

Anna Novák

Good representation

What are the determinants of a good
representative?

Doctoral School of International
Relations and Political Science

Supervisor:
Réka Várnagy, PhD

© Anna Novák

Corvinus University of Budapest
Doctoral School of International
Relations and Political Science
Department of Political Sciences

Good representation

What are the determinants of a good representative?

Doctoral Dissertation

Anna Novák

Budapest

2025

Acknowledgements

This PhD program has been not only one of the biggest challenges of my life, but also one of the best experiences. Although I only started it in 2020, the idea had been on my agenda since 2017. That year, after completing my BA studies with the final exam, my mentor and supervisor, Réka Várnagy, outlined my options, including the PhD program. That was the moment everything was set in motion.

So first, I would like to express my gratitude to Réka, for always standing by my side. Thank you for your tireless support, not only on a professional level, but personally as well. I feel lucky to have worked with you. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to join the OTKA research project, where I had the privilege of working alongside Gabriella Ilonszki, DSc, from whom I also gained invaluable insights.

I am also grateful to the other professors at Corvinus University of Budapest. Their expertise and helpfulness were a great source of learning throughout my academic journey.

I am especially thankful to my family – my parents, my older brother, and my grandmother. Without their continuous support and belief in me, none of this would have been possible.

I must also express my gratitude to my colleagues at work: Ancsa, Bandi, and Norbi. Working in an environment where continuous learning and knowledge are valued and appreciated is a privilege. Over the years, they not only allowed but actively supported my academic endeavors, for which I will always be grateful to them.

And, of course, this section would not be complete without mentioning Judit. It is an interesting twist of fate that our first conversation took place years ago, outside academic life. That conversation back then was also decisive, as it inspired me and gave me determination. That is why it was only natural that, years later, I called her without hesitation to tell her that I had reached a point in the program where I needed her help. That phone call has since led to collaborative projects.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends, Fruzsí, Lilla, Regi, and others. Their support and love helped me get through many difficult moments. Knowing that they were interested in what I was working on was a constant motivation. I could not have done it without all of you.

Abstract

This doctoral dissertation aims to deepen and refine our understanding of political representation – which refers to the institutionalized relationship between electorates and their representatives – by highlighting the effects of candidate characteristics, representatives' actions, and personality traits. The theoretical framework incorporates not only the classic theories of representation, such as the work of Pitkin and Mansbridge, but also introduces newer approaches, such as the theories of Celis, Childs, and Saward. The dissertation also builds on the literature of political psychology, voter behavior, and political leadership, aiming to connect these disciplines and thus gain a more comprehensive picture of political representation and voters' expectations.

To answer the research questions, I used a mixed-method approach, including both quantitative and qualitative research tools: a vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment conducted on a representative sample of Hungarian voters, and two focus group discussions. The research questions focus on the desired characteristics, actions, and personality traits of theoretical candidates and representatives. The first group of hypotheses focuses on theoretical candidates' characteristics and their effects on voter choices. The second group of hypotheses focuses on the actions of theoretical candidates and how voters evaluate them depending on the context.

The results of the dissertation confirm that voters strongly prefer local candidates over their non-local counterparts. Voters' preferences for younger and female candidates are also indicated, which seems to be a change, compared to the contemporary Hungarian political landscape. Regarding the actions of theoretical representatives, the results reveal that Hungarian voters do not prefer experts in the representational process during times of crisis. Instead, they prefer representatives who follow voters' interests during the decision-making process.

The dissertation highlights that political representation is indeed a dynamic process. Furthermore, I found evidence that political representation can be characterized by *context-responsive demand*, which indicates that voters' expectations and evaluations of representatives change dynamically according to the situational context. This work contributes to our understanding of political representation models and theories and emphasizes the importance of personal characteristics, actions, personality traits, and contextual factors in voters' evaluation.

Keyword: *political representation; personal characteristics; decision-making; crisis; conjoint analysis; quantitative research; qualitative research*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	8
List of figures.....	9
1. Introduction.....	10
2. Theoretical framework.....	13
2.1. The object of the research.....	13
2.2. Who do we vote for?.....	17
2.2.1. Descriptive representation	17
2.2.2. Locality	18
2.2.3. Affinity.....	20
2.2.4. Social identity	25
2.2.5. Styles of representation: delegate and trustee models.....	29
2.3. What do they do?.....	31
2.3.1. Substantive representation	31
2.3.2. The process-approach of representation.....	32
2.3.3. Whose interests and opinions to follow?.....	34
2.3.4. The result-approach of representation.....	36
2.4. What are they like?	43
2.5. Summarizing the theoretical framework.....	50
3. Research design and method	52
3.1. Research questions and hypotheses.....	52
3.2. Case selection for the research.....	56
3.3. Vignette and conjoint survey experiments.....	62
3.4. Critiques of the methodology.....	66
3.5. The first vignette.....	69
3.6. The second vignette	72
3.7. Attributes of the quantitative study sample.....	78
3.8. Data collection.....	79
3.9. Representativeness of the quantitative study sample	79
3.10. The focus group discussion.....	81
4. Data analysis.....	83
4.1. Methods of data analysis.....	83
4.2. Results of the first vignette	83
4.3. Results of the second vignette.....	103
4.4. Results of the focus group discussion.....	112

5.	Discussion and limitations	116
5.1.	Discussion and interpretation of the first vignette results	116
5.2.	Methodological limitations of the first vignette	120
5.3.	Discussion and interpretation of the second vignette results	122
5.4.	Methodological limitations of the second vignette.....	126
5.5.	Discussion and interpretation of the focus group discussion.....	128
5.6.	Methodological limitations of the focus group discussion	129
6.	Conclusion and implications	130
	References.....	137
	Appendix 1: The survey experiment	156
	Appendix 2: Focus group discussion guide.....	174

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Pitkin's four views of representation (Source: Dovi, 2018; Pitkin, 1967).....	15
Table 2. An overview of affinity variables (author's own).....	23
Table 3. Example for paired conjoint design (author's own).....	65
Table 4. All the set of characteristics used in the first question/vignette (author's own)	72
Table 5. All the set of characteristics used in the second question/vignette (author's own)...	77
Table 6. Answers to the last question (author's own).....	79
Table 7. The composition of the research sample (author's own).....	80
Table 8. AMCEs on preferences in candidate characteristics (author's own)	85
Table 9. Detailed results of non-local candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own)	89
Table 10. Detailed results of candidate with two children advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	92
Table 11. Detailed results of candidate with experience as mayor advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	95
Table 12. Detailed results of candidate with experience with parliamentary experience advantage/disadvantage (author's own)	96
Table 13. An overview of the results for the first vignette (author's own).....	97
Table 14. AMCEs on preferences of female and male respondents (author's own).....	99
Table 15. AMCEs on voter preferences under and over the age of 40 (author's own)	100
Table 16. AMCEs on voter preferences under the age of 50 (author's own)	100
Table 17. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an economic crisis (author's own)	105
Table 18. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of a social crisis (author's own).....	106
Table 19. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an environmental crisis (author's own).....	107
Table 20. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process (author's own)	109
Table 21. Detailed ACIE results on interactions of the gender variable (author's own)	110
Table 22. Detailed ACIE results on interactions of the interest variable (author's own)	112
Table 23. Extract from the focus group results (author's own).....	115

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Group membership, group identification, social identity, and political identity (author's own).....	27
Figure 2. Mean Number of Technocratic Ministers Per Government in Europe, 2000–2020. (Source: Vittori et al., 2023).....	61
Figure 3. Number of technocrats during legislative periods in Hungary (author's own, based on the TMD).....	61
Figure 4. AMCEs on preferences in candidate characteristics (author's own).....	84
Figure 5. Female candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	86
Figure 6. 52-years-old candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	87
Figure 7. Non-local candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	88
Figure 8. Married candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	90
Figure 9. Candidate with two children advantage/disadvantage (author's own)	91
Figure 10. Candidate with national-level experience advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	93
Figure 11. Candidate with experience as mayor advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	94
Figure 12. Candidate with parliamentary advantage/disadvantage (author's own).....	95
Figure 13. ACIE on interactions of the parental status variable (author's own).....	101
Figure 14. ACIE on interactions of the previous political position variable (author's own)	102
Figure 15. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an economic crisis (author's own).....	105
Figure 16. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of a social crisis (author's own).....	106
Figure 17. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an environmental crisis (author's own).....	107
Figure 18. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process (author's own).....	108
Figure 19. ACIEs on interactions of the gender variable (author's own).....	110
Figure 20. ACIEs on interactions of the interest variable (author's own).....	111

1. Introduction

Politics, as its core, has always focused on people and their decisions. Political representation is the institutionalized form of the connection between electorates and their representatives. The concept of political representation is multilayered: it involves multiple actors, various possible ways of connection, and even multiple political institutions.

In the simplest approach, there are the voters and the representatives whom these voters elect. However, representation is not just about electing someone we consider most suitable for the position based on certain criteria. Instead, representation is a complex, multi-level process. It is complex because it also encompasses the actions of representatives after getting into the office, and because it is shaped by various expectations from the voters. Constituents may expect representatives to resemble them in certain ways, or they may expect them to act in their best interests, among other possible expectations. Representation is also a dynamic process as voters' expectations are constantly changing depending on the environment.

Constituents and representatives embody only part of the overall system. Alongside these individual-level actors, we must also consider, for instance, political parties, independent political actors, and different institutions. The term multi-level also can be interpreted in territorial terms, as politics exist not only on a local level, but also on national and supranational levels.

The connection between voters and their representatives varies – ranging from strong meaningful bonds to scenarios where there is hardly any connection between voters and representatives. In addition to this, one must consider the broader institutional context when thinking about representation. For example, in proportional representation systems, the legislature is supposed to mirror voters' preferences more effectively than in majoritarian systems. This sheds light on the fact that political representation is not a simple and straightforward transaction between electorates and representatives. Rather, this relationship is shaped and affected by numerous factors, such as different institutions, personal characteristics and voter expectations.

Although the field of political representation has a significant body of theoretical literature, empirical research focusing on voters' expectations remains less extensive. Scholars have studied political representation from various aspects over the past decades. Some of them explored representation from the perspective of representatives (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 2004). This approach involves the examination of the motivations and communication of

representatives, among many other factors. Other scholars have examined representation from the perspective of voters (Achen & Bartels, 2016; Allen, 2021; Downs, 1957). Downs (1957) presumed that voters were rational decision-makers whose main goal is to maximize their own benefit. Allen (2021) emphasizes the importance of voters' role in political decision-making processes – especially in difficult times, when representing minorities in need becomes crucial. Achen and Bartels (2016), in contrast to Downs' work, state that voters often make decisions based on identity or party loyalty, as they are not informed or rational enough.

Most previous work has focused either on the motivations of representatives or on the voting decisions of constituents, while the voters' expectations have been examined less. This applies both to voters' expectations regarding the personal characteristics of representatives and to voters' expectations about representation as a process. The aim of my research is therefore to map out what expectations voters have of the person of a good representative and of the actions of a good representative, reflecting the process of good representation.

The concept of good representation does not only mean that voters accept the decisions of their representatives, but it also goes beyond that. Voters also need to feel that the way the decision was made, the process, is legitimate and represents them.

An example of this could be the case of the building of a proposed industrial park. Voters are divided on the idea: some support the initiative due to the new potential jobs, while others strongly oppose it because of the anticipated environmental impact. The local representative decides against the investment due to environmental concerns. Although some voters disagree with this decision, they still feel that they were well represented. How is this possible? The solution lies in the representative's actions. They held a public forum in advance and listened to the interests and opinions of all parties. In addition, they communicated the reasoning behind the decision in a transparent manner and even involved experts in the decision-making process. In the end, they explained the rationale for their final decision. Derived from these, I emphasize the importance of the process over the output. Good representation is a complex experience that is linked both to the representatives' personal characteristics and their actions.

To be able to thoroughly investigate and examine the concept of good representation, I draw on the knowledge of three distinct disciplines: representation theory, political psychology, and voter behavior. I emphasize political representation theories, as they provide the core of my research. In simple terms, political representation offers the theoretical framework, while political psychology contributes explanatory mechanisms, and the field of voter behavior

complements these with empirical data and findings. My goal is not to formulate and test a new theoretical framework, but rather to explore how voters think about good representation in practice, across different contexts. I approach this question by combining existing literature on political representation and voters' behavior and by incorporating findings of emerging, interdisciplinary fields such as leadership studies. Through employing diverse and effective methodological tools I aim to capture subtle, and potentially previously hidden aspects of how voters evaluate good representatives and good representation.

As a voter and researcher, I have long been interested in why we make the political decisions we do. During my psychology studies, one fundamental principle took root in me: individual differences. Conversations with family, friends, and acquaintances have repeatedly confirmed that no matter how similar we are to each other, our preferences often differ. These can manifest in different ways – one person likes dogs, another cats. Some focus on theory, others on practicalities. The same applies to political preferences. While we often describe ourselves as left- or right-wing, liberal or conservative, these labels only scratch the surface. Why does someone prefer this politician, while others reject them outright? Why do we feel well represented by one person and not by another? Does the “*good representative*”, who is preferred by everyone, exist? Or, similarly, are there traits that trigger rejection? And what about the interactions between the individual aspects? How do their combinations affect our evaluations? These questions may seem abstract, but they are central to understanding political representation. Through this research, I explore them using hypothetical candidates and theoretical scenarios, in order to gain a better understanding of our political evaluations. My interdisciplinary background – as both a psychologist and political scientist – allows me to examine these questions from multiple aspects. With this dissertation, my aim is to deepen our understanding of what voters expect from good representatives, laying the foundation for future research that can examine *why* voters hold these expectations. My work is thus rather abstract: instead of asking voters to choose among existing parties or even candidates of existing parties, I present them with imagined scenarios, a limited number of cues, and ask questions about abstract preferences. This approach poses a significant limitation to my work, as it cannot be directly applied to elections or to studies of popularity. However, my aim is not direct application, but an insight into the often abstract values, preferences, and expectations voters hold about representatives and representation, which indeed often get distorted in real life situations.

To explore the phenomenon presented above, I have formulated several research questions, which I present in the relevant section of my dissertation. My main research questions are: *What do voters want? What factors influence voters' preferences? What is the personality of the ideal representative like?* I expect voters' expectations to be dynamically changing, in terms of the personal characteristics of theoretical candidates and in terms of the actions of theoretical representatives. It is important to emphasize that in one section of my work I examine the personal characteristics of theoretical candidates, while in another I focus on the actions of theoretical representatives. I use these terms consistently to accurately reflect the wording used in the research. Regarding the personality of the ideal representative, I expect voters to have explicit preferences, especially for qualities such as professional experience, knowledge, and communication skills.

The relevance and timeliness of this research stems from the dynamic changes in the political and social environment in Hungary. These changes are closely linked to the growing voter discontent and on the challenges representative linkages face. Over the past months – since the appearance of the TISZA party on the political scene, a significant restructuring of the Hungarian party system has begun. This is related to declining trust, increasing uncertainty, and shifting voter attitudes, as signaled by recent public opinion poll results (Bíró-Nagy et al., 2025, p. 15; Political Capital, 2025). These polls reveal that voters' expectations are not only changing, but also complex. In this context, maintaining the legitimacy of representative processes and strengthening democratic decision-making pose serious challenges for the Hungarian political system. Therefore, the in-depth exploration of voters' expectation is essential, as it contributes to a better understanding of the connection between constituents and their representatives.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The object of the research

In the field of political representation, hypotheses and objects of research vary across a broad spectrum. In my work, the focus is solely on voters; they constitute the object of the research, as they are the foundation of the system. People's interests and preferences transform into voting behavior, which then result in election outcomes – namely, in the election of political representatives (Weßels, 2007). In this dissertation, I put the emphasis on the elected official – who are they? What do they do? What are they like? Did they get elected because of their

personal characteristics, their actions, or their perceived personality? All these questions refer to distinct models and theories of political representation. My aim is to map out voters' preferences in these areas. In this chain of events – voters' interests and opinions transforming into representation – a vague part appears at the end: the *flashbulb metaphor* of political representation. Hanna Pitkin (1967) highlights the complexity of representation with this theory. According to this metaphor, political scientists are taking flash-bulb photographs of a given structure from different angles, which can result in different interpretations of the same situation (Kurebwa, 2015; Pitkin, 1967). To avoid these misinterpretations, she argues that one needs to know the context in which representation is examined. To support this process, Pitkin (1967) identified four dimensions of representation, which need to be assessed in order to examine representation in depth (Dovi, 2018). Pitkin's four views can be seen in Table 1.

		In focus	Main Research Questions	Implicit Standards for Evaluating Representatives / Aspects of evaluating
Formalistic Representation		Institutional arrangements	What is the institutional position of a representative?	None
	Authorization	The means by which a representative obtains their office	The process of gaining power (e.g., elections)? What are the ways of enforcing their decision?	Legitimacy
	Accountability	Punishment of representative	What are the sanctioning mechanisms available to voters?	Responsivity
Symbolic Representation		How the representative “stands for” the represented	What kind of response is invoked by the representative in those being represented?	Degree of acceptance among the represented
Descriptive Representation		Degree of resemblance	Does the representative look like, have common interests with, or share certain experiences with the represented?	Accuracy of resemblance
Substantive Representation		The representatives’ actions	Does the representative advance the policy preferences that serve the interests of the represented?	Achievements

Table 1. Pitkin's four views of representation (Source: Dovi, 2018; Pitkin, 1967)

Pitkin's work uncovers the crux with these views of political representation. It is not only indispensable in the field of political representation, but also timeless. Her work explores the context of representation and the relationship between voters and representatives. This is proven by the fact that even decades later, Pitkin's four views of representation serve as a baseline for political representation research. I will elaborate on the particular aspects of the theory in the subsequent chapters of my dissertation.

Pitkin highlights the essence of political representation through these views, with Formalistic representation giving the institutional framework and Symbolic, Descriptive, Substantive representation focusing on the relationship between voters and representatives. Pitkin's *Symbolic Representation* concentrates on symbols and the emotional connection between citizens and representatives – something they mutually share with each other. Queen Elizabeth II exemplifies the importance and effect of *Symbolic Representation*. Her presence and speeches at various events gave a sense of identity and unity to the citizens. *Descriptive Representation* emphasizes the importance of representatives resembling their voters in miscellaneous characteristics, like race, gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic background. This idea is based on the premise that representatives who share similarities with their voters are more likely to adequately understand their interests, thus they are more capable of representing them effectively. The Squad of the U.S. House of Representatives serves as an example in this case. The election of the members of the Squad – Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib – shows that descriptive representation is gaining momentum in the composition of the US legislative bodies. This shift also suggests that voters attribute value to certain similarities – such as racial or ethnic ones – and are willing to support candidates on this basis.

To be able to draw a clear picture of political representation and voters' expectations related to it, the following subchapters will present different approaches to representation. With the help of these approaches, I will be able to answer my main question: *What do voters want?* To thoroughly explore this question and its different aspects, I apply a two-fold approach in my quantitative research. In one case, I present peaceful times without any disturbing external factors, allowing me to focus solely on the personal characteristics of theoretical candidates. In the other case, I present challenging times, where I focus on the actions of the theoretical representatives. These approaches, combined with qualitative research examining the personality traits of a good representative, help me answer my research questions.

2.2. Who do we vote for?

As Pitkin (1967) points out, the resemblance between voters and their representatives plays a crucial role in political representation. This resemblance can stem from various characteristics, such as age, gender, race, or even geographical location. This is a non-exhaustive list of potential aspects. In any of these cases, the essence remains the same: Pitkin's premise is that representatives who resemble their electors are more likely to understand their interests and opinions. For example, a younger candidate or representative is more likely to know what younger voters want than an older one. Similarly, a candidate or representative living in the same geographical area – constituency – will have more information and knowledge about that specific area's interests and needs, as well as those of its constituents. All of this can lead to a higher quality of representation. In the upcoming subchapters, I will present some of the key representational models and theories focusing on the person who represents the voters.

2.2.1. Descriptive representation

The first approach to examining the person who represents voters based on resemblance is the descriptive model of representation. In this case, the main question is: "*Who can best represent the voters?*". The knowledge base needed to answer this question is provided not only by representation theories but also by studies in the fields of voter behavior and political psychology. Regarding representation theories, the importance of Edmund Burke's work should be highlighted. From a chronological perspective, his work was decisive in the subsequent development of political representation. Since his work goes beyond the classical concept descriptive representation, I will present his theory in detail at the end of the chapter, in subchapter '2.2.5. *Styles of representation: delegate and trustee models*'.

In representation theories, the term "*descriptive representation*" was introduced by Griffiths and Wollheim (1960, p. 188). This approach refers to the scenario when representatives are identical in some ways to their constituents, in other words, a member of the group becomes the representative. Women political actors represent women, and a member of a minority represents that minority. This approach is not restricted solely to "visible characteristics" (Mansbridge, 1999, p. 629), such as gender. Invisible features, such as shared residency, can also serve as a basis for descriptive representation. Residents, who have lived in a district for a long time often prefer a candidate born in that district, as this guarantees shared interests with the voters and the attachment to these interests (Mansbridge, 1999) – for the critical role of locality in representation see '2.2.2. *Locality*' subchapter.

The resemblance model of representation is strongly linked to the previously presented descriptive approach of representation. The resemblance model puts an emphasis on the overall similarity between citizens and their representatives, and it focuses on the sympathetic attachment between voters and representatives. By this, the resemblance model presumes that representatives and voters might share experiences and values (Arowolo, 2015; Burke, 1975).

In the following sections of this dissertation, I will present the different forms and approaches to similarity and resemblance between voters and their representatives.

2.2.2. Locality

Historical roots of political representation theories bring us all the way back to the feudal Middle Ages. As Judge points out, “*the basis of representation in Britain has, since medieval times, been territorial communities*” (Judge, 1999, p. 46). There was a clear territorial distinction between the two represented units in the Commons. The two represented units were the counties and the boroughs. While representatives through counties represented the landed interests, those from boroughs represented commerce. Resulting from this, one might assume that in this arrangement instead of the interests of people, the interests of the nation were represented in the legislature (Childs & Cowley, 2011; Reeve & Ware, 1992). This operational practice is deeply incorporated into one of the oldest democracies, into the British political dynamics, as shown by empirical results. In the early 2000s, researchers found that British voters prioritized local issues more than they did national ones (An Audit of Political Engagement, 2007; Childs & Cowley, 2011). Linked to this, local issues are not only significantly dominant in political actors’ electoral campaigns (Robinson & Fisher, 2005), but the local economic performance can also influence voters’ choice (Johnston & Pattie, 2006). Locality provides the foundation for political representation, as presented. Not only does it provide a solid foundation for this conceptual work, but it also plays a crucial role in nowadays’ politics. As time passed by, modernization and globalization transformed the world. Whereas land and ownership were central in the feudal, medieval ages, today’s focus has shifted to other territorial issues, such as available resources, infrastructure, and environmental protection. Many works have demonstrated this preference to local candidates following Key (1949) who pointed out that local candidates have an advantage at elections – a phenomenon called friends-and-neighbors voting. He pointed out that a candidate “*gains support, not primarily for what he stands for or because of his capacities, but because of where he lives. A more or less totally irrelevant appeal – back to home-town boy – can exert no little influence over an electorate not habituated to the types of voting behavior characteristics of a two-party situation*” (Key, 1949,

p. 41). This might lead to lack of accountability and weaknesses is of policy representation (Campbell et al., 2019; W. E. Miller & Stokes, 1963). Derived from these, according to Key (1949), the phenomena of friends-and-neighbors voting “*justifies a diagnosis of low voter-interest in public issues and a susceptibility to control by the irrelevant appeal to support the home-town boy*” (Key, 1949, p. 37).

