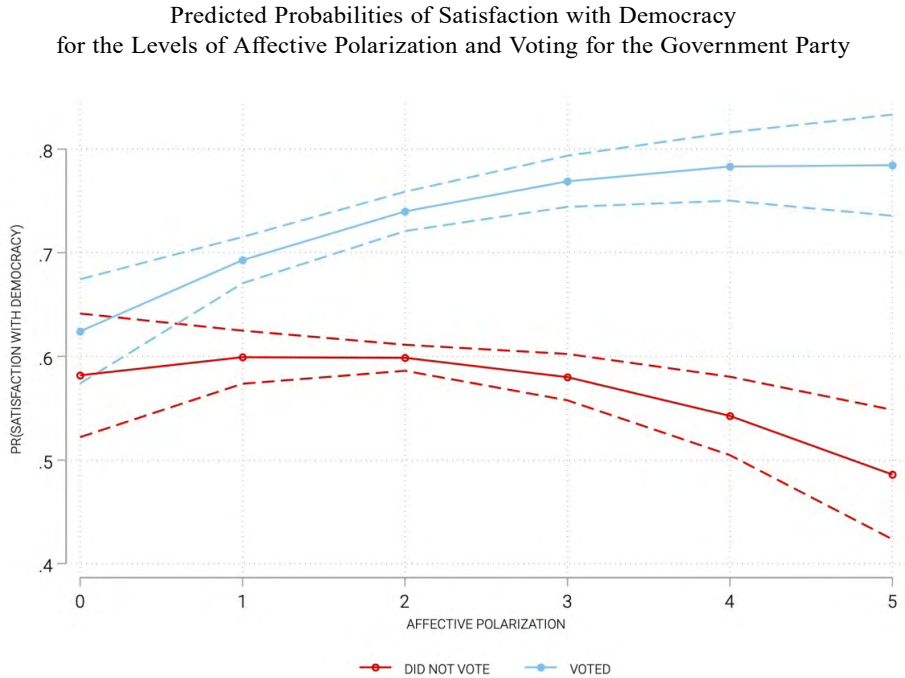


Figure 3



In the Appendix, I provide initial robustness checks. Firstly, I test the relationship using an ordered logit regression model with an original version of the satisfaction with democracy question from the CSES. Secondly, I provide the results for including economic variables (inflation, GDP growth, unemployment). In both instances, the results are consistent with the main findings.

Therefore, the results align with the theoretical expectations in previous sections on affective polarization. First, the non-linear association between affective polarization and democratic satisfaction indicates that extremely low and extremely high levels of partisan affect are linked to lower satisfaction, whereas moderate levels correspond to the highest probability of being satisfied with democracy. This pattern suggests that moderate affective attachment may support feelings of political engagement and system responsiveness, while both indifference (low affect) and intense partisan hostility (high affect) undermine positive evaluations of democratic performance. Second, the interaction results clarify why partisan context matters: supporters of governing parties become increasingly satisfied with democracy as their affective attachment intensifies, whereas supporters of opposition parties respond in the opposite direction. This reflects the asymmetry in how partisans interpret political outcomes. Governing-party voters translate stronger partisan ties into more positive system evaluations, while opposition voters with stronger negative affect perceive the system as less fair or less responsive.

Together, these findings highlight the central role of partisan identities in shaping democratic satisfaction across European multiparty systems.

Concluding Remarks

This study provides an analysis of the relationship between affective polarization and satisfaction with democracy across 24 European countries, using data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). The findings underscore an interplay between levels of polarization and democratic satisfaction, with moderate affective polarization associated with higher levels of satisfaction, particularly among those who support the governing party.

The results contribute to the existing literature on political behavior and democratic attitudes by highlighting that affective polarization does not uniformly undermine democratic satisfaction. Instead, it suggests that a moderate degree of polarization may be beneficial, fostering political engagement and a sense of belonging within the political system. This aligns with the notion that a completely depolarized society might lack the dynamism and contestation necessary for a vibrant democracy, while extreme polarization leads to alienation and distrust.

