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Deliberative Democracy  
and Opinion Formation

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## Acknowledgments

In the process of writing a Ph.D.-dissertation you meet people and deliberate with them. In this deliberative process a new understanding and ideas are created and arguments are sharpened. I have presented various working papers of this dissertation to numerous people at conferences and seminars. I would like to thank all of them for their comments and encouragement.

The Department of Political Science and Public Management at University of Southern Denmark in Odense has been the focus of my work on the dissertation. Thanks are due to all my colleagues for creating a dynamic research environment and for the 'open-door' policy where everybody has been willing to and has taken the time to discuss various aspects of my project.

It would be impossible for me to mention all those who have contributed to my work. Nevertheless, quite a few stand out:

Audun Offerdal and Jacob Aars (University of Bergen) gave me the opportunity to participate in a deliberative project in Norway in 1998. Had they not given me the opportunity to take part in their deliberative project I would probably still not have heard about deliberative democracy and my work would have gone in another direction.

Thanks to Søren Hviid Pedersen, Klaus Levinsen and Robert Klemmensen from my department who all gave comments on various parts of the dissertation.

During 2001, I was a visiting scholar at Stanford University - Scandinavian Consortium of Organizational Research - SCANCOR. Many thanks to my fellow colleagues at the center, and to Barbara Beuche and Woody Powell for creating a stimulating research atmosphere and environment.

Jim Fishkin, Stanford University and Bob Luskin, University of Texas at Austin have throughout the project given great inspiration and help and both have commented on different parts of the book. During my stay at Stanford, we had weekly meetings at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. Also thanks to the other outstanding scholars attending the meetings at the center. Their insights and our discussions have been of considerable help to me.

Archon Fung, Harvard University gave me very constructive comments on large parts of the manuscript. Many of Archons comments caused me to rethink the argument and make it more clear. His encouragement also helped me find the final motivation to complete the dissertation and to continue the work on deliberative democracy.

The dissertation was defended on April 2 - 2004. The committee was composed of Peter Kurrild-Klitgaard, Peter Esaiasson and Johannes Andersen. I would like to thank the committee members for their friendly comments and constructive suggestions on my work.

My supervisor professor Mogens N. Pedersen has assisted throughout my Ph.D.-project. Mogens has provided comments on several drafts for which I thank him. About halfway through my dissertation Mogens, in his usual, well-written polemic style, wrote a chapter on deliberative democracy. One part was titled - deliberative democracy as the 'empty category'. One argument in Mogens' chapter is that deliberative democracy is "old wine on new bottles". I sincerely hope that this dissertation will prove he is wrong - at least on the former aspect and partly on the latter. Mogens also had the dubious pleasure of reading the manuscript through before I turned it in. His reading helped me avoid many loose ends and vagueness in the argument, for which I am grateful.

The Danish National Deliberative Poll on the Euro, which was conducted as the empirical part of this project involved many people:

First of all I would like to thank my colleague Vibeke Norman Andersen for her collaboration on the project. I have benefitted much from our discussions on deliberation democracy.

The house of 'Mandag Morgen' not only raised the funds to conduct the Deliberative Poll, they also took care of the crucial logistic aspects of bringing 364 people together to deliberate, not to mention writing the briefing material and making arrangements with politicians and experts. Without 'Mandag Morgen', the project would never have been possible. Special thanks go to the many different sponsors of the project.

The Danish Broadcasting Corporation (DR) broadcasted the event to the Danes who did not have the chance to participate. Thanks to DR for their willingness to take a chance on broadcasting a weekend of euro-deliberation, even through debate-shows usually do not bring together a large TV-audience.

Also thanks to the 20 students and 20 moderators who took

a weekend off to carry out the project.

Finally, I would like to thank the 364 Danes who took part in the Deliberative Poll. It is their opinions and deliberations which are analyzed throughout this book.

Especially two persons have help turning my Danish-English into real English. Gitte M. Kaastrup corrected many of the grammatical errors. Vibeke Pierson had put much effort into improving not only the grammar, but also making each sentence understandable for the many who otherwise would have been lost in long sentences, missing words, etc. Many thanks to both of them.

Also thanks to Jan H. Hermansen for this help at the last minute with preparing the manuscript for the committee.

Finally and most dearly, I would like to thank my wife Line Møller Hansen, who has helped me focus on other things than deliberative democracy the last couple of years. Without her personal support, the project would never have been completed. I must also thank her for the forbearance she has shown me when my work often got in the way of other things. I hope she will let me spend the next many, many years making it up to her.

On the back of the weekly advertisement from the local grocery store there is always a statement in small print: "The offers are conditional: printing mistakes, increases in taxes, lack of supplies, and goods sold-out". I can, in this case, limit the disclaim to my own mistakes.

*Kasper Møller Hansen  
Odense, May 2004*



# Chapter 1 - Introduction

This dissertation is a journey into the land of deliberative democracy and the realization of deliberative processes. The journey takes us through a discussion of how deliberative democracy is justified. This justification leads us to the core of politics that is - what we disagree about. Pitfalls of the deliberative democracy are confronted and recognized theoretically as well as empirically. Empirically the journey takes us to the experiment of the Danish National Deliberative Poll on the Euro. During the experiment, the opinions of 364 Danes collided in a process in which the opinions of leading experts and politicians persistently tried to convince the Danes to follow their arguments.

## 1.1 Framing the dissertation

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the claimed potentials of deliberative democracy in an empirical setting, and to create an insight into the dynamics of opinion formation in the context of deliberative democracy.

If democracy refers to '*rule by the people*' - a principle in which the legitimacy of the rulers has its origin in the wishes of the people - an understanding of how wishes and opinions are created plays an important role. Nevertheless, democracy is not easily defined, and several models of democracy could have been chosen as a reference point in this study. However, this study uses the theory of deliberative democracy as the reference point for several reasons. First, the core of deliberative democracy is often referred to as an exchange of arguments and opinions and, in this way, an understanding of deliberative democracy and the dynamics of opinion formation are highly related. Second, some theorists of deliberative democracy argue that the theory potentially bridges the gap between the different schools of democratic theory, which also justifies a further exploration of the idea. Third, the interest in deliberative democracy has increased dramatically in the academic literature. Nevertheless, the theory consists of many parts which, in some cases, seem to be both incompatible and contradictory. The aim is thus to specify the assumptions and the consequences of the deliberative democratic theory theoretically as well as empirically. Fourth, as the theory of deliberative democracy is still relatively

weakly defined, it opens up the opportunity for an alternative interpretation of the idea, as well as a critique of the idea. Finally, deliberative democracy theorists have stressed the theory's potential contribution to a democratic process, leaving, however, the empirical evidence at best inadequate or to a large extent non-existent. This study will put the potentials of deliberative democracy to the empirical test and try to relate the normative and the empirical consequences of deliberative democracy.

The overall aim of the dissertation is to assess the potentials of deliberative democracy in the experimental setting of Deliberative Polling. In order to do so, deliberative democracy is discussed and confronted with other theories of democracy and subsequently put on the empirical trial of the Danish National Deliberative Poll on the Euro. The dissertation will focus on several sets of overlapping discussions and relating questions surrounding the method of Deliberative Polling and the theory of deliberative democracy. These discussions and questions pursue the overall aim of evaluating deliberative democracy in the setting of the Danish National Deliberative Poll on the Euro. One general research question is guiding in this dissertation:

- *To what extent are the potentials of Deliberative Democracy fulfilled in the empirical setting?*

To answer this question it is vital to reach a detailed understanding of what the opinion formation process looks like in the Deliberative Polling process, which not only demands extensive analyses of the data material of the Deliberative Poll, but also demands clarification and discussions on the method of Deliberative Polling and deliberative democracy. The discussions on the method of Deliberative Polling and deliberative democracy need to be carried out before the empirical analyses can be carried out as these discussions provide the foundation for the analyses - methodologically as well as normatively.

## **1.2 Outline**

The principle of selection by drawing lots was used as a democratic tool in ancient Athens. Aristotle believed that drawing lots was essential for democracy as the method treated all citizens equally. Even though the principle of equality has been challenged by political thinkers, the principle

is one of the most important aspects of contemporary democracy. Another aspect, to which the debates on contemporary democracy have paid some attention, is to what extent citizens have incentives and are qualified to utilize their equal right to participate in democracy and contribute to democracy. The development of a representative political system has been the solution to these challenges. However, increasing attention has been given to the weakened legitimacy of the political parties as membership has declined. Simultaneously, elected leaders express a need to consult the public more than just at election time. Several methods of consultations have been employed to bridge the gap between the public and the decision-makers. These methods are discussed, but only the most ambitious method - the Deliberative Poll - is carried out as part of the study.

The idea of Deliberative Polling is to bring together a representative group of citizens and letting them deliberate and discuss with each other, experts, and politicians. Before, during, and after this process the citizens' opinions are polled. The second chapter of this dissertation explains and discusses the method of Deliberative Polling and relates the method to the established political system. This chapter also addresses the problem of external and internal validity when comparing the Deliberative Poll to a true experimental design. Chapter two also constitutes part I of the dissertation focusing on the methodological aspects of the Deliberative Poll.

Part II moves the discussion to the normative theory of deliberative democracy discussing central aspect of deliberative democracy and some tensions within the theory. Furthermore part II outlines nine potentials of deliberation.

That political conversation and participation are the core of democracy has been argued by a number of scholars. This argument has been challenged by other prominent scholars. Within the last decade, the concept of deliberative democracy has inspired the debate between these two dominant lines of arguments in democratic theory. Despite the increasing interest in the concept of deliberative democracy, the theory still seems somewhat sporadic and diffuse. The dissertation's third chapter explores the debates on deliberative democracy and identifies and defines the core concept of deliberative democracy. Furthermore, chapter three sets deliberative democracy into perspective by comparing the model of deliberative democracy to other models of democracy.

A concept of democracy should never be left unchallenged. The

critique of deliberative democracy has been just as fragmented as the concept itself. The need for a systematic exploration of the critique of deliberative democracy seems to be required and relevant in order to understand the concept, develop it, or even to deploy it. Chapter four of this dissertation will, in this way, discuss several tensions within the theory of deliberation. Accordingly, this chapter represents a rather critical note on deliberative democracy, but this is important in order to pave the road for further work within deliberative democratic theory.

The academic debates between the various scholars are almost solely based on political philosophy and abstract arguments. That is deliberative democrats have certain hopes for the potential of deliberation, but lack empirical indication to back these hopes. This dissertation argues in chapter five that there is a need to relate the normative standards of democracy to empirical indications. Few have ever tried to put the normative claims of deliberative democracy to an empirical test, leaving the democratic theory decoupled from real-world politics and everyday lives. Chapter five also constitutes the frame for the remaining discussion in the dissertation as nine potentials of deliberative democracy are presented.

Part III provides the empirical analyses of the nine potentials of deliberative democracy. Each potential of deliberation will be analyzed in a separate chapter using the empirical findings from the Danish National Deliberative Poll on the Euro. Nevertheless, not all potentials are analyzed with the same intensity. In some cases the data material from the Deliberative Poll allow analyses of the potentials in detail, while in other cases they can only be analyzed indirectly and superficial. Thus, the amplitude of the nine analytic chapters varies according to the richness of the data material.

From a deliberative democratic standpoint it is more or less presumed that deliberation will have a positive effect on political knowledge. Chapter six analyzes the effect of deliberation on knowledge regarding the single European currency.

Most deliberative democrats describe opinions as endogenously given in the political process. Chapter seven analyzes the opinion formations during the Deliberative Poll with focus on the level of opinion stability and the extent to which more consistent opinions emerge during the deliberative process.

Deliberation is a process where opinions are exchanged and

created. In this process, the potential of deliberation claims that the spectrum of the possible outcome increases. This potential is analyzed on the group level in chapter eight. Chapter eight also provides alternative explanations for the development in the opinions of groups using concepts such as groupthink and conformity.

When people engage in a deliberative process they will potentially become more politically tolerant and mutual understanding might prevail. This claimed potential of deliberation is analyzed in chapter nine.

The procedures on which deliberation is based are often emphasized as the foundation of how deliberative democracy is justified. Deliberative democracy stipulates that during deliberation arguments voiced with reference to public interest are favored as to arguments based on self-interest. Chapter ten analyzes this potential. Furthermore, the prevalence of deliberative accountability is explored in this chapter.

The extent to which the participants become politically empowered by participating in the Deliberative Poll is in focus in chapter eleven. Several specific questions are examined, e.g. does participation the Deliberative Poll lead to increased interest in participation in other political arenas?

When the citizens are aware of and understand the different values underlying a policy decision they increase their support to the implementation of the policy even though they might not agree with it. The statement is analyzed in chapter twelve. However, as the Deliberative Poll was not decisive this potential of deliberation can only be analyzed indirectly.

Whereas chapter ten analyzes the prevalence of arguments referring to public interest, chapter thirteen focuses on whether deliberation affects the inclusiveness of the political process. That is whether certain opinions are excluded from the process.

Publicity and degree of transparency do not only give the opportunity for citizens not participating in the deliberation to assess the quality of the process, but according to deliberative democracy publicity does also advances public interest arguments. On the other hand once deliberators have publicly committed themselves to an opinion, it becomes difficult to change opinion without displaying the opinion changers as weak or as turncoats. This tension between publicity and opinion change is

analyzed in chapter fourteen.

Table 1.1 provides an outline of the different potentials of deliberation as they are analyzed in part III of the dissertation. Table 1.1 will in chapter five been further developed.

**Table 1.1: An outline to explore the potentials of deliberation**

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The effect of deliberation on knowledge	Chapter 6
The effect of deliberation on opinion formation	Chapter 7
The effect of deliberation on the spectrum of the	Chapter 8
The effect of deliberation on tolerance	Chapter 9
The effect of deliberation on the justification of	Chapter 10
The effect of deliberation on empowerment	Chapter 11
The effect of deliberation on the implementation	Chapter 12
The effect of deliberation on inclusion	Chapter 13
Deliberation and publicity	Chapter 14

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Finally, part IV provides a conclusion and discusses some of the implications of the findings. The concluding chapter brings the many ends together and concludes. The conclusion includes four sections each addressing a specific point in relation to the overall aim of the dissertation. The first section in the conclusion provides a general and a heuristic model of the dynamics of the opinion formation process during the Deliberative Polling process. The second concluding section provides the answer to the question of to what extent the potentials of deliberation are achieved during the Deliberative Polling process. The third section discusses the findings' implication for the future use of Deliberative Polling and suggests some adjustments to the method. The final concluding section addresses the tensions within deliberative democracy suggested theoretically and supported in the empirical analysis. Whereas the first two concluding sections focus on the research question the final two concluding sections discuss the further implication of the findings.



Part I  
The Innovation of Deliberative  
Polling

## Chapter 2 - Deliberative Polling

In recent years, methods aiming at involving citizens in decision-making have flourished. In section 2.1 it is argued that these methods are used to address challenges to the institutional form of representative democracy, such as lack of trust in politicians, and to provide the political establishment with alternative, consultative mechanisms between the elections.

The Deliberative Poll which is the focus of section 2.2 and throughout this dissertation is on many parameters the most ambitious method in terms of combining representativeness and deliberation. Deliberative Polling was initially laid out and applied by James S. Fishkin (1988; 1991; 1995; 1997), but what democratic history and theory provided arguments to support the Deliberative Poll's mix of deliberation and representativeness? The mix of deliberation and representativeness is discussed in section 2.2. Initially it is shown how acquiring political equality through selection by lot has been widely used as a democratic instrument and how deliberation and representativeness often are believed to be mutually exclusive. In section 2.3 the aim is to relate the method of Deliberative Polling to other methods of involving citizens in decision-making. The comparison indicates that the Deliberative Poll provides a justifiable mix of deliberation and representativeness, whereas many other methods only provide one or the other.

The empirical part of this dissertation relies on the first national Deliberative Poll on the European continent, that is the Danish Deliberative Poll on the European single currency - the euro. In section 2.4, details on how the experiment was conducted, information on the contextual information, and the environment of the Deliberative Poll are provided. It is argued that the deliberative ideal is well known to the Danes. Secondly, it is argued that for more than 30 years the debate on European integration has polarized the Danes into two rather entrenched positions of either supporting or opposing further European integration. This entrenchment indicates that the deliberative ideal is tested on a rather 'critical case'.

Section 2.5 discusses the Deliberative Poll in the methodical perspective. It is shown how internal and external validity can compromise the findings from a Deliberative Poll, and some examples of how the

method could be improved to confront these challenges are presented.

The justification of the Deliberative Poll's democratic legitimacy is discussed in section 2.6. It is argued that the Deliberative Poll has obvious potentials within all three sources of legitimacy which frame the discussion in this section.

In the later chapters of the dissertation, the national Danish Deliberative Poll on the euro will undergo analysis aiming at answering the question: To what extent are the potentials of deliberative democracy present during this experiment of Deliberative Polling.

## **2.1 Public involvement in decision-making**

Democratic systems are founded on a number of different channels through which citizens can express their views. However, the most important of these channels is the mechanism of election which is the foundation of representative democracy. In between elections, different methods of consultation between politicians and citizens are applied, where the citizens directly or indirectly can express their preferences up through the system. In some countries, some of these channels are constitutionally ensured (e.g. referendums), while others have developed along with the welfare state expansion (e.g. the hearing of interest groups and political parties). Additionally, citizens can make politicians aware of their preferences through the many opportunities for complaint, which are ensured in most Western democracies (e.g. the Ombudsman, various complaints boards or, in some cases, the judicial system). The media are yet another important channel through which the public can make their voice heard. Common to these forms of consultations, are a high degree of institutionalization, implying, among other things, that they are taken for granted and have existed for some time. As society develops, the institutionalized version of representative democracy is confronted with many challenges. One of the main challenges of the contemporary representative democracy is the claimed increasing democratic gap between the elite and the public, which is often interpreted as a democratic deficit. This gap is often expressed as a lack of trust in politicians, low turnout at elections, a lack of party loyalty and more general tendencies such as increasing individualization, globalization, europeanization and pluralization of norms and values in society (e.g. Narud & Aalberg, 1999; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1998; Bauman, 1998; Putnam, 2000). In an attempt to address the challenges to the

institutionalized form of representative government and inspired by the debate on a more theoretical level of contemporary democracy and within the political theory (e.g., Habermas, 1984; Rawls, 1971; Elster, 1998; Bohman, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996), new methods designed to integrate the public in decision-making procedures have evolved during the last decades. These new methods are numerous and have been applied simultaneously with an even more intensive use of traditional and institutional methods such as referendums and public opinion surveys (Donovan & Bowler, 1998; Mendelsohn & Parkin, 2001; Petersson & Holmberg, 1998). The mass media experiments with public/civic journalism and different forms of town meetings, and also the development within communication technology, have advanced alternative channels for public involvement and consultation. These methods are wide ranging and some of them have been used for substantial periods of time, while others are rather new, more specialized, and narrowly defined. The large variations between the different methods are partly due to that the methods can be designed to accomplish different democratic governance goals as Fung (2003) argues.<sup>1</sup> Among the methods which are relatively narrowly defined are Consensus Conferences (Klüver, 1995; Andersen & Jæger, 1999), Planning Cells (Renn et al., 1995; Dienel, 1978; Dienel & Renn, 1995), Citizens' Juries (Crosby, 1995; Barnes, 1994), different forms of citizen panels or "*Minipopulus*" (e.g. Dahl, 1989:340; 1997), focus group studies, town meetings, conferences, workshops, citizens summit and participatory budget procedures (Fung, 2003; Nylén, 2002; Baiocchi, 2001; Avrizer, 2002) and, of course, the focus of this book: the method of the Deliberative Poll (Fishkin, 1988; 1991; 1997). These methods have several common characteristics: they are ad hoc, non-institutionalized, have a limited agenda of issues with which to deal, have deliberation as a central element, are independent of the electoral procedure and are primarily organized by decision-makers or external consultants and not by the citizens themselves. The methods vary on many factors such as number of participants, time-frame and different restrictions on the procedures and the participants. In

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<sup>1</sup> See for Fung (2003) for a discussion of eight of such goals. The potentials of deliberative democracy presented in chapter five relates to this discussion by summarizing what potentially can be expected from deliberative democracy and then in the following chapters analyzing to what extent these potentials are found in the Danish Deliberative Poll.

many ways, the most ambitious of these methods is the Deliberative Poll, which is the empirical focus here.

## **2.2 The Deliberative Poll in perspective**

A Deliberative Poll is based on a simple idea: bring together a representative group of citizens, let them deliberate with each other, with politicians and experts, and poll their opinions before, during and after this process. In the context of democratic theories, the method of Deliberative Polling combines two normative ideals of democracy. The first ideal stresses that opinions evolve from a process, where the issues at stake are actively debated in the light of information. The other ideal emphasizes that all citizens affected by a decision should be represented in the process. These two ideals combined in the Deliberative Poll give a unique mix of the ancient Athens' form of face-to-face democracy with the ideal of representative governance. In this way, a Deliberative Poll tries to fulfill the criterion of political equality in the form of representativeness of the public as well as the criterion of deliberation. As a method, the Deliberative Poll gives an insight of how the voice of the people would have been, if all citizens were given the chance to participate in a similar process. Additionally, a Deliberative Poll prescribes public opinion and does not, like other polling methods, try to describe or predict public opinion. The point is that the participants mirror the public on opinion and social characteristics when they enter the process of the Deliberative Poll and from then on they cease to be representative of mass opinion and instead represent citizens possessing engaged and informed public opinions (Fishkin, 1988; 1991; 1997). Even though the method may be quite simple and may seem intuitively appealing, the method also opens up a number of more theoretical questions and arguments. Most of these arguments and questions have been debated ever since democracy saw its first light in ancient Greece and are still a part of the debate on contemporary democracy. The purpose of this section is to discuss the Deliberative Poll and some democratic justifications of the method and its chain of reasoning.

The two normative principles - representativeness and deliberation - which the Deliberative Poll combines, have often been presented as mutually exclusive. On the one hand aiming to achieve a representative body consisting of all parties involved, the body will be so large that effective deliberation is impossible. On the other hand, when

aiming for thorough deliberation, the governing body can only involve a relatively small number of people compared to the population of the modern nation state (Dahl, 1989:340; Bohman, 1996:28).<sup>2</sup> A crowded, smoke-filled room with middle-aged men is often the caricature of the genuine deliberation, but also very unrepresentative of the population.

The principle of representativeness has its root in the concept of political equality - every citizen should be counted and considered as equal and have the same say in decisions that affect them. However, as soon as any demos - a body of citizens - becomes large, some kind of selection mechanism is needed to create an efficient governing body that decides for the entire population. Such an efficient argument is however, opposed by Rousseau (1762), who because of his strong priority to people's right to self-governing argues that representation enslaves the people and, thus, argues that representation is inconsistent with democracy. Nevertheless, election and the concept of representative democracy became the historical solution to these challenges of the growing population of the nation states. At the same time the election mechanism emphasized political equality as '*one man one vote*'. However, as was already recognized in ancient Athens, selection by election creates some intentional bias towards more privileged groups. Therefore, Aristotle described selection by election as an oligarchic mechanism rather than a democratic one as it would promote some candidates rather than others (Aristotles, 1908:1294b/165). The argument behind the selection by election emphasizes that the governing body should

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<sup>2</sup> The mutual exclusiveness between these two dimensions is also found in democracy theory, which has dichotomized the debate into two general and broad arguments or models of democracy. The most commonly used label in the literature is the "republican" and the "liberal" model of democracy (e.g. Held, 1996). However, there are numerous labels for a similar distinction between liberal and republican interpretations of democracy. Some distinguish between adversary democracy and unitary democracy (Mansbridge, 1980/1983), others between the elite/competition model of democracy and the participatory model of democracy (Pateman, 1973) and yet others between the Westminster model or the majoritarian model of democracy and the consensus model (Lijphart, 1999). Barber's (1984) distinction between weak/thin and strong democracy also has similar characteristics as do March and Olsen's (1989) distinction between aggregative and integrative interpretations of democracy. In a Danish context, the famous debate between Hal Koch (1945/1991) and Alf Ross (1946/1967; 1952 (English edition); 1948) signifies these two classic dimensions of democracy.

consist of the most competent and wise ones among the citizens - the best men - and the election mechanism should weed out the most incompetent ones. However, to address the elite nature of the election and to secure that the voice of the expert is not totally outweighed, the voice of the ordinary citizens' selection by election in ancient Athens, as well as in many of the republics of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (e.g. Rome, Venice and Florence), was combined with a complex system of rotation in office, term limits, and first of all, *selection by lot* (Manin, 1997). Three reasons supporting selection by lot can be put forward. First, selection by lot was considered democratic as it treated everyone equally and did not discriminate any citizens and thus Montesquieu (1748:415) as well as Aristotle, (1908:1317b/240) describe selection by lot as an important feature of democracy. Second, drawing lots was democratic because it made the selection mechanism to be above any influence from campaigning, rivalry or coalition formation and corruption. Accordingly, lot was essentially a neutral selection mechanism and some historians have also argued that drawing lots had a religious character and the outcome of the lot drawn was interpreted as some revelation of a divine will (Manin, 1997; Hansen, 1991). A third reason for the use of drawing lots was that it was feasible with rotations in office between all citizens. As in the case where a relatively substantial number of the citizens were to be in office at some period anyway during their citizenship, the exact time period for one office term might just be left to chance. Moreover, there is also a potential conflict between free election and rotation in office, because freedom to elect is also freedom to re-elect whoever wanted. This problem could be addressed by setting a limit for number of terms in office, but at the same time it would contradict the principle of freedom to elect freely among the citizens. On the other hand selection by lot does not represent this conflict as it does not imply the electorate's free choice, but rather the neutrality of the selection mechanism (Manin, 1997:31). Nevertheless, selection by lot was emphasized because of its political equality. It was never applied without attention to some pre- or post selection mechanism which in reality promoted the 'best' candidate. First of all, the citizens had to volunteer to be entered into the lottery. This self-selection mechanism guaranteed that only those willing would be selected. Secondly, candidates selected by lot could also in some cases be impeached as the Assembly (ekklesia) had to approve the 'winners of the lottery'. Thus, selection by lot had some built-in

mechanism guaranteeing that those unwilling and incompetent were never inaugurated into office.

The deliberative aspect of the decision-making in ancient Athens was magnified, as many decisions were made at mass-meetings in the Assembly. However, due to the size of the Assembly, the debates were almost exclusively one-way, from speaker to audience. The debates were conducted as a series of speeches, where the rhetorical skill of the speakers was crucial in the attempt to persuade the audience to vote according to their arguments (Hansen, 1991). Therefore, the debates in ancient Athens were very far from the normative ideal of an equal face-to-face deliberation, but on the other hand the debates had a clear purpose: to persuade as many as possible before the vote was taken (Pericles, 400 BC/2000).<sup>3</sup>

In Athens, the dilemma between representativeness and deliberation was confronted by a complex system of selection by election and lot combined with term limits, rotation in office, and debate both in the Assembly of the people and within the selected bodies. However, as described, both the ideal of representativeness and deliberation were compromised. Even though many of the arguments and the details behind the ancient Athens political system have been lost in history, the many constitutional conventions and other processes leading up to a constitutional set-up or revision of such reflect arguments and discussions between proper representativeness and proper deliberation.

The American constitutional convention reflects in particular these arguments. The Anti-federalists, a mixed group of people who opposed the constitution, argued that a governing body should be like the citizens electing it. The representatives should be a true picture of the citizens, or in the words of John Adams<sup>4</sup> - "*It should be in miniature an exact portrait of the people at large. It should think, feel, reason and act like them*" (Adams, 1776 in Manin, 1997:111). The true resemblance of the representative compared to the citizens at large was, according to the Anti-federalists, the only way the representative would spontaneously act

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<sup>3</sup> "*Instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all.*" (Pericles 400 BC in Gundersen, 2000:21).

<sup>4</sup> John Adams did not participate in the constitutional debate, but his thoughts were very influential on the anti-federalists work. John Adams became the second president of the USA (1797-1801).

according to the will of the people. However, in the argument of true resemblance between the representatives and the citizens was also the view that the elite should not be allowed to monopolize the power of government and that the experiences of the common man would be lost if particular institutional arrangements did not guarantee his representation in the chosen body (Manin 1997). On the one hand the Federalists, who were strong supporters of the American constitution, argued that the citizens should be able to elect freely and stressed that the elected governing body should express the free choice of the people. The Federalists, who were strong advocates of the free election, also saw election as the mechanism which implicitly advanced the citizens “*who possess most wisdom to discern and most virtue to pursue, the common good of society*” (Madison, et al., 1788:343; Manin, 1997). Accordingly, the Federalists never saw it as an ideal that the governing body should mirror the population. The Federalists gave much more weight to proper deliberation as, they argued, the governing body should act as a filter for the public’s raw, emotional, uninformed and unstable preferences. Only by applying this filter, would the representatives serve the common good rather than their personal interest. James Madison argued that the effect of delegating government to a small number of citizens is “*to refine and enlarge the public views by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice into temporary or partial considerations*” (Madison et al., 1788:126). Thus, the Federalists also stressed the viewpoint that the representatives should not be forced to follow the views of their constituents, but rather act as trustees and follow their own convictions refined and enlarged through the deliberation of the governing body. This is a view, which was also phrased by Edmund Burke in 1774 in his famous speech to the constituents of Bristol.<sup>5</sup> The two arguments expressed in the

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<sup>5</sup> These views have later been theorized into a more comprehensive theory of representation by Hanna Pitkin (1967). She discusses the view that the representatives should be a true picture of the population as descriptive representation whereas the boundness of the mandate is referred to as the mandate-independence controversy. Others have referred to the distinction between the focus of representation as who should be represented? And the style of representation as how the representation should be done? (Eulau et al., 1959; Wahlke et al., 1962:267; See also Kjær, 2000).

ratification debate on the American constitution have been broadly described by James Fishkin as the “*mirror*” and the “*filter*” (Fishkin, 1997; 2000).

About one hundred years later John Stuart Mill theorized on similar questions in relation to political equality in the various forms of suffrage and deliberation as in the form of political education. Mill concludes, because of the large number of citizens in almost any community, that personal participation in public affairs is impossible. Thus, the ideal type of government must be representative (Mill, 1861/1991:256). In his discussion leading to this conclusion he presents many thoughts concerning proper deliberation and proper representation. Mill emphasizes education as a condition for political equality by arguing that universal teaching must precede universal enfranchisement (ibid:330). His strong emphasis on political education led him to advocate the idea that citizens with higher education should have two or more votes whereas non-educated should have only one. However, any citizen should be given the opportunity to advance in the electorate hierarchy by passing a test. Ultimately citizens unable to pass such a test after a few years have no real political opinion and should be deprived of their suffrage (ibid:330-331). Mill’s argument behind dismissing political equality in its pure form is similar to the Federalists’ argument for the elected body as a filter. Mill argues that political education and discussion make individuals able to go beyond their own self-interest and to learn to take public interest into consideration and that this learning process will unite the people in a larger common interest (Mill, 1859/1962:243-244). Thus, the quest for ‘public spiritism’ has, in Mill’s line of argument, a higher priority than political equality in form of universal suffrage. Deliberation should, however, not only be a necessary condition before equal universal suffrage was granted, but also a central element among the representatives in order to hear and consider as many conflicting views as possible (Mill, 1861/1991:272).

In the Danish context, Alf Ross (1946/1967; 1948) has also expressed views similar to those of the Federalists and J. S. Mill. Ross argues that the representative body represents the rational and deliberate opinions, whereas the citizens’ opinions are unreliable due to ignorance, unsteadiness and short-sightedness, and for those reasons will fail to find what is in their own good as well as what is in their common interest. And Ross continues, “*The people’s task is fundamentally therefore not to legislate but to elect an elite*

*of trustworthy representatives and leaders whose task it shall be to safeguard the interest of all, wisely and with equal consideration for all, better than the people themselves can do directly, and to lead the people toward the goal that best agrees with their true interest and constant will.”* (Ross, 1952:207). Like Mill, education of the public is essential for Alf Ross in order to confront the incompetence of the citizens, however Ross argues that even with a highly educated population the common man will never come to an understanding of the more complicated political problems (Ross, 1946/1967:198). Anthony Downs (1957) presents a much cited explanation of the reason why individuals lack basic political competence and skills, and often intentionally and rationally choose not to engage themselves in the political process. As each citizen has only one vote out of millions with a microscopic chance of its being decisive, why should the individual spend much time and effort trying to understand politics? On the contrary the citizens’ rational choice is ignorance and therefore Downs sees them as ‘rational ignorants’. By following Downs’ reasoning, public opinion should never be listened to in its raw form as it is uninformed, unreliable and very labile in the course of time.

Hal Koch (1945/1991), Alf Ross’ Danish contemporary counterpart, is more optimistic about citizens’ competence. Koch argues with emphasis that general education and political participation increase the citizens’ faculties and enable them to make more informed choices. Therefore, the body of citizens is a safeguard against the risk of a small faction trying to seize power only to promote personal benefits (ibid:46). Koch strongly advocates deliberation as the defining nature of democracy. For Koch the essence of democracy was to come together and talk, and through conversation to reach a better understanding, which would not only serve a specific individual or class, but also concern the common good (ibid:20). For Koch a representative body mirroring the population at large was first of all an indicator of the fact that political participation and education have enabled the citizens to engage themselves actively in politics. On the other hand Ross argues that being a part of demos, being a citizen, is in itself an important political goal reasoned in the opportunity and duty to participate. The more people it involves, the better the chance that minorities see themselves as an integrative part of the democratic process (Ross, 1946/1967:132). Other arguments for the mirror were also advocated. First, it was argued that if the communication between certain

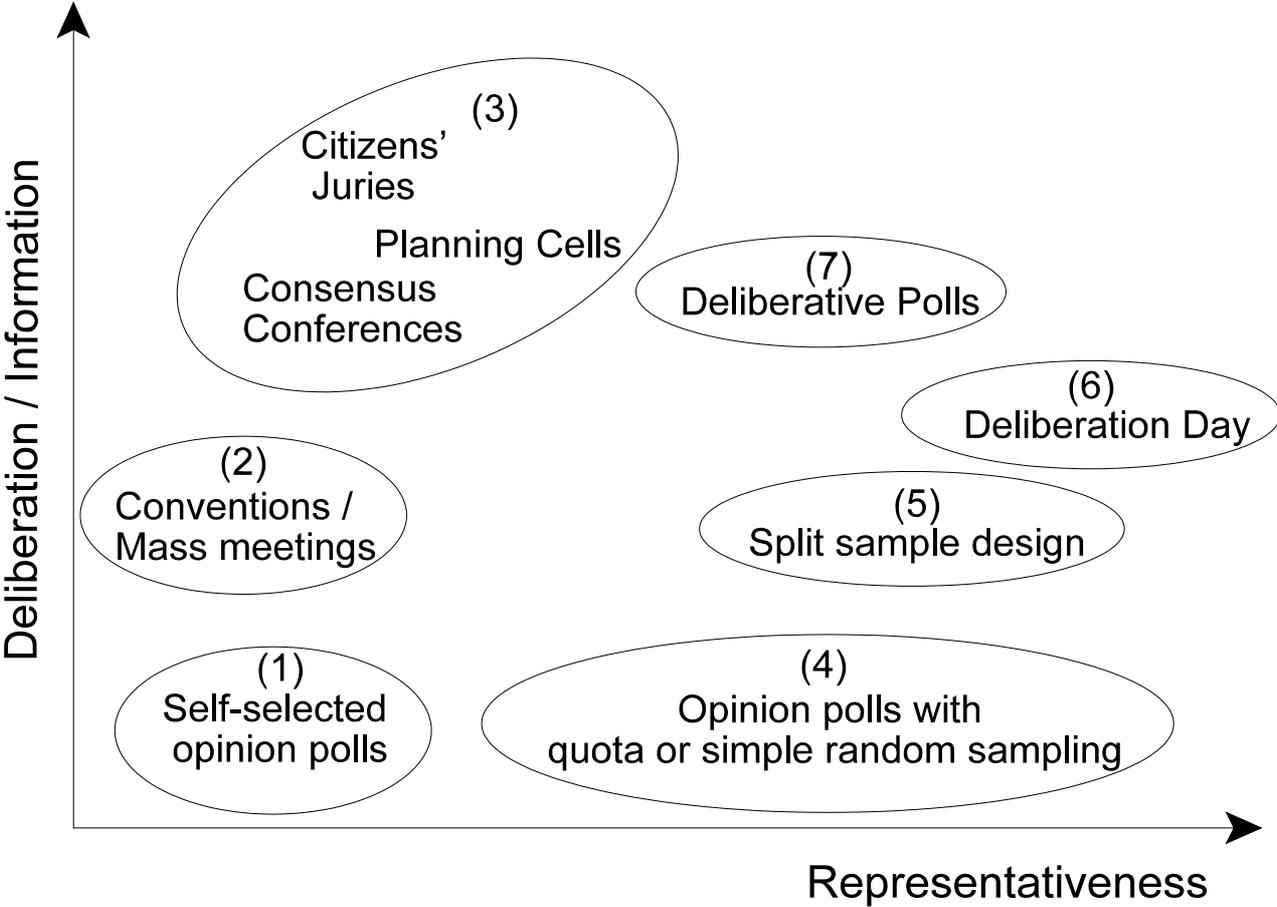
groups is dominated by distrust, a higher descriptive representation will increase general trust to the representative body. Secondly, if the opinions of certain groups are dominated by blurred and uncrystallized opinions or if some groups are geographically spread out and have few economic resources, increased descriptive representation can represent a short cut to opinion representation (Mansbridge, 1999; Lijphart, 1968). Furthermore, if certain groups are systematically unrepresented, it may be perceived as a source of illegitimacy (Larsen & Offerdal, 1994:73), which may compromise general support to the representative body and complicate implementations. Finally, it is often argued that the 'mirror' is important in order to avoid certain opinions and experiences disappearing in the political process (Hansen & Pedersen, 2001). However, one problem of placing a strong emphasis on descriptive representation could be that it complicates the process of forming stable majority governments and, thus, a less effective government due to the focus on the descriptive representation (Hermens, 1972). Furthermore, if emphasis is put on descriptive representation, it has not become less problematic in contemporary society to identify and choose which characteristics it is relevant to represent - it might be gender, race, education or geography, etc., but while some groups might be stable, others might change in the course of time. And who is to choose the characteristics when they vary not only in the course of time, but also between context and issue? (Pitkin, 1967:64). Finally, as studies have shown, opinion representativeness is often reflected in representative bodies whereas demographic representation is not (Berg & Kjær, 1997; Larsen & Offerdal, 1994:82). These findings suggest that a focus on demographics' representation might compromise opinion representativeness.

### **2.3 Different designs for public involvement**

As the discussion above has shown, many arguments can be presented for the optimal mix of proper deliberation and proper representativeness in the selective body depending on the normative reference and the focus. Immediately the brief presentation of some of the controversies behind the two principles of proper deliberation and proper representativeness seems to build on competing and opposing arguments. Deliberation is emphasized because of the incompetent public whereas representativeness is emphasized due to a belief in the public competence, the legitimacy in the inclusiveness of a democratic process and the emphasis on political equality. The

reasoning, and quite pragmatic conclusion followed here, is an attempt to move away from this dichotomy and mutual exclusiveness between deliberation and representation and instead explore methods combining the two principles. To do so, the figure below (figure 2.1) combines the two principles represented by the two dimensions and classifies seven different families of methods, which mix deliberation and representativeness differently. On the first dimension, an increase (movement to the right) represents a move from bias, self-selected and non-representative selection to different forms of quota sampling to simple random sampling and full representativeness, and finally, to full inclusiveness (everybody included). On the second dimension, an increase (movement upward) represents a move from poorly informed and less considered opinions to more informed and actively debated, post-deliberative opinions.

**Figure 2.1: Representativeness and deliberation as two dimensions of extra-parliamentary public involvement - Designs for public involvement**



The figure includes different ways or methods in which citizens can express their opinions. The figure is not in any way full inclusive, but nevertheless the figure groups different relatively narrowly defined methods accordingly to the two dimensions - representativeness and deliberation. The different designs for public involvement in figure 2.1 all focus on extra-parliamentary and less institutionalized designs. General elections, referendums and the numerous institutional representative bodies from parliaments to city councils and school boards, etc. represent of course also ways for public opinion to communicate to the political system, but these are defining parts of the representative political system and the focus here is how to communicate public opinion to these established parts of the political system. Furthermore, the figure only includes methods which are relatively clearly defined.

The first method described in the figure is the self-selected opinion poll. This method is characterized by lack of deliberation as well as representativeness. Opinions are expressed individually and often on the pollsters' initiative. Examples of these methods are internet polls, where visitors to the website can express their opinion or cast their votes, or TV-shows, where the viewers are asked to call in and cast their votes. The participants are far from representative of the general population and often not even representative of the visitors to the website or viewers of the TV-show. Furthermore, the participants have not often had the opportunity to deliberate with other citizens or participants before they cast their votes.

The second way in which opinions are expressed is different forms of meetings or conventions. The self-selection mechanisms are often even more pronounced than in the self-selective opinion polls, as participation demands an active effort from the participants. This means they need to be aware of, and obtain information about, the meeting and transport themselves to the meeting. On the other hand the deliberative elements are enhanced as participants at the meeting can engage in dialog. However, as these meetings are not moderated and the number of participants is rather large, accordingly, views which do not follow the mainstream may not be expressed or listened to. Consequently, such meetings may create a bias in the expressed opinion toward main stream arguments or lines of arguments which seem to have broader support and thereby neglect minority arguments. Open public hearings, some citizen panels and party conventions are examples of such meetings.

The third broad category of methods, which may be used to communicate opinions, is the Citizens' Juries family. These methods build on a broad tradition of public involvement, which broadly speaking came out of the interest in the social and participatory movements in the late sixties. The methods took many forms such as future workshop (Jungk & Müllert, 1981) and focus group studies, which have later developed into a widely used strategy to gather information on the diversity and saliency in citizens' opinions (Hansen, 2000; Dahler-Larsen & Dahler-Larsen, 1999; Rieper, 1993; Albrecht et al., 1993). Lately, the methods have spread among political parties and are used to adjust political campaigns and even to create politics (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999). However, few of these new methods evolved into specific methods which have been applied to a broad spectrum of situations. The Citizens Juries', the Consensus Conferences, and the Planning Cells can be specified in this family of methods. Originally, the Citizens' Juries were developed by Ned Crosby and his colleagues at the Jefferson Center in Minneapolis (Crosby, 1995; Crosby et al., 1986). The first Citizens' Jury conducted by Ned Crosby, dates back to 1974, and since then the Jefferson Center has conducted more than 30 Citizens' Juries in the US. The process behind the Citizens' Juries has been copied and used in many research projects around the world (e.g. Barnes, 1994; Mattinson, 1999; Lenaghan, 1999; Pickard, 1998). The process of a Citizens' Jury begins by selecting approximately 18 participants from a stratified random telephone interview. The participants are selected to include many different types of citizens, allowing different characteristics to be represented proportionally to the general public. During the event, the participants are presented with different experts' views and are given the opportunity to ask the experts questions. The participants discuss the issue with each other in closed sessions led by a neutral moderator. Usually, the event lasts four to five full days. As conclusion the participants give a public presentation of their findings and recommendations. Often there is a strong norm causing the recommendations from the jury to be binding for later decision-making or, as a minimum, the commissioning body has to give a reason for a dissenting decision (Smith & Wales, 1999:305, Smith & Wales, 2000:55). The Planning Cells are a German invention from the beginning of the 1970's and are quite similar to the Citizens' Juries model. However, the method differentiates from the Citizens' Juries by usually bringing together about 25 people who participate in each cell, and often the event is

replicated across time and localities with new participants. During the sessions which last at least three full days, the citizens are engaged in face-to-face deliberation, they receive balanced information prior to the sessions and meet and discuss with various experts during the event. The results are compiled into a “citizens’ report”, written by the project team and validated by the participants (Dienel, 1978; Dienel & Renn, 1999; Price & Neijens, 1998). Yet another branch of the family is the Consensus Conferences, first carried out by the Danish Board of Technology in 1987. Today the board has conducted more than 20 Consensus Conferences in Denmark and the method has been applied in several other countries too. The early conferences lasted for three days whereas lately the conferences have been divided up over several weekends during a period of up to three months, including a public hearing of the final document presented by the participants. What differentiates the Consensus Conference from the two other methods in the same family is, first of all, that the participants are strongly encouraged to reach a consensus on the final document from the conferences, although minority statements have been allowed. Secondly, the final document is written by the participants themselves (Andersen & Jæger, 1999; Klüver, 1995; Danish Board of Technology, 1994; 2002). What is common to the family is the strong emphasis on deliberation and the qualitative, collective way the result is reported as an individual questionnaire is not used. Accordingly, the methods within the family aim at a collective decision, rather than pure aggregation deduced from individual questionnaires. However, statistically representative samples of the population are not attained due to the small number of participants and the recruitment procedure, but the method still tries to bring together a broad spectrum of citizens’ opinions.

The fourth method is the traditional opinion poll in the form of a questionnaire answered through face-to-face interviews or self-administrated questionnaire, mail surveys or, as it is very common, by telephone. These surveys are based on representative sampling of social security numbers, addresses or telephone numbers. The representativeness of the sampling compared to the population is fulfilled through the sampling procedures. Sometimes quota sampling is used to reduce costs. In quota sampling the sampling is conducted in a stepwise manner where the participants are included in the sample according to a predefined proportion of certain characteristics. However, in this way, the sampling procedure is

not random, and therefore the sampling distributions of any statistics are unknown. Accordingly, a simple random sampling procedure is preferred as every individual of the population in this way has an equal chance of being selected and therefore the likelihood of bias is reduced and it is not a matter of predefined characteristics. These traditional opinion polls give a snap-shot of what is salient in the mind of the public at the specific time of the interview. However, the participants have not necessarily taken a stand on the issue before the interviewer brings it up and, thus, their opinions may not even have existed before the interview. Furthermore, the participants have often not had the interest in nor opportunity to read information or deliberate on the issue. The responses in these surveys are therefore often just an echo of the media interpretation of the issues (Fishkin, 1997; Zaller, 1992).

The fifth family of methods included in the figure is the split sample design. These methods range from rather simple designs where different groups of the sample are provided with information, arguments or cues on the issues. Subsequently, the groups can be compared in order to assess the impact of the different stimulus. The choice questionnaire, one of the more comprehensive methods, goes much further aiming at providing reasonably objective information and arguments to the respondents in the representative sample and giving them a chance to evaluate the various arguments. Furthermore, the design encourages the respondents to consider different possible outcomes and provides an opportunity to understand the consequences of their opinions (Neijens, 1987; Price & Neijens, 1998). All the methods put emphasis on the representativeness of the sample. To a varying degree, the methods provide in a systematic way the respondents with different stimuli to ensure a broader and more thorough understanding of the opinion structure and its salience than traditional opinion polls. However, the split sample design does not provide the opportunity of bringing the public together or deliberating face-to-face allowing the opinions to be heard and evolved in a constructive dialog among other citizens.

The sixth design is the Deliberation Day. The ambitious idea behind the design is to have a national holiday one week before the national election. On this day citizens would gather at neighborhood schools and during the day deliberate on the central election issues in randomly composed groups of 15 and in plenary with local party representatives. As an encouragement to participate, the participants would be paid for their

attendance and work. The aim would be to give all citizens the opportunity to be more informed and aware of the issues at stake in the upcoming election and through deliberation to be able to see the consequences of their vote. In this way, Deliberation Day can be seen as a way to improve the voters' decisions on election day (Ackerman & Fishkin, 2003). From a European perspective there is an obvious similarity to the international working class holiday the first of May, which originally was organized with speeches and demonstrations for an eight-hour working day. The participatory budget procedures institutionalized in some Latin American countries is a more current parallel. These initiatives have gathered thousands of citizens to debate and vote on different municipal expenditures and differ from other methods by being decisive on the issues delegated by the local government to the assembly (Nylen, 2002; Baiocchi, 2001). The Deliberation Day is a rather utopian idea due to logistics and costs. However, self-selection participation and that deliberation might will tend to focus on specific neighborhood issues, which are seldom on the agenda of a national election, also challenges the idea of a Deliberation Day. However, if this utopia is carried through as an experiment of thought, we would see that all citizens were given a chance to engage in an intensive one-day deliberation with other citizens before having to cast their vote. Accordingly, the design represents a method, which aims to fulfill political equality by inviting all citizens to the event, as well as a method to create post-deliberative opinions.

As already mentioned, the seventh method, the Deliberation Poll aims at combining the deliberation with the principles of representativeness. The general idea behind the Deliberative Poll developed by James Fishkin (1988; 1991; 1997) is simple: *Bring a representative group of people together and let them deliberate with each other, politicians and experts and poll their opinions before, during and after this process.* The Deliberative Polling process begins by interviewing a representative sample of citizens, selected by simple random sampling, who are invited to an event where they meet experts and politicians. Prior to the event, the participants receive some balanced information material. During the event, citizens debate the issue in small randomly composed groups and in plenary sessions with experts and politicians. The participants' opinions are polled using a quantitative approach with a self-administered questionnaire. Accordingly, the method gains an insight into how opinions evolve throughout the

process. Furthermore, the process of the Deliberative Poll prescribes how the public opinion would evolve if all citizens were given the opportunity to engage themselves in a similar process of information and deliberation. The opinions, expressed by the representative sample on the last day of deliberation are expected to reflect this process, which has given the participants occasion to reach more reflected opinions, unlike the 'snapshot' and top-of-the-head opinion traditional opinion polls produce. Accordingly, the Deliberative Poll will, as a minimum, prove to be an improvement of the traditional opinion surveys. In a broad context, the method may also be recommended for its emphasis on improving the communication between the elected representatives and the public. In the normative debate on deliberative democracy, the need of creating alternative arenas for public deliberation has often been emphasized (Bohman, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). On the one hand the Deliberative Poll is a setting designed to enhance particular dimensions of democracy - that is, deliberation. On the other hand, a setting for studying processes of deliberation and opinion formation is created - that is, a quasi-experiment. A Deliberative Poll may be one way to contribute to create a new arena or communication channel for citizens, allowing for a range of different experiences to be brought into the political process and allowing reflection and exchange of viewpoints to become important aspects of the political process.

The Deliberative Polling events have spanned from two to four days and up to 460 people have participated in a single event. In most cases, the Deliberative Polls are independent of the decision-making process and not binding for the sponsors. So far there have been conducted eight national Deliberative Polls - two in Australia, one in the US, five in the UK, and one in Denmark which is the focus here. Furthermore, the Deliberative Poll has been conducted on the local and regional level (List et al., 2001; Aars & Offerdal, 2000; Hansen, 2000).

With different emphasis, the seven methods described above combine the principles of deliberation and representativeness in a specific design to communicate public opinion to the established political institutions. Some of the methods put strong emphasis on the deliberative aspect and some on the principle of representativeness and others aim at combining the principles. If the objective is to communicate the non-deliberated, but representative opinion, the traditional opinion poll would be the natural choice. If more informed and deliberated opinions are

emphasized and representativeness is less important, the Citizen's Juries family might be the method to choose. In this way, the choice of method depends on which principles are in focus. Here, the aim is to combine the two principles of deliberation and representativeness, and the Deliberative Poll is thus a reflective choice. Secondly, by adding control groups and more waves to the Deliberative Polling design, a unique quasi-experimental setting is created to explore the effect of deliberation and information on a representative sample of the public's opinions and behavior.

Accordingly, the method represents a unique setting as the method on the one hand is a quasi-experiment and on the other hand represents an innovation of democratic practices. The extent to which the method fulfills the experimental requirements, and how the Deliberative Poll can claim political legitimacy, is discussed in the following sections. The next section 2.4 will, however, describe in detail how the Deliberative Poll on the euro was conducted and its Danish context. Section 2.5 discusses the Deliberative Poll from the experimental perspective and how validity is justified, whereas section 2.6 discusses the method from a democratic legitimacy perspective and its practice compared to decision-making in parliament or by referendums.

#### **2.4 The Danish national Deliberative Poll on the euro**

Since the first referendum in 1972, the issue of European integration has been a highly politicized and debated issue in Denmark. Denmark has had six national referendums on the issues regarding European integration within the last 30 years. The issues of European integration have divided the Danish public as well as the political elite into two rather entrenched positions. The division on the European issue is found 1) within the public, 2) within the elite and 3) between the public and the elite. The division was emphasized with the close race at the Danish referendum on the euro on September 28, 2000 where 53% of the Danish citizens voted against the euro with a turnout of 88%. The historical division also had a strong impact on the referendum in 2000, even though the issue at that time was whether Denmark should join the European single currency - the euro. Many of the arguments for and against European integration presented in the political campaigns before prior to the five previous referendums, were also present in the public debate on the referendum on the euro (Buch & Hansen, 2002). Accordingly, most of the arguments concerning European

integration were already known by the public and partly because of this the level of political knowledge about European integration was also profound in the Danish population. For these reasons, it was expected that the participants would have a strong position beforehand and that participants would be better informed on the issue beforehand compared to participants of other Deliberative Polls. Finally, as the results of opinion polls prior to the Deliberative Poll and the previous referendums on European integration indicated, the population was divided into two almost equally sized groups either supporting or opposing further European integration. Thus, the claimed potential of deliberative democracy is tested on a rather 'critical case', meaning that if the claimed potential is justified in this context, it would also be likely to be found in a context where the line of conflict is not so entrenched. Yet another point that made the Danish Deliberative Poll deviate from other Deliberative Polls in other countries is that many Danes probably found it quite easy to identify themselves with the ideas of deliberation as represented by the Deliberative Poll, as the ideas correspond to N. F. S. Grundtvig's<sup>6</sup> ideal of proper education and deliberation (Grundtvig, 1834/1983). An ideal, which has been exercised by the Danish Folk High School since the middle of the 19th century, but which also has had an impact on the entire Danish public school system. Accordingly, although the European issue might have been a critical case because of the Danes' entrenched position, the ideal of deliberation was not unfamiliar to the Danes.

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<sup>6</sup> N. F. S. Grundtvig (1783 - 1872) was a Danish priest, author and member of the Danish constitutional assembly. He advocated the improvement of youth and adult education and encouraged that the elite must rely on broad popular appeal. Furthermore, he advocated the ideal that the Danish people must participate broadly in decision-making procedures within the church as well as in society in general. A participation that should be rooted in the Danish national identity (Korsgaard, 1997). See also Hansen (2003).

The national Deliberative Poll on the euro<sup>7</sup> was held in August 2000 one month prior to the Danish referendum on the European single currency. In no way was the Deliberative Poll on the euro presented as an alternative to the government initiated referendum titled in the Danish constitution. It was only presented as an arena for reasoning or sense-making rather than decision-making, as the Deliberative Poll on the euro by no means replaces the institution of the referendum. Thus, besides the quasi-experimental perspective, the Deliberative Poll created a supplementary consultative process between the citizens/public and politicians/elite according to deliberative principles.

The Danish Deliberative Polling process was launched by an interview of a representative sample of citizens, selected by simple random sampling (t0). At the same time, the respondents were invited to participate

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<sup>7</sup> Professor James S. Fishkin has registered Deliberative Poll and Deliberative Polling as trademarks. This project 'The Danish National Deliberative Poll' was conducted as a joint project between the University of Southern Denmark - the Department of Political Science and Public Management and the House of Mandag Morgen. PLS Rambøll Management conducted the recruitment interviews, the second invitation 8-11 August and the control group interviews. The follow-up interviews were conducted at the Department of Political Science and Public Management by political science students under close supervision of Kasper M. Hansen. The questionnaires were designed by Kasper M. Hansen and Vibeke Normann Andersen. The Danish Broadcasting Corporation (Danmarks Radio) covered the broadcasting (Internet, national radio and national TV). The project was financed by the following organizations, parties and companies: Nævnet vedr. EU-oplysning, The European Parliament, The Danish Institute of International Affairs (DUPI), Danish State Information Service, The Danish State Railways (DSB), The Confederation of Danish Industries, The Danish Trades Union Congress (LO), Danish Metal Workers Union (Dansk Metal), The Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti), The Danish Bank, ISS, Novo Nordisk, Danfoss, Group 4 Falck, Coloplast, VELUX, Chr. Hansen, Grundfos, Danisco, Unimerco, J. Lauritzen, Bestseller A/S and The European Commission. The financing organizations had no influence on the design of the project.

in a later event.<sup>8</sup> In this way the recruitment interview had two purposes. First to provide a baseline on social-demographics, political knowledge and opinions among a representative sample of the population and, secondly, to recruit the participants to the Deliberative Poll three weeks later. Accordingly, the recruitment survey provided not only a snapshot of the population opinions as a traditional opinion poll, but it also supplied the first wave of the participants' opinions.

Prior to the Deliberative Poll, the respondents who accepted the invitation received information on the single currency. The information material was carefully prepared in order to put forward balanced arguments on the issue. All relevant political parties and movements were invited to comment on the information material prior to its publication. Their comments were included in the final version of the material.<sup>9</sup> Besides the information material, a pamphlet explaining the Deliberative Poll, and train tickets were sent to the participants. The participants were also contacted twice by phone to confirm their participation. In this way, much effort was put into ensuring that as many participants as possible of those initially contacted eventually showed up at the Deliberative Poll. The recruitment process and the four surveys, in which the participants took part throughout

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<sup>8</sup> Each recruitment interview lasted on average 20 minutes, where two thirds were focussed on mapping the social demographics and opinions of the respondents, and one third of the interview time was used to persuade the respondents to take part in the event three weeks later. Only respondents, who definitively refused to take part in the Deliberative Poll were not contacted again. Many persuasive arguments were used e.g., a present for participation (retail value approx €60), a single room at a good hotel, three travel vouchers were provided by lot (approx. retail value €240 each), travel to the event was paid and arranged, meeting with the Prime Minister, good dinner with famous entertainer, chance to be on TV hosted by famous talk show host. See appendix A and F for the questionnaire used for recruitment.

<sup>9</sup> The information material was prepared by an independent think-tank, Strategic Forum, which also was a part of the organizing team. The material was sent to all Danish libraries and published on the internet at the same time it was sent to the participants. House of Mandag Morgen (2000) *Værd at vide om euroen. 14 brændende spørgsmål om den fælles mønt*. [Worth knowing about the euro. 14 burning questions about the single currency.] Copenhagen, House of Mandag Morgen. An English translation is provided upon request. 95% of the participants assessed the information material to be political balanced.

the process, are shown in table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: The recruitment to the Deliberative Poll on the euro - year 2000**

	Date	Number of participants	Response rate
Initially contacted for recruitment interview		2843	
Declined to participate		1063	
Not reached after 7 call-backs		78	
t0 Recruitment interview	1-8 August	1702	60%
Acceptance of participation in the Deliberative Poll	8 August	732	26%
Yes		206	
Possibly		526	
Information folder on the event sent to participants	8-11 August	732	
Second invitation by telephone	16 August	699	25%
Yes		375	
Possibly		81	
No		243	
Could not be reached		33	
Program and information material sent to participants	14-18 August	489	17%
Contacted by phone to confirm participation	17-22 August	489	
Participants enrolled	22 August	396	14%
Tickets sent to participants	21-25 August		
Participants enrolled	25 August	386	14%
t1/t2 Participants in the Deliberative Poll	26-27 August	364	13%
t3 Participants re-interviewed	27 Nov-16 Dec	355	12%

Note: TV-spots on the event were shown daily on national Danish television the week prior to the event. The recruitment interviews (t0) were conducted by PLS RAMBØLL Management by telephone. The response rate was 60% with 7 call-backs. The sampling was carried out through simple random sampling on telephone numbers. The t1 and t2 surveys were done through self-administrative questionnaires. The t3 survey (telephone interview) was conducted by trained students from the Department of Political Science, University of Southern Denmark supervised by the author. At a later stage, the surveys will be available from the Danish Data Archives.

Evidently, the recruitment process produced large number of drop-outs as only 13% of the respondents initially contacted showed up at the Deliberative Poll. In section 2.5, I will discuss these drop-outs in more detail.

At the Deliberative Poll on 26-27 August, the 364 participants were given the opportunity to discuss issues related to the EU and the euro with other participants, politicians and experts, including the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, and all party leaders of the opposition represented in the Danish Parliament. Furthermore, four Danish MPs from the European Parliament were also included, among them were the two leaders from the EU skeptical movement. The event took place at a weekend during which the participants deliberated in small groups and in plenary sessions with politicians and experts. Part of the plenary session and part of the group discussions of two random selected groups were transmitted by national television. The small groups were randomly composed and consisted of 18-20 citizens. A moderator was assigned to each group.<sup>10</sup> The two days' event alternated between plenary sessions, in which the groups asked questions to the experts and the politicians, and group discussions focusing on phrasing the new questions for the subsequent plenary session.<sup>11</sup> The participants' opinions were polled through self-administered questionnaires at the beginning (t1) and at the end of the event (t2).<sup>12</sup> To a large extent, the questions asked in t1 and t2 were similar to the questions asked in t0. However, they were supplemented with questions evaluating the information material (t1) and the deliberation

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<sup>10</sup> The moderators had experience with teaching and focus group interviewing. Furthermore, the moderators received written information on what was expected from them in the job as moderators and they took part in a meeting where they received further instructions. The moderators' most important job was to chair the group discussions, but also to encourage all participants to actively take part in the discussion. Furthermore, the moderators were instructed to remain neutral to the issue. Appendix J states the participants' evaluation of their moderator showing that according to the participants, the moderators managed the job to perfection.

<sup>11</sup> In appendix K a detailed program for the Deliberative Poll is provided.

<sup>12</sup> Appendix B includes questionnaire (t1) and appendix C includes questionnaire (t2).

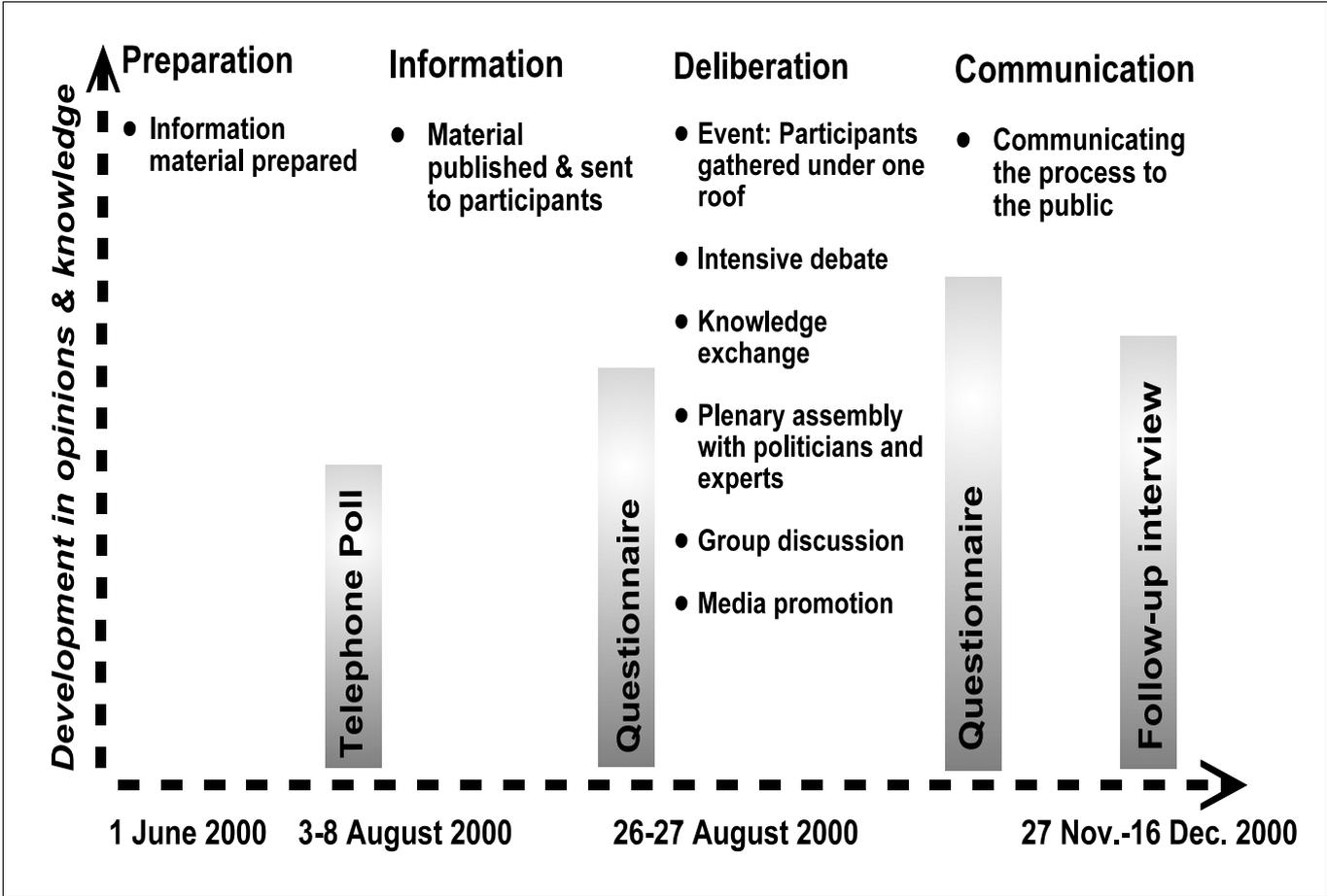
at the plenary session and in small groups (t2).

Three months after the Deliberative Poll, the participants were polled once again this time by telephone (t3). The reason for this fourth and final poll of the participants was to be able to gain an insight into how the participants' opinions developed during the period after the Deliberative Poll. The questionnaire therefore included the same opinion items as in the previous round of questioning. Furthermore, items to evaluate whether the Deliberative Poll had a politically activating effect were included.<sup>13</sup> The four times the participants were polled thus constituting a panel-study with different forms of stimulus which can be seen as a quasi-experiment. The focus was directed on what happens when a group of citizens is exposed to information and placed in a setting of deliberation. The analysis in the following chapters will hence focus on deliberation, attitudes and cognitive skills of the participants. To summarize the process of the Deliberative Polling project, figure 2.2 below presents the project divided into four phases: preparation, information, deliberation and communication. In general terms, the vertical axis can normally be interpreted as part of the hypothesis formulated through the normatively desirable potential of deliberation, which stipulates that by giving information, and by giving the participants the opportunity to deliberate, their knowledge on the issue would increase. Furthermore, the knowledge and the deliberation may also stimulate opinion change or opinion fortification.

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<sup>13</sup> Questionnaire (t3) is included in appendix D.

Figure 2.2: The process of Deliberative Polling



The Danish Deliberative Poll was innovative in the sense that methodologically it was developed in order to be able to 1) differentiate between the effect of deliberation and the effect of information, the public debate, etc. 2) assess the deliberative process at the Deliberative Poll through a thorough evaluation of the participants' deliberation. Several adjustments, compared to Fishkin's model (1997), were applied to the project. First, the participants were not offered a honorarium for participating, instead a gift was offered (approx. retail value €60) and three travel vouchers were provided by lot (approx. retail value €240 each). Secondly, their opinions were polled four times (t0, t1, t2, t3) instead of twice (t0 + t2) as in the first of Fishkin's Deliberative Polls conducted in 1994.<sup>14</sup> These adjustments made it possible to differentiate between the effect of the deliberation of the

<sup>14</sup> In Fishkin's later projects control groups and post surveys of participants have been included in design.

weekend and the effect subscribed prior to the weekend.<sup>15</sup> It also made it possible to study the long-term (three months) effects of the participation in the Deliberative Poll, as the opinions of the participants were polled again three months after the event (t3 - 27 November-16 December 2000).<sup>16</sup> Thirdly, a representative control sample of citizens was surveyed at the same time as the 364 participants were gathered at the Deliberative Poll (24 August- 3 September, N=993). The control sample allows assessment of the effect of deliberation and the effect of other factors such as the public debate. Finally, more emphasis was put on the evaluation of the participatory and deliberative processes in the small groups in the Danish Deliberative Poll on the single currency than in the Deliberative Polls conducted by Fishkin. The survey of the participants was also supplemented with video recordings of four groups, and two other groups were transmitted 'live on tape' on national TV. Furthermore, all panel speakers and moderators were surveyed through a questionnaire after the Deliberative Poll<sup>17</sup>, and all 20 groups continuously transcribed the blackboard during their discussions. In addition, a student independent of the research team made a brief qualitative interview with politicians after their participation (Nielsen, 2001). Hence, the adjustments of the method and the comprehensive data material gathered allowed a more thorough assessment of the process of deliberation. Contrary to this approach, Fishkin's (1997) focus has primarily been on the increase of knowledge and changes in attitudes among the participants. This project also focuses on knowledge and attitude change, but much effort went into disentangling the deliberative process and analyzing whether the claimed potential of

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<sup>15</sup> One argument against having a poll at the beginning of the event is that the attention of the participants is put too much on the questions in the questionnaire. Little room is thus left for the participants to bring new issues and alternative aspects into the process of deliberation. Nevertheless efforts were made to bring up issues related to the euro, which the participants found were important. E.g. was the discussion in the groups initiated by a general discussion on the referendum campaign and what the participants found most important with regard to the euro-question. Secondly the questionnaires included several open-ended questions.

<sup>16</sup> Questionnaire used in the control group is included in appendix E.

<sup>17</sup> Questionnaires used to the moderators, experts and politicians see appendix G and H.

deliberative democracy is justified in the Deliberative Poll on the euro.

## **2.5 The Deliberative Poll as a methodological innovation - the problem of validity**

From a methodological perspective, the Deliberative Poll is an experiment, or more precisely a quasi-experiment, set out to gain an insight into the processes of deliberation and disentangle what happens when people meet and discuss a political topic. Explaining the Deliberative Poll from an experimental perspective, the method begins by pre-testing the participants' attitudes, knowledge about the issue of the Poll, and mapping background characteristics. As a treatment effect or stimulus, the participants receive written information and then their attitudes are measured again. The post-test is conducted and then the participants debate the issue with each other, with experts and politicians before their attitudes are polled once again. Thus, the Deliberative Poll can be described as a simple quasi-experiment to create an understanding of group processes where effect of information and deliberation can be observed and measured, but also an experimental setting where conformity, group thinking, consistency of argumentation, change in attitudes, and in opinion formation are highlighted. This section will first briefly discuss the concept of experimental-design from a general perspective and, secondly, discuss the Deliberative Poll on the euro in an experimental perspective focussed on validity.

Even though experimentations most often are related to natural science, experimental design has for decades been applied within social science. Some of the more famous experiments are the Hawthorne study from the 1920s of how respondents change their behavior when becoming aware of themselves being part of an experiment; Asch and Sherif's experiments, in relation to conformity from the 1950s; and Milgram's study of obedience to authority from the 1970s. The general idea of experimental design is that it is a way to establish causal links between variables and, thus, to generate understanding and insights into the phenomenon studied. In a true experiment the researcher controls all independent variables and is able to measure the changes in the dependent variable. Most experiments are carried out by first specifying the cause-and-effect variables and other variables that might affect the relationship. By measuring the dependent variables before and after the independent variables have been applied to the subject, it is possible to understand the causal relationship between

independent variables and the dependent variable. From a social scientist's point of view, one major problem with experimentation is that the setting of the experiment is within an artificial environment, which questions whether or not it is at all possible to generalize to real world situations from such experiments. The respondents may very likely act differently in the artificial environment of an experiment, compared to how they would act in their natural environment. Merely being a part of an experiment could easily create certain expectations which differ from real world situations as in medical experiments where the placebo-effects are often described. Furthermore, it is debatable whether it is possible to control the number and effect of the variables when the complexity of a study intensifies. In trying to cope with the challenges and opportunities of experimental design, the researcher is confronted with a dilemma. On one hand, the closer an experiment is to a real world setting the larger the chances are for generalising the findings of the experiment. On the other hand, in a real world setting the researcher easily loses control of the number of variables and their effects. Accordingly, the experientialist is often confronted with a trade-off between experimental control and the possibilities of generalizing to a broader population or another setting.

In the simplest experiment you have only a pre-test and a post-test of the respondents. Thus, the change in the dependent variable can be measured. However, this type of experiment lacks control of extraneous variables and can be used only where the effect from the extraneous variable is minimal. By addressing this problem, control groups are needed in order to understand the effect of other variables affecting the respondent's answer and behavior. In experiments with control groups, the experimental group and the control group are both pre-tested and post-tested. However, it is only the experimental group which is exposed to the independent variables (stimulus or treatment). The cause effect is calculated by the difference in the experimental group minus the difference in the control group (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Friedman & Sunder, 1994; Baily, 1987:213-237). By recognizing that it is very seldom possible to control all variables, especially when experiments are carried out in natural social settings, the term quasi-experiment is often used. Quasi-experimental design refers to a design that lacks some control of variables compared to what is expected from a true experiment (Campbell & Stanley, 1963:34; Cook & Campbell,

1979).<sup>18</sup>

Clearly, the classic experimental design has its offset within a positivistic frame of mind, implying that reality is assumed to exist independent of its context and that the researcher ultimately uncovers the truth. The researcher studies the object through a one-way-mirror, and if any interaction between researcher and the object is recognized, this interaction has to be eliminated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These positions have, however, been rejected and a new generation of experimental design is evolving. In this post-positivistic tradition reality exists. However, it is believed to be imperfect and reality must be subjected to critical examination. It is believed that interaction between the researcher and the subject occurs and is to some extent unavoidable. The findings are considered in a more critical light and are only referred to as the probable truths. Furthermore, experiments are carried out in more natural settings due to the recognition that context matters (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 ; Cook & Campbell, 1979). Both the positivistic and post-positivistic approaches have been criticized by other traditions, such as more constructivistic approaches to research believing that reality is an ambiguous construction constituted by the interaction between researcher and the subject. The aim is to create an understanding which should never be interpreted as truth in any absolute sense (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, an experiment will always be understood as a construction and its results can never provide any absolute truth, but only tentative approximations (Cook & Campbell, 1979:37). The choice between these methodological positions is often a matter of belief and is often rather implicit in the design as the analyses are carried out. The following analysis will, as most do, follow an approach within a post-positivistic frame as findings will be examined in a critical light and alternative interpretations of the findings will be considered.

Validity is generally understood as data's relevance to the problem under investigation and whether there is correspondence between the theoretical meaning of a variable in the causal model and the measure used for the variable in the empirical analysis (Hellevik, 1988; 1991). Accordingly, validity is a crucial issue to all analyses and data. However, in experimental-design, additional validity questions are asked, often grouped

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<sup>18</sup> Campbell and Stanley (1963) describe experiments without control groups as pre-experimental and experiment with control groups as true-experimental.

under internal and external validity. Internal and external validity, as phrased by Campbell and Stanley in their classic work from 1963 and later elaborated by Cook and Campbell in 1979, represent the most thorough account of the pitfalls and possibilities in experimental design. Here, I will discuss the Deliberative Poll on the euro in relation to internal and external validity.

Internal validity concerns to what extent experimental control of the treatment and variable measures is achieved, as this influence often determines to what extent causal relationship can be established.

External validity refers to what degree the generalizations to the population, setting, treatment variables or measurement variables can be established. Often the concern of external validity is narrowed down to representativeness, asking is the sample representative of the general population? If so, generalization from the sample to the population is possible. As Campbell and Stanley (1963) as well as Cook and Campbell (1979) all provide adequate lists and elaboration of concepts of internal and external validity, this study will focus only on the elements of internal and external validity of special relevance to the Deliberative Poll.

### *Internal validity*

History is the first concern for internal validity. If specific events occur between pre- and post-testing, these events may have influence on the variables, and the effect on these variables cannot be ascribed only to the treatment effect. As there were about three weeks between the first and the second wave of questionnaires and the referendum campaign was running, such specific events were expected. One such specific event was - in the time between the two waves of questioning - that a famous Danish author was launched by the Danish government as a strong pro-euro advocate. In order not to lose control and take account of the history effect, the Deliberative Polling project included a control group questioned at the same time as the participants were assembled at the Deliberative Poll. Figure 2.3 illustrates the design behind the experiment - the Deliberative Poll on the euro. The figure includes other design features, which were not included in the design on the Deliberative Poll on the euro, but if added to future designs of Deliberative Polls, will improve the possibilities of achieving better control of the treatment effects. The notation follows Campbell and Stanley's (1963) classic OXO notation.

**Figure 2.3: The Deliberative Poll from the experimental perspective**

Time of measurement	T <sub>0</sub>	T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>3</sub>			
- Participants	O <sub>0</sub>	X <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
R - Control group (t0)	O <sub>0</sub>						
R - Control group (t1/t2)		(O <sub>1</sub> )		O <sub>2</sub>			
R - Control group (t3)							O <sub>3</sub>
R - Panel without treatment	O <sub>0</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>		O <sub>2</sub>			O <sub>3</sub>
R - Panel without O <sub>0</sub> interview effect		X <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
R - Panel without O <sub>1</sub> interview effect				X <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>2</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>
R - Panel without O <sub>2</sub> interview effect						X <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>3</sub>

Note: The shaded area represents the Deliberative Poll on the euro. The non-shaded area illustrates how the design could have been improved. O represents observations, X a treatment, R a random assignment in a true experiment. The footnote of O follows the different points in time in which the surveys were conducted, i.e. <sub>0</sub> = at recruitment, <sub>1</sub> = at arrival of the Deliberative Poll, <sub>2</sub> = at the end of the Deliberative Poll and <sub>3</sub> = three months after the Deliberative Poll. The footnote of X represents different treatments, i.e. <sub>1</sub> = ‘Information, etc.’, <sub>2</sub> = ‘Deliberation, etc.’, <sub>3</sub> = ‘Lagged effect of the treatments of <sub>1</sub> and <sub>2</sub> etc.’