While Key clearly judged the home-appeal and saw it as a sign of voters’ laziness, the literature offers two distinctive possible explanations for the phenomenon. First, spatial proximity can translate to more intense communication between voters and candidates (Arzheimer & Evans, 2012, 2014). Results show that even in situations, where voters have same amount of information about both the local and non-local candidate, they tend to choose the candidate with local roots (Campbell et al., 2019; Campbell & Cowley, 2014). Second, the local proximity between candidates and voters might translate into the shared interests (Campbell et al., 2019; Childs & Cowley, 2011; Meredith, 2013). Schulte-Cloos and Bauer take this argument even further by stating that “*that voters’ preference for local candidates may also be an expression of their place-based social identity*” (Schulte-Cloos & Bauer, 2023, p. 680) and based on their research on the German cases concluded that “*We contend that the local roots of political candidates act as social identity cues to voters.*” (Schulte-Cloos & Bauer, 2023, p. 695).

Independently from the possible explanations, many conceptual analyses show that local elections have a greater relevance from this perspective than elections on a national level. Firstly, because local candidates share common interests and opinions with their voters. Secondly – as the British example presents – a smaller electoral division supports a clearer connection between voters’ needs and candidate interests. Political actors on local levels spend their most of their time working on locally relevant issues. Thirdly, the concept of ‘personal vote’ (Cox & McCubbins, 1986) plays a significant role in locality. Let it be retrospective delivery, or prospective perception, a candidate’s proven or assumed ability to deliver has a crucial influence on voters’ choice (Arzheimer & Evans, 2014, p. 2).

The knowledge of voter behavior (Evans, 2017, p. 656-657) and political psychology also supports the locality aspects of representation. Empirically measurable effects of localism on voters can manifest in different ways – voters might suppose that a local candidate has more knowledge and information regarding the specific area and its needs (Collignon & Sajuria, 2018). Furthermore, other research suggest that localness can be linked to the accountability of the representatives, as voters can easily assess and evaluate their representative’s work (Jankowski, 2016; Kovarek, 2022). The latter findings are in line with Arzheimer and Evans’

(2014) results, as they linked localism to retrospective delivery and prospective perception. Although it is crucial to point out that other scholars found contrasting results. Former works on locality suggests that “*friends-and-neighbors*” voting erodes the accountability of political representatives (Campbell et al., 2019; Key, 1949; Stokes & Miller, 1962). These theories and results can be traced back to Pitkin’s (1967) *Formalistic Representation*.

2.2.3. Affinity

For decades, party identification was the main concept in research on political behavior, especially in the American political scene. Party identification played an essential role in clarifying vote choice and the influence of partisan elites (Bartels, 2002; Campbell et al., 1980; Huddy et al., 2015; Lavine et al., 2012). Over time, rethinking of party identification started. Studies shed light on the importance of different social dimensions that significantly influence voters’ traditional party-based identification. The effect of sharing some defining characteristic with candidates is referred to as the affinity effect in political studies, and is often referenced in research focusing on the impact of candidate gender, age, and/or race (Dolan, 2008; Sanbonmatsu, 2003; Sevi, 2021) on voting preferences. The affinity effect can be observed when voters are more likely to vote for candidates who they share a given characteristic with. Such social dimensions can be for instance the voters’ race, gender, or ethnicity, which resonate with Pitkin’s *Descriptive Representation*. For example, gender affinity occurs when women are more likely to vote for female candidates than men, or when young people prefer to vote for candidates closer to their age.

However, it is important to note that affinity has various forms, not only gender affinity. Previous theoretical and empirical works have examined the phenomenon from different angles. Some scholars emphasize gender affinity (Badas & Stauffer, 2019; Brians, 2005; Dolan, 2008; Goodyear-Grant & Croskill, 2011; Ortega et al., 2025), while others have studied the intersection of gender and racial affinity simultaneously (Matson & Fine, 2006; McGregor et al., 2017; Penney et al., 2016; Philpot & Walton, 2010). Others have explored ethnic (Aguilar et al., 2015; van der Zwan et al., 2020) and cultural affinity (McConaughy et al., 2010). In these works, the terms ‘racial’, ‘ethnic’ and ‘cultural’ are rather close to each other in meaning. Age-based affinity also plays a crucial role in related research. General findings show that voters penalize older candidates, and at the same time, younger voters show explicit preferences towards younger candidates (Eshima & Smith, 2022; McClean & Ono, 2024; Roberts & Wolak, 2023). Another aspect of the affinity effect is the religion-based one. The empirical results

display the complexity and contextuality of the affinity argument: some offer a straightforward picture, such as religion, as voters tend to favor candidates with the same religious beliefs, while candidates with other religious backgrounds face skepticism (Madrid et al., 2022). Others offer rather mixed results, such as education-based affinity. Voters with higher education backgrounds display a preference for highly educated candidates, while lower-educated voters also lean towards well-educated candidates (van Noord et al., 2023). Other results show no explicit penalty for lower-educated candidates (Carnes & Lupu, 2016). Some research build on education-based affinity, but also exceeds it, when emphasizing social class affinity. In these cases, education, income, occupation, or socio-economic background are in the focus. Previous studies display a rather complex picture – working-class voters tend to disprefer upper-class candidates, while middle-class voters tend to disprefer lower-class candidates (Carnes, 2013; Wüest & Pontusson, 2022). Empirical results confirm the theory of affinity – it is at play – but in this research I will analyze only two aspects of it.

As presented earlier, locality also acts a form of affinity – geographic affinity, as voters show a preference for candidates from their own geographical area, or constituency (Key, 1949; Nyholt, 2024). A special form of affinity is the ideological, or party-based affinity, as voters often feel an affinity for candidates who hold similar ideological views as them (Tausanovitch & Warshaw, 2018). Table 2 presents an overview of the previously presented affinity effects, and variables. The variable names in *italics* indicate the variables that I examine in this research.

Affinity type	Source	Country	Key findings
Gender	Badas & Stauffer, 2019	USA	Gender affinity in low-information contexts
	Brians, 2005	USA	Marginally greater support for female candidates from female voters
	Dolan, 2008	USA	Subtle presence of gender affinity amongst women voters
	Goodyear-Grant & Croskill, 2011	Canada	Gender affinity appears among low-party loyalty voters
	Ortega et al., 2025	Multi-country	Women are more likely to vote for women than men
Gender x Race	Matson & Fine, 2006	USA	Stronger gender affinity
	McGregor et al., 2017	Canada	No empirical support for gender affinity, but racial affinity is present
	Penney et al., 2016	Canada	Gender affinity in the case of women voters. Race can override gender
	Philpot & Walton, 2010	USA	Racial affinity in the case of black voters. White women voters showed stronger gender affinity
Race / Ethnic	Aguilar et al., 2015	Brazil	Strong race affinity in the case of black voters
	van der Zwan et al., 2020	Netherlands	Strong affinity effects
Cultural	McConnaughy et al., 2010	USA	Stronger cultural affinity effect in the case of Latino voters
Age	Eshima & Smith, 2022	Multi-country	Voters show a preference for younger candidates
	McClean & Ono, 2024	Japan	Strong affinity effect in the case of young voters. Strong bias against older candidates
	Roberts & Wolak, 2023	USA	No significant affinity effect found

Religion	Madrid et al., 2022	USA	Voters tend to favor candidates with the same religion
Education	van Noord et al., 2023	Netherlands	Voters with higher educational background prefer higher-educated candidates
	Carnes & Lupu, 2016	USA	Results show no penalty for working-class candidates
Social class	Carnes, 2013	USA	
	Wüest & Pontusson, 2022	Switzerland	Each social class prefer candidates from their own class
Geographic	Key, 1949	USA	Preference of home-town candidates
	Nyholt, 2024	Denmark	Strong preference for local candidates
Party-based	Tausanovitch & Warshaw, 2018	USA	The party-based affinity effect is stronger than affinity based on a candidate's individual ideology

Table 2. An overview of affinity variables (author's own)

As Besco (2015) points out, the affinity effect has two distinct theoretical explanations. There are the so-called “*interest-based heuristic accounts*” (Besco, 2015, p. 308), in which candidate demographics serve as heuristics. These allow voters to get a clearer picture of the candidate's competencies or policy positions, which then provides them with the knowledge needed to identify the most appropriate candidate. This account serves as the basis for the racial affinity effect. In contrast, Besco offers another possible explanation for the affinity effect – the identity-based one. Recent results show that social identity plays a crucial role in shaping voters' political decisions, thus their voting behavior (Charness et al., 2007; Chen & Li, 2009; Duell & Valasek, 2019). As a consequence, citizens tend to prefer in-group candidates (Bassi et al., 2011), since affinity suggests that candidates who share certain characteristics with voters are perceived as knowing them better. Thus, they are seen as more capable of appropriately representing voters' interests. In this sense, the concept of descriptive representation and the affinity effect also can be connected to the politics of presence (see the ‘2.3.4. *The result-approach of representation*’ subchapter), and thereby to the substantive approach of political representation.

Before taking a closer look at social identity and its connection to political representation, I need to emphasize the importance of another factor that can and does influence voters' choices when it comes to voting. As I have pointed out previously, there are several social, personal or demographic characteristics that play a crucial role in voters' decision-making processes. Beyond them, there are the personal vote earning attributes (in short: PVEA) of a candidate. The PVEA is based on the concept of the personal vote, which "*refers to that portion of a candidate's electoral support which originates in his or her personal qualities, qualifications, activities, and record*" (Cain et al., 1987, p. 9). Initially, personal vote was connected to the behavior of legislators and candidates (Shugart et al., 2005), then scholars started to emphasize the importance of different – rather static – attributes. PVEA can manifest in various ways, although the goal remains the same: legislators and candidates aim to stand out and gain visibility (Gschwend & Zittel, 2015). Once they are elected, they can do so by being active in parliament – gaining name recognition (Däubler et al., 2016). As a representative, or even before that, as a candidate, they can exhibit their PVEA by having a celebrity status (Arter, 2014), or a family relationship to a former politician (Horiuchi et al., 2020; Smith, 2018), or by being physically attractive (Put et al., 2019; Rosar et al., 2008).

A specific form of PVEA focuses on the "*localness* of politicians" (Put et al., 2019, p. 466). The concept of 'local PVEA' incorporates more than the previously presented concept of locality (see the '2.2.2. *Locality*' subchapter). While locality focuses explicitly only on the spatial proximity of the voters and candidates – for example, a candidate being born or living in the specific area, the 'local PVEA' even refers to a candidate having local-level political experience, or speaking the specific dialect of the area (Shugart et al., 2005; Tavits, 2010, as cited in Put et al., 2019, p. 466).

At this point, it is important to note that a significant amount of the PVEA literature assesses the concept through an electoral system lens, as the characteristics of an electoral system influence the behavior of both candidates and voters. In party-centered countries, such as Hungary, neither politicians nor voters emphasize PVEA. In candidate-centered systems politicians strongly build on their PVEA, and voters use them as heuristics when it comes to voting (Put et al., 2019; Shugart et al., 2005). In party-centered systems like Hungary, where candidate selection is tightly controlled, this creates a strategic tension: appealing to voter demand for local representation while maintaining centralized party discipline.

Returning to the earlier argument by Besco (2015), it is important to note that, beyond institutional and individual-level candidate characteristics, another crucial factor shaping voter

preferences is social identity. In the next subchapter of my dissertation, I present the theoretical foundations of social identity and its connection to political representation theories.

2.2.4. Social identity

Hillary Clinton's 2008 election campaign (Simien & Hampson, 2017) is an excellent example for gaining a comprehensive understanding on the shift from party identification towards social identity in politics. Besides, her run for the office shows the emerging new approaches regarding the concept of political representation, which will be presented in subchapter '2.3.2. *The process-approach of representation*' of my work.

To gain a better understanding of social identity, we need to dive into the knowledge of political psychology. The expression used by Paolino (1995) – 'in-group favoritism' – matches the terminology used by psychologists. The expression "in-group" is rooted deeply in the basics of social psychology, where this binary distinction serves as a basis for understanding the dynamics between different groups. 'We' constitute the 'in-group', and 'they' are the 'out-group'. 'We' are women, while 'they' are men. 'We' are protecting the environment, while 'they' seem to do not care at all about our world. This binary system can be captured in many other ways in our everyday lives. It is vital to highlight that one person can be, and indeed is a member of several different groups. One can identify themselves as someone who: (1) lives in the capital, (2) is single, (3) works in a white-collar position with a classic 9-5 schedule, (4) has a dog, and (5) holds liberal political values. These are five different group memberships of a theoretical person. This list could be extended with many more details, but these five categories already give us a quite detailed description of this citizen. All these characteristics help this person to define themselves in front of others, and this list also helps us to correctly position this person in different social dimensions. It is essential to underline that these group memberships can differ based on their embeddedness in one's personality.

Group membership means the weakest link, as this refers to an objective inclusion in a group, although it does not necessarily mean an internalized sense of membership. Group membership is when one is a member of a library or is a registered member of a political party, for example the Democratic Party. One may have registered with a political party because of a family tradition or because the given party's views broadly align with the citizen's views, but in this case, there is no activity or strong feelings towards the specific party. The term *group identification* overcomes this obstacle, and it implies an internalized sense of group membership, which is completely subjective. Group identification is, for example, active

connection to a movement, like environmentalism. Members not only support the movement in silence, but they also actively partake in it through attending rallies and participating in discussions. *Social identity* means the next level in this hierarchy, where the group membership is incorporated into the self-concept (Huddy, 2013, p. 738-739). Only this incorporation is necessary but not sufficient condition – besides the knowledge of this membership, there has to be an emotional significance and value regarding this membership to get a social identity (Tajfel, 1981). Social identity appears if a voter explicitly identifies themselves as liberal. In this case, one is not only a party member, but also their worldview and social interactions are influenced. Social identities may lack political content – for example in the case of vegetarians, but if they have distinct political outlook, they become *political identity*. For instance, being a Democrat in the US or a Christian Democrat in Germany (Huddy, 2013). Political identity serves as the base for the evolution of group-based political cohesion (Huddy, 2013). Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between these concepts. The examples in each circle represent different possible types of attachment (such as group membership or political identity, among others), rather than depicting the linear development of a single person or identity. Incorporating these theories into my work is essential for a better understanding of the topic of good representation, besides it enriches the literature of political science and electoral behavior with political psychology.

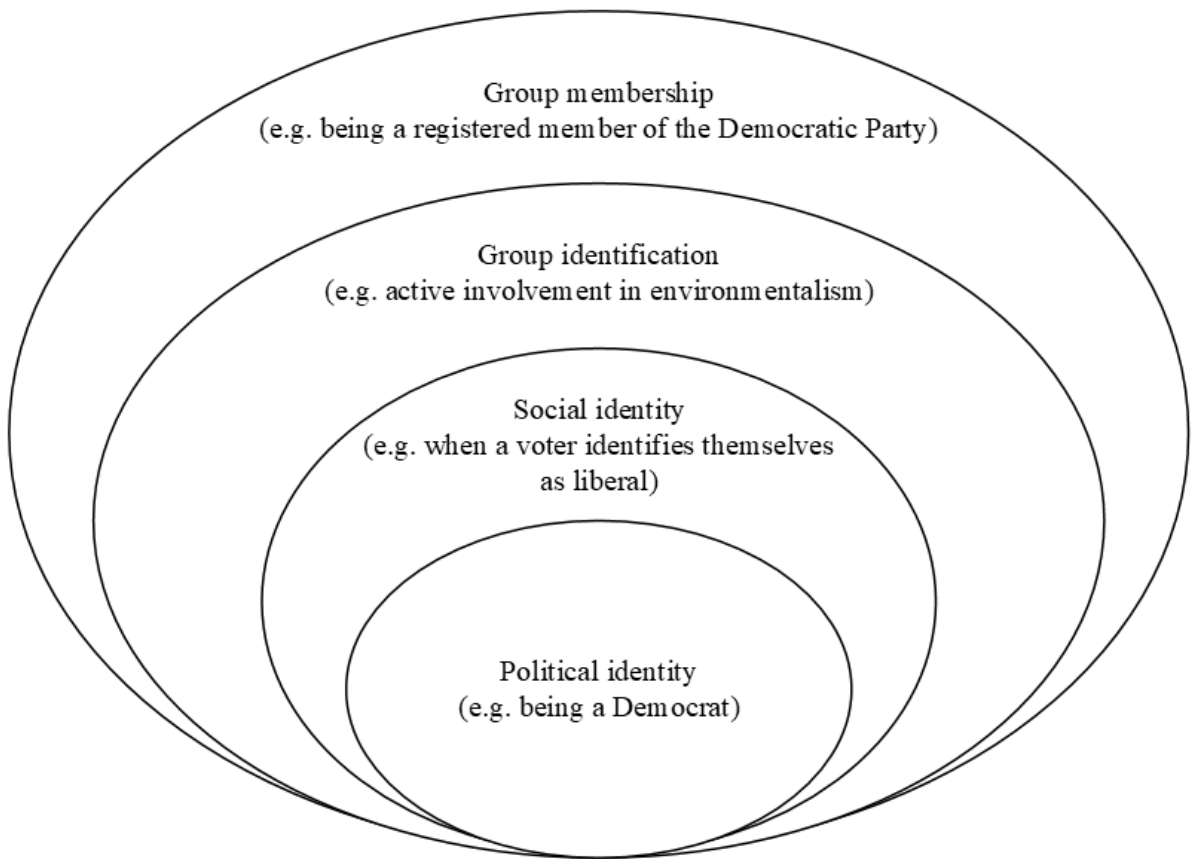


Figure 1. Group membership, group identification, social identity, and political identity (author's own)

Group-based political cohesion can be formed in many ways, based on various group membership, potential group identification and resulting social identities. As a result, literature offers various theoretical approaches to explain the phenomenon (Self-Categorization Theory, Cognitive Mobilization Theory).

As in political representation the term 'symbolic' has a significant role, so does it in relation to social identity. Social Identity Theory (in short: SIT) is the embodiment of the symbolic approach of social and political identity. The theory underlines the value of symbolic concerns, like a group's social position as a fundamental element to the development of group cohesion (Huddy, 2013). Based on SIT, the members' main aim is to differentiate themselves positively from other members of the society – who are not part of the given group, thus reaching a positive social identity (Huddy, 2013; Turner et al., 1987). Simien and Hampson (2017) applied this logic projected to the formerly presented example from the US means the following: in the case of the Latinas, their social identity based on their gender was stronger than their social identity based on their race. This expounds their voting choice, as voting for the female candidate –

Clinton – strengthens their positive social identity. In the case of the African American women, many voted for Obama, because their social identity based on their race was the stronger one. Voting for Obama – thus his victory – resulted in their empowered positive social identity (Simien & Hampson, 2017, p. 111). Let it be any type of social identity, the pattern is the same – voters prefer someone, who is similar to them, someone who they share particular characteristics, identities with.

Scholars name this phenomenon differently in the field of political science. Some call it “*gender affinity*” (Simien & Hampson, 2017, p.93), while others call it “*affective preference*” (Rosenthal, 1995, p. 599), “*baseline gender preference*” (Sanbonmatsu, 2002, p.20), or “*in-group favoritism*” (Paolino, 1995, p.309). The term used by Paolino (1995) – “*in-group preference*” stems from the knowledge of social psychology. Interestingly, ethnocentrism serves as a basis for this phenomenon. The preference of one’s own ethnic group has a long history in human behavior thus scholars in the 20th century conducted various ethnographic and experimental research on this topic (Sidanius & Kurzban, 2013). The “minimal groups experiments” brought a significant breakthrough in the research of social identity (Tajfel, 1978).

In Tajfel’s experiments, participants were randomly divided into two groups, often on the basis of insignificant criteria such as painting preference – Kandinsky or Klee – or coin toss results. Participants were aware of their own group membership, but they did not have any information regarding other participants’ group membership, besides they had no prior contact with each other.

In the experimental phase, participants had to distribute cash prizes between themselves and other group members. The instructions provided by the leader of the experiment were clean and simple – “Give two different amounts of money to the 44th member of the Klee group and the 77th member of the Kandinsky group”. Tajfel and his colleagues (1978) observed that participants tended to give more rewards to members of their own group, even when the groups were set up on a completely random basis. This suggested that the knowledge of group membership alone is sufficient to distinguish between “them” and “us” groups, and that this distinction often favors one’s own group, even if there is no real basis for the preference.

The results of these experiments have shown that in-group favoritism goes beyond the frame of ethnicities, cultures and nations (Sidanius & Kurzban, 2013), as citizens can quickly and strongly develop preferences even to groups to which they are attached by formerly insignificant characteristics.

The expressions presented above – “*gender affinity*”, “*affective preference*”, “*baseline gender preference*”, and “*in-group favoritism*” – can be seen as synonymous in this work, as they manifest in the same way, namely that – for instance – women voters are more likely to vote for women candidates. Simien and Hampson (2017) examine women’s “*gender affinity*” in a separated way, where women are seen as a diverse group, based on race, ethnicity, and age. Contrarily, other scholars in previous works (Atkeson, 2003; Lawless, 2004) treat women as a monolithic, homogenic group, where the only differences can be based on partisanship and ideology.

Based on empirical evidence, treating women as a diverse group means a step forward in political representation research. The results show that there is a certain societal group – namely the Latinas –, who expressed the highest level of pride in Hillary Clinton’s candidacy in the 2008 elections. Derived from their societal position – they are leaders in state, they have a significant influence in their social network. This fact underlines the importance of including different identities in empirical research. The case of African American women is also a great example for this. African American women’s identity is connected to a complex historical background and a special set of conditions of race and gender. The final result of the competition between Clinton and Obama shows us that African American women prioritize their race over gender when it comes to a decision (Simien, 2009). This suggests that viewing women voters as a homogenic group does not always work the best, as the assessment of representatives, thus the concept of good representation is depending on many individual factors, like social identification and the prioritization of its different elements, such as gender, race or age which can determine how connections based on affinity play out in elections.

2.2.5. Styles of representation: delegate and trustee models

Interestingly, in some scenarios, citizens vote not for someone identical or with shared experiences, but for someone they perceive as better than themselves in some way. Edmund Burke, as the member of parliament of Bristol, can be considered a pioneer in this approach to representation. During his term, he withstood his voters’ preferences in the case of the Irish trade. However, this resistance was not completely unforeseen. When Burke was elected, he made a clear and straightforward statement about his role as an MP. Based on Burke’s (1774, p. 81) argument, the parliament is not a ‘*congress of ambassadors*’ from different districts, instead, it is a ‘*deliberative assembly*’ of a given nation. With this proclamation, Burke justified the possibility of resisting the voters (as cited in Andeweg, 2014, p. 268).

On this basis, the theoretical literature on political representation includes, inter alia, two well-known approaches: the delegate and the trustee model, which focus on the *style of representation* (Madison et al., 1787; Pitkin, 1967). These two models represent the relationship between voters and representatives.

In the delegate model, representatives are seen as “listeners”, where they are expected to do everything according to voters’ preferences. Derived from this, the delegate model implies that voters have an explicit list of preferences that can easily be tracked by their representatives (Barker & Carman, 2012).