The study's findings have several important implications. Firstly, they suggest that efforts to reduce affective polarization should focus on mitigating its extreme forms rather than aiming to eliminate polarization entirely. Policymakers and political leaders should be aware that some level of political division can be constructive, as long as it does not devolve into extreme hostility. Secondly, the role of winning or losing in elections is critical; satisfaction with democracy is significantly higher among those whose preferred party is in power. This indicates that ensuring fair and inclusive political processes where diverse groups can see their interests represented is crucial for maintaining democratic satisfaction.

Furthermore, the research opens up new avenues for future studies. Investigating the mechanisms through which moderate affective polarization enhances democratic satisfaction could provide deeper insights into the conditions under which polarization is beneficial. Additionally, examining how these dynamics play out in different political and cultural contexts outside Europe could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the global applicability of these findings. Future research could also compare clusters of countries that differ in their regional context or differentiate parties by ideological family, allowing for a clearer assessment of how institutional or ideological environments condition the effects of affective polarization.

Overall, this study advances our understanding of the complex relationship between affective polarization and democratic satisfaction. By highlighting the

conditions under which polarization can be both beneficial and detrimental, it provides a nuanced perspective that can inform both scholarly research and practical policy interventions aimed at fostering healthier democratic societies.

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Appendix

Table 2

Summary Statistics					
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Satisfaction with Democracy (Binary)	157.545	0.570	0.495	0	1
Satisfaction with Democracy	157.545	3.122	1.252	1	5
Affective Polarization	153.535	2.369	1.094	0	5
Voting for Ongoing Governing Party	120.390	0.387	0.487	0	1
Age	163.932	48.098	17.314	18	109
Gender	164.570	1.518	0.500	1	2
Education	161.446	1.867	0.740	1	3
Partisanship	143.604	0.713	0.452	0	1
Left-Right (Self)	140.272	5.207	2.432	0	10
ENPP	157.715	4.278	1.365	2.09	9.05

Table 3

The Relationship between Affective Polarization and Satisfaction with Democracy, ordered logit				
	H1		H2	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Affective Polarization	0.418*** (0.063)	0.242*** (0.065)	0.211*** (0.079)	0.110 (0.078)
Affective Polarization x Voting for Government			0.235*** (0.051)	0.257*** (0.057)
Voting for Government (<i>ref</i> – <i>No</i>)			0.079 (0.096)	0.047 (0.101)
Affective Polarization, sq	–0.061*** (0.012)	–0.036*** (0.011)	–0.049*** (0.013)	–0.034*** (0.012)
Age		–0.019*** (0.004)		–0.018*** (0.005)
Gender (<i>ref</i> – <i>Female</i>)		–0.041 (0.025)		–0.059** (0.023)

Table 3 cont.

Education (<i>ref</i> – <i>Elementary</i>)				
Secondary		0.146***		0.138***
		(0.043)		(0.036)
Higher		0.334***		0.326***
		(0.046)		(0.046)
Partisanship (<i>ref</i> – <i>No Partisan</i>)				
		0.381***		0.297***
		(0.041)		(0.048)
Ideology Left-Right				
		0.069***		0.071***
		(0.019)		(0.017)
ENEP				
		–0.075*		–0.046
		(0.043)		(0.041)
/cut1	–2.987***	–3.145***	–3.137***	–3.129***
	(0.204)	(0.296)	(0.234)	(0.285)
/cut2	–0.998***	–1.134***	–1.098***	–1.079***
	(0.186)	(0.290)	(0.213)	(0.285)
/cut3	–0.950***	–1.097***	–1.048***	–1.039***
	(0.192)	(0.301)	(0.217)	(0.297)
/cut4	2.150***	2.051***	2.154***	2.192***
	(0.194)	(0.309)	(0.229)	(0.311)
Observations	148,795	112,095	114,203	90,498
Log-Likelihood	–164101	–120906	–122087	–95248
Pseudo R2	0.0883	0.0959	0.0957	0.104