A true experiment need random assignment between people being exposed to the experimental treatment and the people being assigned to the control group and not receiving the treatment (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The recruitment to the Deliberative Poll does not satisfy such a requirement as self-selection occurs. In this way, even though the recruitment sample is selected by simple random sampling, the assignment to the control group or to the group of participants is not random. Figure 2.3 shows how the design included two control groups. The first t0 is the recruitment sample whereas the second is an independent survey conducted at the same time as the participants were assembled.<sup>19</sup> The control group survey conducted at the same time as the participants were assembled was a great benefit to the

<sup>19</sup> In a Campbell & Stanley (1963) sense this group is rather a comparison group because it lacks random assignment. Nevertheless, for simplicity the term ‘control group’ will be used here.

project's experimental design as it gave the opportunity of disentangling the effect of the referendum campaign on the general population with the treatment effect intentionally applied to the participants. However, full control is still an illusion. The experiment lacks a control group at t3 because it is not possible to differentiate between the specific effect of having been part of the Deliberative Poll and changes in the general population. A few commercially published opinion polls may give a proxy for any general development, however, these polls include only questions of limited relevance. In this way, a control group at t3 would have improved the design. However, the most important challenge to the design is by far the lack of control with the treatment effect or amount of noise which also influenced the participants without affecting the general population. The participants received written information and 95% of them read it. This material, so to speak, narrowly defined the treatment effect between recruitment and the Deliberative Poll. However, many other things happened to the participants during this period. The surveys showed for instance that the participants followed the news more carefully than usual and they often discussed the issue with friends and family. For these reasons it is impossible to isolate a specific treatment-effect from other things such as the effect of the initial survey or the fact that the participants were more politically aware as they knew that they were going to take part in a two days session where they had to discuss the issue. One argument is that the Deliberative Poll was actually designed so that the participants would be encouraged to be more politically aware in the period leading up to the event. Thus the 'noise' is included in the treatment-effect, which expands the treatment effect to include everything from being invited to a paid trip to Odense, to discussing with friends, colleagues and family, to following the news, and to reading the material sent to them. However, by expanding the treatment-effect into one variable labeled 'information', the lack of control is also recognized as it becomes virtually impossible to disentangle the specific treatment and its relations to the observed variables. In this way, from a true experimental point of view internal validity is compromised in the Deliberative Poll. More control groups could address these problems, but as the number of control groups increases exponentially with the number of treatments aimed to be disentangled, the costs may soon

outweigh the advantages.<sup>20</sup> During the Deliberative Poll, the treatment is also difficult to specify. Is it the discussion in the small groups, or is it the experts' answers to the groups' questions, or is it the top-politicians, or just the informal discussion over dinner? Again merging all these treatments into one called 'deliberation' makes it impossible to pinpoint the actual, causal effect between the variables measured and the specific treatment. The pragmatic solution, which is followed in the Deliberative Poll on the euro, is first of all to recognize these problems and in the following analysis to take this lack of control into account. This is also why the Deliberative Poll is a quasi-experiment and not a true experiment. However, one step towards more control was introduced in the Deliberative Poll on the euro compared to other national Deliberative Polls as a wave of questionnaire was added when the participants arrived at the Deliberative Poll. This helped disentangle the difference between the effect of 'information', or more precisely what happened up to the Deliberative Poll, and 'deliberation', or more precisely what happened during the Deliberative Poll.<sup>21</sup>

Another threat, which compromises internal validity in the Deliberative Poll on the euro, is of instrumental character. As the specific way in which the variables were measured differed between the waves of questioning, the recruitment interview (t0) was carried out through telephone-interview and so was the follow up interview (t3), but the interviews during the Deliberative Poll (t1 and t2) were done by self-administrated questionnaires. One difference between the two is that it may

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<sup>20</sup> As an example of this exponential increase in the demand of the number of control groups think of a case in which there is only one recognized treatment effect ( $x_1$  - information from written material) which is being controlled for. A design would only include a pre-observation/test  $O_1$  then the treatment is applied ( $x_1$ ) and a post-observation/test  $O_2$  is conducted. To allow to differentiate from specific events occurring during the period between the waves, a control group without treatment is conducted  $O_1$  - no treatment -  $O_2$ . In a case where the researcher wants to control for two treatments ( $x_1, x_2$  - intensified discussion with friends and family), the design needs  $O_1$ - $x_1, x_2$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_1$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_2$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ -no treatment- $O_2$ . If a third treatment is added ( $x_3$  - intensified attention to the media), the design needs to include  $O_1$ - $x_1, x_2, x_3$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_1$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_2$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_3$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_1, x_2$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_1, x_3$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ - $x_2, x_3$ - $O_2$  and  $O_1$ -no treatment- $O_2$ .

<sup>21</sup> Aars & Offerdal (2000) introduced the t1 measure in their deliberative experiment in 1998.

be easier for the respondent to compare previous answers on the questionnaire in the self-administrated questionnaire than in the telephone survey. Furthermore, it may be intuitively easier for the respondents to comprehend the five-point scale, which was used in the surveys, when the participants had the questionnaire in front of them and were able to visualize the scale, compared to the telephone interview. The way these issues were addressed was that all options on the scales, including the “don’t know” option, were read aloud in the phone interview, which usually is not the case in traditional telephone surveys (Hansen, 2000).<sup>22</sup> However, in some other Deliberative Polls, the similar patterns of change in the participants answers have been reported with the use of identical measurement instruments (Fishkin, 1997), which indicates that the effect of changing instrument is small. Nevertheless, it does not remove the problem with the changing measurement instrument, but, once again these effects will be considered in the following analysis.

Yet another threat to internal validity is the effect of being tested more than once. Studies have shown for example that the second time you take an IQ-test, a higher score is more likely (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). This effect is utilized in the Deliberative Poll in different ways. First of all, as the participants were asked a number of identical knowledge questions in the four waves, it is likely that change is not only learning, but also an effect of the participants getting acquainted with this form of questioning. Furthermore, about 1/4 of the participants in the recruitment interview asked the interviewer for the right answer after they had given their answer, or asked whether their answers were correct. In these cases the interviewer gave the respondent the right answer. In this way being tested also effects the data. Yet another aspect is the Socratic effect, which usually occurs between the first and second wave in panel studies, i.e. that the

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<sup>22</sup> Many studies have, however, shown that the effect of using different interview methods are relatively minimal on the frequencies reported. Nevertheless, Lise Togeby (1989) finds that similar items measuring political participation and political interest are significantly higher in telephone interviews than interviews conducted face-to-face. If this effect is a general pattern, when comparing interviews conducted over the phone with interviews carried out face-to-face, any increase in political interest when comparing the recruitment interviews with self-administrated questionnaires during the Deliberative Poll is in reality larger.

questions are likely to activate a latent knowledge and make one aware of ones knowledge (Hill & Kriesi, 2001). This threat to internal validity would have been addressed if a four-wave panel without treatment was conducted simultaneously with the Deliberative Poll as included in the improvement part of figure 2.3. However, such simultaneous waves were not included in the design, which made it impossible to differentiate the repeated measurement effect from the treatment effect. The three last additional design features included in figure 2.3 could also have been included to differentiate from each repeated round of questioning. Another strategy is to argue that the repeated measurement is included in the broad category of the treatment effect, but once again it would compromise the control of the treatment effect and its effect. In the following, the repeated measurement effect will be considered when the result is presented. The repeated measurement effect also compromises external validity, which is in focus in next section as the participants by each wave of interviewing become more and more non-representative of the general population. However, the idea behind the Deliberative Poll is that the participants should mirror the population at large before the deliberative process, and as soon as they engage themselves in this process their opinions will start to mirror this specific process of deliberation and information set up in the quasi-experimental context and will, thus, differ from the population at large. Accordingly, it is intentional that the participants will become unrepresentative of pre-deliberative and pre-informative opinion, but rather represent an approximation of a representative post-deliberative and post information opinion. The participants in the Deliberative Poll are given the opportunity to act in accordance with deliberative principles.<sup>23</sup> In this way, the Deliberative Poll is an artificial setting and deviates from real world deliberative processes as people do act differently when they are part of an experimental setting. In the methodological literature this is referred to as the Hawthorne-effect, which also has been a critique voice against the Deliberative Poll (Ladd, 1996). However, at the Deliberative Poll it is intentional that the participants come to deviate from the population at large with regard to attitudes, knowledge and behavior due to the experimental setting. The ‘artificial’ setting is thus part of the experimental

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<sup>23</sup> These principles or the potential of deliberation will frame the analysis in the following chapters.

treatment (Merkle, 1996), but it also means that internal validity once again is compromised as control of the treatment variable is jeopardized. Nonetheless, most, if not all, experimental settings are to some extent artificial compared to the natural environment. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, there is a trade-off between control and mirroring the natural environment.

*External validity - Response, acceptance rates and representativeness*

External validity concerns whether generalizations can be made from the experimental setting i.e., can generalizations be made from the different treatments' effects to everyday situations and from the participants to population. As described in the previous section, the setting is artificial by intention. The artificial setting makes it impossible to generalize from the setting to real everyday settings - it is simply too different. But another claim could be made about the setting: If the potentials of deliberation do not prevail during the Deliberative Poll, or the participants are not capable or interested in acting according to the potentials of deliberation in the artificial environment of the Deliberative Poll, where many efforts were made to give the participants the opportunity to act according to the deliberative principles (e.g. moderated deliberation, balanced information, securing diversity), the deliberative potentials will be very difficult to achieve in everyday situations. In everyday situations, citizens are not exposed to balanced information, or have been given the opportunity to deliberate in small groups where a diversity of opinions is present. On the other hand people to whom the information has been exposed are biased as balanced information exposure is seldom. Secondly, if people discuss politics they often tend to discuss with people representing view like themselves, e.g. family and friends. The claim is therefore that if the deliberative potential is not present during the Deliberative Polling process, it will definitely not be part of everyday situations.

The second threat to external validity is the selection bias i.e., the representativeness of the sample. Traditional opinion polls can claim external validity if the sample is representative of the population, which makes generalization from the sample to the population possible. The Deliberative Poll also aims for representativeness between the participants and the Danish electorate, as the idea was to be able to present an insight into what the Danish electorate as such would think had they all been given

the chance to take part in the deliberative process. Dependent on the homogeneity, the size of the population, and the accuracy needed in the estimates, the simple random sampling would have provided an adequate sample. However, in reality as long as participation in the sample is not mandatory, self-selection procedures and some selection bias are inevitable.<sup>24</sup> The selection-bias represents a threat to external validity and thereby to what extent generalization to the population is possible. Two elements in the selection process are relevant to discuss in relation to the Deliberative Poll. First what is the extent of drop-outs or self-selection through the recruitment process? Is there room for bias, and secondly, do these selection procedures result in any bias? The recruitment procedures shown in table 1 on page 18 show each step of the selection procedure. The first room for bias is in the initial, random sampling on phone numbers. This sampling procedure has some built-in bias as some citizens do not have a phone and furthermore persons in small households with a phone have a higher chance of participating than persons in large households. More important, many people decline being part of the initial interview, and therefore they never receive the invitation to participate in the Deliberative Poll. As table 1 shows, more than 1,000 respondents, or about 40% of the initially contacted, declined to participate in the interview. The second large drop-out occurred in the recruitment process where 732 of the 1,702 persons who initially completed the interview showed an interest in taking part in the upcoming Deliberative Poll. Furthermore, a large drop-out in the days before the event was expected, but only 6% of the participants, who were registered the day before the event, did not show up at the event, which was few compared to other Deliberative Polls which have reported drop-out rates on the last day of up to 30%, e.g. 27% in Norway and 25% in Denmark (Aars & Offerdal, 2000:78-79; Fishkin, 1997; Hansen, 2000:15). The low drop-out in the last days prior to the event should probably be ascribed to the strong effort which was put into committing the participants to show up to the Deliberative Poll. The participants were contacted three times by mail and three times by phone in the three weeks' recruitment period. Finally 364 or 13% of the initially contacted took part in the Deliberative Poll. In traditional opinion polls, a high response rate is often

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<sup>24</sup> Even with mandatory selection procedures, some citizens would prefer the sanction rather than having to participate as indicated from the countries with compulsory voting as e.g. Australia.

seen as a sign of high quality as it leaves little room for any bias between the random sample and the sample completing the interview, and thereby strengthens the claim of external validity. The initial response rate was 60% which was slightly higher than what the polling agency usually obtains through simple random sampling. Compared to other polling agencies in Denmark, the response rate seems, however, satisfactory.<sup>25</sup> Compared to the commercial polling industry the response rate was very good as a response rate of 30% - 50% seems prevalent (Luskin & Fishkin, 2002; Asher, 2001; Carl Bro, 2001). However, the Danish National Institute of Social Research (SFI), one of the most appreciated polling agencies, has reported an average response rate of 77% on their face-to-face and telephone interviews during the period of 1995-1998 (SFI 2002). The response rate of recruitment interviews can, in these comparisons, be seen as relatively good. However, not as high as the best in the business. That only 13% of those initially contacted took part in the Deliberative Poll, seems quite alarming as it leaves plenty of room for self-selection and bias. A relevant comparison for this response rate would be other panel designs or experiments. Compared to different panel designs, where the respondents need only to devote a few minutes of their time for the interview, the 13% acceptance rate seems rather low. The first Danish election survey with waves running in 1971, 1972 and 1973 had a calculated response rate of 43%, conducted by SFI through face-to-face interview.<sup>26</sup> A recent Danish three-wave panel design with a 15-minutes telephone interview had reported an impressive response rate of 61% (Togebj, forthcoming). However, these comparisons do not seem fair as the participants in the Deliberative Poll had to invest much more time than respondents in usual panel designs. Furthermore, many other variables affect the response rate such as the length of the questionnaire, difficulty, actuality of the issue and time between the waves, which complicates a comparison. Compared to other national Deliberative Polls, the 13% response rate is the lowest reported. The acceptance rates have varied about 25%, and one - the American National Issue Conventions - had an acceptance rate as high as 36% (Fishkin & Luskin, 1999; Luskin et al., 2002; Luskin & Fishkin, 2002). The relatively higher acceptance rate

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<sup>25</sup> The polling industry has been reporting declining response rates in the last decade (Asher, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> The Danish Data Archive Survey no.: DDA-0007, DDA-0008 and DDA-0148.

in other national Deliberative Polls is first of all due to the fact that the participants were paid up to \$325 for their participation and, secondly, that the recruitment surveys were often done face-to-face. Sometimes a personal arrangement was also offered to the participants, e.g. arranging for babysitters or receiving help to milk one's cows as one farmer did (Merkle, 1996; Fishkin, 1997:180; see Hansen & Pedersen, 2001 for an overview). Although many resources were invested in the recruitment, such offers were not made to the participants and no cash honorarium was given to the participants. As mentioned, a gift was offered instead. When polling companies recruit participants for two hours focus groups, the acceptance rate is usually less than 10% of the people taking part in the interview. For a comparison: with an initial response rate of 60%, the equivalent acceptance rate would be only 6%.<sup>27</sup> The 364 persons had to spend an entire weekend at the experiment and travel to Odense. Hence, compared to a two hours focus group interview, the 13% is rather good. Furthermore, compared to recruiting for an experiment researchers often have a strong partiality for their own students. The Deliberative Poll has achieved much better external validity than these experiments.

To summarize the response and the acceptance rate discussion, the Deliberative Poll on the euro shows that the initial recruitment response rate of 60% is relatively good, whereas the 13% acceptance rate is on the low side compared to other national Deliberative Polls which leaves space for improvement, but nevertheless is higher than most other experiments. Another thing is, of course, that a sample of only 364 individuals produces a higher margin of error compared to larger surveys, and consequently larger difference is needed before a significant claim can be justified. However, a good response and acceptance rate only shows whether there is room for bias. What is more important is the extent to which the participants, who actually showed up at the Deliberative Poll, mirror the population at large? That is whether the low acceptance rate of 13% produced any biases.

To analyze any differences between the population and participants at the Deliberative Poll table 2.2 includes a comparison between the initial sample (N=1702) weighted according to the Danish electorate and the participants. Only key variables are included in table 2.2

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<sup>27</sup> Personal communication with PLS Rambøll in 2000 and Vilstrup Research in 1999.

whereas appendix I includes all 17 opinion questions. To assess the representativeness of the sample, the best comparison would be to compare the sample with census data, but relevant census data are seldom available and opinion and knowledge measurements are of course not present in census data. The second best comparison, which will be used here, is to use some of the socio-demographic variables from the census data, which are available and weight the recruitment sample accordingly. The weighted recruitment survey is therefore the best available proxy to estimate the representativeness of the participants. The social-demographic comparison is also possible and used in traditional opinion polls, but the Deliberative Polling design also enable to compare if the initial recruitment survey deviates on attitude and knowledge items from those participants, who eventually showed up at the Deliberative Poll. This double check is not possible in traditional opinion polls, where the researchers have to assume that if the sample mirrors socio-demographic characteristics it also mirrors attitude and knowledge variables. This assumption is not necessary in the Deliberative Poll as a comparison of participants and the recruitment sample on attitudinal items is possible. Luskin et al. (2002) use another strategy when comparing the representativeness of Deliberative Poll. They divide the recruitment sample into participants and non-participants and compare these two groups. However, this comparison assumes no bias between census and the recruitment interview and even a very good initial sample has some bias. In some cases for example, age in the initial sample may underestimate the number of young people in the population. They are again hard to convince to participate. In this case, a comparison between participants and non-participants would underestimate the difference. In other cases the opposite may be the case. To prevent this, the table compares participants to the entire recruitment sample weighted according to census data. A better comparison would have been to compare the participants directly with census data, but census data have proven difficult to find and to group in corresponding categories. It may be argued that this comparison between the interviewees in recruitment and the participants represents a problem as the participants are part of the recruitment sample and thus the participants are included in both groups. However, by weighing the recruitment data according to census data the data is approximated to mirror the population, and, secondly, the participants are only a minor proportion of the recruitment sample.

Table 2.2 shows a relatively large resemblance between the electorate and the participants. However, on a number of variables the relatively small differences seems statistically significant, partly due to the relatively large recruitment sample and the number of categories on the scales. One of the differences between the participants and the recruitment data is, not surprisingly, ‘interested in politics’, as interest in politics among participants is slightly higher than in the recruitment interview at large. Furthermore, participants supporting a yes to the euro and persons with a higher education are slightly overrepresented among the participants although the difference remains small. However, looking through all 17 opinion questions underlying the voting intention in the questionnaire only one show a significant difference (see appendix I). Accordingly, I will argue that resemblance between the initial sample and the participants seems to justify that the participants are a relatively good reflection of the population at large. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that it is debatable which characteristics it is relevant to mirror in the sample and that these characteristics do change over time and between contexts (Hansen & Pedersen 2001). Eventually, every selection process will show a difference between the selected and not-selected ones. As emphasized by Heinz Eulau (1969:101) “*The very fact of their having been elected or selected - having “elevated” through some mechanism of choice from one position into another - makes the “chosen” fundamentally different from their choosers.*”

**Table 2.2: Representativeness of the participants at time of recruitment (t0) (%)**

		Participants of the Recruitment Survey	
		Deliberative Poll	Recruitment Survey
<i>Gender</i> <sup>*,**</sup>	Male	58	49
	Female	42	51
<i>Age</i> <sup>*</sup>	18-30 years	17	23
	31-40 years	23	20
	41-60 years	41	34
	61+ years	19	23
<i>Education</i> <sup>*</sup>	None	2	3
	Lower secondary education	12	17
	Upper secondary education	51	51
	University degree	35	29
<i>Occupation</i>	Self-employed	5	4
	Private employee	57	58
	Public employee	38	38
<i>Place of living</i>	Rural area	5	5
	- 2,000 inhabitants	10	10
	2,001-10,000 inhabitants	18	21
	10,001+ inhabitants	67	64
<i>Member of a political party or group</i>	Yes	10	9
	No	90	91
<i>Interest in politics (mean)</i> <sup>**</sup>	Index (0-100)	59	50
<i>Expected vote at the referendum</i> <sup>*</sup>	Yes	45	39
	No	37	37
	Undecided	18	24

Note: 364 citizens participated in the Deliberative Poll. The recruitment survey was representative of the Danish electorate. The recruitment survey (N=1702) is weighted according to census data - age, gender and geography. \* indicates that the difference between the groups is significant at  $p < 0.05$  using a chi-square test for independence (2-tailed test). \*\* indicate that the mean between the groups is significantly different at  $p < 0.05$  using a test comparing the mean (2-tailed test). Age shows no significant difference if mean is compared.

As in any other experimental setting, the Deliberative Poll cannot claim that external and internal validity are fully accomplished. The self-selectiveness of the participants and the bias, e.g. towards higher political interest, compromise external validity and the lack of control compromises internal validity. The Deliberative Poll is, accordingly, also a compromise between the two forms of validity. In this perspective, the method has been criticized for not being cost-effective (Merkle, 1996), as the focus on bringing a representative group of citizens together is extremely costly. Other designs, e.g. with the use of internet, and other forms of communication technology, may soon prove better in terms of achieving external and internal validity as well as cost-effectiveness. Hopefully, the discussion and description of the Deliberative Poll has created methodological transparency, which enable and encourage the inclusion of methodological considerations in the preceding analysis, rather than neglecting them.

After having focussed in some detail on the experimental character of Deliberative Polling, the focus shifts to the democratic aspect of the Deliberative Poll. In section 2.2, the problems of combining the two principles of the Deliberative Poll - deliberation and representativeness - were discussed. Yet another problem is democratic legitimacy, which is in focus next.

## **2.6 The Deliberative Poll as a democratic innovation - the problem of legitimacy**

As discussed, the Deliberative Poll combines two normative, thus debatable, democratic principles - deliberation and representativeness - in one method. However another question remains - how can the focus and the combination of these two principles justify that the Deliberative Poll can claim legitimacy? The concept of democracy and legitimacy is often linked and democracy is often seen as a necessary premise for legitimacy. This section explores the Deliberative Poll from a legitimacy perspective and how the Deliberative Poll can claim legitimacy. In order to be able to answer this question, the discussion will first briefly focus on the concept of legitimacy and, secondly, compare the Deliberative Poll to institutionalized representative institutions exemplified by the institution of the parliament and referendum, which are emphasized by the present Western political systems and today often interpreted as the ideal type of legitimate institutions.

Legitimacy has been another all-embracing buzz-word in the debate regarding institutional setups in contemporary society. Especially in the debate on European integration, the concept has during the last decade been omnipresent. Even though the concept has been broadly and often vaguely defined, the concept is most often empirically operationalized as popular support or consent for given institutions or procedures (Karlsson, 2001; Blondel et al., 1998). This operationalization is applied despite of the fact that legitimacy is generally interpreted as “*rightfulness*” (Dahl, 1991:54; Heywood, 1997:193) and, accordingly, legitimacy is broader than just popular support. More broadly the concept of legitimacy has been described as “*the quality that transforms naked power into rightful authority*” (Heywood, 1999:141), “*the moralization of authority*” (Crook, 1987:553) or “*the quality of ascribed entitlement to exercise power*” (Birch, 2001:58). According to David Beetham(1991), at least three approaches to legitimacy can be identified. One approach to legitimacy is defined by legal experts, whose focus is on the resolution of legal disputes as a means of validating who or what is legally entitled to exercise power. In another approach, founded in the moral philosophy tradition, legitimacy is based on universal claims rather than the empirical context or what pertains to a given context or society. As opposed to these two approaches, social scientists approach legitimacy in order to identify the empirical consequences of legitimacy with regard to the character of, e.g. a political system in a particular context. The purpose is explanatory, rather than an attempt to justify legitimacy as done by philosophy or constitutional experts, who determine legitimacy from a legal perspective.

The approach followed by Max Weber is within the third category. He argues that legitimacy can be based on the following ideal-types of legitimate authority: 1) A legal-rational kind, where legitimacy is based on what is laid down in the constitution or in other laws; 2) A traditional kind, where legitimacy rests on the established belief and respect for long-established customs and traditions, which are often without further elaboration interpreted as commonly accepted; 3) A charismatic kind, where legitimacy rests on a devotion to a specific leader due to his or her personal capabilities such as charisma, heroism or competence. According to Weber, legitimacy can be deducted from any of the three ideal types even though the legal-rational kind is the most common (Weber, 1947). Beetham (1991) criticizes the Weberian typology for having become a straightjacket for

social scientists, where examples of legitimate systems have to be forced into the categories without taking the particular context into account. Accordingly, the Weberian typology does not adequately supply a means of explaining why people acknowledge the political system as legitimate at one time or context and not in another.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, as none of the three ideal-types are fully self-sufficient types of legitimacy, the Weberian typology does not recognize that the concept of legitimacy is multi-dimensional in its character. That is, legitimacy embodies several elements, but none of them are sufficient to secure legitimacy. Rather the elements are successive and cumulative, and full legitimacy is only secured when all of these are fulfilled. Thus, a political system can be more or less legitimate with regard to the extent to which the elements are fulfilled. In a legitimate political system the willingness to cooperate with the government or the obedience to the government is constituted by more than what may be created by punishment and reward, rather legitimacy is constituted by all three different elements of legitimacy. The elements, which Beetham (1991) advocates to constitute legitimacy, follow as well as deviate from the Weberian typology. Beetham's (1991) three sources of legitimacy can be labeled legality, justifiability and consent (Parkinson, 2003). The first source of legitimacy - legality - is conforming to established rules. This source includes the legal-rational kind in the Weberian typology, but it is broader as it includes a spectrum of unwritten or informal conventions and customs and practices which have set a precedence. Accordingly, this first source combines the first and second ideal-types in the Weberian typology. Beetham's (1991) second source of legitimacy - justifiability - is justified in shared beliefs between the government and the governed as well as within these groups. Thus, any political system relies greatly on a minimum of recognizably shared beliefs within a society in order to achieve legitimacy, which can be justifiable to the public. For example a representative system needs a minimum of shared beliefs indicating that representation is accepted, which is justifiable through emphasizing political equality or effectiveness. The third and final source of legitimacy - consent - rises from the actively expressed consent by those governed. This consent is often expressed through voting, which constitutes an expressed acknowledgment of the symbolic as well as normative nature of the selection procedure.

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<sup>28</sup> See also Barnard (2001) for additional discussion on this point.

Additionally, by voting, the electorate enters into a form of contract by delegating a mandate to those elected.

The following analysis of legitimacy of the Deliberative Poll is based on Beetham's typology. By using this typology the approach also leaves out Weber's charismatic kind of legitimacy as it is irrelevant in this case. The reason why the charismatic approach is considered irrelevant is, first of all, that in this case, the discussion is focussed on the method of the Deliberative Poll and, secondly, by recognizing charisma as a source of legitimacy will compromise political equality as it would give more weight to the say of some people rather than others.

Beetham's approach allows to discuss the legitimacy of the Deliberative Poll and compare it to elements of the institutionalized representative system. Nevertheless, the approach seems to neglect a fundamental question. That is, why citizens accept authority in the first place, or more specifically, why should citizens accept the authority of the Deliberative Poll? The question is somewhat answered by the Beetham's approach implies that the Deliberative Poll would be legitimized to the extent the Deliberative Poll is able to find support in the three sources of legitimacy - legality, justifiability, and consent. Another approach would have been to discuss the question from a social contract approach. However, the Beetham approach is used as it allows a more descriptive and empirical discussion rather than a discussion based more on political philosophy.

As with most concepts, if not all of them, the concept of legitimacy in political science is not value free. In Beetham's typology, one may question the minimum of the shared beliefs, is high turnout an adequate indicator of expressed consent, or are other forms of participation necessary as well? In this case, the vagueness in the typology is actually quite useful as it opens up for interpretation and the possibility of taking the specific context into account when assessing legitimacy. The vagueness also recognizes that procedures, institutions, or methods can be classified as more or less legitimate, rather than a neither nor distinction. The following discussion will also show that the sources of legitimacy are not watertight categories as they overlap and relate to each other, but the three sources of legitimacy provide a framework for the discussion.

The first source of legitimacy - conforming to established rules - is strongly present in most modern representative systems. Through this perspective, the parliament gains legitimacy from the constitution and other

formally ratified laws. In the Danish case, the referendum can also claim constitutional legitimacy e.g. in case of ceding sovereignty to inter-state or supra communities (The Danish Constitution §20). The Deliberative Poll has no such source of legitimacy as the Constitution does not approve or for that matter disapprove of the method of Deliberative Poll. Only the highly unlikely adding of the Deliberative Poll to the Constitution secures the Deliberative Poll with constitutional legitimacy. However, in the Danish case, a national referendum has also been applied in a consultative manner, which is not mentioned in the Constitution (see Buch & Hansen 2002 for a full discussion of the use of referendum in Denmark). Accordingly, the Deliberative Poll may also be used in a consultative manner if parliament so decides. Was the Deliberative Poll conducted on the initiative of the parliament, rather than on the initiative of researchers or the media, some source of legitimacy would be established. To what degree such a parliamentary outsourcing is acceptable depends, of course, on the second and third of Beetham's sources of legitimacy - shared beliefs and consent. In the source of legitimacy in conforming to established rules the argument also rests that customs, precedents or traditions without further elaboration justify a legitimacy claim. One Danish example is how negative parliamentarism, i.e. the forced resignation of a minister or the Government if a majority of the parliament expresses its discontent, was introduced by custom rather than by legal claim. Negative parliamentarism was applied only by custom from 1901 until 1953, when finally negative parliamentarism was included in the Constitution.

Another example is political parties which were for a long time considered undemocratic. In Denmark up to 1860 it was forbidden to refer to the members' party affiliation in the Danish parliament (Buch, 2001). However, since then political parties have been institutionalized as one of the most important cornerstones in modern democracy, even though they are seldom mentioned in any constitution. Despite the fact that today political parties are often mentioned in other laws, political parties were for a considerable time left with the legitimacy the parties could claim from the established tradition when running for office and acting on the political scene. Looking at the Deliberative Poll from this perspective, the more often the method is applied, the more legitimacy it will gain.

To aim to guarantee representativeness the Deliberative Poll uses selection by lot to select the participants. In contemporary society

selection by lot is seldom used excepts in traditional opinion polls. Selection of juries is also one of the few examples, where emphasis on representativeness, impartiality and reduction of the chance of the juries being subject to outside influence. Even though selection by lot is not a common practice when selecting citizens to the established and institutionalized political system, selection by lot is commonly accepted through the traditional opinion polls. Considering the high prevalence of traditional opinion polls and the impact of these polls on the political life and in the media, one might argue that selection by lot in the opinion polls has been established as a broadly accepted practice. Nevertheless, opinion polls were for many years considered with some suspicion by the established research community (Lazarsfeld, 1957; Berelson, 1956) Thus, as a minimum, the Deliberative Poll may claim (methodological) legitimacy with reference to traditional opinion polls. This is of course only the case if the recruitment procedures described in the previous section are respected.

Beetham's second source of legitimacy is a minimum of shared beliefs within society. If no such common framework exists, a political system must rely on legal legitimacy or sheer force to exercise its powers. In such a case, the political system undermines its normative base, which might weaken the voluntary rate of compliance of those governed. Open and free elections may be one example of a broadly shared belief within Western societies justifying the representative governmental system. The Deliberative Poll's emphasis on political equality in the form of selection by lot may rest on a shared belief in political equality, but compromises a somewhat shared belief that all citizens should take part in the democratic process, e.g. all citizens should take active part in selecting their leaders. Selection by lot gives all citizens an equal opportunity to be selected and thereby guaranteeing representativeness. However having an equal opportunity to be selected is not equivalent to the idea that all citizens should have the opportunity to participate in a democratic process, which is the case of a referendum. Accordingly, the Deliberative Poll only provides an equal opportunity to be selected, not an opportunity for everybody to participate and, thus, compromises a claim of full inclusiveness in the democratic process. Nevertheless, in this way the Deliberative Poll fulfills Dahl's (1989:109) first criterion of a democratic process by satisfying the demand of equal opportunity to participate.

Another, even more debated belief is that the selection

mechanisms of a democratic process should advance the most competent citizens. The advancement of the most competent citizens is not fulfilled in the case of the Deliberative Poll as selection by lot is a neutral mechanism. A comparison between selection by lot and selection by election relates also to the shared belief in a need for accountability. In the representative political system, election is not just a mechanism to choose the future representatives, it is also a way to hold the previously elected representatives accountable for their actions in the previous term. Thus, election has a retrospective as well as a progressive element. The participants in the Deliberative Poll are not held accountable for their actions or opinions in this way. If the participants' recommendations contradict the citizens' opinions, the citizens cannot make the participants accountable by electing someone else. As soon as the participants leave the Deliberative Poll, they are out of the political spotlight and are again anonymous citizens. The degree of anonymity of course relates to the size of demos. A Deliberative Poll, held on the national level, would *ceteris paribus* result in less social accountability than a Deliberative Poll on the local level as the chance of being confronted with the Deliberative Poll's recommendations by other citizens at the national level is less likely than Deliberative Poll held on the local level. On the other hand the interest of media in local compared with national Deliberative Polls is also smaller, which gives the opposite effect.

A second element in the discussion about accountability is that if implemented, the recommendations which the participants give in a Deliberative Poll also affect their own lives. Thus, the participants have no incentives to recommend something which conflicts with what they believe is the 'best' solution - on the contrary.

However, these two arguments relating to the size of demos and the incentive to aim at the 'best' solution, could also have been advocated in relation to the elected representatives. Thus, the argument does not provide a source of legitimacy which other representatives cannot claim.

A third element is that participation in a Deliberative Poll departs from a random sample so it cannot be argued that the participants seek participation for their own personal benefit as it can with regard to the elected representatives. The deliberative aspect of the Deliberative Poll may also, as argued by many deliberative democrats, advance a certain form of deliberative accountability. In a deliberative process, where arguments as well as opinions are answered by yet other arguments and opinions, a

broader focus tends to be fostered than just narrow self-interest. Once again this argument could also have been advanced in relation to representatives, however, it depends on the boundness of the representatives' mandate. If for example the mandate is fully bounded, deliberation would be without relevance, and the representatives would not be able to obtain deliberative accountability. Finally, transparency in the deliberative process, which is partly secured by the attention of media to the Poll, will give the participants the feeling that they are accountable for a broader public thus advancing social accountability in order to reach solutions justifiable by the common good.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, deliberative accountability at a Deliberative Poll may also be less prevalent as participants never have to meet each other again. The participants may, accordingly, be more likely to care less about other participants' concerns than if they had to face them on other occasions and in other contexts. This factor also differentiates the Deliberative Polling process from the relationship between members of parliament as the members of parliament have to work together on many issues over a much longer period of time. Even though deliberative accountability may be present among the participants at the Deliberative Poll, this accountability is not reinforced by the sanction of not being reelected. Thus, it is expected that the sense of the accountability experienced by the participants is less dominant than that of directly elected representatives. This conclusion also follows the traditional debate on accountability in democratic theory where authority and responsibility go hand in hand.

Another aspect of the Deliberative Poll's emphasis on deliberation, rests on a broader notion that opinion exchange is part of the democratic system, but again deliberation may compromise political equality as an underlying notion is that deliberative opinions are normatively better and represent a qualitative improvement to the raw and non-deliberative opinions. Accordingly, the Deliberative Poll aims to fulfill procedural legitimacy. That is, the method relies on and accentuates the process of information and deliberation. Whereas the procedural legitimacy of the Deliberative Poll rests on the processes the method accentuates, substantive legitimacy of the Deliberative Poll is reached to the extent that

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<sup>29</sup> Whether deliberative accountability is present during the Deliberative Poll on the euro will be analyzed in the following chapters.

the Deliberative Poll produces wiser decisions in the sense that the process allow the participants to reach decisions based on informed choice (Cohen, 1996). In this way, the Deliberative Poll relies on the argument that through ongoing deliberation, opinions and values are reexamined and new ideas may prevail. Thus the Deliberative Poll opposes sources of legitimacy relying on perceptions of citizens opinions and values as fixed choices. Furthermore, the procedural legitimacy in the Deliberative Poll relies on the existence of some kind of shared belief supporting the process the method accentuates. Thus, it comes down to whether balanced information and deliberation among equals are adequately shared beliefs in society.

Looking at the Danish traditions for general education and the deliberative ideal of the Danish Folk High School, these ideals are well-known and exercised in Denmark. Accordingly, the Deliberative Poll's emphasis on representativeness and deliberation has the potential for a minimum of shared belief. Nevertheless, the arguments supporting any belief in this context of democracy is strongly depending on the democratic theory frame of reference, which is ultimately a normative choice.

The third source of legitimacy is expressed consent by the governed. A consent which not only is tacit i.e., absent of civil disobedience, but a consent that also actively expresses support to the existing institutions. High turnout has already been mentioned as an example of this source of legitimacy. Another is the citizens' willingness to run and be elected for office. Accordingly, one might argue that 13% of the random sample, which eventually participated in the Deliberative Poll, indicates only a moderate consent to the method. On the other hand the fact that almost 10% of all Danes followed a part of the Deliberative Poll on national television shows a broad interest to the idea.

The discussion about legitimacy, in relation to the Deliberative Poll framed by the three-fold typology, does not capture the many other differences between parliamentary practices and the Deliberative Poll.

One difference worth emphasizing is the predefined and limited agenda at the Deliberative Poll. In order to setup a questionnaire, make arrangements with relevant speakers, prepare the information material, etc. the organizers have to narrow down the agenda. Thus, the participants cannot freely choose the topic for deliberation. If the aim is to communicate what at a the given time is salient in the citizens' mind on any topic, the method would fail. However, the aim is only to communicate experiences

and opinions on a specific topic. Nevertheless, at the Deliberative Poll on the euro there were particularly measures taken to encourage the discussion on the euro to depart from the participants' own understanding of the issue, as the group discussions started out with a broad discussion trying to identify what the participants considered as the most important issue with regard to the single currency. A limited agenda makes it less likely that logrolling is part of the deliberative process.

Logrolling was also disadvantaged by the fact that the only collective decisions that the groups at the Deliberative Poll had to make was what question to ask to the different panels, to whom the question should be addressed and who in the groups should raise the question. Thus the potential logrolling was limited to this aspect of this process. However, it is quite likely that it was used to solve some disputes about which question to raise.<sup>30</sup> In this regard, the Deliberative Poll does not differ from other political processes.

However, one aspect which makes the process at a Deliberative Poll fundamentally different from parliamentary practices is the absent of collective decisions, beside the less relevant for an outsider, the phrasing of the questions. The lacking aim of collective decisions and the emphasis on aggregation of post-deliberative preferences make the deliberative process fundamentally different from parliamentary practices aimed at collective decision e.g. draw up laws. In this light, critics would argue that the Deliberative Poll may entrench lines of conflict between individuals and not pave the road for collective decision. In this light the Deliberative Poll invites to radical individualism and arguments and opinions based on self-interest rather than its aims at collective will. Furthermore, it is argued that even though deliberation might create the necessary conditions for reasonable decision-making, the actual decision is the culmination where individual preferences are converted into reality which forces the participants to make an actual choice. Thus, the decision defines choices whereas deliberation only identifies options (Barber, 1984:201-202). Accordingly, the Deliberative Polls' decoupling of decision and deliberation constitute a challenge to the idea that legitimate practices must be aimed at the common good. On the other hand, from a deliberative democratic

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<sup>30</sup> One indication that this actual happen is that some groups decided to pose more or fewer questions than the two to three questions they were allowed to in order to find a compromise.

perspective it would be argued that deliberative accountability, insofar that arguments must be backed with reason, forces the participants to justify their claims in terms of collective reasons. Thus, even without an *a priori* aim on decision, general considerations will be included in the process. Whether or not deliberation without the aim of collective decision considers the common good is not to be concluded theoretically, but left to the empirical analysis in the following chapters. However, a cautious conclusion must follow the proclaimed idea behind the method of the Deliberative Polling as a method only aiming at communicating post-deliberative opinions to the decision-makers and, thus, as only preliminary to actual decision-making.

The above discussion of the Deliberative Poll has followed a rather narrow perspective on legitimacy. The discussion has shown that the Deliberative Poll lacks legitimacy within all sources of legitimacy when compared to referendums titled in the constitution or well-established parliamentary practices. However, within each source, the discussion has also shown that the method has a potential of gaining legitimacy. This immediate lack of legitimacy is also the reason why the Deliberative Poll in its present form should constitute only a method, aiming at allowing a minipopulus mirroring demos in terms of socio-demographic characteristics and opinions, to communicate different social experiences and reflective deliberative opinions into the political process. Accordingly, the method does not constitute an authority which acts on behalf of demos, but rather facilitates an advisory or consultative purpose. Therefore, a concluding remark must be that the Deliberative Poll in its present form at a minimum represents an alternative to other opinion measurement tools which opens up for post-deliberative opinion and, secondly, the method may also supplement, but not replace the more established channels for political communication.

## 2.7 Summary

This chapter has discussed the Deliberative Poll in a methodological and democratic perspective. The idea behind the Deliberative Poll is to bring a representative sample of citizens together and let them deliberate with each other, leading experts, and politicians. Before, during and after this process the opinions of the citizens are polled. Whereas the first poll reflects the citizens' spontaneous opinions, as traditional opinion polls, the last poll

reflects the opinions of a representative sample of citizens that have been provided with the opportunity to engage in careful deliberation on the issue before giving their opinions. Accordingly, the Deliberative Poll gives an indication of what the public would think if they were given the same opportunity to learn about the issue and debate it with fellow citizens before stating their opinion.

It is argued that the Deliberative Poll is only one method among many, which in the last decades have been advanced in order to communicate more reflective opinions of the public to the political system. Nevertheless, the Deliberative Poll is on many aspects the most ambitious of these methods, as the Deliberative Poll simultaneously aims to achieve representativeness and deliberation.

To achieve representativeness in the Deliberative Poll the participants are selected by lot. Selection by lot was by Aristotle, Montesquieu and Rousseau emphasized as a democratic mechanism of selection as it treated everyone equal and was a neutral mechanism which could not be corrupted by e.g., campaigning. Selection by lot was applied in ancient Athens and the republics of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but today selection of juries is one of the only examples of the use of selection by lot.

In the American constitutional debates the desire for representativeness and deliberation are also reflected in the debates between the Anti-federalists and the Federalists. On the one hand the Anti-federalists advocated that the representatives must be a *mirror* of the population. On the other hand the Federalists gave much more weight to that the representative body should act as a *filter* where the raw opinions of the public through deliberation would be transformed into considering the common good. The Deliberative Poll aims to achieve the mirror as well as the filter. The mirror is achieved by the use of selection by lot. The filter is achieved by giving the participants opportunity to deliberate before deciding on the issue.

The Danish national Deliberative Poll on the euro was conducted in August 2000, one month prior to the national referendum on whether Denmark should join the single European currency. A representative sample of 364 Danish citizens participated in the Deliberative Poll. During a weekend the participants debated the euro with each other, leading experts and leading politicians including the prime minister and the

leading opposition leaders. The participants were polled four times. The first poll was conducted as the participants were initially contacted. The second poll was conducted when the 364 participants arrived on site. The third poll was conducted at the end of the Deliberative Poll and finally the participants were polled by phone three months after the event. To a large extent the questions posed to the participants were identical, but questions evaluating the deliberative process were also included. Furthermore, the experiment included several control groups and interviews with moderators etc. In this way the experimental design of the Danish Deliberative Poll on the euro was improved compared to most other Deliberative Polls which only include a poll when the participants are recruited and a poll when the participants leave the event.

Compared to a true experimental design the Deliberative Poll, however, falls short in some aspects. First of all the Deliberative Poll lacked control of the treatment effects. The treatment effect in the period between recruitment and the participants' arrival to the Deliberative Poll is the balanced information material, but many other things also happen in this period. The participants may have discussed the issue with friends and family or become more attentive to the media in the same period. In this way the design is not able to differentiate between the many different stimuli to which the participants are exposed. The same is also true during the Deliberative Poll. Thus the design needs to be improved in order to pinpoint the actual causal effect between the variable measured. E.g. by adding more control groups and waves of questioning.

The Deliberative Poll lacks legitimacy within all sources of legitimacy when compared to referendums titled in the constitution or well-established parliamentary practices. Nevertheless the method has a potential of gaining legitimacy. The immediate lack of legitimacy is also the reason why the Deliberative Poll in its present form should constitute only a method, which can communicate the opinions of a reflective public into the political process. Accordingly, the method does not constitute an authority which acts on behalf of demos, but rather facilitates an advisory or consultative purpose. Nevertheless, the Deliberative Poll in its present form represents a possible alternative to other opinion measurement tools which opens up for post-deliberative opinions. Secondly, the Deliberative Poll may also supplement, but not replace the more established channels for political communication.



**Part II**  
**The Normative Claims of**  
**Deliberative Democracy**

## Chapter 3 - Deliberative Democracy

Whereas chapter two focused on the method of Deliberative Polling, this chapter discusses in detail the tradition of deliberative democracy. The discussion is divided into four sections. In section 3.1, the view of five political thinkers on deliberation are discussed. The discussion aims to show that deliberation is not a new phenomenon only considered by contemporary deliberative democrats, but an element of democracy well-rooted in the republican tradition of democracy.

In section 3.2, the institutionalization of deliberation in contemporary government is discussed. It is argued that deliberation in some aspects is a well-established part of contemporary political practices.

Section 3.3 puts more emphasis on some of the explanations of why deliberation, as an important element in democracy, in recent years has been rediscovered in academic writing. To show that deliberation has been rediscovered, a survey in the literature of deliberative democracy is conducted.

The most important step is section 3.4 which is based on the three previous sections. Section 3.4 discusses some of the controversies within the theory of deliberative democracy and aims to identify the core of the theory. Deliberation is defined and the different elements of the definition are discussed in a broad context of deliberative democracy.

Section 3.5 discusses whether deliberative democracy should be considered as yet another ideal model of democracy and section 3.6 summarizes the chapter.

### **3.1 Deliberation as an important feature of democratic theory**

As discussed in the previous chapter, political discussions and deliberation have been important elements in democratic theory and thus, even though with varying intensity, deliberation has always been a central feature of democracy. In ancient Greece, as well as in the city-states of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, citizens would gather in the assembly to debate issues before deciding. In the etymological sense, the term deliberation can be traced to Latin, where *libra* translates into scale, weight, or balance. In this sense, deliberation refers to de-weight, de-scale, or de-balance and is often translated into careful consideration and discussion.

In this section, the focus will be on how deliberation has been applied by four political thinkers: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Alexis de Tocqueville, John Stuart Mill, and John Dewey. As a supplement to these four famous political thinkers, I will introduce the Danish theologian and professor Hal Koch (1945/1991) as the deliberative democrat he was, although never directly identified as such.

However I will not go into detail about these political theorists' complex political theories, but only briefly focus on how deliberation is considered in different parts of their work. I also recognize that the political theorists discussed deliberation in various spheres of public life, but nevertheless all in the context of democracy. It is only intended to show how these political theorists discussed related aspects of democracy, however, fully recognizing that their theories are of a much more complex and sophisticated nature. The following discussions aim to show that deliberation is not a new phenomenon, only considered by contemporary political theorists and thinkers in the last decades, but has been part of a long republican tradition. The aim of showing how deliberation has been considered by these political theorists throughout history would receive critique from the developing approach of conceptual history or *Begriffsgeschichte*.<sup>31</sup> This approach argues that concepts cannot meaningfully be considered without reference to the social and political history of their time. Any conceptual analysis not providing the context would fail to gain the full range of the use of a concept.

In conceptual history every concept has many meanings and is historically contested in its specific period. In this way, the approach is more constructive and, accordingly, provides a more relativistic understanding of a concept's history. A conceptual historical approach is thus not just a matter of finding the specific meaning of a word or term and its shift in meaning through history, but also of seeking to provide an understanding of how a concept infuses society and the environment with meaning and connotation. Accordingly, a conceptual historical approach rejects that there is one true or natural meaning of a term and, thus, a conceptual historical approach strongly opposes etymologies as something fixed with permanent definitions and meanings of words and concepts. The approach of

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<sup>31</sup> See Richter (1995) and Martin (1997) for an overview of different approaches to conceptual history and Gadamer (1989) for an alternative approach.

conceptual history can also be considered as a counteraction to traditions, which have been accused of having separated ideas and concepts from their political, social context and of having disregarded that many concepts have been used for rhetorical purposes in specific political disputes. In this way, conceptual approaches oppose traditions which have treated theories and concepts completely autonomously, free-floating and without relation to the concepts' position or social contexts. On the contrary, conceptual history accentuates the necessity of incorporating social and political history and historical semantics. As such the approach rejects historical semantics which only seeks to determine the meaning of a single term without also discussing the larger structure of meaning in which the term is embedded.

In relation to the purpose of grasping how different political thinkers have considered deliberation in their work, the approach of conceptual history would as a minimum require that analyses must include some broad contextual analyses of the political thinkers' work and that such analyses must reflect the political environment of their time. Such comprehensive analyses are, however, well beyond the narrow focus presented here. The focus here is only to give a few examples of how these five political thinkers used the idea of deliberation in various part of their work. Firstly, in order to incorporate some of the ideas of conceptual history, the following discussions on the theorists' political ideas in relation to deliberation will also include some broad contextual information. Secondly, the discussions will search for the meaning of deliberation rather than take the definition of deliberation as *a priori* to the reading of the political theorist. I hope that such a discussion of the earlier political theorists can inspire the contemporary discussion on deliberative democracy without raising any claim that every interpretation of the earlier political theorists should constitute a guideline of the contemporary discussion on deliberative democracy. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify that the concept of deliberative democracy has a strong historical legacy in the republican tradition of democratic theory. The following brief discussions of the political thinkers indicate, that the interpretation of deliberation seems relatively stable throughout the five political thinkers' writings. The stability indicates that in this case it would be less problematic to compare the use of the term deliberation over time and context. As such the analysis follows more the line of Gadamer (1989), who argues that some kind of natural understanding between individuals exists, which makes it possible

to relate and understand writings from other contexts and generations. In this way, any reading of a text may contribute to productive reinterpretation influenced by the interpreters' own historical legacies (Lübcke, 1982; Bukdahl, 1979). Accordingly, I also position my analysis to extreme interpretations of conceptual history, where it becomes impossible to understand what earlier political theorists discuss in their work and where conceptual history, thus, is forced into a descriptive positivism averting comparisons over time.

### *Jean Jacques Rousseau on deliberation*

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was one of the first political thinkers who had a plebeian background and stayed rather poor during his entire life. His background may be part of the explanation why he was so concerned about political equality in a time dominated by the rational outlook of the Enlightenment. Rousseau continued the tradition, the social contract theories of Hobbes (1651) and Locke (1690), but because of his strong belief in liberty, he e.g. rejected Hobbes' positions that the individual must be completely submissive to the sovereign. Rather in Rousseau's social contract, everyone submits to all and, thus, to nobody in particular and, accordingly, the individual remains just as free as before the contract, as each individual gains an equivalent share of the whole for any losses as well as an increased capacity to preserve what he owns (Rousseau, 1762:455-456). Rousseau is one of the first political thinkers since the ancient Greeks, who explicitly emphasizes deliberation in the political process. The strong belief in peoples' sovereignty, and their right of self-government, lead Rousseau to argue for direct or 'city-state' democracy, where citizens would be able to take a direct part in the decision-making process. Thus, governing by representatives should not be tolerated as it would enslave the people and violate its right to self-government. As Rousseau emphasizes in his famous statement about the people of England: "*The people of England regards itself as free; but it is grossly mistaken; it is free only during the election of the members of parliament. As soon as they are elected, slavery overtakes it, and it is nothing*" (Rousseau, 1762:470). In the process of self-government, deliberation is essential for Rousseau as it transforms self-interest into a common interest or, in Rousseau's own words "...*particular wills are*

*substituted for general will in public deliberation,...*” (Rousseau, 1762:472)<sup>32</sup> and “*There are two general rules that may serve to regulate this relation [the relation between the particular wills and the general will]: First, the more grave and important the questions discussed, the nearer should the opinion that is to prevail approach unanimity. Secondly, the more the matter in hand calls for speed the smaller the prescribed difference in the number of votes may be allowed to become: where an instant decision has to be reached, a majority of one vote should be enough*” (Rousseau, 1762:472).<sup>33</sup> While the former quote emphasizes deliberation as a means to transform self-interest to common interest, the latter quote states that, if important questions are at stake,

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<sup>32</sup> The French original reads “... *substituait des volontés particulières à la volonté générale dans les délibérations publiques,...*” (Rousseau, 1762b:244, orthography modernized). It must be noted that accordingly to Rousseau (1762:459) if parties and fractions are formed it will ruin the capacity of deliberation to generate the general will as fractions and parties reduce the numbers of particular wills. Thus, Rousseau warns against the creation of parties, but not against the process of deliberation.

<sup>33</sup> The French original reads “*Deux maximes générales peuvent servir à régler ces rapports: l'une, que plus les délibérations sont importantes et graves, plus l'avis qui l'emporte doit approcher de l'unanimité: l'autre, que plus l'affaire agitée exige de célérité, plus on doit resserrer la différence prescrite dans le partage des avis; dans les délibérations qu'il faut terminer sur-le-champ, l'excédent d'une seule voix doit suffire.*” (Rousseau, 1762b:244-245, orthography modernized). There seems to be some ‘difficulties’ in translating the quote as Rousseau, 1762:472; Rousseau, 1762c:391; Rousseau, 1762d:148; and Rousseau, 1762e:154; all come to different translations of the quote. Especially the term “*les délibérations*” has been translated into different terms “*reconciliations*” (Rousseau 1762d), “*discussion*” (Rousseau 1762; 1762c) and even left out (Rousseau, 1762e), which probably is part of the explanation why Rousseau is seldom quoted on this aspect of his theory. Manin (1987) argued quite to the contrary of the above reading of Rousseau that Rousseau uses the term deliberation in the sense of decision. Manin (1987) comes to this conclusion first, by claiming that only a decision can be morally right or not, not a process of exchanging arguments. Second, because Rousseau believed that decision-making is essentially self-evident and, accordingly, does not need deliberation. However, Manin (1987) seems to be quite alone with this interpretation of Rousseau. The more commonly applied interpretation of Rousseau is that the decision is expressed through majority vote, which defines the general will. Thus, public deliberation is applied before the vote and the decision (Rousseau, 1762:459; 471).

deliberation should approach unanimity and the faster a decision is needed, the smaller the difference should be between the opinions during deliberation. As will be obvious later in this chapter, this view on deliberation as a means to transform opinions toward a unanimous common interest, also prevails in today's approaches to deliberation.

Even though the above reading of Rousseau betokens Rousseau's partiality for deliberation, he also warns against "*long debates, dissensions and tumult proclaim the ascendancy of particular interests and the decline of the State*" (Rousseau, 1762:471). In this way Freeman (2000:377) and Elster (1998:14) interpret Rousseau as being against deliberation. Nevertheless, it could also be argued that Rousseau rather warns against distorted deliberation, that is, if the deliberation is too long combined with tumult. Regardless of the interpretation of Rousseau, the above examples show that for centuries the concept of deliberation has been a relevant concept in theories of democracy.

#### *Alexis de Tocqueville on deliberation*

Another important political observer is Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859), who is often quoted on his fascination of the American society during his studies in the 1830s. Especially Tocqueville's fascination of the participation in local institutions, the voluntary associations and civil society in general is often highlighted in his writings (e.g., Barber, 1984:234-235; Mansbridge, 1980/1983:41). Thus, Tocqueville is interpreted as an advocate of what, at a later stage, has been known as communitarianism (Putnam, 2000:24). Deliberation and discussion are also part of Alexis de Tocqueville's fascination of the American society as described in "*Democracy in America*". This fascination emerges for example as he describes the debate culture of Americans, where he claims that Americans find such amusement by deliberation that to a certain extent they have substituted theater entertainment with debate clubs (Tocqueville, 1835:289). Tocqueville also describes how discussions are carried out as long as the majority is undecided, "*but as soon as its decision is irrevocably pronounced, everyone is silent, and the friends as well as the opponents of the measure unite in assenting to its propriety*" (Tocqueville, 1835:304). This description shows how discussion was very important in the decision-making procedures, but also that everyone, according to Tocqueville, united on the decision as soon as it was taken. Deliberation in the juries of the 1830s America is the

institution which Tocqueville describes as the “*most efficacious means for the education of the people which society can employ*” (Tocqueville, 1835:330). But the juries are not only important due to their educational effect, but also because they promote the citizens’ attention to the common good. “*By obliging men to turn their attention to other affairs than their own, it rubs off that private selfishness which is the rust of society*” (Tocqueville, 1835:329). As in the writing of Rousseau, Tocqueville emphasizes how discussions can remove citizens’ narrow focus on self-interest and promote broad attention to society.

### *John Stuart Mill on deliberation*

As discussed in the previous chapter, John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) also emphasized the educational effect of participation and deliberation. In his own words “*...,the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns - habituating them to act from public or semipublic motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another*” (Mill, 1859/1962:243-244). Mill’s strong advocacy of liberty of speech has also relevance for the reason why deliberation has been justified as an important element of the political process. Mill summarizes the arguments for liberty of speech on four grounds. First, if an opinion is not allowed to be expressed, how would we know whether it is true or not? By denying an opinion to be expressed we assume our own infallibility that is we assume the current truth is unquestionable. Second, even if the silenced opinions are not true, they may be part of a new perception of the truth and it is only by the collision of different opinions that the entire truth will prevail. Third, even in the case where the current perception of the truth is entirely correct, liberty of speech is a necessity. Otherwise the truth would turn into prejudice and people would forget the rational grounds on which the truth was based. Finally, the meaning of the truth will be endangered, if the freedom of expression is violated as the truth becomes a formal profession and prevents the development of the current belief based on rational arguments or personal experiences (Mill, 1859/1962:180-181). From the four above reasons it is clear that Mill argues for liberty of speech as a means to reach a “*truth*”, but looking at Mill’s four grounds they also form a strong argument for deliberation to be part of the political process

to secure a decision based on “*rational grounds*”.

The aim of this brief discussion was to demonstrate that deliberation is not just a contemporary phenomenon developed in the twentieth century, but has a long tradition in the republican tradition of democratic theory. By having shown that elements of deliberation appear in the writings of Rousseau, Tocqueville and Mill, I consider this aim fulfilled.

### *John Dewey on deliberation*

In recent writings, the American philosopher and educational theorist John Dewey (1859-1952) has been put forward as the first twentieth century political thinker, who advocated the need of giving deliberation a more central position in democratic theory (Eriksen & Weigård, 1999:152; Eriksen, 1995). In his work on democracy, Dewey argues that the voting procedures and experts’ decisions in government need to be supplemented by popular participation, otherwise democracy will turn into technocracy, because a class of experts will rule remote from every common interest. Even when decisions are carried out through majority rule, public consultation is important as it allows interest to be created, articulated and communicated into the political system (Dewey 1927:364-365). Thus for Dewey “*The essential need,..., is the improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasions*” (Dewey, 1927:365).

### *Hal Koch on deliberation*

In 1945 Hal Koch (1904-1963), with the purpose of advocating general education in the post-war period wrote a relevant book in this context with the title “*What is democracy?*”. As such the book and his lectures held prior to the book on Grundtvig (1783-1872), had a strong emphasis on general education. Koch himself considered this work as his contribution to the Danish resistance against the totalitarian regime of Nazi Germany. In this way, the book is infused with a strong belief in general education leading to democracy and liberty. In his book he emphasized deliberation as the essence of democracy. Thus, democracy could not be defined simply by a model or a system, as democracy is a way of life and a frame of mind and, as such, much more comprehensive and complex than any definition considering democracy purely as a method using election and voting procedure to reach decisions on behalf of society. Democracy for Koch is

the deliberative process between conflicting actors who carefully examine the issues at stake in a sincere attempt through deliberation to reach a more truthful and justified understanding of any conflicting interest. As such “*It is the deliberation (the dialog) and the mutual understanding and respect, that are the nature of democracy*” (Koch, 1945/1991:16, own translation). This suggests that a decision based on a deliberative process does not serve only a single person or class, but is concerned with the common good (ibid:20). In Koch’s view, voting is only a justified and legitimized democratic procedure if voting is conducted after the issue has been carefully deliberated. As such, the distribution of votes indicates how effective the deliberation has been in pursuing a decision considering the common good. In this way, any democratic decision is always relative and only an approximation of the “*right*” decision and, thus, the deliberative procedure never stops, but is a continuous process (ibid:24-25). If the attempt to reach a mutual understanding of the conflict fails, society is, according to Koch, bound to end in a situation that reminds us of Hobbes’ state of nature, in which people’s lives are considered as “*solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short*”, and where each individual only tries to maximize his own self-interest (Hobbes, 1651:76). In this way, Koch did not see any true alternative to deliberation.

In section 3.3, where the contemporary version of deliberative democracy is discussed, it will be evident how Hal Koch’s thoughts in many ways are quite similar to deliberative democrats of today.

Dewey and Koch both emphasized the educational aspect of the democratic process and in particular they both specifically accentuate the deliberative aspect of democracy. Once again it is exemplified that deliberation is not a new phenomenon only considered by contemporary political theorists, but part of a continuous development of deliberative thoughts.

As the above brief discussion of the political thinkers has emphasized, there exists a long tradition in democratic theory to emphasize the importance of deliberation. This observation is also supported by the discussions in the previous chapter where it was shown how James Madison advocated the filter of deliberation through which public opinion must be matured in order to improve its quality and to include the common interest. However, it is important to understand the difference between the arguments that the thinkers advocate. On the one hand they argue that

deliberation is needed because the poor (pure) quality of the public's raw opinions and deliberation encourages substitution of self-interest for common interest. On the other hand deliberation is needed because deliberation implies a stronger popular control of the decision-making procedures. The two arguments are not contradictory or mutually exclusive, but the two arguments represent two very different assumptions about popular control and the quality of public opinion.

### **3.2 Deliberation in government today**

Contemporary political democracy systems are almost without exception in the form of representative democracy, where universal suffrage, utilized in open, free and periodical elections, and protection of basic rights (e.g., freedom of expression and association, etc.) represent the cornerstones of political equality and liberty. In many cases the deliberative aspects of representative political system are institutionalized in the procedures within this system. A Bill for example must be read a certain number of times in parliament or it must go through several readings in different houses before it can be ratified and turned into law. The several readings give the public opportunity to object to the bill as well as it allows several parliamentary debates on the issue. In the British case as well as in the Danish case, a bill must be read three times before it can be ratified (§41 of the Danish Constitution; Rasmussen, 1969:162-163; Petersen, 1946:271). Even though these institutionalized decision-making procedures show that in some cases deliberation has found its way into the constitutional frame, it is in the committees of government, which only enjoys weak constitutional institutionalization, where deliberation is mostly realized and carried out. Besides the traditional committees within the parliamentary system, many countries also have appointed special extra-parliamentary committees of various sorts. In the Danish case, special standing committees are appointed by the government to deliberate on issues such as ethical questions, ethnic equality or new technology. In these extra-parliamentary settings laymen and experts deliberate on these questions in order to advise parliament before a decision is taken (e.g., *Etisk Råd*, 2002; *Nævnet for Etnisk Ligestilling*, 2002). In Norway a special commission on 'values' was appointed in 1997 by the government to deliberate on the basic values of the Norwegian society (*Verdikommisjon*, 2002). However, the focus was on the traditional committees within the congressional system, when Joseph

M. Bessette (1980; 1984) as the first coined the term ‘deliberative democracy’ in his discussion on the American Congress. Deliberation, according to Bessette (1984), is carried out by those holding formal positions in government, this may be elected representatives or appointed or elected staff and it may include interest groups in some cases. Deliberation may be conducted on the floor of the House or Senate, in committees or between legislators’ staff. Accordingly, deliberation is limited to government and not extended to the ordinary citizens’ involvement in decision-making as is the case of the Deliberative Poll, or the model of Citizens’ Juries as described in the previous chapter. Recently other studies on comitology and committees have also used the frame of deliberative democracy on the national level (e.g., Spörndli, 2002) and in the context of the European Union (e.g., Neuhold, 2001). Yet another field where a deliberation framework has been applied, is the studies of juries’ deliberation (Sanders, 1997; Sunstein, 2000).<sup>34</sup> Habermas’s (1996) notion of deliberative politics also considers deliberation more broadly, that is, deliberation within civil society and social movements. In section 3.4, I will compare Bessette’s notions of deliberation with other deliberative democrats’ notions of deliberation in order to develop a tangible and well-defined notion of deliberation. However, the next section will examine why deliberation within a decade has become omnipresent in democratic theory.

### **3.3 Democratic theory takes a deliberative turn**

To some extent the continuous debate on contemporary democracy and the debate within political theory reflect the complexity and challenge with which society is confronted. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the focus was the competitive and pluralistic element of representative democracy (e.g., Schumpeter, 1942/1975; Dahl, 1956; Hayek, 1960) whereas in the late 1960s and the 1970s, the participatory model of democracy began to flourish (e.g., Etzioni, 1968; Pateman, 1970; Macpherson, 1977; Mansbridge, 1980/1983). The participatory turn in democratic theory soon was soon heavily criticized by a very mixed group of liberal democrats (e.g., Nozick, 1974; Rawls, 1971). In the 1980s, the debate between the communitarians and the liberals dominated (e.g., Sandel, 1982; MacIntyre,

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<sup>34</sup> The deliberative frame has also been applied within research in planning and evaluation (e.g., House & Howe, 1999; Fischer & Forester, 1993; Fischer, 1995; Hansen, 2003b).

1981; Barber, 1984; Etzioni, 1995). From the beginning of the 1990s, the debate has again changed its focus inspired by a devotion to the deliberative element of democracy (e.g., Fishkin, 1991; Dryzek, 1990; Habermas, 1996; Bohman, 1996; Gutmann & Thomsen, 1996).

As shown, the term deliberation and its use in relation to the concept of democracy has a long tradition back to ancient Greece and deliberation has achieved attention in the debate between important political thinkers ever since. However, the term deliberative democracy was rediscovered in the late 1980s. In recent work many writers claim that in recent years the attention to the concept of deliberation has increased (e.g. Bohman & Regh, 1997), but so far few have presented any empirical indication for this claim.

But before presenting an empirical indication of the fact that deliberation has experienced increased attention, there is a need to clarify two central figures in modern political theory and their views on deliberation. In some sense it can be argued that John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas are the founding fathers of contemporary deliberative democracy, because deliberation prevails in various forms and with different emphasis throughout their work. John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas are probably the two most influential, contemporary, political philosophers and both are part of the explanation why deliberation in various forms today seems omnipresent in large parts of political and democratic theory. The work of the two political philosophers has also greatly inspired two important and distinguishable forms of deliberative democracy represented by Bohman (1996), greatly inspired by Habermas, and Gutmann & Thompson (1996) strongly influenced by Rawls. Accordingly, the legacy from the two political philosophers' writings is part of the core identity of deliberative democracy in its present form.

One of the essential questions, which John Rawls (1971) confronts in his work, is which theory of justice can be considered fair for a society. The process of choosing these principles should, accordingly, be drawn from a dialectic process where the developing concept of justice is confronted by our considered convictions of justice in an imaginary situation where everyone is equal and deprived of information about their own particular case now and in the future. Through deliberation Rawls argues that a reflective equilibrium will prevail. In Rawls' later work (1996; 1997), deliberation is also important and is especially prevalent in his

concept of “*ideal of public reason*”. Rawls (1996) argues, that if questions of basic justice or constitutional essentials are at stake, public reasoning should be the basic method to settle these disputes. Public reasoning refers to an ideal where citizens are ready to explain their views to other citizens. Such public reasoning should be based on what is widely accepted and justifiable to all citizens and put in terms that the listening citizens find reasonable and are expected to find consistent with basic principles such as freedom and equality (Rawls, 1996:213-225).

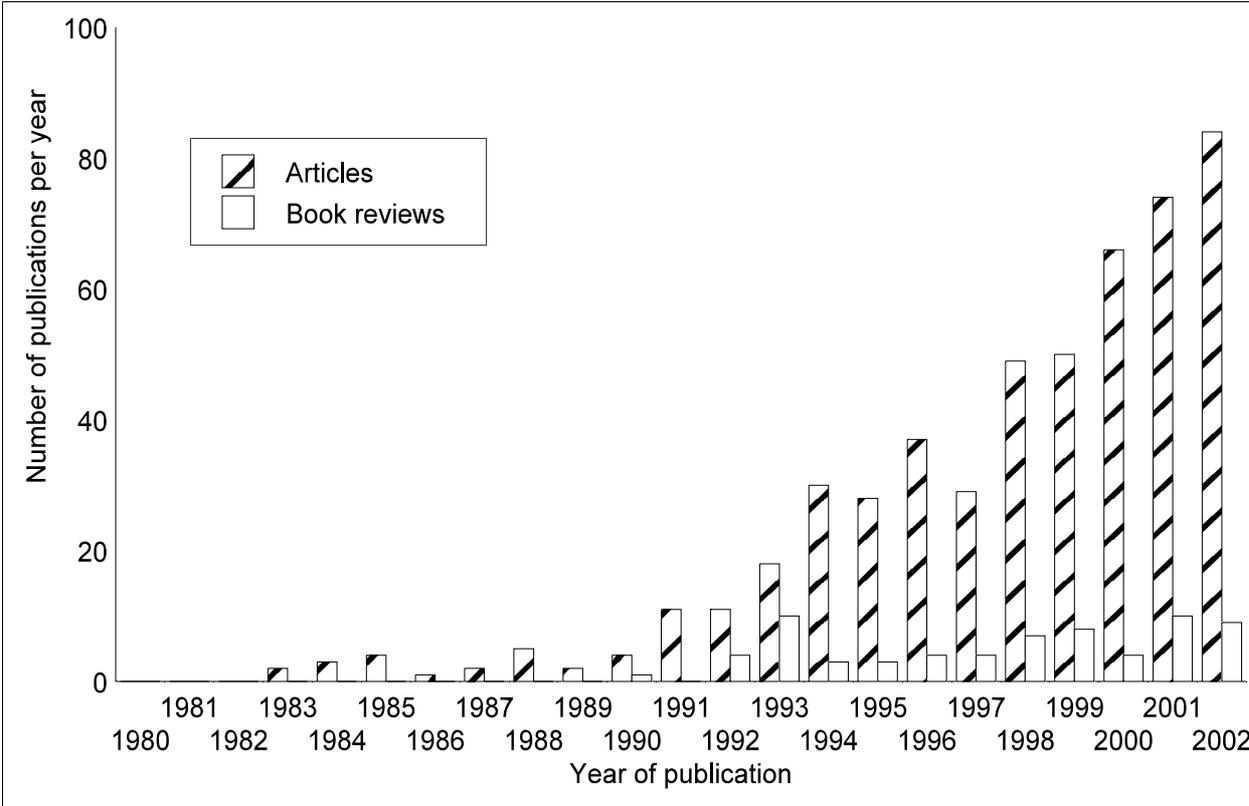
In many ways Jürgen Habermas’ philosophical work is more comprehensive than Rawls theories (Rawls, 1996), but in relation to deliberation, Habermas’ concept of communicative action is the central idea. By the concept of communicative action, Habermas emphasizes that by the use of language - as a medium for reaching a mutual understanding between actors - and through verbal discourse, actors seek to reach an understanding and consensus about their action situation and to coordinate their actions by way of agreement. In Habermas’ “*ideal speech situation*”, communicative action is present in its pure form and, in an ideal speech situation, viewpoints are solely motivated by the force of the better argument. Furthermore, the discourse in the ideal speech situation is restricted and validated by everything said must be objectively true, normatively correct and meant as expressed i.e., a strategic use of arguments is not a valid claim (Habermas, 1984:99-101). Accordingly, communicative action emphasizes the procedural elements of legitimacy in order to coordinate social action. Nevertheless, pure communicative action is never present in any real society but is mostly intended to display the inevitable “*inertial*” features of society (Habermas, 1996:323-326). Deliberative politics for Habermas is thus in practice not limited to the ideal speech situation, but rather to a complex network where various forms of communication are included (Habermas, 1996; see also Freeman (2000) for a comprehensive discussion on Rawls’ and Habermas’ different deliberative democratic positions).

As will be clearer in section 3.4, where the idea of deliberative democracy is explained in detail, Rawls and Habermas have had an important influence on the idea of deliberative democracy as it has developed today. The legacy and inspiration from these two theorists is apparent in many parts of the theory, but despite the work of Habermas and Rawls on deliberation, the concept of deliberation did not prosper until

the late 1980s as figure 3.1 below indicates. Figure 3.1 measures the number of academic articles and book reviews published about deliberation in relation to democracy and gives an impression of the attention and popularity the concept of deliberative democracy has achieved.

As figure 3.1 indicates, the academic debate on deliberative democracy has increased dramatically during the 1990s. From 1945 to 1993, only 84 academic articles were published in the field. From 1994 to 2002, 447 articles were published according to Social Science Citation Index.

**Figure 3.1 - Articles and book reviews concerning deliberative democracy**



Note: Articles and book reviews are found in “Social Science Citation Index” by searching for “Deliberation” or “Deliberative” and “Democracy” in title, summary, and keywords in English language only. Only publications from 1980 to 2002 are included in the figure. Search in SSCI conducted 26 June 2003.

One might speculate why the attention shifted so dramatically from the beginning of the 1990's and whether the rediscovery of deliberation has contributed with anything new? Or is the term only a more or less empty

category due to a certain fashion in democratic theory, covering already known processes and already discussed fields? If the latter is the case, why use the term deliberation at all? Why not use terms such as conversation, communication, discussion, argumentation, negotiation, bargaining, dialog, and debate? Pedersen (2002) discusses deliberative democracy and compares it to the Danish debate between Koch (1945/1991) and Ross (1946/1967) and to the literature on negotiation and bargaining. He concludes that many contemporary deliberative democrats tend to use more academic language than Koch (1945/1991) and Ross (1946/1967), but nevertheless are concerned with the same problems of democracy. According to Pedersen (2002), deliberative democracy thus tends to be only "old wine on new bottles".

Regarding the question of whether the rediscovery has provided anything new, I would first of all claim that deliberation signifies that we are addressing a concern in a democratic context, which other terms do not emphasize or simply leave out. This is e.g., the case in the literature on negotiation and bargaining (Pedersen, 2002). Second, the rediscovery of deliberation can be understood as a counteraction to a liberal understanding of democracy and politics, which has dominated throughout the 1970s (Besette, 1994:xi; Bohman & Rehg, 1997:xii; Smith & Wales, 2000). Third, the rediscovery may also be seen as a development of the participatory understanding of democracy (Pateman, 1970). But whereas participatory democracy often has been associated with social movements and the women's movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s deliberative democracy signifies another focus. Deliberative democracy has to some extent moved the focus from the prevalence and diffusion of participation, i.e. the quantity of participation, to the contents and quality of this participation that is a focus on deliberation. Accordingly, participation in deliberative democracy is mainly emphasized as a means to encourage more deliberation in the different stages of public decision-making and not as a goal in itself (Englund, 2000). Fourth, it is also possible to relate the focus on deliberative democracy to the general reaction of societies' individualization, lack of trust in politicians, gap between politicians and public, and general tendencies to pluralization of norms and values in society. These features also relate to the theoretical ideal many deliberative democrats believe to address with the theory of deliberative democracy and to the alternative methods to involve citizens in decision-making as

discussed in chapter 2. Finally, the emphasis on deliberation and deliberative democracy is also part of a general trend within political theory and the normative debate on democracy that the normative theory needs to relate to the empirical reality of contemporary society (Smith, 2001).

Turning to the question of why attention increased so dramatically by 1990, Carole Pateman explains the dramatic shift in an uncompromising way by saying: “*I get up one day and everybody is talking about deliberative democracy*”.<sup>35</sup> Looking at the figure, it certainly seems that it almost happened over night, but behind this shift one finds several explanations of why it happened. Firstly, one explanation is that within a few years, several articles and books independently of each other were published in relation to the subject of deliberation (e.g., Manin, 1987; Cohen, 1989; Fishkin, 1991; Dryzek, 1990; Miller, 1992). Part of this explanation is also that the attention to Habermas’ work was revitalized by the translation in 1989 of his book from 1961: *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (Habermas, 1989). Yet another explanation is due to a general trend among researchers to jump on the bandwagon. Thus, today deliberative democracy is a fashionable term, but that is not to say that the term is without content. On the contrary, deliberative democracy has been argued to bridge the liberal and republican tradition within democratic theory (Habermas, 1996b; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:27). Deliberative democracy has also moved the rather entrenched debate between liberal and republican approaches to democracy, to a debate which seems to allow many approaches to democracy to find common grounds for their arguments. Furthermore, the next section 3.4, will hopefully convince any remaining skeptical reader that the concepts of deliberative democracy are more than a purely fashionable term.

### **3.4 Deliberative democracy**

So far it has been shown that deliberation has a long tradition in democratic theory and that in recent years the concept has achieved considerable attention. Although the interest in deliberative democracy is increasing, the concept has not yet been consolidated in the literature. The frame of the deliberative democracy is still vague and researchers argue continuously

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<sup>35</sup> Presentation at the conference *Deliberating About Deliberative Democracy*, The University of Texas at Austin, February 4-6, 2000.

about definitions and boundaries of the concept. Therefore, a commonly accepted definition of the concept has yet to come. It may be inexpedient to try to reduce deliberative democracy to an absolute definition, because deliberative democracy would tend to lose some of its inborn flexibility, complexity and dynamics. Even if this is true, there is a need to try to capture the core idea of deliberative democracy to provide a common reference and frame for further analyses. Although, an aim trying to capture the core of deliberative democracy may ultimately prove to be just another variant of deliberative democracy. Nevertheless, the following section will aim at discovering and defining the meaning of deliberation, but also consider what is implied by deliberation in the relevant context of democratic theory.