Conversely, in the trustee model, voters see representatives as “leaders”. Representatives are elected because voters trust that they will know what the best for them is, even if voters do not even know themselves. Burke’s work as an MP manifests the trustee model.

Literature on political leadership suggests the same logic: there are followers who attribute certain qualities to leaders – whether they are actual or perceived – which leads to their election (Metz, 2021, p. 439). Voters – or followers, in this sense – hope that leaders have the skills and the ability to make the best decisions for them. But what makes someone a leader? Are there any unique characteristics? Or are they just ordinary citizens?

The *triangle of leadership* (Ceccobelli & Di Gregorio, 2022) offers a conceptual framework to answer these questions. According to this, there are three distinct dimensions that make a leader. First, ordinariness, as political leaders attempt to seem like any other ordinary citizen (descriptive model, resemblance model). Second, competence, as they demonstrate that they are better than ordinary citizens in certain ways (trustee model). Third, authenticity, which shows that voters can trust them because they have values such as congruence, reliability, and integrity (Ceccobelli & Di Gregorio, 2022, pp. 114-116). I emphasize the importance of integrity, which I will elaborate on further in the ‘2.3.2. *The process-approach of representation*’ subchapter of my dissertation.

From the perspective of personality traits, Aichholzer and Willmann (2020) argue that several leadership traits are preferred. According to their work, a leader should be communicative and responsive toward voters. Teles, (2015) adds that leaders should also be responsible. Furthermore, leaders should keep their word, meaning the implementation of promises made before the elections. Mondak (1995) refers to this as being ‘principled’. Related to this, a leader is expected to be reliable and predictable. Lastly, as leaders shape the future, they should have

a lot of knowledge (Aichholzer & Willmann, 2020); Mondak (1995) describes this as being ‘an intellectual leader’ and ‘well-informed’.

Leaders should be knowledgeable because they do not merely mirror voters’ interests and preferences, they also show guidance to voters and influence them (Aichholzer & Willmann, 2020; Teles, 2015). These characteristics can be interpreted as part of the *superman* model of politicians, political leaders (Sullivan et al., 1990).

These are some of the key assumptions of the leadership literature. They raise intriguing questions regarding political representation. Do these apply to political representation as well? Do voters expect a representative to be like them, and/or be better than them? Do voters value responsiveness? This research aims to answer such questions.

2.3. What do they do?

2.3.1. Substantive representation

The previously presented different approaches of descriptive representation aim to answer the question: *Who is the person voters want to represent them?* Once we understand the characteristics of this person, we need to take a look at their actions as well. Based on the theories and ideas of descriptive representation, the resemblance between voters and their representatives can foreshadow the actions of the representative. If they are similar to their voters in some sense – for example their sex, age, or geographical proximity, the representative is more likely to act based on their voters’ best interests and opinions.

But how should the representative do that? What are the voters’ expectations regarding the actions of the representative? Do voters want someone who brings their voices into the political decision-making process? Or do they want someone who just follows their lead? Theories of *Substantive representation* offer some potential answers to these questions.

Substantive representation in itself can be divided into two distinct approaches. One of them focuses on the process of representation itself, while the other scholars emphasize the results of that process. In the case of the process-approach, we put the focus on the relationship between voters and their representatives. Does the representative organize consulting hours for their voters to hear them out regarding the current issues and hardships? Do voters feel like there is a real connection between them and their representatives? In this case, results are secondary.

In contrast, the result-approach is more strict and rigid. In this approach we focus solely on the outputs. The representative may be rarely seen by their voters, however, they have important achievements, like a new school for the districts' children, or improved public transportation. Getting things done – that is what only matters in the result-approach of political representation.

In the next subchapters, I will present these ideas and theories.

2.3.2. The process-approach of representation

The *Substantive Representation* in Pitkin's (1967) approach focuses on the representatives' actions and outputs. According to her, substantive representation is "*acting in the interests of the represented, in a manner responsive to them*" (p. 209). Within the framework of Substantive representation, some scholars focus on the political agenda. This view evaluates how well the representatives' actions align with the preferences and interests of the voters. The General Data Protection Regulation (in short: GDPR) in the European Union and the European Economic Area serves as an example for *Substantive Representation*, where EU policymakers acted in a way that serves the privacy rights and interests of EU citizens. Another example can be seen in MPs raising parliamentary questions and participating in parliamentary voting on the issue of the minority language use.

Interestingly, these findings are in line with another significant work regarding women's political representation. Based on previous research, one needs to take into consideration, whether women as a social group have generally valid political characteristics, or their social group can be separated depending on any special interests or beliefs they may have (Sapiro, 1981). Women as a social group can be seen as homogenic in the political sphere from two perspectives. First, if one can presume that they have certain political, social, or economic issues, which are entirely other than those issues of other groups. Second, according to Sapiro (1981), women do have distinct, exact opinions on the solution of political issues. These possible ways go in the same direction – if any of them is true, one can state that women as a group share opinions or interests, which can be represented. These are the so called "*representable interests*" (Sapiro, 1981). Although women as a social group can be considered as homogenic in the *political sphere*, this does not invalidate the findings, which indicate their heterogeneity in the social sphere, in other words, in our everyday lives (see Celis & Childs, 2020) or that they can have more, competing identities such as race (see subchapter '2.2.4. *Social identity*').

Starting from the end of the 20th century, scientists identified several new types of representation. Within the typology Jane Mansbridge (2003) created, there is '*Promissory representation*', '*Anticipatory representation*', '*Surrogate representation*' and '*Gyroscopic representation*'. This latter model not only strongly differs from the other new forms of representation, but it is also – at least to some extent – incompatible with anticipatory representation. This model provides an operation, in which citizens select representatives who can be expected to act in ways the citizens approve without external incentives. In other words, representatives are like gyroscopes, rotating towards certain built-in goals. This model can take different forms, but one feature remains constant, namely that representatives will reflect on their own opinions and interests, when it comes to making a decision. They look for guidance because the aim is to get a *contextually derived understanding* of interest. According to this model, voters can make a decision based on the narrowest type – for instance based on the representative's dedication to a single issue; or voters can decide based on the broadest version – for instance a person of integrity, who is committed to the public good (Mansbridge, 2003). Integrity is often painted as a matter of 'standing for something', in the sense that the person of integrity refuses to 'trade action on their own views too cheaply for gain, status, reward, approval, or for the escape from penalties, loss of status, disapproval [and so on]' (Calhoun, 1995, p. 6). While a "good type/representative" has 3 main characteristics that go beyond outputs and processes: (1) they have similar policy preferences as the voter; (2) who is honest and principled; (3) who is sufficiently skilled (Fearon, 1999). These criteria are intriguing and worth of further research, however in this work I am only engaged in the last characteristic, the skills. This resonates well with the presence of experts in legislative processes, which is included in the research. The first criterion only implicitly appears in my research, although the second criterion falls outside of this work's scope.

The '*Surrogate representation*' in Mansbridge's (2003) work refers to instances where the representative has no electoral relationship with voters because they live in another district. Despite living in different districts, the representational relationship can be based on ideology or on shared experiences, especially in cases of certain experiences that are only known to a minority of the legislature (Mansbridge, 2003, p. 523). The essence of surrogate representation is that there is neither an adequate way of accountability between the representative and the surrogate constituent, nor any power relation between the two parties – the constituent and the representative (Mansbridge, 2003). Contrary to this, previous findings emphasize not only on the representation of local interest, but also the local embeddedness of MPs (Ilonszki, 2012).

The focus on responsiveness has opened its own strand in academic research. Closely following Pitkin's (1967) formerly presented idea on the substantive representation entails an element of responsiveness, Celis suggests that "*Responsiveness turns what representatives do into substantive representation of the demos*" (2012, p. 524). Literature on voter behavior often addresses this question in terms of policy representation and public responsiveness. The concept of substantive representation is supported by the knowledge of voter behavior through the model of 'opinion representation' (Wlezien & Soroka, 2007, p. 800). The idea suggests that policies result, in some way, from public preferences. In this approach, scholars emphasize the output, which can be assessed in a legislative setting by how MPs took upon putting issues and problems on the political agenda. In practice this can be captured by the number of parliamentary questions and bills introduced (Höhmman, 2020; Mügge et al., 2019; Saalfeld & Bischof, 2013).

Theories of political psychology refine the approach to substantive representation. There is a huge temptation to simplify social identity by reducing it to categories like race or gender and consider women as one political group. This approach is misleading as women are a rather diverse group which can manifest in many ways, not only, for example in terms of their commitment to environmental protection, but also in their positions on issues like abortion or childcare. Derived from this difference of viewpoints, Celis and Childs construct effective representation of women in a procedural approach and state that "*women's disagreement is considered constructive; women's interests are identified through debate*" (Celis & Childs, 2020, p. 25). This intriguing thought implies that women will favor representatives who actively listen to or partake in these debates and thus do not focus on the seemingly static representable issues but on their dynamic (re)construction. These thoughts lead us to the next crucial theoretical section of my dissertation, which will be presented in subchapter '2.3.4. *The result-approach of representation*'.

2.3.3. Whose interests and opinions to follow?

Before discussing the result-approach of political representation, I must deepen the concept of the process-approach of political representation, as it emphasizes the importance of responsiveness. According to the classic models of representation (Mansbridge, 2003; Pitkin, 1967), the legitimacy of the representative decision-making process can derive from several sources, one of them being responsiveness. But to whom should representatives respond? Whose interests and opinions should they incorporate into the decision-making process?

Following voters' interests and opinions in the decision-making process corresponds to the delegate model of political representation (Barker & Carman, 2012). This is the narrowest approach, as in this case representatives follow a clearly defined group of people, namely those living in a given constituency. A broader approach emerges when representatives aim to fulfil the interests and opinions of society as a whole, even if voters themselves do not know what is best for them. This is the trustee model of political representation (see also the '2.2.1. *Descriptive representation*' subchapter). These two competing ideas share two important traits. First, they focus solely on the voters and the representatives, no other external actors are involved in the process. Second, they emphasize the interests and opinions of a well-defined set of people. But what happens if other actors appear on the scene?

In practice, representatives are rarely fully independent – they can depend on their parties, or they can depend on external actors when it comes to decision-making and thus representing their constituents. As I pointed out in the '2.2.3. *Affinity*' subchapter of my dissertation, in Hungary, being a strongly party-centered system, candidate selection is tightly controlled, and this tight control also persists in everyday politics, with representatives strictly following the party discipline (Papp, 2021; Szente, 2018). In the process of political representation, this phenomenon translates into representatives following the party programs when it comes to decision-making. This can be considered as the party-label-based process-approach to political representation. An illustration of this is when parliamentary voting patterns show a strong alignment with party positions, even on issues where local constituencies express different preferences.

The process of representation, thus the process of democratic decision-making can be understood in several ways. It can include not only voters but experts also (Fernández-Martínez & Font Fábregas, 2018). Experts' presence in governments has a long history. As Vittori et al. describe, "*Technocratic ministers are members of government cabinets who have never been elected to public office, never had formal ties to any political party and, finally, possess non-party political expertise relevant to their role in government*" (Vittori et al., 2023, pp. 867-868). During the times of Italy's and Greece's debt crisis, party politicians "*were replaced by 'technocrats' such as Mario Monti and Lucas Papademos. With a background as experts in economics instead of being career politicians, their mandates were to implement fiscal austerity packages that their predecessors had not been able to push through. This type of leadership turnover is meant to bring more 'competent' people into government in times of deep economic crises*" (Bäck & Persson, 2018, pp. 57-58). Although a debt crisis is a strong driver of

technocratic trends, economic and political crises are also a significant predictor of the strengthening of these trends (Costa Pinto et al., 2018; Wratil & Pastorella, 2018). Beyond their long-established presence in governments, experts may also serve to complement rather than replace the traditional forms of political representation (Várnagy et al., 2025). As the Italian and Spanish examples show, voters tend to evaluate decision-making processes that involve experts more positively than those that do not (Ganuza & Font, 2020; Vittori et al., 2024). According to the technocratic approach, decisions involving experts are considered better than those made by elected officials (Caramani, 2017; Dargent, 2014; Fernández-Vázquez et al., 2023).

The above presented examples show that in practice, representatives' decision-making can be shaped by different interests and opinions: voters' direct interests, the broader public good, party programs, or experts' considerations.

According to Várnagy et al. (2025), although voters respond positively to different forms of decision-making, their evaluations depend on several factors, such as the issues in question (Wojcieszak, 2014), their political and social context (Bertsou & Pastorella, 2017; Chiru & Enyedi, 2022), or even their personal characteristics (Coffé & Michels, 2014; Fernández-Martínez & Font Fábregas, 2018), as also shown by earlier studies. In this research, I aim to explore how voters perceive different options in a theoretical decision-making process, particularly in times of crisis. Whose interests and opinions do voters expect representatives to prioritize in this process-approach? This question is at the heart of my analysis, seeking to reveal what voters expect their representatives to do when facing challenging situation.

2.3.4. The result-approach of representation

The concepts of *Locality* and *Pitkin's four views of representation* have established our understanding of political representation. As new – formerly unknown – issues and situations have emerged, theories of representation have continued to change and develop. More complex approaches have begun to unfold in recent decades. Scholars exceeded the original question of “Who can represent us in the best way possible?” as various other viewpoints have emerged. The prevailing question has shifted to “How can we be represented in the best way possible?”. The formerly applied static approach has been challenged by a more dynamic approach.

The term ‘dynamic representation’ is not new in the context of representation theory. I am not the first to suggest that representation can be best described as dynamic. The expression is difficult to grasp, as it is widely overused in the literature – not only by representation theories,

but also in voter behavior studies. As Sartori points out, “*the larger the world, the more we have resorted to conceptual stretching, or conceptual straining, i.e., to vague, amorphous conceptualizations*” (Sartori, 1970, p. 1034). That is also the case with the ‘dynamic representation’.

To offer a substantial understanding, first I present the origins of dynamic representation, which are rooted in the literature of voter behavior, and then I discuss my approach to it. As Wlezien and Soroka (2007) pointed out, the term ‘dynamic representation’ can be traced back to the end of the 20th century. Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson suggested that “*public opinion moves meaningfully over time, that government officials sense this movement, and that — for a mixed set of motives — those officials alter their behavior in response to the sensed movement. This is dynamic representation, a simple idea and an old one*” (Stimson et al., 1995, p. 543). In other words, classic voter behavior literature links the dynamic representation to the responsiveness of political actors. Representation theories have incorporated this idea. Dalton and his colleagues suggest that “*rather than a discrete, point-in-time choice, democracy is based on a process of ongoing, dynamic representation that occurs through a comparison of the past and the future across repeated elections*” (Dalton et al., 2012, p. 22). This idea can be linked to Mansbridge’s (2003) concept of ‘Promissory representation’. Through their significant work focusing on women’s representation, Celis and Childs proposes that “*representation is better regarded as a more interactive process*” (Celis & Childs, 2020, p. 87). Although the terminology they use differs from the classic term of ‘dynamic representation’, the essence remains the same.

All these definitions differ, yet they share a common element: each highlights the importance of context. This indicates that representation is not a static phenomenon but is actively changing. In the work of Dalton and his colleagues (2012), the timeliness of representation contributes to its dynamic nature. In my work, the changes in contextual information lead to the dynamic characteristic of representation. This does not mean that I dismiss the timeliness of representation, rather, I emphasize context over time.

To answer this new question – “How can we be represented in the best way possible?” –, the concept of *Descriptive representation* has been extended by the emergence of *Self-representation*, which puts an emphasis on the importance of direct participation and self-advocacy instead of relying on agents or delegates in the representational processes. Again citing the literature on women’s representation, Williams articulates that “*it is not enough that women communicate their perspectives to men; a full respect for women’s agency, and a full*

protection of their interests, requires that they act on their own behalf” (Williams, 1998, p. 119). Building on this premise, representatives merely mirroring particular visible characteristics – such as gender, race, and ethnicity – is not sufficient for proper representation of citizens’ opinions and interests.

Our ways of thinking about political representation theories are rapidly evolving. As a result, we are now able to address the topic of representation in a more complex and nuanced sense, considering not only the basic characteristics of representatives, but also the specific situations, contexts, institutional systems, actors and available knowledge. This comprehensive approach captures nearly every aspect of representation, indicating a crucial shift in the discipline. Whereas scientists formerly took snapshots at specific points in time for analysis, today they focus on the dynamic process regarding representation. They consider not only political parties and their candidates, but they also examine the situations and the institutional frameworks thoroughly and pay special attention to changes that occur amongst other factors.

Anne Phillips (1995) continued exploring political representation and took a step back with exposing issues concerning how well voters’ preferences and beliefs are mirrored. In some of the formerly introduced theories – for example in the case of the *delegate model* and the *promissory representation*, one may assume that voters have clear and explicit opinions and preferences, which are completely transparent (Saward, 2008). The ‘*politics of ideas*’ builds on these opinions and preferences. This approach focuses on the composition of legislative assemblies, which should completely reflect all voters’ opinions, ideas and preferences (Phillips, 1995). Phillips (1995) argues that given opinions and preferences can be supported by people with different backgrounds – for example the interest of a given geographic location can be represented not only by someone, who lives there, but also by someone, who only used to live in that specific area, as we have seen it in the case of the surrogate representation model (Mansbridge, 2003). Or another example by Phillips is that the interests of mothers with young children can also be represented by males without a child (Phillips, 1994). The ‘*politics of ideas*’ puts emphasis on the output – it does not matter who speaks for a specific constituency or for a specific group of people as long as they do it effectively.

With the changing world and changing challenges, the theory of ‘*politics of ideas*’ faced some difficulties. According to many feminists, ‘*politics of ideas*’ failed to overcome the issues of political exclusion. As Phillips (1995) points out in her research, male-dominated parliaments differentiate between the interests of male and female citizens, while not giving them equal attention (as cited in Baaz & Lilja, 2014, p. 9). These critiques induced the promotion of the

concept of '*politics of presence*'. It is essential to highlight that these two approaches – '*politics of ideas*' and '*politics of presence*' – are not opposite by any means, they are more like complementing each other. Modern democracies not only fail to present political equality but also they do advocate overrepresenting of political elites within political spaces (Baaz & Lilja, 2014). This is the weak spot of modern representative democracies and the theory of '*politics of presence*' offers a solution to it. Its premise is that subaltern groups should also be represented in politics. This means that legislative assemblies need to mirror significant, distinct identity categories. These identity categories hold diverse opinions and interests and only a certain model of representation is able to handle these opinions and interests appropriately – a model, which strongly builds on the presence of these subaltern groups, in other words, these minority social groups (Baaz & Lilja, 2014; Phillips, 2000). With this, we return to a certain aspect of political representation, namely to characteristics and resemblance. Based on previous findings (Phillips, 1995, 2000), fair representation means balanced representation in accordance with certain characteristics like gender, race or ethnicity. This idea can be seen as parallel with the descriptive representation (Dovi, 2018; Pitkin, 1967) and the resemblance model (Arowolo, 2015). Although they may seem similar, their essence is differing. While in the case of descriptive representation and the resemblance model we focus on '*How one chooses his/her representative?*', in the case of '*politics of presence*' we put emphasis on the process itself – we concentrate on the operation and recruitment of legislative assemblies.

This process-based approach also marks a pivotal moment in the present work. Looking back at the previously presented theories in the field of representation theories, the main consequence is that is Hanna Pitkin's (1967) work is inevitable and fundamental in this area. Majority of scholars build on her theories and ideas. Phillips (1995), Lawless (2004) and Simien (2009) contributed to a shift in the field by customizing political representation ideas according to the present political context. The same applies to Michael Saward (2006a). Saward (2006a) provides us a completely renewed approach, with three key background assumptions:

- (1) “ (...) *we must understand representation not as a relationship between constituents and representatives at particular moments, but as a process in which the relationship between citizens and representatives continues over time*” (Thompson, 1988, as cited in Saward, 2006a, pp. 184-185).
- (2) Representation as a process focuses on the action of making claims to be representative and then to vie those claims.

- (3) ‘Constituents’ and ‘representatives’ do not need to be members of certain electoral districts and elected members of the parliament or any councils. According to Saward (2006a), this approach only applies to narrow political science customs.

The first two points are the most crucial from the perspective of my work. Although the third assumption is also intriguing, my current research operates in the ‘classic’ constituent-voter scenario, so derived from this, that point will have the least relevance in this chapter.

Political representation is a dynamic process, instead of a static connection between voter and representative – this is one main key to my work. My work aims to capture the process of evaluating representatives and its influencing factors. My premise is that the rationale voters use to evaluate representatives’ changes based on the context and the type of issue at hand.

The practice of making claims is also a novelty in political representation theories. The prior theories operated more like in a ‘one-way street’, where political issues are given by narratives of political actors and political parties. Voters are only expected to respond to these stimuli. This can be seen as a top-down logic in political representation, where the ones with political power rule the political sphere. Contrarily to this, Saward (2006a) suggest a ‘two-way street’. In this sense, claims could be made not only by representatives, but also by voters – which can also be seen as a bottom-up logic. The author’s reasoning behind this is that representation is about *“something in the making rather than something achieved or completed”* (Saward, 2006a, p. 185). The claim could be anything, coming from anyone. Someone my claim to represent someone else’s opinions, while another person may claim the needs of a geographical area. At this point, it is important to declare that normally any claim is subject to discussion, after which it can be accepted, rejected or ignored on any level (Saward, 2006a).

Albeit representative claims can be extremely different from one another, there is a universal formula for them on an abstract level, with 5 key components (Saward, 2006a):

- (1) Maker – the person who proclaims the given claim
- (2) Subject – this varies, it can be the person itself, or a certain social group or party, or a symbol
- (3) Object – the concept or the idea of the real thing
- (4) Referent – the real thing itself in the claim
- (5) Audience – to whom the claim pertains, who can accept or reject the claim.

The Subject-Object-Referent triad may be deceptive. In order to avoid any potential misconceptions, I do present a conventional example for a representative claim. Let us suppose that a member of the parliament (M) offers an expert's knowledge (S) as the solution of a threatening environmental issue (O) with respect to the potentially affected voters living in the same geographical area (R) to the voters and media.

This example is related to a question in this research, as the topic of environmental issues appears in the questionnaire, although in another aspect. The detailed demonstration of the questions will be taking place in the '*3. Research design and method*' chapter.

This approach of political representation has been used by many scholars not only in the field of political sciences, but also in the of gender studies. When thinking about women representing women in this approach, the following model arises: women representatives (M) offer themselves (S), to represent the opinions and interests of women (O) that is connected to certain women in the society (R), and this chain is offered to not only women in the society, but also maybe for other members of the society as well (A) (Celis & Childs, 2018; Ilonszki & Vajda, 2019).

Following the way of these 5 key components, one main question arises – what is a maker without an audience? This implies that a maker's effort is needed for a representative claim to be made. Without a claim, there is no relationship of representation. The subject and object themselves are necessary but not sufficient to form a relationship between the representative and the voters. Actions and – from that – performance is also needed from the representative – or the candidate (Saward, 2017). Actions and performance can manifest in many ways – for example representatives can consult with their voters, or with experts about dubious issues. In the research, different forms of representative actions were offered to the respondents, one of which lacked any type of discussion and suggests that the representative should follow the party's policy instead of breaking the party unity (see Bøggild, 2020; Louwerse, 2011; Papp, 2021) regarding a given topic. Although this option seems to be contrary to Saward's standpoint, originating from the general political context and characteristics of Hungary, respondents may favor this option over the other ones, where dialogue between voters and representatives is displayed.