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4

The Relationship between Affective Polarization and Satisfaction with Democracy,
economic variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Affective Polarization	0.400***	0.236***	0.218**	0.131
	(0.072)	(0.077)	(0.090)	(0.088)
Affective Polarization x Voting for Government			0.214***	0.225***
			(0.049)	(0.055)
Voting for Government (<i>ref</i> – <i>No</i>)			0.191**	0.189**
			(0.090)	(0.093)

Table 4 cont.

Affective Polarization, sq	−0.061*** (0.013)	−0.039*** (0.013)	−0.053*** (0.016)	−0.041*** (0.015)
Age		−0.021*** (0.004)		−0.020*** (0.004)
Gender (<i>ref</i> – Female)		−0.021 (0.026)		−0.026 (0.025)
Education (<i>ref</i> – Elementary)				
Secondary		0.150*** (0.036)		0.136*** (0.030)
Higher		0.358*** (0.043)		0.338*** (0.045)
Partisanship (<i>ref</i> – No Partisan)		0.395*** (0.039)		0.302*** (0.047)
Ideology Left-Right		0.069*** (0.019)		0.071*** (0.018)
ENEP		0.009 (0.045)		0.027 (0.044)
Inflation (<i>Annual</i> %)		−0.000*** (0.000)		−0.000*** (0.000)
GDP Growth (<i>Annual</i> %)		0.056*** (0.016)		0.057*** (0.017)
Unemployment (<i>Annual</i> %)		−0.087*** (0.011)		−0.081*** (0.012)
Constant	0.759*** (0.236)	0.875*** (0.254)	0.758*** (0.263)	0.681*** (0.261)
Observations	148,795	112,095	114,203	90,498
Log-Likelihood	−87679	−64543	−64600	−50056
Pseudo R2	0.134	0.145	0.145	0.158

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5

Country Jackknife for H1 and H2

Excluded Country	H1	H2
Austria	0.309*** (0.080)	-0.068*** (0.017)
Belgium	0.315*** (0.0810)	-0.066*** (0.017)
Bulgaria	0.296*** (0.076)	-0.063*** (0.015)
Croatia	0.310*** (0.078)	-0.067*** (0.016)
Czech Rep.	0.317*** (0.080)	-0.070*** (0.016)
Denmark	0.289*** (0.076)	-0.061*** (0.016)
Estonia	0.317*** (0.079)	-0.068*** (0.016)
Finland	0.342*** (0.078)	-0.073*** (0.016)
France	0.306*** (0.077)	-0.066*** (0.016)
Germany	0.267*** (0.068)	-0.062*** (0.017)
Greece	0.346*** (0.075)	-0.077*** (0.015)
Hungary	0.332*** (0.081)	-0.071*** (0.017)
Iceland	0.318*** (0.081)	-0.064*** (0.017)
Ireland	0.333*** (0.084)	-0.074*** (0.017)
Italy	0.311*** (0.079)	-0.067*** (0.016)
Latvia	0.311*** (0.079)	-0.068*** (0.016)
Lithuania	0.312*** (0.078)	-0.071*** (0.017)

Table 5 cont.

Norway	0.315*** (0.079)	-0.061*** (0.017)
Poland	0.292*** (0.081)	-0.071*** (0.017)
Portugal	0.328*** (0.083)	-0.068*** (0.018)
Romania	0.332*** (0.089)	-0.070*** (0.016)
Slovakia	0.324*** (0.080)	-0.069*** (0.017)
Slovenia	0.327*** (0.080)	-0.067*** (0.016)
Spain	0.309*** (0.078)	-0.076*** (0.016)
Sweden	0.344*** (0.080)	-0.061*** (0.016)