The following discussion will search for some kind of common denominator in deliberative democracy. In this context it should be mentioned that even the term deliberative democracy has been disputed as Young (2000) preferred *communicative democracy*, in order to emphasize the need to include most forms of communication in the deliberative process, or as Dryzek (1990; 2000:3; 2000b), who refers to *discursive democracy* as a more critical stand of deliberative democracy. Nevertheless, the term deliberative democracy is without doubt the dominantly used and most general term to conceptualize the ideal of deliberative democracy. Accordingly, deliberative democracy is used throughout this book.<sup>36</sup>

When reviewing the work on deliberative democracy, it soon becomes obvious how comprehensive the interpretations of the theory are, recalling also the number of publications on the subject in the last decade. The theory spans constitutional, liberal, and participatory democratic viewpoints. This comprehensiveness in the interpretations is emphasized in the many different definitions of deliberation which have been put forward. One definition focuses on the result i.e., the outcome of deliberation: “*as the*

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<sup>36</sup> In the Scandinavian countries “deliberative democracy” has been translated directly into - *deliberativt demokrati* in Danish (Hansen, 1998; Hansen, 2000; Andersen & Hansen, 2002; Loftager, 1999; Krogstrup, 2001; Haahr, 2001; Fiig, 2001), *deliberativt demokrati* in Norway (Eriksen & Weigård, 1999) and *deliberativt demokrati* in Swedish (Dahlberg & Vedung, 2001). However in Swedish also “*samtalsdemokrati*” (Teorell, 2000; Garpenby, 2002) or “*rådslagdemokrati*” or “*samrådsdemokrati*” have been used (Sveriges Riksdag, 2001).

*endogenous change of preferences resulting from communication*” (Stokes, 1998:123). Other definitions emphasize the process: “*a conversation whereby individuals speak and listen sequentially before making a collective decision*” (Gambetta, 1998:19) or as Bessette (1984:46) who suggests a broad definition. Bessette (1984:46) defines deliberation as “*reasoning on the merits of public policy*”. A third definition considers deliberation as “*A dialogical process of exchanging reasons for the purpose of resolving problematic situations that cannot be settled without interpersonal coordination and cooperation*” (Bohman, 1996:27).

Whereas the two first mentioned definitions focus on certain aspects of deliberation, the last definition also includes the purpose of deliberation and further limits deliberation to situations which cannot be settled in other ways. However, the problem of the last definition is that it raises many new questions. Such as which situation does or does not demand coordination and cooperation? Is it a decision of public concern in general? Or is it only a situation in which decisions are difficult to make? And when is it what? On the other hand if the electoral process brings about solutions to many of these potential problems does that mean that in these cases deliberation is less important?

These questions constitute two broad and classic dimensions in democratic theory, along which the debate of deliberative democracy can be drawn.

The first dimension addresses the question of *who* should participate in deliberation, where the continuum goes from only including elected representatives, to including experts, to selective lay persons, to all citizens. Accordingly, some deliberative democrats argue that deliberation is part of the democratic process at large. Thus, deliberation is not just a matter of the elected elite as some democratic positions suggest (e.g., Schumpeter, 1942/1975). Rather, deliberation is considered as an ongoing process of the elite as well as of the public and the interaction between the two groups (e.g., Gutmann & Thomsen, 1996; Dryzek, 2000).

The second dimension addresses which *issues* should be the concern of the deliberation. Accordingly, the continuum goes from only constitutional issues demanding deliberation, to particularly difficult and

complex issues of public concern, to all collective issues.<sup>37</sup> Taking a position on these fundamental issues should not be included in a definition of deliberation, as it would soon become a straitjacket for further development of the theory. In order to incorporate the two dimensions in deliberative democracy without taking a firm position on the two continua a relatively broad definition of deliberation is adopted. Deliberation is “*An unconstrained exchange of arguments that involves practical reasoning and always potentially leads to a transformation of preferences*” (Cooke, 2000:948). However, it seems contradictory to include ‘always’ and ‘potentially’ in the same definition. Secondly, since a deliberative process can just as easily lead to a reinforcement of initial preferences, it is suggested to exclude ‘always’ from the definition of deliberation. The definition also emphasizes what seems to be common grounds for deliberative democrats that is, a rejection of a strong rational choice account of exogenously given interests. On the contrary to a strong rational account of exogenously given interests, deliberative democrats regard opinion formation to be a defining part of the deliberative process.

The opinion formation aspect of deliberation is also argued by many deliberative democrats to differentiate pure negotiation and bargaining processes from deliberation. This differentiation is often done by giving a rather extreme or, some would argue, a pure interpretation of what should be understood as bargaining and negotiation. One interpretation of bargaining and negotiation is that it is a process involving rational actors, who through strategic action try to maximize their own gains by the use of threats, warnings and offers e.g. in the form of side payments, logrolling and compromises. Such a process does not prescribe that opinions will change or develop within the process, rather that opinions are exogenously given (Dryzek, 2000:170; Elster, 1992). On the other hand deliberation emphasizes that opinions are endogenously given and thus evolve within the deliberative process, where the participants are open and willing to learn from each other and reflect upon their own stand (Dryzek, 2000:170). According to Bessette (1984:49) deliberation will always involve three essential elements: information, arguments, and persuasion or as Dryzek (2000:1) phrases it - “*deliberation involves persuasion rather than coercion,*

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<sup>37</sup> These two dimensions follow John Rawls’ (1996) distinction between which questions should be asked and in which forum.

*manipulation, or deception*". Yet another argument trying to differentiate between deliberation and negotiation is that whereas negotiation is a hard-headed calculation of the costs and benefits of whether to support a decision, deliberation rests on merit of a decision according to the public good (Bessette, 1984). As in many cases when trying to position a 'new' concept to a 'traditional' one there is a tendency to create a dichotomy idealizing the new concept and emphasizing the traditional concept's imperfections. Accordingly, the differences between the concepts are in reality not as clear, as emphasized by Pedersen (2002). Negotiation may often involve a process where actors try to manipulate the interests at stake, and thus diverge from an exogenous interest interpretation. Secondly, one good piece of advice for a successful negotiation is to try to expand the possible outcome in order to find a common ground (Fisher & Ury, 1991). Thus, both arguments applied to differentiate negotiation from deliberation and establishing the dichotomy seem to be less useful, unless negotiation is interpreted as a rather extreme case. This is also why most deliberative democrats acknowledge that in practice the two concepts are difficult to distinguish, thus arguing that the distinction is only analytical (Elster, 1992; Bessette, 1984). However, the difference of approach applied by deliberative theorists is essentially normative, as any approach within democratic theory, whereas research on bargaining and negotiation is essentially descriptive. Thus, it is especially when the approaches are applied analytically that differentiation becomes difficult and even irrelevant. The approach in this dissertation follows the deliberative democrats' interpretation of negotiation, but will remain open to interpretations which could just as easily refer to literature on negotiation and bargaining theory. Furthermore, in the following chapters, this book will make both claims subject to empirical analysis, where it will be examined whether the participants in the Deliberative Poll changed their opinions, and secondly, whether they argued according to common interest or self-interest.

Freeman (2000) emphasizes four broad reasons or arguments of why deliberative democracy should be supported. First, deliberative democracy leads to wiser and more rational decisions. Second, deliberative democracy combines open and free debate with equal expression of opinions advancing that everyone's interests are considered. Third, deliberative democracy promotes decisions based on general interest and tempers self-interest. Finally, deliberative democracy encourages reflective opinions based

on informed choices. In the following paragraphs, reasons for supporting deliberative democracy are unfolded. The discussions do not directly apply Freeman's four reasons, but rather use the above mentioned definition of deliberation as point of reference. Even though the ordering of the reasons to support deliberative democracy should not be interpreted as a prioritization of the reasons, the first three of the below reasons are less controversial as probably most deliberative democrats would agree with them. The last four paragraphs in this section are more general because these discussions are more controversial among deliberative democrats. The discussions on these controversies show one way a deliberative democrat could handle these controversies and at the same time take a stand in the debate among deliberative democrats.

*Deliberative democracy has an educational effect and improves the quality of opinions*

As is emphasized by the adopted definition of deliberation, deliberation would *potentially lead to a transformation of preferences*, but that is not to say that opinions per se change during deliberation. On the other hand the deliberative process will always encourage the participants to discover to what degree their own opinions conflict or are in agreement with the other participants' views (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:93). Yet another aspect of the opinion formation is that in the process of deliberation, the participants are forced to articulate their views and listen to other views. Such an articulation may potentially clarify personal opinions and may even create a more consistent and coherent set of opinions in the process in which the participants try to justify their views. By arguing on these grounds it is also an implicit part of the theory of deliberative democracy that before engaging in a deliberative process of some kind, many individuals do not have a well-ordered preference structure. As individuals might very well not have opinions on many of the issues which are on the agenda for deliberation, and, secondly, if pre-deliberative opinions exist, they might very well be incoherent, inconsistent, and intransitive. However, deliberative democracy claims that through deliberation individual opinions will improve the 'quality' of the individuals' opinions in the sense that post-deliberative opinions are likely to be more consistent and, thus, for one thing not in conflict with each other. From a social choice perspective, the improvement of opinion 'quality' has been advanced in the discussion of

deliberative democracy. In particular the problem that the voters' most preferred alternative among a set of alternatives depends on the different ways of aggregating the voters' preferences has led some social choice theorists to promote deliberative democracy. In some social choice accounts no rule of aggregating preferences is obviously rational and fair and every rule is liable to strategic behavior, but if deliberation is able to increase the individuals' ability to rank the alternative into coherent patterns and to exclude the alternatives which nobody likes the choice of decision rule becomes less complex (Miller, 1992).

In the deliberative process, different opinions confront each other and in this process participants potentially clarify opinions, but such a process demands also that views are initially conflicting, as without divergent views there would be no need for deliberation. It is, so to speak, the pluralism in the opinions which is the dynamic behind the deliberative process. Pluralism is, accordingly, an essential assumption of deliberative democracy. It is not just opinions that are confronted in the deliberative process, information is also shared and validated in the dialog between the participants. Thus deliberation has a potential educational effect, in the sense that participants become more informed, which may also affect the opinion formation (Manin, 1987).

*Self-interest is tempered and mutual justification is promoted*

This process of exchange of arguments is essential for deliberative democracy. The exchange of arguments is governed by an ideal of creating mutual understanding or reciprocity as the potential outcome of deliberation. Inspired by Rawls (1996), Gutmann and Thompson (1996:52-53) refer to reciprocity as "*...the capacity to seek fair terms of social cooperation for their own sake*". The process of deliberation in itself becomes important in order to understand the normative idea of deliberation, because the justification is based on what is considered mutually accepted by others, meaning that one must be responsive to others. Each citizen is accountable to objections raised by other citizens and answerable to demands from other citizens in order to recognize other citizens' concerns as well (Bohman, 1999:185). Thus, the citizens are forced to consider what would count as good reasons for others involved in the process (Benhabib, 1996:71-72). That is, to appeal to reasons that fellow citizens in the specific context of deliberation can share. Thus, one aim of deliberation is to aspire

to a reasoning that is mutually justifiable based on citizens' continuous seeking of fair terms of cooperation among equals, and encouraging them to continue the ongoing deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Bohman, 1996:32). Through the deliberative process, participants aim to persuade each other based on what is mutually justifiable and as such deliberation encourages incentives to present arguments in a generalized way (Manin, 1987). An aim of deliberative democracy is that citizens should, as a minimum, agree to disagree based on an acceptance of, though not necessarily agreement on, other citizens' viewpoints.

### *Deliberative democracy promotes deliberative accountability*

The process of exchanging arguments has another important purpose in deliberative democracy as the process encourages a deliberative sense of accountability in the political system. That is, the participants in a deliberation must give “...reasons that can be accepted by all those who are bound by the laws and policies they justify”, and not only rely on the mandate given to them at election time (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:129). Thus, participants should be considered deliberatively accountable in relation to the argumentation they put forward during deliberation. This form of deliberative accountability is different from accountability as defined by representative democracy, where the focus is on how elected officials can be held accountable for their decisions through formal electoral procedures (Pitkin, 1967), but deliberative accountability is only a supplement and provides some additional demands on the accountability considered in the formal electoral procedures. The argument presented by deliberative democrats call for the need for citizens, as well as elected officials, to justify their decisions to all those who are affected by them (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:128). This is done through deliberation where participants are mutually accountable to the objections made towards their arguments and are, thus, strongly encouraged to look beyond self-interest and consider the interests of others (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:228).

### *Does deliberative democracy motivate consensus?*

Some deliberative democrats argue that deliberation is aimed at consensus (Habermas, 1984:100; Cohen, 1997:75). The defining characteristics of consensus are that participants of a deliberative process provide similar reasons for their agreement on an issue (Habermas, 1996:166). Accordingly,

legitimacy of deliberation is achieved by the emerging consensus. Other perspectives on deliberation have challenged this view. First, it is difficult to distinguish consensus from conformity in the deliberative process and behavior that on the surface looks like consensus can also be an expression of conformity rather than rational argumentation (Elster, 1997:16). Accordingly, a demand for consensus does not ensure that all arguments are put forward - on the contrary, it can elude some arguments from the discussion as some participants might be reluctant to voice views that are in conflict with the emerging consensus (Mansbridge, 1980/1983; Fishkin, 2000b:661; Young, 2000). Secondly, the consensus restriction seems unrealistic in a real world political setting, where time constraints are everywhere, but also because disagreement is the *raison d'être* of politics. Without disagreement there is no need for politics and no need for deliberation (Gunderson, 2000:89; Mouffe, 1993). Politics is so to speak what we disagree about. Finally, if deliberation is considered an essential part of pluralistic societies, characterized by strong diversity and differing opinions which are not always possible or even normatively justifiable to unite, an *a priori* restriction on consensus being the outcome of deliberation would violate the very idea of a pluralistic society (Young, 1996). Whereas the first arguments mostly reflect a descriptive critique of a prior consensus demand to deliberation, the latter argument is of a more normative character.

*Does deliberative democracy allow everyone's interests to be articulated?*

Another aspect of deliberative democratic theory is whether it is possible to create a free deliberative process. This aspect is emphasized in the definition of deliberation by the idea of the *unconstrained* exchange. The unconstrained exchange or the free process is related to the deliberative process in two aspects - external and internal inclusiveness (Young, 2000).

External inclusiveness is defined according to Robert Dahl's (1989:129) justification for inclusiveness. That is "*The demos must include all adult members of the association except transients and persons proved to be mentally defective*". Thus, the definition of external inclusiveness in relation to deliberative democracy stipulates the right of all adults to take active part in the deliberative process. Excluding certain groups from this process

would violate the idea of external inclusiveness.<sup>38</sup>

Internal inclusiveness is defined according to Dahl's (1989:109) notion of 'Effective Participation'. All participants should have equal opportunity to express their opinions throughout the process. Opponents of deliberative democracy claim that deliberative processes are not equal processes, as participants capable of arguing on rational, measurable, and objective grounds are favored through these processes, and that such participants are already overrepresented in the political system (Young, 1996; Sanders, 1997; Phillips, 1995). Thus, it is important to encounter this criticism by designing deliberative arenas that do not compromise the internal inclusiveness and allow different types of arguments to be put forward. On the other hand, some may argue that it is an advantage to the deliberative process that rational and objective arguments are advantageous to arguments based on feelings and mainly subjective arguments. This is also pinpointed by the Habermasian notion of the force of the better argument, as some reasons are better than others in the sense that by referring to the common good they are more convincing (Manin, 1987). It is often argued that deliberation will strengthen procedural legitimacy only as long as opinions are backed by reason (Habermas, 1996:448; Rättilä, 2000). Thus, advocates of deliberation may find themselves in a tradeoff position. On the one hand, it is claimed that if opinions are well argued and reasoned, stronger democratic legitimacy is acquired. On the other hand, this process of deliberation may compromise political equality, a question that will be addressed in the next chapter.

*What issues and in what fora should deliberation take place?*

In principle, any question may be posed in a deliberative setting and, accordingly, deliberative democracy in its pure form would consider rights as violable or at least debatable. Deliberative procedures are legitimate to the extent that interests are mutually justifiable to all citizens, and especially in the case where a consensus is reached. In such a case the participants' rights

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<sup>38</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Deliberative Poll only gives all citizens the right to participate in the lottery, which provides an equal chance to be selected to participate in the deliberative process. Thus, the recruitment process of the Deliberative Poll does not grant the full right to participate to all, which compromises Dahl's normative criteria that all citizens should be able to participate in the democratic process.

and basic civil liberties may be decided and distributed according to the outcome of the deliberation. In such a strictly procedural interpretation of deliberative democracy there are no substantive limits on the outcome of the deliberation - laws are justified simply by consensus (Freeman, 2000:413). To avoid this situation, some deliberative democrats argue that deliberation is always constrained by constitutional principles, which, initially of course, have been developed in a deliberative justifiable way (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:229). Another way to reach the same conclusion is by arguing that deliberative democracy must protect equality and basic civil liberties because otherwise the theory violates its own theoretical foundation as an *unconstrained* deliberation, which would limit the opinions voiced during the deliberative process. Furthermore, as part of the core of deliberative democracy is to encourage an outcome based on mutually acceptable reasons between citizens, it seems to be impossible to question equality or e.g. freedom of expression without questioning the entire concept of deliberative democracy (Cohen, 1996). Basic civil liberties must thus be recognized in order to establish and maintain the necessary procedures which deliberative democracy emphasizes (Freeman, 2000). Accordingly, most versions of deliberative democracy do not allow basic civil liberties to be questioned during deliberation and, thus, collective decisions deduced from deliberation are only legitimate, if these decisions satisfy basic principles of civil liberties and constitutionally secured rights. This is also to say that deliberative democracy does not solely rest on a procedural legitimacy where outcomes only are democratically legitimate if they are the result of a free and reasoned agreement among equals. Deliberative democracy must claim its legitimacy from constitutional principles, too (Cohen, 1996:99-100; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:200).

Even though, as just argued, basic civil liberties should be guaranteed in a deliberative democratic process, there are still some discussions among deliberative democrats about what issues should be part of the deliberative processes. As mentioned previously in this section, the continuum runs from only constitutional principles to all issues of public concern, which indicates the many possible interpretations within the theory. Mansbridge (1999b) suggests expanding the calm of deliberation to everyday talk, which regards issues of public concern, but at the same time recognizing that in such a case it would be necessary to relax the high standards of how deliberation should be conducted. On the other hand,

such a broadening of society's political talk would remove some of the alienation from deliberation, which ordinary citizens might experience. In this way, everyday talk partly rests on an argument that it would increase the citizens' capabilities to engage in 'conventional' deliberation and, secondly, open up for the possibility of broader political participation in decision-making procedures. For Gutmann and Thompson (1996), the core of deliberation should be issues that are infused with moral conflicts and disagreement. Among these issues are e.g., abortion, affirmative action, and doctor-assisted suicide. In the American context exactly these issues have traditionally been limited to the judicial fora and kept out of the ongoing political and legislative procedures. The argument for making such issues the core of deliberation is partly that decisions on these issues involve a choice between essentially incompatible values and beliefs.

There is, so to speak, no easy solution and it should never be just a matter of a pure bargaining process or a fast majority decision. On the contrary, because these issues are infused with incompatible values, there is a strong need for a deliberative process, which would broadly encourage politicians and citizens (between these groups as well as within) to establish a mutual understanding of the underlying conflicting values before a collective decision is taken. Whether the final decision, if such is needed, is decided through a bargaining or simply a voting procedure does not contradict the theory of deliberative democracy. The claim is only that the decision procedures need to be supplemented by deliberative fora in which decisions, and the arguments behind the decisions, are deliberated upon in order to reach mutually justifiable and acceptable decisions, which make the public understand the reasons and the consequences of the different courses of action. The point for deliberative democrats is not to try to solve or choose between the incompatible values, but rather to encourage a continuous deliberation upon these issues in order to try to encounter the development of prejudice and to uphold a mutual understanding of the issues.

However, as pointed out by Schauer (1999), if deliberation is limited to only moral disagreement many forms of communication are excluded. Nevertheless, even though Gutmann and Thompson (1996:6; 12) focus on issues infused with moral conflicts, they argue that the deliberative process virtually embraces any collective decision of public concern. However, broadening the scope of deliberation challenges the

implementation of deliberative democracy, since the number of issues that require citizens' deliberation would be confronted with what is the practicably possible in modern society. One way for deliberative democrats to confront this problem is, first of all, to acknowledge the necessity of representative institutions and, accordingly, most of the deliberation must be carried out within these institutions. But deliberative democrats call also for the establishment of supplementary arenas for public deliberation. Some deliberative democrats, among them Habermas (1996:299), argue rather abstractly for more autonomous public spheres as arenas for deliberation. Others suggestions are quite detailed, such as the Citizens' Juries, Consensus Conferences or the Deliberative Poll, as described in the previous chapter. Accordingly, these arenas should be the fora where citizens deliberate among themselves, but also fora where citizens are confronted with politicians' and experts' arguments and where the elite engage in deliberation with the public.

#### *Deliberative democracy and publicity?*

In order to stimulate deliberation, where arguments are based on what is mutually justifiable, most deliberative democrats argue that information related to a decision and the arguments given for political actions and decisions should be made public. This means that in principle, decision-making, discussion, and information pools should be open to everyone (Bohman, 1996:25), at least to those affected by the decisions (Dahl, 1989). Such a strong transparency and publicity will regulate the exchange of viewpoints across the expert - layman division in such a way that the participants in the deliberation will be more reluctant to refer to arguments based on self-interest, and instead be encouraged to argue according to a broader interest. However, publicity will not remove arguments referring to neither self-interest nor group-interest, but will only disable such self-interest argumentation in a public deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:94; 126). Secrecy is accepted only when secrecy is needed to implement decisions or if publicity violates basic civil liberties, but even in these cases it is only the details of the decision, which are made in secrecy; the politics as such must be public (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:105). Yet another point regarding publicity is that opinion change and publicity are somewhat contradictory. The relationship between opinion change and publicity is discussed in the next chapter.

The previous paragraphs have discussed several reasons why deliberative democracy is an attractive concept of democracy, but in order to give more perspective to these justification of deliberative democracy, the next section 3.4 provides a somewhat suggestive table comparing deliberative democracy to well-established models of democracy.

### **3.5 Deliberative democracy - another ideal model of democracy**

Deliberative democracy is a normative theory of democracy. As any normative theory, deliberative democracy ultimately relies on and assumes certain characteristics about human nature and social relationships. The characteristics of human nature and social relationships in deliberative democracy assume that people are social beings who are willing to engage in deliberation. Human interaction is valued not only because of e.g. an assumed positive educational effect, but also valued for its intrinsic value. That is, simply bringing people together to deliberate is valued as a way to enhance the social capacity of the involved (Cohen, 1997; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). Opponents of deliberative democracy may argue that it is a rather naive assumption, which seldom is fulfilled in actual deliberation or other forms of social interaction. Nevertheless, it is basically from these basic assumptions of human life that the emphasis of endogenously given opinions and the emphasis of the unconstrained, mutually justifiable deliberation that is governed by an ideal of the creation of mutual understanding are deduced. That is, it can also be argued that according to deliberative democracy, inter-personal reasoning should to a large extent guide political decisions in order to be responsive to political equality and public wishes (Parkinson, 2003). But does the assumptions and emphasis of deliberation provide enough foundation to argue that deliberative democracy is an independent ideal model of democracy? This section tries to argue that they do.

It has been argued that deliberative democracy is nothing but a decision procedure. A procedure, which suggests how a democracy should make its decisions when it comes to issues of moral conflicts (Schauer, 1999). Others argue even more strongly by claiming that deliberation is only a pragmatic device and part of a discovery process aimed to arrive at an informed decision, but not a procedure for decision-making. Thus, deliberative democracy may only be a part of a theory on how to carry on a public debate and, from a utilitarian point, deliberation is only roughly to

be described as a device for the discovery of relevant causal relationships before a decision is taken (Hardin, 1999). However, if we would consider Schumpeter's (1942/1975) description of democracy as one model of democracy why should not deliberative democracy be considered as well? As Schumpeter claims "*the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote*" (Schumpeter, 1942/1975:269).

Models of democracies are not easily compared as they assume different values and emphasize different elements of how a society should be governed. Nevertheless, David Held (1987:1996) has done so by providing a framework to compare different models of democracy. By comparing deliberative democracy to other models of democracy within David Held's framework it is illustrated how deliberative democracy is distinguishable from other normative accounts of democracy. The comparison between the well know models of democracy and deliberative democracy is provided in table 3.1. The five models of democracy presented in table 3.1 are ideal models in the sense that the models are purified in order to emphasize their differences, which opens for more analytic comparisons. Every key dimension in each ideal model is debatable, and no democratic theorist will probably identify himself with any of these pure models which tend to exclude more than they include in terms of how democracy is applied in contemporary society. The ideal models are, thus, only a way of describing some contradictions and overlapping views in democratic theory. Secondly, the models are normative as any model of democracy. Thus, behind the different dimensions, a normative argument rests, claiming how society should be governed.

**Table 3.1: Five ideal models of democracy**

	<b>Participatory democracy</b>	<b>Neo-pluralism</b>	<b>Competitive elitist democracy</b>	<b>Legal democracy</b>	<b>Deliberative Democracy</b>
<b>Principles of justification</b>	An equal right to liberty and self-development can only be achieved in a 'participatory society', a society which fosters a sense of political efficacy, nurtures a concern for collective problems and contributes to the formation of knowledgeable citizenry capable of taking a sustained interest in the governing process.	Secures government by minorities and, hence, political liberty. Crucial obstacle to the development of excessively powerful factions and an unresponsive state.	Method for the selection of a skilled and imaginative political elite capable of making the necessary legislative and administrative decisions. An obstacle to the excesses of political leadership.	The majority principle is an effective and desirable way of protecting individuals from arbitrary government and of maintaining liberty. However, for political life, like economic life, to be a matter of individual freedom and initiative, majority rules must be circumscribed by the rule of law. Only under these conditions can the majority principle function wisely and justly.	Political reasoning that is mutually justifiable for all citizens and with respect to citizens.
<b>View on some key dimensions:</b>					
<b>Participation</b>	Participation is defined broadly and constitutes a variety of activities.	Participation is defined narrowly and is closely related to the political system and the electoral procedures. Participation is thus indirect and instrumental.	Participation is defined narrowly and is closely related to the political system and the electoral procedures. Participation is thus indirect and instrumental.	Participation is defined narrowly and is closely related to the political system and the electoral procedures. Participation is thus indirect and instrumental.	Participation is defined in relation to deliberation.

<b>Accountability</b>	Fulfilled through citizens practicing active self-governance.	Fulfilled through the electoral procedures and competition within the political system.	Fulfilled through the electoral procedures and competition within the political system.	Fulfilled through the electoral procedures with respect to the constitutional rights.	Fulfilled through continuous deliberation between politicians and citizens.
<b>Political equality</b>	Constituted through active participation.	Constituted through an equal and free opportunity to participate in elections.	Constituted through an equal and free opportunity to participate in elections.	Constituted through constitutional rights, which secure basic liberty and freedom.	Constituted through active deliberation.
<b>Decision-making</b>	Deliberation.	Voting and negotiating.	Voting.	Voting in respect to constitutional rights.	Deliberation followed by bargaining or voting if needed.
<b>Legitimacy</b>	Consensus.	Majority.	Majority.	Ensured by constitutional rights.	Mutual respect with regard to arguments offered by other citizens.
<b>Liberty</b>	Positive - the liberty to - opportunity.	Positive - the liberty to - opportunity.	Positive - the liberty to - opportunity.	Negative - the liberty from - absence of coercion.	Positive - the liberty to - opportunity.
<b>Preferences</b>	Endogenously given - created within the process.	Exogenously given - preferences are carried into the political process.	Exogenously given - preferences are carried into the political process.	Exogenously given - preferences are carried into the political process.	Endogenously given - created within the process.
<b>Recommendations</b>	Polyarchy, supplemented with participation.	Polyarchy.	Polyarchy.	Minimal state.	Polyarchy, supplemented with deliberative arenas.
<b>Society</b>	Consensus.	Pluralistic	Pluralistic	Consensus.	Consensus / Pluralistic.

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Compiled from Held (1996). The deliberative democracy model follows the arguments presented in this chapter.

Table 3.1 shows that deliberative democracy claims that democracy should be justified by political reasoning, that is mutually justifiable for all citizens and respecting citizens way of life and opinions, whereas a competitive elitist model of democracy emphasizes the election of a political elite as the method which provides the necessary conditions to make the legislative and administrative decisions. Participation in deliberative democracy is closely defined in relation to deliberation, whereas in a participatory model of democracy, participation is defined broadly and constitutes a variety of activities. The representatives in a deliberative democracy are not only accountable according to formal election procedures as in the competitive elitist model of democracy, but accountability is fulfilled through continuous deliberation between politicians, experts, and citizens. Political equality is achieved through active deliberation and not as in a legal model of democracy where political equality is constituted through constitutional rights which ensure basic liberty and freedom. Regarding the decision-making procedure, deliberative democracy advocates the need of deliberation before a decision is taken, whereas other models of democracy focus narrowly on the actual decision-making. In a democracy based on neo-pluralism, the legitimacy behind the decisions is constituted by majority, whereas legitimacy in a deliberative democratic model of democracy focuses on the mutual respect and justification with regard to arguments offered. Liberty in deliberative democracy is positively defined as the liberty to act, whereas a legal model of democracy would emphasize liberty through the absence of coercion - that is, liberty is negatively defined in the legal model of democracy. Basic civil rights are guaranteed in order to maintain the free and unconstrained deliberative procedures in deliberative democracy. When it comes to preferences, these are in deliberative democracy defined endogenously within the process, and not as in a legal model of democracy where preferences are exogenously given. The way of achieving the deliberative democratic ideal is the polyarchy, in Dahl's (1989) sense, but supplemented with deliberative arenas where citizens and elite can engage in deliberation. Society in deliberative democracy is interpreted as having some embedded conflicts building on incompatible values. In this way society is pluralistic, but it is also assumed that in some - not specified - cases, consensus may prevail in the deliberative process. These views are in contrast to the competitive elitist model of democracy, which assumes that society is faced with considerable conflicts

and the always competing interests.

I hope that this comparison in table 3.1 between different models of democracy has shown that deliberative democracy at least has a strong potential as yet another ideal model of democracy. But on the other hand, I also acknowledge that deliberative democracy is only an ideal model of democracy and not a more comprehensive model or a first-order theory such as utilitarianism or liberalism. Deliberative democracy is rather comprehensive or some would probably argue, weak and vague, in the sense that one may implement utilitarianism or liberalism through the means of deliberative democracy (Hardin, 1999; Gutmann & Thompson, 1999).

### 3.6 Summary

The concept of deliberation can be traced back to ancient Greece and the concept is well-established in republican traditions of democratic theory. The idea that deliberation encourages the transformation of the particular interest to interests that are concerned with the 'common good' emerges in the writings of Rousseau, Tocqueville and Mill. Furthermore, the importance of deliberation's educational effects appears in the writings of Tocqueville, Mill and Dewey. In this way, it is shown that many deliberative democratic thoughts have a long tradition in the republican interpretation of democracy.

It is argued that deliberation is part of the institutionalized setting of contemporary political systems by referring to the fact that a bill must be read a certain number of times in parliament before it can be passed. But deliberation is also a genuine part of the less institutionalized setting of contemporary political systems such as the debates in the numerous committees in government. Furthermore, some examples of extra-parliamentary settings where laymen and experts discuss issues of moral conflict are emphasized.

In 1980 when Joseph Bessette coined the term deliberative democracy he probably had no idea that he started a new fashion within democratic theory. From 1990, the number of publications in journals related to deliberative democracy has increased dramatically. During the 1980s deliberative democracy was almost neglected, but today around 70 articles a year are published on the subject.

Part of this development is no doubt fashion, but deliberative democracy has also revitalized the debate on democracy with a focus on the quality of

deliberation and has tried to relate democratic practices to the more normative expectations emphasized in the theories of democracy.

Deliberation is defined as “*an unconstrained exchange of arguments that involves practical reasoning and potentially leads to a transformation of preferences*”. In the context of deliberative democracy the definition provides a number of concepts, which constitute the core of the theory of deliberative democracy.

Deliberative democracy assumes endogenously given opinions. That is, through deliberation the citizens’ opinions are potentially transformed. Nevertheless, the transformation of opinion does not necessarily lead to opinion change. The transformation of opinion may also lead to an increased awareness of the underlying values of one’s initial opinion and, thus, reinforce initial belief. Opinion change or not, the opinions expressed after intense deliberation are believed to embed a higher quality than the pre-deliberative opinions because the post-deliberative choice is believed to be more informed and reflective. That is it can also be argued that deliberation possesses an educational effect.

The idea of exchange of arguments is essential to deliberative democracy as it is specified by the ideal of reasons. When citizens engage in deliberation, they should be responsive to objections raised by other citizens and, in this way, recognize their concerns too. But the assumption of many deliberative democrats that deliberation helps secure responsiveness is not only a normative claim, it is also argued that deliberation, by bringing different experiences together, will force participants to act according to the assumption in their attempts to be persuasive.

The legacy from the habermasian notion of the ideal speech situation, among others that deliberation ideally is aimed at consensus, is still to some degree alive in deliberative democracy. Nevertheless, in this chapter it is argued that an *a priori* aim of consensus on the deliberative process will have a tendency to elude arguments going against any emerging consensus. In this way, a demand for consensus works against all arguments being put forward. Furthermore, the consensus restriction is unrealistic in a world of real politics where time constraints are everywhere, and unrealistic because disagreement is the *raison d'être* of politics. Without disagreement there is no need for politics and no need for deliberation. Politics is, so to speak, what we disagree about. Removing disagreement from deliberation would remove the politics, which would tend to make

deliberation less suitable as a supplementary mechanism to improve decision-making in a democracy.

Deliberative democracy aims at inclusiveness - external as well as internal. That is, deliberative democracy stipulates that all citizens must be included in the deliberative process. Internal inclusiveness emphasizes that deliberative democracy must allow all arguments to be put forward.

This chapter hopes to have shown that the theory of deliberative democracy today is feasible and not an abstract utopia as it has been interpreted in the early works of Habermas and Rawls who have paved much of the theoretical road for the development in deliberative democracy.

Deliberative democracy acknowledges the necessity of representative institutions, but many argue that the present representative institutions should be supplemented with deliberative arenas such as e.g. Deliberative Polls. In this way, it is argued that deliberative democracy is possible within a representative political system. It is also shown that deliberative democracy differs from other models of democracy and it is argued that deliberative democracy can be considered an independent model of democracy. Even though deliberative democracy is considered an independent model of democracy a number of tensions seem to be present in the theory. The tensions of deliberative democracy are in focus in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4 - The Downside of Deliberative Democracy - A Critical Note

As was laid out in the previous chapters, the development and deployment of deliberative democracy have been fast moving, but at the same time very little attention has been given to the problems and contradiction in the theory of deliberative democracy. So far the literature in the field has primarily praised deliberation for its considerable contribution to almost any political process, even though some notable critical contributions also do exist in the field (e.g. Young, 2000; Sanders, 1997; Mouffe, 1993; Shapiro, 1999). To some extent, the focus on the normative potential of deliberation has neglected the many pitfalls and contradictions of deliberation. As deliberative democracy essentially is a normative theory, a critical note is not only important to challenge the theory if further advancement is to be made, but also important in order to avoid deliberative democracy developing into an abstract utopia. To bridge the gap in the research on deliberative democracy between the benefits of deliberation and the contradictions and problems involved, this chapter takes up the challenge to discuss several tensions in the theory of deliberative democracy.

At least three tensions in Deliberative Democracy can be identified - the equality tension, the publicity tension and the outcome-driven tension. The political equality tension of deliberation, which is the focus of section 4.1, relates to the idea that many deliberative democrats advocate the importance of ensuring that the deliberative process does not compromise political equality. They believe the participants in the deliberative process should be able to express their views freely and openly without any procedural restrictions. At the same time, however, it is argued that arguments referring to the common good should and will be emphasized in a deliberative process which favors participants accustomed to this kind of reasoning.

Section 4.2 addresses the publicity tension that relates the emphasis in deliberative democracy for greater transparency and openness to the idea that participants should be able to change their opinions if they wish. But if participants have expressed their views in public, an opinion change is not likely because a public change of opinion may discredit the participants, which would disadvantage them in the ongoing dialog.

The outcome-driven tension of section 4.3 argues that if deliberative processes should be aimed at a collective decision, whether based on consensus or other less restricted procedural mechanisms, it may ensure a certain realism and encourage more balanced views in the process of reaching this decision. At the same time, aiming at collective decisions also gives room for conformity and groupthink jeopardizing the free and open deliberation and, eventually, suppressing conflicting arguments.

Finally, section 4.4 discusses the concept of the common good in relation to deliberation. The critique to deliberative democracy presented by the three tensions, and the discussion of the common good, is first of all an internal critique on the theory. That is, a critique working within the framework of deliberative democracy related to the same scientific paradigm and belief. Such an approach of critique is chosen because it is the strongest one and it avoids the pitfall of talking at cross-purposes. However, often the internal critique is supplemented with a more empirical discussion building on finding from: decision-making theory, political psychology, and social-psychology or analysis of relevant historical events. In this way, empirical findings contribute to the understanding of the tensions. Tensions, which represent contradictions in the theory of deliberative democracy, are backed with an empirical indication of how deliberation is carried through in everyday politics.

The arguments presented in this chapter will mainly be theoretical, but in the following chapters, the discussion will be operationalized into hypotheses and, subsequently, analyzed in the setting of the Deliberative Poll on the euro.

#### **4.1 The political equality tension of deliberative democracy**

Political equality and liberty are often presented as the cornerstones of democratic theory. In reality, political equality and political liberty are most often understood as universal suffrage and freedom of expression, etc. In relation to deliberation, political equality and liberty are emphasized in the definition of deliberation as deliberation involves an *unconstrained* exchange of arguments. Deliberation is, so to speak, a process where all participants during the deliberation should have an equal opportunity to express their opinions as they wish and are able to do so throughout the process. While this notion follows Dahl's ideal standard of 'Effective Participation' (1989:109), it is often emphasized that deliberation will strengthen

procedural legitimacy only as long as opinions are backed with reason (e.g. Habermas, 1996:448; Rättälä, 2000). It is also argued that one of the advantages of deliberation is that it offers an advantageous position to arguments based on the common good and arguments with reference to general principles, compared to arguments based on self-interest and purely subjective arguments. The view that arguments stated in terms of the common good are advantageous in deliberation is also pinpointed by the notion of 'the force of the better argument', as some reasons are better than others in the sense that they are more convincing to all participants by referring to the common good. Accordingly, these types of arguments are more persuasive than other types (Manin, 1987; Habermas, 1984). Thus, deliberative democracy gives an *a priori* authority to certain kinds of reasons, which are defined prior to the deliberative process (Macedo, 1999:3). Young (1996; 2000:37) has persistently criticized assumptions of some shared premises of speech culture or discursive frameworks for being fallacies given the heterogeneity and plurality of society. Secondly, the effort to shape arguments according to some speech culture would sometimes exclude the expression of some views, needs, and injustices, because some participants may not be able to voice their claims according to such a framework. To be unable to communicate one's opinions according to a certain speech culture does not make these views and needs less relevant in the process, but accentuate that other forms of communication are needed in order to incorporate these views in the deliberative process.

The notion that there exist some universally acknowledged norms and conditions of how the processes must be conducted is basically Kantian and has received strong criticism from others. Bohman (1999) argues that the norms for the deliberative behavior develop in relation to the context, the social roles, and status which the participants possess. Thus, the procedures of deliberation should not be limited by an *a priori* set of universal norms, as these do not exist. Instead it is acknowledge the procedures of deliberation develop in relation to and are embedded in the specific context and, thus, emerge according to the issues at stake. If deliberation was limited according to an *a priori* set of norms, the success of deliberation would be determined by whether the participants have the ability to abstract from their particular identities and social roles and not on their capacities to engage in deliberation with other participants. The *a priori* acknowledgment of certain norms for the deliberative procedure will,

eventually, have the effect that the participants, who are unable to abstract from their social roles, are excluded from the deliberation, thus violating political equality not to mention liberty of speech and causing certain experiences to be lost in the deliberative process. This standpoint has been acknowledged by many deliberative democrats, who have emphasized that the norms for deliberation must develop within the group of deliberators during the process (Bohman, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson, 1999:224; Young, 1996). Acknowledging that the procedures for deliberation develop between the participants during the deliberative process rather than being defined in advance according to some abstract principles, relaxes the tensions within the theory of deliberative democracy. but deliberative democracy still claims that the participants must be willing to enter the deliberative arena, in which they try to present their views, by appealing to reasons which the other participants can share. How exactly this is achieved, might be developed during deliberation, but it remains immanent in the theory that opinions, which can be presented in a mutually justifiable way, will receive a higher authority than other arguments referring to purely subjective interpretations of the situation. Secondly, it may partly also be an empirical claim or at least a piece of good advice from the literature on negotiation. This field of literature argues that if the negotiators are able to invent and exploit options for mutual gain and articulate their views in a general manner, the likelihood for success improves, that is increases the chance of reaching a solution closer to one's self-interest (Fisher & Ury, 1991; Lewicki et al., 1994).

The theory of deliberation thus articulates three central, normative points. First, deliberation is a free and unconstrained exchange of arguments. Second, opinions must be backed with reasons and, finally, that some reasons, i.e. reasons with reference to the common good, are more advantageous than others. But is it possible to have a theory that on the one hand aims at political equality and on the other hand claims that some arguments are better than others? If all could equally express their interests through common good arguments and all could articulate the reasons for their opinions, it may be possible. However, critics of deliberation have argued, that it is far from the case as the asymmetries - in e.g. level of information and the participants' capabilities in arguing - undermine any equality standard political equality requires. The deliberative process, critics of deliberative democracy argue, is not an equal process, as participants

capable of arguing on rational, measurable and objective grounds are favored through the deliberative procedures. This challenge to the theory is also accentuated by the fact that such participants are already overrepresented in the political system (Sanders, 1997; Phillips, 1995). Enhancing the deliberative aspect of a political system thus compromises political equality and favors reasoned, post-deliberative opinions and disfavors raw, emotional and top-of-the-head opinions. Besides being elitist in nature, this defining feature of deliberation also disadvantages people not used to express their opinions in terms of the common good. People inexperienced with meetings, less educated and shy people are easily sidetracked and, consequently, individuals with strong rhetorical skills and demagogues are in a more advantageous position when justifying their interests. The disadvantaged people's experiences and interests are lost in the process, thus creating a strong bias in the political system. The political equality tension and self-contradiction in the deliberative democratic theory lie in that on the one hand most deliberative democrats strongly advocate deliberation for aiming at reasons referring to the common good, and on the other hand claim that deliberation is a free and unconstrained exchange of arguments. The tension exists because competing values simultaneously are emphasized in the theory. If true to the criterion of political equality it would challenge the aim of restricted common good deliberation - and vice versa. Being true to these competing and contradicting values in its ideal form thus becomes impossible. Some have encountered the tension of the theory by calling on future designs of deliberative arenas to allow different types of communication to be a genuine part of the deliberative process and only excluding communication that completely lacks a respect for others or is incoherent (Young, 2000:30). The three types of communication are greeting, rhetoric, and storytelling or narrative (Dryzek, 2000; Young, 1996; 2000).

Greetings, verbal as well as nonverbal, such as gestures of flattery, deference and conciliatory caring should be included in the deliberation in order to stimulate trust among participants. Greetings, including small talk before the actual political discussion, are important because greetings are partly a public, explicit and mutual acknowledgment of each other. Without any form of greeting, deliberation becomes difficult as the participants have not recognized and shown the respect that is needed to establish the trust necessary for deliberation (Hedin, 2001).

Rhetoric is another form of communication which, according to Young (1996), must be allowed into the process. Allowing rhetoric would specify that an argument should appeal to the particular audience's experiences. It is also a way to get and keep the attention of the audience through the use of emotion, humor and wordplay, etc. which will increase the likelihood of reaching the desired outcome. Accordingly, the use of rhetoric opens up for claims that are embedded in the belief of the particular audience and acknowledges the audiences's particular context, which not necessarily is framed in the common good but rather in the good of the audience.

Narrative or storytelling is yet another form of communication, Young (1996; 2000) argues, is supplementary to other means of deliberation. Narrative involves a narrative description of the participant's particular experience and may thus help establish an intersubjective understanding of the situation. Narrative may also evoke sympathy and reveal the sources of the participant's values, which may serve to explain the underlying premises of a participant's opinion (Young, 1996). Furthermore, narrative may help foster a shared understanding of the situation and allow experiences embedded in a particular belief or social role to be voiced. Such a shared understanding also provides the opportunity to share knowledge reflecting the particular characteristics of individuals, that otherwise might not have been voiced. Sharing such subjective experiences might enhance a shared understanding of the situation, but it is also a way to encounter myths, biased interpretations and prejudices among the participants.

However, it is necessary to point out that also these means of communication can be coercive or strongly manipulative, such as an emotional personal story or a rhetorical speech (Dryzek, 2000), as Young also points out in her later work (Young, 2000:78). Nevertheless, many deliberative democrats maintain that these forms of communication have to be genuine elements of the deliberative process in order to give the disadvantaged participants a better opportunity to articulate their experiences and to expand the possibility of a plurality of views surviving the deliberation (Young, 1996; 2000; Dryzek, 2000). Even though assigning more weight to these forms of communication in the deliberative process may help maintain a certain plurality, this claim is beside the main point. The point is that such means of communication are disadvantageous in the processes of exchanging arguments, not that these forms have not been

allowed - deliberation is by definition an unconstrained exchange of arguments. The fundamental distinction, which frames deliberative democracy, is between communication based on reason and communication not based on reason, where the former is favored and the latter disadvantaged in the deliberative process. The three supplementary types of communication are also, as Young (2000) points out, inevitable parts of human interaction and must consequently also be present during deliberative processes. However, just by encouraging these means of communication does not make them more persuasive than before. Thus, deliberation still favors reasons with reference to the common good and arguments based on a broader understanding of the situation. Nevertheless, it would be fruitful to stress that these forms of communication are part of any deliberative process in order to facilitate a less biased process, but it remains embedded in the theory that these forms of communication are disfavored, compared to an argument based on a broad understanding of the issue. To include greeting, rhetoric, and narrative more directly in the deliberative process may contribute to expansion of the shared frame of interpretation and establishment of a deeper frame of reference, but these types of communication remain less convincing than an argument based on reason.

As the discussion indicates, there is no easy path to successfully encounter this tension, but three supplementary approaches can be suggested.

First, an explicit acknowledgment of the fact that an appeal to a broader understanding of an issue has a larger impact during deliberation would also encourage to consider the problem that certain types of communication are being disfavored in deliberation. Such an explicit acknowledgment would also be important when designing future deliberative arenas as it becomes possible to design arenas in ways that to a larger extent adopt these facts.

Secondly, by theoretically and explicitly acknowledging the trade-off between political equality and arguing by referring to more generalized claims would produce a more coherent and non-self-contradictory theory of deliberative democracy. If, on the other hand, one argues in order to recapture the essence of deliberative democracy as a theory, where legitimacy is based on the process in which opinions are backed with general principles, one would also implicitly compromise

political equality and such a compromise seems too important to take implicitly. Instead one needs to aim at more sensitivity in how actual deliberation is conducted and not just allowing but maybe even forcing more subjective statements into the initial process of deliberation to avoid deliberative democracy turning into pure technocracy. This is often achieved by the use of a neutral moderator during deliberation. Such a moderator would ensure that people are properly introduced to each other and would allow experiences to be expressed on the premises of the participants. The use of a moderator during deliberation would also confront the risk of compromising political equality, as the moderator would encourage all participants to bring their experiences into the process and ensure that no one dominates the deliberation. This, of course, does not solve the problem of certain arguments being favored during deliberation, but it may help especially those participants unaccustomed to the activity to take part in the deliberation.

A third approach would be to recognize that the dichotomy between reasons and emotions is false (Young, 2000:39). In a deliberation, emotions such as expression of anger, hurt or passionate concerns and reasons such as reference to so-called more objective concerns, will work in a dialectic relationship between the participants thereby being difficult to distinguish. Some emotions as well as some reasons might have a great appeal within the group. Other emotions and reasons will be shared only by a few of the participants and, thus, will not be as powerful if used as reference when an argument is advanced. Accordingly, it is not a matter of reasons or emotions, but rather which points of reference achieve a certain inter-subjective appeal among the participants. Some emotions as well as reasons might even have a rather objective appeal in the group and consequently such reasons and emotions would immediately become accepted in the group.

Even though the above three approaches to confront the tension of political equality might help to reduce the tension within the theory of deliberative democracy, the tension of political equality seems immanent in the theory and the empirical premises, and unsolvable if one is being true to the theory. This argument partly rests on the implicit assumption that the participants, who are accustomed to deliberative processes, also are biased toward certain groups. Encouraging deliberation into a political process will, accordingly, disadvantage some groups of people, and these groups are

groups which are already underrepresented in the political system. Deliberation will, thus, strengthen an already existing bias in the political system. So far the argument has only been theoretical, but in the following chapters I will explore these biases and try to give an answer as to what extent such biases were evident during the Deliberative Poll on the euro.

#### **4.2 The publicity tension of deliberative democracy**

Publicity, openness, and transparency are other ideals which are emphasized in the deliberative theory. These ideals refer to the belief that information necessary for engaging in a deliberative process should be publicly available and that reasons given for political actions and decisions should be made in public (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:95). In principle, decision-making, discussion, and information pools should, consequently, be open to everyone (Bohman 1996:25), at least to those affected by the decisions (Dahl, 1989). Many deliberative democrats advocate the importance of publicity throughout the deliberative process to ensure that no argument is suppressed and to promote impartial reasoning. The principle of publicity will not remove arguments referring to self-interest in the political process nor will it remove group-conformity, but it is argued that when combining the principle of publicity with reciprocity, participants are more reluctant to refer to arguments based on self-interests. Instead the participants' initial raw opinions are transformed from subjective desires to objective claims, and most often the contents of these initial opinions are also subject to change when they are articulated in public (Young, 1996:125).

That change in opinions is a central element in the deliberative process is also emphasized by the definition of deliberation where transformation of preferences is accentuated (see chapter 3). Opinion change thus becomes an important and defining element of deliberative theory. But paradoxically, opinion change and publicity do not go hand in hand. On the contrary they are often contradictory as publicity can be a barrier to opinion change. Any rational participant, presenting an argument, will try to be as convincing as possible by minimizing the use of self-interested reasons and by trying to avoid being self-contradictory and, accordingly, is subject to a consistency constraint (Elster, 1998). If participants change opinions in public, they might lose face, credibility and be presented as self-contradictory, which would disadvantage them in future deliberation. Therefore, participants may decide to stick to their already

expressed views, even if new knowledge or better arguments are voiced. Accordingly, publicity hinders opinion change whereas secrecy facilitates opinion change. Some deliberative democrats do recognize this argument, but insist that publicity is more important, as otherwise the public loses its opportunity to hold decision-makers accountable for their arguments and actions. Some exceptions are, however, reluctantly granted, but only in those cases where secrecy is necessary to accomplish the purpose of the policy. E.g. if a central bank decides to change the interest rate next week, secrecy must be upheld until the decision is implemented (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996).

Yet another problem of publicity is the risk of creating a resonance box for demagogues and rhetoric. If publicity creates a resonance box for demagogues and rhetoric, the participants with the good rhetorical skills would again be granted an advantageous position in the deliberative process which again would constitute a threat to political equality. In this way, the publicity tension is related to the tension of political equality of deliberation. One way to confront the tension of publicity in deliberation is to encourage a design in deliberative settings which is balanced between closed and public deliberation. Nevertheless, the tension remains embedded in the theory of deliberative democracy.

The publicity tension in deliberative democratic theory is characterized by emphasizing publicity with a simultaneous emphasis on transformation of opinions. This simultaneous emphasis has been argued to be contradictory in empirical settings. The first indication that this contradiction exists in an empirical setting can be found by looking at how politicians deliberate in parliamentary assemblies. Not very often - if at all - has it been reported that a member of parliament has changed his or her mind during a public parliamentary assembly. Other empirical examples, which give some opportunities to explore whether the claimed contradiction is justified through empirical indication, are the French constitutional assembly of 1789 and the American federal constitutional convention of 1787. The French assembly debates were open to the public, whereas the American debates were held in secret. During the debates in Paris, lists of delegates arguing against popular initiatives were made, causing some delegates to fear for their lives. This publicity, according to some analyses, defeated unpopular claims such as the bicameralism and an absolute veto for the king. This case is highlighted because it may be interpreted as some

arguments or opinions, which did not refer to general or more precisely popular interests, were disfavored because of the publicity. The means were nevertheless quite alarming in this case. A clearer example of impartial reasoning in the French assembly of 1789 was that the delegates voted themselves ineligible for the first legislature (Elster, 1998b; 1992).

At the American constitutional convention, James Madison, one of the founding fathers of the American constitution, argued after the ratification of the American constitution that “*Had the members committed themselves publicly at first, they would have afterwards supposed consistency required them to maintain their ground, whereas by secret discussion no man felt himself obliged to retain his opinions any longer than he was satisfied of their propriety and truth, and was open to force of arguments.*” (Madison in Elster, 1998b:110). And furthermore “*no constitution would ever have been adopted by the Convention if the debates had been public*” (Madison in Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:114). However, it is difficult to present concrete examples of whether the delegates changed their opinions through the deliberation leading up to the constitution. Nevertheless, state interest (i.e. self-interest) was widely used throughout the deliberation backed with threats of either invasion in the case of larger states or alliance with foreign powers in the case of smaller states (Elster, 1991; 1998b). These two historical cases follow the argument raised by some deliberative democrats that secrecy in some cases facilitates self-interest reasons, whereas publicity on the other hand facilitates reasons appealing to common interest. The former case being the American convention, whereas the latter case being the French case.

As mentioned a balanced deliberative design with public as well as closed meetings may address the tension of simultaneously emphasizing publicity and opinion change, but first of all there seems to be a need for a theoretical explicit acknowledgment of a trade-off between publicity and opinion change which must be confronted when deliberative arenas are designed.

In the analysis presented in the following chapters, the relationship between publicity and opinion change will be investigated in the setting of the Deliberative Poll on the euro in order to try to understand the relation more fully and the effect on deliberative democracy.

### **4.3 The outcome-driven tension of deliberative democracy**

In the deliberative democratic theory there have been some controversies

about whether the outcome of deliberation should be aimed toward a collective decision and, if so, which decision-mechanism should be used - unanimous vote, majority vote, some qualified majority vote, or by consensus? Deliberation in the Habermasian sense is aimed at consensus. However, that is not to say that deliberation in reality will always produce consensus (Habermas, 1984; 1996; Cohen, 1997). Some of the arguments behind aiming at consensus are that it encourages the participants to argue according to general principles and the common good, and secondly, that it encourages the participants to search for alternative solutions in order to reach consensus. Finally, an aim for consensus may also encourage the participants to relax their stand on an issue and instead search for a collective, acceptable solution.

Deliberation, according to other theorists, is not aimed at consensus. Some deliberative democrats argue that deliberation may or may not produce consensus and that there should be no prior demand for aiming at consensus in a deliberative process. The outcome is instead an aggregation of the post-deliberative individual opinions (Fishkin, 1991; 1997). The arguments behind this position are first of all to avoid any tyranny of opinions deviating from the emerging consensus. That is to say that a consensus aim might discourage some participants from expressing their views if these views contradict some emerging consensus. Secondly, this position is based on the goal to ensure that political equality is not compromised by using the principle of 'one man one vote'. However, a vote based on a post-deliberation opinion is used to summarize the deliberative process (Koch, 1945/1991:24; Fishkin, 1997). Furthermore, a consensus aim of deliberation is rejected because it is difficult to distinguish between conformity and consensus, and a prior aim for consensus may very well give much more strength to group conformity than rationally motivated deliberation (Elster, 1998). The empirical analyses of decision theory suggest that participants in decision-making processes tend to adapt their individual behavior to group behavior in different situations. Such behavior is captured by the concepts of groupthink, which refers to the situation when members of a group in their efforts to reach consensus suppress conflicting opinions in order not to violate a prior established consensus (Janis, 1972; 't Hart, 1990). Furthermore, research suggests that individuals might become psychologically entrapped in the deliberative processes by escalating their commitment to previously chosen actions in order to justify these actions,

even though these actions have been proved to fail and be incorrect. Accordingly, individuals fail to assert the alternative solutions by comparing incremental values or marginal values, and instead include prior investment (e.g. sunk cost) and commitment, thus failing to choose an optimal outcome (Kameda & Sugimori, 1993). Mansbridge's (1980/1983) studies of decision-making in town meetings and voluntary organizations support these tendencies to suppress conflicting views. Accordingly, consensus mechanisms, which originally often are justified to ensure minority rights and voices tend to work contradictory to their justification and actually suppress the minority voices.

If we idealize the two positions, i.e. deliberation should be aimed at a firm outcome justified by consensus, or deliberation should not be directed at any specific outcome, but may be subsequently subject to popular vote, the problem of the positions becomes clear. The Habermasian consensus position may compromise political equality, as certain views may not be voiced during deliberation, and may receive criticism from the advocates of the idea of groupthink and conformity. If taking the no-outcome position, accordingly lacking the aim of a built-in consensus outcome, the Habermasian position would argue that this form of deliberation will entrench the lines of conflict between individuals and not pave the road for collective decision. On the contrary, such deliberation invites to radical individualism and arguments and opinions based on self-interest rather than to aim at a collective will. Even though deliberation might create the necessary conditions for a reasonable decision, the actual decision is the culmination where individual preferences are converted into reality, as the decision forces the participants to an actual choice. Thus, deliberations without a collective aim only define options and lack the process which converts these options into choices (Barber, 1984:201-202). On the other hand, most deliberative democrats would also agree that deliberative accountability and reciprocity, i.e. arguments must be backed with reason, force the participants to justify their claims in terms of collective reasons. Thus even without an *a priori* aim on decision, general considerations will be included in the deliberative process.

The tension in the deliberative democratic theory lies in that no matter what position one may choose, the position contradicts other elements of the theory. By following the consensus position, one might compromise simple, political equality, whereas by choosing the no-outcome

position one might be subject to an entrenched line of conflict and, accordingly, contradict the very purpose of deliberation which is to encourage mutually justifiable solutions.

As in the cases of the previously argued tensions a theoretical and explicit acknowledgment of the trade-off between outcome-driven deliberation and not a certain *a priori* outcome would help to ensure a more coherent and non-self-contradictory theory of deliberative democracy.

The reasoning behind the outcome-driven tension is also amplified by that some deliberative democrats acknowledge that in some cases decisions have to be made, also in the case of strong disagreement (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:77). In this way, some deliberative democrats argue only for deliberation as a supplementary mechanism, which should to a larger extent infuse the current representative democratic institutions with deliberation and to some extent call for supplementary deliberative arenas. Deliberation is very often only an initial process before e.g. a majority vote is taken in parliament or congress. Deliberation has, thus, in many cases only an advisory jurisdiction. But even though deliberation in many cases is prior to e.g. voting procedures, the many potentials of deliberation are still present. In some cases, the deliberative process potentially produces a common understanding of the problems at stake. In some situations, the participants may come to mutual acknowledgment of their differences and disagreements, thereby mutually acknowledging that co-operation between them requires some work in order to arrive at mutually acceptable and understandable positions. On some occasions, the deliberative process might arrive at a consensus where participants rely on the same reasons when justifying the decision. In other cases, the deliberative process might produce a compromise where the participants rely on different reasons when justifying the decision, but in many other cases the outcome might be the result of a *rough consensus*.<sup>39</sup> Rough consensus would be a situation where a person or group of persons who had the formal power would eventually call the 'consensus', but only after the different views had been articulated, validated in confrontation with other views and after the differences had been mutually accepted. Such a rough consensus outcome does not express unanimity, or just a majority decision, but rather a position acceptable to the participants due to the

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<sup>39</sup> I owe the term *rough consensus* to Michael Laver, Trinity College, Dublin.

procedural legitimacy. Accordingly, a rough consensus acknowledges the differences in opinions and respects these differences, but is nevertheless justified due to a legitimacy in the procedures surrounding the outcome and the formal and informal authority of the person or group of persons calling the rough consensus. The legitimacy of the rough consensus is thus different, compared to a legitimacy based on a consensus, in which all participants supporting the outcome are applying the same reasons. Rough consensus also relies on a different form of legitimacy compared to a voting procedure where the outcome achieves its legitimacy by the majority vote. This is also to say, that infusing a decision-making with deliberation is not in any way a guarantee that the best and most rational decisions are taken. As such deliberative democracy is an imperfect theory, but it nevertheless aims to produce outcomes which are mutually acceptable to all participants (Manin, 1987:363).

#### **4.4 The common good vs. self-interest in deliberation**

Another challenge to deliberative democracy is that the theory often tends to dichotomize the type of arguments put forward in a deliberation as either opinions referring to common interest or self-interest. This dichotomy seems to be part of the contradictory aspects of the theory as it raises the questions: what constitutes the common good, and who is to define the common good? There are at least three often applied understandings of the common good, which might help to understand the notion of the common good in deliberative democracy.

First from a utilitarian perspective, the common good is simply constituted by the means which maximize the sum of all individuals' pain and pleasure over time (Bentham, 1789).

The second understanding of the common good is accentuated by Rousseau's (1762) concept of the 'general will'. The 'general will' in Rousseau's work is constituted by something with an intrinsic quality and goodness as opposed to just the sum of the individual citizens' interests. The 'general will' would evolve from all citizens and is applied to all citizens.

A third approach to the common good would argue that the common good should be extracted from an overall moral codex.

Contrary to these approaches to the common good, many deliberative democrats argue that the common good is procedural in the sense that if certain procedures are satisfied, the outcome will aim to achieve

the common good. In this way, during a deliberation, the common good is endogenously and implicitly given and emerges during deliberation. Cohen (1997:77) argues that the common good is the aims, interests and ideals that survive the deliberative process. Accordingly, in a deliberative process it would be much more precise to define the common good as what is inter-subjectively accepted in the group. If only a procedural claim of deliberation is maintained it would only be the procedures of deliberation that limit the outcome of deliberation and thus define the common good.

To supplement the procedural legitimacy of the common good, Cohen provides a supportive substantive ideal. That is, the common good that emerges from the deliberation should provide a Pareto-efficient solution<sup>40</sup> (Cohen, 1996). Nevertheless, the procedural and substantive claim to the common good can be argued to be somewhat ambiguous. It is ambiguous because the position argues on the one hand that a Pareto-efficient solutions exists which is normatively more desirable than other solutions. At the same time, the position argues that the conclusion is based on the common good which is only 'common' within the groups of deliberators and even changes in the process of deliberation, which questions the authority of the 'common' good. Different groups may develop different notions of the common good. Furthermore, the dichotomy between the common good and the self-interest hardly exists in the mind of the participants. On the contrary, it is quite plausible that most participants just try to find the most persuasive arguments and that such arguments often tend to refer to general principles is secondary to the individual. Furthermore, arguments referring to commonly accepted principles may very well be used strategically to promote self-interest. Therefore the common good is never a well-defined principle when actual deliberation is conducted.

These arguments call on deliberative democrats to explicitly acknowledge that the common good or, more accurately, the different principles of justification that evolve and change during deliberation are never pre-given, but develop within the conceptual framework. This is done by partly taking the plurality of deliberation into account as argued in the

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<sup>40</sup> If a Pareto-efficient solution is achieved, it is impossible to find another solution that makes everyone at least as well off and at the same time makes at least one person better off.

previous chapter. If there is no disagreement, there is no need for deliberation. This is also relevant when referring to the concept of the common good.

Even though the common good is not a well-defined principle it has been argued by some thinkers to maintain the common good as a normative goal within as well as a result of the political process. If the common good was substituted with a focus on group-specific political claims it would make meaningful communication impossible because the public would be divided into selfish interest groups. Such interest groups would not be oriented towards transformative deliberation or co-operation, but only destroy any public commitment to a common good. Thus making the group differences a primary concern in the political process would entrench the differences between the groups and freeze the group members in opposition to one another rather than uniting everyone who have reasons to oppose any unjustified power.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, if deliberation only allows opinions oriented toward the common good to be voiced, the plurality of society is neglected and many opinions simply disappear in the process of deliberation.

Along the same line of reasoning Iris Marion Young (2000:81-84;113) also presents a strong argument for rejecting the perceived common good as a goal. According to her, if participants in the political process must commit themselves to the common good, each participant must leave their differences, their particular social situations, and any local loyalty behind. In such a case, the common good suppresses all differences, and the common good becomes a straitjacket, which excludes certain experiences which again narrows the possible agenda and fails to acknowledge important conflicts and disagreements, which are the usual state of politics (Young, 2000:43-44). Thus, maintaining the common good as a goal does not adequately respond to the plurality of society or notice the differences. Instead, it must be acknowledged that politics are deduced from different particular groups and politics should, accordingly, attend these issues of difference and not be aimed at constructing a rather arbitrary notion of a common good. That is also to acknowledge that issues of justice vary according to group and arguments are always only relatively justified. A relative justification depends always on the values of the particular groups,

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<sup>41</sup> Young (2000:82-84) reviews different accounts of defense of the common good.

some groups will find certain arguments more convincing than other groups. In this sense, deliberation is based on only the relative force of the better argument (Manin, 1987). Thus, politics should not be interpreted as a process trying to reach a solution based on the common good, but rather politics is a matter of reaching just solutions to particular problems in a particular social context (Young, 2000:113). Taking this argument further suggests that politics to a large extent is the battle of who is to define the common good rather than arguing that politics is about trying to find an exogenously given common good. In this way the common good will tend to be nothing but a political creation.

Young rejects the case where politics is a competition between self-interests where no public spirit exists as well as the case where politics is a public deliberation in which the participants are mutually committed to equal respect, seeking the common good, and setting aside any self-interests (Young, 1997:398-399). Instead Young provides a third alternative between the two extreme positions just mentioned. This alternative perceives deliberation as aimed toward solving collective problems, but not directed toward any common good. Any participant of the deliberation promotes his own interest, but must be answerable to others in order to justify his interest. That is, any participant must be willing to take the interest of others into account in the process of deliberation. This procedural claim of deliberation - mutual accountability - on the one hand provides legitimacy to the deliberation. On the other hand, as no substantive claim of deliberation is used, the alternative provides a much weaker foundation of deliberation (Young, 1997). The only indirect substantive claim of deliberation is that the deliberation must be directed toward collective problems (Freeman, 2000:412). Yet another advantage of this alternative is that this understanding of deliberation does not violate political equality, as the common good is rejected as the only legitimate line of reference for arguments advanced during deliberation. In this way, the alternative also theoretically helps solving the tension within deliberative democracy between political equality and that only arguments referring to the common good are to be advanced during deliberation (see section 4.1).

This alternative would also encourage deliberative democrats to take a broader continuum of arguments into account to break the deadlock dichotomy which has been created between the common good and self-interest. This might be achieved through explicitly acknowledging that

any common good and self-interest dichotomy is false. A fruitful path would not just need to acknowledge that belonging to certain groups is to a large extent the determinant which decides interests. Furthermore, interests are deduced from the fact that individuals have different experiences and knowledge, but also that individuals are willing to work out outcomes that cut across their particular situation (Young, 2000:7). Justified political judgement must thus arrive from discussions of differences not by excluding them and, through deliberation, allowing the experiences of the different groups to be brought together. Such a form of deliberation would aim at achieving full inclusiveness in the process by giving special attention to the social relations that different people bring together and by acknowledging the condition which shapes these experiences, opportunities, and their knowledge of their society. An explicit inclusion of different social groups' experiences during deliberation would, according to Young (2000:113), increase the likelihood of promoting justice because the interest of all is taken into account. Furthermore, such an inclusion would rest on that the interest of each participant is acknowledged to be embedded in his or her particular values and beliefs, which are confronted with others' particular values and beliefs during the deliberation. Nevertheless, this also acknowledges that deliberation is not a matter of finding the truth or common good, but a matter of setting up a process in which the final judgement rests on being able to articulate any claim as justifiably as possible (Manin, 1987). In this sense, deliberation as such must address the problems in their context, in which diverse experiences and opinions are respected and taken into account.

#### 4.5 Summary

It is argued that deliberative democratic theory has several immanent contradictions and tensions. These contradictions are important to discuss, not only if the theory is to be as persuasive as possible, but also necessary if the aim is to advance the theory of deliberative democracy.

Three tensions can be identified in deliberative democracy: the equality tension, the publicity tension and the outcome-driven tension. Each tension implies that contradictory values are present and emphasized in the deliberative democracy. Being true to one value will challenge the other and vice versa.

The political equality tension of deliberation argues that it is

paradoxical that the theory advocates political equality during deliberation and, simultaneously, advocates that certain types of arguments possess a higher value because they refer to the common good. In this way, equality is disregarded concerning type of argument. The problem is nevertheless that disregarding equality favors participants accustomed to this kind of reasoning. To confront this tension in order to improve the theory of deliberative democracy it is necessary to explicitly acknowledge the trade-off between advancing political equality and arguing by referring to more generalized claims. Furthermore, there is a need to aim for more sensitivity in the way of how actual deliberation is conducted and to set up frames which allow different types of arguments to be put forward, in order to avoid deliberative democracy turning into pure technocracy.

The publicity tension of deliberation argues that it is contradictory to advocate an environment which encourages opinion change and a higher awareness of the expressed opinions and, at the same time, to stipulate that deliberative democracy emphasizes transparency and openness in order to improve the likelihood of advancing arguments referring to the common good and to give the public an insight into the deliberative process. It is contradictory because opinion change and publicity do not go well together. Participants, having expressed their opinions in public, are less likely to change their opinions because a public change of opinion may discredit and disadvantage them in the ongoing dialog. The opposite in non-public settings where opinion change is easier as the participants are not publicly exposed as weak, mindless and ambiguous toward the issue. The approach to confront the publicity tension is to explicitly acknowledge the trade-off between publicity and opinion change which must also be confronted when deliberative arenas are designed.

The outcome-driven tension discusses whether deliberation should be aimed at a formal collective decision. On the one hand the aim for a collective decision may ensure a certain realism and encourage more balanced views in the process of reaching a decision. Simultaneously aiming at collective decisions also gives room for conformity and groupthink, jeopardizing the free and open deliberation and, eventually, suppressing conflicting arguments. As argued in the cases of the two other tensions there is a need for a theoretical and explicit acknowledgment of the trade-off between outcome-driven deliberation and deliberation not aimed at a certain *a priori* outcome. Such an acknowledgment would help ensure a

more coherent and non-self-contradictory theory of deliberative democracy. Another supplementary approach would be to recognize other procedural mechanisms to establish a legitimacy behind the outcome, such as a rough consensus.

The chapter also discusses the concept of the common good in relation to deliberation. It is argued that deliberative democrats need to explicitly acknowledge that the common good relies on different principles of justification and that these principles evolves and changes during the deliberation. Thus, the common good is never pre-given, but develops within the conceptual framework. In this way, it is accentuated that deliberation is not a matter of finding the truth or the common good, but a matter of setting up a process in which the final judgment rests on being able to articulate every claim as justifiably as possible. In this way, the legitimacy of deliberation primarily rests on a procedural claim. This implies that participants of deliberation must be mutually accountable and willing to justify their reasons to each other. The substantive claim of deliberation is only made implicitly by aiming deliberation toward collective problem-solving.

It is the hope that by focusing on some of the tensions in deliberative democracy, this chapter will be a small contribution toward a theory of deliberative democracy which is more coherent and persuasive, contrary to an account of the theory that does not acknowledge these tensions. In the next chapter, the theory of deliberative democracy presented in chapter 3, and the critique of the theory presented in this chapter, are operationalized into several potentials of deliberation. Subsequently, these potentials are analyzed in the setting of the Deliberative Poll on the euro.





**Part III**  
**The Empirical Analyses of**  
**Deliberative Democracy**

## Chapter 5 - The Potentials of Deliberative Democracy

So far the dissertation has discussed the methodology behind the Deliberative Poll and the theoretical framework of deliberative democracy. This chapter is the transition chapter between the methodological and theoretical considerations and the empirical analyses of the national Danish Deliberative Poll on the single currency.

Section 5.1 discusses why the normative implication of deliberative democracy should be subject to empirical analyses. The claim is that any normative theory must relate to empirical indications and vice versa in order not to turn into either a utopia or a purely descriptive analysis.

Section 5.2 frames the following nine chapters by discussing the potentials of deliberative democracy. Nine potentials are presented based on the previous chapters. According to deliberative democracy, each potential has some normatively desirable features as well as some undesirable features.

### 5.1 Finding a balance between normative and descriptive analyses

A reasonable objection to the approach used throughout this volume is that the discussions simultaneously are carried out on the normative as well as on the descriptive level. In this way, it is not clear when the arguments are mainly justified on normative principles respectively on empirical premises and analyses. Some might argue that so far this has led the discussion into rather hazardous waters, because of the tendencies to compare non-comparable elements of the theory by confronting normative reflections with empirical indications. Some might also claim that there is a tendency to compare the most idealized normative principles with the worst-case empirical scenarios leaving the discussion rather irrelevant and talking at cross-purposes.

However, I will argue that without relating normative standards to empirical indications we tend to decouple our understanding of society. That is, if analyses do not relate normative and empirical issues, the analyses will often either be out of touch with the reality of public life or leave out the possibility of assessing the appropriateness of e.g. the established political institutions (Ricci, 1984). Accordingly, for any model of democracy to be plausible, it must be concerned with normative as well as empirical issues.

Such a double focus might be a difficult balance to maintain, but it is important in order to avoid that the normative discussion turns into rather arbitrary choices, and abstract and endless debates based on a society inhabited with self-centered citizens or saints. Such idealizations are rather inaccessible and irrelevant for applied research and have few, if any, practical implications. On the other hand, such normative discussions might foster a sense of virtue, but also produce a utopia and a thought-experiment leaving the actual meaning of the ideas to be spelled out in practice. That is not to say that a utopia, no matter how abstract it is from real life, cannot be normatively desirable, but only that utopias best serve the purpose of ideal types to clarify the unavoidable inertial elements of our society and not as a goal for actual politics.

On the other hand, a focus only on empirical premises may gain an insight into the way certain institutions function and operate, but does not provide any idea of how these institutions are justifiable or about the institutions' desirability and their appropriateness and, in its extreme form, such analyses turn into purely descriptive positivism (Held, 1996:304).<sup>42</sup> Accordingly, the double approach taken in this dissertation is a reflective choice aiming at analyzing to what extent some normatively desirable principles, according to deliberative democrats, are present in a deliberative arena.

The approach to the deliberative democracy applied in this dissertation relates also to the more general theoretical approach of 'critical theory' where the idea is not to derive a theory's ideals from philosophical premises about certain features of morality or human nature, but rather to reflect on existing institutions, social relations and processes to identify what may be potentially valuable in order to develop a theory (Young, 2000:10). That is to say, a more inductive and empirical approach generalizing from specific existing cases and empirical evidence rather than a deductive approach where the conclusions necessarily follow from universal premises.

Most approaches within deliberative democratic theory aim at the double focus by confronting normative standards and empirical indications, in order to find reasons and principles which can be applied to an actual political process and not just another normative thought-

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<sup>42</sup> See Hansen & Ejersbo (2002) for a similar argument in relation to models of public administration.

experiment of political philosophy, but at the same time allowing much discussion on how to justify the principles of deliberative democracy and judge their appropriateness in a normative sense. That is also to say that deliberative democrats recognize that most of the time, democratic procedures and processes in practice fall short of the conditions that deliberative democracy prescribes, but that the application of deliberative democracy nevertheless must confront politics in practice (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:16-17). When confronting the application of deliberative democracy with politics in everyday life it may provide some indication of which conditions and institutions that need adjustment in order to make deliberative democracy flourish, or in what situation the theory of deliberative democracy needs adjustment in order not to turn into a utopia.

The double focus of normative and empirical premises has already surfaced more or less explicitly in many of the discussions in the previous chapters. For instance, in the discussion on negotiation versus deliberation, the discussion on whether deliberation is aimed at consensus, and in the discussion on the whether the common good exists. In the following chapters, the double focus is spelled out as the normative potentials of deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy is operationalized into more specific hypotheses, which are subsequently used to empirical verification in order to confront deliberative democracy with an empirical process of deliberation and vice versa. Such a confrontation must be applied and be practical, in order to assess to what extent the concept of deliberative democracy can improve and enrich the processes of political life in contemporary society and whether the concept can overcome the many obstacles confronted by real political life today.

## **5.2 The potentials of deliberation**

Deliberative democracy is based on a number of successive arguments, which have been discussed in the two previous chapters. These arguments can also be explained as potentials of deliberative democracy. Such potentials should be understood as what the theory potentially would contribute to a political process, if applied. As such the potentials present some plausible opportunities and possibilities when the theory is applied to an empirical process. In some cases, a potential may be normatively desirable according to deliberation democracy; in other cases, the potential may actually turn into an undesirable feature of deliberation democracy. In this

way, the normatively desirable potentials are weak hypotheses, whereas the undesirable potentials are weak anti-hypotheses. They are weak hypotheses, as they do not represent hypotheses in the statistical or strictly methodological sense, where the aim is to make the hypotheses as explicit as possible making a clear acceptance or rejection straightforward. Rather, the normatively desirable as well as the normatively undesirable potentials will be matters of discussion and interpretation of the empirical analyses in order to reach plausible conclusions about to which extent the potentials are present during the deliberative experiment of the Deliberative Poll on the euro.

In the sections below, each potential is briefly described as deliberation's potential effects on a political process. Subsequently, each of the potentials will be discussed in more detail in a separate chapter where the empirical analysis will dominate.