Summarizing the previously presented literature and their concepts, we can see the changes of how political scientists approach political representation. As Pitkin (1967) is considered as a pioneer of the field, Mansbridge (1999, 2003) and Saward (2006a, 2006b) can be considered as

innovators. Their works incorporate and present the significance of the '*creative*' acts regarding political representation (Celis et al., 2008). The model of the *anticipatory representation* is a great example in this sense. In this approach of *anticipatory representation*, political representatives do not operate with already existing interests, which are provided by the voters. Rather they actively construct the voters' interests, by pursuing to fulfil their future interests and opinions (Celis et al., 2008).

This process of construction leads us to Saward's (2006b) work. As Mansbridge (1999, 2003) does, Saward also explicitly puts an emphasis on creating 'representative claims'. He clearly denies the concept of already existing interests and opinions, which are simply brought in the context of political representation. Instead, Saward proposes the concept of claim making (Saward, 2006b).

Saward's alteration of the concept of political representation results in four main perks (Celis et al., 2008):

- (1) It includes new actors – for instance experts, businessmen, NGOs – in the concept of political representation, aside the elected the officials, who are 'traditionally' one of the main actors of representation
- (2) It exposes the vulnerability of claims, as they can be easily rejected or accepted
- (3) This model leads us to the significance of context, by considering political representation as a performance
- (4) It sheds a light on the characteristics of the constituency and its interests – for example their stability.

In my work, the first and third points are particularly crucial. Celis et al. emphasize that "*representation is, at least in part, a performance of claim making*" (Celis et al., 2008, p. 106). Thus, discourses are essential for appropriate representation, as discourses are the means through which people can be represented. Besides, discourse can create and shape the context. Mansbridge's (2003) 'Gyroscopic representation' also highlights the importance of the context, as it helps representatives to get a better understanding on the preferences and opinions of their constituents.

As I am examining the dynamic process of representation through survey experiment research, I render experts as relevant actors in political representation, while providing exact, explicit context – which changes randomly in vignettes – for the respondents. In the light of these circumstances, I attempt to elucidate the dynamic nature of political representation from the

perspective of voters, emphasizing the vital aspects of evaluating political representatives' performance. The fact that the research is based on one-time survey means that the time component of the dynamic nature of representation cannot be captured here, so it is the changing context that offers an insight into this dynamism.

Building on the previously discussed theories on representation, it becomes apparent that our perceptions of political representation and representatives are influenced by various factors, including context, institutional system, specific situation, actors, and the information available about the case. Considering all these factors we can see that representation unfolds as a dynamic process. Consequently, with my work I will not be able to identify the characteristics of the ideal representative. Instead, it will identify the variables that determine voters' preferences and their evaluations of representatives. Among these variables, some are stable, such as locality, where voters explicitly prefer candidates from their own constituencies. Other variables are defined by context, like in crises, where voter preferences may vary according to the nature of the crisis. Additionally, there are personal variables that can affect how citizens view candidates, including the candidates' personality traits. This type of preference is not based on interests or needs, instead it focuses on personal attachment between citizen and candidate, where various psychological dynamics dominate, like identification.

In this work I aim to identify the factors with the most influential power on voters' evaluation of representatives' performance. If there are any fix factors, which are they?

2.4. What are they like?

When we think about representation and politics, it is inevitable to think about the individuals behind them. Over the last decades, the personalization of politics has gained significant attention, with scholars noting that nowadays' politics is more personalized than ever (Garzia, 2014). The personalization of politics implies that the ones in political office (candidates and leaders) are more prominent than other political actors, like parliaments or parties (Bøggild et al., 2021; Pedersen & Rahat, 2021). This shift in focus towards individual actors affects not only political practices but also voter behavior – through the leader effect – introducing new decision-making challenges beyond the traditional party-centered paradigm (Garzia, 2014; Garzia et al., 2022). Scholars often link this trend to partisan dealignment – as voters' long-term attachments to parties weaken, they rely more on short-term evaluations of individual candidates (Falcão et al., 2023). Garzia (2014) demonstrates, for instance, that voters' attitudes toward party leaders can outweigh party identification and ideology in determining vote choice.

This resonates well with other findings that suggest a growing influence of party leader evaluations in parliamentary elections (Bittner, 2011). Other research show that declining party loyalties have led to increasingly candidate-centered voting (Bøggild et al., 2021; Falcão et al., 2023). This pattern is likely to influence even party-centric systems like Hungary. From the voters' perspective, this means that deciding "Who do we vote for?" is no longer a simple question that could be answered based on party labels. Instead of those, voters need to take into consideration the personal qualities of candidates. These personal qualities vary – it can be the candidates' competence, integrity, or other individual-level traits they possess. This serves as a base for examining which individual characteristics and personality traits shape voters' perceptions of a "good" representative.

While social identity theory can be considered as one potential approach to good representation (see subchapter '2.2.4. *Social identity*'), I also need to emphasize the significance of research on political cognition, as work in this field also pointed out that political representation is shaped not only by institutional factors, but also by identity-based, symbolic, and media-mediated factors (Hayes, 2005; Miller et al., 1986). Previous studies highlight that voters often rely on the personal characteristics of candidates and politicians when processing information (Bauer, 2015; Valgarðsson et al., 2025).

Information processing can, and indeed does, happen in various ways. The *theory-driven* approach suggests that voters focus on information that confirms their already existing standpoints while dismissing contradictory pieces of information (Lord et al., 1979). The *data-driven* approach, on the other hand, offers a more open and flexible way of information processing, as it assumes that voters are receptive and sensitive to new information (Rahn, 1993). The *dual process*, or *dept-of-process* model, combines these approaches by suggesting that, depending on the context, citizens can and do shift between the previously presented information processing models – for example "when the benefits of doing so seem to warrant the cognitive >>expenditure<<" (Rahn, 1993, p. 475). I argue that the *theory-driven* and *data-driven* approaches are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are simultaneously present in voters' candidate evaluations.

This growing focus on individual candidates naturally leads to the increasing salience of personal attributes – including not only personality, but also leadership traits. But at this point, a new question emerges – given these candidate characteristics and traits, how do these shape voters' decisions? Not only does the literature on voter behavior and political psychology offer various options, but also, we have theories from the field of economics. This latter introduced

the *Rational Choice Theory* (in short: RCT) that views humans as *homo economicus*, presuming that (1) people behave as if they have full information, (2) people have clear preferences, and (3) they have the cognitive capacity and ability to make a decision, while considering all the potential costs and benefits of the process and its outcome. According to the model, people aim to maximize their personal gain (Downs, 1957). As RCT has a normative focus, scholars created the *Behavioral Decision Theory* (in short: BDT) to describe and understand people's decision-making processes. What do decision-making processes in our everyday lives look like? Do we know all the potential options and outcomes? Results of previous research show the complete opposite. Instead of maximizing our own benefits, we often choose the "good enough" option (Redlawsk & Lau, 2013). Contrary to RCT, BDT views humans as *limited information processors*, stating that people do not have the ability and motivation to perform the calculations described by RCT (Edwards, 1961). Based on previous findings, "bounded rationality" is a popular expression to describe human cognition (Simon, 1947, 1957 as cited in Redlawsk & Lau, 2013).

But how do we get to decide which option is the "good enough" one? The decision-making process can be thought of as a continuum, where on one end we have "System 1", which refers to relying solely on intuition during the process. On the other, end there is "System 2", which refers to the effortful reasoning process (Kahneman, 2003). "System 1" is automatic, hence fast and affect-driven, whereas "System 2" is slow and objective (Chong, 2013, p.100). Other scholars name these dual-process cognitive models, which consist of a "central" and a "peripheral" process (Fazio & Olson, 2003; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty & Wegener, 1999). The expended effort is the basis for distinguishing between the two possible processes – the central process being slower, as it focuses on motivated message processing and evaluation, while the peripheral process is faster, as it relies on heuristics and other rules of thumb.

Heuristics help people when it comes to decision-making. I have already touched on them previously in my dissertation (see subchapter '2.2.3. *Affinity*'), but now I will present them in depth, as a form of simplifying decision-making processes. Based on the political psychology literature, there are different ways to simplify decision-making processes, three of these are: (1) decomposition, (2) editing, and (3) heuristics (Redlawsk & Lau, 2013, p. 137).

- (1) Decomposition is when one breaks a decision or a problem into smaller pieces, which are easier to evaluate than the entirety of the decision or problem. A voter, for instance, might not be able to decide whether a candidate would be a good politician when in office. So instead of thinking about this day and night, they decompose the question and

start examining the candidate from different aspects, such as their speaking skills, their educational background, or their achievements so far. This way, instead of one complex decision, they make several smaller, more manageable ones.

- (2) Editing refers to the process of excluding some parts of the decision. For example, voters may exclude new, formerly unknown candidates, and they only focus on candidates they already have information about. This action reduces the number of options they actually consider.
- (3) Heuristics are shortcuts, aiming to help and accelerate the decision-making process. A common example is when candidate demographics are used as heuristics. Younger voters may assume that a younger candidate shares their interests and opinions, or a religious voter might trust a candidate who has the same religious background. In both cases, voters may vote for these candidates without even taking into consideration other possible candidates. These associations allow voters to make rapid decisions without performing time- or resource-intensive research into policies or backgrounds.

What factors influence voters' judgement of a candidate's capability to hold office? Based on the knowledge of political psychology, social roles serve as the starting point for examining how voters may evaluate candidates. For instance, we can briefly consider how one of the most studied candidate traits, gender, has been constructed as a social role and how it might shape voters' perception of candidates. The evolution of mankind resulted in quite well-defined differences between men and women. As centuries ago, men were the ones hunting and working in the public sphere, and women were the ones caring for others and childbearing, distinct social roles started to form. Men formed '*agentic*' traits, while women formed '*communal*' traits (Schneider & Bos, 2019, p. 175-176). Whereas the strict division of manly and womanly jobs have already started to fade, the heritage of the previous centuries still lingers around. Men are (implicitly) expected to work in jobs like mechanics, repairmen, plumber, driver, while women are (implicitly) expected to take jobs like nurse or teacher. This means that the members of the society have exact anticipations regarding one's tasks in life. These are the so-called social roles (Social Role Theory, in short: SRT). These social roles result in gender stereotypes, which "*describe, prescribe, and proscribe*" men's and women's characteristics and behavior (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Schneider & Bos, 2019, p. 192). These rules and stereotypes go into effect when one gets in office – or aims to get there. Role congruity theory (in short: RCT) emphasizes the importance of the agentic and communal traits. Derived from this, women face obstacles

when running for office, because voters expect them to present communal traits, while political positions are strongly linked to agentic traits (Schneider & Bos, 2019).

These traits related to gender can be named differently. Huddy and Capelos call characteristics linked to women ‘expressive’, while they call traits related to men ‘instrumental’ (Huddy & Capelos, 2002, p. 31). They “*describe the nature of gender stereotypes and document shared expectations of a >>good<< politician in order to explore the interplay between political and gender stereotypes*” (Huddy & Capelos, 2002, p. 30). My secondary research question is the same as the core of their question – What are the shared expectations of a ‘good politician/representative’? According to their work, instrumental traits, such as determination, strength and confidence are perceived as more important for political actors than expressive traits (Huddy & Capelos, 2002, pp. 32-33). Huddy and Capelos name “*four key dimensions of presidential personality*” (Huddy & Capelos, 2002, p. 32), these are ‘leadership’, ‘competence’, ‘empathy’ and ‘integrity’. Although it seems like women face complex obstacles when it comes to their run for office, they can decrease voter bias by educating voters about themselves. By sharing information about themselves, they become able to disprove – or at least weaken – the effects of gender stereotypes (Huddy & Capelos, 2002). By transcending gender roles, the qualities of a good representative come to focus on personality and personality traits.

Ha and Lau conducted a research on a US sample, who found that certain personality dimensions influence voters' decisions and also affect the strength of party identification (Ha & Lau, 2015). The effect of candidates' personality traits may be stronger for voters who have weaker party affiliation (Nai et al., 2021). Other research has broadened the focus and examined the personality of political candidates in addition to voters' personality traits. These results have also shown that personality traits affect the evaluation of political candidates and thus who voters vote for (Falcão et al., 2023).

These results enrich the theoretical approaches to representation theory presented here, since from the voters' point of view, the personality and individual personality traits of representatives' function as a heuristic in their decision-making (Falcão et al., 2023), that is the impact of personality traits on political choice should not be ignored, in addition to the models of representation theory presented earlier. The present work is situated at the intersection of the knowledge of three fields – political psychology, representation theory and electoral behavior – and aims to explore how approaches and methods from electoral behavior and political psychology can enrich our knowledge of representation theory. This supplementary research is

a pilot project designed to test how well this research question and design would perform in a study with a larger sample size.

Whether voters are looking for a representative like themselves – the affinity, descriptive model – or a representative who is better than they are in certain aspects – the trustee model – the personality traits of politicians play a crucial role in the process – candidate trait model (da Silva, 2025; Hayes, 2005; Holian & Prysby, 2014).

A popular tool for understanding human personality is the Big Five personality model. One of the main reasons for its popularity is that it is an excellent tool for capturing individual differences while still providing generalizable results. This generalizability applies across time, gender and ethnicity (Gallagher & Allen, 2014; Kaarbo, 2017). The Big Five model uses 5 scales to capture the complexity of human personality. Although some discrepancies in the naming of the factors have appeared in the past, both internationally and domestically, it is important to highlight that the content of each scale is unanimously accepted by the scientific community. In the Hungarian adaptation of the Big Five, the factors are named: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Openness.

The Extraversion factor assesses the behavior and attitudes of individuals in social situations. People who score high on the scale are considered extraverted, more sociable, talk more, and like to be around people. At the other end of the scale are introverts – they tend to be more introverted, withdrawn, and quiet. Those scoring higher on the Agreeableness scale are more cooperative, altruistic, supportive, and empathetic. People on the opposite side of the dimension, on the other hand, are more cynical and do not shy away from conflict with other people. People scoring higher on the Conscientiousness scale are more organized and flawless in the fulfilment of commitments, and are generally more disciplined, orderly, and forward-looking than their counterparts scoring lower on the scale. People who score lower on this scale are more spontaneous and reckless. The Emotional Stability dimension measures sensitivity to cues and impulses from the environment. People with higher emotional stability are calmer and more patient than people with lower emotional stability. They are more worried and anxious. The Openness dimension measures individuals' openness to new experiences. Open-minded people are more interested in other cultures and are more open to new relationships, ideas, creativity, and innovation. In contrast, less open individuals like established practices and are afraid of new things (Caprara & Vecchione, 2013; Carver & Scheier, 2006).

Research in political psychology is increasingly focusing on understanding the personality traits of political actors. To achieve this goal, social scientists often use the Big Five personality model. Previous empirical research has found that political candidates excel more in the dimensions of Extraversion, Openness and Emotional Stability compared to voters in terms of their scores (Scott & Medeiros, 2020). For incumbent politicians, the Extraversion, Openness, Emotional Stability, and Conscientiousness factors stand out when comparing results to voters when examining the issue in a US sample (Hanania, 2017). Looking at the same question in an Italian context, we see overlaps – the Italian results also confirm that politicians are more salient on the dimensions of Extraversion and Agreeableness, but there are no significant differences between voters and politicians on the factors of Emotional Stability, Conscientiousness and Openness (Caprara et al., 2003). Other studies, which, like a part of present work, also focus on the personality of the ideal politician, have found that the Conscientiousness scale emerges as the most important and highly rated dimension (Roets & Van Hiel, 2009). Examining the personality of the ideal representative in a German and Austrian sample, it emerged that voters look for politicians who are more extroverted, open, emotionally stable and conscientious than they are, but less agreeable than they are (Aichholzer & Willmann, 2020).

However, most of the previous studies on the topic focus on political leaders (Caprara et al., 2002, 2006; Dietrich et al., 2012; Joly et al., 2019; Scott & Medeiros, 2020), hence the results of empirical research on the so-called leadership traits. However, it is important to underline that political leaders and political representatives are not necessarily the same – neither in terms of the content of the concepts, nor in terms of the persons occupying the positions. The literature has explored the relationship between the two concepts from several angles. Platow's research suggests that it is the representatives who make the particularly good – charismatic – leaders. Empirical results show that a leader can be a true leader – having a vision that he or she can transmit to the larger masses – if he or she is a prototypical representative of the group, i.e. the most typical member of the group (Platow et al., 2006). This provides a consistent empirical result placing the relationship between leadership and representation in a local context. An analysis of the representational role of Danish mayors, it was found that this role can be multifaceted, with Kjaer's study identifying four mayoral representative functions, namely 'representative', 'master of ceremonies', 'local secretary of state' and 'ombudsman'. This list highlights the complexity of the mayoral role and, in turn, reveals two potential types of representation – the 'leadership' and 'legislative' styles (Kjaer, 2015). Ultimately, leadership

traits shape how voters evaluate a candidate's capacity to act as a representative – both in symbolic and substantive terms.

As outlined at the beginning of this section, the personalization of politics draws voters' attention to leaders' and politicians' individual characteristics, with an emphasis on their perceived representativeness and leadership competence. Leadership traits are discussed in more detail in subchapter '2.2.5. *Styles of representation: delegate and trustee models*', of my dissertation.

2.5. Summarizing the theoretical framework

Literature from different disciplines – representation theories, political psychology, and voter behavior – apply diverse approaches to the concept of representation. Despite this diversity, there are some common points that define the four key points of my work.

First, *representation is dynamic*. Voters' expectations are by no means static, instead, they change over time and place. Voters may vote for a candidate during the elections who they assume would be the best fit for the office. Conversely, the actions of that representative may result in voters' reevaluation of their own decision. The feedback loop between voters and their representatives is prominent. This involves how representatives adapt to changes in public opinion, which can influence voters' future choices. This highlights the responsive nature of representation. Issues that need to be represented can also vary. In other words, as an effect of external actions and changes, voters may change their minds regarding the person of their representative. The dynamic nature of representation refers to the evolving and responsive nature of the voter-representative relationship – through the formerly addressed feedback loop, one can think about this as adaptation. This concept can be captured in my thesis in a rather implicit form, as in the first vignette several theoretical candidate characteristics were examined, one being former political experience. I highlight the implicit nature of this concept throughout my research, as I did not provide my respondents with in-depth information regarding the previous actions or achievements of the theoretical candidates. These formerly presented external factors, and their effects open the strand for the next key point of my work.

Second, *representation is contextualized*. Voters' preferences, as well as their evaluations of their representatives, depend on the context in which they are situated. This context-sensitivity applies not only to representatives' actions but also to their personal characteristics. For instance, in terms of actions, public health emergencies often require fast decisions and reactions, whereas when long-term urban development projects demand a more considered,

thorough decision involving the affected parties. In terms of personal characteristics, certain traits may be evaluated differently depending on the context. Regarding female politicians it is often suggested that they need to be more prepared and/or experienced than their male counterparts to gain the support of the electorate (Crowder-Meyer et al., 2015). The double bind occurs when the prescribed social roles of politicians include attributes that pose an additional challenge for certain groups: being a parent seems to burden women more than men – “*fatherhood might be an electoral asset, motherhood an electoral constraint*” (Campbell & Cowley, 2018, p. 755). This is what Teele et al refers to as double standards and double binds (Teale et al., 2018).

Third, *interests are constructed*. As Reingold and Swers pointed out, “*women’s interests are socially constructed, politically contested, and empirically contingent, then we can further explore how and why the meaning and significance of women’s interests vary across time, space, institutions, groups, and individuals*” (Reingold & Swers, 2011, p. 430). It is important to highlight that not only women’s interests are socially constructed. Following the terminology of Saward (2006a, 2006b), claims can be made by a variety of actors about a variety of objects. Constructed interests focus on how voters’ preferences and interests themselves are shaped by social, political, or institutional narratives – this is about formation, instead of adaptation. This approach is also central to my research, as I aim to capture how voters formulate and articulate the traits they expect from their representatives.

The fourth key theoretical assumption of my dissertation is that *representation is strongly personalized*. Scholars not only emphasize the processes of politics but also stress the importance of the persons shaping politics.

These four key theoretical assumptions directly inform the empirical part of my dissertation. Points 1 and 2 will be the basis for the two vignettes, as in those cases I am examining contextual conditions, allowing me to assess how voter preferences are shaped by different circumstances. Point 3 and 4 serve as a basis for the first vignette and for the focus group discussion, as they explore how voters reason about candidate suitability in relation to group identity and social roles. The first vignette isolates individual-level candidate traits and examines how these affect voter preferences.

3. Research design and method

3.1. Research questions and hypotheses

Defining the scope, thus the research questions and hypotheses of my work is a crucial point. As political representation is a complex concept, it offers many potential directions for research. Scholars explore its substantive nature, its process nature, or its outcomes, among many others. In my research I emphasize quality – specifically, voters’ satisfaction and their expectations. Firstly, I attempt to understand what factors influence voters’ assessment and choice when electing their representatives. Secondly, I aim to gain a deeper insight into voters’ expectations of their representatives during turbulent times. Thirdly, as a psychologist, I am interested in outlining the personality traits of the sought-after representative. To contribute to our existing knowledge in a relevant way, I have formulated the following research questions:

(1) What do voters want? What factors influence voters’ preferences?

Are preferences linked to descriptive ideals of representation? Does affinity matter?

Are preferences linked to trustee ideals of representation? Does experience matter?

Are preferences linked to the decision-making processes? Does participation or expertise matter?

Are these preferences dynamic in their nature? Do they change due to the changing context?

(2) What is the personality of the ideal representative like?

Are voters’ expectations about representatives’ personality explicit? Which personality traits do voters associate with being a good representative?

To answer the first research question and test the related hypotheses, a quantitative study was conducted using a vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment¹.

The first research question is rather broad; therefore, I narrowed down my focus based on the literature of representation presented in the previous section. To discover voters’ preferences, I included the variables of sex, age, locality, family status, parental status, previous political

¹ This research has received funding from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund of Hungary (project no. K128833). The preparation and design of the research involved Réka Várnagy, PhD, as the scientific leader, Gabriella Ilonszki DSc, and the author of this dissertation. At a later stage of the research project, Judit Badics, PhD, joined the group as a data scientist.

experience and previous elected position into the first vignette. I conceptualized affinity along the lines of locality (H1), sex (H2), and age (H3), and formulated my hypotheses accordingly. I conceptualized experience along the lines of political experience (H4) and previous elected position (H5). These variables and their conceptualization reflect the descriptive model (through affinity) and the trustee model (through experience) of representation. I also wanted to explore not only voters' gendered expectations but also their expectations related to age through the interactional effects among several of my variables. Therefore, I conceptualized the "*double bind-double burden*" along the lines of sex, age, parental status, and previous elected position. The conceptualization of gender is more complex, as several attributes can be connected to it beyond sex alone. For instance, parental status may evoke qualities typically associated with gender roles, such as caring, compassion, and multitasking. In this sense, I conceptualized gendered expectations through the combination of sex and parental status (H6), as well as through sex and previous political position (H8). At the same time, I conceptualized age-related expectations through the interaction of age and parental status (H7), and through age and previous political position (H9). By distinguishing these dimensions, I aimed to capture how different combinations of personal attributes might activate overlapping or even conflicting expectations in voters' minds. Based on these considerations, I formulated the following hypotheses:

Descriptive representation – affinity variables:

H1: Locality is the most significant variable among the candidate attributes (cf. Key, 1949; Nyholt, 2024)

H2: Candidate sex is a significant attribute, with female voters preferring female candidates over male candidates (cf. Brians, 2005; Dolan, 2008)

H3: Candidate age is a significant attribute, with younger voters preferring younger candidates over older candidates (cf. McClean & Ono, 2024)

Trustee model – experience variables:

H4: Voters are more likely to prefer candidates who have local political experience (cf. Put et al., 2019).

H5: Voters tend to prefer candidates who had political position previously (cf. Shugart et al., 2005)

Interaction hypotheses – double bind-double burden; dynamic representation:

H6: The combined effect of having children and being female is stronger than the added effect of having children and being female (cf. Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018)

H7: The combined effect of having children and being younger is stronger than the added effect of having children and being younger (cf. Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018)

H8: The combined effect of having previous political position and being female is stronger than the added effect of political experience and being female (cf. Crowder-Meyer et al., 2015)

H9: The combined effect of having previous political position and being younger is stronger than the added effect of political experience and being younger (cf. Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018)

The second vignette of the research sheds light on voters' preferences regarding the decision-making process, with a focus on the dynamic nature of voters' expectations. To map out these preferences, we included the variables of sex, type of crisis, and the different interests representatives may follow in the decision-making process. I conceptualized the "Important considerations, interests" variable as encompassing four potential decision-making logics – one of which, the involvement of experts, reflects the technocratic approach (H10 and H12). The type of crisis was conceptualized through the different types of crises (H11). In this case, I also aimed to explore not only voters' expectations regarding experts' involvement in the decision-making process but also their presumably dynamic expectations through the interactional effects among several of my variables. Therefore, I conceptualized the dynamic nature of political representation through the combination of the type of crisis and gender (H13). It is important to highlight that this hypothesis slightly overlaps with the previous vignette, as it can also be considered an investigation into voters' gendered expectations, although from a different angle, relying on the social role theory of gender construction. This will be presented and discussed in more detail in the subsequent subchapter '3.6. *The second vignette*' of my dissertation. Lastly, I conceptualized dynamic representation through the type of crisis and different interests (H14 and H15). Based on these, I formulated the following hypotheses:

Experts' involvement – technocratic approach:

H10: In all types of crises, there is a preference for the involvement of experts in the decision-making process (cf. Ganuza & Font, 2020; Vittori et al., 2024)

H11: The type of “crisis narrative” significantly influences voters’ preferences regarding the involvement of experts in decision-making processes (cf. Costa Pinto et al., 2018; Wrátil & Pastorella, 2018)

H12: Voters exhibit a preference for experts’ considerations over party lines (cf. Fernández-Vázquez et al., 2023)

Interaction hypotheses – dynamic representation:

H13: The combined effect of a social crisis and a female representative is stronger than the added effect of the social crisis and being a female representative separately (cf. Schneider & Bos, 2019)

H14: The combined effect of a social crisis and public good-based decision-making (trustee model) is stronger than the added effect of a social crisis and public good individually (cf. Mansbridge, 2003; Saward, 2006a)

H15: The combined effect of an environmental crisis and expert-based decision-making is stronger than the added effect of the environmental crisis and expert-based decision-making separately (cf. Ganuza & Font, 2020; Vittori et al., 2024)

For the second research question – “*What is the personality of the ideal representative like?*”, I employed a qualitative method, using focus group discussion². The research was designed as a pilot study. Rather than providing data that can be used to test any hypotheses, it offers insights for refining research questions and retaining some methodological lessons.

The vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment enabled me to map out all the causal relationships relevant to my work. It allowed me to examine how the attributes of theoretical candidates influence voters’ preferences in a controlled context. The vignettes themselves were carefully designed, they reflect realistic scenarios. When creating the scenarios for the vignettes, we aimed to write life-like stories so that voters could more easily relate or connect to them. For example, in the first vignette the theoretical candidate could have either 0 or 2

² The research has been conducted with the technical support of the New National Excellence Program of the Ministry of Culture and Innovation, code number ÚNKP-23-3-II-CORVINUS-93, funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund. The article has been published in Századvég Journal (Novák, 2024).

children – options chosen to reflect possible life circumstances rather than extreme or atypical cases. From a statistical perspective, survey experiments are often favored because they make it possible to investigate complex interaction effects. This was particularly useful, as one of the goals was to explore voters' dynamically changing expectations. The survey experiment provided an excellent way to collect and analyze large amounts of quantitative data, but I wanted to go beyond this by adding a qualitative dimension to my work. After considering my research plan and my available resources, I decided that focus group discussions would be a valuable addition. As a psychologist, I have always been interested in how people think and talk about politicians, and a focus group was one of the best tools for gathering data of this kind. The sole purpose of the focus group discussions was to conduct exploratory, pilot-level research, allowing me to identify new potential approaches and explanations for the quantitative results. The quantitative method revealed the broad trends while providing comparable results. The qualitative method provided further additional context, uncovering subtle attitudes and narratives. By combining these methods – the vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment and the focus group discussions – I was able to develop a more nuanced and refined understanding of voters' expectations regarding good representation. Together, they helped me to get a better understanding of how voters' think about what makes a good representative.

3.2. Case selection for the research

Representation in Hungary seems to show a well-polished picture, although behind this lies a more disenchanting reality where weak electoral linkages and a substantial representational deficit are documented (Ilonszki, 1998). Representational deficit means in very simple terms that voters do not feel represented. Given that the democratic system is indeed a representational democracy, we can argue that this phenomenon of voters' discontent is a pivotal shortcoming that can weaken the democratic structure itself. This concern is a driving force of my research, thus understanding voters' preferences is also a way of addressing the deficit that occurs. This representational deficit can stem from several causes. Here, understanding voters' preferences and wishes is pivotal. Who do voters want to represent them, ensuring they feel adequately represented? Do they want someone like them, to represent them (affinity effect)? Or do they want someone who possesses certain characteristics, independently from their own attributes? Regardless, public support is crucial for appropriately functioning representational processes and democracy (Ribbhagen, 2013, p. 22).

This leads us to the second essential consideration regarding representation in Hungary. With experts entering the political arena, traditional dynamics began altering. In a technocratic operation, *“First, the source of legitimacy of power is superior knowledge and expertise (rather than, say, popular will). Second, political representation follows a >>trustee<< model positing independence from, and unresponsiveness towards, society”* (Caramani, 2020, p. 3). Further elaborating this logic, Caramani points out that *“Technocracy is thus a type of power, but also a source of legitimacy and a form of representation”* (Caramani, 2020, p. 3). Democratic legitimacy is often contrasted with technocratic legitimacy which stems from expertise, knowledge and economic explanations such as efficiency and efficacy. Research on expert governments and policy decision-making has demonstrated that these two types of legitimacy can coexist within political systems. What about Hungary? The presence of experts in the Hungarian government is not unprecedented in recent decades (Galambos, 2023). In areas requiring specialized expertise, it has been common for experts to be appointed to decision-making positions (Ilonszki & Ványi, 2011). The more so as the proportion of experts in Hungarian governments is outstanding in European comparison with neighboring countries (Vittori et al., 2023). As these results focus on experts in official political positions, two questions emerge: (1) How do voters react to experts in the representational process, as a third party? And (2) In which scenarios do voters prefer experts instead of political actors, in the representational process?

To answer these questions in my dissertation, this subchapter is divided into two parts. Firstly, it examines the main characteristics of the Hungarian Parliament, outlining how the Hungarian legislature fits into the descriptive approach of representation theories. Secondly, it reviews Hungarian representation from a process-oriented perspective, focusing on the presence of experts in representation during turbulent times. These steps will facilitate a deeper exploration of Hungarian voters’ preferences, not only towards the individuals representing them, but also towards the actions performed by their representatives.

Looking at the National Assembly in Hungary, one can speculate that voters’ preferences tend to converge in one direction: towards incumbent, middle-aged, male representatives of Fidesz. The findings of Ilonszki (1998) are still supported nowadays by empirical data on young people’s political attitudes, as the most recent studies showed that among the V4 countries young Hungarians are least likely to believe that they are represented well (Bíró-Nagy & Szabó, 2022). We argue that this representative deficit contributes to the fragile nature of Hungarian democracy and thus learning about voters’ preferences regarding representation can contribute

towards the strengthening of democratic ties and the lessening of democratic discontent (Dahlberg et al., 2015).

Among Central and Eastern European countries, Hungary hosts a rather old-fashioned parliamentary elite: its parliamentary politicians became highly professionalized early on (Cotta & Best, 2000; Ilonszki & Edinger, 2007) meaning that incumbency became a defining feature of its parliamentary elite with a turnover rate being the second lowest among CEE countries (Semenova, 2024). This closed elite preserved and strengthened its highly educated, middle-aged and male character. Comparing the parliamentary elites in different parliamentary cycles from 1990 to 2010, Ilonszki and Schwarcz argued for a homogenization thesis stating that MPs became more similar regarding their age, gender, place of birth and education. Regarding the causes behind these trends, the authors pointed towards party-related explanatory variables “... *with the consolidation of the party framework – two big parties and some small parties located in parliament – differences in the composition were mainly due to party size and power positions. This tendency confirms that party changes and the transformation of the party system are often the background to the parliamentary elite differences, and these changes are reflected in party selection and de-selection strategies.*” (Ilonszki & Schwarcz, 2013, pp. 68-69). Looking beyond parliamentarians in her research on candidates, Papp confirmed the role of parties which tended to place more experienced candidates are placed higher on party lists and preferred men over women although regarding age, younger candidates were placed higher than older ones (Papp, 2017). Both studies investigate the Hungarian political landscape before 2010 when the conservative party, Fidesz won with a landslide victory introducing a period of a dominant party system with the same party winning qualified majority in four consecutive elections. While the turnover rate peaked in 2010 with the emergence of new parties and Fidesz introducing new politicians as well, soon the dominant party model solidified the parliamentary elite again along the same lines as before: both in 2018 and 2022 the average age of MPs was 50 and 52 years respectively, men dominated with 13-14% of women present and MPs had around 10 years of parliamentary experience on average (Republikon Intézet, 2022). However, the dominant party model also masked important differences: both in 2018 and 2022 opposition MPs were approximately 10 years younger on average, the percentage of women was more than 20% in their ranks and their parliamentary experience ranged from 4,7 to 5,5 years (Republikon Intézet, 2022). These are striking differences that indicate a turmoil under the rigid surface. The question still remains: what do voters want? Analyzing elections between 1994-2010 Papp (2018) found that voters seem to punish incumbency and they do not value experience in

national political positions either. What voters do value is local attachment although the effects are small thus as Papp describes: *“Regardless of the party-centeredness of Eastern European politics, personal characteristics of the candidates can influence electoral performance. Of course, selecting locally attached candidates will not change the power relations between parties.”* (2018, p. 535).

The evident dominance of party politics both on the supply and demand side of electoral politics prompted us to consider conducting the research in a low-level environment where party influence is deliberately not considered (see more on that below).

Factors influencing voter choice and voters’ preference are diverse and thus the empirical research tracking their effects are numerous and vary greatly in their approaches and methods. Some studies emphasize the candidate’s gender (Ono & Burden, 2019; Sanbonmatsu, 2002; Sapiro, 1981), while others focus on the geographical distance between voters and candidates (Arzheimer & Evans, 2012; Evans et al., 2017; Kal Munis, 2021). Some works examine the effects of age (Eshima & Smith, 2022; Webster & Pierce, 2019) and the candidate’s prior experience, whether in business or politics (Adams et al., 2021; Kirkland & Coppock, 2018). These works are based on the results of experimental studies. One shared characteristic of all these works is that they focused on one or two factors at one time, allowing respondents and researchers to take these factors into consideration independently but also limiting their capacity to contextualize answers and examine interactions.

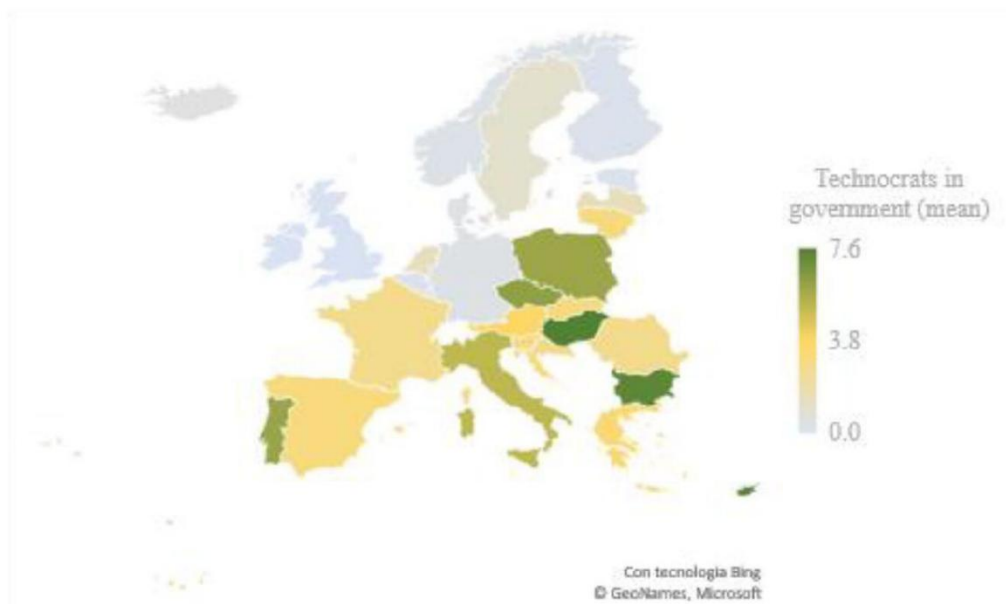
Although the Hungarian parliamentary elite is quite closed, it has been a tumultuous time in recent years for them. First, the primaries organized before the national elections of 2022. *“While the primaries organised in 2021 introduced an innovative element into the opposition landscape by inviting voters to participate in the selection of single-member district candidates and the prime ministerial candidate, the resulting alliance, under the leadership of Péter Márki-Zay, failed to live up to the expectations. Similarly to previous elections, the opposition alliance was not marred with internal divisions, as parties and party leaders fought for dominance, which the newcomer Márki-Zay was unable to overcome”* (Várnagy, 2023, p. 216). As Várnagy (2023) points out, the Hungarian political sphere had a newcomer in 2021, which was quite a novelty on this level. Then, in 2024 another new actor appeared on the scene: Péter Magyar. He held different positions during the last decades; in the 2010s Magyar had been working in governmental positions. Then, in 2024, after the scandalous resignation of Katalin Novák (former President of Hungary), and Judit Varga (former Minister of Justice, and former wife of Magyar), Péter Magyar has started his public political presence and career. His well-

constructed activism resulted in electoral success in the 2024 Hungarian municipal and European Parliament elections in June 2024. His party won the second-highest number of seats in the European Parliament, following the Fidesz-KDNP coalition with 11 and 7 seats, respectively. These results suggest that Hungarian voters and Hungarian politics seems to be open for newcomers thus gaining an insight into what shapes representation ideals of the Hungarian public is timely and relevant topic even if not directly applicable.

The process-oriented approach of the Hungarian representation also reveals an interesting picture. Democratic legitimacy is often understood as legitimacy stemming from procedural elements such as voting that connects the represented and the representative through shared political values, beliefs, opinions and interests. Derived from this, the representational process, thus the democratic legitimacy in Hungary is also strongly characterized by the electoral system of the country. Up to 2010, it was observed that *“While voters expect the representation of ‘the local’, their connection with MPs is exceptionally low”* (Ilonszki, 2012, p. 180). In 2011, there were significant changes in electoral rules in Hungary. In the current system, there are 199 seats in total in Hungarian Parliament, from which 106 Members of Parliament (in short: MPs) are elected in Single-Member Districts (in short: SMDs), the remaining 93 MPs are elected on a national list. As Papp and Zorigt highlights it, *“SMDs create a stronger linkage of accountability by setting clear responsibility for the different (positive and negative) outcomes”* (Norris, 2001; Papp & Zorigt, 2018, p. 121). Derived from this strengthened accountability, representatives aim is to please voters even more, in order to be re-elected in the future. But how can they do that? Does incorporating experts’ opinions make a difference?

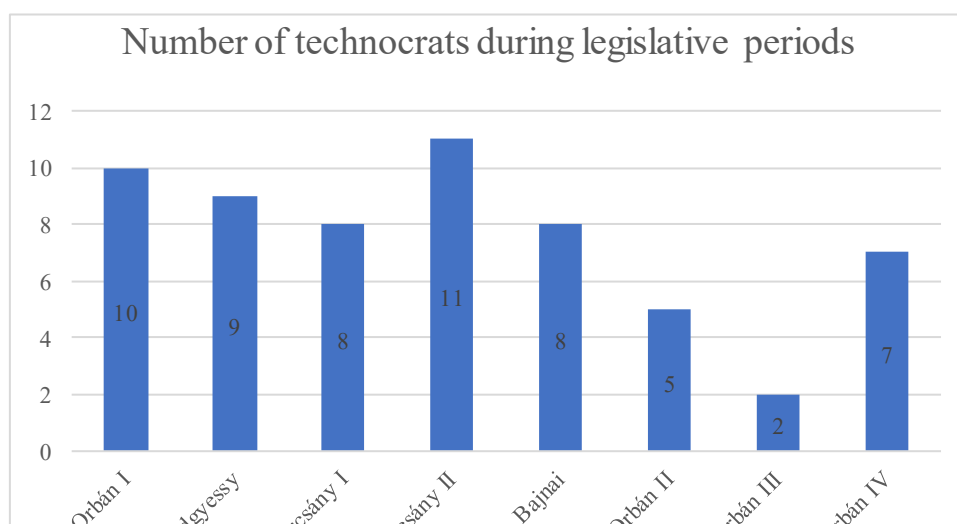
Hungary is not exempt from technocratic governments, however the classification of the Bajnai cabinet is not completely unambiguous (Kovarek, 2021). Sitter argues that the cabinet led by Prime Minister Gordon Bajnai can be described as a *“a more or less technocratic interim government”* (Sitter, 2011, p. 1).

Vittorio et al. have also created the Technocratic Ministers Dataset (in short: TMD) which collection consists of 31 European countries (Vittori et al., 2023). Based on this dataset’s content, Figure 2 shows the ratio of technocrats in European countries’ governments.



*Figure 2. Mean Number of Technocratic Ministers Per Government in Europe, 2000–2020.
(Source: Vittori et al., 2023)*

As Figure 2 indicates, there are more technocrats in Hungarian governments than in the neighboring countries. Figure 3 shows further data on how the number of experts in the governments has evolved during the terms starting from 1998 to 2018.



*Figure 3. Number of technocrats during legislative periods in Hungary
(author's own, based on the TMD)*

As the figures show, there are a rather good number of experts in the Hungarian government. However, we lack information about voters' preferences regarding experts outside the government. Do voters even want to see experts involved in decision-making in Hungary?

In my dissertation I argue that the two forms of legitimacy – democratic and technocratic legitimacy – not only coexist but also can be intertwined within the procedural interpretation of representation. Voters might expect their democratically elected representatives to incorporate and even prioritize technocratic approaches in decision making. A good representative might also include the technocratic aspect in the decision-making procedure. A puzzling question about representation is thus when do voters legitimize technocracy over politics and demand their representative to prioritize expertise over particularistic political interests or party platforms? Recent Hungarian results show that Hungarian citizens preferred experts in political decision-making processes during the pandemic (Papp, 2024, manuscript).

3.3. Vignette and conjoint survey experiments

Survey experiments were introduced in the disciplines of marketing research and sociology in the 1970s and in political science, they have gained immense popularity in recent years (Knudsen & Johannesson, 2019; Ono & Burden, 2019) mainly due to their capacity to embrace complexity. The design of conjoint experiments enables us to examine the effects of multiple influencing factors at once (Hainmueller et al., 2014). In this design, all variables can be manipulated independently and are generated in a different step of the process, which allows us to examine the independent and interactive effects of specific variables (Hainmueller et al., 2014; Ono & Burden, 2019). With conjoint analysis, variables can be manipulated separately, enabling the creation of various types of vignettes without requiring an extremely large sample size during the data gathering phase of the research. Furthermore, conjoint analysis helps reduce the possibility of participants' social desirability bias.

The naming of vignette method refers to very different types of stimuli, used during data collection. In this case, a stimuli can be not only in text format – like in a casual questionnaire survey, but it can also be an images or a video. The point is to create an exact context for respondents (Hughes & Huby, 2004).

Nowadays, in our globalized world, individuals do not have the capacity to properly track every aspect of their daily lives, so they become selective of the sense what they interpret from the world's happenings (Giddens, 1991; Hughes, 1998). Selectivity also applies to the vignette method – with the created context, vignettes provide a 'snapshot' of a situation to respondents.

This emerges two significant points. First, vignettes provide respondents space to form a discursive interpretation within the given context. Second, this space ensures a ‘non-personal’ and ‘non-threatening’ perspective to consider the issues arising from the vignette (Hughes, 1998).

At this point, it is important to note that this characteristic of the method – the significance of the context –, raises key considerations for analyzing and interpreting results. With a strictly constructed context, it is challenging to collect generalizable data (Hughes & Huby, 2002). One key element of the constructed context is what the literature calls low-level environment which in this research manifests as the lack of party identifiers. On the one hand low-level environment is favorable for mapping out how voter choice is influenced by the limited set of variables as it simply blocks out other major influences, most and foremost the influence of party candidacy. Thus, many studies dealing with voters’ preferences choose not to include party preference (Van Dijk & Van Holsteyn, 2022) or only include it in follow-up surveys (Campbell & Cowley, 2014). While the low-information research design can certainly prompt respondents to focus on other heuristics than party affiliation, it has strict limitations regarding generalizability and applicability to in-real life electoral settings, where party cues bear heavily on voters’ choices and often mute the effects for other variables (see Kirkland and Coppock, 2018 for the discussion on how candidate characteristics matter in partisan versus in non-partisan elections). Low-information design also implies a lack of political context that makes it very different from real-life settings and can lead respondents to overemphasize the effect of certain variables: for example, according to Dolan (2014) gender bias is more evident in experimental setting, a result that has been reinforced by study of Campbell and Cowley (2014). While low-level information research design clearly cannot model the full complexity of real-life electoral decision-making, its abstract nature can offer insight into the preferences of voters regarding candidate characteristics without confounding their effects with actual party preferences. That knowledge is an important starting point for mapping out where certain advantages and disadvantages originate from, whether they are inherent to voters or rather are the product of the political context – such as when preferences are influenced by party cues or candidate labeling. The work of Badras and Stauffer (2019) demonstrates the potential distorting effect of partisan labels: their results show that party labels can be the most important predictive factor over any other factors. Since my aim is to map out voters’ expectations regarding the personal characteristics and actions of theoretical candidates and representatives, I did not want to risk this research focus by incorporating party cues. Therefore, by excluding party labels

from the research, I was able to analyze the impact of different personal characteristics on voter evaluations more precisely.

As a potential counterpart to low-information environment, the phenomenon of ‘information leakage’ appears. The concept refers to the phenomenon when “*respondents infer additional information beyond that which is explicitly cued in the manipulation*” (Sher & McKenzie, 2006; cited in Johns & Davies, 2014, p. 770). The possibility of ‘information leakage’ should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. Thus, while there is a strictly constructed context, a significant strength of the method is its ability to include more factors and examine multidimensional choices. In this recent research, multidimensionality appears several times – for instance, when considering different models of representation.