### *The effect of deliberation on knowledge*

Through deliberation knowledge is potentially increased. The participants bring together different kinds of information on the issues and through deliberation this information is shared. As such the pool of available information is expanded by deliberation. Secondly, before the actual deliberation the participants have an incentive to seek information which they can use during deliberation. Accordingly, the participants may follow the media more closely than usual, or intensify their discussions on politics with family, friends, and colleagues. On the other hand, an increase in knowledge may be obstructed by the fact that an individual has a tendency towards selective exposure of information and selective perception of information. Thus, in some cases, individuals' initial opinions determine which media they choose to follow and, secondly, the individuals' initial opinions act as a selection mechanism for which arguments and information the individuals accept. That is, to argue that to some extent the individuals seek confirmation of their initial opinions and interpretations. This is also enforced by the fact that people tend to belong to social groups that look like themselves and, as such, their everyday environment carries opinions that replicate their own (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). In such a case, the potential that deliberation increases the information available is confronted by arguments suggesting selective learning patterns and, in a worst-case scenario, even reinforcement of prejudice.

### *The effect of deliberation on opinion formation*

Initially individuals may not have consistent opinions about the issues. Their opinions might be incoherent and vary strongly over time and according to the latest argument presented to them. Through deliberation the individuals are forced to express their opinions and these opinions are confronted by other opinions. In such a deliberative process, the individuals would potentially develop a more coherent and consistent opinion structure, their opinions would potentially be more stable and less subject to change. On the other hand, the deliberative process might also leave the participants more confused as they now see how complex the problem can be. In such a case, the participants' opinions actually become less stable and less consistent as the participants understand that the problem is many-sided and, accordingly, have difficulty in deciding.

### *The effect of deliberation on the spectrum of the outcome*

Potentially deliberation will initiate a collective reasoning producing new information and alternative solutions that had not surfaced without deliberation. As such, the number of options, from which the final outcome must arrive, is increased. These options are justified and verified in the deliberative process. Working against the potential expansion of the possible outcomes are that groups tend to conform to a prevailing consensus or perceived consensus. Participants might have difficulties arguing against the majority in the groups and be unaware or aware of giving in to the majority, thereby producing a situation where the participants search for a common ground that only reinforces already existing possible solutions. Deliberation might, in such a situation, produce only groupthink, psychological entrapment, and conformity, which work against expanding the possible range of solutions.

### *The effect of deliberation on tolerance*

Deliberation increases mutual understanding among the participants. Through deliberation they learn about opposite views and positions, they meet these positions with counter arguments in an attempt to persuade the other participants according to their own position. The insight which the participants gain into each other's positions will potentially lead to an increased respect for these positions although not to agreeing on them. Through deliberation, the participants might also potentially understand

that an opinion conflicting their own position is not just a matter of simply ignorance, but rather a matter of conflicting values. On the contrary, it may also be argued that deliberation might potentially bring many latent conflicts out in the open. Conflicts that might not have surfaced if the participants had not been brought together in the deliberative process. In some cases, one might argue that these conflicts would be normatively better if they had remained latent and out of the political agenda. Another undesirable effect of deliberation is that deliberation might create entrenched positions, which do not encourage future co-operation or produce a broader tolerance for different opinions.

#### *The effect of deliberation on the justification of outcomes*

Whether the outcome of a deliberative process is an aggregation of post-deliberative preferences or an outcome resting on a consensus, compromise, or a rough consensus, deliberative democracy argues that a genuine deliberative process potentially will increase the justification of the outcome. E.g. deliberation potentially advances the common good, as participants are reluctant to refer to arguments based on narrow self-interests. In such a case, the deliberative process potentially increases procedural legitimacy as well as the justification for a decision following from the deliberative process. On the other hand, during the exchange of arguments, self-interest might be camouflaged by arguments based on the common good. However, the exchange of arguments has the potential to discover such use of arguments. In other cases the deliberation might be infused with narrow self-interest arguments and threats may even surface. In such a case, an increase of the justification to any subsequent decision is questionable.

Another way in which an outcome of a deliberative process potentially increases its justification is through the notion of deliberative accountability. If deliberative accountability prevails in a deliberative process, the participants will be responsive and listen to the objections raised against the individual's opinion in their aim to articulate and clarify their position. That is not to say that the participants will reach a consensus, only that they are willing to justify their opinions to other participants.

#### *The effect of deliberation on empowerment*

Potentially, deliberation may encourage self-development and empowerment in the sense that participants may experience both an

increased sense of being capable to participate in politics and engage in political discussions and an increased sense of having a say on government decisions. Participating in deliberation in one arena may also potentially spread to other levels of political life. As such, deliberation may encourage more deliberation. On the other hand, participation in deliberation may also produce a feeling among the participants that they have now done their democratic duty. Accordingly, one experience of deliberation may have used up the time and resources which the individual has for participating in politics, and a bad deliberative experience might even have a negative impact on the empowerment.

*The effect of deliberation on the implementation of the outcome*

An outcome, which has gone through a deliberative process, will potentially produce a more successful implementation of politics due to an increased understanding of the reasons for the decisions among citizens. That is, if the participants arrive at a broader understanding of the different possible solutions, they will potentially find it easier to support the solution even if it goes against their own opinion. Secondly, it might also make the implementation of a decision easier and, as such, deliberation might work against civic disobedience. However, it may also be argued that the deliberative process produces strong expectations that the participants' recommendations become a substantial contribution to the final political decision. That is, the more time and resources the participants invest in the deliberative process, the more disappointed they would be if their contributions were neglected and ignored in future political processes. In such a case where the decision-makers disregard the deliberation process, the deliberation may end up in contributing an even stronger capability to civic disobedience and, accordingly, working against implementation of the policy.

*The effect of deliberation on inclusion*

Extensive research has been conducted on the extent to which certain groups systematically are excluded from politics and it has produced the finding that elected representatives differ from the population with some systematic characteristics, such as they are better educated, and that more men than women are elected representatives. In this way, this research has confronted the question of representativeness, a question also addressed in chapter two

in relation to the Deliberative Poll. However, much less research has been conducted about the influence of these differences between elected representative and the electorate, with Kjær (2000) and Mansbridge (1991; 1999) as exceptions. In the context of deliberation, the question of representativeness can be addressed in terms of external exclusion; that is, certain citizens are kept out of the deliberative forum or even not allowed access, and internal exclusion; that is, does the deliberative process prescribe a certain discursive framework or a certain speech culture, which certain citizens lack the effective opportunities and means to fulfill and thus are excluded on these grounds (Young, 2000)? On the one hand, deliberation will potentially advance a process that treats everyone equally and, accordingly, gives an equal access to the forum of deliberation as well as equal opportunity to express opinions. On the other hand, deliberation might increase new or already existing equalities in political participation. Accordingly, deliberation may potentially exclude certain people, opinions, and experiences from the political forum and, in this way, compromise political equality.

#### *Deliberation and publicity*

If deliberation potentially is to have any effect on other than the participants in the deliberation, the process of deliberation must in some way be made public. Secondly, in order to increase the legitimacy of a deliberative process in relation to the population at large, transparency and openness should be prevailing features of a deliberative process. Otherwise the process might be regarded as rather suspicious and manipulative by the population at large or opponents of the outcome. Thirdly, as it has been argued in the previous chapter, publicity potentially encourages the participants to present their claims in a mutually justifiable manner, which might advance some kind of common good solutions. These three arguments for publicity and transparency of the deliberative process conflict with the argument that participants have difficulties in changing their opinions during deliberation if they wish, as publicity exposes the participants who have changed their minds as self-contradictory and weak. Publicity would, accordingly, bring participants who change their opinions in a disadvantageous position in the deliberation.

These nine potential effects of deliberation are summarized in table 5.1 below. The potentials are compiled from the discussion in the

preceding chapters. Other deliberative theorists have also provided lists, but have only included the normatively desirable elements from deliberative democracy (Aars & Offerdal, 2000; Offerdal & Aars, 1998; Benhabib, 1996; Cooke, 2000; Elster, 1998; Fearon, 1998; Gargarella, 1998). In particular the first two potentials of deliberation can be interpreted as somewhat instrumental, where deliberation contributes to a more qualified opinion and increased knowledge. That is, it can be argue that deliberation contributes to increased outcome legitimacy. The other seven potentials are of a more procedural character, where the effects of the deliberative process are in focus. That is, it can also be argue that deliberation potentially contributes to procedural legitimacy.

**Table 5.1: The potentials of deliberation**

Normatively desirable	Normatively undesirable
<b>The effect of deliberation on knowledge</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating citizens and increasing knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selective learning and reinforcement of prejudice</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on opinion formation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of coherent, consistent, and stable preferences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unstable, inconsistent, confused preferences</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on the spectrum of the outcome</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing collective reasoning leading to new upspring of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group processes reflecting conformity and groupthink</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on tolerance</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing mutual understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring out latent conflicts and entrenched positions</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on the justification of outcomes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advancing the common good by minimizing the use of arguments referring to narrow self-interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-interest arguments and strategic use of arguing according to the common good</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on empowerment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a politically activating effect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That was enough, never again</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on the implementation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating broader support of decisions which allows more successful implementation of politics due to increased understanding of the reasons behind the decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision-makers did not listen to participants of the deliberation</li> </ul>
<b>The effect of deliberation on inclusion</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberation is a process where everyone may and can express their views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain views are excluded</li> </ul>
<b>Deliberation and publicity</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberation as a transparent and public process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity conflict with opinion formation</li> </ul>

The nine potentials for deliberation are related to each other and are dependent on each other. Some of these may even be overlapping and some even contradictory. However, each of the normatively desirable potentials according to deliberative democracy posits reasons why deliberation should be a desired part of a political process, whereas the normatively undesirable potentials posit arguments why deliberation should not be desirable

elements of a political process. The normative values, which thus allow deliberative democrats to differentiate between normatively undesirable and normatively desirable potentials of deliberation, rely on the values and characteristics which were discussed in chapter 3 on deliberative democracy and summarized in table 3.1. That is also to say that the normatively desirable potentials provide an indication of how democracy would be experienced if it was organized according to the principles and assumptions of deliberative democracy.

As the nine potentials are laid out, they should be interpreted as potential aspects of a deliberative process and, as such, not all nine reasons will necessarily present features of a deliberative process. By relating the potential aspects of deliberation to an empirical setting, it is possible to distinguish between more and less deliberative processes, similar to Dahl's (1989) argument that democratic processes can be more or less democratic. In this respect, the normative theory engages the necessary relation with empirical issues. If this was not the case, deliberative democracy would risk being placed in a situation of focusing on arbitrary principles and engaging in endless abstract debates. To the extent the desirable potentials are fulfilled during a deliberative process, it also presents a contribution to developing and maintaining a democratic culture and tradition according to deliberative democratic ideals. Furthermore, to the extent the desirable potential is achieved, it would, according to deliberative democracy, also increase democratic legitimacy in a broader sense.

In the following chapters, each of the nine potentials will be explored and elaborated by analyzing the Danish Deliberative Poll on the single currency. Nevertheless, the data material from the Danish Deliberative Poll does not allow to analyze all the potentials with the same degree of detail. Some of the potentials can, thus, only be analyzed indirectly and rather superficially while other potentials are analyzed in more detail. E.g. the individual panel data from the Poll provide the opportunity to analyze the opinion formation (second potential in table 5.1), while the effect of deliberation on implementation (seventh potential in table 5.1) can only be analyzed indirectly, as the Poll did not provide any decisive collective decision to be implemented. In order to provide a systematic and straightforward structure of the following chapters, each potential is analyzed in a separate chapter. This structure makes the volume of the chapters vary according to the richness of the data material.

### 5.3 Summary

This chapter represents the transition between the methodology discussion on the Deliberative Poll of chapter two, the normative discussion on deliberative democracy in chapters three and four, and the empirical analyses of deliberative democracy in the following chapters.

Section 5.1 advocates the necessity of relating descriptive and normative analyses. The approach throughout this dissertation has been to move along the balance between normative and empirical analyses. Accordingly, the aim of the discussions have been to force an assessment of the appropriateness of deliberative democracy's normative expectations to real life, and to confront these expectations with the deliberative process during the experiment on Deliberative Poll on the euro. The argument is that by moving along this balance between normative and descriptive analyses we might gain a better insight into the desirability of our normative expectations as well as better insights on how to improve current practices and how to adjust these empirical practices in order to move closer to our normative expectations or, vice versa, by adjusting our normative expectations in order for these not to turn into a pure utopia.

Nine potentials of deliberation are outlined in section 5.2. Each potential includes a normatively desirable component according to the theory of deliberative democracy as well as a normatively undesirable component. In this way, each potential consists of a weak hypothesis and a weak anti-hypothesis. It is argued that a political process can be more or less deliberative depending on to what degree the potentials are present in a political process. In the following chapters, each of the nine potentials will go through separate empirical analyses before all the empirical findings are brought together in the concluding chapters. The first potential analyzed is the relationship between knowledge and deliberation.

## Chapter 6 - Deliberation on Knowledge

This chapter presents the first empirical analyses on the experiment of the Deliberative Poll on the euro. The chapter focuses on the first of nine potentials presented in chapter 5, that is, the effect which deliberation has on the participants' level of specific knowledge regarding the euro. In section 6.1 some arguments supporting the idea that deliberation will increase the participants' level of knowledge, are presented. These arguments are based on writings on democracy. Section 6.2 presents analyses showing that on the aggregated level, the participants did learn as a result of the deliberative experience. In order to assess whether the learning process during the Deliberative Polling process depends on different groups, section 6.3 presents the level of knowledge throughout the experiment divided on different socio-demographic groups. Section 6.4 tries to disentangle the effect of the process prior to the Deliberative Poll, and the process during the Deliberative Poll with regard to the development on the participants' level of knowledge. The analyses show how the process leading up to the Deliberative Poll as well as the process during the Deliberative Poll contributed to the participants' learning experience. In particular the participants' increased awareness of the media during the time leading up to the Poll can account for the learning process before the weekend where the participants met. The analyses in section 6.5 present findings suggesting that the participants' initial decisiveness and initial positions with regard to the euro influenced their learning patterns. Even though these selective learning patterns are present during the Deliberative Polling, the findings indicate that deliberation and information narrow down the gap in the level of information between the two groups.

### 6.1 The educational potential of deliberation

In the republican and participatory tradition of democracy theory, an essential claim is that when citizens participate in political processes they also enter into an educational process. As has already been discussed in the previous chapters, J.S. Mill believed that democracy would also be an important means to advance the general level of education among citizens and their opportunity to self-development. His strong advocacy for education even led him to suggest plural voting based on education. For

participatory democrats, participation in democratic processes is essential to serve a necessary educative function in order to develop the social capacity as well as political qualities of each individual. If such a participatory democracy is established, it would not only maximize the inputs to decision-making processes and ensure more justifiable political decisions, but also enable the citizens to give qualified feedback on established policies (Pateman, 1970). In a strictly normative and general sense, the educational effect may teach citizens to live in mutual respect in pursuit of the common good (e.g., Koch, 1945/1991). Other theorists have argued that even though democracy's educational effects are important, democracy's primary objective is to elect an elite to take the decisions, thus increasing the educational level of the population remains a by-product of the democratic process and not a goal in itself (Schumpeter, 1942/1975; Ross, 1946/1967). Within deliberative democracy it is to a large extent assumed that participants, when entering the deliberative process, will experience a potential increase in knowledge and in their capability to engage in politics. This assumption is, so to speak, the glue that brings and holds the many potentials of deliberative democracy together. Thus, if it is rejected that deliberation increases knowledge, the theory loses much of its justification. There are two general arguments supporting the idea that deliberation increases knowledge.

First of all when different individuals are brought together they bring a variety of knowledge into the political process. Accordingly, the amount of information available for each individual increases as the pool of information is expanded. During deliberation, this information is shared and validated against other information. This of course assumes that individuals are capable of and willing to share their individual information with other participants during deliberation.

Secondly, when participants know they are going to be engaged in deliberation, they have an incentive prior to the deliberation to seek relevant information. Such an incentive is intensified if the deliberation is conducted in public, e.g. in front of a national audience through television, as participants would prepare themselves to the deliberation in order not to lose face and credibility. The participants may seek information prior to the deliberation by following the news media more intensively or by engaging in discussion with family, friends, and colleagues on the specific issue of the deliberation.

Empirical research has also repeatedly shown that the educational level of the participants is related to the extent to which people involve themselves in politics, their interest in politics and the extent to which they follow political issues in the media (see Almond & Verba (1963) for a classic comparative study). Accordingly, the question of whether it is possible to increase knowledge through deliberation has an empirical as well as a normative relevance.

The educational potential of deliberation is not only the increase in factual knowledge, but also increased communicative and social skills. The focus in the analyses of this chapter is the potential effect deliberation has on factual knowledge regarding the euro issue. The other potential educational values of deliberation such as being more politically tolerant, more engaged in politics, or being able to communicate a persuasive argument are in focus in chapters 9 through 11.

Even though knowledge items have been applied for decades in American opinion polls, knowledge items in Danish opinion polls are still rarely applied. However, in the Danish context a few notable examples have shown that when providing respondents with information, their capabilities to take a stand on policy issues increase. Furthermore, when citizens are provided with information about the level of public spending, more skeptical opinions about increasing public spending are reported (Winter & Mouritzen, 2001; Frandsen et al., 2000). The Eurobarometer surveys have also occasionally included knowledge items on European issues, but often the level of information is measured by asking whether people feel informed rather than by using specific knowledge questions.

In the experiment of the Deliberative Poll on the single currency, specific knowledge questions as well as questions regarding whether the participants felt informed were posed. In this chapter, the focus is on knowledge measured by a knowledge quiz.<sup>43</sup> <sup>44</sup> Whether the

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<sup>43</sup> The knowledge items are closely related to the euro-issues and are, as such, policy-specific-knowledge and not a measure of general knowledge. General knowledge is per se unlikely to measure political ignorance or to directly influence opinions. Such general information is the number of seats in parliament or number of supreme court judges, but such a general measure may capture a more general indication of the respondents' interests, engagement, and capacity for understand politics and, accordingly, indirectly relate to respondents' opinions. Accordingly, such a general measure can at best provide

participants felt informed is analyzed in chapter 11 under the heading of internal efficacy. By comparing the development in 20 specific knowledge items, and comparing these to the same questions posed to control groups, it is possible to assess to what extent the participants increase their knowledge. Moreover, it can be assessed whether this development can be assigned to the effect of the Deliberative Polling process.

The participants are exposed to many sources of information during the Deliberative Polling process. First of all, prior to the event participants all received a balanced information material presenting arguments for and against Denmark joining the European single currency. Secondly, the surveys throughout the Deliberative Polling process have indicated that the participants were very attentive to the issues in the media from the time they were recruited to the start of the Deliberative Poll. Thirdly, at the time of recruitment, the political campaign on the actual referendum had been running for approximately four months, however, not yet intensified. Thus, the media had covered the issue of the single currency for some time. In addition, as discussed in chapter 2, the issue of European integration has been on the Danish political agenda for more than 30 years with 5 referendums on the issue prior to the euro 2000 referendum. Accordingly, most participating citizens would have been exposed to much information from both sides in the campaign even before they were recruited.

## 6.2 Deliberation increases knowledge

The potential of deliberation for educating citizens is in the experiment of the Deliberative Poll first of all tested by analyzing the participants'

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a proxy of political ignorance. Furthermore, it has been shown that policy-specific information shows a much larger effect on individual opinions than general information as such policy-specific knowledge affects opinions in a more direct manner. Moreover, research suggests that it is actually people with the highest general knowledge who are influenced the most by policy-specific information as they are better capable to perceive the information even it may be argued that they also have the resources to resist influence from new information (Gilens, 2001).

<sup>44</sup> I have shown elsewhere that the knowledge items are related to what the participants indicated they would vote in the referendum (Buch & Hansen, 2002).

development on several identical and specific knowledge items relating to the single currency. These knowledge items were posed to the participants four times throughout the Deliberative Poll and were also included in the questions posed to the control groups. During the political campaign of the euro, the knowledge items vary according to cognitive difficulties and importance, but they can all be considered as relevant and part of many messages communicated in the media during the political campaign up to the referendum, and they can all be directly related to the issue of Denmark's full participation in the single European currency.

As table 6.1 below shows, there is a strong increase in the level of knowledge among the participants on these items. On all items there is a significant increase when comparing the percentage of correct answers at the time of recruitment with the percentage of correct answers at the end of the Deliberative Poll. The largest increases are experienced on the question of whether the euro coins will have a national side with an increase of 41 percentage points. Another large increase is found on the question regarding whether Denmark as part of the euro-countries could be fined if the country had a large fiscal deficit. This knowledge item increased by 39 percentage points. Also the question regarding when the euro would be in circulation, if Denmark joined the single currency as scheduled, increased by 38 percentage points. On two knowledge items (one statistically significant) the participants seem to have experienced a decrease in knowledge in the period between the recruitment and the Deliberative Poll. This may indicate that for some participants, the information seeking process leading up to the Deliberative Poll had a negative impact on their capability to answer the questions correctly. However, on all other items, the period from the recruitment until the Deliberative Poll showed a positive impact on knowledge and the two days of intense deliberation had also a significant, positive effect on the knowledge.

Comparisons to the control groups suggest, first of all, that the participants initially are slightly more knowledgeable than the general population at the time of recruitment, varying between 1 and 10 percentage

points in the participants' favor.<sup>45</sup> The differences are significant on two out of the seven items<sup>46</sup>, nevertheless indicating that people with a high level of knowledge are slightly overrepresented among the participants compared to the population. Due to this minor overrepresentation of the knowledgeable citizens, the finding of the strong increase in knowledge is even more impressive. A perfect, representative body of participants would have had an even stronger potential for increasing their knowledge as their initial knowledge would have been lower. Another interesting finding when comparing the control groups to the participants, shows that the public experienced only a minor effect on their level of knowledge of the single currency during the same time period as the participants. This effect can be assigned to the simultaneously ongoing referendum campaign and information campaign initiated by the government. Furthermore, the media also intensified their coverage of the single currency in the same period.

On the question regarding whether the euro coins would have a national side, table 6.1 presents an interesting result by indicating that the public experience a 28 percentage points increase in the period. This large increase can partly be explained by the fact that the Danish government in that period published a booklet in which a famous Danish author was announced as a strong pro-euro advocate. The booklet received much publicity in the media mainly because it was argued by euro-skeptics that a government ought not fund one-sided information in this way (The Danish newspapers: Jyllands-Posten, 23 August 2000; Aktuelt, 23 August 2000). However, it seems to have had an effect as many more Danes now knew

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<sup>45</sup> The 1,005 interviews composing the control group sample were carried out from August 24 to September 3. The Deliberative Poll was conducted August 26 - 27. Thus, it could be argued that the control group could reasonably be compared to  $t_1$  - the beginning of the Poll, as well as  $t_2$  - the end of the Poll. Nevertheless, these analyses will compare the control group only with the participants' answers at the end of the Poll.

<sup>46</sup> Using a compare mean test the first and the final questions of table 6.1 are significantly different when comparing the general recruitment survey (N=1702, weighted according to the Danish electorate) and the participants at time of recruitment (N=364). Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Using a Chi-square test dividing the answers into correct, incorrect and don't know answers indicate that also the fourth question is significant different (significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

that the euro coins had a national side.

The intervening event between the two waves of questions also shows the importance of including a control group in the design. Otherwise it would have been impossible to differentiate between the effect of the general referendum campaign and media intensified coverage of the issue to the specific stimuli that the Deliberative Polling participants experienced. In a strictly experimental pursuit, the effect of the general campaign experienced by the public can be calculated from table 6.1. In the case of the euro coins it is 27 percentage points ( $76 - 49 = 27$ ). In the same period, the participants experienced an increase from 53 to 94. That is, an increase of 41 percentage points. From an experimental perspective it could, thus, be argued that only 13 percentage points ( $40 - 27 = 13$ ) should be explained by the Deliberative Polling event, whereas the rest should be assigned to the general campaigning, etc. This of course assumes a linear learning curve. The last column of the table shows these effects which, in an experimental sense, can be described as directly related to the effect of the Deliberative Polling process. These are all positive, ranging from a 2 to a 37 percentage points increase in knowledge.

**Table 6.1: Level of knowledge (% of correct answers)**

t0 Recruit- ment	t1 Beginning of DP	t2 End of DP	t3 Three months after DP	General recruitment survey (t0)	Control group (t2)	Effect assigned to DP - process
As a member of the monetary union Denmark could be fined if the national fiscal deficit is too large (Yes)						
41	71**	80**	82	34	36	37
Denmark can decide its own interest rates if we join the monetary union (No)						
73	78	82**	83	72	74	9
Denmark can decide its own rates of taxation if we join the single currency (Yes)						
64	66	83**	75**	59	65**	13
If we vote yes at the referendum on September 28, the single currency will enter into circulation starting in 2001, 2004, 2005, or 2007 (2004)						
51	83**	89**	88	48	53**	34
If Denmark joins the single currency, the Danish National Bank will be closed down, continue to operate as now, or become part of the European Central Bank (become part of ECB)						
59	55	66**	68	56	54	9
Will the euro coins have a national side (Yes)						
53	91**	94**	92	49	76**	13
Is Denmark already involved in a monetary union where the member states help each other in situations of an unstable foreign exchange market (Yes)						
83	78*	87**	88	73	75	2

Note: N varies from 354-364. In the general recruitment survey N varies between 1669 and 1672. The control group's N = 984. The general recruitment survey and the control group are weighted according to the Danish electorate. Correct answers in parenthesis. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ , whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The general recruitment survey and control groups are two independent samples. The effect ascribed to DP-process is calculated by the development in the participants' knowledge minus the effect on knowledge which the public experienced.

Yet another point that needs attention is that on four items in table 6.1, the

large increase in knowledge occurs before the Deliberative Poll, and on three items the largest increase occurs during the Deliberative Poll. As such the data is inconclusive as to whether the participants experience the largest increase in knowledge during or in the period up to the Deliberative Poll. On two of the seven items, the participants experience a decrease in their level of knowledge up to the Deliberative Poll. On one of these items, this negative development is also experienced by the public. Thus, it may be argued that the development in this period may be due to some inconsistency in the public debate on this issue. However, on five of the seven items, the period up to the Deliberative Poll and the period of intense deliberation had a cumulative, positive effect on knowledge.

During the time between the recruitment and the Deliberative Poll, the participants all received the balanced information material. As 97% of the participants had read the information material, the material represents a strong source for this increase in knowledge.<sup>47</sup> Another source for this knowledge is that several participants indicated an increased awareness of the public debate due to the fact that they were invited to the Deliberative Poll and, thus, became more aware of the topic. In chapter 11, the topic of the extent to which participants became more politically interested and aware during the Deliberative Polling process is reviewed. During the Deliberative Poll, the participants indicated that it was the discussion in their groups that had the largest effect on their opinions. 75% of the participants reported that the group discussion had a large impact on their opinions and only 33% reported that they gave the same weight to the information material.<sup>48</sup>

Finally, the knowledge items presented in table 6.1 show that

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<sup>47</sup> See chapter 8.

<sup>48</sup> In the recruitment interview up to 20% of the participants also asked the interviewer whether their answers were correct. This indicates some insecurity among the respondents as to whether their answers were correct and suggests that many answers might represent a pure guess rather than a reflected answer. However, to keep the guessing to a minimum, the participants were encouraged to use a don't know option. In those cases where the respondents asked directly whether their answers were correct, the interviewers were allowed to give the right answer to the respondent after they had answered the question. Accordingly, the interview itself might also have contributed to the increased knowledge among the participants.

this increase in knowledge remains present three months after the Deliberative Poll leading to the conclusion that the Deliberative Poll has some lasting educating effect.

To support the finding of increased knowledge, the participants were also asked throughout the process which political party and movement that supported the euro. First, it could be expected that the largest parties with the largest campaign budgets would be the parties which had the highest degree of success in communicating their stand on the issue to the public. Second, it could be expected that it would be easier for the public to identify the positions of the parties which took a more salient and 'extreme' position on the issue. Table 6.2 shows the percentage of the participants who gave correct answers.

**Table 6.2: Level of knowledge of political parties' recommendations (% of correct answers)**

	t0 Recruit- ment	t1 Beginning of DP	t2 End of DP	t3 Three months after DP	General recruitment survey (t0)	Control group (t2)	Effect assigned to DP -process
Movement against the EU (against)	98	97	98	97	92	93	-1
June Movement (against)	94	95	96	96	87	89	2
Social Democrats (for)	97	99*	99	97	94	96**	0
Social Liberals (for)	90	92*	97**	93**	84	85	6
Conservative Party (for)	91	91	93	91	86	88*	0
Center Democrats (for)	82	85	93**	87**	75	73	13
Socialist People's Party (against)	75	82**	92**	88	68	80**	5
Danish People's Party (against)	91	91	96**	95	87	91**	0
Christian People's Party (against)	46	55**	77**	75	41	44	28
Liberal Party (for)	95	87**	93**	99**	92	93	-3
Unity Party (against)	87	90	94**	92	80	83*	4
Progress Party (against)	76	79	87**	86	70	76**	5
Freedom 2000 (against)	77	80	93**	89**	65	67	14

Note: N varies from 352-364. In the general recruitment survey N varies between 1669 and 1672. The control groups N = 984. The general recruitment survey and the control group are weighted according to the Danish electorate. Correct answers in parenthesis. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicates significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The general recruitment survey and control groups are two independent samples. The effect ascribed to DP-process is calculated by the development in the participants' knowledge minus the effect of knowledge experienced by the public.

The finding in table 6.2 supports the increase in knowledge measured by the factual knowledge questions in table 6.1. In the case of the Liberal party, the results indicate that the participants actually became less aware that the Liberal party supported the euro during the time between recruitment and the Deliberative Poll. One explanation might be the media, which in the same period gave some attention to the fact that about 1/4 of the Liberal party's voters indicated in a public opinion poll that they would vote 'no' regardless of the fact that the party recommended a 'yes' (The Danish newspaper: Politiken, 22 August 2000). However, this did not impact the general public knowledge on the Liberal party's recommendation. As indicated by the surveys throughout the Deliberative Polling process the participants were also more aware of the news than the general public (see appendix L). Thus, the participants were generally speaking exposed to the issue to a larger extent than the general public, which, accordingly, may have caused a decrease in the participants' knowledge on this point.

Comparing the two control groups also gives some indications of how the political campaigns and the media attention affected the general public's knowledge of the parties' and movements' recommendations. These indications show that the Christian, Progress and Freedom 2000 parties had difficulties in making the public aware of their recommendation.

The supposition that the public would have the highest level of knowledge about the largest parties' recommendations is also confirmed in table 6.2, as the Social Democrats and the Liberals have the highest score at the beginning of the process. The small, politically center party - the Christian People's Party - had the lowest knowledge score throughout the process, which gives some support to the supposition that it is difficult for center parties to get their position through to the public. Nevertheless, the knowledge about another small center party, the Center Democrats' recommendations, somewhat contradicts this supposition.<sup>49</sup>

From these analyses, the general conclusion is clear: The participants learn during the deliberative process. However, some

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<sup>49</sup> Part of explanation of the Christian People's Party's low score is probably also due to the quite balanced position the party took on the euro issue, even though the party recommended a yes. With regard to the Center Democrats' score it is also worth mentioning that the Center Democrats historically have a very pro-European opinion.

reservation should be considered with regard to this conclusion's generalization of the general public. First, it is reasonable to expect that the 364 participants were highly motivated to learn more about the euro since they were willing to spend an entire weekend discussing the issue. This was actually confirmed; when the participants were asked why they chose to participate, they ranked "to learn more about the issue" the highest.<sup>50</sup> The high willingness to learn may very well have affected the learning positively and, thus, it might not be the same learning pattern in a less motivated group. This high motivation not only differentiates the experiment from real world situations, but also from other experiments on learning patterns, which usually do not demand that participants spend an entire weekend in 'the lab'.

### **6.3 Learning divided on different groups**

Another question is whether there are differences in the level of knowledge among different groups and whether any group deviates with regard to the learning experience and level of knowledge. If differences between the groups are present, it would be interesting to investigate whether the deliberative process is able to reduce the differences between the groups. From a deliberative democratic perspective, it would be problematic if learning is confined to only certain groups as it would suggest that certain groups do not learn from the deliberative experience. Table 6.3 presents level of knowledge divided on different groups throughout the deliberative process.

The most straightforward expected relationship would be that level of general education correlates positively with level of knowledge. Furthermore it might be expected that men, the middle-aged, and public employees would be those who have the highest level of knowledge, as these groups also are the groups which traditionally are the most interested in politics and participate most in the various forms of politics (Hansen et al., 2000; Andersen, 2000). From table 6.3 it is confirmed that men are relatively more informed on the issue than women. There is no difference between public and private employees, but the group between 31 and 40 years old shows the highest level of knowledge throughout the process compared to other age groups.

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<sup>50</sup> See appendix B.

Table 6.3 confirms the findings from the previous tables in this chapter as it shows that the participants, generally speaking, learn through the deliberative process. The findings also show that all groups learn measured by the knowledge index comparing  $t_0$  -  $t_2$ . Learning during the deliberative experience thus cut across all groups. On the other hand, the bias between the groups in the level of knowledge is not removed by the deliberative process except when dividing the participants into which party they would support at a national election.

The general supposition that the participants with the highest level of general education also have the highest level of knowledge regarding the euro is confirmed in the findings. The participants with a university degree, initially and on average, answer two questions more correctly than participants with the lowest education. Even though the level of knowledge of all group is increased, the relation between level of education and level of knowledge remains throughout the process. The analyses in table 6.3 also show that participants with lower education only experience a significant increase in knowledge during the two days of deliberation. This suggests that the participants of this group are not able to increase their knowledge from the written information material and discussions in their everyday environment, but instead they learn relatively more in the two days of deliberation compared to the highest educated. This finding is also interesting, considering aspects of e.g. political campaigns and how to reach the lowest educated groups of the population with information.

**Table 6.3: Level of knowledge divided on different groups (index 0-100)**

	t0	t1	t2	t3	N
	Recruit- ment	Beginnin g of DP	End of DP	Three months after DP	
Total	76	82**	89**	88	355-364
Gender	++	++	++	++	
Men	79	84**	91**	90	210-206
Women	72	78**	86**	85	149-154
Age	+		+		
18-30 years old	72	80**	87**	86	59-62
31-40 years old	78	83**	92**	89*	83
41-60 years old	77	82**	89**	89	145-150
61+ years old	76	82**	87**	87	67-69
Children in household					
No children in household	76	83**	89**	88	187-193
Children in household	76	81**	89**	88	168-171
Employment					
Private employee	76	81**	90**	89	130-134
Public employee	79	86**	93**	90*	87-89
Indicated vote in national election today	+	+		+	
Social Democrats	75	82**	90**	90	64-66
Social Liberals	76	90**	93	93	16
Conservative Party	83	89**	92	93	30-31
Socialist People's Party	79	84*	91**	89*	42-44
Danish People's Party	75	78	86**	88	19
Liberal Party	79	83**	89**	88	77-79
Education	++	++	++	++	
Lower education	69	72	81**	80	49-51
Upper education	77	81**	89**	88	176-182
University degree	79	88**	93**	92	122-124
Place of living	+			+	
Rural area	74	79	85**	87	17
Less than 2,000 inhabitants	70	81**	88**	85*	36-37
2,001-10,000 inhabitants	75	78*	89**	85*	65-66
10,001+ inhabitants	78	83**	89**	89	235-243

Note: The knowledge index combines all 20 questions giving 5 points for each correct question. Thus the index ranging from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates correct answers and 0 incorrect answers to all 20 questions. N varies according to group and time of questioning. \*\* Significantly different from the previous round at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). \* Significantly different from the previous round at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). ++ Significant between the largest and smallest mean value within the group at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). + Significant between the largest and smallest mean value within the group at the 0.05 level (two-tailed).

From a deliberative democratic perspective, the finding that all groups learn during the deliberative process is an inspiring result as it indicates that knowledge increases regardless of any socio-demographic inequality. On the other hand the intense deliberative experience is, generally speaking, not able to remove initial knowledge bias among the participants divided on groups as the differences remain significant before and after the process. It might, nevertheless, be argued that expecting that the three weeks during the recruitment period and the two-day of intense deliberation would remove the impact of e.g. a five-year university degree compared to only compulsory schooling is too high an expectation.

#### **6.4 Learning patterns during the Deliberative Polling process**

The previous section showed a general increase in the participants' knowledge. This section analyzes whether certain groups among the participants learn more than other groups. On the one hand it could be argued that the participants, who initially were the most knowledgeable, also would learn the most as they have the capability to learn. In such a case, the influence of the Deliberative Poll would actually make the knowledgeable even more knowledgeable and actually polarize the amount of knowledge between the participants. Analyzing this hypothesis is, however, difficult as the items are strongly affected by 'regression towards the mean' and 'ceiling effect'. Regression towards the mean considers the fact that once participants have answered a question correctly, they cannot improve their knowledge, measured by that question. Variation in such a case can actually show only a decrease in knowledge. The ceiling effect on the other hand considers the case in which some participants will eventually reach the ceiling that is, answer all questions correctly and, accordingly, the measurement is not able to record a further increase in knowledge. Even if including all above knowledge items in an index, the ceiling would be reached by some participants even in the first round of questioning. Nevertheless, an index measuring knowledge which includes many items partly solves the problem as it becomes more difficult to reach the ceiling.

More difficult questions would partly have solved the initial problem of ceiling effect, but would not guarantee that the participants would not learn these questions as well and, accordingly, reach the ceiling at the end of the

Deliberative Poll.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, ‘floor’ effects may have appeared, if the questions turned out to be too difficult given the opposite problem of the ceiling effect.

Due to ceiling effect and regression toward the mean, if the change score is used to analyze learning-effects, that is the participants’ final answer subtracted from their initial answer, the analyses would only find that the participants with lowest initial knowledge learned the most. In table 6.4, a variant of such an analysis is presented using an index including all 20 available knowledge items divided on the process prior to the Deliberative Poll and during.<sup>52</sup> From table 6.4 it is shown that 95% of the participants experienced an increase in knowledge throughout the Deliberative Polling process. About 1/3 of the participants learn before as well as during the Deliberative Poll, whereas a little less than 1/3 only learn before and a little less than 1/3 only learn during the Deliberative Poll.

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<sup>51</sup> However, a pilot-test among the project-team indicated that the questions might be too difficult. Another survey in a study focused on the Danish political campaign up to the referendum on the euro also included knowledge items, which also indicated a high level of political knowledge among the Danes (De Vreese & Semetko, 2002).

<sup>52</sup> An alternative index correcting for guessing by given ‘-1’ for incorrect answers and ‘0’ for don’t know answers and ‘1’ for correct answers does not change the result in any consistent way, but makes the analyses and interpretations only more complex.

**Table 6.4: In what phase of the Deliberative Polling process do the participants learn?**

<i>During DP</i>	Increased knowledge	Decreased knowledge or stay the same	Total
<i>Before DP</i>			
Increased knowledge	35% (69=>82=>92)	29% (79=>93=>90)	64%
Decreased knowledge or stay the same	31% (80=>72=>87)	5% (87=>81=>76)	36%
Total	66%	34%	100%

Note: N=358. The knowledge index combines all 20 questions giving 5 points for each correct question. Thus the index ranges from 0 to 100, where 100 indicates correct answers and 0 incorrect answers to all 20 questions. To be classified as a participant having experienced increased knowledge, the participant has a larger knowledge index-score after the time period than before. The groups are significantly different at the  $P < 0.000$ . The numbers in the parentheses show the development of the participants' average knowledge measured by the index in  $t_0$ ,  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ .

The findings in table 6.4 also support that participants with an initially low level of knowledge learn the most, whereas participants with an initially high level of knowledge actually seem to experience some decrease in knowledge. The 5% of the participants, who experience a decrease in knowledge, are also the participants with the highest initial level of knowledge, which can partly be explained by the problem of the ceiling effect.<sup>53</sup>

The findings in table 6.4, however, do not present any indication of why the participants learned or what sources contributed to this increased knowledge. In the initial phase of the Deliberative Polling process, which is between the recruitment and the start of the Deliberative

<sup>53</sup> The participants answering the knowledge questions correctly the first time can actually only show a decrease in learning on these items, not an increase. Initially measured full information would thus be correlated with a decrease in learning. See Luskin et al. (2002) for a further discussion on this point.

Poll, the information material and increased awareness of the media are plausible sources for the knowledge increase. 97% of the participants indicate that they had read part of the information material sent to them. In this sense almost all had been exposed to the material. However, only 45% of the participants had read the entire material. Thus, it is plausible that there is a positive relationship between how much of the information material the participants had read and whether they had experienced learning. As discussed above, the index of increase in knowledge is affected by ceiling effects and regression toward the mean, thus it is necessary to control for initial knowledge. In table 6.5 a binomial logistic regression is applied to analyze these expected relationships between increased knowledge and the reading of the information material, and increased awareness of the media and initial level of knowledge. Level of education is also included in the regression to control for the effect of level of education, which was found in table 6.3.

**Table 6.5: Sources of increased knowledge in the initial phase of the Deliberative Polling process? (binomial logistic regression, odd ratios for increased knowledge)**

$\ln \frac{p}{1-p} =$	1.406 X Reading of information material	+ 2.398 X Awareness of media	+ 0.970 X Level of initial knowledge	+ 0.2.001 X Level of education
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Note: N=344. The dependent variable measure increase in knowledge dichotomized from the index presented in table 6.4. Odds ratios equal to 1 indicate that there is a 50/50 change for an increase in knowledge when the independent variable changes. Odds ratios below 1 indicate that an increase in knowledge is less likely when the independent variable changes. Odds ratios above 1 indicate that the change is more likely when the independent variable changes. All odds are significant:  $p \leq 0.028$ . Reading of information material is measured as an index where 0 = less than half, 1 = not entire material, 2 = entire material. Awareness of the media is measured by an average on four items in relation to the extent to which the participants, since the recruitment, indicate that they have read about politics in the newspapers, followed the news on TV, listened to the news on the radio, and used the internet to find information on the euro more than usually. 0 = less than usual or don't know, 1 as usual and 2 more than usual. Level of initial knowledge is measured as in table 6.4 that is, each correct question assigns 5 points to the respondent giving an index from 0 to 100. Level of education is measured as 1=lower education 2 = upper education and 3 = university degree. Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness-of-fit test  $P^2 = 5.299$  sign.,  $p = 0.725$ . Nagelkerke R Square = 0.212. The model correctly predicts 66% of the cases.

The binomial regression presented in table 6.5 isolates the effects of increased awareness to the media, the extent to which the participants had read the information material, their initial level of knowledge, and educational level in relation to whether the participants experienced an increase in knowledge between recruitment and the Deliberative Poll. First of all, the regression confirms that level of initial knowledge decreases the likelihood of whether the participants learn as the odds are below 1. Secondly, it shows that reading the information material and level of education have significant effects on the chance of becoming more knowledgeable. The largest effect is the awareness of the media. After controlling for the effect of reading the information material, the participants' level of education and their initial level of knowledge, the odds of the participants experiencing a learning effect change by a factor of 2.4 for a unit increase in awareness of the media. That is, if the participants paid more attention to the media than usually, the chance that they experience a learning effect between time of recruitment and the Deliberative Poll more than doubles.

During the Deliberative Poll, the participants discussed the issue of introducing the euro in Denmark in groups and confronted leading experts and politicians with their questions. The deliberative theory claims that such deliberation will lead to a higher level of knowledge among the participants from the questioning of experts and politicians as well as from the deliberation in the groups. As shown in the previous tables 6.1 and 6.2, such an increase in knowledge is present on the general level. According to the deliberative theory, one reason for the increase in knowledge during the Deliberative Poll would be that during deliberation, the participants shared their different knowledge and, accordingly, expanded the available information. All groups possessed the information, measured by the 20 questions, at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll. That is at least one participant answered the questions correctly in each group. However, there was some variety between the groups to the extent of how many participants that were able to answer the questions correctly. The minimum number of participants in a group who were able to answer a specific question correctly was 32%. Accordingly, the correct information was present in all groups and by sharing this available knowledge all participants would at least potentially have access to the correct information.

However, from the theory of decision-making it has been

argued that collective decision-making might be dysfunctional as participants in a group do not share the information they carry into the process. Not sharing individual information may be done strategically by participants in order to manipulate the outcome or in order not to get in conflict with an emerging consensus, but it might also occur because some participants are not capable of communicating their knowledge. If the individual information is not shared, there might exist a 'hidden profile'. A hidden profile is an outcome that would prove better for each participant than an outcome without sharing the information. According to this approach, the participants tend to discuss only information which they share beforehand and thus collective decision-making tends to become thematically focused on initial issues based on initially shared knowledge. Accordingly, the groups' initial level of knowledge is composed of only individually shared knowledge and this knowledge determines the final level of knowledge in the group and, thus, eventually the possible solutions. In such a case, a group's decision-making process would actually narrow the possible solutions compared to individually reached solutions, because the group follows the lowest common denominator. That is also to say that group decision-making processes reach poorer decisions than individual decision-making processes (Stasse & Titus, 1985).

Basically, the deliberative position claims that deliberation increases knowledge as the participants would share any asymmetric information which they carry into the process. Most deliberative positions would not claim that any information voiced during deliberation is or must necessarily be true, but only that deliberation provides the opportunity to validate one piece of information voiced against another.<sup>54</sup> The position briefly discussed in the previous paragraph, on the other hand claims that deliberation would not affect knowledge as only shared information is discussed.

The findings presented in table 6.6 below show that the 20 groups experience an increase in knowledge and that the groups experience a decrease in their asymmetric information from the time they initially met at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll to the end. Accordingly, the second

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<sup>54</sup> This is in contrast to Habermas' ideal speech situation where one of the criteria is that everything said must be objectively true (see chapter 3; Habermas, 1984:99-101).

position, claiming that only shared information is discussed, is rejected as no development in the group’s knowledge would have been expected. On the other hand, table 6.6 also includes an analysis indicating that the higher the initial level of knowledge is in the group, the larger the final level of knowledge is. Furthermore, the more scattered the initial knowledge (higher asymmetric information) is in the group, the more scattered the knowledge is at the end of the process.

**Table 6.6: Knowledge at the group level**

	Beginning of DP	End of DP
<b>Average level of knowledge in groups</b>		
- measured as the percentage of participants in a group averaged over all groups able to answer the questions correctly over all the 20 knowledge items	82%	89%**
<b>Level of asymmetric information in groups</b>		
- measured as the standard deviation in a group averaged over all groups and over all 20 knowledge items	0.144	0.106**
<b>Correlation between the groups’ initial and final level of knowledge</b>		
- measured as Pearson’s correlation on the average level of knowledge in the groups		0.556++
<b>Correlation between the groups’ initial and final level of asymmetric information</b>		
- measured as Pearson’s correlation on the average level of asymmetric information in the groups		0.519++

Note: N = 20: \*\* indicate a significant difference from the previous round of questions,  $p < 0.000$ . ++ indicate that the correlation is significantly different from 0,  $p < 0.000$ .

So even though asymmetric information decreased and overall level of knowledge increased, the initial level of knowledge still significantly affects the final level of knowledge indicating that deliberation is not entirely able to remove the effect of initial knowledge. However, there is at least one fact that must be considered in relation to this conclusion. The groups do not only get their information from other group members. Information is also given to the participants during the sessions in plenum where all the groups are assembled. The above analyses are not able to differentiate between the

information that is shared and discussed in groups and the information brought up during the sessions in plenum. Such a differentiation would only have been possible by introducing more rounds of questionnaires in the process of the Deliberative Poll. It could, thus, also be argued that without the plenary sessions, the group effect on knowledge would have been expected to be larger than the findings indicate.

### **6.5 Selective learning pattern**

The analyses in this chapter have so far focused on the general increase in knowledge and on how the learning took place before the Deliberative Poll and in the groups during the Deliberative Poll. These analyses have not focused on how the individual seeks and perceives different forms of information. From the normative perspective of deliberative democracy, the argument is made quite simple. When people are presented with information either through written material or the deliberative process, they will learn. The preceding analyses have shown that the participants at the Deliberative Poll, as an aggregated group, do learn. However, much empirical research in similar contexts have indicated that the story is rather more complex.

Festinger (1957) suggests that individuals will seek and absorb information relevant to the action they must conduct. Furthermore, people are more open to further aspects and more alternatives prior to a decision being made compared to after. In addition, if people have made up their minds, they have fewer incentives to seek out information. They may even have incentives to try to avoid information. People having some doubts as to which decision to make, will try to consolidate their position. People, who are very insecure about which decision to make and who are unable to make up their minds, will actively seek and absorb information (Festinger, 1957). The empirical evidence for this behavior is, however, relatively weak. Nevertheless, some studies do find that in situations where a definite decision has been taken, individuals tend to seek information which consolidate their position (Jecker, 1964). Furthermore, the more convinced people are about their decision being correct, the more likely it is that they will not avoid information contradicting their decisions (Canon, 1964).

Another parallel research finding indicates that it is not only individuals' coming actions or decisiveness that act as filters for information and learning. Individuals' initial opinions will act as a filter for selective

exposure of information and selective perception of information as well. In this way, individuals' initial opinions influence which media the individuals choose to follow. Furthermore, the individuals' initial opinions act as a selection mechanism for which arguments and information they accept. Along the same line of argument, it is argued that to some extent individuals seek confirmation of their initial opinions and interpretations (Siune, 1984). The selective learning pattern is also confirmed by the fact that the individuals' level of knowledge on specific policy issues only correlate modestly with knowledge on other specific policy issues. Furthermore, people tend to acquire information on issues about which they are already relatively informed (Iyengar, 1990).

From the above discussion of some of the research findings, two generalized claims can be put forward. The first claim indicates that there is a negative relationship between decisiveness and learning. The second claim is that a positive relationship between initial position and learning can be expected to be found.

What can we expect from these two claims in the setting of the Deliberative Poll? Using the first claim it could be argued that people, who have not decided what to vote with regard to the euro, are more likely to learn from the information presented to them. That is, the undecided would learn more than the decided.

To follow this hypothesis, table 6.7 divides the participants on their decisiveness with regard to their individual vote on the euro when they were initially contacted.

**Table 6.7: Level of knowledge divided on decisiveness with regard to voting intention (% correct answers, N in parenthesis)**

	Decided	Undecided
t0 - Recruitment interview	78 (298)	70+ (66)
t1 - At the beginning of the Deliberative Poll	83** (297)	77**,+ (66)
t2 - At the end of the Deliberative Poll	89** (293)	87** (66)
t3 - 3 months after the Deliberative Poll	89 (290)	85 (65)

Note: \*\* significant compared to previous round of questions at the  $p < 0.001$  (2-tailed). + significant compared to difference between the two groups at the  $P < 0.05$  (2-tailed). Decided consists of the participants, who indicate that they would vote yes or no at time of recruitment. The undecided consists of participants, who declared themselves undecided when asked about their voting intention at time of recruitment. The % is the number of correct answers over all 20 knowledge items.

Table 6.7 first of all confirms that the participants with the lowest level of knowledge are more undecided than the participants with high factual knowledge. Secondly, it indicates that the undecided participants learn more than the decided participants because the undecided participants gain 17 percentage points, whereas the decided participants gain only 11 percentage points in their factual knowledge. However, table 6.7 also shows that it was the undecided who initially had the lowest level of learning. On the one hand, this might indicate that there is a reciprocal effect between the variables as high level of knowledge also leads to decisiveness. On the other hand, the ceiling effect should be considered when concluding on these results. The ceiling effect implies that the undecided participants also had much more room to learn, which suggests a cautious interpretation of the findings. With the disclaimer of the ceiling effect, the findings in table 6.7 support the first claim that is, the undecided participants learn the most. Thus, the findings support a moderately negative relationship between learning and decisiveness. From a deliberative democratic perspective it is also interesting that the differences in knowledge between decided and undecided disappear at the end of the deliberative experience - t2. This suggests that the deliberative experience is not only able to increase

knowledge, but also able to equal out the initial differences between decided and undecided participants' level of knowledge.

Following the second claim, suggesting a positive relationship between initial opinion and learning, would lead to argue that during the Deliberative Poll, the participants tend to perceive information which reinforces and supports their initial opinion. The relationship is not only expected to be found during the Deliberative Polling process, but also already at time of recruitment. That is, it is anticipated that the participant supporting the euro will be able to answer factual knowledge questions supporting a 'yes' to the euro correctly to a higher degree, than factual knowledge questions which do not support the euro. The reason for this is also enforced by the fact that people tend to belong to social groups that look like themselves and, as such, their everyday environment carries opinions that replicate their own (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944). In this way, in their everyday environment people tend to be presented with knowledge that supports their opinions to a higher degree than knowledge that contradicts. By following this line of argument it would be expected that selective learning patterns also would be presented in the case of the Deliberative Poll. That is, deliberation and information might reinforce only initial choice and exclude factual information, which may cause a polarization of opinions.

To analyze the extent to which initial opinions influence the participants' learning pattern, table 6.8 presents the percentage of correct answers on the seven knowledge questions in each round of questioning divided on whether the participants indicate a no, a yes vote, or were undecided when they were recruited for the Deliberative Poll.

**Table 6.8: Correct answers to six knowledge questions divided on voting intention (%)**

Question	Indicate a no-vote	Un- decided	Indicate a yes-vote	Gap between yes and no
<b>1. If we vote yes at the referendum on Sept. 28 will the single currency then enter into circulation starting in 2001, 2004, 2005 or 2005? (2004)</b>				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	46	48	56	-10*
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	78	79	86	-8
- t2 - At the end of the DP	88	86	91	-3
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	83	89	92	-9**
<b>2. Can Denmark decide its own rate of taxation if we join the single currency? (Yes)</b>				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	50	58	79	-29**
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	53	52	83	-30**
- t2 - At the end of the DP	70	85	93	-23**
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	61	75	87	-26**
<b>3. Is Denmark already involved in a monetary co-operation where the countries help each other when the foreign exchange market is unstable? (Yes)</b>				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	76	82	89	-13**
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	72	71	86	-14**
- t2 - At the end of the DP	83	80	92	-9**
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	85	83	92	-7*
<b>4. Can Denmark decide its own interest rate if we join the single currency? (No)</b>				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	87	68	64	23**
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	84	77	73	11**
- t2 - At the end of the DP	83	80	82	1
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	86	78	81	5
<b>5. If Denmark joins the single currency, the Danish National Bank will be closed down, continue to operate as now, or become part of the European Central Bank (become part of ECB)</b>				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	67	55	55	12**
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	56	52	57	-1
- t2 - At the end of the DP	64	70	67	-3
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	67	65	69	-2

*The table continues on the next page.*

Question	Indicate a no-vote	Un- decided	Indicate a yes-vote	Gap between yes and no
6. As a member of the single currency, Denmark could be fined if the national fiscal deficit is too large? (Yes)				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	45	39	39	6
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	69	71	72	-3
- t2 - At the end of the DP	80	78	79	1
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	83	82	81	2
7. Will the euro coins have a national side? (Yes)				
- t0 - Recruitment interview	54	44	56	-2
- t1 - At the beginning of the DP	92	94	89	3
- t2 - At the end of the DP	92	98	94	-2
- t3 - 3 months after the DP	93	91	92	1

Note: Questions 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 were multiple choice with two choices, whereas question 1 had four and question 5 had three choices. The number of cases in each cell for participants indicating a 'yes' is 158-163. For the participants indicating a 'no' the N is 130-135 and for the undecided participants 65-66. \*\* indicate that the difference between 'yes' and 'no' is significant at  $p < 0.03$ , whereas \* indicates significant at the  $p < 0.07$ . Vote indicates what the participants would vote when initially contacted. Grouping the undecided according to what they most likely would vote does not change the results. Correct answer in parenthesis.

As the second claim suggests, it could be expected that the participants would seek and absorb information in order to conciliate their already perceived position. The findings in table 6.8 show that the yes and the no voters have different knowledge varying from question to question. At the time of recruitment, the pro-euro participants are significantly better informed on the questions 1 through 3 than the euro-skeptics. On the other hand the opposite pattern is present on questions 4 and 5. On these questions it is the no-voters, who answer the questions correctly to a higher degree. On the two last questions there are no significant differences between the groups. Following the line of argument of selective attention to information, these findings can be explained by looking more carefully at each question. The first three questions all support a pro-euro stand. E.g. Denmark is already a member of a monetary co-operation, Denmark can still decide its own rate of taxation when joining the euro, and even if

Denmark decides to join, the euro will not be in circulation for another four years. Questions 4 and 5 are examples of how joining the euro will imply ceding Danish sovereignty to a supranational authority which, for many Danes, would be a reason to vote no. The last two questions are, first of all, rather factual questions compared to questions 2 through 5, which might be the explanation why no difference is found between the groups. That is also to say that even though all questions are knowledge questions which have only one correct answer, some of the questions give more room for interpretation than others.<sup>55</sup> The more room for interpretation, the stronger the selective attention to the facts is. In this way, the findings support that the participants' initial knowledge is related to the participants' initial position with regard to the euro, but also related to the degree of possible interpretations of questions.

On a more general level, the findings suggest that the participants' initial opinion to some degree frames the participants learning patterns. It could also be argued that the emotional component of opinion to some degree frames the cognitive component of the opinion (Rosenberg & Hovland 1960, see also next chapter). If this is the case, it may also help explain why the yes-campaign prior to the referendum did not succeed in convincing the voters. To a large extent, the yes-campaign focused on providing information to the Danish population. The yes-campaigners seemed to believe that the campaign would be able to change peoples' opinion by raising their level of knowledge on the single currency. However, if the affective component of a person's opinion is selective to the way a person seeks and absorbs information, it is very difficult to change opinions only by trying to raise the level of knowledge. This reasoning suggests that opinion changes are partly created by affecting the emotional component of the opinion rather than the cognitive component. Furthermore, by influencing the emotional component, it is possible to affect the level of information. In this way, the emotional component is prior to the cognitive element.

By looking at the learning pattern of the three groups in table 6.8 it has been shown how the selective level of knowledge partly disappears during the Deliberative Polling experience. On two questions (1 and 5) the

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<sup>55</sup> Luskin et al. (2002) have a similar distinction by grouping information items as either *factual information* or *empirical premises*.

selectivity disappears in the period between time of recruitment and the Deliberative Poll, whereas on three questions (2 through 4) the selectivity either disappears or is reduced during the Deliberative Poll. First of all, this indicates that the more the participants are exposed to similar information and deliberation, the less selective they become. Secondly, it suggests that participants in their everyday-life are more selective in their information seeking, but when engaging in deliberation with people with different views, it is not possible for the individual to avoid the information. In a deliberation, such as during the Deliberative Poll, the participants have to relate to the information raised by other participants.

In this way, the intensive information process up to the Poll as well as the deliberation during the Deliberative Poll has to some extent removed the difference in yes-voters' and no-voters' learning patterns. This conclusion also contradicts the initial statement that deliberation may cause selective learning patterns and thereby a reinforcement of prejudice. Quite to the contrary, these findings indicate that through information and deliberation it is possible to narrow down the information gap between two rather entrenched groups - the pro-euro and the euro-skeptics.

## 6.6 Summary

The findings from analyses of the deliberation and information effect on knowledge indicate first of all that the participants experienced a great increase in knowledge during the Deliberative Polling process, also when taking into account that the public also experienced some learning in the same period. With few exceptions the period up to the Deliberative Poll and the intense deliberation during the Poll both had a positive influence on the participants' learning. On average the learning occurs before as well as during the Deliberative Poll. Prior to the Deliberative Poll, an increased awareness to the media had the largest effect on the participants' learning as the chance of an increase in knowledge more than doubles if the participants were more aware of the media than usually. Accordingly, the deliberation and information to which the participants were exposed during the Deliberative Polling process have given the participants a more informed foundation to base their opinions on.

The findings indicate that the learning process during the deliberative experience cuts across every group with regard to education, gender, age, and employment. On the other hand, the initial bias between

the groups in the level of knowledge is not removed by the deliberative process. E.g. before as well as after the Deliberative Poll it is the participants with the highest level of education who have the highest level of knowledge.

The findings suggest that the participants are capable of sharing initially asymmetric information in their groups during the Deliberative Poll, even though a significant correlation between initial and final level of asymmetric information is reported.

The undecided participants learn the most during the process, but they were also the group that initially had the lowest level of learning. Nevertheless, the information gap between the initially decisive and indecisive participants disappears during the Deliberative Poll.

The selective learning pattern is supported in the analyses because the euro-skeptics tend to learn the empirical premises supporting the no, whereas pro-euro-participants tend to learn the empirical premises supporting the yes to a larger degree. Nevertheless, the Deliberative Poll narrows down the gap in level of information between the pro-euro and the euro-skeptics. Accordingly, the normatively undesirable effect of deliberation on knowledge - selective learning and reinforcement of prejudice - is somewhat rejected by the findings. That is, even though selective knowledge is reported, the information and deliberation in the case of the Deliberative Poll narrow down the gap. In this way, the anti-hypothesis that deliberation would reinforce prejudice is also somewhat rejected.

## Chapter 7 - Deliberation and Opinion Formation

In the previous chapter it was analyzed how deliberation increased the participants' knowledge. This chapter analyzes how the deliberative process affects the participants' capacity to form a reasoned opinion. Section 7.1 discusses the general arguments underlying the claim that deliberation and information will have an effect on opinion formation. Section 7.2 analyzes the developments in the participants' voting intention throughout the Deliberative Polling process. It is shown how the undecided group of participants is split in half during the deliberative process. The voting intention is the most general measure of the participants' opinions toward the single currency. To supplement the analyses of the participants' voting intentions, a number of underlying opinion dimensions are identified. Throughout the Deliberative Polling process, the participants are asked survey questions designed to measure these underlying opinion dimensions. These questions are analyzed in section 7.3 and, in this way, the development of the participants' opinions is analyzed. Section 7.4 discusses how the opinions develop in the perspective of Converse's non-attitude thesis. That is, a large part of the fluctuation in public opinion is due to the fact that the public do not have real opinions, but largely respond randomly when asked in the surveys. Section 7.5 discusses opinion consistency as a measure for opinion quality and explores the opinion consistency in the process of opinion formation during the Deliberative Poll. Section 7.6 presents first an alternative interpretation to understand the development in opinion consistency. Secondly, it is discussed why the opinions might become more consistent and at the same time not reflect an increased stability. Section 7.7 takes on the task of trying to explain the opinion change. This is done by presenting different multiple-regression models with different focuses. Finally in section 7.8 the chapter is summarized.

### 7.1 Endogenously given opinions

The assumption that opinions are essentially endogenously given is one thing on which most deliberative democrats agree. Accordingly, it is emphasized that when individuals engage in a process where they are forced to articulate their views and listen to others' views, the individuals' opinions are potentially transformed. Opinions are only *potentially* transformed

because deliberation may also lead to increased awareness about the underlying values of the initial opinions and thus stronger reasoning for the initial opinions. Accordingly, deliberation can lead to opinion change as well as confirmation of initial opinions. Thus opinion change cannot be a sufficient criterion for a successful deliberative process. Opinion change may or may not happen, but alone it can never be a criterion of a successful, deliberative process such as e.g. the Deliberative Poll.

In the process of deliberation, latent and not yet crystallized opinions may also surface. This may happen when some participants bring up issues which other participants not initially thought about or simply by the participants giving the issues more thought.

The assumption of endogenously given opinions is in sharp contrast to a strong rational choice argument, arguing that opinions are pre-given whatever context they confront. Others might argue that the assumption is elitist by nature as it aims to improve the raw opinions of the public and, in this way, implicitly disregards the quality of the pre-deliberative opinions of large parts of the general public. However, the post-deliberative opinions of the Deliberative Poll should be emphasized only as a supplement to other methods which focus on the pre-deliberative opinions. By giving the participants in the Deliberative Poll incentives and opportunities to learn about an issue and engage in deliberation before deciding may be interpreted as elitist by nature, but is nevertheless a way of trying to fulfill some normative principles of balanced information and deliberation. Giving more weight to post-deliberative opinions may also be a way to get past a public opinion, which is characterized as nothing but an echo of the elite's discourses communicated to the public by sound-bites in the media.<sup>56</sup> An echo, which is often reported as 'top-of-the-head' responds to a pollster's questions, only giving a snapshot of what the opinions of the public would have looked like if the public were given the opportunity to engage in deliberation before they were polled (Fishkin, 1997).

The process of deliberation will potentially also lead to increased stability in the participants' opinions. That is, the more the participants deliberate on the issue, the more arguments and information they obtain,

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<sup>56</sup> This caricature of public opinion as an echo is rephrased after V.O. Key's (1961) pioneer work on public opinion and Zaller's (1992) research on the relationship between the media and public opinion.

the less likely it is that they will be confronted with information or arguments which they have not already taken account of in their opinions. In this way, the result of an intense deliberation might be that the participants are somewhat immune to future information and arguments. In addition, simply the fact that through deliberation, the participants have weighted the arguments for and against the issue may also lead to more stable opinions. Finally, the commitment during the deliberation to one position as opposed to another may also increase the stability.

Deliberation may cause opinion change and stability, but deliberation may also affect the degree to which participants' opinions are consistent. That is, the deliberative process may identify inconsistencies in the participants' opinions, which may lead to a more consistent opinion structure in the course of deliberation. One reason for this is that participants will try to avoid being confronted with inconsistencies in their argumentation and, secondly, a consistent argument is more persuasive than an inconsistent one (Elster, 1998).

Contrary to the above normatively desirable effect of deliberation on opinion formation it may also be argued that deliberation will leave the participants more confused because through deliberation, the issues may have proven to be much more complex than initially believed. The participants' expressed opinions might thus be post-deliberative, but might actually indicate only a fine balance between several complex positions and more deliberation may tip the opinions once again. Positions, which, before deliberation, were completely out of the picture, may now also prove to be reasonable positions. Following this line of argument, deliberation causes less stable and less consistent opinions.

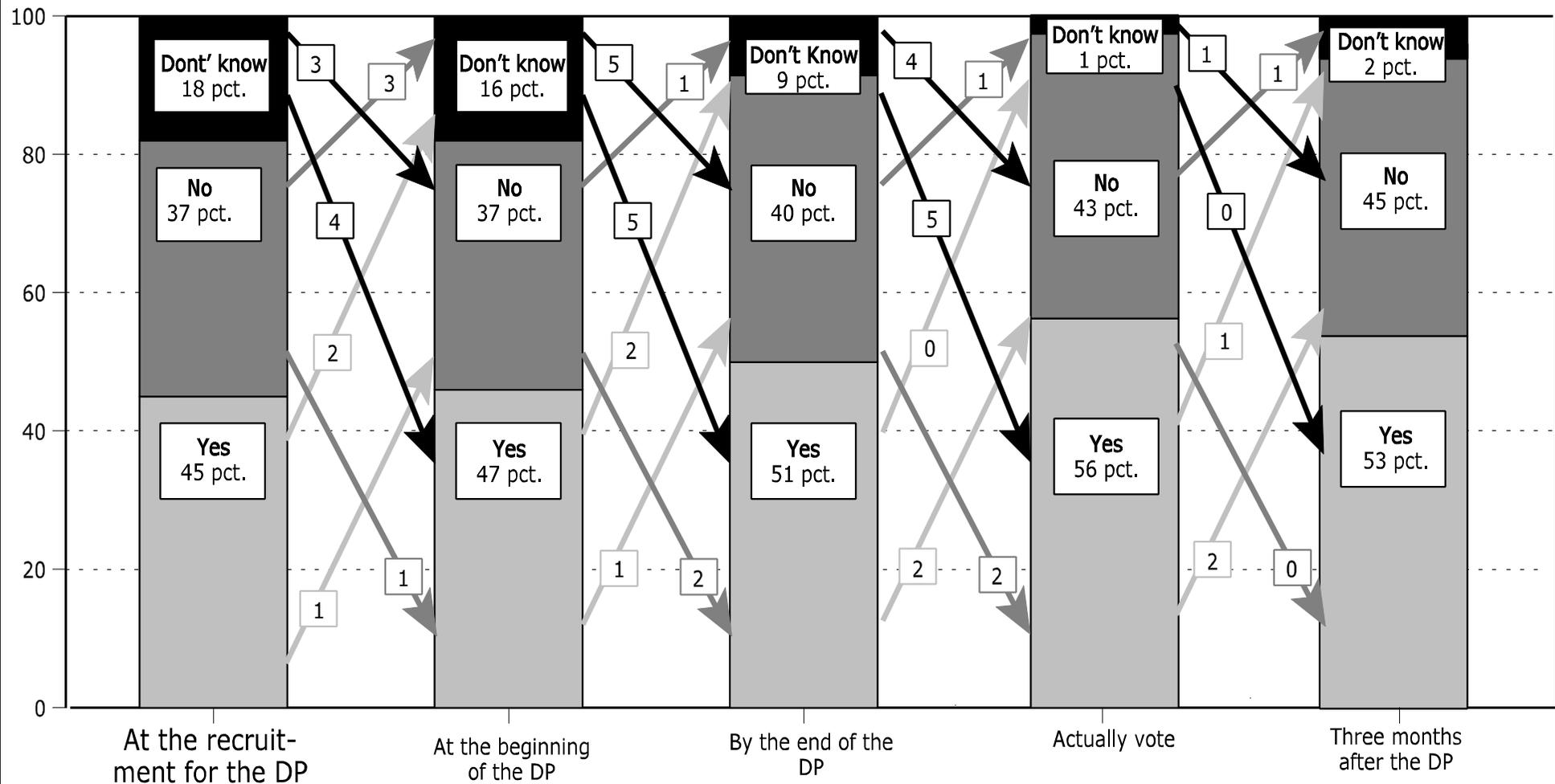
## **7.2 Voting intentions with regard to Denmark's participation in the euro**

The public attention to the experiment of the Deliberative Poll on the euro was focused on whether the Deliberative Polling process would affect the participants' voting intentions with regard to the one month later national referendum. Figure 7.1 summarizes the participants' indicated voting intentions throughout the Deliberative Polling process. The shaded areas in each column indicate the percentage of undecided no-vote and yes-vote, whereas the arrows indicate the movement between the three different positions.

Figure 7.1 shows that the group of participants, who initially

did not know whether to vote yes or no, is split in half from the beginning of the recruitment to the end of the Deliberative Poll. In the same period studies of the control group identified a drop in the number of undecided among the general population. However, 18 percent of the Danes were still undecided a month before the referendum. Only 9 percent of the participating citizens of the Deliberative Poll remained undecided at that time. In this way, participation in the Deliberative Poll can be expected to be the reason for the large drop in number of undecided. The voting intentions of figure 7.1 show also that most of the movement between the positions occurred before the Deliberative Poll or during the Deliberative Poll. After the Deliberative Poll, and until the actual vote, most of the movement happened because the undecided finally took a stand. This suggests that the Deliberative Polling experience not only helps the participants to take a stand, but also that the position, which the participants took at the end of the Deliberative Poll, was to a large extent their final position.

**Figure 7.1: The participants' indicated voting intentions on the euro issue**



Note: N=332 as only participants, who answered the question in all rounds of questioning, are included.

The yes-support gained 11 percent and the no-support gained 6 percent between the recruitment for the Deliberative Poll and the actual vote. The relative gain in favor of yes was 24 percent, whereas the relative gain in favor of no was 16 percent. Based on this, more participants of the Deliberative Poll came to favor Denmark's participation in the single currency by the end of the event. The changes in the participants' voting intentions indicate that information and deliberation on the issue had an impact on the opinion formation of a large number of the participants. On the 28th of September 2000, about a month after the Deliberative Poll, the Danish voters at large responded differently in the referendum on Denmark's participation in the single currency - 47 percent voted yes and 53 percent voted no, with a turnout of 88 percent.

Two general conclusions concerning figure 7.1 can be drawn. First, the Deliberative Polling had an impact on the number of undecided participants as the number of undecided was cut in half. In this way, the Deliberative Polling experience increased the participants' ability to take a stand on the issue. This finding thus also contradicts that deliberation should cause more confusion among the participants. Quite to the contrary deliberation helps people to decide. A second conclusion is that the information and deliberation in this case move more participants toward a pro-euro position than the other way around. The pro-euro position gained more support than the euro-skeptical position measured relatively to the initial number of supporters as well as in absolute terms. This conclusion may lead some to speculate that if the voters in the referendum had had the opportunity to engage in the same process of information and deliberation, the outcome of the referendum would have been different. However, one remark to this conclusion must be made, which is that at time of recruitment, the pro-euro-supporters were slightly overrepresented at the expense of the undecided. This overrepresentation might have given the pro-euro position an advantage during the deliberation in the groups. Chapter 8 will analyze the relevance of some of these group processes.

The findings in figure 7.1 do not give any indication of how many actually moved between the three positions during the Deliberative Polling process. Calculations show that 20% of the participants<sup>57</sup> moved at

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<sup>57</sup> N=332 as only participants having answered the question in all rounds of questioning are included.

least once between the three polls from the time of recruitment to the end of the Deliberative Poll. 25% moved at least once from the time of recruitment to the poll taken three months after the Deliberative Poll. This level of change is slightly higher than the level of change which has been reported in previous Danish referendum campaigns. E.g. in 1993 when the Danes voted for the Edinburgh Treaty, 17% of the voters changed their vote in the last month before the referendum. These 17%, who decided during the campaign of the referendum to the Edinburgh Treaty are mostly, as in the case of the Deliberative Poll, due to the fact that the undecided take a stand (Siune et al., 1994:104-105).<sup>58</sup> The 25% of the participants, who changed their voting intentions during the experiment, are nevertheless in sharp contrasts to the voting stability which the participants had when comparing their voting during the Deliberative Polling and the 1998 referendum on the Amsterdam Treaty. Of the participants, who were eligible voters and remembered what they voted in 1998, 92% of the participants' 1998-vote are identical to their voting intentions at the end of the Deliberative Poll.<sup>59</sup> These findings indicate how entrenched the participants' opinions towards Europe are. Secondly, they also emphasize the critical nature of the issue. That is, if deliberation and information have an impact on these well-rooted opinions it is likely that deliberation and information have even a larger impact on other issues less entrenched. Nevertheless, 1/4 of the participants changed their voting intentions, and the group of undecided was cut in half during the process. The decrease in the of numbers of undecided indicates that deliberation and information

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<sup>58</sup> It has been shown that pre-campaign opinions, beliefs and the race of the respondent accounted for 81% of the variance in vote choice at the US presidential election in 1980 (Finkel, 1993). At Danish national elections about 3/4 of the voters have decided what to vote before the campaign starts. Furthermore, the number of voters deciding what to vote during the campaign to Danish national elections has been quite stable over time (Buch, 2001:62).

<sup>59</sup> 52% voted yes to the Amsterdam Treaty and indicated a yes-vote to the euro at the end of the Deliberative Poll. 40% voted no to the Amsterdam Treaty and indicated a no-vote, 4% voted yes and 4% voted no in 1998 and indicated the opposite vote at the end of the Deliberative Poll. N=268, only participants who were eligible voters in 1998 and who remembered what they voted in 1998 when recruited for the Deliberative Poll are included. Eight participants who indicated that they voted 'blank' are also excluded.

have an impact on the participants' voting intentions even on an issue which has been on the Danish political agenda for more than 30 years.

The question capturing the participants voting intentions was one of the questions posed in all rounds of questioning, which processed the highest stability among the participants' answers - measured individually as well as collectively. The voting intentions are thus only the first step to understand the opinion formation during the Deliberative Poll. Many questions designed to capture the reasoning behind the vote were also included in the questionnaires. These questions are in focus next.

### **7.3 Level of opinion change**

To provide a more comprehensive account of the underlying opinion fluctuations among the participants, table 7.1 includes several key questions regarding the euro. The six questions in table 7.1 include aspects on the two most important issues in relation to the citizens' voting intention. The two issues, which were identified as the most important ones in open-ended questions during the Deliberative Polling (Andersen et al., 2000) and in multi-variable regression analysis (Buch & Hansen, 2002) were 'independence' and 'economy'.

The results in table 7.1 show that more participants formed an opinion as more participants took a stand by the end of the Deliberative Poll (t2) compared to the time of the first contact (t0). Secondly, by the end of the Deliberative Poll, more participants neither agreed nor disagreed and claimed that they somewhat agreed or disagreed rather than strongly agreed or disagreed on a number of issues related to the single currency. The time up to the Deliberative Poll (t0-t1), as well as the period during the Poll, contributed to these effects (t1-t2). At least two interpretations of the changes in opinion structure are possible.

According to the first interpretation, the participants formed a more balanced view on the issues as the answers in extreme categories (strongly agreeing or disagreeing) decreased. Thus, the participants discovered that questions concerning the single currency and European integration in general are more complex and many-sided. As the participants incorporate more dimensions to their opinions, somewhat agreeing or disagreeing becomes more likely.

The second interpretation suggests that the participants, by being exposed to information and deliberation, have become more insecure

and confused with regard to forming an opinion. It becomes more difficult for the participants to form an opinion due to the complexity of the topic. The two interpretations are not necessarily contradictory. Nevertheless, the drop in all 'don't know' categories suggests that the participants are capable of forming an opinion and supports the first interpretation. This interpretation is also supported by the fact that the number of participants, who were undecided with regard to voting intentions, were cut in half in the same period.

The finding that participants come to more balanced opinions during deliberation contradicts research suggesting that group deliberation causes groups to polarize their opinions. That is, group members tend to move toward a more extreme point following their pre-deliberation opinions (Sunstein, 2000; 2003). Quite to the contrary the more balanced view, which prevails during the Deliberative Polling, suggests that pre-deliberative opinions tend to group around the middle of the scale.<sup>60</sup>

However, one might think that the level of 'don't know' at the time of recruitment corresponds to the higher level of 'neither nor' answers at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll as the participants simply move from 'don't know' to 'neither nor'. Nevertheless, the movements between these categories are found to be no more frequent than any other individual movement. The movement away from the 'don't know' answers supports the first interpretation, thus indicating that the participants are capable of forming an opinion and it is not because of a general movement from 'don't know' to 'neither nor'.