As previously indicated, we used vignettes throughout the research. However, it is essential to mention the differences between vignette and conjoint survey experiments. Hainmueller and his colleagues (2015) identify five different experimental designs within vignette and conjoint survey methods.

The first types involve the two types of vignette methods – *single and paired vignette* design. In the single vignette setting, respondents are presented with a short paragraph of text, while in the paired design, they receive two short paragraphs describing various attributes. An example from my questionnaire could be: “Tamás, a 32-years-old politician who has lived in the constituency since his childhood. Tamás is a married man with two children. Before he got elected, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.” Respondents then accept or reject these vignettes, with the option in paired setting to accept or reject each vignette individually (Hainmueller et al., 2015).

The second types include the two types of conjoint settings. In these designs, instead of a nicely formatted paragraph of text, respondents are presented with a table displaying attribute levels. This design simplifies the comparison of the options for the respondents (Hainmueller et al., 2015, p. 2396). Usually, the first column shows the types of different attributes, while the other column(s) present(s) the value of the given attribute. Table 3 shows how my question would have looked like in a conjoint design. Single conjoint and paired conjoint designs are also closed with a decisive question. Like in the case of the paired vignette design, respondents here also have the opportunity to accept or reject both options (Hainmueller et al., 2015).

	Candidate 1	Candidate 2
Sex	Male	Female
Age	32 years old, young	52 years old, middle-aged
Residence	Does not live in their own constituency	Lives in their own constituency
Family status	Single	Married
Children	Has no children	Has two kids
Political experience	Active in national politics	Active in local politics
Previous political position	Held a parliamentary position	Held no elected position

Table 3. Example for paired conjoint design (author's own)

The last potential setting is the paired conjoint analysis with forced choice, which is the most restrictive. In this setting, respondents must choose exclusively. Choosing “Option A” automatically means rejecting “Option B”, and vice versa (Hainmueller et al., 2015).

In the research, respondents were presented with candidate profiles – short descriptions of potential candidates. This design is familiar and therefore less complex for citizens, as the act of voting resembles the situation created during the conduct of the research. For example, a more complex survey experiment might assess multicomponent political decision-making. In such a complex research design, various actors can be involved in the evaluation, including policymakers, public administrators, interest groups, voters, experts, the media and/or international actors. With my less complex research design, respondents are less exposed to *survey fatigue* (Bansak et al., 2018, p. 118).

In the present analysis, we applied a hybrid methodological approach to answer my main research question and hypotheses: *What do voters want? Who do voters want to represent them? What do voters expect their representatives to do?*

In the survey experiment respondents were presented with short paragraphs of text – theoretical candidate profiles or scenarios – in every question. This setup resembles the paired vignette design. However, after presenting the candidates, respondents were forced to choose one of the two possible candidates – as in the case of paired conjoint analysis with forced choice. This resulted in a hybrid solution, *paired vignette-looking conjoint with forced choice design*. By using paired design, “respondents are implicitly encouraged to compare the two applicants,

and this encouragement to compare might increase survey engagement” (Hainmueller et al., 2015, p. 2396). In the subsequent chapters of my dissertation, I will be using the terms vignette-looking conjoint design and vignettes as well, since the stimuli used in the research resembles vignettes.

The study applies a conjoint analysis method mainly because it has the capacity to capture some of the complexity of representation. As noted above voters’ choice is often not made along one single dimension or is defined by one driving characteristic but many. Their gender preference can for example collide with their expectations regarding political experience. If they prefer male and experienced politicians, who are they going to choose if there is an unexperienced male and an experienced female politician? Conjoint experiments can deal with those potential interactions by presenting voters small scenarios and/or descriptions allowing for a more considerate answer where the voter has the chance to weight characteristics not only individually but against each other. By offering candidate profiles in which each characteristic is varied separately, we can assess both independent and interactive effects of such variables simultaneously.

3.4. Critiques of the methodology

Although I have identified some of the indisputable advantages survey experiments have in the previous subchapter of my dissertation, it is essential to also address their limitations. As I have already emphasized, the generalizability of survey experiment results is a key weakness of the method. In other words, the external validity of the conjoint method might be questionable. However, there are more potential flaws of survey experiments which need to be addressed. As Hainmueller, Hangartner, and Yamamoto point out, *“such experiments fundamentally lack external validity and do not accurately capture real-world decision-making”* (Hainmueller et al., 2015, p. 2395). The field of psychology – not only political or social psychology – has been aware of the influencing force of different questionnaires and question types for decades, with a focus especially on self-report questions. Respondents’ reactions and evaluations can easily be altered by the questions themselves – their wording, context, and format matter (Schwarz, 1999, p. 93). Respondents are exposed to various types of biases, for example social desirability bias (Hainmueller et al., 2015), when the respondents’ aim is to choose ‘the correct’ answer, which they think is the socially acceptable and desired option. In the first vignette, a socially desirable option may be the hypothetical candidate with former political experience on a national level. These biases can lead to a difference between survey responses and real-life choices (Hainmueller et al., 2015).

To test out the validity and reliability of different survey experiment methods, Hainmueller and his colleagues conducted a complex research in Switzerland (Hainmueller et al., 2015). In that setting, they were able to compare the results of the five types of survey experiment methods – single conjoint, single vignette, paired conjoint, paired vignette and paired conjoint with forced choice – with data resembling voters’ real-life choices. Results of the paired conjoint analysis were the closest to Swiss people’s choices. Paired conjoint with forced choice also performed well, nevertheless its logic is an outlier as it is strongly differing from the operation of real-life referendums. Paired vignette setting shows great results compared to the benchmark and the other two settings (Hainmueller et al., 2015). In general, paired designs perform better than single designs, which can be attributed to the engagement of respondents throughout the course of the experiment. Participants may be more motivated when they are asked to assess two profiles at once, so the level of satisficing can remain relatively low (Hainmueller et al., 2015).

Survey satisficing occurs when respondents “*adapt by using cognitive shortcuts which can degrade response quality*” (Krosnick, 1999; cited in Bansak et al., 2018, p. 113). The phenomenon can occur in experimental settings where respondents are asked to evaluate multiple profiles one after another. Simply put when respondents repeat the same task multiple times during the survey experiment. Based on the literature, in case of conjoint design, it is a common practice to ask participants to execute the same task repeatedly. A traditional approach of conjoint design is where respondents receive not only a few possible descriptions, but also all of the possible combinations (Bansak et al., 2018, p. 113). In the research, applying this approach during the data collection phase would have meant well over 100 tasks for one respondent. Instead of this traditional approach, each task was presented only once to the respondents; there was no repetition during the form completion. This setting differs from the one favored by researchers, who often suggest providing respondents with more tasks, “*so as to maximize their statistical power*” (Bansak et al., 2018, p. 114). Consequently, having each respondent complete multiple tasks in a survey can greatly increase the number of evaluations without the need to recruit additional respondents. A conjoint survey experiment conducted in Hungary by Papp and Nkansah (2023) serves an example for this concept. With their research setting, they received 3888 profile evaluations from only 324 respondents (Papp & Nkansah, 2023). Presenting respondents with the same tasks consecutively within a survey experiment can enhance their familiarity with this unique, and relatively novel research setting. Classic surveys, which are widespread, are already familiar to many people in terms of their logic. However, survey experiments can introduce a new kind of stimulus and challenge for

respondents, who may first need to familiarize themselves with the process. This can be particularly true for conjoint survey experiments, which present the different attribute levels in a tabular format. In contrast, vignettes may be easier for respondents to understand due to their more narrative, readable nature. This was the rationale behind the decision of the research group to employ a vignette-like format of a conjoint survey experiment.

Creating survey experiments is a complex process. Researchers are advised to follow certain guidelines when formulating conjoint surveys and vignettes. The following non-exhaustive list presents some of these recommendations (Bryan, 2002):

- (1) Attribute levels should be clearly defined without using ranges. For example, when presenting a theoretical candidate to respondents, indicate their exact age, like 55 years old, rather than stating that “The candidate is between 50 and 60 years old”.
- (2) Attributes of the survey experiment should be independent. If attributes are not exclusive, meaning they potentially have overlapping in their meaning, results can be distorted as attributes can be “*double counted*” (Bryan, 2002, p. 1). In the case of our survey experiment, attributes’ independency would be compromised if one of the vignettes included this sentence: “Roland, a 48 years old, middle-aged politician who was born in the constituency and has lived there since then”. The underlined expressions – 48 years old and middle-aged – are close in meaning, their simultaneous presence in the vignette can significantly affect voters’ choices, thus the results of the survey experiment.
- (3) “*Levels within each attribute should be mutually exclusive*” (Bryan, 2002, p. 2). This means that respondents can only choose one level per attribute at a time. In this survey experiment, this suggestion was implemented as respondents did not have the chance to simultaneously choose the younger and the older theoretical candidate when they completed the survey experiment questionnaire.

The first and third points were implemented in the research; however, the second point is a critical one. The lessons learned from the research shed light on the importance of applying independent attributes in a survey research experiment. These will be presented in the subchapter ‘5.4. *Methodological limitations of the second vignette*’ of my dissertation.

As in survey experiments – not only in conjoint, but also in vignette research – respondents face a list of different attributes. There is a possibility that respondents’ final decision is influenced by a factor which otherwise would have only a minor effect on voters’ choice in a real-life

setting (Gal, 2022). In this research, participants were presented with numerous different attributes that may not even appear during elections. For example, information about candidates' previous political experience is not always easily accessible. In our research, we presented the theoretical candidates' former experience in every case along with a list of other information about them. There is a possibility that respondents, seeing that a particular candidate gained political experience prior, so they chose the experienced one over the other. This might differ from a real-life election outcome, where voters could choose a candidate who ran a better a campaign, regardless their previous political experience.

The complex weaknesses presented in this subchapter influence the interpretation of the results.

3.5. The first vignette

In this recent survey experiment, in the case of the first vignette, we presented each respondent with 2 of the candidate profiles. After the profiles, we asked the respondents the following question: "Based on the brief description provided below, which representative do you think would be best suited to represent you?". This question mimics the process of a real-life election. In each candidate profile, we manipulated 7 different variables. Six of these could take on two distinct values, while one variable could have three values in the profile description. A candidate profile looked like as the following one: "Tamás, a 32-years-old politician who has lived in the constituency since his childhood. Tamás is a married man with two children. Before he got elected, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor." The underlined expressions indicate the variables, which can have 2 or 3 different values. This leads us to a $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3$ arrangement with 192 possible profiles. This design consists of 7 attributes with a total of 15 levels.

These attributes are instrumental in conceptualizing voters' expectations towards their representatives (see the discussion on research questions and hypothesis). Specifically, I conceptualized the supposed affinity effect, which I linked to the biological sex and age of the theoretical candidates. The concept of locality which I understand as a type of affinity is operationalized through the third variable. Gender roles are conceptualized through marital and parental status with the 4th and 5th attributes. The last two attributes conceptualize political experience and are incorporated to examine the trustee model of political representation. Together, these variables help us to get a better understanding on voters' expectations.

Biological sex has been greatly studied, especially in connection to women's representation. In order to look into discrimination of women based on their sex, in my vignettes, the theoretical

candidate can be either a male or female. While biological sex in itself can potentially be an explanatory variable, the concept of gender roles can further enhance our understanding of the expectations and preferences of voters in relation to men and women. In our research we grasped the family aspect of gender roles by including variables about family and parental status and the career aspect of gender roles by including variables about political experience. In interaction with biological sex, these variables contribute to the conceptualization of gender roles although they also offer insights into voters' preferences as independent variables (see below).

Age seems to be another factor often examined, as it can reflect on the candidate's experience and potentially professional status. Typically, more senior candidates are perceived as more ideal for the position, whereas their younger counterparts are seen less experienced, thus less competent (Stockemer & Sundström, 2018). Age can also be analyzed in relation to the representation of younger generations. The values in my vignettes are as follows: the candidate is 32-years-old, or 52-years-old. They are neither very young in their teens, nor very old in their seventies.

Locality has been a focal question of representation and empirical data show that even in situations, where voters have same amount of information about both the local and non-local candidate, they tend to choose the candidate with local roots (Campbell et al., 2019; Campbell & Cowley, 2014). Defining locality is tricky. Some researchers define it by the birthplace of candidates, others relate it to residence. Both approaches can vary in taking either SMD boundaries as defined by the electoral law, or administrative settlement boundaries into consideration. I decided to focus on the candidate's residence, which allows for more flexibility. This focus emphasizes whether the candidate lives in the same SMD as the survey participant. The values we designed are as follows: the candidate either lives in the same SMD or does not.

Marital status also plays an important role in representation studies. Marital status embodies the traditional family structures and roles. Based on former empirical evidence, married candidates are more favored than unmarried candidates (Teele et al., 2018). To examine the effects of marital status in the research, we designed the vignettes with variables specified as follows: the candidate is either married or single.

Parental status has gained momentum on its own right, not only in relation to father- and motherhood. Like marital status, a candidate's parental status also represents the traditional family roles. This analogy is supported by empirical results as well. Voters prefer candidates

with children over childfree candidates (Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018). To examine the effects of parental status, respondents had the opportunity to choose between the following options: a candidate with two children, or a candidate without children.

The penultimate variable of the research addresses whether the candidate is active at the local or national level in politics, reflecting different areas of activity. Thus, we designed the values as follows: the candidate is active either at the local or national level.

Our last variable reflects the specific political position the candidate may held previously during their career. Different positions can indicate different levels of embeddedness and network sizes. To assess the effects of these positions, respondents were given three potential options to choose from: the candidate held the mayor's position, a position in Parliament, or no political position at all. Table 4 presents the attributes and their potential levels of the first vignette of this research.

Variable	Values of the variables
Sex	Male
	Female
Age	32 years old, young
	52 years old, middle-aged
Residence	Lives in their own constituency
	Does not live in their own constituency
Family status	Married
	Single
Children	Has two kids
	Has no children
Political experience	Active in national politics
	Active in local politics
Previous political position	Held the position of mayor
	Held a parliamentary position
	Held no elected position

Table 4. All the set of characteristics used in the first question/vignette (author's own)

As the vignette and its variables indicate, the first question of the survey experiment focuses on the supposed affinity effect and the descriptive nature of representation. The main question is: *What do voters want?* To answer this, I conceptualized affinity in different approaches, through different variables, such as the theoretical candidates' sex, age, and locality. The question is: *Does affinity matter when it comes to electing their representatives?* From a different angle, I conceptualized political experience through the last two variables, which help me capture the supposed presence of the trustee model in contemporary Hungarian representation.

3.6. The second vignette

The second vignette of the research experiment, as presented in my dissertation, aimed to investigate the role of experts in the representational process. Unlike the first vignette, which focused on the individuals representing voters, this one concentrated on the representative

process of decision-making itself. In this case we also presented respondents a pair of vignettes – two hypothetical scenarios about specific crisis situations. After the scenarios, we asked the participants the following question: “In a crisis situation, it may be necessary to reassess decision-making criteria. In your opinion, in an economic/social/environmental crisis, which is the best approach for representatives?”. In each candidate profile, we manipulated 3 different variables. The first of these variables could take on 2 distinct values, the second one on 3, and the third one 4 different values. A hypothetical story looked like as the following one: “Katalin pointed out that in an economic crisis, the interests of the voters are particularly important. In a crisis, the interests of the people come first.”. The underlined expressions indicate the variables, with the last two underlined expressions together forming the third variable. This leads us to a $2 \times 3 \times 4$ arrangement with 24 possible scenarios. This design consists of 3 attributes with a total of 9 levels.

The attributes of the second vignette slightly overlap with the first vignette; however, the operationalization differs. In this case, candidates’ biological sex operationalizes the Role Congruency Theory. The concept of crisis is operationalized through different types of crises, indicating different scenarios and their impact. Lastly, I operationalized specific models of representation through different groups’ interests. Together, these variables enhance our understanding of the process nature of political representation.

Similar to the first vignette, the biological sex of the theoretical candidate in the representational process was also the first variable in this case. Although the proportions of men and women in the population is roughly the same, there are more males in political and leader positions. This phenomenon can and must be investigated from both the supply side – women’s interest in holding political positions – and the demand side – voters’ preferences in politics (Kantorowicz-Reznichenko et al., 2023, p. 5). As I have already pointed out in subchapter ‘2.4. *What are they like?*’ of this work, distinct characteristics, behavioral patterns, and roles are associated with men and women. These characteristics lead to voters’ beliefs that male and female politicians possess different skill sets and competencies. The research of Johnson and Thomson (2023) focuses on female leaders during the Covid-19 pandemic. They suggest that “*Women show a natural tendency for transformational leadership which means they have the ability to lead with empathy and integrity and inspire followers to act selflessly for the greater good. These are the very traits that are appropriately suited for leadership roles during crises. This ability to understand followers’ needs at a deeper level and act accordingly explains actions that female transformational leaders have made*” (Johnson & Thomson, 2023, pp. 2461-2462). These

attributes can also be linked to the RCT (see also ‘2.4. *What are they like?*’ subchapter of this work). Although the authors emphasize women’s role in business in the first place, they also highlight that “*women political leaders play an equally important role and should not be ignored. Women in both sectors are faced with similar challenges when jockeying for leadership positions, and many political bureaucracies often mirror the structures of large businesses. Therefore, the impact that leaders like Margaret Thatcher, Angela Merkel, and Jacinda Ardern have during times of crisis supports this analysis of women leaders in business during these tumultuous times*” (Johnson & Thomson, 2023, p. 2462). In order to gain a better understanding of Hungarian voters’ beliefs about male and female politicians during times of crisis, in the vignettes, the theoretical candidate can be either a male or female.

Different types of crises are a part of our everyday lives. Crises can manifest in many different forms, such as extreme weather conditions, financial crisis, health crises, like a pandemic, or environmental crises. Any type of crises occurs, it has and will have an impact on the course of politics. Stemming again from the Role Congruency Theory, male politicians are perceived as more competent in military and labor issues, and they are considered more effective at handling demonstrations and diplomatic situations. Conversely, female politicians are seen as more competent in areas concerning education, poverty, and health policy issues (Alexander & Andersen, 1993; Dolan, 2010; Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993; Kantorowicz-Reznichenko et al., 2023; Sanbonmatsu & Dolan, 2009). Literature also offers a binary distinction for different types of issues, namely ‘hard’ and ‘easy’ or ‘soft’ issues. The former refers to topics, which are more complex and expect professionals to strategic planning, while the latter less complex, but at the same time they hold more symbolic power in politics due to their cultural and/or moral foundations (Bertsou, 2022; Carmines & Stimson, 1980). Questions regarding policing, security, military, and environment are considered as ‘hard issues’, whereas questions regarding immigration, arts and culture, and the LGBTQ rights are considered as ‘easy issues’, or ‘soft issues’ (Bertsou, 2022; Blee, 2020; Hawley, 2013; Krimmel et al., 2016). This distinction draws solely upon the foundation and complexity of the given topic. But scholars evolved this logic further with incorporating gender interests. On one hand ‘soft issues’ are connected to women, in line with leftist, egalitarian and globalist policy views and standpoints. On the other hand ‘hard issues’ are associated with men, in line with a more rightist, anti-egalitarian and nationalist attitudes (Blee, 2020). In this work, I am focusing on two hard and one soft issue. Economic crisis and environmental concerns are considered as ‘hard issues’ (Frangonikolopoulos, 2014), which serves as an example of a core political dimension, thus they

are strongly connected to realm of different political actors, like representatives and parties. Social crises can be considered as an example of the ‘easy issues’. Unfortunately, these types of crises are not unknown for us. In the recent decades, we have witnessed for example the global financial crisis (GFC) between 2008 and 2012 (Elliott & Stead, 2018), and the Greek debt crisis (Capelos & Exadaktylos, 2015), which serve as an example for economic crises. The Syrian refugee crisis can be considered as social crises from the last years (Talani, 2020). Looking back a bit further in time, the Chernobyl disaster of 1986 (Abbott, 2016) and the quite recent European heat waves of the last years (Buonocore & Pettoello-Mantovani, 2023) can be considered as environmental crises. To assess the effects of the different types of crises, respondents were presented with these three hypothetical scenarios: economic, social and environmental crises.

Lastly, I incorporated the interests and opinions of various actors into the second vignette of my survey experiment. I operationalized different models of political representation through these various interests and opinions. The concept of representative democracy emphasizes the interests and opinions of the citizens, with representatives aiming to aggregate and articulate the interests of their constituents (see ‘2.2.1. *Descriptive representation*’ and ‘2.2.2. *Locality*’ subchapters). Following the voters’ interests in a crisis situation translates into the delegate model of political representation.

Although the delegate model holds significance in the field of political representation theories, modern challenges require modern solutions. A major event of recent years, the Covid-19 pandemic, posed some formerly unprecedented challenges to countries worldwide. The pandemic has been described as “*the epitome of how some contemporary problems challenge the capacity of national party governments to implement successful policies*” (Lavezzolo et al., 2022, p. 1124). To address these challenges, experts have increasingly entered the political arena, supplementing or even bypassing traditional party governments. Experts in political decision-making processes are not a new phenomenon; however they have gained significant popularity in the last few years, partially due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Lavezzolo et al., 2022). Their presence in the political arena altered the traditional representational processes, as experts come from outside of the political sphere. Previous research from Spain indicates that the pandemic has significantly increased public support for technocratic governance, where experts are preferred over politicians for crisis management. It is important to note, however, that the research also demonstrates a significant framing effect, meaning that the way the pandemic is framed – either solely as a public health crisis or as including economic dimensions – strongly

influences voters' choice (Lavezzolo et al., 2022). One important takeaway here is that in our research all scenarios alluded to a crisis situation, thus the answers can only be interpreted in that context. However, the changing type of crisis is suitable for offering a drastically different context to see if it causes a shift and thus to test if representational preferences shift as a consequence. It is not suitable however to examine if experts (or man vs women for that matter) are preferred in other situations. Experts in this vignette translate into the technocratic approach of political representation.

Contrary to experts' recent rise, public opinion has been at the heart of representation theories for centuries, as the trustee model of representation shows that. Relationship between public opinion and public policy is an essential subject in political science. Researchers emphasize the *"the importance of 'responsive rule' – the correspondence between citizens' preferences and government actions – in democratic governance"* (Soroka & Wlezien, 2004, p. 531; see also Pitkin, 1967). The concept of policy representation shows us *"whether and how policy follows public preferences"* (Soroka & Wlezien, 2004, p. 531).

Lastly, party preferences also appeared in this particular vignette of my survey experiment. The Hungarian parliament is traditionally characterized by strong party discipline, which means that in the representational process, party opinions and interests are often prioritized over those of citizens (Szente, 2018). Party identification and affiliation is discussed in detail in the voter behavior literature, however these are not reflected in the process of representation.

To examine the influence of different opinions, respondents were given the option to choose between the following: voters' interests, experts' considerations, public opinion, and party program.

Table 5 presents the characteristics used in the second vignette.

Variable	Values of the variables
Sex	Male
	Female
Type of crisis	Economic crisis
	Social crisis
	Environmental crisis
Important considerations, interests	Voters' interests (Delegate)
	Experts' considerations (Technocratic approach)
	Public opinion (Trustee)
	Party program (Party-label based approach)

Table 5. All the set of characteristics used in the second question/vignette (author's own)

In contrast to the first vignette, the second vignette of my survey experiment focuses on the process approach of representation, emphasizing voters' perceptions of different actors in the process while also considering the role of various types of crises.