Three months after the Deliberative Poll, the participants reverted somewhat to their initial opinion position. One interpretation is that by the end of the event, the participants' opinion structure reflected the deliberative process, the impact of which declined when the participants returned to their everyday lives. Secondly, some participants may also have changed their opinion after knowing the result of the referendum due to a *bandwagon effect* and because the Danish economy did not seem to suffer from the outcome of the referendum, which was a strong argument in the yes-campaign.

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<sup>60</sup> In the next chapter more analyses on the opinion formation on the group level are presented.

**Table 7.1: Net change to key opinion items (%)**

	Strongly agree	(1)	Neither agree, nor disagree	(2)	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Mean
<b>It is an important priority for the EU to include additional countries in the Union as soon as possible</b>							
t0-Recruitment interview	33	22	4	10	24	7	57
t1-At the beginning of the DP	22	28	17	16	12	5	58
t2-At the end of the D P	26	35	19	11	7	2	66**
t3-Three months after the DP	33	31	3	15	12	6	65
t0-Control group at recruitment	28	22	5	10	24	12	55
t2-Control group during the DP	26	22	7	10	24	9	53
<b>Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence</b>							
t0-Recruitment interview	34	9	3	10	34	10	50
t1-At the beginning of the DP	26	24	4	12	29	5	52
t2-At the end of the D P	24	20	5	19	30	2	47*
t3-Three months after the DP	29	14	2	14	38	3	45
t0-Control group at recruitment	33	11	3	9	33	11	50
t2-Control group during the DP	32	11	4	10	36	7	48**
<b>Danish participation in the single currency lowers the current Danish interest rates</b>							
t0-Recruitment interview	14	11	4	6	19	46	49
t1-At the beginning of the DP	14	13	24	8	10	31	53**
t2-At the end of the D P	15	23	28	9	7	18	58**
t3-Three months after the DP	15	12	7	13	22	31	46**
t0-Control group at recruitment	12	9	4	6	18	51	48
t2-Control group during the DP	14	9	9	6	17	43	49
<b>Danish participation in the single currency weakens the Danish welfare system</b>							
t0-Recruitment interview	17	9	5	8	47	14	35
t1-At the beginning of the DP	16	16	14	14	29	11	45**
t2-At the end of the D P	13	22	13	15	30	7	43
t3-Three months after the DP	19	13	3	18	38	9	39**
t0-Control group at recruitment	16	8	4	11	44	17	35
t2-Control group during the DP	19	10	6	11	41	13	39**

*The table continues on the next page.*

	Strongly agree	(1)	Neither agree, nor disagree	(2)	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Mean
The single currency is a step toward "The United States of Europe"							
t0-Recruitment interview	50	18	5	5	14	8	71
t1-At the beginning of the DP	35	26	13	8	14	4	65**
t2-At the end of the D P	23	24	12	13	25	3	51**
t3-Three months after the DP	40	21	2	10	22	5	62**
t0-Control group at recruitment	48	19	3	6	14	10	71
t2-Control group during the DP	49	19	3	5	16	8	71
Danish participation in the single currency would weaken the workers' situation							
t0-Recruitment interview	13	7	4	11	46	19	32
t1-At the beginning of the DP	9	13	15	13	29	21	40**
t2-At the end of the D P	10	13	18	17	32	10	38*
t3-Three months after the DP	13	11	4	17	39	16	36
t0-Control group at recruitment	12	6	3	11	44	24	33
t2-Control group during the DP	12	7	5	9	46	21	32

Note: N varies from 350 to 364. 1) refers to somewhat agree. 2) refers to somewhat disagree. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The two control groups are independent. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1674-1675 and the control group during the DP has an N of 984, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

Table 7.1 includes also the two control groups allowing us to conclude that opinion changes among the participants at the Deliberative Poll was brought about by the process of the Deliberative Polling and not by a general development in the public opinion. A comparison of the participants at the time of recruitment, and the control group at the time of recruitment, shows that the participants reflect opinion representativeness. Secondly, by comparing the two control groups it is shown that the public did experience a significant change on two of the six questions, but these differences remain small. Furthermore, the number of 'don't know' answers in the control groups show only moderate decreases compared to the drop among participants. A general effect from the ongoing campaign up to the referendum on the general public opinion is, accordingly, only moderately

present because of the minor decrease in the number of undecided in the control group. This allows us to conclude that the opinion change experienced by the participants is brought about by the process of the Deliberative Polling and not by a general development in public opinion.

Even though there are significant net changes throughout the process of the Deliberative Poll, the net opinion changes of table 7.1 do not show changes at the individual level. An individual change of opinion in one direction might be canceled out by an opposite change by another individual. Table 7.2 therefore includes the gross change of opinion at the individual level on the six questions from table 7.1 including three additional questions.

**Table 7.2: Gross change on key opinion items (percent of participants who changed their views)**

	Changed category					Changed side				
	t0-t1	t1-t2	t2-t3	t0-t2	at some point	t0-t1	t1-t2	t2-t3	t0-t2	at some point
It is an important priority for the EU to include additional countries in the Union as soon as possible	60	53**	57	63	80	14	10*	15**	16	26
Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence	51	45	51	50	76	17	15	20*	17	36
Danish participation in the single currency lowers the current Danish interest rates	63	53**	70**	76	88	6	6	12**	8	20
Danish participation in the single currency weakens the Danish welfare system	58	53	58	63	81	14	10**	13*	18	29
The single currency is a step toward "The United States of Europe"	55	53	55	66	81	10	11	13	17	25
Danish participation in the single currency would weaken the workers' situation	57	46	55	60	76	9	6	11**	12	17
If Denmark joins the single currency it cannot resign at a later point in time	67	62	63	74	88	23	19	22	28	45
The cooperation within the single currency is undemocratic	61	46**	54**	61	80	19	10**	15**	16	32
Danish participation in the single currency is beneficial to the Danish economy	64	47**	60**	68	84	7	3**	6*	7	12

Note: All questions had a 5-point scale and a don't know option. 'Changed category' is defined as a change between the 6 points. 'Changed side' is defined as a change from agrees to disagrees or vice versa. Only respondents who answered the question in both relevant rounds of questioning are included. N varies from 327 to 364. 'At some point' refers to participants changing at least once between the four polls. All changes in the table are significant compared to no change. \*\* indicate that the number of participants changing opinion is significant compared to the previous phase at  $p < 0.05$  (2-tailed-test), whereas \* indicates significance at  $p < 0.1$ .

Changing opinion when exchanging viewpoints with others during a deliberative process suggests that opinion is not a stable property, but an ongoing process continuously developing as people engage with each other. Between 7 and 28% of the participants changed their views from agreeing

to disagreeing or vice versa on a number of issues related to the single currency, see table 7.2. Changes in opinion were also found prior to the deliberative phase (t0-t1) as well as after the deliberative phase (t2-t3). The changes of opinion among the participants before t1 are, among other things, ascribed to the information material, discussions concerning the EU with friends and families, increased awareness of the public debate, etc. The changes during the Deliberative Poll are most likely due to group discussions and the plenary sessions with politicians and experts. Fewer participants changed their opinion during the Deliberative Poll compared to before (t0-t1). For none of the nine questions is the level of opinion change larger during the Deliberative Poll (t1-t2) than before (t0-t1), both measured by changing category and measured by changing side. Four out of nine questions show significantly more change in the period up to the Poll than during and no questions show the opposite effect.

The pattern of change points out first of all the importance of adding the second poll to the design of the Deliberative Poll, which has been missing in all other Deliberative Polls conducted so far by Fishkin and his colleagues. That opinion change occurs before as well as during the Deliberative Poll is also a prevailing feature of a similar experiment, which has included a survey between recruitment and the end of the Deliberative Poll (Aars & Offerdal, 2000; Hansen, 2000; 2000b).

The first intuitive interpretation of the higher level of individual change before than during the Deliberative Poll would simply suggest that in this period the stimuli had a larger impact on the participants' opinions. Such an interpretation can also be supported by an argument suggesting that it is likely that the first stimulus has a larger impact than the last stimulus. That is, it can also be argued that the effect of the participants' exposure to different stimuli decreases with exposure to new stimuli over time. Following this line of argument, the amount of opinion change would be smaller and smaller the more deliberation and information the participants are exposed to. However, the finding in table 7.2 shows that on seven out of the nine questions the amount of change increases in the three-months-period between the Deliberative Poll and the final poll compared to during the Deliberative Poll. Up to 22% of the participants changed their opinions after the Deliberative Poll (t2-t3). In this regard the Deliberation Poll did not create stable opinions in the sense of being non-changeable after the deliberative process. This also contradicts the idea that the

participants would become more immune to stimuli during the process of information and deliberation.

When asked directly, 32% of the participants indicated that they had changed their opinion on one or more issues related to the single currency from the time of the recruitment to the end of the Deliberative Poll. Many are thus aware that they had changed their opinion indicating that for some the opinion change to some extent can be argued to be a conscious choice.

The relatively considerable amount in change in opinion first of all supports the assumption of deliberative democracy that opinions to a large extent can be considered as endogenously given. The opinions of the participants have shown to be affected by information and deliberation. Secondly, the relatively considerable amount of opinion change challenges the traditional opinion polls. In a best case scenario, the high number of participants changing their opinions decreases the reliability of traditional public opinion polls. In a worst case scenario it makes them useless.

Throughout half a century, several studies have shown that opinions measured on the individual level vary highly over time. In what way can these findings contribute to the understanding of the opinion formation during the Deliberative Poll? In the field of public opinion, opinion instability has on the one hand been described as a symptom of an incompetent public, and on the other hand been considered due to poor and inadequate measurement tools. These approaches have to some extent dichotomized the debate on opinion formation in the field of public opinion, as change in individual opinion is either understood as random change or true change, and in this way the grey area in between has been somewhat neglected. At the same time, the black box of opinion formation has remained rather closed for these two approaches. The next sections try to open this black box of opinion change during the Deliberative Poll on the euro. In order to do so, the next section outlines some of the controversies in the field of public opinion. Secondly, it also explores to what extent the considerable opinion change during the Deliberative Poll fits a random pattern. The analyses in section 7.4 are followed by analyses in section 7.5. of whether the intensive deliberation and information during the Deliberative Poll have affected the consistency of the participants' opinion. Section 7.6 discusses opinion consistency and opinion stability whereas section 7.7 presents different models of level of opinion change as

a function of different variables.

#### 7.4 Formation of stable opinions

In the literature in the field of public opinion, the fluctuations in public opinion have been described as true or random change. In order to explore the formation of opinion it is therefore reasonable to discuss whether the process of Deliberative Polling can be characterized to fit a random pattern, or whether the process reflects a process of genuine change. On the one hand, if all changes can be accounted for as purely random, any further analysis does not seem justifiable. On the other hand, if a pattern of non-random change can be identified, it is particularly interesting to ask - why did the opinion changes occur during the process of information and deliberation?

One of the most cited and debated thesis in the field of opinion research is Philip E. Converse's nonattitude thesis. Converse concludes on empirical findings that the population's opinions are "*extremely labile for individuals over time*" (Converse, 1964:241) and that "*large portions of an electorate do not have meaningful beliefs, even on issues that have formed the basis for intense political controversy among elites for substantial periods of time*" (ibid:245). Empirically, the concept of nonattitude suggests that the changes in the population's opinions will to a large extent fit a random pattern. Converse investigates the opinion fluctuations and shows that the correlations between individual answers to identical questions have the same degree of explanation in a three-wave-panel survey. The correlations between time one - time two, time two - time three, and time one - time three were at the same order of magnitude and, on this ground, he concludes that a majority of the population has inconsistent and highly unstable opinions over time, which amounts to the fact that fluctuations in public opinion to a very large extent are random. The model is also known as Converse's Black-White model, because it dichotomizes the public into two groups - an elite, which has genuine and perfectly stable opinions, and a group who does not have any real opinions, instead its opinions are invented on the spot when the pollsters ask for them. When the perfectly stable group, with a correlation of 1, is combined with the nonattitude group, with a correlation of 0 over time, the correlation in the chronological as well as non-chronological order on identical questions will be at the same level, which is supported in Converse's analyses (ibid; 1970). The high

individual opinion instability has been confirmed in several panel studies ever since Converse's empirical studies from the late 1950s. However, the debate on the interpretation of this instability continues (Kinder & Palfrey, 1993; Kinder, 1998). In the Converseian tradition, the instability has often been put forward as a challenge to democracy, because if large segments of the public do not have coherent preferences or any preferences at all, how can anybody listen to them or even govern in accordance with their will?

On the other hand, the nonattitude interpretation of the instability has been challenged. Achen (1975) argues that what on the surface may seem to be nonattitude is in reality measurement errors such as vague wording, order of questions, interviewer bias, scaling error, context in which the questions are asked, etc. and not vague opinions. Accordingly, measuring errors can also simply be that the participants misunderstand the questions or that the interviewer misunderstands the answers or codes the answers incorrectly. In this way, measuring errors increase when the questions are badly phrased, which again increase the observed movement in the participants' answers (Togeby, 2002). The approach blames so to speak the tool of opinion polls rather than the public. Various research is giving some empirical support to this interpretation (Achen, 1975; Zaller, 1992; Inglehart, 1990). Repeatedly, however, it has been demonstrated that party affiliation and other significant questions have much greater stability than other questions. It has also been suggested that issues with which people have recently been in contact, issues closely related to their everyday lives, and issues entangled with moral, or racial religious values are more stable over time (Hansen, 2000; 2000b; Aalberg, 1997; Kinder & Sears, 1985). In a recent study of the Danes's values it is also confirmed that values pose high stability over time (Togeby, 2002). Elites have also shown tenacious opinions over time, in this way, the survey instruments are at least effective on these groups and on these questions. Secondly, it has been shown that the level of information is related to instability, which also challenges that the measurement error should be the entire explanation for high instability (Kinder, 1998; Kinder & Sears, 1985).

Recently, the debate has been revitalized by yet another interpretation of the instability (Zaller, 1992). The approach suggests that instability is not due to citizens having any opinions, but that they have too many opinions and that their opinions are multidimensional and as such a more complex phenomenon. Accordingly, one opinion may lead to several

different answers, which do not indicate instability, but rather more complex opinions. Citizens experience opinion-ambivalence rather than nonattitudes and the individual's answers reflect what happens to be most salient at the time of the interview. What happens to be salient at a given point depends on the general level of the elites' discourses, media coverage and on the individual level of political awareness, exposure and access to information, political knowledge, and political interest (Zaller, 1992). John Zaller (1992) presents a model of the dynamics behind public opinion, which opens up for studying the opinions as more than random fluctuations as Converse concluded.

Following the work of Converse and Zaller, Hill & Kriese (2001) try to identify a third group of individuals, who they label the 'durable changers'. However, they find, as predicted by Converse, that this group is quite small ranging from 2% to 8%, whereas the 'opinion holders' range from 37% to 58%, and the number of 'vacillation changers' range from 39% to 58% of the sample over six questions.

In sum, even though measurement errors and opinion-ambivalence account for some of the individual instability over time, it has yet to be shown whether reasoned individual opinion change occurs over time and, if so, why? Hill & Kriese (2001) determine specific response patterns for real opinion change or 'durable changers'. However, if e.g. the individuals cross from agreeing to disagreeing more than once, or if they answer don't know in the fourth wave, they are categorized as 'vacillating changers'. In this way, Hill & Kriese (2001) follow Converse (1964; 1970) in the interpretation of opinion change as real individual opinion change will occur continually over time and response categories. This form of stability is known as 'normative stability' and is often measured by correlations over time. Another type of stability is 'structural invariance', which refers to whether underlying dimensions change. E.g. in the case of 'structural invariance' it is expected that if three items constitute one dimension at time 1, these items will again at a later stage form one dimension even with considerable individual opinion change. Yet another type of opinion stability is 'ipsative stability' or 'status consistency' defined as high intraindividual consistency, i.e. high consistency between an individual status (e.g. race, religion, gender) and specific attitude. Finally, 'level stability' refers to the stability on the aggregated level (Taris, 2000). These four types of opinion stability may occur simultaneously or

independently. E.g. you might experience high ‘level stability’, but low normative stability. In the previous section, in table 7.1, it was shown how the opinions of the participants in the Deliberative Poll at the aggregated level developed. Secondly, the amount of change on the individual level was presented in table 7.2.

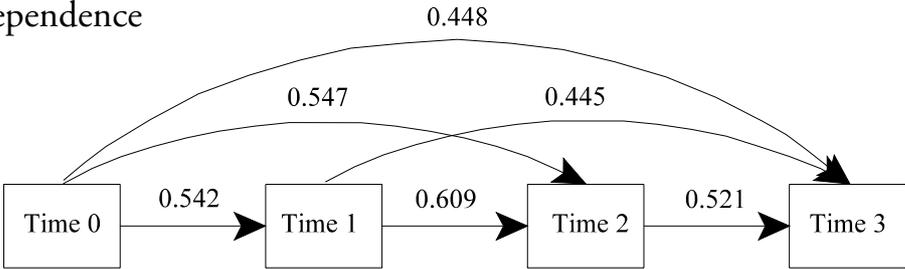
The considerable amount of opinion change reported in the previous section would in the Conversion tradition be interpreted as due to large proportions of the participants’ answers reflecting nonattitudes. That is, the opinion instability during the deliberative process is not due to the effect of information and deliberation, but caused by the fact that large proportions of the participants have only nonattitudes; a fact which is reflected in random responses to the questions. If the Conversion interpretation is justified, the intracorrelation, i.e. the correlation over time on each question, should be in the same order of magnitude. Intracorrelation refers to correlations on identical questions over time.<sup>61</sup> By presenting the intracorrelation in figure 7.2 on the four of the six questions from table 7.1, the focus is on normative stability during the Deliberative Polling process. In this way, the analyses’ focus are more on individual capabilities to form a reasoned opinion through a process of opinion change, rather than focusing on predetermined patterns of responses, which classify citizens as belonging to one group or another and, thus, the analyses follow another approach than Hill & Kriese (2001).

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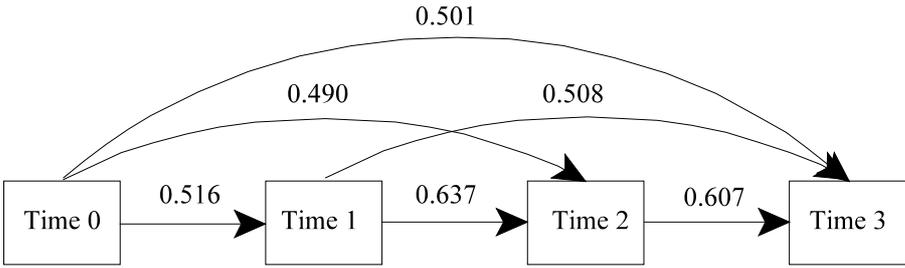
<sup>61</sup> The correlations used in the following sections are all Spearman correlation coefficients. Spearman correlation is a non-parametric version of the Pearson correlation coefficient, based on the ranks of the data rather than the actual values. Thus, no assumption has to be made regarding whether the variables are distributed along a normal distribution. Nevertheless, the correlation can be interpreted in the same way as the Pearson correlation ranging from -1 to 1. Togeby (2002) shows that the Pearson, Polychoric, and Gamma correlation coefficients all produce different results when measuring opinion stability partly dependent on the distribution of the variables. The Spearman correlation coefficient is used here because it is the most often used on ordinal scaled variables and does not assume normality.

**Figure 7.2: Intracorrelation on key opinion items over time**

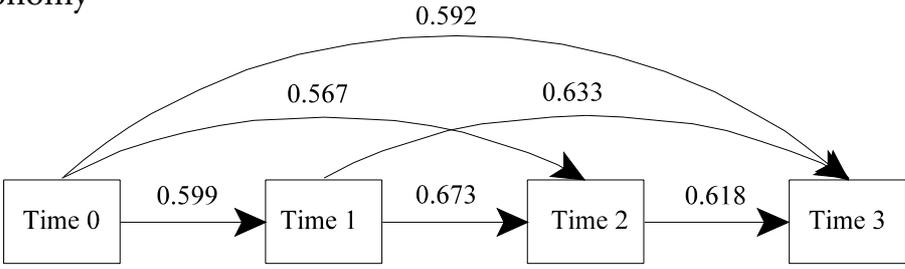
1) Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence



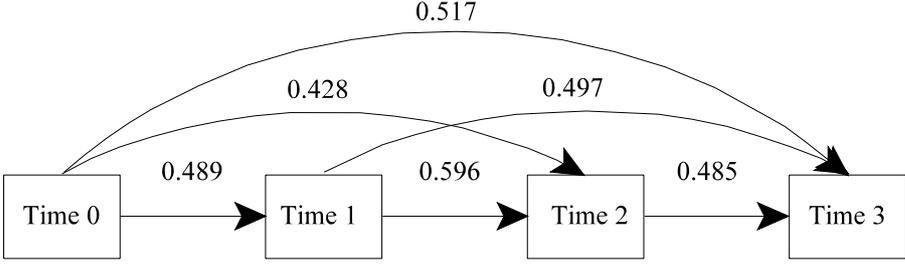
2) The single currency is a step toward "The United States of Europe"



3) Danish participation in the single currency is beneficial to the Danish economy



4) Danish participation in the single currency would weaken the workers' situation



Note: The correlations are the Spearman correlation coefficient. Time 0 is at the recruitment interview. Time 1 is at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll. Time 2 is at the end of the Deliberative Poll. Time 3 is three months after the Deliberative Poll. The scale is merged to three categories agree, disagree, and don't know/neither agree, nor disagree. N varies between 341-357.

The intracorrelation in figure 7.2 shows the correlations for four questions over time. Looking at the correlations, one could easily come to the same conclusion as Converse did on his data, as the correlation on each question in every period is in the same order of magnitude and the change process therefore fits a random process. Nevertheless, a closer look shows that the correlations in the chronological order are slightly larger than in the non-chronological order. The average correlation in the chronological order is 0.574, whereas the non-chronological is 0.514. The correlations, which are reported by Hill & Kriesi (2001) in their four-wave-panel study of six questions, where the participants also in various ways received information between the waves, show that the chronological order correlations are 7% (0.04) higher. During the Deliberative Polling process, the chronological order correlations are 12% (0.06) higher on the four questions over the four waves.<sup>62</sup>

One interpretation of this slight difference is that there is a relatively small group of people who change their opinions in a gradual manner. This form of change Converse (1964) describes as due to a 'third force'. On question two in figure 7.2 it is shown that all the chronological order correlations are larger than the non-chronological order correlations. In this case, the random process of change is rejected, but on the three other questions the data are inconclusive. Nevertheless, the finding that on average the chronological order correlations of four questions are 12% higher than the non-chronological order correlations, indicates that the process of opinion change during the Deliberative Polling does not reflect an entirely random process.

Another interesting aspect (*cf. figure 7.2*) is that the correlations between time 1 and 2 i.e., during the Deliberative Poll, are higher than any other correlations. These higher correlations support the findings from the net change (table 7.2) that the opinion changes before and after the Deliberative Poll were the largest and relatively smallest during the Deliberative Poll. In this respect, the two days' session of deliberation has the smallest effect on the opinion change. Secondly, the correlations between time 2 and 3 also support the fact that the opinions did not become more stable through the process as was discussed in the previous section.

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<sup>62</sup> Absolute increase in parenthesis.

So far significant opinion change has been identified at the aggregated and individual level (section 7.3) and in this section it is suggested that the process changes cannot be explained by random change. The finding of considerable opinion changes, which cannot be explained by a random pattern, allows asking further questions. E.g. have the opinion changes caused more reasoned opinions and, secondly, what kind of variables can contribute to understand the opinion change? The next section 7.5 analyses whether an increase in the quality of the participants' opinions can be found. That is, are their opinions more reasoned than initially stated in the recruitment interview? Section 7.6 discusses opinion consistency and opinion stability, whereas section 7.7 focuses on the question of which variables can help to understand the processes of opinion change.

### **7.5 Formation of coherent and consistent opinions**

Not many political issues can be boiled down to a single dimension, and the issue of whether Denmark should join the single currency is no exception. As the findings suggest in the above sections, the considerable individual movement does not seem to reflect a random process of change as the chronological order correlations on average are slightly higher than the non-chronological. However, nothing has been suggested about the quality of the post-deliberative opinion. Only the amount of stability has been explored. It has been shown that post-deliberative opinions to a large extent remove cycles in individual opinions and therefore post-deliberative opinions are more single-peak than pre-deliberative opinions (Miller, 1992; List et al., 2001). To explore opinions' single-peakedness demands ranking questions and, as the Deliberative Poll on the euro survey did not include such questions, another approach to exploring the quality of opinions is followed.

In the Conversian tradition, individual stability has been interpreted as an indicator of the existence of real opinions and a competent public whereas all change is random and not meaningful. On the other hand, individual opinion consistency has also been used as an indicator of the existence of real opinions - as if the individual was able to put together and relate relevant questions, the individual answers reflect a more ingrained opinion. However, the stability thesis and the consistency thesis are seldom

brought together.<sup>63</sup> To put it simple: the quantity (stability/instability) is seldom related to the quality (consistency/inconsistency). Even though correlation measures covariation and not consistency, it is reasonable to use correlation as a measure of consistency as it pinpoints whether variation in one variable corresponds to variation in another variable (Luskin, 1987; 1990). Hence, consistency will here be operationalized as high correlations between corresponding analytically and theoretically related items. Status and cognitive consistency are generally the two perspectives, which have been put forward when opinion consistency is researched. Status consistency focuses on the degree to which a respondent's opinion reflects his status (occupation, race, religion, income, gender, education, etc.), whereas cognitive consistency focuses on the degree to which different opinion elements are consistent (Nimmo & Bonjean, 1972). In this way, it follows that consistency in this study refers to cognitive consistency and not status consistency.

Table 7.3 below shows the correlation between the four questions in focus paired in two sets of questions. These correlations are referred to as intercorrelations and as an indicator for quality of opinions. The two questions in each set measure equivalent or strongly related items in an analytical as well as theoretical sense. Furthermore, the referendum campaign and the elite's discourses also relate to the issues. The first set relates Denmark's independence to further integration in terms of a United States of Europe. The second set relates the Danish economy to the workers' situation if the single currency is introduced. Following the analytical as well as theoretical arguments it would be expected that the first set of questions would be positively correlated, whereas the second would be negatively correlated due to the wording of the questions. Generally speaking, the table shows increasing correlations between the questions in each set during the process of information, which is the time up to the Deliberative Poll as well as the process of deliberation, which is the time during the Deliberative Poll.

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<sup>63</sup> This is despite the fact that Converse (1964), in his classic chapter, actually did relate the two opinion consistencies measured as the correlation between items, as well as opinion stability measured as the correlation on identical items over time.

**Table 7.3: Intercorrelation for the four key questions (N)**

	t0	t1	t2	t3
- Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence				
- The single currency is a step toward "The United States of Europe"				
- Participants in the Deliberative Poll	0.288** (364)	0.446** (351)‡	0.550** (347)	0.437** (355)
- Two independent control groups	0.273** (1675)		0.315** (986)	
- Danish participation in the single currency is beneficial to the Danish economy				
- Danish participation in the single currency would weaken the workers' situation				
- Participants in Deliberative Poll	-0.378** (364)	-0.466** (353)	-0.504** (352)	-0.472** (353)
- Two independent control groups	-0.350** (1674)		-0.412** (986)	

Note: The questions' 5-point scales and the don't know options were merged to three categories. "Agreeing" consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, "Disagreeing" consists of strongly and somewhat disagree and "Neutral" consists of neither agree nor disagree and don't know. t0 = time of recruitment, t1 = at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll, t2 = at the end of the Deliberative Poll and t3 = three months after the Deliberative Poll. \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed). The correlations are all Spearman's rho. ‡ A bootstrapping procedure confirms that the correlation increases significantly from the previous wave at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

The increase in correlations seems highest in the period up to the Deliberative Poll, and three months after the Deliberative Poll the correlations show a moderate decrease, however, the correlations stay high compared to the initial correlation (t0). These findings support the earlier suggestion in this study that the opinion change is not random as it is clear that the fluctuations in the two sets of questions follow each other. Had the fluctuations been random such patterns would have been impossible, as random movements would have resulted in intercorrelation in the same order of magnitude. Therefore, the opinion change during the Deliberative Poll must reflect something other than random opinion change. The control groups' correlations in table 7.3 also support this conclusion. Even though the general public measured through the control groups do show some increase in correlations, which is ascribed to the ongoing referendum campaign, the participants in the Deliberative Poll show a much higher

increase in correlations. One rather straightforward interpretation of these opinion changes, together with the increase in the correlations, is that the participants throughout the process of information and deliberation develop a more consistent set of opinion structure. Items, which were pre-deliberatively marginalized, are being drawn into the debate throughout the process of Deliberative Polling. This may indicate that the opinions are being more crystallized for the individuals and that the individuals are capable of linking these opinions together in a consistent way. In the experimental setting of Deliberative Polling, the development up to the Deliberative Poll could partly be assigned to the information the participants gain through the briefing material, discussions with friends and family and increased awareness of the media, whereas deliberation with other participants, experts, and politicians during the Deliberative Poll can partly be the stimulus to this specific development during the event.

Part of the changes up to the Deliberative Poll may also be ascribed to the so-called 'Socratic' effect, which implies that opinion change not only occurs because new information is presented, but also because the questions in themselves enhance the salience of the information the persons already had. This effect has been shown to be the strongest between the first and the second wave of questioning in traditional panel studies (McGuire, 1985).

The lesson from these interpretations is that information and deliberation make the participants understand the questions at stake to a higher degree, and in this way, they become better able to understand the dimensions of the issues and how these relate, and in this sense become able to form a more consistent opinion structure. Also in analyses of other Deliberative Polls has it been shown that the participants' level of information is a key to understand the opinion change during Deliberative Polls (Luskin et al., 2002).

Another interpretation is that the increase in the correlations is due to the fact that people make up their minds as to which side to support. In this sense, information and deliberation also make people choose which side to support and their choice has a high degree of consistency. When looking at the development in the frequencies, and the difference in the mean between each time period, it is shown that people do take a stand as the number of don't know answers drop (table 7.1). The two interpretations - information and decisiveness - are not mutually exclusive, on the contrary,

the interpretations suggest that information and deliberation during the experiment advance the formation of opinions and that these opinions express an informed and actual choice, making the final opinion structures more consistent than the initially expressed opinion structures. To explore these two points further - the positive effect of information and the positive effect of people making up their minds - table 7.4 and 7.5 divide table 7.3 on whether the participants initially had a high or low factual knowledge (table 7.4), and whether the participants had made up their minds with regard to their voting intentions (table 7.5).

**Table 7.4: Intercorrelation for key questions divided on participants' initial knowledge level (N)**

	Participants with a high factual knowledge				Participants with a low factual knowledge			
	t0	t1	t2	t3	t0	t1	t2	t3
- Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence								
- The single currency is a step toward "The United States of Europe"								
- Participants in Deliberative Poll	0.342** (278)	0.468** (270)	0.557** (264)	0.455** (271)	0.086 (86)	0.339** (81)	0.523** (83)	0.360** (84)
- Two independent control groups	0.330** (1140)		0.376** (787)		0.104** (533)		0.042 (199)	
- Danish participation in the single currency is beneficial to the Danish economy								
- Danish participation in the single currency would weaken the workers' situation								
- Participants in Deliberative Poll	-0.369** (278)	-0.469** (270)	-0.507** (268)	-0.458** (271)	-0.407 (86)	-0.449* (83)	-0.454** (84)	-0.500** (82)
- Two independent control groups	-0.352** (1140)		-0.421** (787)		-0.316** (533)		-0.375** (199)	

Note: The questions' 5-point scales and the don't know options were merged to three categories. "Agreeing" consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, "Disagreeing" consists of strongly and somewhat disagree and "Neutral" consists of neither agree nor disagree and don't know. t0 = time of recruitment, t1 = at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll, t2 = at the end of the Deliberative Poll, and t3 = three months after the Deliberative Poll. At t0 the participants were asked four factual knowledge questions regarding the euro (Fined for large deficit? Time for circulation of currency? National side of coins? Current participation in EMS?). If the participants answered at least two out of the four questions correctly, the participants are grouped as having high knowledge otherwise low knowledge.\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed). The correlations are all Spearman's rho.

**Table 7.5: Intercorrelation for key questions divided on participants' determination with regard to voting intention (N)**

	Participants who are decisive about their voting intention				Participants who are not decisive about their voting intention			
	t0	t1	t2	t3	t0	t1	t2	t3
- Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence								
- The single currency is a step toward "The United States of Europe"								
- Participants in Deliberative Poll	0.328** (284)	0.458** (272)	0.570** (272)	0.446** (276)	0.120 (80)	0.385** (79)	0.472** (75)	0.419** (79)
- Two independent control groups	0.298** (1344)		0.335** (836)		0.090 (332)		0.140* (150)	
- Danish participation in the single currency is beneficial to the Danish economy								
- Danish participation in the single currency would weaken the workers situation								
- Participants in Deliberative Poll	-0.455** (284)	-0.504** (283)	-0.514** (277)	-0.467** (274)	-0.063 (80)	-0.257* (80)	-0.452** (75)	-0.494** (79)
- Two independent control groups	-0.403** (1343)		-0.457** (836)		-0.098* (332)		-0.087 (150)	

Note: The questions' 5-point scales and the don't know options were merged to three categories. "Agreeing" consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, "Disagreeing" consists of strongly and somewhat disagree and "Neutral" consists of neither agree nor disagree and don't know. t0 = time of recruitment, t1 = at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll, t2 = at the end of the Deliberative Poll and t3 = three months after the Deliberative Poll. At t0 the participants were asked how likely it was that they would change their vote before the referendum. Their answers were very unlikely, unlikely, neither nor and don't know. The "decisive" group includes the 'very unlikely' and 'unlikely' answers whereas other answers constitute the "not decisive" group. \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed). The correlations are all Spearman's rho.

In table 7.4 only one of the two sets of questions shows the anticipated effect, that is, level of information<sup>64</sup> is related to whether a participant forms a consistent opinion, whereas both sets of questions show the expected effect with regard to whether the participants have decided what to vote (table 7.5). In this way, the interpretation that decisiveness is a key variable to understanding degree of opinion consistency is largely supported, whereas level of information as a key variable is only moderately supported. The increase in the intercorrelation is strongest among participants who were indecisive with regard to their voting intention. Participants, who indicated that they would not change their vote, have higher correlations on both sets of questions than participants, who were not as decisive with regard to their voting intentions. This suggests that a higher degree of consistent opinion structure leads to a higher degree of certainty.

The decrease in the correlation from the end of the Deliberative Poll to three months after the Deliberative Poll suggests that the participants to some extent 'lose' their obtained opinion consistency when they return to their everyday lives and are influenced by their surroundings or from an experimental view, the treatment effect abates and is overridden by other effects. However, the consistency is still higher than initially.

## **7.6 Understanding increased opinion consistency without increased opinion stability**

The analyses in this chapter have so far demonstrated that participants at the Deliberative Poll experience considerable opinion changes and through this process of opinion formation more people took a stand on the issues simultaneously with becoming more balanced about their opinions as extreme answers decreased. Secondly, the analyses demonstrated that post-deliberative opinions are more consistent than pre-deliberative and that the participants' decisiveness and level of information partly can account for these increases in consistency. The findings can also be interpreted in the light of the underlying analytic dimension of which an attitude consists. In the literature on opinion formation, the terms 'attitude' and 'opinion' are often used interchangeably, even though there have been attempts in the literature to differentiate between the two terms (e.g. Wiebe, 1953). It seems

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<sup>64</sup> Correcting for guessing by giving '-1' for incorrect answers '0' for don't know answers and '1' for correct answers does not change the result.

that political scientists prefer the term 'opinion' whereas social psychologists and psychologists seem to prefer the term 'attitude'. This ambiguity has fostered alternative terms, e.g. Lane (1973) identifies 39 different terms, which have been used to reflect the concept in a broad manner. In this study, the implicit understanding of opinions has followed the commonly applied definition of attitude and opinion as a summary evaluation of objects (e.g., oneself, other people, issues, etc.) along a dimension ranging from negative to positive (e.g., Petty et al., 1997; Katz, 1960; Ajzen, 2001).

It is often suggested to conceptualize attitude in a tripartite model in which the affective component includes feelings or emotions, the cognitive component includes thoughts, knowledge and the behavior component includes actions or intentions to act (Breckler, 1984; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Dawes & Smith, 1985). Applying the tripartite model to attitude on the issue of the European single currency, the affective component would include the individuals' feelings about abandoning the national currency in favor of the single European currency, and their gut reaction to the entire idea of a single European currency. The individuals' level of knowledge and the amount of reflection and thoughts about the issue constitute the cognitive component. The behavioral component would e.g. include the individuals' voting intentions as well as the actual vote and other forms of action e.g., signing petitions, participation in meetings and campaign contributions, etc. What is measured by the items in the survey questionnaires throughout the Deliberative Polling process is, in this way, a mixture of these three components, even though it can be argued that some questions emphasize one of the three components. In this way, the opinion change may be due to a change in one of these components or a combination of them. The variables applied in the above tables can be argued to include affective, cognitive as well as behavioral elements of the attitudes. The questions regarding independence and economy include strong affective elements, e.g. the picture of a European Union moving towards federation without any national influence or the 'little man' being neglected for economic profit. The cognitive element includes the thought which has been devoted to these issues as well as the measures for level of information. The behavioral elements are included in the analysis through the questions about whether individuals have decided on their voting intentions. The reported increase in consistency may thus also be interpreted as a higher degree of harmony

between the affective, cognitive, and behavioral elements of the opinion structure of the participant.

Another aspect of opinion formation in the process of Deliberative Polling is that it does not seem to create stable opinions. On the individual level, the fluctuation after the Deliberative Poll is at the same order of magnitude as the changes before and even slightly higher than the amount of change during the Deliberative Poll. This is also partly found in the aggregated analysis where there is a tendency among participants to change toward their initial positions between the end of the Deliberative Poll and until they are reinterviewed three months after the Deliberative Poll. It has been argued above that there are three explanations for these opinion changes. First, a bandwagon effect among the participants, when the result from the referendum was known. Secondly, because the Danish economy did not seem to suffer from the outcome of the referendum, which was a strong argument in the yes-campaign. Thirdly, it has also been suggested that the participants to some extent reformulate their opinions when they return to their everyday lives and are influenced by their surroundings or from an experimental view - the treatment effect abates and is overridden by other effects.

Nevertheless, as these explanations account for only some of the fluctuations in individual opinions, a supplementary explanation should be put forward too. So far this study has empirically shown and argued that deliberation and information enable citizens to form a more consistent opinion and help them decide which side to support. However, a contradictory effect can be argued to intervene with this causality. That is, the deliberative process also enables the participants to view the issue in its more complex and many-sided setting, which encourages to opinion change if e.g. new information becomes available. This contradictory effect is also emphasized among the participants if, due to participation in the Deliberative Poll, they tend to be more engaged with the issue before as well as after the Deliberative Poll, e.g. by following the public debate more intensively. Whether the Deliberative Poll has such an effect is analyzed in chapter 11. In this way, if the participants follow the media more intensively than before the deliberation, it is also likely that the media has a strong influence on the participants. These points help explain why fluctuations also occur after the Deliberative Poll. However, even though the fluctuations in individual opinions are relatively considerable in all phases

of the Deliberative Polling process, the analysis also demonstrates that the individual opinion structure is more consistent three months after the Deliberative Poll than initially. Accordingly, on the one hand the process described here suggests that deliberation does not create stable opinions. On the other hand the fluctuations in opinion after the intensive information and deliberative process reflect more consistent and unambiguous opinion changes which would not have occurred if the participants had not been stimulated by the Deliberative Poll, as participants who changed their opinions between the Deliberative Poll and the last interview kept their opinion consistency. The opinion change in the post-deliberative phase may in this way be characterized as reasoned opinion change or as ‘durable change’, as labeled by Hill & Kriese (2001), rather than just random change. Given that the participants are more open to new information and arguments, as well as to the channel in which such ideas are often expressed, makes it questionable whether stability should be used as a measure of the quality of public opinion especially in the context of Deliberative Polling.

The implication of the findings also generates confidence in the citizens and their capacity to express informed and consistent opinions. Other analyses have shown how easily citizens are influenced when exposed to information and arguments, but it has also been shown that when information and arguments reflect both sides of an issue, people tend to choose opinions which are in correspondence with their more fundamental beliefs, e.g. party choice or ideology (Sniderman & Theriault, 2001). In this way, deliberation and information stimulate reasoned opinion change by helping people tie their opinions together and crystallize them in a consistent manner. The Sniderman & Theriault (2001) findings correspond to the analysis presented and emphasize the strong potential of deliberation in relation to the quality of public opinion.

The findings in this chapter suggest that deliberation enables the participants to increase their opinion consistency and provide them with a more balanced opinion, but this development does not entrench them, rather it allows them to respond to new information and arguments. Sunstein’s Law of Group Polarization (2000; 2003) stipulates that “*members of a deliberation group predictably move toward a more extreme point in the direction indicated by the members’ predeliberative tendencies*” (Sunstein, 2003:81). As argued above the development of balanced views contradicts Sunstein’s law of group polarization. Two principles underlie the law of

group polarization. First, the social influence between the group members tend to create a situation where the participants' desire to maintain their self-conception and reputation. The social influence is increased if a group is composed of liked-minded participants. Second, within any group the pool of information and arguments are limited by the information and arguments the participants carry into the deliberation.

The initial opinions of individuals are a function of the information and arguments they carry into the deliberative process. Because the individuals are initially inclined to certain opinions, the pool of information and argument will be disproportionate in direction of these initial opinions, the result is that the group members will tend to move in direction of their initial opinion during the deliberation (Sunstein, 2003:82-83).

Both these two principles are violated in several ways in the experiment of the Danish Deliberative Poll. First the groups were diverse because they were randomly composed from a random sample. Second, the deliberation of the groups was moderated, decreasing the likelihood of domination and encouraging everybody to take an active part in the deliberation. Third, the information and arguments were not limited to what the participants carried into the group. The participants received written information material before the deliberation and some consulted the material during the deliberation. The participants obtained information from the questions they and members of other groups asked the leading politicians and experts during the plenary sessions (ibid:97-98).

Accordingly, even though the results presented here are in conflict with the law of group polarization we could not have expected to find the law presented under these circumstances all along. The analyses presented here provide a much more inspiring result from a deliberative democratic viewpoint than the law of group polarization suggests. Thus, two tentative conclusions should be emphasized. First, deliberation as it was carried out during the Deliberative Poll questions the robustness of the law of group polarization. Second, if deliberation is carried out through a design which pays attention to social influence and the pool of information and arguments, deliberation provides opinion changes that are less likely to be a product of a skewed group sample and skewed argument pools, but rather provides opinions based on good judgment and arguments and not only reflecting the particular circumstances of the group. This also shows that the deliberative design becomes a crucial variable in future deliberative arenas

(ibid:98). Nevertheless, it has yet to be shown how these developments in the opinions of the participants can be explained. The next section takes on this task.

### **7.7 Explaining the opinion change**

In this section, the dependent variable is opinion change. That is, what is investigated is to what extent can variation in other variables explain the variation in opinion change among the different participants.

The first question to be addressed is whether the opinion change is confined to members of certain sociodemographic groups. Is it maybe only the more educated who have the ability to make effective use of the information material and the intense deliberation in the groups? On the other hand it could also be argued that the more educated participants had already made up their minds and, thus, are less affected by information and deliberation opinion change. Party choice is also included to assess whether voters of some parties are more affected by the deliberative process than voters of other parties. To gain an insight into the relationship between sociodemographic variables, party choice and level of opinion change, table 7.6 presents a simple linear regression where level of opinion change is the dependent variable measured on an index including all nine questions from table 7.2. In this way, the dependent variable only measures level of opinion change and not the direction of the change.

**Table 7.6: Opinion change as a function of sociodemographics and party choice - OLS-regression (standardized beta-coefficients)**

	Changing category		Changing side	
	Level of opinion change (t0-t2)	Level of opinion change (t0-t3)	Level of opinion change (t0-t2)	Level of opinion change (t0-t3)
Constant	57.460**	57.894**	5.135	6.281*
Gender (1)	-0.085	-0.084	0.035	0.065
Age	0.015	0.039	0.128*	0.157*
Children in household (2)	0.060	0.064	0.068	0.083
Employment (3)				
- Self-employment	-0.093	-0.099	-0.046	-0.076
- Public-employment	0.044	0.060	-0.037	-0.006
Indicated vote in national election today (4)				
- Social Democrats	-0.057	-0.077	-0.036	-0.065
- Social Liberals	0.030	0.010	0.004	-0.025
- Conservative Party	-0.104	-0.132*	-0.013	0.009
- Socialist People's Party	0.048	0.036	0.065	0.049
- Danish People's Party	-0.074	-0.066	0.011	0.026
- Liberal Party	-0.090	-0.109	0.036	0.073
Education (5)				
- Upper education	0.086	0.113	0.028	0.025
- University degree	-0.029	-0.026	-0.005	-0.080
Place of living (6)				
- 2.001-10.000 inhabitants	-0.070	-0.067	-0.032	-0.035
- 10.001+ inhabitants	-0.036	-0.080	0.130	0.079
R <sup>2</sup>	0.063	0.076	0.045	0.056
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.021	0.034	0.002	0.013
F	1.500	1.797	1.057	1.313
- Probability	0.103	0.034	0.396	0.192
n	353	345	353	345

Note: Level of opinion change is measured as the average level of change opinion on all nine questions from table 7.2 creating an index from 0 to 100. If the participants change their opinions in all periods, the level of opinion change equals 100. If the respondents gave the same answer to all nine questions in all periods, the level of opinion change equals 0. All independent variables are measured at time of recruitment. (1) 'Men' coded as 1. (2) 'Having children' coded as 1. (3) 'Private' employment is 'omitted category'. (4) 'Other' indicated vote is 'omitted category'. (5) 'No' and 'lower education' is 'omitted category'. (6) 'Rural area' and 'Less than 2,000 inhabitants' is 'omitted category'. \* Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). \*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

The findings from the regression presented in table 7.6 indicate that level of opinion change is not well explained by sociodemographic characteristics and party choice. Only one of the four regression models is significant as a whole and the significant model explains only 7.6% of the variation in level of opinion change. Looking at the four models for level of opinion change, the general conclusion must be that sociodemographic characteristics and party choice poorly explain the variation in level of opinion change. Accordingly, all groups are equally affected by the deliberative process.

In a deliberative democratic frame of mind, the results are inspiring as they show that the effect of deliberation is not confined to specific groups, but regardless of party choice and sociodemographic characteristics the participants come to a reasoned opinion through deliberation. These findings are also similar to the results from the first Deliberative Poll held in England in 1994 (Luskin et al., 2002). Nevertheless, there are two variables which have come out significantly in the models. When measuring level of opinion change as changing side, age is positively related with level of opinion change. The older participants thus change side more frequently than younger participants when the other variables in the regression are held constant. Actually the regressions suggest that each time a participant becomes a year older leads to an 8%-9% increase is observed in level of opinion change (unstandardized beta-coefficient not shown in the table). Even though age is significant, it must be emphasized that the models as such are insignificant. When measuring level of opinion change as changing position on the scale, the measure shows that conservative voters are more stable than other voters when other independent variables are held constant. But, as already emphasized, the four models do not explain the level of opinion change satisfying, especially when looking at the adjusted  $R^2$ . The overall conclusion is that, generally speaking, the level of opinion change is not accounted for by sociodemographic characteristics and party choice.

The fact that the level of opinion change can not be explained by sociodemographic characteristics and party choice gives the first indication that level of opinion change is equally distributed among the participants. However, other variables may affect the level of opinion change. At least five variables can be argued to have an effect on the level of opinion change.

First of all, it can be argued that level of knowledge and level of

opinion change are related. More specifically it can be suggested that learning is part of the explanation why the participants change their opinions. Such a hypothesis is closely related to the normative theory of deliberative democracy. As argued in the theoretical chapters, most deliberative democrats assume that deliberation has the potential of increasing participants' knowledge. An increase in knowledge, which might lead to opinion change. In chapter 6 it was shown that the participants experienced significant increases in level of knowledge. One way of measuring learning is simply by calculating the difference between level of information in  $t_0$  and level of information in  $t_2$ , but, as Luskin et al. (2002) persuasively argue, this approach involves a number of problems. The first is the problem of the ceiling effect on the knowledge index as discussed in the previous chapter. Secondly, some literature on learning suggest that those, who learn the most, are those who have the highest level of initial knowledge, but because of the ceiling effect the index does not capture this development. Following the line of reasoning suggesting that the information-rich become information-richer would indicate that the level of knowledge at each stage in the process would be a better proxy for true learning than the change score (see Luskin et al., 2002 for more on this issue). Another strategy, which is used in this case, is to average the number of correct answers in all relevant rounds of questions. The knowledge measure in such a case would thus represent the average level of knowledge through the process. Contrary to the information-rich get information-richer argument, which assumes an infinity learning curve, it is argued that it is the most knowledgeable participants who, knowing more details about the issue, are the most likely to have a more embedded opinion. In such a case, the participants with a low level of knowledge will change their opinions as they receive additional and new information. In this way, it would be presumed that a high level of knowledge would result in more stable opinions. This argument suggests that there is a negative relationship between level of knowledge and level of opinion change.

A second set of variables, which might help explain the level of opinion change, is political interest and awareness. The relevance of political interest is supported in the literature on the dynamics of public opinion. E.g. Zaller's (1992) four axioms on understanding public opinion suggest first of all that there is a positive relationship between a person's cognitive engagement with an issue and the likelihood of receiving a political message.

That is, the more a person is aware and attentive to an issue, the more likely it is that the person will be exposed to political messages. Secondly, Zaller's axioms suggest that if a political message conflicts with a person's salient political predispositions he or she is likely to resist change. However, a person is able only to resist the conflicting message to the extent the person has sufficient information to perceive it. The third axiom states that the more recent a consideration has been active, the more likely it will be part of the assessment of the political message. In this way, the more a person has encountered a certain consideration recently the more likely it is that it will be utilized. Fourth, and finally, Zaller's axioms suggest that a person's response to a question is an average of the person's considerations, which are active at the time. Following Zaller's work, political awareness, political knowledge, and political interest are of interest to understand the development in the opinion (Zaller, 1992:43ff). The idea in Zaller's axioms that people have a tendency to resist political messages if they conflict with their salient political predispositions would suggest that an opinion change is more likely among the participants, who are initially in conflict with their party's recommendation on the euro issue rather than among those who already follow the party's line. In the surveys, throughout the Deliberative Polling process, the participants were asked about their interest in politics and whether they were member of a political party or movement. These variables all relate to the issue of political awareness and directly to the level of political interest. Yet another variable of interest is decisiveness. As was indicated in chapter 6 on the increase in knowledge, decisiveness tends to influence the participants' openness to new input.

In order to assess these variables' effect, table 7.7 presents level of opinion change as a function of knowledge, political interest, membership of party or movement, decisiveness, and the participants' alignment with their party's recommendation on the euro issue.

When measuring level of opinion change as movement between positions on the scales, table 7.7 presents two very significant models supporting a relationship between knowledge, political interest, decisiveness, and alignment with party recommendation. When measuring level of opinion change as movement between the agreeing and disagreeing, the two

models in table 7.7 are very insignificant.<sup>65</sup> The way the dependent variables ‘changing position’ and ‘changing side’ are calculated, the latter is a subgroup of the former. Changing side thus has less variation than the variable changing position. This might also explain why only the regression model using changing position provides a significant model. The following interpretation will thus focus on the significant model.

The expectation that participants with the highest level of knowledge are more stable, is significant. That is, the more knowledge participants have throughout the Deliberative Polling process the less likely it is that they will change their opinions. Accordingly, the expectation that the level of knowledge would serve as a proxy for learning, because of the assumption that the information-rich would get information-richer, is not confirmed. The finding contradicts the result from the Deliberative Poll in England in 1994. In the English Deliberative Poll, the final level of knowledge is argued to serve as a proxy for learning, and findings support that those who learn the most tend to change opinion the most in the same direction as the sample as a whole (Luskin et al., 2002). One explanation for these contradictory findings might be that, generally speaking, the participants of the two countries had started out differently on the learning curve. In England, the issue was on crime, whereas the euro-issue had been greatly debated for several decades in Denmark. In this light, the different results from the two Deliberative Polls suggest that when participants’ level of knowledge reaches a certain level, they are better able to resist changing their opinions. That is also to say that we would expect to find a concave relationship between level of opinion change and level of knowledge if the results from the two polls could be analyzed together.

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<sup>65</sup> All dependent variables have a skewness and a kurtosis below one indicating that the distributions do not differ significantly from a normal distribution. Transforming the dependent variable - level of change opinion - by the use of logarithms or by ranking the different levels of opinion change does not change the variable’s level of significance in the models. Such transformations will, in this case, only complicate the interpretations of the parameters.

**Table 7.7: Opinion change as a function of political awareness, alignment and decisiveness - OLS-regression (standardized beta-coefficients)**

	Changing category		Changing side	
	Level of opinion change (t0-t2)	Level of opinion change (t0-t3)	Level of opinion change (t0-t2)	Level of opinion change (t0-t3)
Constant	77.106**	81.101**	15.070**	17.133**
Factual knowledge (1)	-0.113‡	-0.117*	-0.054	-0.059
Political interest (2)	-0.205**	-0.260**	-0.007	-0.027
Membership of party or movement (3)	-0.001	-0.024	0.088	0.050
Decisiveness with regard to vote on euro (4)	0.142*	0.150**	0.026	0.006
Alignment with recommendation of own political party (5)	0.111*	0.128*	-0.022	0.021
R <sup>2</sup>	0.133	0.186	0.010	0.007
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.118	0.172	-0.007	-0.009
F	8.862	13.538	0.606	0.445
- Probability	0.000	0.000	0.695	0.817
n	295	302	295	302

Note: Level of opinion change is measured as the average level of opinion change on all nine questions from table 7.2 creating an index from 0 to 100. If the respondents change their opinion in all periods, the level of opinion change equals 100. If the respondents give the same answer to all nine questions in all periods, the level of opinion change equals 0. (1) Measured as the average number of correct answers to all 20 knowledge questions presented in chapter 6 - table 6.1 and 6.2. The average is calculated over all relevant polls in the Deliberative Polling process. (2) Political interest is measured by the question “To what extent are you politically interested” - Very high extent = 100, High extent = 75, Some extent/don’t know = 50, Low extent = 25, No extent = 0. An average is calculated over all relevant polls in the relevant process. (3) Membership of political group is measured by the question “Are you a member of a political party or group?” Yes = 1, No = 0, don’t knows are excluded. (4) Decisiveness is measured by the question “How likely is it that you change your vote before the referendum” Very unlikely/Unlikely = 0, Neither nor/ Don’t know / Likely / Very likely = 1. An average is calculated over all relevant polls in the relevant process. (5) Alignment with political party equals 0 or 1. If the respondents follow the recommendation of the party they would support in a national election with regard to the euro vote, the alignment variable equals 0. If the respondents are not aligned, the variable equals 1. An average is calculated over all relevant polls in the relevant process. \* Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). \*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). ‡ \*\* Significant at 0.064 (two-tailed). Conducting the regression in a stepwise manner does not affect the level of the coefficients suggesting that multicollinearity is not a problem in the model.

Political interest is shown to have the largest effect on level of opinion change. The higher political interest the participants indicate the more likely is it that their opinions will be stable. The large relevance of political interest is supported in Zaller's work on public opinion (1990; 1992). The interpretation of the positive relationship between political interest and opinion stability is that interest in politics is an indicator for a person's cognitive engagement with political issues. Having a high political interest thus indicates that the person has invested more thoughts in the issue than people with low political interest. In this light, it is reasonable to argue, that the initially expressed opinion of the people with a high political interest is more thoroughly considered, and based on a more sophisticated assessment of the dimensions in the issue. In the experimental setting of the Deliberative Poll, people - regardless of level of political interest - are given the opportunity to learn and deliberate about an issue but, as the findings from table 7.7 show, measured by level of opinion change, the participants with low political interest are affected the most. This result confirms the negative relationship between political interest and opinion change.

Whether the participants are members of a political party or movement is non-significant. This indicates that being member of a political party or movement does not affect the level of opinion change. The survey does not allow a follow-up of this finding as it might be suggested that, even though membership is insignificant, it would be more relevant to investigate whether the participants are active or inactive members. It could also be argued that active members would be more aware of the party reasons for recommending a yes or a no to the euro-issue and, accordingly, the arguments in relation to the issue would be more salient among the active than the inactive members, which may lead to increased opinion stability among the inactive members.

Decisiveness also meets the expectation. If people indicate some insecurity with regard to the general issue of the euro, their answers are affected more by the learning and deliberation during the experiment than other more decisive participants measured by level of opinion change. The interpretation, also presented in the previous chapter with regard to learning, is that people have a tendency to try to consolidate their opinions if they have made up their minds. On the other hand, if people are undecided they are more open to letting new arguments and information determine their opinions, which also is confirmed in the findings in table

7.7.

The final variable which shows the expected effect is party alignment. The participants, who do not follow the recommendation with regard to the euro issue of the party, which they would support in a general election, are more likely to change their opinions during the Deliberative Polling process. This finding suggests that in the cases where the participants' political predisposition is in conflict with their initial opinions to the euro, it is more likely that they will change their opinions and vice versa.

The regressions from table 7.7 have confirmed that knowledge and political interest have a positive effect on opinion stability. Furthermore, a negative relationship is found between decisiveness and alignment of the participants' own party recommendation and the likelihood of opinion change. Nevertheless, only opinion change measured as the aggregate of changing position on the questions provides satisfactory models. When measuring opinion change as 'changing side' none of the variables prove to be significant. This suggests that other elements need to be included in order to understand this aspect of the opinion formation process during the Deliberative Poll. One such variable which could be interesting to include, would be the effect of the general opinion of the small group to which the participants belonged during the weekend. The group mechanisms are in focus in the next chapter.

## 7.8 Summary

Most deliberative democrats argue that deliberation potentially will transform opinions. The underlying assumption is that when opinions are exposed to information and deliberation they might change. That is, opinions are considered endogenous in deliberative democracy.

The analyses of the opinion formation during the Deliberative Polling process have shown that many participants change their opinions toward a more balanced stand on the issue. At the same time, participants become better able to take a stand on the euro issue as the number of undecided is reduced during the experiment.

The development in voting intention shows a moderate movement toward more pro-euro opinions, but the analyses do not support a landslide to either side of the issue.

The large level of opinion change is not well explained by a

random process where a large number of the participants should have answered randomly. Quite to the contrary, an increase in the participants' opinion consistency is found. That is, the participants prove more capable of linking analytically and theoretically relevant dimensions of the euro issue together after the deliberative process than before. The interpretation from a deliberative democratic frame of mind would suggest that the deliberative process has shown the expected normatively desirable effect as it has improved the quality of the participants' opinions. From another perspective, the increased opinion consistency can be portrayed as an increased correspondence between the cognitive, affective and behavioral elements of the euro-attitudes.

Even though an increased opinion consistency is reported, the opinions of the participants do not prove to be more stable after the deliberative process. The level of opinion change is actually higher after (and before) the Deliberative Poll than during the Deliberative Poll. The claimed normatively desirable effect of deliberation, that deliberation would lead to more stable opinions, is thus not confirmed.

One general interpretation of the process of opinion formation during the Deliberative Polling process is that the participants form a reasoned opinion in the time up to the Deliberative Poll. During the experiment, these opinions are consolidated, but as soon as the participants leave the experiment their opinions are once again challenged by exposure to arguments and information leading some participants to change their opinion again, but this time consistently and thus keeping a more reasoned opinion that they had when they initially were contacted.

Another important element of the opinion formation is that regardless of socio-demographic characteristics, the participants are equally affected by the deliberative process measured in terms of level of opinion change. This finding is important as it would have been troubling for many deliberative democrats if deliberation would only affect certain groups. That deliberation equally affects participants regardless of socio-demographics also somewhat contradicts an argument claiming that deliberation is elitist by nature.

The level of opinion change can partly be explained by the participants' level of knowledge, political interest, decisiveness and alignment with their political party's recommendation on the euro issue. The higher the level of knowledge and the higher the level of political

interest of the participants throughout the deliberative process, the less likely is it that they will change their opinions. This finding supports the interpretation that the less thought individuals have given an issue the more likely it is that they will change their opinions when affected by deliberation and information. On the other hand, the more decided and the more aligned the individuals are with their party's recommendation, the more likely it is that they will resist a change of opinion. In this way, it is suggested that deliberation helps participants to find correspondence between their political predispositions and their opinion about the euro.

## Chapter 8 - The Group Processes during Deliberation

In the previous two chapters, the focus has been on the extent to which deliberation affected knowledge and opinion formation among the individual participants. In this chapter another intervening effect is added to the understanding of the deliberation. This effect is the group processes during the Deliberative Poll. In section 8.1, the normative claim for deliberative democracy that group processes lead to new ideas and alternative solutions is challenged. The concepts of groupthink, conformity, and psychological entrapment are discussed in this context. These three concepts all provide a supplementary interpretation of group processes, which challenges the claim from deliberative democracy.

Section 8.2 shows that, according to the participants, the group discussions were the most important element of the Deliberative Poll. It is also shown that according to the participants, consensus did not emerge during the Poll. Elements of real politics proved also to be elements of the artificial setting provided by the Deliberative Poll as the participants indicated that time was limited, alliances arose and a few participants dominated the discussions. Based on video-recording of four groups, section 8.2 also tells the story of what happened inside the groups, no general or consistent picture of conformity and groupthink is found in the groups.

Section 8.3 expands the regression presented in the previous chapter by adding variables of the group process to the models. The individual opinion distance to the group mean and whether the participant belongs to the opinion minority show significant relationship with level of opinion change. Section 8.4 summarizes the chapter.

### 8.1 Group processes during deliberation

Deliberative democracy stipulates that deliberation potentially will produce alternative solutions, new information, and alternative ways to confront and seek compromise. In this way, the number of alternatives, from which the final outcome must arrive, are increased. The belief that through deliberation new ideas emerge is also the basis of the literature of focus group interview techniques. That is, the group dynamics will expand the available information and help the participants to new ideas and thoughts. On the other hand objections raised by other group members will also

encourage the participants to be realistic (Albrecht et al., 1993; Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999; Morgan & Krueger, 1993).

As discussed in section 4.3 - the outcome-driven paradox of deliberative democracy, there are still some controversies within deliberative democracy about whether deliberation should be aimed toward a collective decision and if so, which decision mechanism produces the highest level legitimacy? As it was argued, an *a priori* consensus aim may increase the likelihood of conformity and groupthink. On the other hand, deliberation, which aims at reaching a consensus, would also tend to assume that any cohesiveness is due to real, genuine consensus being established and that consensus originates from a free exchange of arguments and not simply from conformity and groupthink. In this approach, a consensus or conformity would sometimes also be seen as a normatively desirable part of the democratic process as the participants adapt their views in respect for the general norms in the group and, as a result, produce morally acceptable decisions. On the other hand, from a liberal, democratic standpoint, this kind of democratic decision-making is criticized for its lack of individual autonomy (Elster, 1997:10). If conformity is created through manipulation, paternalism, and suppression of viewpoints it seems difficult to accept group decisions as democratic. In this way, a consensus achieved on such grounds may actually be harmful to a democratic process. As a result, it may be argued that a decision is more convincing if there is a minority against the decision, as that would make it less likely that the decision came about as a result of conformity (Elster, 1997).

The arguments referring to deliberative democracy of course rely on a normative approach and a belief that deliberation improves the decision-making process. However, studies from other research traditions have suggested that some group processes actually work against the idea that deliberation potentially expands the number of possible outcomes. Individuals might in some cases have difficulties in arguing against a majority in the groups and, unaware or aware, give in to the majority. Given a situation where the participants seek compromise it may cause a reinforcement of already existing possible solutions rather than the creation of alternative ones. Deliberation can in such a case produce groupthink, psychological entrapment, and conformity. The concepts of groupthink, conformity, and psychological entrapment are relevant concepts, which help to understand deliberative group processes. In the following, the three

concepts are briefly discussed and subsequently analyzed in the context of the Deliberative Poll on the euro. However, one of the problems with these concepts is that they do not appear to have taken into consideration more political aspects of decision-making, e.g. democracy and power ('t Hart, 1990:25; Janis, 1972). That is also to say the concepts do not carry the normative legacy, which deliberative democracy tends to advocate. In this way, the concepts of groupthink, conformity, and psychological entrapment provide us with supplementary perspectives to understand the group processes.

### *Conformity*

Literature on group conformity surfaced in the work on collective decision-making and opinion formation. Asch's experiments from the 1950s are often described as classical experiments. Asch found that people tend to follow group judgments, even when it was obvious that the judgment was incorrect (Asch, 1956). Even though in his experiments Asch found large variations in the degree to which different persons adapt their individual behavior to group behavior in different situations, conformity has been described as "*the universal modes of social behavior*" (Nisbet & Perrin, 1977:64). Conformity is seen as the process through which the individual adapts his behavior to some norm that is preexistent to the situation. The influence of the group norms may be manifested in the group as well as more latently evident (Nisbeth & Perrin, 1977:63). Group conformity can be a cognitive, attitudinal, or behavioral change in a group member's opinion due to group pressure either exposed directly on or perceived indirectly by other members ('t Hart, 1990:48). Traditionally, conformity carries negative connotations as conformity in its pure form implies that individuals tend to support the majority in a group even though it is 'objectively' incorrect (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). In this way, consensus and conformity can also be analytically differentiated by on the one hand suggesting that consensus is reached through an exchange of arguments where the group members freely and rationally agree on a solution. On the other hand, conformity is believed to constitute a situation where the individual group member blindly follows the opinion of the majority without examining or discussing other alternatives. In relation to empirical studies, the problem is to separate consensus and conformity. That is, the group members are convinced by the better argument from situations of

conformity. In a few cases this will be clear, in many others, the distinction may be subtle. It has also been suggested that conformity is divided into public conformity and private acceptance (Festinger, 1957). Consensus has been referred to as when people support a decision with similar arguments (Elster, 1992). Consensus will, hence, be an inter-subjective matter within the group. The group members are aware of this process. Secondly, consensus will be more relevant at the group level compared to the individual group member. In contrast to consensus, conformity can be seen as a condition related to the individual who is not always aware of this process.

Nevertheless, in reality it will always be very difficult to separate consensus and conformity as it is seldom clear why individuals tend to follow the majority. The reasons why individuals tend to conform to the majority are that conforming may enhance the feeling of self-approval and self-esteem, while non-conformity may cause guilt, anxiety, or display the individual as incompetent (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Several factors have been identified to affect the degree of conformity in groups. First of all, if there is more than one individual going against the majority opinion, the tendency to conformity decreases significantly. Second, if the deliberation is not carried out face-to-face or in public, the degree of conformity also decreases. Third, an *a priori* commitment also decreases conformity. Fourth, the more straightforward the questions are the less likely it is that an individual will conform. Finally, conformity decreases as the number of people constituting the majority decreases (Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

The concept of conformity was of relevance to opinion formation during the Deliberative Poll as the participants much of the time deliberated in small groups of 18-20 participants. In relation to the Deliberative Poll, conformity is mainly limited to the following analyses of the opinion expressed during the process. Accordingly, in this context conformity can be defined as the individual's adaptation of an opinion to follow a group's norms and to adhere to an emerging consensus in the group due to group pressures exerted on the individual group member either directly or indirectly. In this way, conformity focuses mainly on individual behavior and not on group behavior as the concept of groupthink does, which is in focus next.

### *Groupthink*

The concept of groupthink, introduced by Irving L. Janis (1972), focuses on similar processes of decision-making in groups as conformity does - even though from a different perspective. Focus is on the group at large. Groupthink is defined as “... *a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action*” (Janis, 1972: 9). Groupthink refers to the situation when members of a group, in their efforts to reach consensus, suppress conflicting opinions in order not to violate an emerging consensus. A sign of groupthink is when group members value being part of the group higher than anything else. Groupthink may cause the members of a group to mutually reinforce a bias in the information available and arguments put forward. In this way, conflicting information and arguments are continuously ignored in the pursuit of consensus during groupthink. Furthermore, the group may create an illusion of invulnerability and close-mindedness. In this way, the group may mutually confirm a fallacy and create a collective misunderstanding within the group (Janis, 1972: 13; 198ff). The concepts of groupthink and conformity deal with similar processes in decision-making within small groups, but from different perspectives. The concept of groupthink deals with the group at large, while the concept of conformity deals with processes of social influence from the perspective of the individual group member. The latter is also termed a bottom-up perspective on groupthink (‘t Hart, 1990: 48). Signs of groupthink are when group cohesiveness is high, the members in the group express solidarity, experience a relationship with the group and express positive feelings about being part of the group (Janis, 1972: 4). Three situations can be identified to reinforce the effect of groupthink. These are: if a group experiences 1) high cohesiveness and homogeneity within the group, 2) insulation from the environment, and 3) high stress factors (‘t Hart, 1990; Janis, 1982).

### *Psychological entrapment*

The third concept, which will be briefly outlined before turning to the empirical analyses, is psychological entrapment. Psychological entrapment is defined by a group’s decision-making process “*whereby individuals escalate their commitment to a previously chosen, though failing, course of action in order to justify to ‘make good’ prior investment*” (Brockner & Rubin, 1985:5).

Psychological entrapment occurs when group members continuously commit themselves to a weak choice while disregarding opposing facts in order to justify resources already invested and, thus, defend their initial choice (Brockner, 1992). The process is also known as a 'winner's curse'. That is, if participants get caught up in a negotiation game, where other solutions than leaving the negotiation would be a losing endeavor, the participants tend to be psychologically entrapped in the negotiation. The individuals become entrapped by the bargaining process because of the amount of effort they have invested in the process and, thus, feel that these endeavors will be wasted if they do not obtain mutual accord. That is, the more committed participants are to the decision-making procedure the more psychologically entrapped they potentially become. E.g., if a decision is settled by lot, it does not produce the same potential for psychological entrapment as a required consensus decision. A majority decision would be somewhat in between. Also an opinion-split group shows larger entrapment under unanimity rule than under majority rule. Homogeneous groups (i.e. groups that are closer initially to consensus) also tend to experience greater collective psychological entrapment (Kamenda & Sugimori, 1993). Psychological entrapment has also been found to depend on the issues at stake. Is the issue mainly of a problem-solving kind, i.e. there is only one correct answer, individuals tend to be more information seeking and thus the likelihood of becoming entrapped decreases. Is the issue of a more judgmental kind, i.e. there is no single right answer and the answers rely to a large degree on different values, individuals rely more heavily on their own initial opinions and do not pursue information on which to base their choice in the same degree. Accordingly, if individuals perceive an issue as judgmental, they tend to a greater extent to become psychologically entrapped than otherwise (Stasse & Stewart, 1992).

## **8.2 Group behavior during the Deliberative Poll**

The participants spend much of the time during the Deliberative Poll in small groups composed randomly of 18 to 20 participants.<sup>66</sup> All together 20 different groups were composed during the Deliberative Poll. Over the weekend every effort was made to provide a pleasant atmosphere and allow time for the participants to get acquainted with one another. All meals,

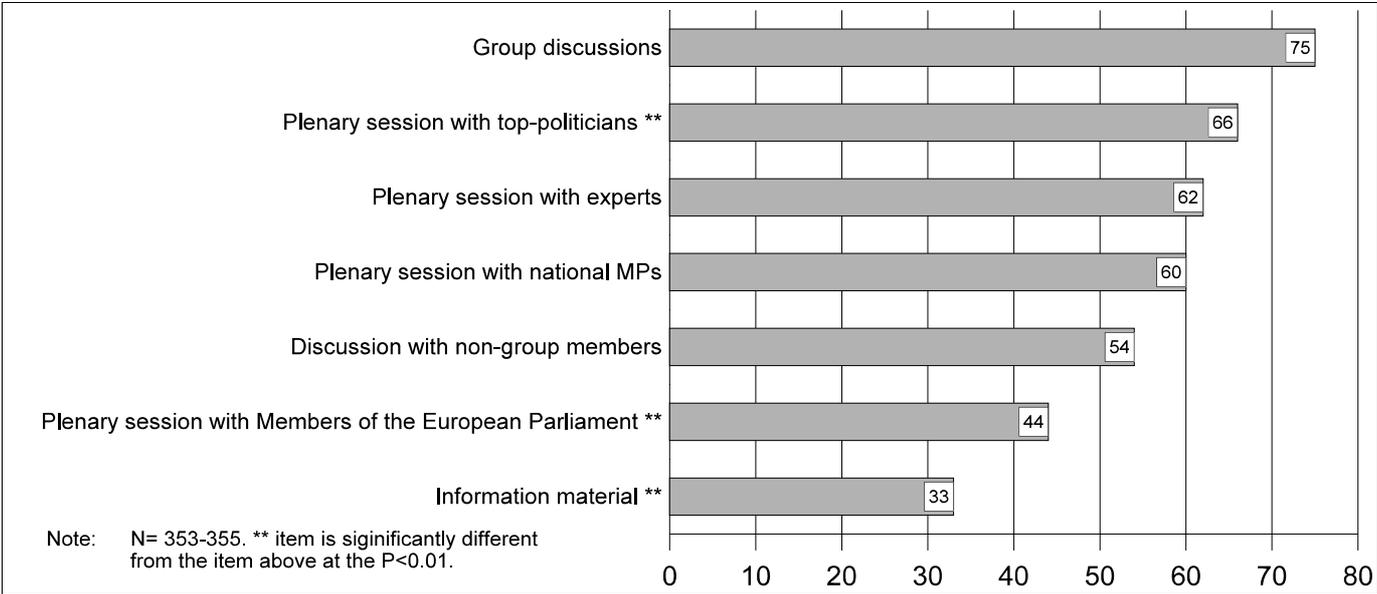
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<sup>66</sup> See appendix K for a detailed program of the Deliberative Poll.

except breakfast, were consumed together in the groups and a party in the evening was also held. Furthermore, the groups were seated together during the plenary sessions.

The purpose of the small groups was to allow the participants to debate the issue of the euro among themselves and to phrase questions to the various, leading experts and politicians in the plenary sessions. The only thing the participants had to agree on was which questions to ask in the plenary sessions, to whom the questions should be raised and who in the group should pose the questions. In each group session, the groups had to phrase two or three questions, but the moderator was told that if there were some difficulties in deciding which questions to ask it was possible to expand the number of questions. In several groups more questions were prepared than the two or three which were allowed. There is, nevertheless, no indication of whether it was the same groups which tended to prepare more questions to all four plenary sessions. 226 questions were phrased and each group phrased 9 to 16 questions over the weekend.

**Figure 8.1: The effect of the different elements on the participants’ clarification of their opinion according to the participants (large or very large impact in percent on each item)**



The participants at the Deliberative Poll on the euro indicated that the group sessions were the most important aspect of the Deliberative Poll in

relation to their opinion formation (see figure 8.1). Figure 8.1 shows that the participants gave the debate with fellow citizens in the group sessions a higher priority than the opportunity, for instance, to engage in the plenary debate with the Prime Minister. Hence, there is every reason to investigate the deliberative process in group sessions at the Deliberative Poll.

The Deliberative Poll on the euro was not designed in any way to explore the effect of conformity, groupthink, and psychological entrapment, which is often studied in a strictly experimental setting or in a more qualitative manner. If the composition of the groups had been manipulated, e.g. by intentionally bringing a strong majority together or by creating homogeneously socio-demographic groups it would have been easier to draw a conclusion on these aspects. Nevertheless, the phenomenon can be analyzed more indirectly and even though the groups were created by random choice, some differences between the groups were observed, which can give some suggestions to the extent to which these phenomena are present during the Deliberative Poll and why. Before turning to more specific analyses there are some indications from the self-assessment questions posed to the participants at the end of the Deliberative Poll, which give some insights into the group processes during the experiment. Table 8.1 shows aspects of the consensus mechanism and the discussion constraints assessed by the participants.

**Table 8.1: Deliberation in group sessions (%), (t2)**

	Agree	Neutral	Dis- agree	Mean group	SD group	N
				range	range	
<b>Consensus</b>						
From the beginning there was consensus in the group	25	21	54	57	27	346
Towards the end there was consensus in the group	27	21	52	61	21	344
There was consensus in the group about the way to deliberate	82	10	8	34	42	351
It was difficult to agree on the questions to be asked in the plenary sessions	28	12	60	68	27	353
<b>Discussions</b>						
A few of the participants dominated the discussions	45	17	38	82	29	353
Alliances between some of the participants arose	31	24	45	68	22	353
The discussions were superficial	10	10	80	41	48	354
There was too little time to discuss	68	11	21	59	50	352
All aspects of the euro-debate were covered in the group discussions	64	17	19	49	20	355

Note: 20 groups, with 18-20 members in each, deliberated during the weekend in Odense in four group sessions of 1½-3 hours' duration and four plenary sessions of one hour. Agree consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, disagree consists of strongly and somewhat disagree and neutral consists of neither agree or disagree and don't know. The group mean and standard deviation (SD) are calculated on an index where agree=100, neutral =50 and disagree=0. The mean and SD group ranges are the range between the 20 groups.

Table 8.1 indicates that the participants do not experience that a general consensus emerges during the deliberation. According, to these results, deliberation does not lead to consensus. These findings are nevertheless somewhat contradictory to the individual opinion formation analyzed in the previous chapter as the participants' answers to some degree converge more by the end compared to before the event. One interpretation of this is that, as discussed earlier in this chapter, it can be argued that, the participants must be aware of an existing consensus whereas conformity may emerge in

obscurity. Accordingly, even though no general consensus emerges, some groups may still show signs of conformity. These findings may thus be interpreted as a preliminary indication that a conformity-process might have been at play during the Poll.

3/5 of the participants indicated that it was not difficult to agree on the questions posed to the politicians and experts in the plenary sessions, and they agreed about how to conduct the deliberation. One interpretation of these results is that it was relatively easy to agree on the questions along with a commitment to the procedure for the deliberation, which indicates that consensus does exist on some levels during the deliberation. That is, a consensus on the procedures, but not on the opinions expressed during the deliberation.

However, the mean range between the groups shows that the groups had different views on this. The SD range shows also that within the groups there were some disagreements on the items. The variation between the groups on these consensus-items provides the opportunity to use these variables on the group level in further analyses as it indicates that the level of consensus varies between the groups.

Table 8.1 also provides an insight into other aspects of the group discussion. In some groups a few people dominated the group discussion and alliances between participants arose.<sup>67</sup> This indicates that the deliberation during the Deliberative Poll has elements of real political discussions where power and domination are present. Furthermore, 68% of the participants indicated that they believed that there was too little time to discuss, but nevertheless only 10% of the participants indicated that the discussions were superficial and 64% of the participants indicated that all issues were covered during the deliberation. In this way, the participants express support to the deliberation by opposing that the discussions were superficial and indicating that all aspects regarding the issue were discussed. Nevertheless, at the same time the participants indicate that domination, limited time, and alliances between the participants were also features of the Deliberative Poll. This suggests that the Deliberative Poll, with its moderated deliberation, also has element of “real” politics, but it also suggests that in deliberation without moderators, these features would

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<sup>67</sup> In the American national Deliberative Poll - NIC - in 1996 a few participants also dominated the deliberation (Merkle, 1996; Smith, 1999).

probably be even more profound. On a theoretical level regarding deliberation, these findings encourage deliberative democrats to include such elements of politics in the deliberative theory, if the theory is to reflect these empirical indications. If the theory of deliberation suppresses or simply disregards that domination, limited time, etc. are defining parts of the political process, the concept of deliberation tends to turn into a utopia or only an ideal type of discussion. The empirical findings from the Danish Deliberative Poll indicate that domination and limited time exist as constraints on the deliberation. In this way, I will argue that it should be taken into account that it is difficult to avoid domination, limited time, and coalition-building from even moderated deliberation. The presence of domination, limited time, and coalition-building should encourage deliberative democrats to include these features of politics theoretically as well as when designing new deliberative arenas.

Another way to understand the opinion formation at the group level would be to look at opinions expressed in the questionnaire before and after the group process. Such an analysis would focus on whether the individual in the group follows the group at large. One way to explore whether some groups conform would be by analyzing the development in the groups' standard deviation on a range of key questions. Decreasing standard deviation would indicate that the groups tend to move their answers closer together on the scale, which may be a sign of conformity or consensus. Increasing standard deviation would indicate that the participants move their answers further apart on the scale, thus indicating that their opinions tend to be fragmented.<sup>68</sup> Table 8.2 shows whether there is an increase or a decrease in the standard deviation in the twenty groups on the six key questions from the beginning of the Deliberative Poll (t1) to the end of the Deliberative Poll (t2).

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<sup>68</sup> It should be noted that the analysis may be affected by ceiling and floor effects. That is, if a group has a very high standard deviation before the Poll, decreasing development would be more likely - and vice versa. Furthermore, the analysis only gives an indication of direction of the development, not an indication of how large this development is. It is also important to emphasize that the number of answers, on which the analysis is based, in each group is small. Accordingly, opinion change by only a few participants affects the development in the standard deviation on the questions within the groups. Any conclusion should thus be taken with some care.

**Table 8.2: Development in the groups' standard deviation from the beginning to the end of the Deliberative Poll**

Question Groups	Include new countries	Interest- rate	Danish inde- pendence	Wel- fare state	Workers situation	United States of Europe	% of the questions on which the groups become more diverse
D	&	&	&	&	&	%	17
<i>I</i>	&	&	&	&	&	%	17
S	&	&	%	&	%	&	33
E	&	&	&	%	&	%	33
F	&	&	%	&	&	%	33
<i>K</i>	&	&	&	%	&	%	33
C	&	&	%	&	&	%	33
N	&	&	&	&	%	%	33
<i>H</i>	%	&	&	%	%	&	50
<i>J</i>	&	&	&	%	%	%	50
G	&	%	&	&	%	%	50
T	&	%	%	%	&	&	50
A	&	&	%	%	&	%	50
B	%	&	&	&	%	%	50
P	&	%	&	%	%	&	50
Q	%	%	&	%	&	%	67
R	&	%	%	&	%	%	67
M	%	%	&	&	%	%	67
L	%	&	%	&	%	%	67
O	&	%	%	%	%	%	83
<b>% groups becoming more diverse</b>	25	35	40	45	55	80	

Note: % indicates an increase in the groups' standard deviation. & indicates a decrease in the groups' standard deviation. N varies from 15 to 20 in each cell. The standard deviation is calculated on a five point scale as 'undecided' answers are merged with 'neither nor'. See table 7.1 for wording of the questions. The bold italic groups were video-recorded.

Table 8.2 shows a large variety between the groups and the questions. The

“United States of Europe”-question indicates that the groups tend to become more divided on this issue. In relation to the question whether new countries should be included in the EU, the groups tend to be more united. In group D and I, the members became more united on all but one of the six questions, whereas the members of group O became more diverse on all but one of the six questions. No general tendencies indicate that the groups become more united or conform in terms of developing more homogenous opinions. On the other hand considerable variety is found between the groups.

To provide more insight into the variety in the development, the video-recordings of four of the groups (H, I, J, K) are useful. The video-recordings of the groups provide a different story of the opinion formation in the groups than can be deduced from the questionnaires. The observations of group H, I, J, and K support that there are large varieties between the groups and in the way the deliberation evolves. There are substantial differences in the way the four groups deliberate and which issues they address. The variety between the groups may in this way contribute to a better understanding of the differences in table 8.2.

One central dimension that made the group processes different was to what degree the discussions were focused on the participants' specific experiences or whether the argumentation was more abstract and theoretical. In group H the discussion was abstract and theoretical, relating, particularly in the beginning, to the role of the yes-support in the public debate. Among the members of group H, there was clearly a lack of confidence in the Danish politicians recommending a yes - even though 56 percent of the members of group H were in favor of the single currency. By referring to the debate and not going into details, the group avoided a direct confrontation with each others' diverging political opinions. Rather, a mutual understanding seems to have been created on the more abstract matter of the campaign and lack of trust in politicians. The participants in group H continue this line of discussion throughout the weekend relating issues more to what the population would think, rather than to confront each other directly with their own opinions. In the remaining three groups, the use of examples from the participants' everyday life prevails. In this way, the discussion becomes more tangible. E.g., one member of group I refers to his place of birth as his source of identity compared to a European identity. A member of group J refers to his job as a car salesman comparing voting at

the referendum with buying a car. He states that you can buy a car either by heart or by brain. Deciding what to vote on the euro is the same, he argues.

A second central dimension, which prevailed from the group observations, is to what extent the participants' voting position is outspoken. Early on in the group sessions the groups members in group I, J, and K became familiar with each others' opinions on the single currency. In group I and J, the participants even insisted on taking a vote on the group members' opinion on the single currency. In group I, the vote was shown by hand. In group J, the vote was taken in secret. In group K, many of the group members presented themselves from the outset as yes, no, or undecided. The three groups, thus, have a fundamentally different outset compared to group H. The theoretical and more abstract discussion, and the lack of knowledge of the opinion of the other group members, might to a larger extent have made it easier for the members of group H to become united on the issue. Whereas, the position was more confronting in the other groups. Combined with a mutual understanding of the public debate, conformity to what the members think is the norm, might have taken place in group H. Nevertheless, the findings in table 8.2 do not significantly differentiate group H from the other groups. The group observations and the analysis of the standard deviations are thus inconclusive on this point.

From the group observations of group I, J, and K it was found that from the outset the differences in opinions were accepted. Secondly, as the participants' individual voting intention was known publicly in these groups, it may have been more difficult for them to change position and, in this way, conform to the group. Changing their positions could be seen as a weakness and a personal defeat or it could display the participants as inconsistent in their line of argument. This may also help explain why group I to a larger extent seems to have conformed on the questions as their answers move closer together on five of the six questions (table 8.2). Nevertheless, group J's answers do not provide supportive indications. Again, the observations and the analyses of the standard deviations are inconclusive.

There were euro-skeptics as well as pro-euro participants in all groups. Accordingly, it may also be the case that the participants entrenched themselves around the two positions. Conformity may not just be according to the group at large, but to either the yes or the no position within the group. A person in favor of the single currency may conform to the yes-

supporters in his or her group, but not to the group at large. To investigate this, table 8.2 is divided on voting intention at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll (see appendix M). As each group consists of participants who indicate they would vote yes as well as those who indicate they would vote no it may be the case that the groupings of respectively yes and no-voters develop differently. Especially among the no-voters, who found their political support in the strong right wing as well as strong left wing parties, contrary to those voters in favor of the single currency, who were more united at the center of a left/right political scale. Participants who indicated a no vote cannot be expected to agree with the argumentation of the right wing parties and the left wing parties at the same time. When dividing the analyses from table 8.2 into yes-supporters and no-supporters (see appendix M), the result is that the yes-supporters in each group become relatively more united on their answers compared to the no-supporters in the group. However, it must also be said that the no-supporters also show larger initial diversity. The observations of the four groups suggest that the group members are aware of the fact that there are different arguments in favor of or against the single currency, respectively. In group I, for instance, one participant votes against the single currency because she fears it will harm the Danish welfare state. Another participant votes no out of solidarity with those living outside EU (third world and Eastern European countries). Furthermore, some group members in group J clearly differentiate themselves from a right wing no to the single currency by refusing to ask the political leader of the right wing party any questions. At one point, group K discusses whether the competitive power of the Danish business community will decrease if Denmark does not join the European single currency. The yes-supporters believe very strongly that this would be the case. Those not supporting the single currency disagree. None of the group members tried to bridge the gap between the two positions. When speaking publicly in the group, a polarization of opinion seems to some degree to have emerged according to the position of respectively yes and no-supporters. Group K also discussed the independence of the Danish currency and its significance to Danish culture. Both those in favor of the European single currency and those against, who engaged in the discussion, agreed that an independent Danish currency in itself has no significance for Danish culture. No group member openly disagreed. However, it is evident from the public debate that right wing parties opposing the European single

currency find the link between a Danish independent currency and Danish culture important. This line of argument was never presented in the discussion of group K. Even though the group's answers in the questionnaire show a movement toward the single currency not being a threat to the national feeling, the questionnaires show also that a couple of the members in group K strongly believed that this was the case and held this position before as well as after the deliberative process. These members may have found it difficult to speak up due to the fact that the rest of the group was in agreement. As a consequence the group did not pose the question to the politicians in the plenary sessions. However, another group (H) raised this question in the plenary session to the right wing party leader. In this way, all groups were confronted with the opposite view during the plenary sessions.

The issue of the "United States of Europe" was also on the agenda in the four observed groups. The issue of whether the "United States of Europe" was something to be anxious about divided those in favor and those against the euro in the group discussions. In these discussions, a polarization within the group members was apparent. But the polarization manifested itself differently in the four groups. In group H, the members did not challenge each others' opinions. In group J, and particularly K, the polarization was apparent at a more tangible level challenging each others' opinions. In group J, the yes-supporters clearly united and challenged the no-supporters on this issue. However, when discussing the Danish currency, the members were aware from the outset that they would not agree, thus, accepting the differences in opinions among the group members.

To sum up. No general evidence suggesting conformity or polarization was found. Nevertheless, there are some indications that the pro-euro participants tend to unite/conform, whereas the euro-skeptics tend to polarize to some extent around the two different no-positions. The indications suggest that group conformity may occur within each sub-group.

The question still left to be answered in more detail is why some groups tend to become more united, and some tend to become more divided on the single currency and related issues during the event. From the above theoretical discussion, the development in the participants' opinions may result from conformity, groupthink, and psychological entrapment. In order to focus table 8.3 summarizes some of the discussed relationships between the concepts and explaining variables, which will be analyzed next.

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**Table 8.3: Some relationships regarding conformity, groupthink and psychological entrapment**

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**Conformity**

- A priori commitment to a certain opinion => decreases conformity
- More straightforward questions => decreases conformity

**Groupthink**

- High homogeneity (opinion as well as socio-demographic) => increases groupthink
- High stress factor => increases groupthink

**Psychological entrapment**

- High commitment through the decision procedure => increases psychological entrapment
  - Homogeneous groups (opinions) => increases psychological entrapment
  - Judgmental questions rather than problem-solving => increases psychological entrapment
- 

For lack of a more sophisticated design to explore the relationship highlighted in table 8.3, very simple indicators of conformity, groupthink, and psychological entrapment are used in the following. An indicator for conformity and groupthink is simply operationalized as if the opinion minority will tend to change opinion more frequently than the participants constituting the majority. Indicators for psychological entrapment would indirectly be opinion stability combined with the participants expressing a stronger commitment to their choice.

With regard to commitment, it has already been shown that participants less committed to their voting intentions change their opinions more frequently than other participants (see table 7.7). In the previous chapter, this relationship was argued to be relevant because the less decided participants are more open to new information and arguments. The conformity and psychological entrapment provide alternative interpretations. The theory on conformity would suggest that the reason why the decided participants change their opinions less frequently than the undecided participants is because they are subjected to less conformity. From a psychological entrapment approach it could be argued that the decisive participants may tend only to escalate their commitment to their initial opinion in order to justify what has already been ‘invested’ in this opinion.

With regard to the issues at stake, it was shown in table 8.2 that the issue of 'United States of Europe' developed differently than the other questions as many groups had more diverse opinions on this issue. The question regarding whether additional countries should be included in the EU shows the opposite development, as most groups united/conformed on the issue. Following the proposed relationship in table 8.3, the more complicated the questions the more likely it is that the individuals will conform to the opinion of their group. It could be argued that the question of 'United States of Europe' is more complicated. For one thing it is debatable what is included in the idea of 'United States of Europe', even though implicitly it stipulates a European federation. But this would argue against the finding in table 8.2 as it is actually the less complicated question that shows the highest development of unity/conformity and vice versa. The relationship stipulated by the theory is, thus, somewhat contradicted in the findings. Judgmental questions tend also to be more affected by psychological entrapment. However, looking at the questions in table 7.2 in the previous chapter it is difficult to find any such relationship regarding neither the judgmental character of the questions nor the extent to which the participants change their opinions on the questions.

Another approach to explore these relationships is based on the group observations in the four groups. Even though the video-recordings of the four groups give some insights into these relationships, it can give only sporadic indications of the relationship presented in table 8.3. Furthermore, several factors speak against the idea that the opinion change is a result of these group mechanisms. All groups had a high opinion diversity and were quite heterogeneous in socio-demographic terms. Furthermore, the plenary sessions provided a setting which cross-cut the specific group sessions. Nevertheless, the group observations provided some indication, which could be relevant in order to understand these relationships. Groups H - the group which did not publicly express their voting intentions and also discussed rather abstractly - limited their discussions to only a few alternatives. This may suggest that the tendencies to groupthink and conformity are rather due to the deliberative form developed in each group. That is, for instance, whether the discussion is abstract or tangible, and whether the groups entrench themselves on initial positions by publicly committing themselves to a certain position. Considering the way it is decided in the four groups, which questions to ask in the plenary sessions, also provides an insight into

these group mechanisms. Having only a limited time frame, and the task of wording two or three questions for each plenary session, it was to a large extent up to the participants in each group to set out the rules for deliberating and deciding which questions to ask. The norms guiding the deliberation and decision-making in the four groups developed differently during the weekend. In group H and J, the members, on some occasions, voted to decide which questions to pose at the plenary sessions. In the other two groups, this method of decision-making was never discussed. This supports that once a group has used one method of decision-making, this method continues to be an option for the group. The fact that the two first-mentioned groups took a vote to come to an agreement would also speak against group conformity.

Besides from the members of group K, the group members prefer to suggest new questions to pose to the plenary session rather than to discuss the questions already suggested. Often this provided the group with 6-7 suggestions. It is clearly difficult for the group members to prioritize these questions. They try to compromise by, adjusting for instance, the questions being of interest for both those in favor and those against the euro, they try to integrate more aspects into the same questions or end up suggesting four instead of three questions for the plenary session. A member of group H states that formulating questions is not an issue of conflict or power between yes and no, but it is about getting answers. Not having discussed the questions in depth, makes it difficult to assess whether the members reach a consensus on the questions finally chosen or whether it was actually the best compromise made or, as in some cases, simply left to the vote. The assessment is also difficult due to the fact that the group members themselves in, for instance, group H at some point actually doubted on which questions they agreed. However, the deliberation and decision-making on the questions to pose is quite different in group K compared to the other three recorded groups. Instead of just suggesting questions, the group members engaged in deliberation on the questions. The group became focused on deliberating the questions that the members could agree on. The task of wording questions provided the group with a common purpose. However, also in this group the members from time to time experienced difficulties in prioritizing the questions. The difficulty which the members experienced in prioritizing the questions can be an indicator of the members trying to conform to each other, avoiding conflict

with the other members or simply trying to reach a decision. This process is in contrast to the answers the participants gave in the questionnaires. When filling-out the questionnaire the participants were not exposed to these social mechanisms in the same degree as the answers were made individually and in secret, which might be part of the reason for not finding any clear signs of conformity in the quantitative data.

Another factor, that prevails during the Deliberative Poll, which speaks against that conformity, groupthink, and psychological entrapment, is the fact that the participants are highly motivated to learn about the issue and have read the information material. Accordingly, the participants may be more open to opinion change contradicting tendencies of psychological entrapment, and it seems less likely that the participants simply blindly follow the majority in their group. Even though all participants had access to the information material, they may absorb and seek information differently. People may discover that their arguments are not sufficient to persuade others, who listen to their arguments, and yet vote in favor of their initial own interests (Przeworski, 1998:141). Exactly this situation occurred in group H when two participants discussed Europe as a new global superpower. Even though inaccuracy was pointed out to one participant by another, the participant stuck to his position.

The four observed groups also differed with regard to information seeking. Group H brings hardly ever knowledge from the information material or insights gained from the answers given to them by experts and politicians into the debate. According to Janis (1972:10), groups showing signs of groupthink will make little or no effort to obtain information from experts. The other groups use information from experts and the information material as a source of knowledge in their deliberation. They discuss factual aspects and relate them to the answers given by the experts or even look into the information material as they deliberate (particularly group J). For instance, group J discussed how the Danish currency will be converted to the euro and found the answer in the information material. Group K uses the information material to seek an answer to the question of whether Denmark can withdraw from membership of the European single currency. Group I, J, and K actively seek information to a larger degree. However, it may also be that in forming their opinion they compare their own capabilities for selecting information with the knowledge of others, thus, relating to inequality in level of

information.

The evidence deduced from the video-recordings provides a rich picture of what went on in the groups. The accounts of the four groups suggest that the deliberation in the groups develop differently. Some groups deliberate in a rather abstract way, others in a more specific and confronting way. In some groups, the voting intentions are outspoken, in others these intentions are only construed indirectly. These accounts from the groups nevertheless prove to be difficult to build strong conclusions on, but they suggest that the quantitative data from the questionnaire tell only part of the story. The next section will turn to the quantitative analysis of the opinion change within the group by adding several variables from the group level to the analysis of individual opinion formation.

### **8.3 Adding group processes to the individual opinion formation**

Several of the relationships from table 8.3 have not been discussed in relation to the experiment of the Deliberative Poll. In this section, the focus will be on three aspects mentioned in table 8.3. First, it will be analyzed whether homogeneity in opinion and socio-demographic variables will increase tendencies of groupthink and conformity (Janis, 1982:244). Second, it will be explored whether the groups, which experienced a high stress factor, have tendencies to increase indicators of conformity and groupthink. Finally, it will be analyzed whether highly homogeneous groups measured in terms of their opinions will be more likely to be psychologically entrapped.

An indication for groupthink and conformity will follow the above-mentioned simple operationalization. That is, whether the initial opinion minority will tend to change its opinion more frequently than the participants constituting the majority. Another way to argue for such a relationship would be to argue that the opinions of the participants constituting the minority in a group will be confronted with a higher pressure than the opinions of the participants constituting the majority in a group. Following such a line of argument would also suggest that because the opinions of a minority group will be more under pressure than the opinions of a majority group, these opinions of the minority will also tend to be more labile than the opinions of the majority group.

With regard to conformity and groupthink, the supposition would be that the groups, which have the highest degree of homogeneity in

opinion or socio-demographic terms or groups with a high stress factor, would also be the groups in which the minority's opinions change the most.

A simple indication for psychological entrapment would be opinion stability from the beginning to the end of the Deliberative Poll. And the supposition is that the groups, which initially have the highest degree of opinion homogeneity, will also be the groups which experience the highest degree of opinion stability.

To explore these relationships, table 8.4 presents the regressions from table 7.7 with two modifications. First of all, the dependent variable is limited to opinion change during the Deliberative Poll. Secondly, several variables of group homogeneity, stress factor, and self-assessed consensus, individual group member distance to group mean, and whether a participant belongs to the opinion minority, are added to the regressions.

The first regression in table 8.4 focuses on whether the level of opinion measured by changing category during the Deliberative Poll is related to a number of variables. The highly significant model explains 25% of the variation in the level of opinion change. The second regression model in table 8.4 using changing side as dependent variables is shown to be insignificant as in the case of table 7.7.<sup>69</sup> The interpretation will thus focus on the significant regression. The first regression shows first of all that factual knowledge and decisiveness present the same result as the regression in table 7.7 in the previous chapter. That is, high factual knowledge has a negative impact on the level of opinion change and undecided participants are more likely to change their opinions. Political interest and alignment with their party's recommendation are, however, insignificant.

The new variables added to the regression compared to table 7.7 provide an insight into some of the group mechanisms at play during the Deliberative Poll. However, none of the indicators of group homogeneity are significant. Accordingly, the relationship between a group's relative homogeneity and opinion change cannot be found. Also the groups' self-assessments of consensus and limited time are insignificant. In this way, these variables do not contribute to the understanding of the level of opinion change. The argued relationship that group homogeneity, because

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<sup>69</sup> One explanation of the insignificant model is the small variation in the dependent variable compared to table 7.7. Secondly, the dependent variable deviates significantly from a normal distribution. Logistical transformation of the variable provides only an even more insignificant model.

of different effect of conformity, groupthink, and psychological entrapment, would affect level of opinion change can thus not be established.

**Table 8.4: Opinion change as a function of political awareness, alignment and decisiveness and group variables - OLS-regression (standardized beta-coefficients)**

	Changing category	Changing side
	Level of opinion change (t1-t2)	Level of opinion change (t1-t2)
Constant	59.025	-42.813
Factual knowledge (1)	-0.149*	-0.046
Political interest (2)	-0.056	0.045
Membership of party or movement (3)	0.063	0.061
Decisiveness with regard to vote on euro (4)	0.125*	0.138*
Alignment with recommendation of own political party (5)	-0.012	0.190
Group homogeneity (6)		
- Education (7)	-0.134	-0.037
- Gender	0.127	0.146
- Age	-0.107	-0.059
- Voting intention (8)	0.027	0.110
Self-assessed level of group time-stress (9)	0.054	0.290*
Self-assessed consensus at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll (9)	0.292	0.621
Self-assessed consensus at the end of the Deliberative Poll (9)	-0.285	-0.771
Distance from group mean (10)	-0.377**	-0.001
Belonging to group opinion minority with regard to voting intention (11)	0.134*	-0.050
R <sup>2</sup>	0.254	0.074
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.206	0.140
F	5.315	1.243
- Probability	0.000	0.246
n	234	234

*The table continues on the next page.*

Note: Level of opinion change is measured as the average level of change opinion on all nine questions from table 7.2 creating an index from 0 to 100. If the respondent changes opinion on all questions, the level of opinion change equals 100. If the respondent gave the same answer to all nine questions at the beginning (t1) and at the end (t2) of the Deliberative Poll, the level of opinion change equals 0. (1) Measured as the average number of correct answers to all 20 knowledge questions presented in chapter 6 - table 6.1 and 6.2. (2) Political interest is measured by the question "To what extent are you politically interested - Very high extent= 100, High extent=75, Some extent/don't know=50, Low extent=25, No extent=0. (3) Membership of political group is measured by the question "Are you a member of a political party or group?" Yes=1, No=0, don't knows are excluded. (4) Decisiveness is measured by the question "How likely is it that you change your vote before the referendum" Very unlikely/Unlikely=0, Neither nor/ Don't know / Likely / Very likely =1. (5) Alignment with political party equals 0 or 1. If the respondent follows the recommendation of the party the respondent would support in a national election with regard to the euro vote, the alignment variable equals 0. If the respondent is not aligned the variable equals 1. (6) Group homogeneity is measured by the standard deviation on the respective variables in each group. (7) Education is divided into four categories. (8) Undecided participants are asked what they most likely would vote creating a dichotomous variable. (9) Group mean on the questions, see table 8.2 for wording, high values indicate consensus / stress-factor. (10) The variable measures the aggregated absolute distance between the individual group member's opinion and the average opinion in the group. The average opinion in the group is calculated on the other group members, excluding the respective participants. The mean is then calculated over all nine items from table 7.2. (11) If equal 1, the participant belongs to the minority voting preference in his group, otherwise the variable equals 0. All independent variables, except socio-demographic variables, are measured at the beginning of the Deliberative Poll. \* Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). \*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed). Conducting the regression in a stepwise manner does not affect the level of the coefficients, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a problem in the model.

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The two final variables in the first regression in table 8.4 are both significant. The variable measuring the distance from group mean indicates that the larger the distance between the group mean opinion and the individual group member the more likely is it that the participants' level of opinion stability increases. This finding suggests that the closer participants are at the average opinion in the group, the more their opinions are affected by the deliberative process. As all groups deliberate on a dichotomous issue - yes or no to the euro, the explanation of this pattern may be that the

participants, initially being indecisive on the issue, take a stand on the issue and thus change relatively more than participants initially expressing a strong and consistent opinion about the issue. Because of the dichotomy of the issue, the group mean may also provide a quite artificial measure of the average group opinion, which would leave the participants taking a position between yes and no in minority in the group with group pressure from both the yes and the no side. It suggests also that participants with the most extreme opinions are relatively more stable compared to the other participants. From a psychological entrapment perspective one reason why the “hardliners” in the group are relatively more stable in their opinions, is that they have more invested in their opinions and, thus, will be more willing to defend them than participants following a more pragmatic group opinion.

Another interpretation is of methodological relevance. That is whereas the participants close to the group mean would often have the opportunity to change their opinions in both directions on the scale, the participants giving an extreme answer in the first round of questioning would only be able to move in one direction. Furthermore, as level of opinion change is measured dichotomously on each question included in the opinion change index and, thus, provides no insight into degree of opinion change nor direction of opinion change, the participants close to the group mean have a relative head-start with regard to level of opinion change. Yet another methodological problem with the variable is that the initial opinion of each group member is part of the dependent variable as well as the independent variable. That is, the dependent variable is measured as the difference between initial and final opinion and the independent variable is calculated as the difference between the initial opinion and the group opinion. In this way, the regression has a built-in correlation between the independent and dependent variable. The problem is nevertheless not directly included and somewhat blurred in the above regression, because both dependent and the independent variable are composed of an index of nine questions and, secondly, because the dependent variable is indexed on dichotomous variables, whereas the independent variable measures the absolute distance between group opinion and individual opinion. Nevertheless, these two methodological problems suggest that some care should be considered when interpreting the indicated relatively strong coefficient in the regression. Taking these methodological problems into

account I would, nevertheless, still argue that because the regression suggests a strong significant relationship between level of opinion change and distance from group mean, an interpretation of the relationship is relevant. One interpretation is that the opinion hardliners are more resistant to the deliberative process measured on level of opinion change compared to the group members closer to the group opinion.

The variable measuring whether the group member belongs to the minority confirms the positive relationship between level of opinion change and belonging to the minority opinion. Minority opinion is here measured by voting intention to euro, thus measuring a more general opinion in the group than the dependent variable, which measures some underlying elements in the opinion to the euro. The first interpretation to this finding is that as the minority is under more pressure they tend to change more than the majority. An interpretation which also suggests some conformity in the groups. But two supplementary explanations should be mentioned regarding this interpretation. First, if the same number of participants changed from a minority to a majority opinion and from a majority to a minority opinion, the number of 'changers' would account for a relatively larger share of the minority group than the majority group. Secondly, and along the same lines, the effect of measuring error and response uncertainty will also be relatively larger in the minority group due to its relatively smaller size (Togebly, 2002).

How does the negative relationship between distance from group mean and level of opinion change correspond to the positive relationship between belonging to the minority and level of opinion change? On the one hand it is suggested that the more the opinion of the participant deviates from the average opinion in the group, the more stable the participant's opinion is. The second finding suggests that if a participant belongs to the majority opinion he or she tends to be more stable than a participant belonging to the minority opinion. The two findings are not necessarily contradictory. The former relationship indicates tendencies to take sides on the issue, whereas the latter indicates tendencies to change more frequently if belonging to a minority. As the overall issue is dichotomized into yes and no to the euro, the average group opinion may very well be constituted around the yes and the no position, leaving a minority of participants somewhat in-between measured on the nine questions underlying the euro-opinion of the participant. Thus, a

participant initially taking a position in-between yes and no experiences arguments from both camps, which helps explain why he or she changes relatively more frequently. Whether this change is a consolidation of initial opinion or change toward the majority cannot be concluded on these regressions. Analyzing whether such a relationship exists would need an analysis of the movement between voting intention, but as figure 7.1 shows there is very little variation in the voting intention, thus, it is not possible to explore this further, especially if the data are divided further into belonging to minority and majority within the group. Nevertheless, exploring not only whether the minority changes the most, but also whether the major proportion of change of the minority is change toward the majority, would have qualified the conclusion of whether conformity or groupthink is present. Unfortunately, the voting intention does not provide enough variation to carry out such an analysis.

The conclusion from this section must, accordingly, be somewhat tentative on the aspect of conformity and groupthink. None of the factors argued, which should have increased conformity or groupthink, are significant in the model. Nevertheless, there is a significantly positive relationship between belonging to the minority and opinion change which indicates that the minority opinion being under relatively more group pressure is affected more by the deliberative process. This result suggests some degree of conformity and groupthink. Furthermore, the level of opinion change depends on the individual participants' distance from the group mean. The larger the distance the more stable the opinions are. The finding also suggests that participants belonging to the extreme opinion in their group have an increased opinion stability. In the previous chapter it was argued that Sunstein's (2000; 2003) law of group polarization does not seem to be present during the Deliberative Poll. Nevertheless, these findings suggest another form of polarization as the participants seem to group around the yes and no position. This suggests that the group tends to polarize around either yes or no to the euro, but recalling the finding from table 7.1, the polarizing does not seem to not produce extreme yes and no positions, but rather a stand on the yes-no-dichotomy based on a relatively more balanced opinion than initially.

## 8.4 Summary

The deliberative, democratic, normative claim is that through deliberation the spectrum of the outcome is increased. However, several other research traditions have provided indications that group processes might, in some cases, actually produce contradictory results. Three alternative concepts are introduced to provide an insight into the group processes during the Deliberative Poll. These are groupthink, psychological entrapment, and conformity. An example of groupthink during the Deliberative Poll could be a situation when members of a group, in their efforts to reach consensus, suppress conflicting opinions in order not to violate an emerging consensus. An example of conformity during the Deliberative Poll could be a situation where individuals adapt their opinions to the majority opinion. Even though it is suggested that conformity focuses on the individual level, whereas groupthink focuses on the group level of opinion formation, the two concepts are difficult to differentiate - especially empirically. The two concepts are also difficult empirically to differentiate from consensus. In this way, the question of why participants tend to follow a group because they now agree with the group, or because they simply blindly follow the group's majority opinion, because of conformity, is difficult to capture. The Deliberative Polling data allow us only sporadically to follow these concepts at play.

The third concept taken from other research traditions is psychological entrapment. An example of psychological entrapment during the Deliberative Poll could be that once an individual has committed himself or herself to an opinion, the individual will stick to this opinion even though it may be proven wrong, in order to justify what has already been invested in this opinion.

The participants indicate that group discussions during the Deliberative Poll had the largest effect on their opinion formation compared to the other elements of the Deliberative Poll.

On self-assessment items, the participants indicate that they did not arrive at a consensus at the end of the event. Nevertheless, the participants agreed on the way to deliberate. From the self-assessed items it is found that in some cases there was too little time to discuss, a few participants dominated the discussion and alliances between some participants arose. These findings suggest that, as it was not possible to remove these defining characteristics of real politics from an artificial setting

with moderators, etc., these features of politics would definitely also be part of less experimental settings of politics, which do not carry such artificial characteristics as the Deliberative Poll. Accordingly, it is suggested to try to incorporate these features of power, alliance-building and limited time into the theory of deliberative democracy. By incorporating such elements into the theory of deliberative democracy, deliberative democracy would move away from an unreachable ideal on these aspects toward a theory which includes defining elements of politics and how to deal with these defining elements instead of simply neglecting them.

The development in the groups' standard deviation on six key questions shows no general tendencies, indicating that the groups tend to conform or unite and, thus, do not develop more homogenous opinions. There is nevertheless a large variation between the groups and the questions. Four groups were video-recorded during the entire event and from these video-recordings it became apparent that the deliberation in the group developed differently. Two important dimensions were found from the video-recordings. The first dimension shows that in some groups, the deliberation was rather abstract and in other groups it was much more detailed and confronting. The second dimension shows that in some groups the voting intentions of the participants were publicly known in the group, whereas in other groups these were not revealed. The analyses of the development on the standard deviation in the groups over the six questions and the video-recordings do not provide a clear picture of why the opinions of the groups developed as they did.

There are some indications suggesting that the pro-euro participants tend to unite/conform whereas the euro-skeptics to some extent tend to polarize. The reason may be that the euro-skeptical position actually has a socialist as well as a nationalistic element constituted on the opposite end of the left/right political scale. Accordingly, the euro-skeptics may have united on two different no-positions, whereas the pro-euro-position is more united on the middle of the political left/right scale.

Some indications of psychological entrapment can be argued to have been found in the data. But it has to be mentioned that psychological entrapment is operationalized very superficially as opinion stability. Nevertheless, the positive relationship between commitment to a choice and opinion stability is established. The concept of psychological entrapment thus provides a supplementary interpretation to the argument provided in

the previous chapter 7. In chapter 7 the interpretation of this relationship was that the undecided participants are more open to new information and arguments and, thus, change their opinions more frequently. From a psychological entrapment perspective, the relationship is due to the fact that the decisive participants have a tendency to stick to the opinions to which they have already committed. The two interpretations are actually not competing, but only supplementary as the psychological entrapment explanation focuses on the decisive participants, whereas the other interpretation focuses on the indecisive participants. When analyzing the underlying factors, which, according to the theory of psychological entrapment, could have increased the likelihood of psychological entrapment, no significant picture is found.

When adding variables reflecting some of the group processes to the regression of level of opinion change, only two of these variables provide significant information to the regression.

The first variable indicates that the larger the aggregated absolute difference between the individual group member and the average opinion of his group is, the more stable is the opinion of the participant. This suggests that it is actually the participants that have opinions who group around the group mean that change the most, whereas the 'hardliners' in the group are more stable. Furthermore, this suggests that participants, who gather around the group mean, tend to take side on the euro-issue. From a psychological entrapment perspective it could be argued that this is due to the fact that the hardliners have invested more in their opinions and, thus, are less likely to change in the same degree as other participants.

The second variable providing new information is that the participants belonging to the minority opinion, measured by voting intention, also are the ones who change the most. The first interpretation simply suggests that the minority is under more group pressure and, consequently, changes opinion more often. This interpretation suggests some degree of conformity and groupthink within each group.

One interpretation of the two relationships together suggests that because the overall issue is dichotomized into yes and no to the euro, the average group opinion may very well be constituted around the yes and the no position leaving a minority of participants somewhat in-between measured on the nine questions underlying the euro-opinion of the participant. The participants thus tend to group around either a yes or no

to the euro within each group, rather than simply going to one side or the other.

The normatively desirable claim of deliberative democracy is, accordingly, somewhat challenged by the indications of conformity, groupthink and psychological entrapment. The indication that the minority in the group changes relatively more frequently than the majority suggests that the opinion formation is affected by group processes, and that these processes should be taken into consideration when validating the opinion formation during the Deliberative Poll.

## Chapter 9 - Deliberation and Tolerance

The three previous chapters have focused on the effect of deliberation on knowledge, opinion formation, and the effect of the group processes on these variables. A large increase in knowledge and effects on the opinion formation have been identified. It has also been shown that the opinion minorities in the groups change their opinions relatively more frequently than the opinion majorities in the groups.

This chapter focuses on a very different claim deduced from deliberative democracy. The claim is that deliberation will potentially affect tolerance among the participants in the deliberation in a positive way. Democratic values such as political tolerance, which is in focus in this chapter, and empowerment, which is in focus in chapter 11, signify the capability of citizens to engage in democratic procedures emphasized as self-rule. Accordingly, political tolerance as increasing mutual understanding among the participants at the Deliberative Poll is part of an educative effect of deliberation.

### 9.1 Claims of deliberative democracy regarding tolerance

From a deliberative democratic perspective bringing people together to deliberate will potentially have a positive effect on tolerance. During deliberation they will learn about each others' opinions and even though they might not come to a collective agreement, a mutual understanding and respect for each others' different viewpoints may prevail.

That such a mutual understanding emerges during deliberation is also important for other potentials of deliberation. E.g. if the participants do not accept conflicting opinions, it would be difficult to argue that arguments voiced during deliberation potentially will mirror some kind of mutual justification. In this way, the first step in any deliberative forum must be that the participants acknowledge each other and acknowledge that they may have different viewpoints. Simply rejecting opposing opinions, because they contradict one's own belief, would potentially make much deliberation a waste of time as a vote would possibly produce the same result. As discussed in the theoretical chapters three and four, it involves some problems if a prior consensus restriction is put on deliberation. When deliberation is not aimed at consensus, the mutual understanding and

political tolerance argued potentially to emerge during deliberation thus becomes important, as it signals the degree to which the participants *agree to disagree*. That is, they might come to some understanding of why others have different opinions and understand the values on which these opinions might be based. If deliberation can create a situation, where deliberators move away from a position that believes that a different opinion is just a matter of ignorance and lack of knowledge, and instead a matter of conflicting values, deliberative democracy has contributed much to a situation of increased understanding in a pluralistic society. Furthermore, if such a mutual understanding is achieved, it may also be more likely that participants with different opinions have established a foundation on which to build future co-operation. In this way a mutual understanding encourages participants with different opinions to continue the deliberation in the future and it may also increase the understanding of the reasons behind the final decision even though it goes against their own positions.

Nevertheless, it can also be argued that in some cases deliberation actually works against a mutual understanding and tolerance. In some cases, deliberation may potentially bring out latent conflicts, which would not have surfaced if the participants had not been brought together to deliberate. It may be argued that in some cases it would have been somewhat normatively more desirable to have avoided these conflicts so that these conflicts had remained latent and off the political agenda. In other cases it may be argued that deliberation actually entrenches and polarizes the initial opinions of the deliberators. In such cases, deliberation would not encourage future co-operation and deliberation or produce a broader tolerance for different opinions.

## **9.2 Conceptualizing mutual understanding and political tolerance during the Deliberative Poll**

Broadly speaking the concepts of tolerance refer to a situation where different views can be expressed and respected in the same context and an often used definition of political tolerance is “*a willingness to ‘put up with’ those things one rejects or opposes*” (Sullivan et al., 1982:2; Togeby, 1994). In this way, tolerance does not indicate that you are indifferent regarding your opinions, but only that tolerance provides room to share and listen to opinions on which deliberators do not agree. That is also to say that you may have very strong opinions, but still be tolerant and vice versa

(Andersen, 2000b). Political tolerance is often conceptualized as support for civil liberties and often operationalized into a degree of support to freedom of speech, support to the fact that everyone should be allowed to run for office, support to allowing everyone regardless of opinion to teach in public schools, etc. (Sullivan et al., 1979; Sullivan et al., 1981; Sullivan & Marcus, 1988; Sullivan et al., 1985). Nevertheless, civil liberties are only a necessity, but not a guarantee for tolerance. In the context of the Danish National Deliberative Poll it was emphasized to the moderators of the group discussions that they should invite everyone to speak and help contribute to an open, active, and free debate. In this way, the simple civil liberties, such as liberty of speech, were emphasized in the set-up of groups.

The questions tapping into the level of political tolerance among the participants were somewhat different than the usual survey questions measuring the support of civil liberties. The questions used at the Deliberative Poll focused directly on the degree of tolerance during the discussion and in this way trying to capture not only the participants' opinion regarding tolerance, but also the actual behavior during the deliberation.

In the Deliberative Poll, several questions posed to the participants at the end of the Poll captured elements of mutual understanding regarding differences in opinions that, according to many deliberative democrats, would emerge during deliberation. Table 9.1 presents the answers to these questions.

**Table 9.1: Mutual understanding of opinions (%), at the end of the Deliberative Poll (t2)**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	N
The discussions were characterized by a responsiveness towards each others' arguments	88	9	3	353
An understanding of the arguments of others opposite my own was created	84	11	5	352
All positions in the group were considered with equal respect	85	9	6	354
The arguments of the other participants were useful in forming my own position	69	17	14	356

Note: 20 groups with 18-20 members in each deliberated during the weekend in Odense in four group sessions of 2-3 hours' duration and four plenary sessions of one hour. Agree consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, disagree consists of strongly and somewhat disagree and neutral consists of neither agree or disagree and don't know.

The participants' answers presented in table 9.1 reflect that the participants are quite sympathetic towards the arguments of other participants, that an understanding of the arguments of others was provided, even though the arguments differed from the participants' viewpoints, and that all viewpoints were considered with equal respect. This understanding of other participants' arguments arising through the deliberative process is also found in a study of a Deliberative Poll in the County of Funen, Denmark (Hansen, 2000: 18) and in a similar deliberative event conducted in a Danish municipality (Hansen & Pedersen, 2002). From a deliberative democratic point of view, the distributions of the answers in table 9.1 provide an indication that deliberation actually contributes to a mutual recognition and respect of others' arguments. Nevertheless, the design of the Deliberative Poll does not allow an assessment of whether this relatively strong support for mutual understanding was already prevalent before the event. In this way, it can only be concluded that the group discussions during the Deliberative Poll were characterized by a relatively high mutual understanding of the arguments voiced, but not whether this understanding changes as an effect of the deliberation. The strong indication of the mutual understanding in table 9.1 nevertheless supports that deliberation does not lead to a decrease in responsiveness or mutual understanding among the participants.

When citizens engage in a mutual exchange of arguments, openness towards the arguments of others is considered an important factor. In the deliberative democratic context, political tolerance based on mutual acceptance of differing arguments is embodied. Two statements were presented to the participants in order to assess whether the process of the Deliberative Poll on the euro would increase the level of political tolerance, table 9.2.

**Table 9.2: Political tolerance (%)**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Un-decided	Mean
Lack of knowledge is the reason why other citizens have political viewpoints that differ from yours?							
t0 - Recruitment interview	28	18	4	9	34	7	49
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	10	18	18	11	35	8	40**
t2 - At the end of the DP	9	16	16	14	38	7	36**
t3 - Three months after the DP	17	16	5	14	42	6	38
t0 - Control group at recruitment	30	16	5	7	34	8	51
t2 - Control group during the DP	30	16	5	8	35	6	50
Other citizens have good arguments for supporting political viewpoints that differ from yours?							
t0 - Recruitment interview	67	17	4	3	5	4	85
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	45	26	14	4	5	6	75**
t2 - At the end of the DP	47	30	9	5	4	5	78
t3 - Three months after the DP	64	23	2	4	3	4	86**
t0 - Control group at recruitment	66	17	3	2	5	7	85
t2 - Control group during the DP	68	17	4	3	4	4	85

Note: N = 353 - 364. N for the control groups are 1664 and 982. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and undecided = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test).

Fewer participants agree on the first statement by the end of the Deliberative Poll (t2). This change may indicate that the participants become more politically tolerant through the deliberative process.

Such an interpretation relies on the fact that the sample as a whole experiences a significant drop in the mean score from 49 to 36 during the deliberative process. Accordingly, fewer participants believe that it is a matter of lack of knowledge why others have deviating political viewpoints. At the same time, the result from the control group supports that this effect can be accounted for by the deliberative process as the control groups do not experience any changes on the item. A further interpretation of these indications suggests that the participants discover that the different views are more related to conflicting values rather than lack of knowledge. Such an interpretation can, nevertheless, not directly be supported in the findings from table 9.2.

Similarly, the second statement in table 9.2 provides an image of a group of politically tolerant people. Nevertheless, at first sight it may actually seem that participants become more intolerant of others' viewpoints during the deliberative process according to the mean score on second statement. The decrease in the mean score occurred mainly due to decrease in the number of participants strongly agreeing and an increase in the number of participants somewhat agreeing and the number of participants responding with a neither nor answer. Nevertheless, only up to 9% strongly or somewhat disagreed on whether other citizens have good arguments for their viewpoints even though these differ from their own. The move away from strongly agreeing on the item does not contribute to the fact that people actually come to disagree with the item. The answers thus still leave us with a highly tolerant group of participants.

However, the shift away from strongly agreeing that other people have good arguments for supporting political viewpoint that differ from yours can be explained in another way. One reason might be that the participants felt that their own argumentation, due to increased knowledge and awareness, has been enhanced and, thus, became more confident in their own arguments. In this way, the shift can be interpreted as increased confidence and commitment to their own opinion rather than intolerance of the opinions of others.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, the dichotomous division on the

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<sup>70</sup> This interpretation also suggests that this item does not properly measure

euro-issue probably had a pluralizing effect on the participants’ answers to this question. Accordingly, it may be argued that the answers rather reflect a stronger belief in their own argument than a decrease in tolerance. 88% of the participants state that participating in the Deliberative Poll has increased their understanding of both yes and no arguments on the euro, and 74% feel that their own opinion on the euro has become more balanced due to their participation, see table 9.3. This supports that the large majority of the participants experience a mutual understanding and the formation of a more balanced opinion.

**Table 9.3: Assessment of the Deliberative Poll (%), at the end of the Deliberative Poll (t2)**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	N
Participating in the Deliberative Poll has increased my understanding of both yes and no arguments towards the euro	88	9	3	356
Participating in the Deliberative Poll has balanced my opinion on the euro	74	12	14	355

Note: Agree consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, disagree consist of strongly and somewhat disagree and neutral consist of neither agree or disagree and don’t know.

That the participants took a more balanced stand on the issue is also supported by the questions underlying the euro opinion analyzed in chapter 7.

From these analyses it was concluded that a mutual understanding of different arguments was a prevailing element of the Deliberative Poll. Furthermore, the change in the support for the statement that different opinions are due to lack of knowledge, also decreased indicating an increase in political tolerance. The question relating to knowledge and the reason why others hold different political views, shows a relatively high variation between the different categories. Such a variation may reflect certain biases between different groups. The next section explores these biases in more detail with a focus on level of education and tolerance.

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tolerance. That is, the validity of the item in this respect is not satisfied as it does not measure political tolerance but rather confidence.

### **9.3 The relationship between political tolerance and education**

In many studies of political tolerance, education has proved to play a vital role in understanding the individual level of political tolerance. Andersen (2000b:228) finds indications that the less educated persons tend to deny liberty of speech of certain groups to a higher degree than the more educated persons. Others too, find a positive effect between support to civil liberties and level of education (e.g. Bobo & Licari, 1989). The general argument for this relationship claims that it is the greater cognitive sophistication produced by a higher level of education that causes a positive relationship between political tolerance and education. This implies that political tolerance, as a democratic value, requires considerable education and social learning that enhance cognitive skills, flexibility, and cultural knowledge, before political tolerance can be applied (Nie et al., 1996; Bobo & Licari, 1989). Table 9.4 presents the relationship between political tolerance and level of education and the development in tolerance during the Deliberative Polling process. The table focuses only on the first question from table 9.3.

**Table 9.4: Lack of knowledge is the reason why other citizens have political viewpoints that differ from yours divided on level of education (% of row / % of total)**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagr ee	Total
<b>Participants at time of recruitment</b>				
Lower education (N=51)	61	20	19	100
Upper education (N=182)	48	9	43	100
University degree (N=124)	36	9	55	100
Total (N=357)	46	10	44	100
	Gamma = 0.296**		Chi-square = 20.255**	
<b>Participants at the end of the Deliberative Poll</b>				
Lower education (N=49)	30	39	31	100
Upper education (N=177)	29	23	48	100
University degree (N=120)	16	15	69	100
Total (N=346)	25	22	53	100
	Gamma = 0.356**		Chi-square = 26.299**	

Note: Agree consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, disagree consist of strongly and somewhat disagree and neutral consist of neither agree or disagree and don't know. \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test).

At first sight, the findings in table 9.4 confirm the general move toward disagreement on the item, as 46% of the participants agree on the item before and only 25% after the process. That is, the participants experience a decrease in the belief that lack of knowledge is the reason for deviating opinions. Furthermore, the findings confirm that political tolerance and level of education is related. The positive relationship exists before as well as after the process. All educational groups experience an increase in political tolerance during the Deliberative Polling process. Accordingly, the deliberative experience influences the participants political tolerance across educational background. The Gamma coefficient as well as the chi-square show that the relationship between education and political tolerance is even

stronger after the deliberative process. In this way, even though all groups increase their level of political tolerance, the deliberative experience does not remove the impact of general education.

#### 9.4 Summary

Deliberative democracy stipulates that political tolerance will, potentially, emerge through deliberation. As deliberation brings different experiences together, the participants will acquire a knowledge about each others' positions and even though they may not come to a collective agreement, a respect and mutual understanding of each others' positions are believed to prevail.

The analyses show that a mutual understanding and respect of different opinions were strongly supported in the participants' self-assessments of the deliberative experience.

Elements of political tolerance were explored by presenting two statements to the participants. The first statement claimed that lack of knowledge is the reason why other citizens have differing political viewpoints. The answers of the participants show that fewer participants agree on the item before the deliberative experience than after. It is argued that this development suggests that the participants become more politically tolerant as the participants reject to a larger degree the somewhat paternalistic relationship between level of knowledge and different viewpoints. This development in political tolerance can also be argued to be contributed by the Deliberative Polling experience as no change is observed in the control groups.

The second statement claims that other citizens have good arguments for supporting different political viewpoints. There is some movement away from an 'agreeing' position throughout the Deliberative Polling. This movement is interpreted as the participants become more confident in their own opinions through the deliberative process. Nevertheless, the answers to the item also suggest that the participants at the Deliberative Poll support the idea that other citizens have good arguments for their political opinions as only about 1 out of 10 disagree on the item. These findings also provide an indication that political tolerance was prevailing during the Deliberative Poll.

The argument, which is very often stated, that general education and political tolerance is positively related, is confirmed in the result from

the Deliberative Poll. It is also shown that even though all educational groups become more politically tolerant during the deliberative experience, the effect of general education remains present after the deliberative process.

## Chapter 10 - The Justification of Outcome by Deliberation

From a deliberative democratic perspective, deliberation will potentially increase the likelihood that arguments will refer to general principles and the common good rather than self-interest. This potential of deliberation is the focus of this chapter. In section 10.1, the relationship between justification and the type of arguments being used in deliberation is discussed. It is argued that in many cases where deliberation does not provide a consensus outcome, the argumentative procedures are even more important in order to provide principles of justification. Section 10.2 provides some indications of the extent to which arguments based on self-interest and public interest were articulated during the Deliberative Poll. Section 10.3 discusses deliberative accountability as a supplementary way to provide democratic legitimacy and justification for deliberative outcomes, whereas section 10.4 indicates that the participants imposed a form of moral accountability onto themselves, which went beyond the Deliberative Polling participants. The final section 10.5 summarizes the chapter.

### 10.1 Disfavoring the self-interest by deliberation

One of the general ideas about deliberation in deliberative democracy is that deliberation potentially tends to foster a discussion where self-interests are disfavored in the argumentation compared to arguments having a broad appeal. That is also to say that through deliberation, the particular interests are transformed into more commonly accepted interests as discussed in chapter 3 and 4. From the normative perspective of deliberative democracy this potential is first of all emphasized as a way to advance the common good by minimizing the use of arguments referring to narrow self-interests. Secondly, the potential will also, in many cases where deliberation does not provide a consensus outcome, be even more important as the legitimacy does not in these cases have the strong justification of a consensus to rely on, but must rely more on the procedures of deliberation.

Two general reasons should be emphasized which both reflect different perspectives or approaches for why deliberation tends to advance arguments and solutions which are mutually acceptable and shaped by the concern for the common good. The first approach highlights more

normative aspects based on deliberative democratic theory. The second approach highlights more descriptive aspects based on negotiation and bargaining theory.

First, some deliberative democrats claim simply that arguing referring to self-interest does not constitute a reason and, thus, becomes rather irrelevant in any deliberation (Eriksen & Weigård, 1992). Looking at deliberation in Rawls' hypothetical situation of the 'original position', self-interest simply does not exist because individuals are subdued by the 'veil of ignorance' (Rawls, 1971, see chapter 3). With regard to actual deliberation, many deliberative democrats take a more balanced position by only arguing that deliberation encourages citizens to be more public-minded and to be reluctant to use arguments reflecting only a narrow self-interest (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996).

It is also argued that during deliberation there is some kind of social norm, which makes it difficult to express self-interest. The social norm of deliberation thus has a steering effect on the deliberation (Habermas, 1996:340). Furthermore, if individuals deviate from the required social norm they may be met with different forms of sanctions, which will disfavor them in future deliberations (Elster, 1991).

The second approach argues that referring to broader principles simply is more persuasive than using an argument based on self-interest. It is more persuasive because more people can relate to the argument and may find it easier to understand the premises for the argument as it considers the interests of many rather than a few. Thus, arguments based on shared understanding will tend to dominate the deliberation because the participants try to be as persuasive as possible (Elster, 1983; 1997; Fisher & Ury, 1991; Lewicki et al, 1994).

It is also maintained that by arguing in terms of the public interest and by referring to general principles it may increase the likelihood that your views will be persuasive. The reasons for this is that a person, whose arguments are based on principles, signals that he or she will rather 'lose' the deliberation than give in to the principle. In this way, arguing in terms of the public interest acts as a means of showing strong commitment (Elster, 1991).

Some challenges to the idea of arguing in terms of benefits of the collective should be emphasized. It may be the case that the use of public interest in deliberation may be only a way to camouflage underlying

self-interest. On the other hand, the exchange of reasons during deliberation has the potential for improving the chance of revealing those who use the public interest to strategically promote self-interest. At the same time, it may be argued that by creating an arena, in which participants mainly argue by referring to general principles, in itself improves the deliberative aspect of a democratic process (Fearon, 1998: 54-55). Moreover, those who initially advocate public reasons strategically only to promote self-interest may over time, in their efforts to reduce a cognitive dissonance of their own opinions, actually come to adopt the public interest position, to which they initially only paid lip service. Furthermore, once an argument with reference to public interest is voiced even though it is motivated for purely strategical reasons to promote self-interest, the participant may become entrapped in the deliberation and forced to promote the public reasons in order not to be inconsistent. In this way, arguing in public interest terms also relies on what Elster (1991; 1997) has labeled 'the civilizing force of hypocrisy'. Nevertheless, Johnson (1998) argues that even though 'the civilizing force of hypocrisy' may be empirically plausible, it is normatively suspect as it induces self-censorship and lacks individual autonomy.

The idea that participants in deliberation will argue in accordance to public interest due to a certain social norm has also been challenged. In chapter four it was argued that such *a priori* universal norm may not exist, but rather develops during the deliberation embedded in the particular context and the social roles and identity of the participants.

As shown in this section, the argument goes both ways. Nevertheless, assessing the prevalence of the self-interest argument in an actual deliberation is important in order to provide an insight into whether or not deliberation can claim procedural legitimacy on this aspect. If an actual deliberation turns out to be dominated and infused with narrow self-interest arguments and threats between the participants, the justification potential of deliberation is questionable.

## **10.2 The prevalence of self-interest during the Deliberative Poll**

In order to gain some information on the prevalence of arguments referring to the public interest and arguments based on self-interest, several questions were posed to the participants at the end of Deliberative Poll. Table 10.1 presents their answers.

**Table 10.1: Arguing in terms of public or private interest (%), t2**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	N
The participants in the group argued by referring to what would be best and most fair for all citizens	70	18	12	354
The participants in the group argued for a case by referring to justice and general principles	57	25	18	355
The participants in the group argued by referring to what would be best for themselves	26	26	48	354
The participants in the group argued by warning against negative consequences of a yes or no to the single currency	54	18	28	352

Note: 20 groups with 18-20 members in each deliberated during the weekend in Odense in four group sessions of 2-3 hours' duration and four plenary sessions of one hour. Agree consists of strongly and somewhat agreeing, disagree consists of strongly and somewhat disagree and neutral consists of neither agree or disagree and don't know.

The first three items in table 10.1 show that, according to the participants themselves, 70% of the participants agreed that participants argued by referring to what would be best and most fair for all citizens, 57% of the participants agreed that participants argued by referring to justice and general principles, and only about a fourth of the participants agreed that participants argued by referring to what would be best for themselves.<sup>71 72</sup>

<sup>71</sup> The last three items have been used in other deliberative settings in Norway and Denmark showing similar results (Hansen, 2000; Hansen, 2000b; Hansen & Pedersen, 2002; The Norwegian results are not yet published). In the future it would be interesting to see whether the items provide different results if used in a strictly bargaining case with high stakes.

<sup>72</sup> However, one reservation should be mentioned in this respect. The view that arguments referring to common good dominate the process may to some extent mirror political correctness, natural civility and social desirability and not actual behavior in the groups. On the other hand the group-moderators were also asked the same items. The distribution of their answers corresponds to the distribution of the participants (appendix G). Furthermore, video recordings of

Even though these high percentages allow only cautious interpretations due to the self-assessed character of the items and likelihood of some effect of social desirability, they indicate that the Deliberative Poll provided an arena where participants to a large extent argued according to the normatively desirable demand advocated by deliberative democracy. On the other hand, self-interests were not eliminated from the deliberative process, thus, deliberation has only disabled self-interest argumentation and advanced the public interest as participants seem to be reluctant to refer to arguments referring to narrow self-interests, but self-interest is not removed. Nevertheless, from a deliberative democratic perspective this finding is inspiring. The result, however, does not provide any indications of whether the participants appeared only to be superficially concerned with public interests and actually only strategically promoted self-interests. To gain an insight into the strategic use of public interests it would be necessary to observe how the participants argued in other contexts and how they acted outside the Deliberative Poll on the euro.

The final item in table 10.1 indicates that a little more than half of the participants agreed that the participants argued by referring to the negative consequences of either a yes or a no to the euro. This indicates that part of the deliberation was actually focused on the future consequences of joining or not joining the euro and not narrowed to only past experience. Dividing this item into the participants' voting intentions shows that 61% of euro-skeptical and only 50% of the pro-euro participants agreed on this item. One interpretation of this difference is, as was claimed by some euro-skeptics during the referendum campaign, that especially the pro-euro advocates tended to emphasize the negative consequences by not joining the euro. In this way, the deliberation replicated to some extent some of the controversies which were also present in the referendum campaign in general. Nevertheless, the items do not relate to the other three items in table 10.1, as the application of future consequences may be based on private as well as public reasons.

As arguments referring to self-interests were not eliminated, nor dominant in the deliberative process, it suggests that deliberative democrats should take into account a broader continuum of arguments and not try to

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four groups throughout the weekend provide a similar picture of the process as assessed by the participants themselves.

force the dichotomy of private and public interests onto actual deliberation. In chapter four it was discussed that what counts as public interests always depends on the context in which they are voiced. The force of the better argument is, thus, better understood by referring to it as 'the relative force of the better argument'. In order to bring the theory of deliberative democracy closer to how actual deliberation is carried out, it is needed to be acknowledged that interests are to a large extent deduced from belonging to certain groups, embedded in certain experiences and knowledge and are not deduced from some abstract principles of the common good. Nevertheless, the finding that the process was dominated by arguments voiced in terms of general principle is an inspiring result for deliberative democrats in search for more justifiable outcomes.

Yet another way deliberation can provide a justified outcome is through deliberative accountability, which is in focus in the next sections.

### **10.3 Deliberative accountability**

In Pitkin's (1967) classic work on representation, she focused mainly on the formal notion of accountability. That is, through the electoral process the citizens provide their delegates with a mandate to govern on their behalf and, at the same time, the citizens judge the incumbents for their prior actions. Accountability mainly refers to the retrospective part of this process, but of course the accountability mechanism is an innate part of sanctioning incumbents by either granting them a new mandate or throwing them out of office (Manin et al., 1999). Deliberative accountability is the idea that any participant in a deliberation must be responsive and listen to the objections raised against the individual's opinion with the aim of articulating and clarifying their positions. The participants must be willing to justify their opinions to the other participants. Many deliberative democrats explicitly argue that politicians in contemporary representative democracy cannot only rely on the formal mandate given to them in election; they also need to take the time and effort to justify their decisions to the citizens through deliberation. In this way, deliberative accountability is twofold. Internally the participants must be willing to justify their opinion to other participants. Externally the participants must be willing to engage in deliberation with others in order to justify the outcome of the deliberation.

Deliberative accountability should be understood as only a

supplementary mechanism compared to the formal arrangement set up by the electoral process. That is, a supplementary way to introduce political outcomes which are deliberatively justified to the people affected by them. In a situation where the mandates of the politicians are weak, e.g. low turnout, or when decisions are matters of values and moral beliefs, deliberative accountability may be a needed and important way to supplement the formal mechanism of accountability in a society.

#### **10.4 Deliberative accountability during the Deliberative Poll**

With the Deliberative Poll, a supplementary arena for deliberation and political participation is established. In the previous chapter on tolerance and deliberation it was indicated how the participants were to a large degree responsive to each others' argument. These results relate also to deliberative accountability in the sense that the participants were willing to listen to each others' arguments. In this section, the question regarding participants' accountability concerns the relation to the politicians on the one hand and the citizens at large on the other hand, not to mention the relationship among the participants themselves. The majority of the participants at the Deliberative Poll did not think that the results of a Deliberative Poll should be binding for political decisions – also when its results were against the majority among politicians, see table 10.2. Furthermore, the result of the Deliberative Poll should be only one among many different sources of information available to politicians. In this way, the participants were in accordance with the view that decisions made at a Deliberative Poll cannot be binding for non-participants as the participants cannot be held responsible to the public at large.

Nevertheless, the distributions in table 10.2 hide the fact that 67% of the male compared to only 46% of the female participants disagreed that the results from the Deliberative Poll ought to be binding and that 32% of the females and only 12% of the men had a neutral opinion to this question. The elderly participants and participants with a lower educational background were the strongest advocates for binding Deliberative Polls. 34% of the participants over 61 years old agreed to the idea that the Deliberative Polls ought to be binding, while only 10% of the group under 30 years old had this position. 29% of the participants with no or only compulsory schooling agreed that Deliberative Polls ought to be binding, whereas only 10% of the participants with university degrees held this view.

Even though four out of five participants agreed that the Deliberative Poll ought to be only one source of information among many, the answers show that 89% of the participants with university degree agreed while only 73% of the participants with the lowest educational background had this belief.

Level of education relates also somewhat to the idea of whether the participants agreed on, whether they spoke also for non-participants. 77% of the participants with only lowest educational background and 69% of the participants with the highest educational background agreed on this item. This picture is also confirmed by the fact that 38% of the participants with the longest education agreed to the idea that you only speak for yourself, while 31% of the lowest educated agreed on the item. The use of the results of the Deliberative Poll and the participants' relationship to the non-participants relates thus somewhat to the level of education. The highest educated persons were more careful in their answers than participants with the lowest level of education.

The general interpretation of these findings suggests that participants with the highest educational background were to a larger extent able to understand the complexity of the use of Deliberative Polls in a binding way. One such complexity would for instance be the relationship between the established political institutions and the binding Deliberative Polls. On the one hand, the participants with the lowest education, who usually are under-represented in the established political institutions, feel that they had been empowered by participating in the Deliberative Poll. This group may see the Deliberative Poll as a direct way to voice their opinions to the political establishment and, thus, are more open to the idea of allowing the Poll to be binding.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> The participating politicians were asked the same questions as in table 10.2. 9 out of 14 politicians, who participated in the Deliberative Poll, returned the questionnaire. All of them disagreed about the idea that the Deliberative Poll ought not to be used and agreed on the idea that the Deliberative Poll ought to be only one source of information among many sources of information. On the other items the politicians' answers followed the participants (appendix H).

**Table 10.2: The use of the outcome of the Deliberative Poll (%), t2**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Mean
The result from the Deliberative Poll ought to be binding for political decisions, also when it is against a majority among the politicians	9	12	15	12	47	5	31
The results from the Deliberative Poll ought only to be one source of information among many available to the politicians	57	24	7	3	6	3	80
As a participant in the Deliberative Poll you also speak for citizens who did not have the opportunity to participate	43	34	7	4	8	4	75
As a participant at the Deliberative Poll you only speak for yourself	15	13	10	20	41	1	35

Note: N varies between 348-352. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0.

Still, the participants at the Deliberative Poll had a sense of accountability that went beyond the arena of the Deliberative Poll. More than three fourths of the participants agreed that they spoke for citizens who did not get the opportunity to participate. A large share of the participants had, thus, restricted themselves to a form of moral accountability that was self-imposed on their participation in the Poll. This result provides increased justification to the deliberative process. That is, the participants claimed to some extent that they looked beyond the interest of the participants and saw themselves as speaking also on behalf of citizens not able to participate. At the same time, 61% of the participants disagreed on the item stating that they spoke only for themselves. The formal theory of accountability is not able to sufficiently account for this type of self-imposed accountability or moral accountability as the participants expressed. From a deliberative democratic perspective, the moral or self-imposed accountability is inspiring as it provides further justification of the deliberative outcome. Moral accountability combined with the domination of arguments referring to general principles from table 10.1 suggest that the participants in the Deliberative Poll not only argue in accordance with broader interest, but also that they consider interests that might not even be represented among the other participants at the Poll.

### **10.5 Summary**

In most cases of deliberation, the deliberative procedures are very important in order to be able to claim justification of the outcomes of deliberation. Many deliberative democrats argue that deliberation will promote the public interest when arguments are exchanged whereas self-interest is less used. One reason for this is that arguments voiced in terms of the public have a broader appeal and thus are more persuasive than arguments reflecting only the interest of the few. Nevertheless, private interests may be promoted strategically by articulating private interests in terms of the public. Deliberation can help reveal the strategic use of public reasons and thus make it less likely.

Strategical use of the public interest or not, if it is the case that the participants voice their reasons with reference to public interests during deliberation, it would, according to some deliberative democrats, provide an argument for infusing more deliberation into public decision-making, as it would make it more likely that public interests would be considered in the

decision-making process.

The findings from the Poll indicate that arguments referring to the public interest dominated the process. This finding is inspiring for the deliberative democratic theory. On the other hand, self-interests were not eliminated from the process according to the participants' assessment. This should encourage deliberative democrats to rethink the public-private continuum. This could be done by e.g. analytically incorporating a range of different arguments in the deliberative frame, which would provide an improved base for understanding actual deliberative processes.

Deliberative accountability is the idea that deliberators are accountable for their arguments to other deliberators. According to deliberative accountability, the participants in deliberation should be willing to justify their reasons to others. The justification of reasons can be considered internally as well as externally. Internally refers to a situation in which deliberators are accountable to each other. Externally refers to a situation where deliberators take the time and the effort to justify the outcome through deliberation to the citizens more widely.

In the previous chapter 9 it was shown that the participants were to a large extent responsive toward each others arguments. The analyses in this chapter show that the participants experience a self-imposed or moral accountability. That is, the participants indicate that they speak also for non-participants. This result provides further justification for deliberation as it shows that participants are not only responsive to other deliberators, but to some extent also consider the interests of citizens not present.

Only about 1 out of 5 participants believes that the results from the Deliberative Poll should be binding, also if the result contradicts the majority among the politicians. The support for binding decisions is somewhat related to level of education. The participants with the highest education are the most skeptical whereas the participants with the lowest educational background are less skeptical of binding decision. The result suggests that the highest educated emphasize the many complications of giving decision-making authority to a randomly selected body of citizens, whereas the less skeptical answers from participants with the lowest education suggest that they feel that the event has empowered them in a way the representational political system does not. The next chapter focuses in more detail on other aspects of empowerment.

## Chapter 11 - Deliberation and Empowerment

The two previous chapters have focused on political tolerance and whether deliberation increases the legitimacy of political outcomes. The present chapter focuses on the effect of deliberation on empowerment. That is, do the citizens experience an increase in their sense of their capacity to influence and participate in politics through participation in the Deliberative Poll? Section 11.1 discusses how the general concept of empowerment is related to other similar concepts focusing on citizens' political capacity building. Section 11.2 explores the development of political efficacy during the Deliberative Poll. The findings on political efficacy encourage some revisions in the design of the Deliberative Poll. Section 11.3 analyzes whether the participants experienced an increased interest in running for political office and an increase in political interest due to the Deliberative Polling experience. Section 11.4 focuses on the level of political trust throughout the Deliberative Polling. Finally, section 11.5 provides a summary of the chapter.

### 11.1 Empowerment as political efficacy, participation, interest, and trust

In this context, the concept of empowerment is understood as a general concept, weakly defined as citizens' abilities to engage in politics (Bang et al., 2000; Lyons et al., 2001; Eklund, 1999). Empowerment has been used in many contexts and levels of analyses such as the individual level, the community level, and organization level just to mention a few. The concept of empowerment overlaps or embraces many other concepts. Some of the concepts, which are overlapped or embraced by empowerment, are broadly defined such as social capital (Putnam, 1993; 2000), others are more narrowly defined such as political efficacy, political participation, political interest, and political trust.

It has already been shown in chapter 6 that the participants experience an increase in factual knowledge on the euro issue during the Deliberative Polling process. By interpreting the increase of factual knowledge as an educational effect of deliberation, the findings in chapter 6 provide a provisional indication that the participants become better capable to engage in politics. The indications in the previous chapter 10, suggesting that the participants are capable of participating in a process of

exchanging arguments and arguing in public terms, provide also some indications in this direction of an empowered group of participants. This chapter extends these analyses to other related effects of deliberation.

In this context, empowerment is used as an overall category of more specific and somewhat more clearly conceptualized and operationalized concepts. Four different subcategories are explored in the context on the Deliberative Poll: Political efficacy, political participation, political interest, and political trust.

The claimed potentials of deliberative democracy are that deliberation may encourage empowerment in the sense that participants may experience an increased sense of being capable of engaging and participating in politics, and a willingness to involve themselves in political discussions and an increased sense of having influence on government decisions.

In addition, participating in deliberation in one arena may also potentially spread to other levels of political life. As such deliberation may encourage more deliberation and participation.

On the other hand, participation in deliberation may also produce a feeling among the participants that they have finished their democratic obligations. Thus, one experience of deliberation such as the Deliberative Poll, may have exhausted the time and resources the individual had for participating in politics, and a bad deliberative experience might even have a negative impact on empowerment.

Relating to the idea that political participation leads to more political participation, deliberation may also affect the general interest in politics. That is, deliberation with fellow citizens may open the door to aspects of politics which used to be closed for the participants, and may increase their general interest in politics. Of course deliberation may also bring out aspects of politics they find unattractive causing their political interests to decline.

Increased political trust may also be an effect of deliberation. After the participants have met the leading politicians face to face and deliberated with them, they might increase the participants' level of trust in the politicians. On the other hand, a bad deliberative experience might have the opposite effect.

## 11.2 Political efficacy during the Deliberative Poll

The concept of political efficacy has been on the agenda of political scientists since its introduction in the 1950s (Campbell et al., 1954) and political efficacy has been a core of many nationalities' election studies ever since. Political efficacy has been defined as "*the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worth while to perform one's civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizens can play a part in bringing about this change*" (Campbell et al., 1954:187). A division of the concept into two components was first suggested by Lane (1959:149) and later by Balch (1974:24) labeled internal and external political efficacy and is respectively defined as "*individuals' self-perceptions that they are capable of understanding politics and competent enough to participate in political acts such as voting*" and "*that an individual and the public can have an impact on the political process because government institutions will respond to their needs*" (Miller et al., 1980:253).

In this context, the two components will be labeled *responsiveness* and *competence* adapted respectively from Aish & Jöreskog (1990) and Almond & Verba (1963).<sup>74</sup> Responsiveness is defined as *citizens' sense of having a say on government decisions* and competence is defined as *citizens' sense of being capable of participating in politics*. In this way, the labels signal straightforwardly the content of the components.

It has been assumed and shown that political efficacy is positively correlated to political participation (e.g., Pateman, 1970; Balch, 1974). Numerous studies have been conducted in order to understand the concepts of internal and external political efficacy and much effort has focused on improving how to measure the concept (e.g., Craig & Maggionto, 1982; Niemi et al., 1991; Zimmerman, 1989) and its causal relationship with political participation (e.g., Finkel, 1985) and its stability over time (Aish & Jöreskog, 1990). In this chapter, the focus will be on the method of Deliberative Polling as a means of exploring, manipulating and maybe even creating political efficacy. That is, does the deliberative experience of deliberation and information have an effect on political efficacy?

The general hypothesis of this chapter based on the potentials

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<sup>74</sup> See also Jørgen Goul Andersen (2000).

of deliberative democracy is that responsiveness and competence increase throughout the process of the experiment. Responsiveness and competence are operationalised rather straightforwardly with the following four questions (see table 11.1).

First of all table 11.1 shows that the citizens feel to a much larger extent that the national level is responsive compared to the European level. On the national level, the citizens agree on average that they have a say in decisions, whereas on the EU level, the citizens disagree on average.

The two other questions in table 11.1 capturing competence, focus on the citizens' feelings of being qualified to participate in the debate on the euro, and on whether they have viewpoints which are worth taking into consideration. Initially, more citizens believe that they are not qualified to participate in the euro-debate, whereas the citizens believe strongly that they have viewpoints that are worth taking into consideration.

**Table 11.1: Elements of responsiveness and competence (%)**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Mean
<b>Responsiveness:</b>							
Citizens like yourself have no say in decisions made by the Government and Parliament							
t0 - Recruitment interview	23	15	3	16	40	3	42
t1 - At the beginning of the Deliberative Poll	15	25	10	23	26	1	45*
t2 - At the end of the Deliberative Poll	13	21	8	26	30	2	41**
t3 - Three months after the Deliberative Poll	13	18	1	32	34	2	36**
t0 - Control group at recruitment	26	16	3	16	36	3	45
t2 - Control group during the DP	23	15	4	17	40	1	41**
Citizens like yourself have no say in decisions made by the EU							
t0 - Recruitment interview	41	15	5	14	22	3	60
t1 - At the beginning of the Deliberative Poll	32	26	8	19	13	2	61
t2 - At the end of the Deliberative Poll	32	24	8	18	15	3	60
t3 - Three months after the Deliberative Poll	34	23	2	23	16	2	59
t0 - Control group at recruitment	45	15	3	14	19	4	64
t2 - Control group during the DP	44	15	4	15	20	2	62

*The table continues on the next page.*

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Mean
<b>Competence:</b>							
Citizens like yourself are qualified to participate in a debate on the euro							
t0 - Recruitment interview	56	13	4	11	12	4	73
t1 - At the beginning of the Deliberative Poll	56	25	7	5	2	5	82**
t2 - At the end of the Deliberative Poll	66	23	4	3	2	2	87**
t3 - Three months after the Deliberative Poll	73	16	1	3	5	2	87
t0 - Control group at recruitment	50	16	3	10	15	6	69
t2 - Control group during the DP	54	14	4	9	14	5	71
Citizens like yourself have political viewpoints that are worth taking into consideration							
t0 - Recruitment interview	79	13	1	3	3	1	90
t1 - At the beginning of the Deliberative Poll	61	24	9	2	1	3	86**
t2 - At the end of the Deliberative Poll	63	27	5	2	1	2	87*
t3 - Three months after the Deliberative Poll	77	17	1	1	1	3	92**
t1 - Control group at recruitment	75	12	1	3	5	4	87
t2 - Control group during the DP	76	13	2	2	4	3	88

Note: N varies between 354 and 364. Mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The two control groups two independent samples of the population. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1666-1675 and the control group during the DP has an N of 982, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

The development in table 11.1 shows a minor significant improvement on the first question in relation to responsiveness on Government and Parliament, but shows no change in respect to responsiveness on the EU-level. That is that the participants increase moderately their feeling of being able to influence decisions made by Government and Parliament, but experience no change on the EU-level. However, the general effect on the population, measured by the development in the control groups, indicates that the effect on responsiveness cannot be assigned to the Deliberation Polling experience, but rather to a general development in the general population probably due to the ongoing referendum campaign. The conclusion is thus that the participants do not experience any effect on their feeling of responsiveness due to the Deliberative Poll.

Competence, measured by the two last items in the table, on the other hand shows a moderate effect due to the Deliberative Polling experience. On the question regarding whether the participants believe that they are qualified to participate in a debate on the euro, the deliberative process moves the participants significantly toward more agreement. This finding is also confirmed by the actual knowledge gain analyzed in chapter 6, but whereas the process, up to the Deliberative Poll as well as the process during the Deliberative Poll, contributes to the actual knowledge gain, the sense of competence increases only during the event. On the other hand, the second competence item in table 11.1 shows a minor decrease in the competence. The mean-index is nevertheless in the high 80s throughout the Deliberative Polling process indicating a strong feeling of competence among the participants.<sup>75</sup> The strong self-confidence among the participants is also confirmed in table 11.2.

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<sup>75</sup> Ceiling effects might also be part of the explanation for the minor decrease.