The compiled survey experiment does not claim that the public interest, the expertise and the interests of the electorate are mutually exclusive, but if they are not in line, there must be a priority, which is why I formulated the question the way I did, asking respondents about "the best approach for representatives?".

The types of crises presented in this subchapter are not by any means separable, neither are they mutually exclusive. As many researches point out, different types of crises can be present simultaneously (Alkiviadou, 2018; Hacker, 2015; Loorbach et al., 2016). Recognizing this overlap, I put the emphasis on the primary narrative framework rather than isolating individual crises. For instance, while the 2009 crises primarily impacted finance, it also had severe social repercussions as well. Similarly, heat waves are primarily environmental but have notable effects on agriculture. In preparing my survey experiment research, I deliberately excluded the Covid pandemic, or any connected public health crises. First, it is close in time; second, many great research has been conducted on it during recent years (Kantorowicz-Reznichenko et al., 2023; Lavezzolo et al., 2022; Papp & Nkansah, 2023).

Another essential aspect of my work is the framing effect. As the work of Lavezzolo and his colleagues (2022) indicates, how the events are framed has a powerful effect on how voters

perceive, thus assess a given situation. My aim was to see how voters react when they receive information only based on a broad narrative. Certain narratives can be framed many ways; for example, the Covid-19 pandemic can be framed as a public health crisis, and at the same time it also can be framed as a social crisis. However, in my survey experiment I put the emphasis on a broad narrative to assess the general reaction to the presented information. Future experiments may explore more nuanced frames and question wording to better understand how different frames and narratives affect voters' choices regarding types of crises.

3.7. Attributes of the quantitative study sample

After receiving four vignettes during the survey experiment, respondents were asked six additional questions. Five of these questions targeted basic demographic attributes of the participants, these are: sex, age, region, type of settlement, and educational background, with responses selected from a drop-down list. Respondents were obligated to choose between 'male' and 'female', in case of their biological sex. The age options ranged from 18 and 69 years. The regional options corresponded to Hungary's seven regions. Settlement type was categorized as Budapest (the capital), city, or village. Educational background was divided into three levels: basic, secondary, and higher educational background. These questions and answer options allowed me to conduct a survey experiment that yielded a sample representative of the Hungarian population in terms of age, sex, region, type of settlement, and educational background.

The sixth and last question was designed to measure the respondents' general political knowledge by asking for the name of their current parliamentary representative. For this question, I used an open-ended question, allowing participants to freely name (or do not name) their representative.

As the last question yielded interesting answers, I present a summarized extract of the results in Table 6. As the research was conducted anonymously, I was unable to verify whether respondents provided correct answers this question. Consequently, I arbitrarily created three categories: (1) respondents who wrote the name of a current MP; (2) respondents who either did not answer or wrote "Do not know" or expressed the same sentiment in a different form; (3) respondents who gave a negative or dismissive answer.

Who is your representative in Parliament?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Knows	591	49,3	49,3	49,3
	Does not know/ Does not answer	556	46,3	46,3	95,6
	Negative	53	4,4	4,4	100,0
	Total	1,200	100,0	100,0	

Table 6. Answers to the last question (author's own)

3.8. Data collection

A 12-month long period beginning in March 2021 was dedicated to preparing the research. In 2022, we conducted a pilot survey experiment on a non-representative sample to test whether the planned survey questions are able to capture effectively voters' perceptions of the concept of representation and representatives. As the preliminary results and feedback approved the research design, I could move forward with the process. A Hungarian polling agency executed the main data gathering. The conjoint survey experiment was conducted in November 2022. We used a questionnaire-based method of individual querying in an online setting. The sample size comprised 1,200 respondents, representative of the Hungarian population with respect to age, sex, region, type of settlement, and educational background. This approach provided a broad and inclusive data collection which is reflective of the basic demographic aspects of Hungary.

3.9. Representativeness of the quantitative study sample

The sample of my survey experiment study is representative of the Hungarian population in terms of age, sex, region, type of settlement, and educational background. Table 7 provides the detailed data on the composition of the research sample.

		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	584	48,7 %
	Female	616	51,3 %
Age	18-29 years	253	21,6 %
	30-39 years	271	22,6 %
	40-49 years	226	18,8 %
	50-59 years	247	20,6 %
	60-69 years	202	16,8 %
Educational background	Basic education	568	47,3 %
	Secondary education	406	33,8 %
	Higher education	227	18,9 %
Type of settlement	Budapest	215	17,9 %
	City	626	52,2 %
	Village	359	29,9 %
Region	Central Hungary (Közép-Magyarország)	362	30,1 %
	Northern Hungary (Észak-Magyarország)	141	11,7 %
	Northern Great Plain (Észak-Alföld)	177	14,8 %
	Southern Great Plain (Dél-Alföld)	156	13,0 %
	Southern Transdanubia (Dél-Dunántúl)	112	9,4 %
	Central Transdanubia (Közép-Dunántúl)	132	11,0 %
	Western Transdanubia (Nyugat-Dunántúl)	121	10,0 %

Table 7. The composition of the research sample (author's own)

3.10. The focus group discussion

To explore my secondary research question, I employed the qualitative method of focus group discussions. The focus group method is a very flexible research tool, used in both political science and psychology, among other fields. A focus group typically consists of a small group of individuals who are convened for the purpose of discussing and providing feedback on a specific, pre-defined topic. Focus group research allows qualitative data to be collected by facilitating open discussion and debate between participants. It is important to see that this tool can not only answer research questions but can also reveal approaches and ideas that no one had thought of before. Other advantages of focus groups are that they are a flexible and dynamic method and guarantee results in a short time (Babbie, 2013; Krueger, 1988).

In the field of political science, focus groups are often used to gain a deeper understanding of public opinion and political behavior, as Clinton, for example, regularly used the focus group tool to test policy ideas and plans (Morris, 1999; Newman, 1999). By bringing together participants with different perspectives, researchers can explore the reasons behind particular political attitudes and beliefs. The focus group methodology allows the exploration of complex issues, for example, it is also a useful tool for investigating what voters think the ideal political representative should be. Open-ended questions allow for a deeper insight and understanding of voters' thinking and logic. Focus group research provides valuable insights into the factors that influence political choice and can provide information for developing effective policy strategies (Halperin & Heath, 2020; Savigny, 2007).

The focus group process typically consists of several steps. First, the research question must be identified, which then forms the basis for the discussion. Next comes the recruitment of participants – this is done along pre-defined criteria relevant to the topic. It is important to ensure an appropriate homogeneity-heterogeneity ratio. Adequate homogeneity guarantees a safe and comfortable environment for all, while heterogeneity ensures that different perspectives and experiences are represented in the discussion (Vicsek, 2006). The discussion is facilitated by a moderator, ensuring that all participants have an equal opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions. The moderator encourages active participation by asking open-ended questions.

The research process of the focus group discussion on which this study is based consisted of two phases: a pilot discussion in December 2023 and a main event in January 2024. Five

participants took part in both discussions. For the recruitment of the participants, I used the convenience sampling method for both discussions.

The pilot discussion in the first phase aimed to test and refine the methodology. This preparatory phase allowed me to further refine the basic aspects of recruiting participants for the talks, as well as the way in which the session was conducted, and the questions raised. The members of the pilot group were a very homogeneous group in socio-economic terms, but the session nevertheless provided an insight into the effectiveness of the methodology. At the same time, it was an indication of the inadequate homogeneity-heterogeneity ratio. Based on the valuable methodological experiences and lessons learned from the pilot discussion, I refined the methodology for the main event. During the second discussion, I paid particular attention to the appropriate heterogeneity of the group to ensure representation of groups from different socio-economic backgrounds. This diversity allowed me to gain a more comprehensive and deeper insight into the potential answers to the research question.

The engagement and activity of participants was outstanding on both occasions, resulting in a lively discussion among the members, which provided me with a rich and diverse set of data. I later analyzed the notes of the discussions in depth to understand the participants' perspectives and opinions on the issues raised.

The focus group discussions were structured in three blocks. At the beginning of the two sessions, I explained the framework to the participants - I assured them of anonymity and the aggregate use of the data. In this way I established an atmosphere of trust. In the first block, I asked participants to draw a picture, so this round served as an "icebreaker". After drawing the ideal representative, I asked the participants to present the figure they had drawn and tell me about it. In the second and main stage, we moved on to the identification of the ideal political representative. To do this, I asked each participant to describe the 5 most important qualities of the ideal representative. I then explained the structure and content of the Big Five personality model to the group and placed the attributes they had written down on a whiteboard, while each participant explained to the group what he or she had attributed to the word or phrase. Placing these attributes was always agreed by the group. This methodology enabled the exploration of the relationships between the attributes written down by the members and the nature of this relationship. During the pilot focus group discussion in December 2023, the attributes were placed first and only then were the group members given information about the structure and content of the Big Five model. This logic was adjusted for the next session based on the information and lessons learned during the pilot group. The flexibility of the focus group

method allowed for the presentation of different opinions and points of view, as well as for discussion. And in the final, concluding block, the participants used barometers to visualize the structure of their ideal representative's personality - also based on the Big Five model.

4. Data analysis

4.1. Methods of data analysis

To analyze the results of the vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment, I used several different software programs. For basic operations and analyses, such as querying frequencies and creating charts, I used Microsoft Excel and SPSS. For the Average Marginal Component Effect (in short: AMCE) and ACIE (Average Component Interaction Effects) analyses, I used the R statistical software package and Python. AMCE captures the average effect of changing one attribute level, while all the other attributes remain the same. In my work, AMCE shows for example how the evaluation of a candidate changes depending on the change of their biological sex or age. Contrarily, ACIE measures the effect of one attribute while also taking into account other attributes' effects, in other words, ACIE analyses capture the combined effect of two separate variables. In my work, ACIE shows for example how voters evaluate female candidates who have children.

4.2. Results of the first vignette

The different characteristics of theoretical candidates affect voters' choices in different ways. The analysis of the first vignette displays these differences by yielding intriguing results. First, I present the exploratory AMCE and its results. Figure 4 and Table 8 show the detailed results. As we can see, the results are in line with the expectations, the most important variable is localism as non-local candidates are severely punished. Theoretical candidates' parental status is the second most important variable that has a statistically significant effect on voters' choice. Hungarian voters show a preference towards candidates who have children. The third strongest influencing factor is the previous position of the theoretical candidate, specifically having experience as a mayor is a key variable that has a significant effect since it probably strengthens the image of a local politician who has been in the business of providing for its constituency. Of course, political experience in itself is valuable according to the trusteeship approach which deems competent and experienced politicians as desirable. Previously having a parliamentary position also significantly influences voters' preferences, as it has the fourth strongest effect on voters' evaluation. The last statistically significant effect is based on the age of the theoretical candidate. We can see that Hungarian voters in general prefer younger political candidates over

those in their 50s. Being active in national politics or in local politics does not make a statistically significant difference when it comes to voters' preferences, however there is a slight inclination towards candidates who are involved in politics on a local level. Being married as a candidate improves the chances of being preferred by voters, although the difference between single and married candidates is not statistically significant. Respondents in my sample tend to favor female theoretical candidates, although the difference between the preference of male and female theoretical candidates is not statistically significant either.

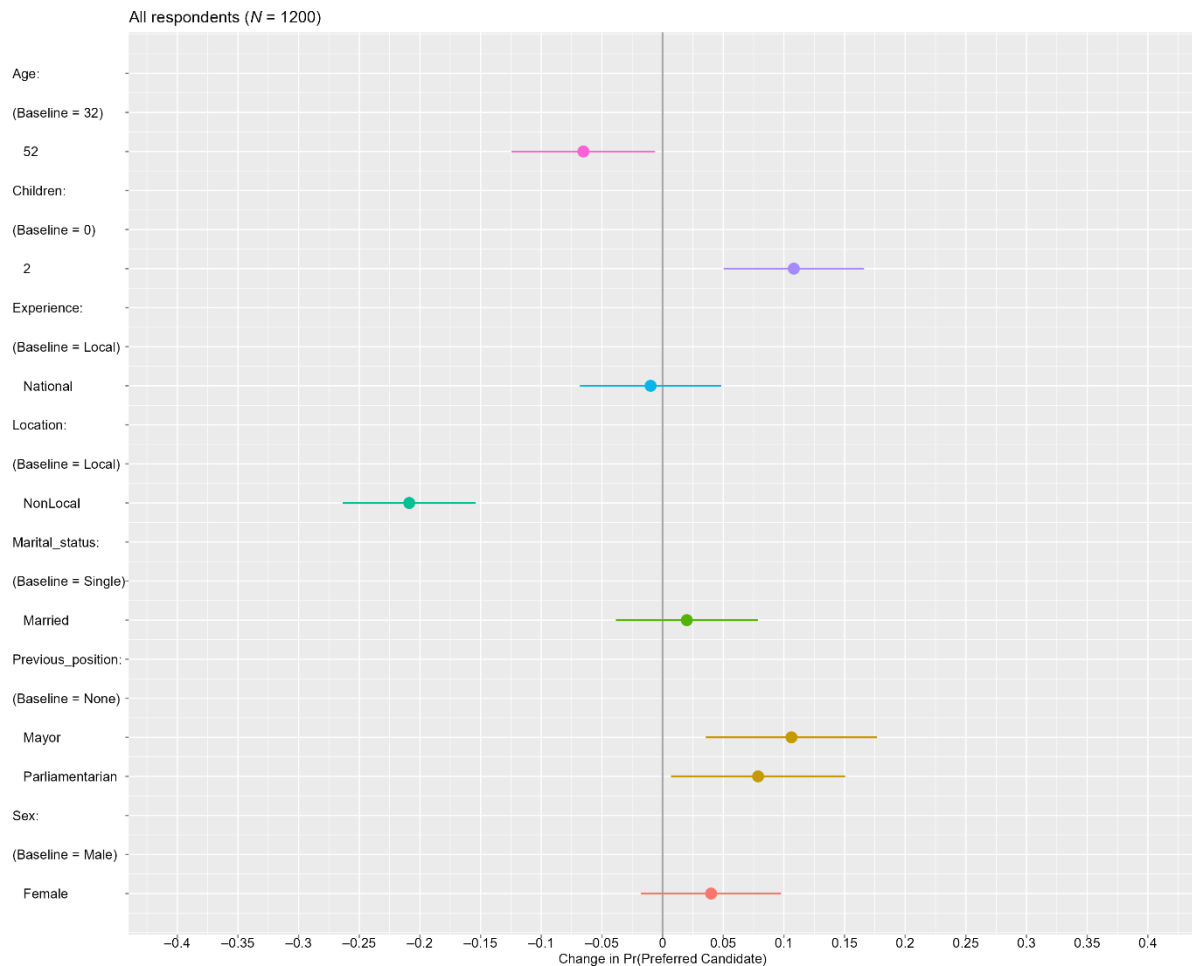


Figure 4. AMCEs on preferences in candidate characteristics (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	p-value
Age	52	-0.0652	0.0301	0.030*
Children	2	0.1082	0.0295	<0.001***
Experience	National	-0.0098	0.0297	0.741
Location	Non-local	-0.2088	0.0280	<0.001***
Marital status	Married	0.0200	0.0298	0.502
Previous position	Mayor	0.1063	0.0360	0.003***
	Parliamentarian	0.0788	0.0366	0.031*
Sex	Female	0.0400	0.0295	0.174

Table 8. AMCEs on preferences in candidate characteristics (author's own)

After the exploratory AMCE analysis, I also examined the effects of each variable separately, across different respondent attributes. The characteristics of theoretical candidates may affect voters' choices differently, depending on the voters' own characteristics. I aim to identify how respondents with different attributes perceive and potentially advantage or disadvantage candidates based on various characteristics. In the following sections, I will present these results in the order of the variables' appearance in the vignettes. I include summarizing tables for the statistical results only for variables where there are more than five statistically significant relationships between voters' attributes and theoretical candidates' characteristics, for a better overview. In other cases, the statistical results will be presented in the main text.

The biological sex of the candidates influences the decisions of respondents across all examined aspects. Voters between the ages of 18-29 and 40-49 tend to favor male candidates over their female counterparts. Every other age group in the research tends to support female candidates, although only in the case of voters aged 60-69 years does this preference show a significant difference towards female candidates; the estimated effect on voter preference is -0.1271, with a standard error of 0.0522, a z-value of 2.4309, and a p-value of 0.015*. Regardless of their level of education, respondents generally show clear support for female candidates; however, those with only basic education demonstrate a more significant preference for female candidates; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.0899, with a standard error of 0.0322, a z-value of 2.7887, and a p-value of 0.005**. Respondents from the Central- and Western Transdanubia region show a preference for male candidates, while respondents from the other regions of Hungary tend to support female candidates. Only participants from the Northern region of the country show a significant difference towards female candidates; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.1168 with a standard error of 0.0532, a z-value of 2.1953, and a p-value of 0.028*. Respondents' type of settlement shows very similar results – participants

from Budapest, cities, or villages tend to favor female candidates over their male counterparts. The difference is significant among respondents living in villages; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.0837 with a standard error of 0.0368, a z-value of 2.2707, and a p-value of 0.023*. Respondents' biological sex also plays an important role, as female voters in my sample demonstrate a significant preference for female candidates; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.0826 with a standard error of 0.0275, a z-value of 2.9983, and a p-value of 0.003**. Figure 5 shows the detailed results. Although their results are not statistically significant, male respondents in my sample also show a preference towards female candidates compared to male candidates.

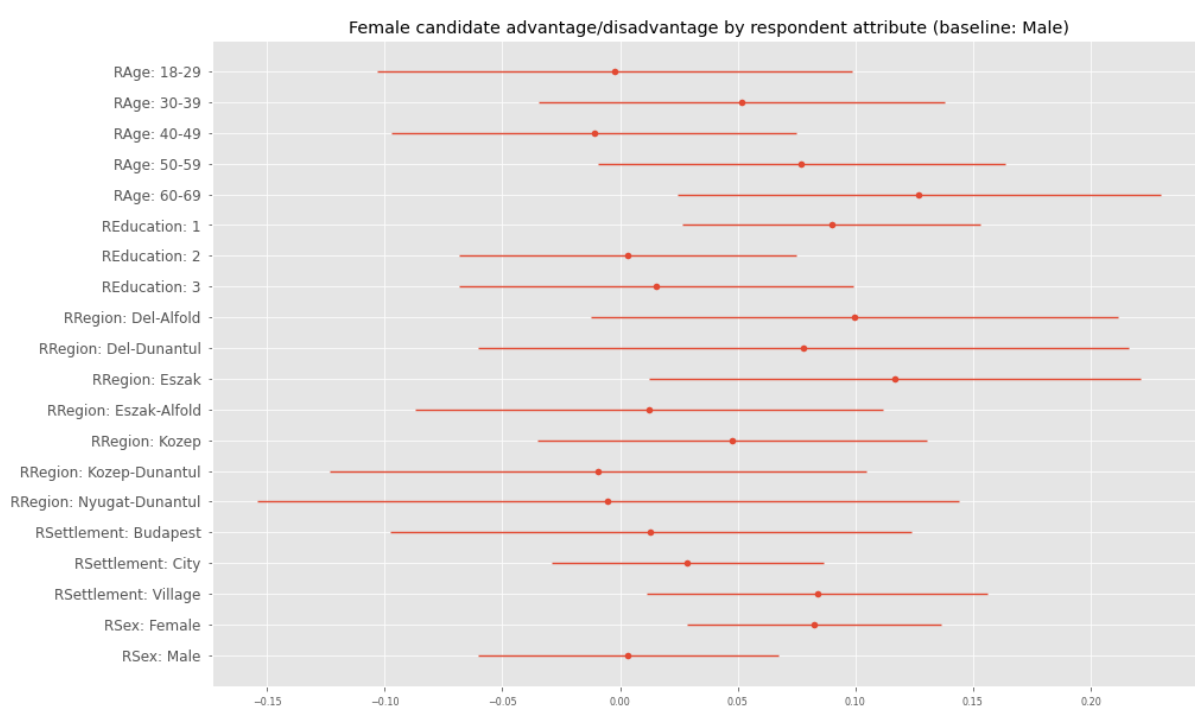


Figure 5. Female candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Candidates' age strongly divide respondents' standpoints. Respondents between the ages of 18-49 significantly disadvantage the theoretical 52-year-old candidate. In case of participants between the ages of 18 and 29 years, the estimated effect on voter preference is -0.1489 with a standard error of 0.0480, and a z-value of -3.0973. This result is statistically significant (p-value of 0.001***), suggesting that the 52-years-old theoretical candidate has a notable disfavor among the youngest Hungarian voters. In case of participants between the ages of 30 and 39 years, the estimated effect on voter preference is -0.1047 with a standard error of 0.0451, a z-value of -2.3213, and a p-value of 0.020*. Meanwhile, respondents between the ages of 50 and

69 years show a strong support towards the older, 52-year-old candidate. Regardless of their level of education, respondents show a general support towards the younger, 32-year-old candidate, although survey experiment participants with higher education qualification present significantly stronger support towards them; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.0850 with a standard error of 0.0414, a z-value of -2.0503, and a p-value of 0.040*. Only respondents from the Northern and the Southern Transdanubia region present an advantage for the 52-year-old candidate, and none of the results show a significant difference. Respondents' living in villages support the 52-year-old candidate, while participants from Budapest and different cities demonstrate a preference towards the 32-year-old candidate; in the case of the latter – respondents living in cities – this difference is statistically significant; the estimated effect on voter preference is -0.0930 with a standard error of 0.0299, a z-value of -3.1030, and a p-value of 0.002**. Both male and female survey experiment participants show a preference for the younger, 32-year-old candidate, although the difference is only significant among male respondents; the estimated effect on voter preference is -0.0326 with a standard error of 0.0326, a z-value of -2.0142, and a p-value of 0.044*. Figure 6 provides the detailed results.