**Table 11.2: Sense of being well informed on the euro (%)**

	To a very high extent	To a high extent	To some extent	To a low extent	Not at all	Don't know	Mean
To what extent do you feel well-informed about the euro?							
t0 - Recruitment interview	7	20	54	17	2	0	53
t1 - At the beginning of the Deliberative Poll	5	22	57	15	1	0	53
t2 - At the end of the Deliberative Poll	23	45	30	2	0	0	72**
t3 - Three months after the Deliberative Poll	13	50	34	3	0	0	69**
t0 - Control group at recruitment	3	15	51	25	5	1	47
t2 - Control group during the DP	4	22	51	19	3	1	52**

Note: N varies between 355 and 364. Mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The two control groups are independent. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1664 and the control group during the DP has an N of 981, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

Table 11.2 shows that especially during the event, the process had a strong effect on the participants feeling of being well informed. The public experiences also a minor effect, which can be assigned to the ongoing referendum campaign.

The general picture is thus that the Deliberative Poll increases the participants' competence measured by the sense of being able to engage in a debate on the euro and the feeling of being well informed about the issue, but on the other competence item in table 11.1 no effect is found. From a deliberative democratic perspective, the increased effect on the sense of being qualified to debate a complex issue is inspiring. It indicates that in this case deliberation not only improved the participants' capacity to engage in politics. Nevertheless, that there is no change in the responsiveness items give reason to consideration. After the participants have spent an entire

weekend with different politicians, a large share of participants still believe that they have no influence on decisions made by Government, Parliament, and the EU. Part of the explanation is, of course, that the Deliberative Poll did not end with a decision. On the other hand, granting decision-making power to the participants would create a new form of legislative body and, in this way, would make the question of responsiveness somewhat irrelevant because the participants would become the rulers. Thus, by granting the participants decision-making power it could be argued that the feeling of responsiveness would be at its highest possible level.

Another way of enhancing the feeling of responsiveness and competence further in the setting of the Deliberative Poll would be to improve the time and the arena where participants and decisions-makers can exchange their arguments. The Deliberative Poll on the euro was to a large extent focused on closed group sessions where participants discussed the issue with each other, and plenary sessions where the participants confronted leading politicians and experts with their questions, but the politicians and experts were seldom engaged in a direct dialog with one another or the participants. One criticism of this model is that it enhances the division between the elite (political leaders and experts) and the electorate (participants) and in this way the Deliberative Poll does not increase the feeling of responsiveness among the participants or the feeling among the politicians that they come closer to the citizens. One of the leading participating politicians was also concerned with this aspect of the design. In the follow-up survey the politician expresses the concern as follows:

*“The applied design does not provide an actual dialog between citizens and politicians, but rather a dialog between the citizens within the groups. [Combined with the fact that the politicians were seldom allowed to reply directly to other politicians] it is confirmed that deep gaps between the elected and the electorate exist”* (Leading politician participating in the Deliberative Poll).

One way of improving the design of the Deliberative Poll, which is aimed to reduce the experienced gap between politicians and participants, might be to open up for more direct deliberation between citizens and politicians. One way of doing so would be to give the politicians access to the small randomly composed groups. However, it would still be necessary to give the

participants time to get acquainted and gain confidence with the deliberative form before engaging with the politicians as the politicians might otherwise be too dominant. Furthermore, if politicians were allowed to interfere with the group too early in the process, it could easily result in manipulation and give the politicians a strong agenda setting power. Changing the design in this way might nevertheless involve some practical challenges as it would be difficult to provide all groups with the same access to the politicians which might cause a bias effect on the groups. Furthermore, the logistics involved by granting the politicians access to the groups would also need to be considered as it would be impossible for each politician to confront all groups e.g. because of limited time resources. However, a session, where some of the initial groups are joined and meet some of the politicians, may be a way to reduce the gap and thus enhance the feeling of responsiveness among the participants.

But to take the analysis one step further, it would be interesting to explore whether certain groups develop their sense of responsiveness and competence differently during the Deliberative Polling event. In traditional surveys it has been shown that gender, age, and education are related to responsiveness and competence. Put in a simple way: men, elderly people, the higher educated, and white collar workers tend to have a relatively higher sense of responsiveness and competence (Goul Andersen, 2000). In the deliberative democratic context it would also be interesting whether the deliberative experience managed to remove any social differences in the sense of responsiveness and competence.

In this context, the effect of gender, age, and education is related to responsiveness and competence. To provide a more straightforward analysis of responsiveness and competence, the items are combined into two indexes running from 0 to 100. 100 indicating the strongest level of responsiveness and competence. In this way, the two questions in the responsiveness index were reversed.<sup>76</sup> In table 11.3 two models for

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<sup>76</sup> A factor-analysis confirms strongly that the four questions measure two factors. The Cronbach Alpha-values on the responsiveness index vary between 0.76 and 0.78 indicating a reliable index. Before the Deliberative Poll (time 0) the Cronbach Alpha-value on the competence index is as low as 0.46. However, in the additional time periods the value varies between 0.63 and 0.71. Taken into consideration that only two questions are combined in the index, the factor-analyses' confirmation of the factors, a declining standard deviation between the

responsiveness and competence are shown for each time period. The idea of the models is not to try to predict the level of responsiveness and competence, but rather to try to identify how gender, age, and education affect responsiveness and competence throughout the process.

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two items in the indexes throughout the time periods, and high gamma coefficients between the questions in the index, the general reliability of both indexes seem satisfactory.

**Table 11.3: Elements of responsiveness and competence as a function of gender, age and education - OLS-regression (standardized beta-coefficients)**

	Time 0	Time 2	Time 2	Time 3	Control group at time 0	Control Group at time 2
<b>Responsiveness</b>						
Constant	49.171**	57.610**	53.788**	56.790**	38.259**	45.604**
Gender (1)	0.086	-0.018	0.047	0.078	0.075**	0.044
Age	-0.132*	-0.198**	-0.168**	-0.169**	-0.039	-0.099
Education (2)						
- Upper education	0.127	0.124	0.146	0.114	0.097**	0.132
- University degree	0.237**	0.234**	0.267**	0.236**	0.213**	0.254
R <sup>2</sup>	0.051	0.067	0.064	0.062	0.038	0.054
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.040	0.056	0.053	0.051	0.035	0.050
<i>F</i>	4.756	6.203	5.919	5.643	15.980	13.645
- Probability	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<i>n</i>	357	353	351	348	1642	968
<b>Competence</b>						
Constant	82.357**	85.462**	88.494**	94.324**	79.430**	86.083**
Gender (1)	0.127*	0.051	0.051	0.059	0.068**	0.052
Age	-0.080	-0.083	-0.160**	-0.199**	-0.112**	-0.212**
Education (2)						
- Upper education	-0.043	-0.016	0.132	0.099	0.055	0.104*
- University degree	0.165*	0.184*	0.321**	0.270**	0.205**	0.247**
R <sup>2</sup>	0.056	0.045	0.084	0.084	0.052	0.091
adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.046	0.034	0.074	0.073	0.050	0.087
<i>F</i>	5.246	4.129	7.910	7.813	22.398	24.030
- Probability	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<i>n</i>	357	354	349	348	1642	968

Note: Responsiveness and competence are measured in an index (0-100). Each index includes two items. See table 11.1 for wording. (1) 'Men' coded as 1. (2) 'No' and 'lower education' is 'omitted category'. \* Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). \*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

By looking at the participants throughout the Deliberative Poll, age and university degree are shown to have a significant effect on responsiveness as well as competence. The younger the citizens are and the better educated the citizens are, the higher the sense of responsiveness and competence they feel. Both relationships have been confirmed before (Goul Andersen, 2000; Acock & Clarke, 1990). That the younger participants feel a higher degree of responsiveness and competence in an EU-related context suggests a generation effect. This generation effect on EU-competence is also confirmed by other studies (Goul Andersen, 2000).

The larger samples in the control groups also confirm the educational effect and the age effect on competence, but not on responsiveness. Furthermore, a gender effect in time 0 contributes significantly to the model. These findings suggest that the education effect is quite 'robust' on both responsiveness and competence while only age proves to be 'robust' on competence. The models are all significant, but explain only about 5-8% of the variation in responsiveness and competence. In this way, the collective effect of gender, age, and education is relatively small even though significant.

The indication of the findings in table 11.3 is nevertheless clear: the social difference in sense of responsiveness and competence is replicated in the experimental setting of the Deliberative Poll. Furthermore, as the social difference in the sense of responsiveness and competence exists throughout the experiment, the deliberative experience did not manage to remove the social bias. That the Deliberative Poll is not able to remove initial, social bias was also confirmed in chapter 6 on level of factual knowledge regarding the euro.

In the case of competence, there is also another interesting tendency. On the competence index there is a tendency of competent citizens becoming more competent through the experiment (that is, the rich become richer). This is shown as the effects of age and education on competence are strengthened through the experiment. In this way, the deliberation seems to some extent to have increased the effect of social difference on competence. The intense deliberative experience is, generally speaking, not able to remove an initial knowledge bias among the participants divided into groups as the differences remain significant before and after the process. From a deliberative democratic perspective this conclusion might seem somewhat alarming as it suggests that deliberation

reinforces social biases rather than removes them.

### 11.3 The Deliberative Poll and political participation

J.S. Mill argues that political participation and discussion encourage self-development and his strong belief that knowledge and education will promote the common interest, provides a strong reference for the potential of deliberation. But Mill provides also the idea that political participation at one level of government may spread to other levels of political life (Mill, 1861/1991; Pateman, 1970; Mansbridge, 1999c; Aars & Offerdal, 2000:76).<sup>77</sup> For the participants, the Deliberative Poll was an intensive experience in taking part in political discussions about a rather complex issue. Following Mill's argument, this experience should increase the participants' interest in becoming more involved in politics. However, as table 11.4 shows, the Deliberative Poll affected only moderately the willingness of the participants to run for office, which is to participate in the established political system. It is also worth noting that the participants are quite unrepresentative compared to the general population in the control groups. The willingness to accept or consider an invitation to run for office seems quite high as about 50% of the participants would at least consider to run. In the control groups this number is only about 30% indicating an unrepresentative group on this aspect. That is, the willingness to run for office is stronger among the participants than among the general population. First of all this suggests that the potential for increased willingness to run for office would have been even higher if the participants had been more representative on this point. Secondly it indicates nevertheless that the participants have an initial bias towards political participation.

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<sup>77</sup> This thesis is also known as the "Classroom Hypothesis". The idea is that participation in workplace democracy leads to increased democratic participation in other spheres of society (Pateman, 1970; Madsen, 1997).

**Table 11.4: Willingness to run for office (%)**

	Yes	Consider it	No	Don't know	Mean
If you were invited to be a candidate for the European Parliament, the Danish Parliament, or for county or city council would you say yes, consider it, or say no?					
t0 - Recruitment interview	11	33	56	0	27
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	12	40	44	4	34**
t2 - At the end of the DP	12	36	50	2	31**
t3 - Three months after the DP	12	33	55	0	29*
t0 - Control group at recruitment	6	22	71	1	17
t2 - Control group during the DP	7	25	68	0	19

Note: N varies between 355 and 364. Mean is calculated on a scale where yes = 100, Consider it and don't know = 50, and no = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The two control groups are independent. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1664 and the control group during the DP has an N of 981, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

Nevertheless, a moderate increase in the willingness to run for office among the participants is found indicating that the deliberative experience affects this aspect of political participation. On the other hand it is very easy to declare oneself willing to run for office in an anonymous survey than actually taking the step to get one's name on the ballot. A more valid and direct measure of whether the participants actually became more political active would thus have been to investigate whether they after the Deliberative Poll actually got involved in politics.

The participants in the Deliberative Poll were also asked whether they would participate in future Deliberative Polls. Only 2% of the participants did not wish to participate in future Deliberative Polls. Only 1% would not recommend family and friends to participate in future Deliberative Polls.

One interpretation of this strong interest in participating in future Polls suggests that the participants appear to favor participating in extra-parliamentary arenas, that is, non-institutionalized, ad-hoc forms of democracy compared to participation in the institutionalized representative democracy e.g. running for office. A supplementary interpretation would also suggest that more intense and less committing forms of political

participation both as regard of time and to a certain political position (party) are preferred or at least seem to appeal to a larger share of the public compared to e.g. running for office. An extra-parliamentary arena such as the Deliberative Poll does not become just an extra mechanism for communicating reasoned opinions to the political elite, but also a mechanism for involving citizens that otherwise are not willing to engage in well-established institutions of representative democracy. Such an interpretation suggests that participating in the Deliberative Poll bring about a strong democratic potential as the participants are overwhelmingly willing to engage in future Deliberative Polls.

One skeptical remark must nevertheless be mentioned which is the willingness to participate in future Deliberative Polls might also be interpreted as the participants simply evaluate the event as successful. A speculation is also that if the Deliberative Poll had decision-making authority the participants would see an effect of their participation immediately, which might have increased their general willingness to participate in politics even more.

Running for office as a measure of involvement in the institutional setting of representative democracy and willingness to engage in future Deliberative Polls is nevertheless only one way to measure political participation. The deliberative experience might also affect the level of political discussion in the participants' everyday environment. Table 11.5 shows the development in the level of political discussion.

**Table 11.5: Discussing politics (%)**

	Often	Once in a while	Never	Don't know	Mean
Within your circle of friends, do you often, once in a while, or never discuss political issues?					
t0 - Recruitment interview	45	46	9	0	68
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	37	60	3	0	67
t2 - At the end of the DP	34	61	5	0	65**
t3 - Three months after the DP	41	53	6	0	68**
t0 - Control group at recruitment	36	51	13	0	61
t2 - Control group during the DP	37	52	11	0	63*

Note: N varies between 355 and 364. Mean is calculated on a scale where Often = 100, Once in a while and Don't know = 50, and Never = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The two control groups are independent. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1664 and the control group during the DP has an N of 981, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

Only a minor effect is found in the development in level of political discussion. During the Deliberative Poll, a minor decrease among the participants is found and in the representative control groups a minor increase is found. One interpretation of the minor decrease during the Deliberative Poll in the participants' level of discussion in their everyday environment might be that the intensive, deliberative experience simply has put the actual level of discussion in some perspective. The participants were not together with their circle of friends during the Poll thus an actual decrease could not have happened. The small effect of the control groups could reasonably be assigned to the ongoing referendum campaign.

The general conclusion on the effect of deliberative experience on participation is that only a minor effect is found. From a deliberative democratic perspective, the most inspiring result is that the participants of the Deliberative Poll seem overwhelmingly interested in participating in future deliberative events. In this way, the undesirable potential of deliberation indicating that citizens would think that they had done their democratic duties by participating and thus would not have the time nor the interest in participating in future deliberative events is rejected.

Yet two other aspects are included in this section. That is, does

the deliberative experience enhance the participants' political interest and their attention to the euro debate? Table 11.6 shows a minor effect on political interest among the participants as well as between the two control groups. Thus, the deliberative experience does not affect the level of political interest. Another point, which needs to be mentioned, is that the participants are more politically interested than the general public. If the participants would have been representative on the level of political interest there would have been a larger potential for increasing political interest.

**Table 11.6: Political interest and paying attention to the euro debate (%)**

	To a very high extent	To a high extent	To some extent	To a low extent	Not at all	Don't know	Mean
<b>To what extent are you interested in politics?</b>							
t0 - Recruitment interview	14	28	40	16	2	0	59
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	12	28	42	15	3	0	58
t2 - At the end of the DP	13	28	45	14	0	0	60**
t3 - Three months after the DP	11	29	44	15	1	0	58**
t0 - Control group at recruitment	7	21	43	23	6	0	50
t2 - Control group during the DP	7	23	45	19	6	0	52*
<b>To what extent do you pay attention to the political debate about the euro?</b>							
t0 - Recruitment interview	10	26	46	16	2	0	56
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	9	20	56	14	1	0	56
t2 - At the end of the DP	13	32	47	8	0	0	63**
t3 - Three months after the DP	10	38	46	6	0	0	63
t0 - Control group at recruitment	5	20	48	21	5	1	50
t2 - Control group during the DP	6	23	47	19	5	0	51**

Note: N varies between 354 and 364. Mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at p<0.1. Whereas \*\* indicate significance at p<0.05. (2-tailed test). The two control groups are independent. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1664 and the control group during the DP has an N of 981, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

Table 11.6 also includes attention to the political debate about the euro. It shows that during the Deliberative Poll the participants increase their

attention to the political debate and that this attention is maintained also three months later. The Deliberative Poll has thus enhanced the participants' attention to and awareness of the political debate. From a deliberative democratic perspective the increased attention can be interpreted as an increased interest to stay informed on a political issue. In this way, even though political interest is not increased in general, it is increased on the particular issue of the euro. The Deliberative Polling process can, thus, also be argued to have had an increasing effect on the political awareness of the participants with regard to the euro issue but not on political awareness in general.

The increase in the awareness of the euro issue should nevertheless not be taken as a direct indicator of a potential increase in political involvement as even though people are well informed about the issue they might simply decide to spend their time in another way (van Deth, 1989:279). Furthermore, these findings also suggest that the general idea that participation in one sphere of politics will lead to increased participation in other spheres cannot be confirmed with regard to political interest, as the increased awareness of the euro does not cause an increase in politics in general.

#### **11.4 Deliberation and political trust**

Political trust is yet another important indication of a legitimate democracy as strong political trust indicates an acceptance of the established political system. Political trust is different from social trust. The latter taps into whether citizens trust their fellow citizens whereas the former taps into whether citizens have trust in the political system e.g. trust the politicians. In this way political trust is understood vertically whereas social trust is understood horizontally (Levinsen, 2003; Bretzer, 2002; Offe, 1999).

An element of social trust among the participants was presented in chapter 8 which showed how the participants indicate that they consider all arguments with equal respect during the deliberative experience. In this section the focus is on an element of political trust. The question used during the Deliberative Polling experience relates to whether the participants gain trust in the politicians as a result of participating in the Deliberative Poll. That is, did the participants trust the politicians to a higher degree after having confronted them face-to-face and did the effect last beyond the Deliberative Poll?

**Table 11.7: Trusting the politicians (%)**

	To a very high extent	To a high extent	To some extent	To a low extent	Not at all	Don't know	Mean
To what extent do you trust the Danish politicians?							
t0 - Recruitment interview	1	21	39	29	8	2	45
t1 - At the beginning of the DP	5	18	38	31	6	2	46
t2 - At the end of the DP	6	23	41	25	5	0	50**
t3 - Three months after the DP	3	20	42	27	7	1	46**
t0 - Control group at recruitment	2	18	43	27	7	3	45
t2 - Control group during the DP	2	20	44	25	8	1	46

Note: N varies between 355 and 364. Mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. \* indicates that the difference from the previous round of questions is significant at  $p < 0.1$ . Whereas \*\* indicate significance at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test). The two control groups are independent. The control group at recruitment has an N of 1664 and the control group during the DP has an N of 981, both control groups are weighted according to the Danish electorate.

Some positive effect on political trust is reported in table 11.7. That is, even though, as mentioned in section 11.2, some politicians felt that the gap between politicians and citizens is manifested due to the design of the event, the citizens increase their trust in the politicians during the event. Nevertheless, the effect disappears in the months after the event.

### 11.5 Summary

The effect on empowerment, that is the ability to engage in politics, is analyzed by investigating the development of the participants' sense of political efficacy. Political efficacy is divided into two components: Responsiveness i.e. *citizens' sense of having a say on government decisions* and competence i.e. *citizens' sense of being capable of participating in politics*.

Generally speaking, the deliberative experience has no effect on the participants' feeling of responsiveness. On the other hand, deliberation is shown to have a significantly positive effect on the participants' sense of being politically competent.

The design of the Deliberative Poll might be one explanation

why the two days of intensive deliberation had no effect on the participants' sense of responsiveness. The politicians and the participants met only in plenary sessions where it was seldom possible for the politicians and the participants to engage in a mutual exchange of arguments. One way of changing the design would be to grant the politicians access to the small group discussions. Nevertheless, granting the politicians access would evidently give the politicians a more central position and a more dominant position in the process.

The increase in sense of competence is limited to the two days of deliberation. In chapter 6 it was shown that the time up to the Deliberative Poll also contributed considerably to the participants' learning patterns measured by the factual knowledge gain. The sense of being competent seems nevertheless only to increase due to the intensive deliberation. From a deliberative democratic perspective, it is inspiring that deliberation increases the participants' sense of competence, as it shows that it is possible to increase the citizens' abilities to engage in politics.

There is no evidence that the experiment overcomes the initial impact of background variables such as age and education on the feeling of responsiveness and competence. Actually, there are some tendencies that the social bias is reinforced by the deliberation. That is, the deliberative democratic idea of a free deliberation, where all equally would gain from the experience, is somewhat contradicted in the findings.

A moderate increase in the willingness to run for office among the participants is found. The idea that deliberation may encourage more participation and deliberation is thus partly supported. Also the participants' level of trust in the politicians is somewhat increased, but level of political discussion in their everyday environment and level of political interest are not effected.

It is also shown that the participants increase their attention to the euro debate. In this way even though political interest remains stable throughout the experiment, the deliberative experience fosters an increased attention to the special issue of the euro.

Generally speaking the analyses have shown that the Deliberative Poll has moderately increased the participants' claimed willingness to run for public office, moderately increased a feeling of trust in politicians and increased the participants' feeling of competence and ability to debate the euro-issue. Focusing on the deliberative democratic

potentials, many findings thus support that deliberation increases empowerment, while no finding supports that an intensive deliberation should dis-encourage future participation in deliberation. The strong support for participation in future Deliberative Polls indicates that special settings such as Deliberative Polls, which are ad-hoc, less institutionalized and less committing for the citizens, are able to activate many citizens, who would not otherwise be able to or would not involve themselves in politics. Accordingly, extra-parliamentary arenas, such as the Deliberative Polls, can be advocated as methods which provide an opportunity for increasing political participation and deliberation of not only the people who usually are active in politics, but also provide an appealing opportunity for citizens who are often only considered as spectators to democracy.

## Chapter 12 - Deliberation effect on the implementation of the outcome

The previous chapters have provided indications of the Deliberative Polling process having increased the participants' empowerment and their political tolerance. In this chapter these findings are interpreted in the light of the potential that a deliberative process may bring about an easier policy implementation. Accordingly, the indications of an easier implementation are at best indirect. The indications are indirect because the Deliberative Poll was not designed to provide a decision and, thus, it is impossible to measure the participants' support to a policy implementation more directly. The question of whether or not the deliberative process provides an easier implementation is analyzed only indirectly, thus the chapter is relatively short, but in order to provide empirical freshness to the results from the previous chapters, various comments from the participants are included here.

Section 12.1 presents the argument that deliberation should lead to an easier policy implementation. Section 12.2 provides some indirect empirical indicators for this potential of deliberation whereas the chapter is summarized in section 12.3.

### 12.1 Deliberation and policy implementation

The potential of deliberation developed in this chapter claims that deliberation increases the likelihood of successful implementation of policies due to an increased understanding of the reasons for the decisions among the citizens. Even if the decision goes against the participants' opinions it is more likely that the decision will be implemented without problems, because through the deliberation the participants have increased their understanding of the reasons behind the decisions and they have acquired a broader understanding of the different possible solutions. Deliberation is, thus, said potentially to produce easier implementation of a decision (Fearon, 1998). Furthermore, simply the fact that deliberation makes participants aware that a decision must be taken increases the attention to the following policy implementation. Put in another way, after the possible solutions have been discussed it is also less likely that participants of a deliberation will try to work against the decision and, thus, deliberation and

inclusiveness are also argued to work against civic disobedience. The idea that deliberation potentially helps produce a greater consensus and the psychological effect it has in allowing people to express their views before a decision is taken under fair procedures are the reasons why it is expected that deliberation potentially leads to unproblematic implementation. More generally, deliberation and public debates may also prepare the public for the policy decision allowing the public to understand the reasons for the policy and thus making it more likely that its implementation is supported (Fearon, 1998:56-57). Also J.S. Mills argument for a “Congress of Opinions” presents this view: The Congress of Opinion is “*an arena in which not only the general opinion of the nation, but that of every section of it, and as far as possible of every eminent individual whom it contains, can produce itself in full light and challenge discussion; where every person in the country may count upon finding somebody who speaks his mind, as well or better than he could speak it himself- not to friends and partisans exclusively, but in the face of opponents, to be tested by adverse controversy; where those whose opinion is overruled, feel satisfied that it is heard, and set aside not by a mere act of will, but for what are thought superior reasons, and commend themselves as such to the representatives of the majority of the nation*” (Mill, 1861/1991:282, my emphasis). Mill’s argument that deliberators feel satisfied with a decision just because they have been allowed to voice their argument also relates to the discussion in chapter four on rough consensus. In chapter four, the decision is argued to be legitimate because everyone has had the opportunity to articulate their argument and the rough consensus is then proclaimed by the formally appointed leader of the group.

Nevertheless, there is another side to this argument. The more time and effort participants have invested in the deliberative process the stronger their expectations may be that their advice will be taken into consideration when the final decisions are made (Bohman, 1996:17). In this way, if legislators after a considerable deliberative process simply set aside and ignore the contribution from the deliberative process, the participants may very well feel a bit disappointed. In a case where legislators disregard the deliberative process, the process might end up producing an ever stronger capability to civic disobedience and, in this way, work against the implementation of the policy. The increased capability to civil disobedience could be the result because the deliberation also increased the participants’ awareness of politics, their political knowledge and capability to present an

argument. Furthermore, if the decision-makers ignore the result of the deliberative process it would also be less likely that the participants would participate in future similar events.

In the context of the Danish Deliberative Poll on the euro, the arguments are difficult to analyze directly because, among other things, the Deliberative Poll did not produce one single decision, but rather presented an indicator of what an informed public would vote. Furthermore, the following referendum on the euro, which was decisive on the issue, was broadly accepted in the population and legitimated in the Danish constitution. Accordingly, expectations were never raised among the participants that the Deliberative Poll should have been decisive instead of the following referendum.

Nevertheless, the analyses can be carried out indirectly by focusing on the increased understanding, political knowledge and awareness reported among the participants in the previous chapters. In this way, some of the results from the previous chapters will be highlighted in the next section in order to provide some indications that at least a base for unproblematic implementation is created as a result of the Deliberative Poll. In order to prevent only a repetition of previous chapters' findings some additional empirical indicators are added to the discussion by introducing participants' spontaneous reactions to the event as they were expressed in an open-ended question in the questionnaire following the Deliberative Poll.

## **12.2 Few empirical indications for easier implementation**

The analyses in chapter six showed that the Deliberative Polling process had a considerable effect on the knowledge of the participants. These increases in knowledge are also supported by the findings presented in chapter 11 which showed increases in the participants feeling of being well informed on the issue. In the light of implementation this achieved knowledge among the participants can be argued to provide a foundation, enabling the participants to better understand the reasons for a subsequent decision. The increased mutual understanding among the participants, and the political tolerance reported in chapter nine, also provide an indirect indication that the implementation would be easier after a deliberative process. That the participants report to a very high degree that an understanding of the opposing side was created can also be argued to indicate a somewhat easier policy implementation due to deliberation. The participants also indicate

after the deliberative process that they feel competent to engage in a debate on the issue, that there is a moderate increase in their willingness to run for office and moderate increase awareness of the media (chapter 11). Broadly speaking, this increase in political empowerment shows an increased competence and willingness to engage in political issues, but such an engagement may however have two opposing effects. On the one hand if the decision-makers ignore the deliberative results, the engagement could be turned against the political establishment and complicate any policy implementation. On the other hand, if decision-makers pay attention to the deliberative process, the political establishment would find increased support of their decision with a less complicated implementation process as a possible outcome. This interpretation is also supported by the moderate increase in the extent to which the participants trust the politicians after the deliberative process (chapter 11). That the participants show an increased trust in politicians also supports that if a subsequent decision is taken by the politicians it will not be considered illegitimate by the participants. An interpretation that also indirectly suggests that deliberation can make the implementation of a decision easier.

The above indications of increased political knowledge, and awareness, tolerance and the fact that the processes had helped the participants taking a stand on the issue are also prevalent in the statements from the participants. Below are shown ten statements from some of the participants at the Deliberative Poll

**Table 12.1: Participants reflect on the deliberative process, with their own words**

- 
- *I was 'forced' to articulate my opinions and feelings more concretely, take a position on the group members' viewpoints, and confront my opinion with other issues. Furthermore, I thought through why the same argument could make someone vote yes and other no.*
  - *We were forced to reconsider our viewpoints and not just present arguments based on preconceived and firmly established opinions. I became aware of the opponents' arguments and visions and, in this way, got a better understanding of how my opinion must also be ready to meet their opinions.*
  - *I would have voted no before I came. I will still vote no, but I'm much more confident about my no. In other words I have increased my knowledge and improved my arguments for a no. The process of exchanging arguments has called my attention to the good no-arguments.*
  - *The participation made me think the thought through. I needed to make my ideas more precise in order to understand them. I have also experienced that before I voiced my opinion I had carefully thought the argument through. When you voice your opinion publicly, it has to be considered.*
  - *I got an insight into the others' arguments for a yes and, thus, also an increased understanding of their opinions.*
  - *You needed to accept the different social backgrounds of the other participants: retired people, self-employed etc. I paid more attention to the arguments of the euro-skeptics.*
  - *The discussion contributed to clarify my own opinion and in better understanding the opinions of others.*
  - *Before the Deliberative Poll I informed myself on the issue more than I usually do. When you exchange arguments with people you don't know, you need to argue in a different way. Your arguments have to be more reliable and without empty phrases. Participation in the Deliberative Poll has given me a feeling that, as an individual, I am of value to democracy.*
  - *I have got a more sophisticated picture of other peoples' opinions and viewpoints. I have critically reconsidered my opinions and assessed more aspect of the issue, of which I had not thought.*
  - *A good experience - sympathetic to different views within the group - open to differences, acknowledgment of different opinions. The exchange of arguments has caused me to reconsider my opinions. Exciting to discuss with so many different people. In my everyday life I often only discuss with people who "look like" myself (education, place of living, age, etc.).*
- 

Note: At the end of the weekend the last question in the questionnaire asked the participants to reflect upon that they had to articulate their opinions in front of other participants.

Some caution is needed when interpreting the statements in table 12.1 as being typical for all participants. Many participants replied to the open-ended question by expressing their delight with and gratitude to the event, while others indicated that the deliberative process had not affected them. Nevertheless, the statements above show how the Deliberative Polling process affected many participants. This is also supported in the quantitative analyses of the survey questions in the previous chapters.

In the light of easier implementation, the presented findings have only been very indirect, but nevertheless suggest that deliberation can provide a foundation for an easier policy implementation.

### **12.3 Summary**

Potentially, deliberation makes the policy implementation easier because deliberation provides the participants with the opportunity to understand the reasons behind a decision. In this way even though the decision goes against the opinions of the participants the simple fact that they have had the chance to express their opinions and learn about the reasons for the different opinions potentially helps a future implementation of the policy.

The empirical indications that deliberation provides an easier implementation are only indirect because no decision was to be implemented from the Deliberative Poll. In this way, even though no empirical indicator suggests that implementation should be more complicated, more specific studies of the implementation process and deliberation is needed. Nevertheless, the analyses of the survey and the comments of participants suggest that the deliberative process does provide a better foundation for successful implementation.

## Chapter 13 - Deliberation and Inclusiveness

In chapter four the tension between political equality and deliberative democracy was discussed. It was argued that deliberative democracy gives priority to arguments that refer to general principles and public interests. Thus, the theory of deliberative democracy disfavors the interests of people who are not capable of expressing their arguments in such terms and tends to exclude certain experiences from the political process. This exclusion of certain opinions has created a tension between inclusiveness and political equality, which is further examined in section 13.1 where the focus is on operationalizing the argument so that empirical analyses can be conducted in order to verify or reject the claim.

Section 13.2 presents and discusses empirical indications from a number of different political arenas on the issue of inclusiveness. The following section 13.3 analyzes the Danish Deliberative Poll with regard to inclusiveness. Finally, section 13.4 summarizes the chapter.

### 13.1 The controversy about inclusiveness

One of the desirable potentials of deliberative democracy is that deliberation favors arguments which refer to the public interest or at least advances that arguments are expressed in a manner where public interests are used as a line of reference. Chapter four discussed this aspect theoretically and chapter 10 provided empirical indications supporting the claim. Even though the previous discussions have provided indications that arguments with reference to public interest were dominant during the Deliberative Poll on the euro, it has yet to be analyzed how the superiority of public interest arguments is linked to inclusiveness. That is, how does deliberation relate to the ideal that everyone should be able to express their views equally?

As discussed in chapter three, there are two general concepts of inclusiveness in relation to deliberation (Young, 2000).

First, external inclusiveness, which refers to the ideal of representativeness. That is, are the participants representative of the population in general on opinions and socio-demographic characteristics? If certain citizens are excluded from the deliberative process and maybe even not allowed in the forum, external inclusiveness is violated. The importance of external inclusiveness was also discussed in chapter two in relation to the

ideal that the participants of the Deliberative Poll must mirror the general population.

Second, internal inclusiveness refers to the ideal that when citizens debate an issue, all citizens should have an equal opportunity to express their views without having to commit to a certain framework or speech culture. A speech culture could be that arguments need not only to refer to some concept of the common good, but also that arguments need to be voiced in a rational and consistent way. If such a speech culture exists, impassioned and purely subjective understandings of the issue will have difficulties in the deliberative process. Furthermore, if citizens must commit to a certain speech culture when debating a political issue, where only certain kinds of arguments are allowed, it would disadvantage many citizens in the attempt to express their views. In such a case, deliberation violates internal inclusiveness. Furthermore, it is likely that any exclusion, due to the fact that a certain speech culture must be obeyed, reinforces already existing biases in a deliberative forum. That is, the groups of people which already are underrepresented in the deliberative forum due to a violation of external inclusiveness may also often be the groups which are affected by a violation of internal inclusiveness. The reasons for this reinforcement of a violation of internal inclusiveness during deliberation are twofold. First of all, the groups which are often underrepresented are also the groups of citizens which lack the capabilities to express their views in accordance with the speech culture. Secondly, if the speech culture is being maintained by the majority in the forum and if the forum is biased, the group may very well develop a speech culture which advances the majority, thus, excluding the already disadvantaged groups.

From a research perspective, external inclusiveness is more straightforward to analyze than internal inclusiveness. Simple comparisons of the characteristics of the participants in the political forum and the general population provide an insight into external inclusiveness. In the Deliberative Poll, comparisons between the participants and the general population were discussed in chapter two. The next sections highlight some general biases in political forums and discuss them in relation to the biases found between the participants at the Poll and the general population. Due to its complexity, internal inclusiveness demands more attention. How can internal inclusiveness be measured? One way would simply be to find indicators of passiveness and domination during the deliberation. A more

sophisticated measure would be not only to look at the quantity, but also at the quality of what is being said. Even though these indicators can be operationalized in an analytic context, they say nothing about the passive participants' influence on the outcome of the deliberation. Silence and listening can be a quite effective tool of bargaining (Lewicki et al., 1994:195). If any biases in the internal inclusiveness are found, it raises yet another important question - why does this bias exist? One way to explore this relationship would be to analyze whether an unequal distribution of passiveness in the forum is distributed according to the degree that arguments referring to public interests dominate in the group. That is, it also has to be analyzed whether a strong speech culture affects the inclusiveness. These questions are analyzed in section 13.3, but first the next section discusses briefly existing research on internal and external inclusiveness.

### **13.2 Previous empirical claims on inclusiveness**

Research on external inclusiveness or representativeness is comprehensive and it is widely documented that some violation of external inclusiveness exists in most political forums. It is a fact that the population differs systematically from the elected representatives. Generally speaking, the elected representatives are e.g. better educated, older and more men than women are elected as representatives (Hansen, et al., 2002; Narud & Valen, 2000). In this way, it is well documented that the 'usual suspects' or 'gladiators' of political participation are biased in certain ways compared to the population in general.

In particular the fact that women are underrepresented in political forums has received much attention (e.g., Phillips, 1995). To show a general picture of women's membership of national legislative assemblies, table 13.1 presents a general overview of the national legislative assemblies.

**Table 13.1: Share of women in national legislative assemblies in selected countries**

Country	Percentage of women in national parliament
Sweden	45
Denmark	38
Finland	37
Norway	36
The Netherlands	33
Germany	31
Spain	27
Australia	27
Belgium	25
Canada	24
Switzerland	22
United Kingdom	17
Ireland	14
USA	14
France	12
Japan	10
Italy	10

Source: United Nations Human Development Report (UNDP, 2003).

Table 13.1 documents that there is a gender bias in national legislative assemblies across different countries. Nevertheless, it is much more difficult to research how this relationship affects the policy outcome. Research on the Danish local government level shows little or no difference between the opinions of the elected men and women within the councils (Kjær, 2000). On the other hand feminist writers claim the opposite, that is that the bias matters. Wängnerud (2000) also points out that in Sweden women MP's prioritize gender equality and social welfare policies higher than their male colleagues. Phillips (1995) advocates the need for gender quotas in political forums in order to reduce the unequal distribution between the genders. Through gender quotas she hopes that the opinions of women will be adequately addressed in political forums.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> See also Wängnerud (2000) for further discussions of the different findings of gender effects.

For several reasons, internal exclusiveness is not researched in the same degree. First of all it is much more problematic to measure internal inclusiveness. Measuring internal inclusiveness is problematic because finding reliable indicators in most cases involve much more interpretation and judgment. Secondly, it is harder to get access to data and, finally, it can be difficult to differentiate internal inclusiveness from external exclusiveness. E.g. is the reason why women speak less in parliament that they have a relatively minor share of important committee seats or is it because they are discriminated by an existing speech culture?

In the existing research within the field, much research has focused on whether there is a relationship between the participants' gender and their behavior during deliberation. This has been the main critique raised against deliberative democracy inspired by feminist writings (Young, 1996; Sanders, 1997; Phillips, 1995). However, only limited and weak empirical evidence has so far been presented.

Research on focus group interviewing has suggested that internal inclusiveness is violated in some cases, even though no solid empirical data have been presented (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999; Morgan, 1993). Research on juries has also shown that men speak more and are more often selected as group leaders than women. Even when taking into account that men are more likely to be group leaders, men tend to dominate the discussion over women. Furthermore, studies of juries have shown that the more a person speaks the more likely it is that other group members regard this person as being persuasive and agenda setting of the discussion (Sanders, 1997; Sunstein, 2000). Also with regard to race, American classroom studies suggest that white people are more active and exert influence more than others during deliberation (Sanders, 1997). In this way, the empirical findings indicate that the deliberative democratic ideal of a free and unconstrained exchange of argument is violated by actual deliberative processes because it seems that e.g. the jurors' arguments are given unequal weight in the deliberative process. A study of private and public discussions indicate that women, the elderly and the poor are underrepresented among the highly active discussants and overrepresented among the passive discussants (Conover et al., 2002). Also Mansbridge (1993:363) cites several studies, which suggest that female US state legislators and women participants in Town Meetings speak relatively less and differently compared to their male colleagues. Sue Thomas (1994) on the other hand presents a

different picture of the US's state legislators as she finds no difference between men and women with regard to being active in the different legislative activities. On the other hand she confirms many other studies suggesting that women have different opinions with regard to gender issues.

To sum up, even though the empirical findings of an exclusiveness potential of deliberation are mixed, the general picture suggests that deliberation in many cases can create some biases. In particular men seem to dominate the deliberation over women. Combining the findings indicates that the opinions of women are different from men's opinions, and the fact that women speak less suggest that a hierarchy within deliberative procedures exists, which in many cases favor certain views and disfavor other views. Therefore discrimination against minorities can be said to influence the exchange of arguments. If this is the case, deliberative democratic theory is confronted with a challenge which questions the possibility of creating actual deliberative settings that fulfill the ideal of a free and unconstrained exchange of arguments.

In the next section inclusiveness during the Danish Deliberative Poll is analyzed in detail.

### **13.3 Inclusiveness during the Danish Deliberative Poll**

The previous section presented some biases between the elected representatives and the general population. Chapter two showed that women were somewhat underrepresented at the Deliberative Poll on the euro, as is also the case in the national parliament. The bias is nevertheless quite small; if e.g. 30 participants had been women instead of men, the bias would have been reversed. Nevertheless, the Deliberative Poll in this case has somewhat replicated the biases found in many other political forums. In this context it must be mentioned that on occupation, place of living, and on sixteen out of seventeen opinion items underlying the euro opinion, there was no difference between the participants and the general population (see appendix I).

Internal inclusiveness is also quite interesting to explore further. In order to provide indicators for the deliberative behavior within the 20 groups that deliberated during the weekend, the moderators assessed the participants of their groups according to passiveness and other types of behavior. Another indicator of inclusiveness is the characteristics of the persons, who the groups decided were to raise their questions in the plenary

sessions. In this way, inclusiveness is explored with two different indicators (see table 13.2).

Table 13.2 shows that during the two days of deliberation, women are significantly more passive and act significantly less often as the expert type.<sup>79</sup> On the other hand there is no significant gender gap in those who are the most active in the groups or who raise the questions in the plenary sessions. Thus, the gender gap only exists among the most passive, but not among the most active participants. One interpretation of these findings is that the critique of deliberation from the feminists is justified. A deliberative process like this one shows a gender bias and, accordingly, this empirical, deliberative process does not live up to the deliberative ideal of a free and unconstrained process and thus certain experiences might be lost in the process.

On the other hand, as there is no gender gap among the most active participants, it seems that the problem is less critical as women actively participate in the deliberation at the same rate as men. As the gender gap also exists with regard to the expert type suggests that part of the explanation is that there is an underlying self-confidence difference between men and women or that women are more modest during group deliberation. However, one thing might be the theoretical argument that the bias is a problem for the deliberative ideal, another is whether the passive women experience their passiveness as a problem.

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<sup>79</sup> The expert type was defined as a person who spoke up as being an expert, was convinced that what he or she said was correct and often seemed convincing to the other participants.

**Table 13.2: The deliberative behavior of the participants in their groups divided on different characteristics (percentage, within group)**

	Most active	Most passive	Different type of behavior				Raised questions in plenary sessions
			Expert	Dominant	Shy	Leadership	
<b>Gender (N=364)</b>							
- Men	28	18	10	8	16	7	47
- Women	27	27*	4*	6	22	6	41
<b>Education (N=357)</b>							
- Lower education	12	43	4	2	37	0	27
- Upper education	19	22	5	5	20	6	44
- University degree	46**	10**	13*	10	8**	9	54**
<b>Age (N=364)</b>							
- 18-30 years	29	31	5	2	34	6	56
- 31-40 years	39	20	11	11	14	7	48
- 41-60 years	25	18	5	7	14	5	44
- 61+ years	17*	23	12	6	20**	7	29*
<b>Decisiveness (N=362)</b>							
- Decided on the euro	30	21	9	8	17	6	44
- Non-decided on the euro	19*	25	3	2*	24	8	45

*The table continues on the next page.*

	Most active	Most passive	Different type of behavior			Leadership	Raised questions in plenary sessions
			Expert	Dominant	Shy		
<b>Knowledge (N=363)</b>							
- Low level of knowledge	18	32	3	5	26	3	37
- High level of knowledge	36**	12**	12**	9	11**	10**	51**

Note: \* indicates that the difference between the groups is significant at  $p < 0.05$  using a chi-square test for independence. \*\* indicate that the difference between the groups is significant at  $p < 0.01$  using a chi-square test for independence (2-sided). At the end of the weekend, the moderators were asked to point out the most active and most passive during the group deliberation and secondly asked to point out which of the participants could be characterized as an expert type, a dominant type, a shy type or as having shown leadership during the deliberation. A participant could easily be placed under more than one of these headings and sometimes not placed at all. The groups prepared a total of 226 questions for the panels in the four sessions. 161 different participants out of 364 were set to ask these questions. Decisiveness is measured at t1. The participants were asked how likely it was that they would change their vote before the referendum. Their answers were very unlikely, unlikely, neither nor and don't know. The "decisive" group includes the 'very unlikely' and 'unlikely' answers whereas other answers constitute the "non-decisive" group. Knowledge is measured at t1. The knowledge index combines 20 questions giving 5 points for each correct question. Thus, the index ranges from 0 to 100, where 100 indicate correct answers and 0 incorrect answers to the 20 questions (see chapter 6 for more details). An index value of 75 is the cut point between low and high knowledge giving approximately an equal number of participants in each group.

At the end of the weekend, the participants were asked in an open-ended question to tell about their experience in the deliberative process. In these questions none of the passive women described the process as being negatively, on the contrary strong enthusiasm was reported.

Five women, rated as passive by their moderator, spontaneously reflected upon their passiveness during the deliberation. Their statements are included in table 13.3. The first four all emphasized their passiveness and immediately thereafter emphasized that they had learned much and gained knowledge by being part of the Deliberative Poll. From an individual level, the women benefitted greatly from the experience.

**Table 13.3: Five passive women reflect on their concerns about being passive**

- 
- *I have been very passive. I have listened and paid attention.*
  - *I have learned much and gained much by listening.*
  - *I am the type who does not say much in meetings. I used the time to listen. I gained much from being together with the groups, in spite of my silence.*
  - *I have not argued for my opinions, but I have been a very keen listener, which has been very beneficial to me.*
  - *The level of discussion was from the beginning very high. I did not know anything about the euro before the weekend and had difficulties participating in the discussion.*
- 

Note: At the end of the weekend, the last question in the questionnaire asked the participants to reflect upon the fact that they had to express their opinions in front of other participants.

The latter woman expressed a concern about being able actively to participate in the deliberation. The view supports the critique that deliberation is not an equal process, but clearly favors the more knowledgeable.

To explore whether level of knowledge is the causing variable, table 13.2 also groups the participants with regard to their level of knowledge. It shows that level of knowledge seems to be an important factor with regard to the participants' deliberative behavior. The more knowledgeable participants are more active, less passive, more often play the role as the expert or the leader and are less shy. Knowledge also plays a role when it comes to who raises the questions in the plenary sessions - 51% of the participants with a high level of knowledge raised a question whereas

only 37% with a low level of knowledge did. In this way, knowledge seems to play a more important role than gender in the deliberative process. These findings contradict Conover et al. (2002), who finds a weak negative relationship between being an active political discussant and political knowledge. Conover et al. (2002:47) explain their findings by suggesting that perhaps their items to measure political knowledge are irrelevant to the perception of level of political discussion or maybe the respondents with a low level of information actually engage in political discussions to gain information. The findings from the Danish Deliberative Poll can be interpreted as low factual knowledge being a barrier for active participation in the deliberative process. Nevertheless, the women's spontaneous reaction to the deliberative experience also suggests that being a listener is not necessarily negative for the perception of the deliberative experience. The process of listening is an important part of the deliberative ideal in pursuit of mutually justifiable arguments, but if it is the case that the active participants also represent certain opinions, which are different from those of the passive participants, a bias may occur.

Level of education, which also is included in table 13.2, shows significance on all groups except leadership and dominance. In particular when dividing the participants into the most active and most passive groups, the difference is quite large. The difference in percent between participants with a university degree and participants with lower education is 34 percentage points compared on being most active. Furthermore, the difference in percentage points between participants with lower education and participants with university degree compared on being most passive is 33. It is even more striking that a strong bias towards the higher educated also is present among the participants who raised the questions during the plenary sessions.

Age also shows a significant relevance for understanding the groups' behavior during deliberation, but the relationship is not linear as education. The age group between 31-40 years is the most active and the young and the elderly participants are the most shy. The young participants' passiveness during deliberation in the groups is in sharp contrast to the fact that the young participants most often raised the questions during the four plenary sessions. One explanation might be that it is less demanding for a participant to read out loud a question phrased collectively in the group than participating actively in the group discussion.

To explore an alternative relationship, table 13.2 also includes whether the participants initially had decided what to vote in the upcoming referendum on the European single currency. One significant relationship is present. The more decisive participants were also the most active ones. Using a variant of an argument from social psychology, discussed in chapter 6 about participants' knowledge seeking, suggests that the more decided seek confirmation of their choice and, thus, find it easier to present a consistent and one-sided argument in order to protect their choice compared to participants who are more in doubt which side to support.

To sum up the findings: the most active participants in general have a university degree, are between 31-40 years old, are decisive with regard to their voting intentions and have a high level of factual political knowledge on the euro issue, whereas the most passive participants are the females, the lower educated and participants with low factual knowledge on the issue. The participants with a lower education, the young, the elderly and the participants with low factual knowledge are more often classified as being the shy types. However, the young participants are the most active with regard to asking questions to the politicians and experts in the plenary sessions.

A clear bias in the deliberative processes is reported and the bias is even present during the setting where the moderator helped and encouraged equal participation. It may, therefore, seem plausible that in other deliberative settings, where a moderator is not present, this bias will be emphasized. Secondly, as Denmark is a relatively highly homogenous society, it is even more significant that the bias in the deliberation activities is relatively strong. In less homogenous societies, these differences might very well be even more marked.

Even though the analysis clearly shows that an internal inclusiveness bias exists during the Danish Deliberative Poll, the results are not as uninspiring from a deliberative democratic point of view as it might look. Many of the variables: education, decisiveness, and factual knowledge are not simply a matter of inherited abilities, but rather abilities which people can achieve throughout life. Thus, by raising the level of education it is possible to reduce the bias in the inclusiveness. Was the bias entirely a matter of gender, the situation would have been different. The analysis presented in table 13.2 does nevertheless only present a bivariate analysis and, in this way, does not allow us to conclude on the relative strengths of

the independent variables. In order to draw such conclusions, a multivariate analysis is needed. Such an analysis is presented in table 13.4.

**Table 13.4: The effect of different variables on the participants' deliberative behavior (binomial logistic regression, odd ratios)**

	Most active	Most passive	Different type of behavior				Raised questions in plenary sessions
			Expert	Dominant	Shy	Leadership	
Constant	0.029**	3.670*	0.003**	0.003**	3.998*	0.009**	0.567
Gender (1)	1.087	1.809*	0.361*	0.911	1.449	0.997	0.775
Education (2)	<b>3.018**</b>	<b>0.404**</b>	2.120*	<b>2.171*</b>	<b>0.405**</b>	1.882	<b>1.664**</b>
Age (3)	0.629**	0.815	1.111	0.936	0.781	0.974	0.665**
Decisiveness on the euro (4)	2.446**	0.930	2.625	3.724	0.805	0.673	1.142
High level of knowledge (5)	2.171**	<b>0.391**</b>	<b>2.933*</b>	1.892	0.428**	<b>3.881*</b>	1.468
Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness-of-fit test	X <sup>2</sup> = 11.999 Sig. = 0.151	X <sup>2</sup> = 9.748 Sig. = 0.283	X <sup>2</sup> = 5.547 Sig. = 0.698	X <sup>2</sup> = 8.564 Sig. = 0.380	X <sup>2</sup> = 6.850 Sig. = 0.553	X <sup>2</sup> = 8.573 Sig. = 0.380	X <sup>2</sup> = 9.942 Sig. = 0.269
Nagelkerke R Square	0.208	0.178	0.142	0.085	0.161	0.093	0.090
Correctly predicted	74%	81%	92%	94%	81%	94%	58%
<i>n</i>	354	354	354	354	354	354	354

Note: \* significant at 0.05 level. \*\* significant at 0.01 level. (1) Women compared to men. (2) Level of education is measured as 1 = lower education, 2 = upper education, and 3 = university degree. (3) Age is measured by four groups 1 = 18-30 years, 2 = 31-40 years, 3 = 41-60 years, and 4 = 61+ years. (4) Decisive compared to non-decisive. (5) Participants with a high level of knowledge compared to participants with a low level of knowledge. See table 13.2 for details on the variables. The bold odd ratio in each regression has the largest significant impact on the dependent variable.

Generally speaking, table 13.4 confirms the bivariate analyses from table 13.2. The discussion will focus on the first two regressions in table 13.4.

Table 13.4 shows that the chance of being active triples by a unit increase in education. Furthermore, being decisive or having a high level of knowledge more than doubles the likelihood of being active in the deliberation. Age is also found to have a significant effect. The younger participants are generally more speaking and are likely to be active. However, it is worth to notice the result from table 13.2 indicating that age did not have a linear effect on the participants deliberative behavior as the participants who were 31-40 years old were the most active.

Being a woman increases the likelihood of being passive in the deliberation by a factor of 1.8, whereas an increase in the level of education increases the likelihood of being passive by a factor of 0.4, that is, an increase in the level of education reduces the likelihood of being passive by a factor of 2.5 (the reciprocal value of 0.404). A high level of knowledge reduces the chance of being passive during deliberation by a factor of 2.6 (the reciprocal value of 0.391). In this way, when controlling for age, education, decisiveness and level of knowledge, gender still comes out as significant, but both education and knowledge have a larger impact on whether a participant is passive during deliberation. In none of the seven regressions in table 13.4 does the gender issue have the largest impact on the participants' deliberative behavior. On the other hand, knowledge and education are found to have a more consistent and important impact on participants' behavior.

A general conclusion must be that internal inclusiveness is violated during the deliberative process, as women, the less educated, participants with a low level of factual knowledge are more passive than anybody else. In this way, an empirical indication of a violation of political equality and internal inclusiveness in a deliberative setting is provided. Nevertheless, education and knowledge turn out to be the most important factors for the participants' deliberative behavior and not gender which although often is the highlighted variable.

A first step to understand the exclusiveness potential of deliberation is analyzed. But yet another question needs to be explored. The general concern of the feminist writers was that the bias in deliberation tends to exclude certain views in the process. To understand the relationship, table 13.5 divides the participants' opinions at the end of the Deliberative Poll with regard to level of activeness and passiveness during the deliberation.

**Table 13.5: Mean difference on eight opinion items and the voting intention divided on deliberative behaviors**

	The most active participants compared to other participants	The most passive participants compared to other participants
It is an important priority for the EU to include additional countries in the Union as soon as possible	13.50**	-1.61
Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence	-11.80**	4.55
Danish participation in the single currency lowers the current Danish interest rates	12.22**	-10.33**
Danish participation in the single currency weakens the Danish welfare system	-14.53**	4.55
The single currency is a step toward 'The United States of Europe'	-13.56**	5.65
Danish participation in the single currency would give Denmark a stronger say in EU decisions	10.32**	-3.54
Danish participation in the single currency would pose a threat to the Danish national feeling	-16.62**	15.53**
Danish participation in the single currency would create better conditions for the Danish business community	6.89**	-4.97
Voting intentions with regard to the euro	18%**	-7%

Note: N for the active group is 90-100 whereas other participants have an N of 230-254. N for the passive group is 71-76, whereas other participants have an N of 249-278. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. Thus, a positive difference indicates that the most active/passive participants agree more with the statement than other participants. The percentages of the voting intention indicate how many percentage points pro-euro participants have over the euro-skeptical participants within each group (active/passive) compared to other participants. The opinions are polled at the end of the weekend, using the poll before the weekend does not change the results significantly or consistently. \*\* indicate that the mean difference is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test).

The results presented in table 13.5 are quite interesting. On all questions there are significant opinion differences between the most active and the other participants. The most active participants are much stronger advocates of the single currency than other participants, whereas the most passive are much more skeptical toward introducing the single currency in Denmark. Accordingly, the data from the Deliberative Poll on the euro show a strong bias in the deliberation toward a pro-European view.

A first interpretation is that the strong bias in the political campaigns up to the referendum toward pro-euro views is replicated in the deliberation during the Deliberative Poll. The referendum campaign was dominated by a massive yes-campaign, which was mainly run on supposedly objective and rational arguments focused on economic issues and more influence in EU-matters. The pro-euro participants may, accordingly, find it easy just to echo this discourse and follow this line of the massive yes-campaign. On the other hand, many of the advocates supporting a no to the euro partly rested their arguments on fear of loss of national identity and cultural tradition (Buch & Hansen, 2002).

The two different discourses among the participants follow the reasoning in deliberative democracy that arguments that are backed with reason and referring to general interests and the common good - such as improvement of the national economy - should be favored. The argument resting on national identity is much more difficult to present in a persuasive way so that all deliberators find it a good argument. Improved national economy is on the other hand more likely to find general support. Thus, the bias in table 13.5 supports the tension of political equality, as presented in chapter four, that arguments referring to objective rational reasons seem to be favored in deliberation at the expense of a feeling e.g. toward being Danish.

Another part of the explanation of this bias in activism is a slightly overrepresentation of more pro-European participants compared to skeptical participants, but this difference cannot account for the large differences. Furthermore, the relatively large bias in the activism did not result in a massive change of opinion toward more pro-European views during the deliberation as the number of participants indicating to vote yes to the euro gained relative 24 percent, whereas the relative gain in favor of a no was 16 percent (see chapter 7). There was no demand on the groups to reach a collective decision at the end of the weekend which is probably why

the disproportionate activism did not result in opinion changes toward more pro-European opinions. However, it is striking that although the groups did not have to reach a collective decision and as the moderators helped and encouraged everyone to participate in the process, the bias in activism is still reported. Accordingly, in a deliberative setting with a demand for collective decisions, and not moderated, the violation of internal inclusiveness may very well be even more prevalent.

It has been argued that violation of internal inclusiveness partly is due to the fact that a certain speech culture evolves during deliberation and that such a speech culture favors certain participants. So far, it has been shown that the participants' socio-demographic characteristics are related to exclusion during deliberation, but is the exclusion also related to the degree to which the groups commit themselves to argue with reference to general principles and the common good?

An indicator of the prevalence of a certain speech culture in the groups during the Deliberative Poll is the participants' answers to two questions regarding the deliberative process. Both questions ask whether the participants in their group argued with reference to general principles and what is thought best for all citizens. As shown in chapter 10, the participants generally agree that this is the case, nevertheless, some variation between the groups exist. Combining the two questions to one dichotomized variable allow us to divide the groups into two categories - groups with strong and weak speech culture. Nevertheless, simply adding this speech culture variable to the regressions in table 13.4 does not show a significant relationship (not shown). That is, whether or not the groups indicate that they are relatively strongly or weakly committed to arguing in terms of public interest does not affect the internal inclusiveness. Another way to analyze the effect of a speech culture would be to divide table 13.5 with regard to the commitment of the groups to public interest argumentation. Table 13.6 presents the result.

**Table 13.6: Mean difference on eight opinion items and the voting intention divided on deliberative behavior and the groups' commitment to public interest argumentation**

	The groups with strong commitment to public interest argumentation		The groups with weak commitment to public interest argumentation	
	The most active participants compared to other participants	The most passive participants compared to other participants	The most active participants compared to other participants	The most passive participants compared to other participants
It is an important priority for the EU to include additional countries in the Union as soon as possible	18.98**	-7.54	6.87	4.25
Danish participation in the single currency reduces Denmark's independence	-14.97*	9.01	-7.38	0.24
Danish participation in the single currency lowers the current Danish interest rates	15.30**	-13.21*	9.11**	-7.30
Danish participation in the single currency weakens the Danish welfare system	-16.11**	11.50	-12.44	-2.36
The single currency is a step toward 'The United States of Europe'	-19.62**	12.82	-7.02	-1.77
Danish participation in the single currency would give Denmark a stronger say in EU decisions	12.87*	-6.56	8.10	-0.24

*The table continues on the next page.*

	The groups with strong commitment to public interest argumentation		The groups with weak commitment to public interest argumentation	
	The most active participants compared to other participants	The most passive participants compared to other participants	The most active participants compared to other participants	The most passive participants compared to other participants
Danish participation in the single currency would pose a threat to the Danish national feeling	-19.51**	22.45**	-13.13**	8.64
Danish participation in the single currency would create better conditions for the Danish business community	9.84*	-9.62	3.89	0.01
Voting intentions with regard to the euro	20%*	-10%	15%	-3%

Note: Two questions measure the groups' commitment to argue according to the public interest: Did 'The participants in the group argue by referring to what would be best and most fair for all citizens' and did 'The participants in the group argue for a case by referring to justice and general principles'. The two questions are combined and an average for each group is calculated. The groups' average allows us to dichotomize the groups by degree of commitment to argue in terms of the public interest. N is half the n presented in table 13.5. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. Thus, a positive difference indicates that the most active/passive participants agree more with the statement than other participants. The percentages of the voting intention indicate how many percentage points pro-euro participants have over the euro-skeptical participants within each group (active/passive) compared to other participants. The opinions are polled at the end of the weekend, using the poll before the weekend does not change the results significantly or consistently. \* indicates that the mean difference is significant at  $p < 0.01$ . \*\* indicate that the mean difference is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test).

Table 13.6 confirms that a strong speech culture somewhat reinforces the biases in the opinions that are being expressed during the Deliberative Poll. In the groups, which are mostly committed to the speech culture, the opinions of the active and the passive participants deviate more from the other participants than in the group with a relatively weak speech culture. In this way, the tension within deliberative democracy between people much committed to public interests in their deliberation and that all opinions should be allowed to be expressed freely is emphasized in the empirical indication of the Deliberative Poll. This also emphasizes the trade-off within deliberative democracy between political equality and the degree to which participants must argue in terms of public interest.

The design of the Deliberative Poll sets few restrictions on the deliberative procedures. This aspect of the Deliberative Poll also makes the process at a Deliberative Poll fundamentally different from parliamentary practices, which aim at collective decisions. At the Deliberative Poll, there was no demand for consensus and the moderators were instructed to encourage everyone to take an active part in the deliberation. The deliberative democratic ideal of a free and unconstrained exchange of arguments stipulates that all arguments should be allowed to be raised in the process. The empirical findings from the Deliberative Poll indicate that this may not always be the case. Even in an environment where political equality is emphasized, bias is found and, as the opinions are unequally distributed between the passive and active groups, certain views tend to dominate the deliberation. In this way, the claim of a tension within the theory of deliberative democracy in chapter 4 is supported.

Two general interpretations should be mentioned with regard to bias in deliberation. The first is somewhat pessimistic with regard to the benefit of infusing more deliberation into the political process of society, the second more problem solving.

The feminist writers have called attention to the many inequalities of society. E.g. the composition of most political forums is biased in certain ways. Deliberative democracy suggests that by infusing political forums with more deliberation will allow a variety of opinions to be heard, which provides the opportunity to find more mutually justifiable decisions. Nevertheless, if deliberation systematically excludes the opinions of certain groups, deliberation is yet another filter which increases the

political inequality of society. With this interpretation in mind, more deliberation in political forums may actually exclude more opinions than before more deliberation was applied to the forums. In such a case, deliberation seems to contradict ideals of finding mutual justifiable solution as well as providing full inclusiveness.

The second interpretation highlights that the most important bias can be reduced simply by raising the general level of knowledge and education among the participants. In this way, to provide the participants with the same level of education and factual knowledge before bringing them together to deliberate would be a direct way to reduce the likelihood of a biased deliberation. At the Deliberative Poll this was done by providing all participants with a balanced information material three weeks before they arrived at the event. Furthermore, the bias can also be interpreted to suggest that if deliberation is to be infused into a very heterogeneous society even more bias would be found in such a society. Homogeneity in education and factual knowledge is, thus, a way to confront the reasons of different in biases' deliberation. On the other hand removing differences might also remove some of the plurality of opinions and, as previously discussed, plurality is the very dynamic that drives deliberation. In this way, bringing education and knowledge to an equal level might remove some of the dynamics of a deliberative process. Yet another way to confront the biases of deliberation, as suggested in chapter 4, would be to provide the opportunity for the participants to tell their own story. Providing the opportunity for the participants to tell their own story might be yet another way to bring a larger variety of opinions into the deliberative process thereby reducing the likelihood of bias in the deliberative process and that the process only considers the opinions of certain groups.

### **13.4 Summary**

Deliberative democratic theory has an immanent tension between political equality and that the fact deliberation favors views expressed in terms of public interest. The tension is discussed in terms of external and internal inclusiveness.

External inclusiveness refers to the representativeness of the participants in a political forum compared to the population at large. Most political forums are biased in their composition as the higher educated, the elderly and men are overrepresented. Also the participants of the

Deliberative Poll showed similar, moderate differences compared to the voters, as men and the better educated were somewhat overrepresented. Nevertheless, these differences were small and on opinion few differences were found.

Internal inclusiveness refers to the ideal that during deliberation all participants must be able to express views without having to commit to a certain speech culture. Research on juries has shown that men speak relatively more than women, and a study of public and private discussions also indicates that women are more passive than men in deliberation.

The most active deliberators during the Deliberative Poll have a higher education, are decisive with regard to voting intentions, between 31-40 years old and have a high level of factual knowledge. The passive participants are women, the less educated and participants with a low level of factual knowledge. In this way, a clear bias between the active and passive exists during deliberation in the Deliberative Poll. Generally speaking, education and factual knowledge are the most important variables affecting the internal inclusiveness instead of gender which is often highlighted in other studies.

The deliberative behavior is also signified in the opinions of the active and passive participants. The active participants express much more positive opinions toward the euro and European integration in general, whereas the passive participants represent more euro-skeptical opinions.

Also the degree to which the groups commit to a speech culture of arguing with reference to public interest is shown to have a significant impact on the violation of internal inclusiveness. The groups that strongly commit to the speech culture show the largest biases in the opinions between the active and passive participants. In this way, the argued tension in deliberative democracy from chapter 4 finds empirical support in the analysis. That is, the more a speech culture is prevalent during deliberation, the more likely it is that certain views are disfavored and excluded by the deliberative process.

The empirical analysis from the Deliberative Poll shows that even moderated and unrestricted deliberation produces significant biases. The higher educated are much more active than the less educated and the active participants show a clear bias toward the position, which easiest can be expressed in objective and rational terms. A skeptical interpretation of these results may lead to argue that deliberation tends to manipulate

minorities and disadvantaged groups in society, thereby making the winners and loser pre-given. From this point of view, deliberation seems highly undemocratic in the sense that it violates political equality and oppresses conflicting reasons, which are difficult to express in a rational way and oriented to a shared problem. For deliberation to be a genuine element of future democratic institutions, deliberative democratic theory as well as deliberative practitioners need to confront this problem head on.

It also follows from the findings that deliberation demands a high level of general education and factual knowledge. Introducing deliberation in heterogeneous societies could, thus, be devastating when it comes to minorities' rights and their opportunities to communicate their opinions to the political system. Constitutional rights and universal suffrage are thus still important cornerstones in democracy and especially if this democracy should be more deliberative.

The tension of deliberative democracy also needs to be actively reflected upon when designing deliberative arenas. If the trade-off in the theory and the empirical indications supporting the biases are not carefully considered, deliberative democracy might turn into a technocratic democracy based on the most privileged opinions. Thus, special attention is needed when designing new deliberative institutions in order to address the trade-off between political equality and the ideal that arguments must refer to public interest.

The Deliberative Poll recruits participants through random sampling in order to achieve that participants represent a minipopulus - a representative sample of the demos and. This does not compromise political equality, but that is only the first step. The deliberative procedures and design need careful reflection. The Deliberative Poll combines close group-discussions with debates in plenary sessions where the groups confront politicians and experts. In order to address the tension between political equality and the ideal that arguments should be voiced according to public interests, deliberative arenas need to allow participants to tell their own story in order to provide an equal opportunity for all participants to express their views without having to obey a certain speech culture. Furthermore, special attention given to education and raising the participants' level of factual knowledge before bringing them together to deliberate is important, as providing an equal base of knowledge increases the likelihood of full internal inclusiveness.

## Chapter 14 - Deliberation and Publicity

In the previous chapter, the tension within deliberative democracy regarding political equality and the degree to which participants need to conform to a certain speech culture was discussed. It was shown that the opinions of the most active participants were much more pro-euro than the opinions of the most passive. Furthermore, it was shown that this bias was reinforced to the degree to which the discussion was dominated by arguments referring to general principles. In this way, one of the tensions within deliberative democracy found empirical support.

This chapter discusses the final of the nine potentials presented in chapter 5. This potential is theoretically discussed in chapter 4 as yet another tension of deliberative democracy. On the one hand, as argued in chapter 4, deliberation should be public and transparent in order to facilitate that non-participants gain an insight into the process. Furthermore, publicity encourages participants to voice their arguments in a mutually justifiable way and disfavors arguments solely based on self-interest. On the other hand, publicity relates to the process of opinion formation. That is, that deliberation should encourage a process where opinions are endogenously given during the process, but once opinions are articulated in public, the participants will have difficulties in changing their opinions because doing so expose them as being inconsistent and, thus, disfavor them in future deliberation. Accordingly, publicity and an ideal of a *free* opinion formation are somewhat contested.

Yet another way publicity and transparency is discussed in this chapter is in relation to the Danish Deliberative Poll and to the degree to which the event is linked to the public at large. In this perspective, it is discussed whether the event had any effects on the public in general and whether it succeeded to create a transparent process.

Section 14.1 discusses internal publicity during the Deliberation Poll. That is, whether any effects on the participants behavior and opinion formation during the Deliberative Poll are related to the degree of publicity within the group. In section 14.2, the degree of openness and transparency during the Deliberative Poll is discussed. Section 14.3 analyzes the effect of the Deliberative Poll on the public at large. This effect is discussed as the Deliberative Poll's effect on external publicity. The final section 14.4

summarizes the chapter.

### 14.1 Internal publicity

As discussed in chapter 4, James Madison advocated the secret deliberation during the American constitutional debates in order to facilitate the force of the better argument and encourage opinion change. The counter argument can be found in J.S. Mill's (1861/1991:351-363) discussion about whether voting should be by secret ballot or carried out in public. Publicity will encourage the voters to cast votes, which reflect the interests of the public and not simply self-interest, because in the case of publicity, the voters would be answerable to the public for their vote cast. Even though Mill acknowledges that in the case of public voting, bribes and intimidating behavior from powerful individuals might exist, he gives priority to publicity due to its advancement of public interests. Furthermore, Mill (1861/1991:357) argues that in the case of public voting the secret ballot of his time provides a much greater source of evil selfishness than the fear of blackmailing from others. Brennan & Pettit (1990) echo Mill's arguments for contemporary society.

The ideal of deliberative democracy (see chapter 3) is that publicity is needed as it encourages deliberators to argue in terms of public interest and makes them reluctant to use self-interest or threats in the exchange of arguments (Bohman, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Elster, 1998b). In this way, publicity also increases deliberative accountability as publicity has an encouraging effect on the participants' need to voice their terms in a mutually justifiable way (see chapter 10).

The ideal of deliberative democracy of publicity and the deliberative idea that interests should be endogenously given in the process of deliberation are nevertheless contested, as argued in chapter 4. On the one hand secrecy allows participants to change their minds without a public judgment of being inconsistent or weak. On the other hand secrecy also gives free play to threats and interests based on self-interest, as secrecy does not provide an audience to which the deliberators must be answerable. Vice versa publicity, which facilitates an exchange of arguments based on general principles, and disfavors opinion change. Accordingly, a trade off between opinion change and an exchange of arguments based on mutually justifiable interests is argued to exist.

In relation to the following analyses of the Deliberative Poll,

two analytical distinctions are made. Internal publicity refers to the publicity which can be argued to be within the different groups during the Deliberative Poll. That is, whether the participants experienced an effect from publicity on their behavior. External publicity discusses the effect of the Deliberative Poll on the public at large.

One way to investigate whether secrecy and opinion change are related during the Danish Deliberative Poll on the euro, is to analyze and compare the most passive participants with other participants on their level of opinion change from the beginning of the weekend to the end of the weekend. The theoretical argument presented above would suggest that as the passive participants do not publicly voice their opinions to the same degree as other participants, they will find it easier to change their opinions because the passive participants would not need to fear being exposed as weak or as turncoats. See table 14.1.

**Table 14.1: Passiveness / activeness and opinion change during the Deliberative Poll**

	<b>Most Passive</b>	<b>Other Participants</b>	<b>N</b>
Stable with regard to voting intentions	13%	24%	
Changed their voting intentions	87%	76%	**74/272
Level of opinion change (index mean)	57	49	**77/2
	<b>Most Active</b>	<b>Other Participants</b>	
Stable with regard to voting intentions	88%	83%	
Changed their voting intentions	12%	17%	100/246
Level of opinion change (index mean)	44	54	**99/254

Note: The voting intentions are measured at the beginning and at the end of the Deliberative Poll. Level of opinion change is measured as the level of changed opinion (changed position on the scale) on nine questions underlying the euro opinion (see table 7.2) creating an index from 0 to 100. If the participants change their opinions on all questions the index equals 100. If the respondents gave the same answer to all nine questions, the index equals 0. Passiveness and activeness are measured in the same way as in table 13.2. The Spearman correlation between voting intention, stability and passiveness is -0.125 sign. at  $p < 0.02$  (2-sided) and between voting intention, stability and activeness 0.063. \*\* indicate that the groups are significantly different at the  $p < 0.02$  (2-sided), using a chi-square test for independence. The index means are significantly different at the 0.01 level (2-sided).

From table 14.1 it is shown that the participants, who were the most passive and, accordingly, did not voice their opinions as much as the others, changed their opinions and voting intention more frequently than other participants. Almost twice as many among the most passive (24%) changed voting intentions than among the more active group (13%). This finding indicates that secrecy and opinion change is positively related as the theoretical argument suggests. As analyzed in the previous chapter decisiveness is somewhat related to the deliberative behavior of the participants and, as chapter 7 showed, the level of opinion change is positively related to decisiveness. One remark to the above interpretation is that part of the significant relationship presented in table 14.1, thus, reflects that level of opinion change is related to level of activity due to the effect of decisiveness.

The table also shows that the most active participants are significantly more stable in their opinions than other participants, but no significant difference is found in terms of voting intentions. This partly supports the claim that the more the participants voice their opinions the less likely it is that they will change their opinions. This implies that publicity and opinion stability are positively related as the theoretical argument suggest.

To pinpoint the tension in the theory of deliberative democracy, a speculation would be that if all participants were very active during deliberation, the number of persons who change their opinions would decrease - active deliberation, accordingly, contradicts the idea of transformation of opinions.

Using the participants' deliberative behavior in their groups during the Deliberative Poll as a proxy for publicity, and relating it to the degree of opinion, supports the relationship between voicing arguments in public and degree of opinion change.

Another way to understand this relationship is to analyze whether the presence of TV cameras or video cameras in the groups as a proxy for publicity is related to the degree of opinion change. In two groups professional cameramen recorded live on tape for national TV. These two group sessions were also shown on TV-monitors in two different, adjacent rooms, where journalists and other interested people could follow the group deliberation. In four other groups, stationary video-cameras recorded the session for research purposes only. The randomly assigned participants to

these six groups were asked whether they wanted to change group due to the recordings, but no one did. Taking the presence of TV and video recording as a proxy for publicity and relating it to opinion change provides another way to analyze the relationship.

**Table 14.2: TV and opinion change during the Deliberative Poll**

	Live on tape for national TV	Video- recorded for research purposes	No TV or video	N
Stable with regard to voting intentions	81	86	85	
Changed their voting intentions	19	14	15	36/71/239
Level of opinion change- index	51	54	50	37/72/255

Note: The voting intentions and opinion change measured as table 14.1. No significant differences are found.

The presence of TV or video shows no effect on the level of opinion change among the participants. One reason might be that the participants did not experience and interpret the anonymous cameras as the public eye into the group discussions. The participants might simply have forgotten the presence of cameras in the process of deliberation. Thus, the participants might not have found that the presence of cameras related to the idea that in a sense they were accountable and answerable to the anonymous viewers of the TV-programs.

To explore this from another angle, table 14.3 presents the participants according to the degree to which the groups that committed themselves to argue according to public interests varied with regard to the presence of TV and video cameras. That is, the relationship explored in table 14.3 indicates the presence of a speech culture where participants argue according to public interest because of the publicity approximated by the presence of cameras. The theory suggests that the presence of publicity through TV and video cameras increases the prevalence of a speech culture. A culture that suggests that deliberators must refer to general principles.

**Table 14.3: TV and the groups' commitment to arguing according to public interest**

	Live on tape for national TV	Video- recorded for research purposes	No TV or video	N
The degree to which the groups argue according to public interest	68	68	63	**37/72/255

Note: Two questions measure the groups' commitment to arguing according to the public interest: Did 'The participants in the group argue by referring to what would be best and most fair for all citizens' and did 'The participants in the group argue for a case by referring to justice and general principles'. The two questions are combined and an average for each group is calculated before a mean index value for the groups belonging to groups that were taped or not is calculated. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0. A value of 100 indicates that all group members strongly agreed on both questions. A value of 0 that all groups members strongly disagreed.\*\* indicate that the mean difference is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . (2-tailed test).

The positive relationship between publicity and the prevalence of a stronger speech culture is supported by the significant differences between the groups. See table 14.3. Even though the significant differences are small, the analysis supports that publicity approximated by the presence of cameras encourages the participants to an exchange of arguments that to a higher degree are based on mutually justifiable terms.

This result also supports the argued tension within deliberative democracy, as a trade-off exists between publicity and opinion change and deliberation voiced in terms of public interest.

## 14.2 Transparency and openness

The method of Deliberative Polling is still relatively new and has only been applied to a limited degree. Thus, there is no institutionalized established practice well-known to the public and, therefore, is it even more important to ensure that the procedures of the method are transparent and open for the public. Otherwise the public (citizens in general, but also journalists,

decision-makers etc.) has no chance of assessing the outcomes and procedures of the Deliberative Poll in terms of its justification and legitimacy. In this way, transparency and openness throughout the Deliberative Poll is a way to give outsiders the possibility of assessing the results and, as such, opening the black box and remove any suspicion from the public to the event.

Many efforts were taken to achieve transparency and openness during the Danish Deliberative Poll.

In the process of writing the information material, which was later distributed to the participants, the political parties and movements campaigning on the euro issue, were asked to comment on a draft version of the information material. Subsequently, the material was rewritten to include the comments. The final information material was, besides being sent to all participants, also sent to all Danish public libraries and published on a website.<sup>80</sup> In this way, openness with regard to the information material was achieved.

Radio, national television and major national newspapers covered the Deliberative Poll. National television broadcasted more than four hours from the weekend. As many as 443,000 Danes, out of a total population of 5.3 million, watched at least 15 minutes of the Deliberative Poll. Behind these figures lie that the summary broadcasted on Sunday evening had the most viewers. 69,000 Danes watched some or all of the coverage on Saturday afternoon; Sunday, the second day, 92,000 watched the afternoon broadcast. On Sunday evening a 45-minute summary of the debates was seen by 191,000 Danes. In addition, the national TV-news also reported from the event. The Managing Editor of the Danish National TV station was satisfied with the numbers of viewers. She observed that the fine Sunday weather as well as the showing of a soccer game on one of the commercial channels might have decreased the numbers (Ekstra Bladet, 2000). The national radio broadcasted more than 4 hours during the Deliberative Poll. In addition they broadcasted debates about the Deliberative Poll in the weeks before the event. The number of radio listeners is not measured. In the American Deliberative Poll - National

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<sup>80</sup> 92% of the participants indicated that the information material was equally balanced. 3% indicated it favored a no, and 4% a yes and 1% did not know. Measured at the end of the Deliberative Poll - N=352.

Issues Convention - conducted in 1996, 9.8 millions out of a population of about 275 millions Americans viewed part of the PBS coverage of the Poll (Rasinski et al., 1999:161). Comparing that almost 10% of the Danes watched the Deliberative Poll and only around 3.5% Americans watched the American Poll, the number of Danish viewers seems satisfactory even though the structure of the media in the two countries makes comparisons difficult.

The press was also active during the Deliberative Poll. 91 articles were printed in 41 different newspapers and magazines discussing the event.<sup>81</sup> Many of these articles described the results of the poll, but there was also some articles before the event as well as during the weekend of the Poll. Furthermore, many of the articles in the local and regional Danish newspapers simply reported the event because it was on the news agencies' bulletins. Many of the small articles are, thus, quite small and simply descriptions of the event. All the large national newspaper, except one, sent journalists to the event and reported their own stories from the events. These journalists also added interviews with participants as well as the participating politicians to their stories. Besides interviewing participants, the journalists, researchers and other interested people could follow the group deliberation live on TV monitors from two of the groups.

One concern about publicity, and allowing the cameramen into two of the groups and the many cameras present during the plenary sessions, was that some participants might feel that the media was a disturbing element during the deliberation. Nevertheless, as table 14.4 shows few participants express this concern.

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<sup>81</sup> There was more than 500 newspaper articles about the American Deliberative Poll - NIC in 1996 (Fishkin & Luskin, 1999:13).

**Table 14.4: The participants' perception of the presence of the media (%)<sup>1</sup>, t2**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Mean
The presence of the national television and radio was a disturbing element during the plenary sessions	3	11	9	16	58	3	21

Note: N varies between 356. The mean is calculated on a scale where strongly agree = 100, somewhat agree = 75, neither agree, nor disagree and don't know = 50, somewhat disagree = 25 and strongly disagree = 0.

Three weeks after the Deliberative Poll, and just before the national referendum, a report was published presenting many of the initial results of opinion change and increased knowledge among the participants (Andersen et al., 2000). This report also increased the transparency and openness surrounding the event and its results.

This openness helped secure that the public was given some insight into the process and that the event in this way was open for outside evaluation. The publicity and transparency during the Deliberative Poll did not only affect the participants and helped achieving a political arena where the public openly could assess the results, but also helped communicate the deliberative process to the public in general. Whether this communication of the event also affected the public is discussed next.

### 14.3 External publicity during the Deliberative Poll

In this chapter, two effects of publicity have been discussed so far. Internal publicity discussed the effects of publicity on the participants, whereas the general openness and transparency of the event was discussed in the previous section. The final discussion concerning publicity examines external publicity of the Deliberative Poll. External publicity concerns the effect of the Deliberative Poll on the public in general.

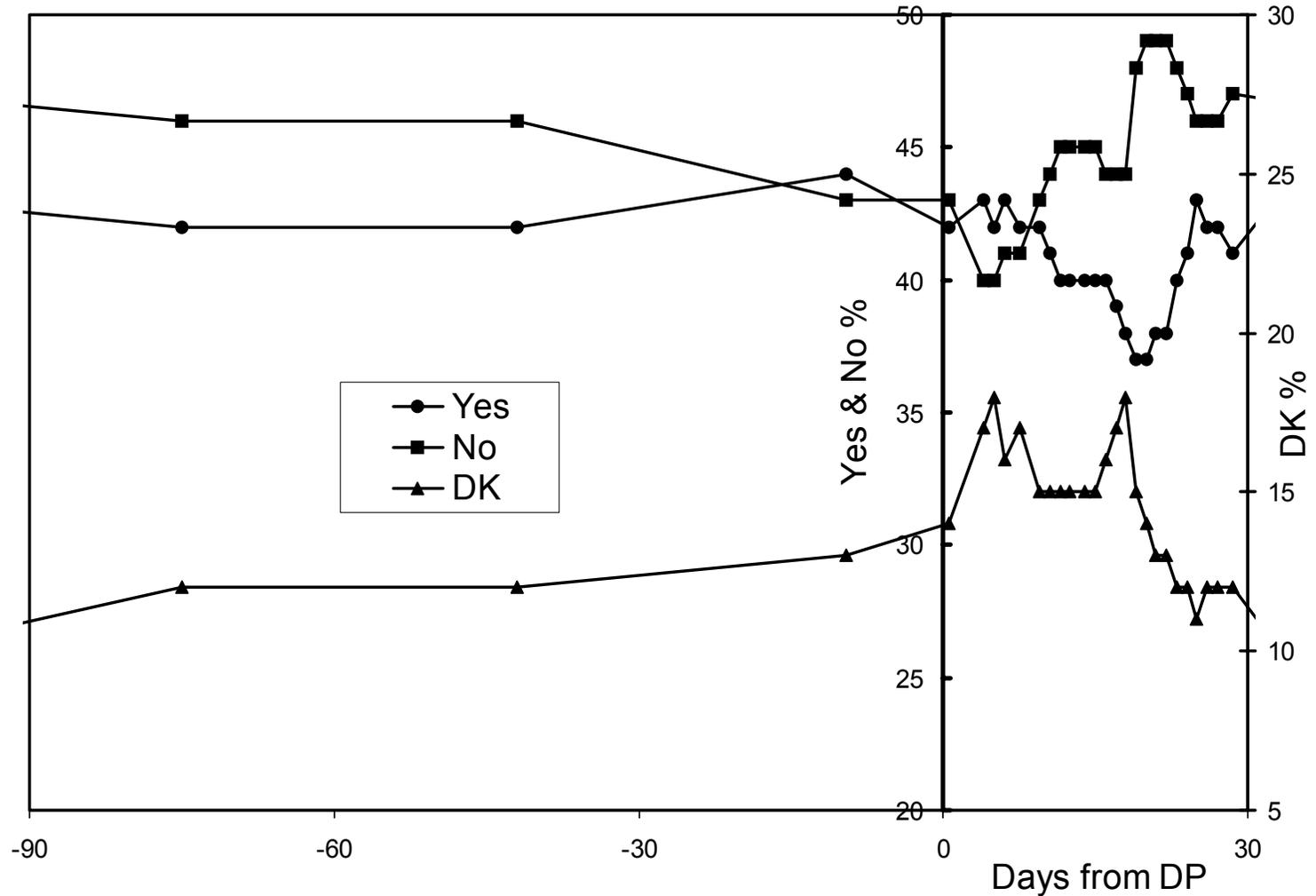
An ideal of the Deliberative Polling is also, according to Fishkin (1997) that involving the media in the process creates the possibility of communicating the process which the participants go through to the general public. In this way, the public in more general terms may also benefit from the event. That is, people watching the broadcasts from the event or reading

about the event might increase their awareness and knowledge of the issue or viewers might engage in discussions with friends and family on the issue. Accordingly, the publicity of the event is important because it potentially helps many more than just the participants to form an informed and reasoned opinion on the issue.

During the American Deliberative Poll - NIC - in 1996, the impact on the public of the broadcasts was analyzed. These analyses show some impact on the views, opinions, and efficacy questions relating the public influence on government as an effect of the information material and the viewing of the Deliberative Poll (Rasinski et al., 1999).

No data from the TV-viewers were collected at the Danish Deliberative Poll, thus, assessing the effect is difficult. Nevertheless, one indirect way to analyze the impact is to measure whether any change in the opinions of the public, measured by the traditional opinions polls, occurs just after the broadcast and the intensive press coverage of the event. Figure 14.1 shows the development of Gallup's opinion poll concerning the euro issue around the event.

Figure 14.1: Public opinion regarding the euro (days from the Deliberative Poll)



Note: Gallup for Berlingske Tidende - Various editions of the Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende. Thanks to Mogens S. Jakobsen from Gallup for making the data available to me for analysis. It takes some days to collect the polling data, thus, the median date is used as reference. The referendum took place 32 days after the Deliberative Poll.

Figure 14.1 shows the development in the public opinion regarding the voters' voting intentions in the days prior to and after the Deliberative Poll. Comparing the Gallup poll, conducted at the time of the Deliberative Poll, with the next poll a couple of days later, there is a small increase in the yes-voters and the undecided and a decrease in the no-voters. Thus, in the days after the Poll, minor changes in the public opinion are found, which are similar to the development in the participants' opinion change on the euro issue (see chapter 7). Assigning these changes directly to the impact of the Deliberative Poll on the public is nevertheless impossible. First of all, as the table shows, the fluctuation in the public support to the euro occurs throughout the period. Secondly, these fluctuations are within the statistical uncertainty of  $\pm 3\%$ . Furthermore, as discussed in the previous section, less than 10% of the voters followed the coverage in TV. A tentative and careful guess is that an additional 20% of the voters had read about the Poll in newspapers, listened to coverage of the event on national radio or followed the features about the Deliberative Poll on the national news on TV. This adds up to about 30% of all voters having been exposed to the event. It is very unlikely that these 30% would be able to change the result of the Gallup Poll barring that the people being exposed to the event all change their voting intentions and change in the same direction. Finally, it is impossible with the present design to differentiate between e.g. the effects of the peaking referendum campaign and any effect from being exposed to the Deliberative Poll.<sup>82</sup>

Even though it is likely that at least some of the people who were exposed to the media coverage of the Deliberative Poll had learnt something about the euro issue and, as a consequence, have changed their voting intentions, the general conclusion must be that the Deliberative Poll's impact on the public at large is minimal.

Whether or not the participating politicians learnt something by taking part in the Deliberative Poll, or whether they only considered the event as yet another political meeting with the public, is also a question worth considering. The answers which the politicians gave in questionnaires and the interviews conducted with the politicians suggest that the politicians were positive about the event, but some indicated that they would have liked to have been part of a group deliberation. Six out of nine politicians who answered the questionnaire indicated that the questions from the

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<sup>82</sup> See Rasinski et al. (1999) for a general discussion on how to measure the impact on the wider public of the Deliberative Poll.

participants were more balanced than at traditional meetings. Five out of nine politicians indicated that the participants' questions reflected a broad understanding of the issue (appendix H). However, any direct effects on the politicians themselves are not found in their answers in the questionnaire. On the other hand when interviewed, several of the participating politicians indicate that the Deliberative Poll, as many other meetings, gives the politicians an opportunity to engage in a dialog with the participants and, in this way, provides a reason why a rejection or acceptance of the single European is necessary. That is, in some ways the politicians saw the Deliberative Poll as an arena where they to some extent were able to carry out a form of deliberative accountability (see also chapter 10 on the participants' sense of deliberative accountability). Furthermore, they are pleased that the media coverage of the event provided an opportunity for the general population to follow the debate and of course a way for the politicians to get their political message communicated to a broad spectrum of citizens.<sup>83</sup> Conclusive indications of the extent to which the politicians had learnt something from the experience are however not present in the interviews.

#### 14.4 Summary

The tension within deliberative democracy between participants who must argue according to mutually justifiable terms and opinions being endogenously given is contested by the degree of publicity and secrecy in the deliberation. The more publicity the more prevalent is the mutually justifiable exchange of arguments, but at the same time the more publicity the more difficult it becomes for the participants to change their opinions. In this way there exists a trade-off between encouraging the participants in a deliberation to voice their arguments in mutually justifiable way and the degree of opinion change.

By comparing the passive and active participants during the Deliberative Poll it is shown that the passive change their opinions more frequently than the active. Taking passiveness as a proxy for publicity, the findings support that a trade-off between degree of publicity and level of opinion change exists during the Deliberative Poll.

Some of the groups were televised and video recorded for national TV and research purposes. Using the presence of cameras within

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<sup>83</sup> The interviews were conducted by Nielsen (2001). I am grateful to him for given me access to his transcribed interviews with the politicians.

the group as a proxy for publicity shows no effect on the participants' level of opinion change. On the other hand, the groups being recorded commit themselves significantly to a higher degree of arguing with reference to general principles and to what is best and fair for all citizens than groups without cameras. This proxy of publicity suggests that a higher degree of publicity does affect the participants' commitment to mutually justifiable argumentation.

In this way, both the positive effect of publicity on the participants' commitment to mutual justice and the negative effect of publicity on the participants' level of opinion change find support in the analyses of the Deliberative Poll.

Transparency and openness are important features of the Deliberative Polling process as they allow outsiders an insight into the procedures. Transparency and openness were advanced in several ways, as all campaigning parties were allowed to comment on the information material in order to achieve a balanced material before it was published.

During the Deliberative Poll, journalists interviewed the politicians and participants, and 91 articles were printed in 41 different newspapers and magazines.

443,000 Danes out of a population of 5.3 million followed the TV-coverage of the event. Nevertheless, it is difficult to assess whether the impact on the public at large is due to the Deliberative Poll. The minor changes in the Gallup opinion poll in the days after the event are likely due to factors such as the peaking referendum campaign and not the impact of the Deliberative Poll itself. However, the design does not allow for a firm conclusion on this aspect.





# Part IV

## Conclusion

## Chapter 15 - The Future Perspective of Deliberative Polling and Deliberative Democracy

The overall aim of this dissertation has been to investigate and gain an understanding of deliberative democracy in the empirical setting of the Danish National Deliberative Poll on the Euro. The experiment of the Deliberative Poll brought 364 representative Danish citizens together and during a weekend they deliberated among themselves and with leading politicians and experts. Throughout this process, their opinions were polled four times - before, at the beginning and at the end of the deliberative event, and finally three months later. During the Deliberative Poll, the deliberation shifted between discussions in randomly composed groups and plenary sessions with politicians and experts. In this way, the Deliberative Poll is an arena infused with deliberation.

Throughout history deliberation has been an important part of many political thinkers' concerns in relation to democracy. Deliberation is defined as *an unconstrained exchange of arguments that involves practical reasoning and potentially leads to a transformation of preferences*. The way deliberation was applied during the Deliberative Polling is distinct from many other forms of deliberation. First of all, the use of a moderator helps ensure that as many as possible of the participants took an active part in the deliberation and that no arguments were suppressed. Furthermore, the presence of media and the fact that the participants did not have to meet each other again, also provide a special form of deliberation. Generally speaking, these differences suggest that generalizing the findings to other deliberative settings with other characteristics is difficult. Nevertheless, as the Deliberative Poll in many ways provided an ideal setting for deliberation it is suggested that any obstacle in reaching the potentials of deliberative democracy will also be present in less ideal settings.

The general research question guiding the overall aim is: *To what extent are the potentials of deliberative democracy fulfilled in the empirical setting?*

Instead of simply repeating the conclusions from the summaries of previous chapters, this concluding chapter takes another approach. The approach is fourfold.

First, the results from the different analyses in the dissertation

are presented in a heuristic path model trying to capture the different relationships between the variables in relation to the opinion formation process during the Deliberative Polling. The many different relationships and the suggested causalities are presented in order to provide a picture of the opinion formation process in the context of deliberation.

Secondly, nine empirical statements are presented, which relate the findings to the potentials of deliberation claimed by many deliberative democrats. In this way, this section concludes whether or not the potentials of deliberative democracy are fulfilled during the experiment.

Third, the chapter discusses the method of Deliberative Polling suggesting some adjustments to the design based on the experience from the Danish national Deliberative Poll. This section also addresses the future use of Deliberative Polling.

Finally, this concluding chapter discusses some of the challenges and tensions of deliberative democracy. In this way, the final section discusses the concept of deliberative democracy providing some suggestions for revising the theory in order to address the tensions within the theory.

Accordingly, the first two sections are narrowly related to the general research question. These two sections provide a picture of what the opinion formation process looked like during the Deliberative Polling process, and secondly, relate the empirical findings to the potentials of deliberation. On the other hand, the final two sections discuss more broadly the implications of the findings for the method of Deliberative Polling and deliberative democracy.

## **15.1 Combining the findings from the Deliberative Poll into a heuristic model**

The data from the Deliberative Poll on the euro has allowed many different analyses with different focus and on different analytical levels and in different time periods during the deliberative process. These analyses have been presented and discussed throughout the dissertation. The level of individual opinion change has been an important endogenous variable in the models. In figure 15.1, a heuristic, combined path analysis with the different variables used throughout the dissertation is presented. The model is not a model in the statistical sense, but a rather heuristic tool presenting many of the statistically significant relationships analyzed in the various

model throughout the dissertation.<sup>84</sup>

The model presents opinion change as the central endogenous and dependent variable. Sense of responsiveness, sense of competence, political tolerance and public interest deliberation are other endogenous variables, whereas the level of knowledge, activeness and passiveness are intervening endogenous variables. The remaining variables are considered as exogenous and independent variables.

The relative thickness of the lines and the size of the arrowheads correspond to the magnitude of the suggested relationships, whereas the signs indicate the positive or negative impact of the variable. Interpretation of the figure is rather straightforward: a positive sign on the path indicates a positive relationship, whereas a negative sign on the path indicates a negative relationship between the variables.

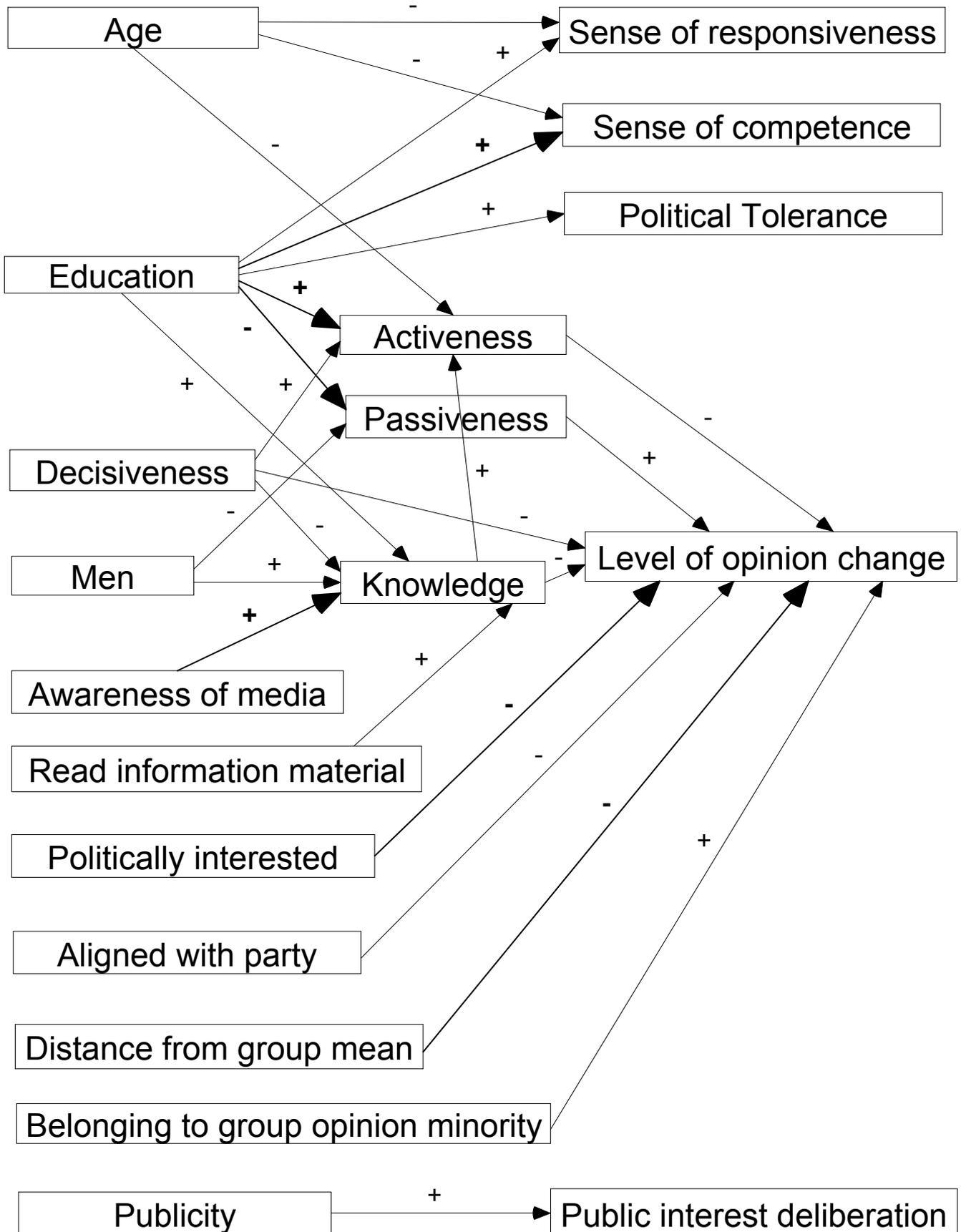
The figure only includes relationships which have been found statistically significant in the different models and analyses presented in the previous chapters. Nonetheless, that is not to say that all relationships would come out with the same degree of significance if the heuristic model actually was carried through in one statistical model, as some correlations between the exogenous variables must be expected. Furthermore, if the model actually is estimated in one statistical model, new relationships between the variables might come out significantly.

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<sup>84</sup> Alternatively a structural equation model (SEM) using the LISREL, AMOS or EQS statistical-packages could have been used as modeling tools. This would have allowed simultaneously to compute the estimates for the model as a whole and would have enabled the inclusion of different recursive relationships. On the other hand SEM does not allow any missing cases, thus, simply eliminating the missing data listwise from the sample (N=364) causes some problems. In particular when considering the degree of freedom because of the relatively many variables and relationships which should have been included in such a model. Furthermore, as some of the data are actually panel data, and the fact that some variables are measured dichotomously and others by interval, the complexity of such modeling increases. In particular because some (intervening) endogenous variables are measured dichotomously it is problematic as it would require combining logistical and non-logistical analyses. Several modeling attempts with SEM, also models including different latent variables and dummy variables, have not proved satisfactory. Yet another consideration is that SEM often tends to produce results which are difficult to communicate outside a relatively tiny circle of esoteric researchers.

At first sight, figure 15.1 is somewhat confusing, but it nevertheless provides an overview of the many findings and signifies the complexity of the different relationships which have been provided by the analyses of the Deliberative Polling process. The model also gives an impression of the different direct and indirect effects of the variables. E.g. gender has only an indirect effect in relation to opinion change, but nevertheless exerts it through passiveness as well as knowledge. Another example is decisiveness which has a direct effect in relation to opinion change, an indirect effect through knowledge and yet another indirect effect through knowledge and passiveness. A statistical model multiplying each path's coefficients - in the heuristic model below only represented by plus or minus - and then adding the different effects would provide an indication of the total effect of a variable.

Figure 15.1: A heuristic presentation of significant relationships between selected variables during the Deliberative Polling process



The variables and the relationships in figure 15.1 should be rather self-explanatory. Nevertheless, some important variables and their relationships are worth commenting on. Figure 15.1 shows how education plays an important role in order to understand the many different relationships discussed in the dissertation. Education has a positive, direct effect on sense of responsiveness, competence and political tolerance, and a direct effect on the deliberative behavior of the participants and a positive effect on their political knowledge. Better educated participants are more active in the deliberating groups than the less educated. The level of passiveness directly affects level of opinion change positively and activeness directly affects level of opinion change negatively.

The relative importance of formal education during the Deliberative Polling leads to a more general comment regarding deliberative democracy and the dynamics of opinion formation in the context of deliberation. In order to ensure deliberation as a politically equal process, a high level of education or at least a relatively homogenous level of education among the participants is necessary. The relatively strong influence of education on the deliberative process suggests that introducing deliberation in a highly heterogeneous society in terms of education will affect the participants according to their educational background. Maintaining the general idea that deliberation should affect deliberators equally and not only affect a certain proportion of the population (such as the less educated) suggests that a homogeneous society will more easily maintain political equality in a deliberative process.

The group variables in figure 15.1 also emphasize the direct influence of the group process on the degree to which deliberation causes opinion change among the participants. The first, and most influential, group variable indicates that the participants who take a strong stand on the issues tend to be more stable with regard to their opinions. One explanation for this finding is that the 'hardliners' in the groups have invested more in their opinions and are thus less likely to change their opinions compared to participants initially taking a more pragmatic and balanced stand. The second group variable shows that the opinion minority in the groups change opinions more frequently than the opinion majority. The findings call attention to group pressure within the group.

These significant relationships on the group level suggest that in order to understand the dynamics of opinion formation, special attention

needs to be given to classic group mechanisms.

Yet another finding regarding the dynamics of opinion formation not included in the heuristic presentation is that the participants tend to take a more balanced stand on the issues underlying their euro-opinion after the deliberative process, because the number of answers in extreme categories (strongly agreeing or disagreeing) decreased. One interpretation of this development is that through the deliberation the participants discovered that questions concerning the single currency and European integration in general are more complex and many-sided and, thus, the participants incorporated more dimensions into their opinions by giving a somewhat agreeing or disagreeing answer.

### **15.2 Relating the potentials of deliberation to the empirical findings**

Figure 15.1 presented many different, significant relationships discovered in the analyses of the experiment of the Deliberative Poll. Nevertheless, being able to analyze these relationships is only part of the experimental potential of the Deliberative Poll. The experiment of the Deliberative Poll was also applied in order to understand the potentials of deliberative democracy. Nine potentials of deliberative democracy have been analyzed in the experimental setting of the Deliberative Poll. Table 15.1 presents nine statements based on the empirical findings analyzed in relation to the potentials of deliberation. The statement does not encompass all the analyses and discussions which have been carried out throughout the dissertation, but highlights some of the important findings.

**Table 15.1: Nine statements relating the potentials of deliberation to the empirical findings**

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- Deliberation increases knowledge, but is affected by the participants' selective perception of the facts. The selective perception of the political facts decrease through deliberation.
  - Deliberation stimulates opinion change and increases opinion consistency, but does not affect the opinion stability.
  - Deliberation does not cause conformity of opinions, but participants belonging to the minority and participants initially positioned around the group mean tend to change more.
  - Deliberation increases political tolerance, mutual understanding and respect toward different opinions, but confidence in the participants' own opinion is also enhanced.
  - Deliberation is dominated by arguments referring to public interest, but self-interest is not eliminated.
  - Deliberation increases the participants' sense of political competence and has a moderately positive effect on the participants' willingness to get more involved with politics, but deliberation has no effect on the participants' sense of political responsiveness toward the EU.
  - Deliberation may improve the implementation of policies, but this aspect is only indirectly examined. Nevertheless, as deliberation provides an opportunity to express an opinion and provides increasing understanding of the different reasons behind the policies, it is argued that deliberation is likely to make the implementation easier.
  - Deliberation favors opinions expressed in terms of public interest, thus, creating a bias in the deliberation.
  - Deliberation in public increases the use of arguing in terms of public interest.
- 

Generally speaking, the statements in table 15.1 show that the desirable effects of deliberation have proved to find empirical support in the experiment of the Deliberative Poll. In this way, theorists of deliberative democracy can find empirical support to many of their claimed effects of deliberation. From a deliberative democratic viewpoint, the findings are most inspiring as they suggest that most of the claimed normatively desirable potentials of deliberation can be reached empirically.

The process up to the Deliberative Poll as well as the process during the Deliberative Poll increased the factual knowledge among the participants. The learning up to the event is mainly caused by an increased awareness of the media, but reading the information material also

contributed to an increased knowledge among the participants. However the participants' learning experience is affected by a selective perception of the facts. That is, the participants inclined to vote no to the euro tended to learn the facts supporting their position, whereas participants inclined to vote yes to the euro tended to learn the facts supporting their position. Nevertheless, during the deliberation the participants were directly confronted by the facts and arguments from both sides of the issue and thus the deliberation disabled the tendency to selective learning which was found in the process prior to the Deliberative Poll.

25% of the participants changed their voting intentions to the euro at least once from the time of recruitment to the poll conducted three months after the Deliberative Poll. Opinion change measured on different underlying dimensions of the euro vote varies between 12% to 36% of the participants, measured as change from agree to disagreeing or vice versa. In this way, the Deliberative Polling process has encouraged opinion change, but the findings also show that the claim from deliberative democrats that opinions essentially are endogenously given has empirical support. The post-deliberative opinions are more consistent, in the sense that participants in the poll conducted at the end of the Deliberative Poll show that they are able to tie relevant and equivalent dimensions together. However, the increased opinion consistency does not entrench the participants' opinions as opinion stability is not affected by the deliberation. The opinion change from the recruitment to the Deliberative Poll can be described as a shift from nonattitudes to more reasoned opinions. On the other hand, the opinion change after the Deliberative Poll represents a more reflected change in opinion because the participants maintain the level of opinion consistency reached during the Deliberative Poll. Thus, deliberation is argued to enhance the 'quality' of the opinions, but not the stability.

The opinion formation process during deliberation is affected by different group processes. E.g. examples of psychological entrapment are found. That is, the more the participants have invested in their opinion the less likely it is that they will give it up. The groups have not shown any general signs of conforming to one opinion or to come closer to a consensus. Video-recordings of four groups show that the deliberation within the groups can develop quite differently. In some groups, the deliberation was confronting and in others rather abstract. In some groups some participants early in the deliberation publicly committed themselves to one side of the

euro issue rather than another. In other groups the voting preferences remained concealed. A general effect of how the deliberation develops is not found. Clearly more research has to be carried out on the group dynamics in relation to the potentials of deliberation. The finding that some individuals show signs of psychological entrapment challenges the normatively desirable claim of deliberative democracy. That is, real deliberation is not simply an unconstrained exchange of arguments, but also a process where different group dynamics are at play.

The deliberative process has increased the participants' political tolerance and mutual understanding of different opinions. In this way, the normatively desirable claim of deliberation is supported in the empirical findings.

During the deliberation, the participants tend to argue according to public interest, but arguing according to self-interest was not eliminated from the deliberative process. Even though the normatively desirable potentials according to deliberative democracy of public interest argumentation dominated the deliberation, the presence of self-interest arguments shows how the ideal deliberative process is infused with elements of 'real-life' politics. The dominance of arguments favoring common interest is inspiring for deliberative democrats as it provides empirical support for their normative claim. Nevertheless, the presence of arguments referring to self-interest encourages deliberative democrats to take a broader view on the arguments presented during deliberation.

Deliberative accountability also prevails during the deliberation. That is, participants show a willingness to justify their reasons to the other participants and show responsiveness toward each others arguments. But also a form of self-imposed or moral accountability is found in the participants answers. That is, the participants indicate that they speak also for non-participants. The indications of deliberative accountability and self-imposed accountability provide justification for deliberation, but it is also an inspiring result for deliberative democrats as it indicates that deliberation in this case is able to provide the participants with a sense of accountability. That is, even though no formal accountability among the public at large and the participants exists, the participants' behavior is constrained by deliberative and self-imposed accountability.

Deliberation not only increases the participants' factual knowledge, but it also increases their sense of being competent to engage in

political discussions. The idea that participation in one arena leads to participation in another arena is moderately confirmed as the participants show a moderate increase in their willingness to run for office.

The national referendum conducted a month after the Deliberative Poll was decisive and not the Deliberative Poll. The relationship between deliberation and easier implementation can hence not be analyzed directly on the data provided by the Poll.

The activeness in deliberation across participants is not equally distributed. The better educated and the participants with a high level of factual knowledge speak up more than others. Comparing the opinions of the active and passive participants show how arguments easily expressed in objective terms are voiced much more frequently than other arguments. This shows how a normatively undesirable potential prevails in the deliberative process. The prevalence of exclusion of certain arguments call on deliberative democrats to consider this aspect in their theory. In particular as moderated deliberation tends to exclude certain views, it is likely that deliberation, without a moderator, tends to reinforce these exclusion mechanisms. That is, it is likely that 'everyday talk' and deliberation will be more affected by this normatively undesirable potential of deliberation.

Deliberation in public compared to deliberation held in secrecy, demonstrates that participants in public deliberation tend to be more reluctant to change their opinions. This relationship finds some empirical support as the passive participants compared to the active participants change their opinions more frequently. Of course passiveness is only a proxy for publicity and it is likely that many other variables affect this relationship. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that to some extent there exists a trade-off between degree of publicity and level of opinion change during the deliberation.

Generally speaking, the normative potentials of deliberative democracy have found much empirical support during the Deliberative Poll on the euro. Nevertheless, a few skeptical remarks are highlighted. These are: the existence of different group dynamics, the presence of self-interest argumentation, the indicated trade-off between publicity and opinion change, and in particular the bias in the arguments voiced during deliberation.

### 15.3 Revising Deliberative Polling

The previous two sections show that the experiment of the Deliberative Poll has provided an insight into the opinion formation process in a deliberative context, but also that the deliberation fulfills many of the desirable potentials, which the theory of deliberative democracy has claimed.

Yet another question relates to the method of Deliberative Polling. The use of the method on the national level in Denmark has raised some questions regarding future use of Deliberative Polling and suggests some adjustments. These questions are in focus in this section.

Even though the Deliberative Poll on the euro was able to bring together a representative sample of citizens, the recruitment process reflects some self-selection among the participants. Using a face-to-face interview for recruitment, increasing the payment for participation, and generally providing more incentives to participate will most likely improve the recruitment process and thereby enhance the representativeness of the sample. These initiatives are however quite costly. A less costly advice is to carefully plan a comprehensive list of reasons why a particular respondent should participate when initially contacted and, furthermore, keep the respondents committed to participate by contacting them several times in the period between the initial contact and when they eventually show up at the event.

Some of the politicians at the Deliberative Poll were concerned that they were not allowed into the randomly composed groups of participants during the Deliberative Poll. The reason why the politicians were not allowed into the groups was the danger of creating biases in the deliberation by favoring a particular politician's voice. Furthermore, granting the politicians access into the groups would tend to shift the deliberation from citizens to citizens to deliberation between citizens and politicians. Nevertheless, some of the politicians were concerned that their exclusion from the groups increased and reinforced a gap between politicians and citizens. Yet another danger to the experimental design of giving the politicians access to the groups is that this would distribute the experimental treatment effect unevenly among the groups as the politicians could only be in one group at the time.

On the local level, another variant of linking the participants' deliberation to the politicians has been tried (Hansen & Pedersen, 2002). In this case, the elected council members were teamed up two and two,

including both sides of the political agenda. These teams moderated the group discussions. This experience showed that it is possible to integrate the politicians more directly in the deliberation if they are carefully instructed not to influence the deliberation. Whether this experience can be used on the national level is nevertheless somewhat questionable as the national politicians have a stronger authority which can be difficult to overcome in small groups.

The additional wave of questions added at the beginning of Deliberative Poll provided much information for research purposes. The extra wave allowed a separation of the process prior to the Deliberative Poll from the process during the Deliberative Poll. In this way, the learning process and dynamics of opinion formation are much better mapped with an extra wave. The relatively small cost of distributing questionnaires to the participants upon arrival at a Deliberative Poll strongly suggests that this extra wave should be part of future Deliberative Polls if research purposes are prioritized, compared to only post-deliberative policy advice. From a research perspective, the Deliberative Poll is an important method to gain an insight into the dynamics of opinion formation in the context of deliberation and information. Nevertheless, the method could be improved by adding more waves of questioning and control groups to the design as it would increase the already gained insight presented by this study and increase internal validity.

It is argued throughout this dissertation that the Deliberative Poll should only be supplementary to more institutionalized representative institutions, primarily because the method does not allow that the participants formally are held accountable for their actions. Even though the behavior of the participants show a sense of deliberative accountability, that is the participants justify their reasons to each other, as well as a sense of self-imposed accountability. In other words, the participants indicate that they speak for non-participants, no formal procedures for holding the participants accountable for their actions exist. Accordingly, it is problematic to use the Deliberative Poll in a decisive way. Nevertheless, one way to infuse the Deliberative Poll with an indirect form of formal accountability would be if the elected representatives delegate a specific decision to the Deliberative Poll. This form of delegation has been used in some cases of referendums. However, as the Deliberative Poll lacks democratic legitimacy, in the sense that the method is not titled in the

constitution or well-established in parliamentary practices, delegation of power to a Deliberative Poll still lacks a formal base of democratic legitimacy.

The lack of democratic legitimacy also leads to the conclusion that the Deliberative Poll in its present form should constitute only a method, which communicates opinions of a reflective public into the political process. That is, the Deliberative Poll may supplement, but not replace the more established channels of political communication. Accordingly, the method does not constitute an authority which acts on behalf of demos, but rather serves an advisory or consultative purpose. On the other hand, the Deliberative Poll represents a possible alternative to traditional opinion polls and provides the opportunity for more reasoned opinions.

The relatively high cost is a primary reason why the Deliberative Poll will never be as common as traditional public opinion polls. Nevertheless, the Deliberative Poll has proved to be a fascinating method to capture the more reflective opinions of the public. Just the experience to gather nearly to 400 ordinary citizens and observe how they, during a weekend, engaged in deliberation on a complex issue with each other and leading politicians and experts was inspiring from a democratic perspective. The participants' evaluation of the Deliberative Poll shows much support to the method: 83% indicate that they would like to participate in future Deliberative Polls, 15% indicate they might, and only 2% would not be interested in participating in future Deliberative Polls. Furthermore, only 1% would not recommend the people in their environment to participate in future Polls, and only 3% of the participants suggest that the Deliberative Poll should not be used in the future. Finally, on a scale from one to nine, 95% of the participants score 6 or more indicating the Deliberative Polling event was a very useful experience. 72% marked 8 or 9 on the scale. Taking these scores as an indication of the participants finding the method beneficial suggest that the method does have a future.

Almost all of the participants would consider participating in future Deliberative Polls and about half of all participants would consider running for political office if asked to. This suggests that the new arena for political participation of Deliberative Polling has activated many citizens who otherwise would not have been involved in politics. That is, the Deliberative Poll to a large degree mobilizes citizens who do not engage

themselves in politics within the representative institutions and who otherwise would not involve themselves in political discussions in the same degree. Accordingly, extra-parliamentary arenas, such as the Deliberative Polls, can be advocated as methods which provide the opportunity for increasing political participation and deliberation, not only for the citizens who usually are active in politics, but also as an appealing opportunity for citizens who often only are considered as spectators to democracy.

In Denmark there is at the time of writing much debate on changing the size of counties and municipalities, which today are controlled by directly elected representative bodies. By increasing the geographic size of the units, and in doing so reducing the number of representatives per citizen, we may experience a sense of an increasing gap between representatives and citizens. In this case, the need for supplementary arenas for deliberation will increase. A more institutionalized use of the Deliberative Poll might be a way to address this problem.

Yet another development in society, which might increase the demand for Deliberative Polls is the increased complexity of the issues on the political agenda. In the Danish case, the need for allocation between various public welfare services has proved a critical aspect of the contemporary political debate as it seems that the tax level has reached the ceiling simultaneously with the emergence of increased expenditures. The debate caused by the introduction of new technologies and research has raised many complex issues needing attention. E.g. research on DNA has raised many complex issues such as different medical treatments and questions of a more ethical nature.

The advancement of information communication technologies in society also provides new opportunities for the Deliberative Poll. The first online Deliberative Poll, where participants through the internet were able to see and talk to each other, has already been conducted by James Fishkin and Shanto Iyengar at Stanford University in 2002. The online Deliberative Poll has also shown opinion change, but the most inspiring is that the online future has opened a door to reduce the cost of the Deliberative Poll and, eventually, allowing the Deliberative Poll to have not only a local or national scope but even a global scope. That is, in the future it will be possible to conduct online Deliberative Polls where people of different nationalities from their own living room can engage in face-to-face deliberation.

Yet another idea for the use of Deliberative Polling is the European Union. The integration of the European Union has been one of the fastest developing and most comprehensive processes of cooperation between national states history has ever seen. However, today several reports have documented a rising skepticism among the European citizens to further integration, and for some time there has been a rising attention to what is referred to as a democratic deficit in the European Union. One of the most outspoken challenges to the European Union is the lack of a wider European public or demos. In general decision-makers are more open towards and better informed about European integration than are laymen. The general public is often more skeptical - and is certainly less well-informed - about European integration. A European Deliberative Poll would be one way to create an arena for a constructive dialog on the future state of the EU. First of all, the aim of designing a European Deliberative Poll would be to stimulate debate, enhance the level of knowledge, and to motivate citizens to take an active part in the process within a broader perspective of European integration. Second, a European Deliberative Poll would also generate an innovative insight with regard to the ways in which a public debate, reflection and knowledge affect the gap and, in particular, the citizens' motivation to engage in a debate on European integration.

One way to conduct a European Deliberative Poll would be to bring a representative sample of European citizens together in the European Parliament to deliberate with each other and the members of the European Parliament. The use of the European Parliament buildings would also increase the media attention to the event. Such attention would allow the deliberation to be communicated to a wider European public.

#### **15.4 Revising deliberative democracy**

The dissertation has considered one particular form of deliberation – the one which was carried out in the Danish national Deliberative Poll on the euro. Accordingly, the findings may not be found in other contexts conducted differently or on a different issue. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that during the deliberative environment many of the deliberative democrats' claimed potentials are justified. This section focuses on the theory of deliberative democracy and the identified tensions. Furthermore, I suggest some adjustments to the theory. Three related tensions of deliberative democracy can be identified. These tensions are supported

theoretically as well as empirically.

The first tension addresses the tension between political equality and the priority given to voicing arguments in terms of the public interest. Many deliberative democrats emphasize political equality and, at the same time, claim that arguments voiced in terms of public interest are more justifiable than others. Thus, theoretically there is a tension within deliberative democracy. The tension is represented by three simultaneous claims. The first claim addresses the nature of deliberation by picturing deliberation as a free and unconstrained exchange of arguments. The second claim argues that only opinions backed with reasons are legitimate. The final claim argues that some reasons, i.e. reasons with common good references, are assumed more advantageous than others. In this way, the theory on the one hand aims at political equality and on the other hand claims that some arguments are better than others. In an idealized world where all people were equally able to voice their interests in terms of public interest this might be besides the point, but the empirical analyses of the Deliberative Poll suggest that this is not the case. On the one hand, the analyses show that the arguments voiced are dominated by reference to the public interest. On the other hand, the analyses show that the passive and active participants deviate not only with regard to opinion, but also on educational level and level of factual knowledge on the euro. The most active groups are better educated and more knowledgeable than the passive. This finding first of all suggests that deliberation is not a politically equal process but favors the more educated and knowledgeable people. One danger of this is that experiences of the less educated and less knowledgeable might be lost in the deliberative process. Furthermore, this suggests that deliberation actually reinforces an already existing bias among politically engaged people because the better educated are already overrepresented among the elected representatives.

This first of all shows that securing basic rights and civil liberties is even more important in a society that is infused with deliberation in order not to compromise minorities' rights. In particular groups of people who are less active during deliberation and less acquainted with deliberative procedures should be guaranteed some basic rights. That is, deliberative democracy needs to incorporate basic, substantive principles in order not to compromise political equality. Furthermore, giving greater priority to

substantive principles in deliberative democracy also relaxes the strong procedural commitment to the common good during deliberation. Relaxing the procedural claim and strengthening the substantive claim in deliberative democracy also eases the tension between political equality as only arguments voiced in terms of the common good are justifiable. This also suggests that constitutional rights and universal suffrage are still important cornerstones in democracy - especially if democracy is to be more deliberative.

In addition special attention should be given to the actual deliberation in order to provide a better opportunity for the disfavored people to participate. The use of a moderator during deliberation is the first step in this direction. Furthermore, allowing more different types of communication such as greeting, rhetoric, and storytelling into the deliberative process would provide new opportunities for the participants. Even though assigning more weight to these forms of communication during deliberation helps maintain a certain plurality, this claim is actually besides the main point. The point is that such means of communication are disadvantageous in the processes of exchanging arguments, not that these forms have not been allowed, but because they only appeal to participants having the same subjective understanding of the situation. Greeting, rhetoric, and storytelling do not refer to public interest nor to a common framework of understanding. Thus, deliberation will still favor arguments with reference to the common good and arguments based on a broad understanding of the situation. Nonetheless, it is fruitful to stress that these forms of communication do facilitate a less biased deliberation, but it remains embedded in the theory that these forms of communication are disfavored, compared to arguments based on a broad understanding of the issue. Including greeting, rhetoric, and storytelling more directly in the deliberative process contributes to an expansion of the shared frame of interpretation and the establishment of a deeper frame of reference, but these types of communication remain less convincing than an argument based on reason. In this way, deliberative democracy needs to include the trade-off between the danger of excluding certain experiences and a justification based on public interest. By acknowledging that a trade-off exists eases the tension in deliberative democracy.

A supplementary approach to address the tension of political equality would be to adjust the deliberative designing. E.g. instead of

composing the groups randomly during a Deliberative Poll, in order to bring as many opinions and experiences together as possible, the groups could at least initially be composed so participants, who we in advance have believed would be passive, were grouped together. In a deliberation, this would allow the passive to build up their confidence and arguments before engaging in deliberation with the 'strong' participants.

The second tension points to the fact that publicity and opinion change do not go well together.

On the one hand, many deliberative democrats advocate that the deliberative process must be held public because it provides non-participants with the opportunity to gain an insight into the deliberative process, and because publicity improves the likelihood of advancing arguments voiced in terms of the public interest. Publicity combined with the idea that the deliberators must justify their opinions to others make deliberators more reluctant to refer to arguments based on self-interests because publicity expands the audience and thereby expands the number of different interests which must be considered when justifying the opinions voiced.

At the same time, deliberative democracy argues that opinion change is an important element of the deliberative process. Nevertheless, these two propositions are tensional. When participants have expressed their opinions in public, they are less likely to change their opinions because a public opinion change may discredit and disfavor them in the ongoing deliberation. Vice versa in closed and non-public settings opinion change is easier as the participants cannot be publicly exposed as weak, mindless and ambiguous regarding the issue. That is, the more public the deliberation is the less likely it is that opinion change will occur, and at the same time the more public the deliberation is the more likely it is that self-interest argumentation is disabled.

The empirical analyses have shown that the participants, who are passive in the deliberation, and thus have voiced their opinions to a less extent, are more likely to change opinions. Furthermore, there is a small tendency that the groups, which had their deliberation recorded for transmission live on tape on national TV, were more committed to voice their arguments in terms of the public interest. In this way, the tension in the theory of deliberative democracy finds empirical support.

The general approach to address the tension between publicity

and opinion change and stronger commitment to arguing in terms of public interest would be to explicitly acknowledge that a trade-off exists between publicity and opinion change. By acknowledging that a trade-off exists opens up for creating a more balanced deliberative design, combining public as well as closed meetings.

The third tension addresses whether or not deliberation must arrive at some collective decision and action. On the one hand deliberation must be aimed at a decision, because only the knowledge that a decision must be taken will convert alternatives into actual choices. Otherwise the different alternatives voiced might only entrench line of conflicts leaving the actual decision-making even more difficult than before deliberation. On the other hand aiming deliberation toward a decision, in particular if based on consensus, enforces group dynamics such as group-think and group pressure which threatens political autonomy. In this way, deliberation not aimed at a consensus decision is less likely to create a bias in the deliberation and to a higher degree allows all the different interests to be voiced.

In the case of the Deliberative Poll, the participants were not asked to reach a decision or a common consensus opinion. Instead, the post-deliberative opinions of the participants were aggregated through a secret ballot, in this case a self-administrative questionnaire. Critics will claim that this procedure has caused opinions to be entrenched without providing the participants the incentive to unite on the issue or to find a compromise. Nevertheless, the empirical analyses of the Deliberative Poll show that the participants were quite responsive toward other arguments, that different opinions were treated with equal respect and that many changed their opinions. In this way, the empirical analyses do not support the argument that non-consensus deliberation, or deliberation not directed toward a collective decision, tends to entrench opinions.

From a theoretical point, the tension between aiming and not aiming the deliberation toward a collective decision lies in the dilemma that no matter what position one may choose, the position contradicts other elements of the theory. The consensus position tends to compromise political equality, whereas the no-outcome position tends to be subject to an entrenched line of conflict and, accordingly, contradicts the very purpose of deliberation which is to encourage mutually justifiable solutions.

The empirical analyses suggest that non-consensus deliberation

does not tend to entrench the opinions, thus simply by maintaining that deliberation should not be aimed at a consensus removes the tension from the deliberative democratic theory. Nevertheless, this conclusion is not entirely backed in the empirical analyses, because the empirical analyses do not say anything about the disadvantages of aiming at consensus. One of the most unfortunate disadvantages is that political autonomy to some extent would be disabled. On the other hand, as deliberative democracy acknowledges that democracy partly is a mechanism for taking collective decisions, limiting deliberation to a pre-decisional procedure by not aiming deliberation toward a collective decision, and in this way linking deliberation to the decision-making process, is somewhat contradictory. In this way, more empirical analyses on the consequences of deliberation aimed at a collective decision are needed. One interesting experiment would be to ask half of the groups at a Deliberative Poll to arrive at a consensus and the other half not to, and simply compare the two. The conclusion is, nevertheless, that the danger of not aiming deliberation at a consensus is much less prevalent during the Danish Deliberation Poll than the theory would suggest.

A final consideration in relation to the theory of deliberative democracy is that the participants indicated that although they were together for two days, they lacked time to deliberate. The participants also indicated that domination, coalition and alliances between the participants were part of the deliberative experience. In this way, the ideal deliberative process interacts with the real world deliberation. That is, even in the setting of the Deliberative Poll, where many efforts were put into providing an ideal setting for deliberation (e.g., the use of moderators and balanced information), domination, coalition building and scarce time resources were still present. It is reasonable to assume that these elements will also be present in other and less controlled deliberative arenas and in everyday talk, which is not moderated. Deliberative democracy tends to neglect these defining elements of politics. Instead of trying to eliminate these elements, or simply ignoring them, as some approaches of deliberative democracy do, it is important to understand these sources of inequality, power and domination, and to try to incorporate these ineradicable features of deliberation and politics into the theory of deliberative democracy and to try to confront these features in the institutional design when future

deliberative settings are designed. A revised theory of deliberative democracy should acknowledge that inequalities, power etc. will exist in any deliberative forum. If deliberative democracy is unable to arrive at this realization, the danger of the theory becoming nothing but a utopia is imminent.

## Danish Summary

### - Deliberativt Demokrati og Meningsdannelse

At folk mødes og debatterer med hinanden har altid været et central element i deltagelsesorienterede tilgange til demokrati. Samtalens betydning for demokratiet har ikke desto mindre fået en ny epoke inden for demokratilitteraturen. Denne nye epoke inden for demokratiforskningen betegnes 'deliberativt demokrati' og adskiller sig fra den deltagelsesorienterede tilgang til demokrati ved at deliberation frem for deltagelse får en helt central betydning. Eller sagt på en anden måde, den deltagelsesorienterede demokratitanke fokuserede fra slutningen af 1960'erne og starten af 1970'erne på kvantiteten i deltagelsen, mens deliberativt demokrati fokuserer på de kvalitative sider af deltagelsen, hvilket vil sige udvekslingen af argumenter mellem deltagerne.

Selvom litteraturen og forskningen om deliberationens betydning for den demokratiske legitimitet har været stærkt stigende det sidste årti, har der været langt mellem de empiriske tilgange til emnet og det er netop her, at ph.d.-afhandlingen tager fat. På den baggrund er formålet med afhandlingen at skabe en forståelse for de muligheder som deliberation bibringer til en politisk proces i en empirisk kontekst, og ikke mindst at skabe indsigt i dynamikken bag meningsdannelsesprocessen.

Den empiriske kontekst udspiller sig i et deliberativt eksperiment - folkehøringen - hvor 364 danskere var bragt sammen for at diskutere Danmarks eventuelle fulde deltagelse i den fælles europæiske mønt - euroen - med hinanden og ledende politikere og eksperter.

#### *Den Nationale Folkehøring om Euroen*

Den grundliggende idé bag folkehøringen er at kombinere to demokratiske idealer - deliberation og repræsentativitet. Deliberation kommer til udtryk ved at deltagerne argumenterer for deres holdninger og lytter til hinandens argumenter, men også at de opnår en øget viden i forhold til emnet. Repræsentativiteten kommer til udtryk ved at deltagerne afspejler de danske vælgere på så mange demografiske og holdningsmæssige karakteristika som muligt. Folkehøringen blev introduceret af James S. Fishkin under betegnelsen Deliberative Polls®.

Grundideen er, at man inviterer et repræsentativt udsnit af

borgerne til at deltage i et arrangement, hvor de på baggrund af information om et givent emne får mulighed for at diskutere en problemstilling med hinanden, eksperter og politikere. Før, under og efter denne proces bliver deltagerne stillet en række ens spørgsmål.

Repræsentativiteten i folkehøringen opnås ved at deltagerne udtrækkes ved lodtrækning - i praksis ved simpel tilfældig udvælgelse på f.eks. telefonnummer eller cpr.nr. Lodtrækning som demokratisk princip er fremhævet af så prominente demokratiske tænkere som Aristoteles, Montesquieu og Rousseau som den fundamentale demokratiske selektionsmekanisme, fordi alle derved behandles fuldstændigt lige og neutralt uden mulighed for at politiske kampagner eller partier kan påvirke hvem der bliver udvalgt.

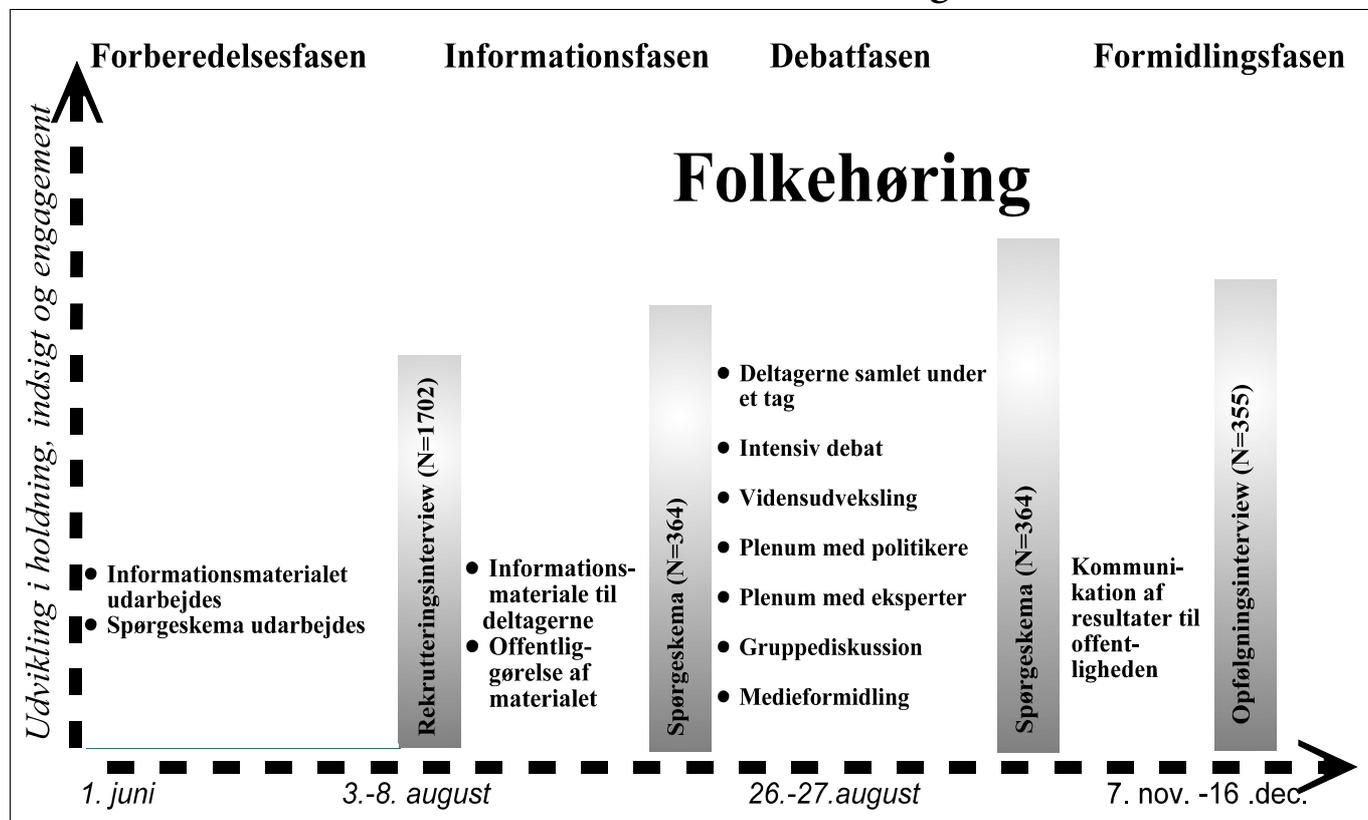
Deliberation i folkehøringen bygger på et til dels modstridende demokratisk ideal i forhold til repræsentativitet, som fokuserer på, at det demokratiske forum skal fungere som et filter mod borgernes umiddelbare meninger dannet ud fra egeninteresse. Filteret, repræsenteret ved deliberation mellem borgerne, skal være med til at omforme borgernes umiddelbare meninger til i højere grad at tilgodese det fælles bedste.

Deltagerne ved folkehøringen om euroen i 2000 blev rekrutteret på basis af statistisk tilfældighed gennem en meningsmåling (N=1702). Respondenterne blev ud over de traditionelle demografiske spørgsmål også stillet en række videns- og holdningsspørgsmål om euroen samt inviteret til at deltage i folkehøringen. De samme spørgsmål blev stillet endnu engang til deltagerne, da de kom til folkehøringen og da arrangementet sluttede, og endeligt tre måneder efter arrangementet, det vil sige i alt fire gange. De respondenter (N=364), som accepterede invitationen til folkehøringen, modtog inden folkehøringens start et informationsmateriale med argumenter for og imod euroen. Informationsmaterialet blev inden offentliggørelsen og udgivelsen sendt til høring hos samtlige partier og bevægelser involveret i kampagnen om den danske euro-afstemning.

Selve folkehøringen forløb over en weekend, hvor deltagerne diskuterede i mindre grupper og deltog i plenumforsamlinger. I plenum stillede de enkelte grupper spørgsmål til ledende politikere og eksperter. Ved folkehøringen om euroen blev der tilfældigt sammensat 20 grupper bestående af 18-20 deltagere. Nedenstående figur viser processen bag den nationale folkehøring om euroen, som den blev afviklet i sensommeren 2000 - ca. en måned før folkeafstemningen om Danmarks fulde indtrædelse

i euro-samarbejdet. Søjlerne repræsenterer en forventning om at deltagelsen i arrangementet vil øge deltagerens indsigt og engagement i euro-spørgsmålet, hvilket potentielt er med til at skabe og ændre deltagerens holdninger til spørgsmålet.

## Processen i forbindelse med den Nationale Folkehøring om Euroen i 2000



Ud over de fire runder med spørgsmål blev der også gennemført et kontrolinterview (N=1005) med et repræsentativ udsnit af danske borgere i samme periode som folkehøringen. Dette interview blev gennemført for at få et indblik i, hvordan den offentlige debat påvirker borgerne generelt. På det grundlag opnås mulighed for at isolere effekten af folkehøringen på deltagerne.

Repræsentativiteten for de 364 deltagere i forhold til de danske vælgers karakteristika synes at være acceptabel. Såvel alder, uddannelse, stilling, land/by, medlem af et politisk parti eller gruppe, stemmeintention ved folketingsvalg som geografi viste ingen større skævhed. Der var 58% mænd blandt deltagerne, mens der blandt de danske vælgere er 49% mænd, på den baggrund var kvinder underrepræsenteret. Endvidere var der 24% af vælgerne, der ved rekrutteringen endnu ikke havde besluttet sig for, hvad de

ville stemme, mens der blandt deltagerne var 18%. Til gengæld var tilhængerne til euroen en smule overrepræsenterede, idet der var 45% blandt deltagerne mens 39% blandt vælgerne generelt.

### *Deliberativt demokrati*

Deliberativt demokrati refererer overordnet til et ideal om at argumentationsudvekslingen mellem borgerne kvalificerer demokratiske beslutninger. Deliberation kan grundlæggende defineres som *en fri proces, hvor deltagerne argumenterer, lytter til og reflekterer i forhold til hinanden, hvilket eventuelt former og ændrer deres præferencer*. På den ene side forholder definitionen sig åbent til de mange kontroverser, der eksisterer inden for deliberativt demokrati, såsom om deliberationen skal være rettet mod at opnå enighed, hvem der skal deltage i deliberationen og hvilke spørgsmål deliberationen skal rettes imod. På den anden side fremhæver definitionen også et af de forhold, som synes at skabe fælles fundament for deliberative demokrater, hvilket er en fremhævelse af at meninger skabes i og påvirkes af den proces, de indgår i. Det vil sige, at meninger er endogent givne.

Deliberativt demokratis antagelse om at meningerne er endogene betyder også, at gennem deliberation bliver borgernes meninger potentielt omformet, så de retter sig mod en bredere fælles interesse. Denne påvirkning betyder ikke nødvendigvis, at borgerne ændrer deres mening. Meningstransformationen vil i flere tilfælde resultere i en øget opmærksomhed på de værdier, som ligger til grund for den umiddelbare opfattelse, og på den baggrund kan deliberation forstærke det umiddelbare valg. Meningsændring eller ikke, så opfatter deliberative demokrater den mening, der udtrykkes efter intensiv deliberation som en mening, der besidder en større kvalitet end den før-deliberative mening. Efter-deliberative meninger er mere informerede og refleksive. Det vil sige, at deliberation også har en uddannende effekt på deltagerne.

Ideen om argumentationsudveksling er essentiel for deliberativt demokrati. Når borgerne mødes og engagerer sig i deliberationen, bør de være lydhøre over for indvendinger fra andre deltagere og anerkende de andre deltageres bekymringer. Antagelsen om at deliberation er med til at sikre lydhørhed, er ikke kun et normativt krav fra deliberative demokrater, derimod argumenterer de også for, at idet deliberation bringer forskellige erfaringer og interesser sammen, vil deltagerne blive tvunget til at handle i overensstemmelse med antagelsen i deres forsøg på at overtale de andre

deltagere.

Genopdagelsen af deliberation blandt demokratiteoretikerne kan blandt andet ses som en modreaktion på det moderne demokratis liberale opfattelse af politik. Det er også muligt at anskue fokuseringen på deliberativt demokrati som en generel reaktion mod på den ene side konkrete problemer ved det repræsentative demokrati, som manglende tillid til politikere, fravær af partiloyalitet og adskillelse mellem politikere og offentligheden, og på den anden side generelle tendenser som den tilsyneladende individualisering, globalisering, europæisering og pluralisering af normer og værdier i samfundet. Disse forhold er argumenter for, at deliberation bør tilskrives en større rolle i en kontinuerlig udvikling af demokratiet. Endvidere argumenterer mange deliberative demokrater for at politikerne ikke kan nøjes med at sætte deres lid til det mandat, der blev tildelt dem ved valghandlingen. Derimod må de ud og møde borgerne og indgå i en argumentationsudveksling for på den baggrund at retfærdiggøre og berettige de kollektive valg, som træffes. Derfor argumenterer deliberative demokrater også for, at der er brug for nye fora for deliberation som supplement til de etablerede institutioner i den parlamentariske styringskæde - folkehøringen kan opfattes som et sådan supplement.

Folkehøringen opfattes kun som et supplement og ikke et alternativ, fordi deltagerne ikke kan stilles formelt til ansvar for deres holdninger i modsætning til f.eks. traditionelt valgte repræsentanter. Trods det, at der ikke er nogen formel mekanisme, der holder deltagerne ansvarlige, vil idealet om at deltagerne skal argumentere for deres holdninger over for de andre deltagere være med til at sikre en vis ansvarlighed. Tillige viste folkehøringen, at deltagerne også pålægger sig et ekstra ansvar, idet de tilkendegiver i deres svar, at de i høj grad følte, at de talte for de borgere, som ikke havde mulighed for at deltage.

Deliberation kan potentielt styrke flere aspekter ved en demokratisk proces. Modsat vil modstandere af deliberation også hævde, at deliberation har nogle aspekter, som kan være skadelige for at nå målet om, at en politisk proces skal være lige og alle ens rettigheder skal sikres. På den måde kan egenskaberne ved deliberationen opdeles i ønskelige og uønskelige egenskaber. De ønskelige egenskaber af deliberationen kan betragtes som argumenter for deliberationens positive betydning i et demokrati. I tabellen nedenfor opsummeres egenskaberne.

## Egenskaberne ved deliberation

Normative ønskelige	Normative uønskelige
<b>Deliberationens effekt på viden</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uddanner borgerne og øger deres viden</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Selektive læringsmønstre og fordomme forstærkes</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på meningsdannelse</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sammenhængende, konsistente og stabile holdninger dannes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ustabile, inkonsistente og forvirrede holdninger</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på løsningsmulighederne</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Øget kollektiv tankegang, som skaber mulighed for alternative løsninger</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gruppeprocessen afspejler konformitet og gruppetænkning</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på tolerance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Øger den gensidige forståelse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bringer latente konflikter frem og grundfæster de umiddelbare meninger</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på berettigelsen af løsningerne</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fremmer det fælles bedste og minimerer brugen af det egeninteressen som reference for argumentation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Argumentation ifølge egeninteressen og strategisk brug af argumentation ifølge det fælles bedste</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på den politiske selvtillid</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skaber en politisk aktiverende effekt</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• En gang deltagelse var nok, aldrig igen</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på implementationen</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skaber en bred støtte til beslutningerne som giver en mere succesfuld implementering pga. bedre forståelse for beslutningerne</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beslutningstagerne var ikke lydhøre over for deltagerne i deliberationen</li></ul>
<b>Deliberationens effekt på inklusiviteten</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliberation er en proces, hvor alle kan udtrykke deres holdning som de ønsker</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visse meninger er udelukket fra processen</li></ul>
<b>Deliberation og offentlighed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliberation er en gennemsigtig og offentlig proces</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Åbenhed er i konflikt med meningsændring</li></ul>

Udgangspunktet i forhold til de ni egenskaber ved deliberationen er pragmatisk, idet de betragtes som potentielle egenskaber ved deliberation. I hvilken grad de er fremherskende, er kontekstbestemt. Det vil også sige, at en proces kan være mere eller mindre deliberativ. Jo mere de ni egenskaber er opfyldt, desto mere deliberativ er den demokratiske proces.

Egenskaberne bruges også til at vurdere deliberationen i den nationale

folkehøring om euroen. I det næste afsnit fremhæves nogle af resultaterne fra folkehøringen i relation til de ni egenskaber. Til slut følger en kort konklusion og perspektivering.

### *Deliberationens egenskaber som de udspillede sig under folkehøringen*

Processen op til folkehøringen såvel som processen under folkehøringen, havde en positiv indvirkning på deltageres faktuelle viden i forhold til euroen. Læringen kan primært tilskrives den øgede opmærksomhed på mediernes behandling af emnet, men også deltageres læsning af informationsmaterialet spillede en vigtig rolle. Deltagerens læring og perception viste sig dog i nogen grad at være selektiv i forhold til deres umiddelbare mening om euroen. Det vil sige, at de deltagere som var positivt stemt over for euroen havde tendens til at lære faktuelle oplysninger, som støtter ja-siden og omvendt. Under folkehøringen tvang deliberationen deltagerne til at blive konfronteret med fakta fra begge sider af eurospørgsmålet, og på den måde blev de selektive læringsmønstre mindre fremherskende efter deltagerne havde debatteret emnet under folkehøringen.

25% af deltagerne ændrede deres stemmeintention mindst en gang under folkehøringsprocessen. Meningsændring, målt på forskellige dimensioner i deltageres holdning til euroen, varierer mellem 12% og 36% af deltagerne, når en ændring opfattes som ændring fra enig til uenig eller omvendt. På den måde har folkehøringen bidraget til at deltagerne har ændret deres mening, men niveauet af meningsændringen viser også, at deliberative demokraters antagelse om at meninger i udgangspunktet er endogene har empirisk støtte.

De efter-deliberative meninger er mere konsistente i den forstand, at deltagerne ved den afsluttende måling er bedre til at binde relevante og sammenfaldende holdningsdimensioner sammen. Trods den stigende meningskonsistens betyder det ikke, at deltagerne stædigt holder fast i deres holdning, da meningsstabiliteten ikke påvirkes. Grundliggende kan man beskrive meningsændringen fra første gang deltagerne blev kontaktet til efter folkehøringen som et skifte fra tilfældige holdninger til reflektive holdninger. Meningsændringerne efter folkehøringen kan i højere grad betegnes som en bevidst holdningsændring, idet niveauet af meningskonsistens nået på folkehøringen bevares, også tre måneder efter folkehøringen. Derfor kan det konkluderes, at folkehøringsprocessen har styrket og forbedret kvaliteten af deltagerens holdninger, men ikke

stabiliteten.

Gruppedynamikken under deliberationen påvirker meningsdannelsesprocessen. For eksempel er der fundet psykologisk 'entrapment'. Det vil sige, at jo mere deltagerne har investeret i deres mening desto mindre sandsynligt er det, at de vil ændre den. Grupperne viser ikke noget tegn på generel konformitet i deres meninger, og enighed fremkommer heller ikke. Indikationerne for de forskellige gruppedynamikker udfordrer deliberative demokraters forestilling om deliberationens egenskaber. Det vil sige, at deliberation i praksis ikke blot er en fri argumentationsudveksling, men også en proces, hvor forskellige gruppedynamikker er på spil.

Videoptagelserne af fire grupper viser, at deliberationen udvikler sig ret forskelligt. I nogle grupper var deliberationen konfronterende og i andre var den mere abstrakt. Endvidere var der forskel på hvordan, hvor tidligt og i hvilken grad grupperne åbenlyst bandt sig en bestemt holdning. Trods disse forskelle er det ikke muligt at konkludere entydigt på disse forskellige måder grupperne udvikler sig på. Derimod viser forskelligheden, at deliberation udvikles meget forskelligt afhængigt af, hvordan de enkelte deltagere agerer.

Den deliberative proces øger deltageres tolerance og gensidige forståelse for hinandens forskellige meninger. Således er en af deliberationens normative ønskelige egenskaber bekræftet i folkehøringen.

Under deliberationen argumenterer deltagerne i højere grad til fordel for den offentlige interesse, men egeninteresse argumentation er også tilstede, dog i mindre grad. Selvom den normative ønskelige egenskab ifølge deliberativt demokrati er, at argumentation med henvisning til den offentlige interesse vil dominere deliberation, viser tilstedeværelsen af argumentation med henvisning til egeninteresse, at den ideale forestilling om deliberativt demokrati også er påvirket af elementer af, hvordan politik foregår i hverdagen. Dominansen af argumenter, som fremmer den fælles interesse er inspirerende for deliberative demokrater, da det giver empirisk støtte til deres normative antagelse. Tilstedeværelsen af argumenter, som refererer til egeninteressen opfordrer deliberative demokrater til at tage et bredere udgangspunkt i deres normative antagelse med hensyn til, hvilke argumenter der vil være tilstede under deliberation.

Deliberativ ansvarlighed kommer også frem under deliberation. Det vil sige, at deltagerne viser en villighed til at retfærdiggøre deres interesser for andre deltagere og viser lydhørhed over for andres argumenter. Men også en form for selv-pålagt eller moralsk ansvarlighed er fundet i deltageres svar.

Det vil sige, at deltagerne svarer at de også taler for borgere, som ikke havde mulighed for at deltage i folkehøringen. Indikationen af deliberativ ansvarlighed og selv-pålagt ansvarlighed er med til at legitimere deliberation, men det er også et inspirerende resultat for deliberative demokrater, da det viser, at deliberation i dette tilfælde skaber en følelse af ansvarlighed. Det vil sige, at selvom der ikke eksisterer nogen formel ansvarlighed i forhold til offentligheden, er deltageres argumenter til dels underlagt deliberativ og selv-pålagt ansvarlighed.

Deliberation øger ikke kun deltageres faktuelle viden, men øger også deres følelse af at være kompetent til at engagere sig i en politisk diskussion. Ideen, at deltagelse i en politisk arena fører til deltagelse i en anden politisk arena er moderat bekræftet, fordi deltagerne viser en moderat stigning i deres villighed til at stille op til et politisk embede.

Aktivitetsniveauet mellem deltagerne er ulige fordelt. De bedre uddannede og deltagere med høj faktisk viden er mere aktive end andre. Sammenlignes meninger mellem de aktive og de passive deltagere, er der en forskel, som viser, at de argumenter, som nemmest kan udtrykkes i objektive termer oftest er tilstede i deliberationen. Dette viser, hvordan en af de normative uønskede egenskaber ved deliberationen er tilstede i den deliberative proces. At visse argumenter har tendens til at blive udelukket, giver støtte til at opfordre deliberative demokrater til at inddrage dette aspekt i deres teori. I særdeleshed fordi når deliberationen hjulpet af en neutral moderator har tendens til at udelukke visse argumenter, vil deliberation, hvor en neutral moderator ikke er tilstede, have tendens til at forstærke udelukkelsen. Det vil sige, at hverdagspolitik og -deliberation i højere grad vil være påvirket af at visse argumenter udelukkes.

Sammenlignes offentlig deliberation med lukket deliberation viser det sig, at i offentlig deliberation er deltagerne mindre tilbøjelige til at ændre deres meninger. Denne sammenhæng får nogen empirisk støtte under folkehøringen, da de passive deltagere sammenlignet med de aktive deltagere i højere grad ændrer deres holdning. I denne sammenhæng er passivitet dog kun en svag indirekte indikator for offentlighed og det er tænkeligt, at andre variable også påvirker denne sammenhæng. Alligevel viser analyser, at der eksisterer en svag afvejning mellem graden af offentlighed og niveauet af meningsændringer under deliberation.

Generelt har de normative egenskaber ved deliberation fundet bred støtte i de empiriske analyser af folkehøringen. Alligevel bør et par skeptiske

bemærkninger fremhæves. Disse er eksistensen af: effekten af gruppedynamik, egeninteresse argumentation, afvejningen mellem offentlighed og meningsændring og i særdeleshed skævheden i de fremførte argumenter.

### *Konklusion og perspektivering*

Analyserne har vist, at de mange egenskaber som deliberative demokrater fremhæver ved deliberationen, i høj grad var tilstede under den nationale folkehøring om euroen. På den baggrund er resultaterne inspirerende for deliberative demokrater, da de langt hen ad vejen støtter deres antagelser om deliberationens positive betydning for en demokratisk proces.

Man skal dog være varsom med at generalisere resultaterne fra folkehøringen til andre deliberative processer. Ved folkehøringen blev der gjort meget for at skabe de bedste rammer for deliberationen (f.eks. brugen af neutrale moderatører, balanceret informationsmateriale). Derfor er det langt fra sandsynligt, at deliberation udspiller sig på samme måde i andre fora. Men det man kan sige er, at idet egeninteresse argumentation og tendensen til at nogle deltagere dominerede debatten også var tilstede under folkehøringen, er det sandsynligt, at disse uønskede kendetegn ved deliberation også vil være tilstede i mindre ideelle processer.

Rekrutteringsprocessen til folkehøringen har vist sig at være en af de største metodiske udfordringer. Hvis folkehøringen skal bevare sine kendetegn ved kombination af deliberation og repræsentativitet kræver det, at der gøres en stor og særlig indsats i forbindelse med rekrutteringen. Men den nationale folkehøring har til gengæld også vist, at det er muligt at samle et tilnærmelsesvis repræsentativt udsnit af befolkningen til en debat om et kompliceret emne.

En udfordring for deliberativt demokrati er at deliberation fremmer de argumenter, som lettest kan fremføres i objektive termer og med reference til det fælles bedste. Fordelagtiggørelsen af disse argumenter har tendens til at skabe en skævhed i deliberationen, som bringer den politiske lighed i fare. For at imødegå denne udfordring bør et større spektrum af argumentationstyper gøres legitime under deliberationen, men problemet er dog, at det i sidste ende stadig vil være argumenterne, som kan udtrykkes i objektive termer, som vil stå stærkest. Der eksisterer altså en grundliggende afvejning mellem politisk lighed og den egenskab ved deliberation, som fremmer argumentation med henvisning til generelle principper og det

fælles bedste. Den virkelige udfordring bliver derfor at deliberativt demokrati skal gøre op med antagelsen om, at det fælles bedste er eksogent givet, idet det fælles bedste i høj grad defineres af den proces, det indgår i. Derfor bliver politikken også i højere grad opfattet som kampen om, hvem der kan definere det fælles bedste, frem for at argumentere for at politik skal opfattes som et forsøg på at finde et udefra givent fælles bedste. Ved at erkende at det fælles bedste skabes af forskellige interesser, bliver det fælles bedste også reduceret til det, det er - en politisk skabelse.



# Appendix

The appendix primarily contains the various questionnaires used within the project including the frequencies for the questions. The appendix is available by contacting the author or can be found at [www.universitypress.dk/Hansen2004.pdf](http://www.universitypress.dk/Hansen2004.pdf).

## Contents of the appendix

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*Deliberative Democracy and Opinion Formation* presents an ambitious and systematic approach to deliberative democracy and provides arguments on how to review the theory of deliberative democracy.

“In this book, Kasper M. Hansen offers us a rich dialogue between empirical work and political philosophy. This book should be read by all those with an interest in deliberative democracy--in practice as well as in theory.”

*James S. Fishkin, Stanford University*

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