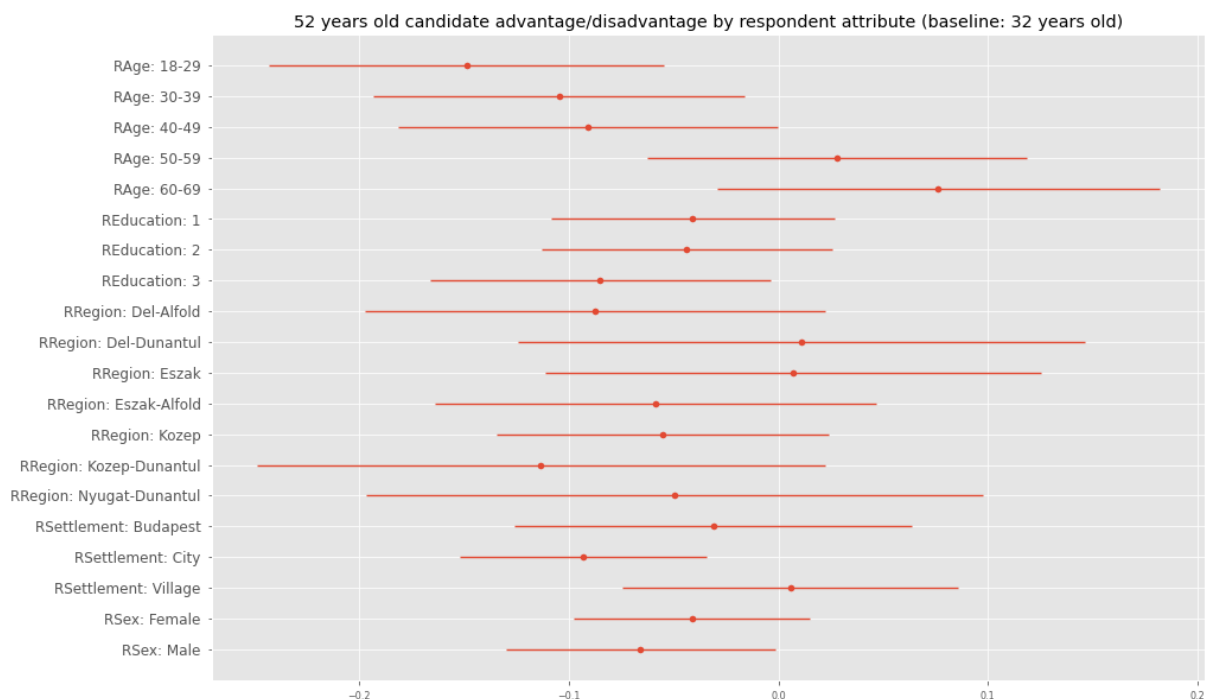


Figure 6. 52-years-old candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

As I have emphasized the importance of locality in the '2.2.2. Locality' subchapter of my dissertation, the empirical data of the research also distinctly supports this idea. Survey

experiment participants in each potential attribute group advantage local candidates over non-local candidates. Only in the case of respondents from the Southern Great Plain region are the results non-significant, however, they also show a tendency towards disadvantaging non-local candidates, so they do not contradict the overall results. Detailed results can be found in Figure 7 and Table 9.

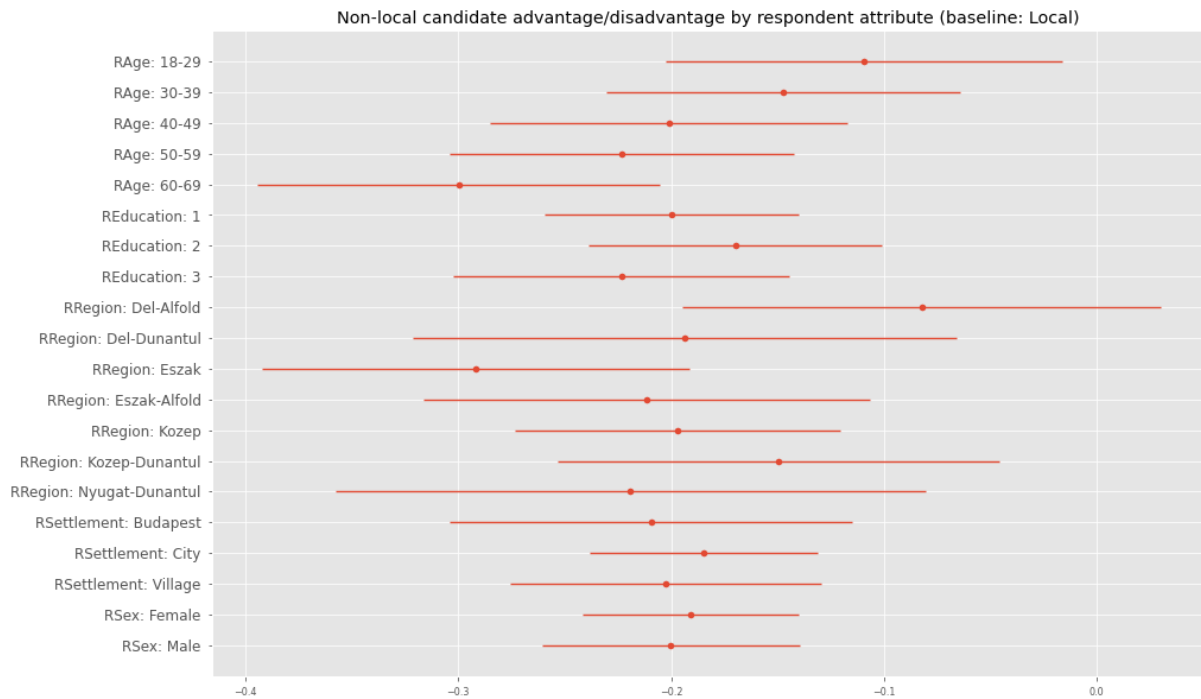


Figure 7. Non-local candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	z value	p value
Sex	Male	-0.2002	0.0308	-6.4971	< 0.001 ***
	Female	-0.1910	0.0259	-7.3761	< 0.001 ***
Age	18-29 years	-0.1095	0.0474	-2.3095	0.021*
	30-39 years	-0.1474	0.0424	-3.4811	< 0.001 ***
	40-49 years	-0.2010	0.0429	-4.6886	< 0.001 ***
	50-59 years	-0.2231	0.0413	-5.3953	< 0.001 ***
	60-69 years	-0.2998	0.0483	-6.2037	< 0.001 ***
Educational background	Basic education	-0.1997	0.0305	-6.5496	< 0.001 ***
	Secondary education	-0.1699	0.0350	-4.8507	< 0.001 ***
	Higher education	-0.2233	0.0402	-5.5517	< 0.001 ***
Type of settlement	Budapest	-0.2095	0.0482	-4.3427	< 0.001 ***
	City	-0.1847	0.0274	-6.7314	< 0.001 ***
	Village	-0.2027	0.0372	-5.4415	< 0.001 ***
Region	Central Hungary	-0.1969	0.0390	-5.0500	< 0.001 ***
	Northern Hungary	-0.2918	0.0512	-5.6956	< 0.001 ***
	Northern Great Plain	-0.2115	0.0535	-3.9537	< 0.001 ***
	Southern Great Plain	-0.0824	0.0572	-1.4398	0.150
	Southern Transdanubia	-0.1937	0.0651	-2.9761	0.003**
	Central Transdanubia	-0.1495	0.0529	-2.8259	0.005**
	Western Transdanubia	-0.219	0.0707	-3.0969	0.002**

Table 9. Detailed results of non-local candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Candidates' marital status is a part of the operationalization of gender, as it is connected to gender roles and the stereotypes attached to them. The research results show that respondents between the ages of 18-29 years tend to advantage the single candidate, while every other age group show a preference for the married candidate; survey experiment participants aged 30-39 years show a significant difference; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.1009 with a standard error of 0.0453, a z-value of 2.2259, and a p-value of 0.026*. Respondents with secondary educational backgrounds present a slight disadvantage for married candidates, while respondents with every other educational background prefer married candidates over single candidates. Based on regional division, respondents from the Southern Great Plain and the Central region of Hungary advantage the single hypothetical candidate, while survey experiment participants from every other region of the country support the married candidate. Respondents from Budapest in this research prefer the single candidate, while respondents from cities and villages support the married candidate; participants from villages show a significant difference; the estimated effect on voter preference is 0.0858 with a standard error of 0.0383, a z-value of 2.2420, and a p-value of 0.025*. Male respondents advantage the single candidate in

opposition to female respondents, who support the married candidate, although in these cases there are no statistically significant results. Figure 8 presents the detailed results.

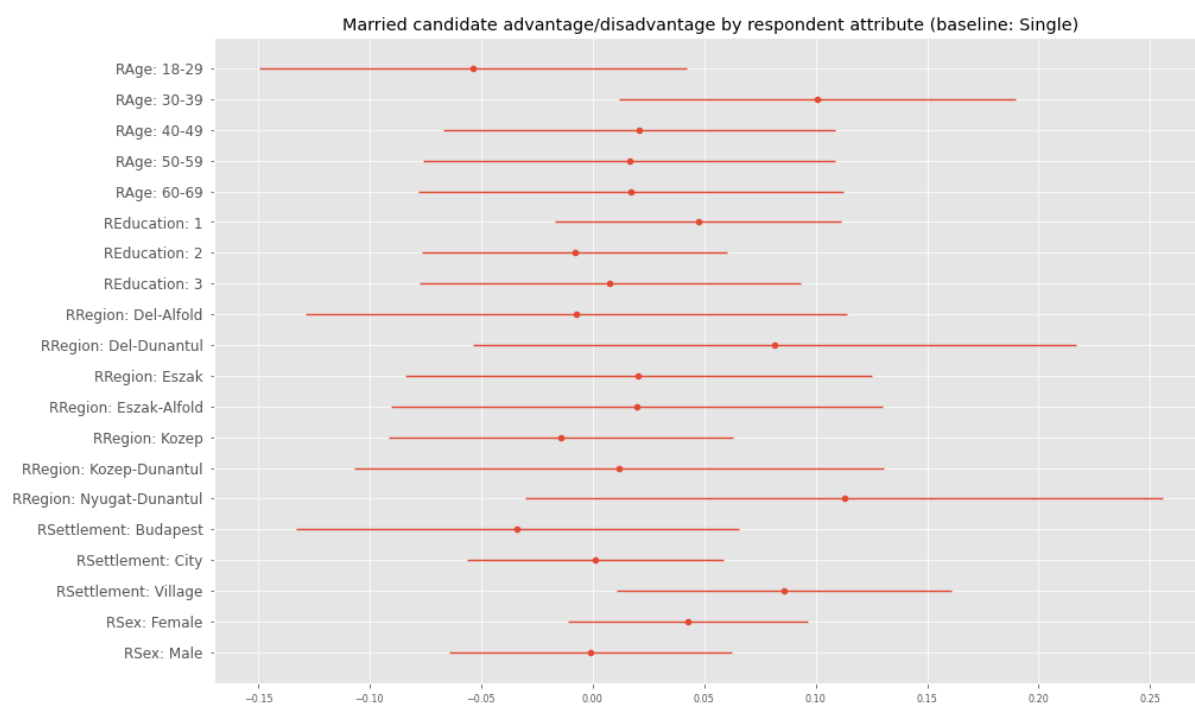


Figure 8. Married candidate advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Having children or not is also connected to the operationalization of gender, like candidates' marital status. Results of the research reveal a more diverse landscape in this regard. Regardless of their age, respondents generally prefer the candidate with two children over the candidate with no children. Notably, the differences are statistically significant only among participants aged 30-39 and 50-59. Respondents from these age groups show a pronounced preference for the candidate with two children. Survey experiment participants with higher educational backgrounds show a preference for the candidate with no children, however respondents with basic, and secondary education show a statistically significant difference, as they show a strong preference for the candidate with two children. Geographically analyzed, only respondents from the Southern Transdanubia region prefer the candidate with no children. Participants from every other region in Hungary favor the candidate with two children; however, the differences are statistically significant only in the following regions: Northern Hungary, Northern Great Plain, Central Hungary, and Western Transdanubia. Those of partaking in the research and living in Budapest demonstrate an advantage for the candidate with no children, while respondents living in cities or villages show a significant preference for the candidate with two children. Female and male respondents in my experiment both support the candidate with two children; however,

only female respondents show a statistically significant difference. Detailed outcomes can be found in Figure 9 and Table 10.

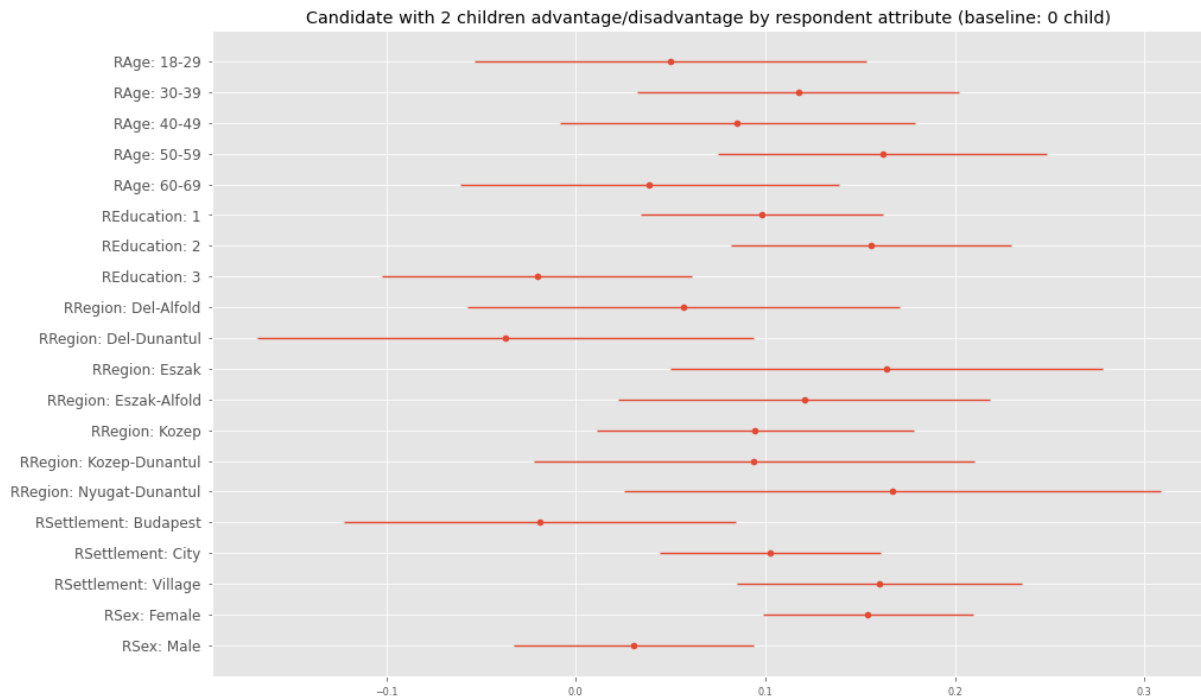


Figure 9. Candidate with two children advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	z value	p value
Sex	Male	0.0305	0.0322	0.9461	0.344
	Female	0.1542	0.0284	5.4281	< 0.001 ***
Age	18-29 years	0.0499	0.0526	0.9493	0.342
	30-39 years	0.1173	0.0434	2.7048	0.007**
	40-49 years	0.0853	0.0479	1.7824	0.075
	50-59 years	0.1618	0.0442	3.6608	< 0.001 ***
	60-69 years	0.0390	0.0510	0.7646	0.445
Educational background	Basic education	0.0980	0.0326	3.0047	0.003**
	Secondary education	0.1558	0.0376	4.1419	< 0.001 ***
	Higher education	-0.0203	0.0417	-0.4863	0.627
Type of settlement	Budapest	-0.0191	0.0528	-0.3615	0.718
	City	0.1026	0.0296	3.4622	< 0.001 ***
	Village	0.1599	0.0384	4.1690	< 0.001 ***
Region	Central Hungary	0.0947	0.0426	2.2207	0.026*
	Northern Hungary	0.1637	0.0582	2.8148	0.005**
	Northern Great Plain	0.1205	0.0500	2.4103	0.016*
	Southern Great Plain	0.0566	0.0582	0.9723	0.331
	Southern Transdanubia	-0.0374	0.0668	-0.5600	0.575
	Central Transdanubia	0.0939	0.0592	1.5852	0.113
	Western Transdanubia	0.1670	0.0722	2.3142	0.021*

Table 10. Detailed results of candidate with two children advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Candidates' previous political experience does not seem to be a key influencing factor in voters' choice. In general, respondents of my survey experiment research favor national and local political experience as well. Participants aged 30-49 show a stronger support for the candidate with local political background, although only respondents between the ages 30-39 years show a statistically significant difference; the estimated effect on voter preference is -0.1151 with a standard error of 0.0446, a z-value of -2.5787, and a p-value of 0.010**. Respondents with basic educational backgrounds advantage the candidate with local political experience, while participants with secondary and higher educational backgrounds advantage the candidate with national political experience. Regional position also divides respondents' preferences. While participants from the Northern and Central Transdanubia region prefer the candidate with local political experience, respondents from the other regions of the country prefer the candidate with political experience gained on the national level. Survey participants who live in Budapest tend to support the candidate with local political experience, while respondents living in cities or villages show a preference for the candidate with national political experience. Female

participants in the research support the candidate with national political experience, and male participants tend to support the candidate with local political experience. Figure 10 presents the detailed results.

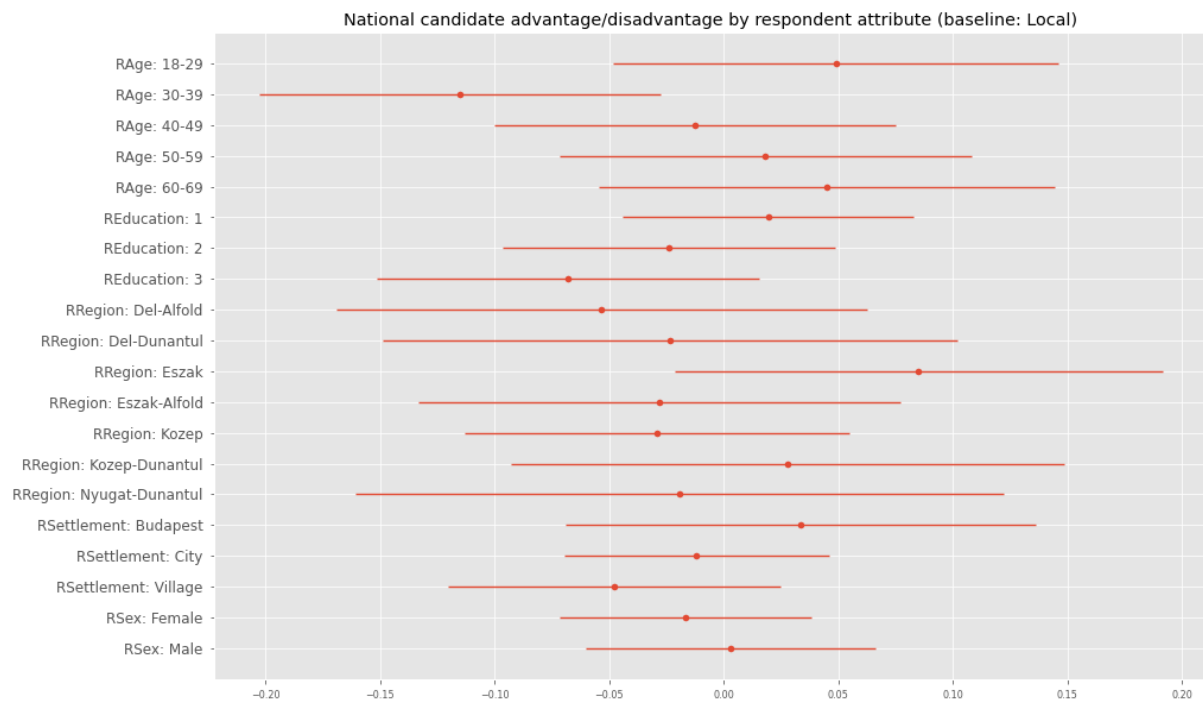


Figure 10. Candidate with national-level experience advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

The variable of *Previous political position* is the only one in our research which has three potential attribute levels. My youngest respondents aged 18-29 tend to disadvantage the candidate who previously held the position of mayor. Every other age group advantage the candidate with such background; however, only respondents between the ages 30-39 and 60-69 show a statistically significant difference. Participants with each educational background support the candidate who previously held the position of mayor, and the difference is statistically significant in case of respondents with basic and secondary education. Geographically analyzed, only respondents from the Southern Great Plain and Western Transdanubia regions disadvantage the candidate who previously was a mayor. Participants from the Central and the Central Transdanubia region of Hungary show a statistically significant support for the candidate with political experience gained as a mayor. Respondents living in Budapest and other cities also show a statistically significant preference for the candidate who has previously held the position of mayor. Both male and female survey experiment participants show a statistically significant preference for candidate with previously

gained mayor experience. As demonstrated, the political position of mayor creates a diverse landscape among my survey experiment respondents. The parliamentary position results in a more homogeneous outlook. Only respondents aged 40-49 years and those from the Central Transdanubia region show a statistically significant preference for the candidate who has previously held a parliamentary position. While the majority of my respondents favor the candidate with such a political background, there are specific respondent attributes that increase the likelihood of disadvantaging them. Respondents likely to disadvantage these candidates include those aged 50-59 years, those with a higher educational background, and those living in the Southern Great Plain, Northern, or Western Transdanubia regions of Hungary. Figures 11-12, and Tables 11-12 present the detailed outcomes of this analysis.

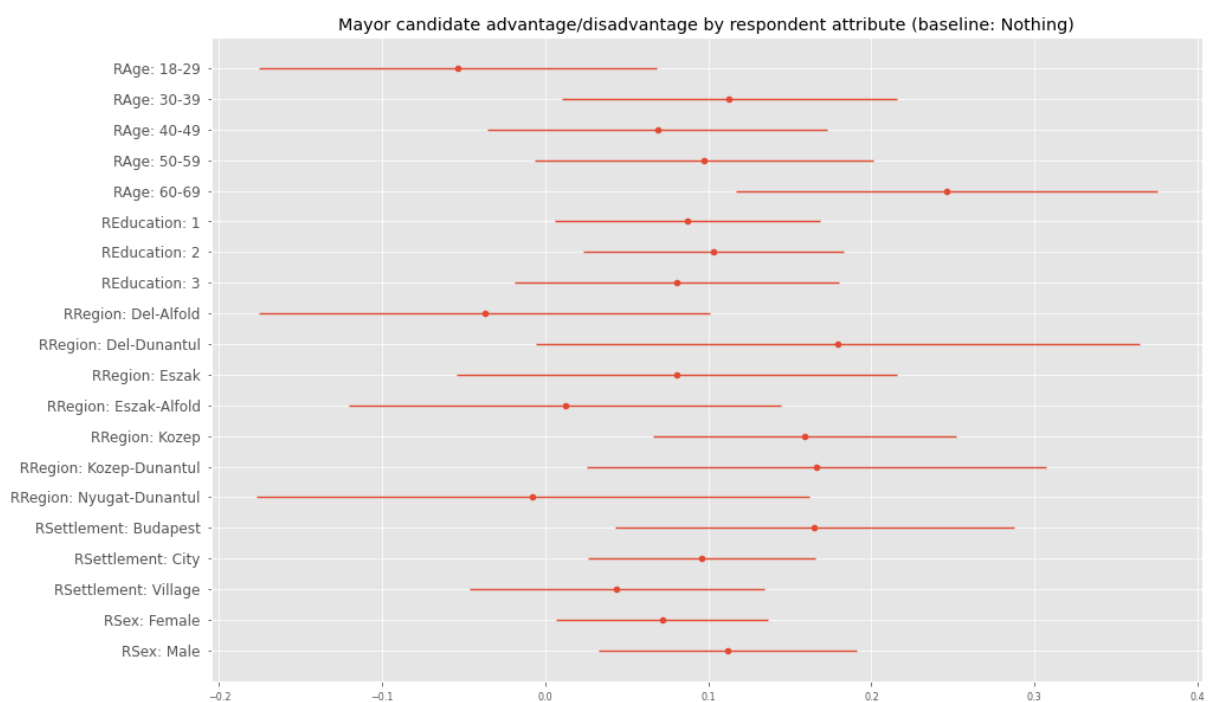


Figure 11. Candidate with experience as mayor advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	z value	p value
Sex	Male	0.1118	0.0404	2.7663	0.006**
	Female	0.0718	0.0331	2.1671	0.030*
Age	18-29 years	-0.0538	0.0622	-0.8643	0.387
	30-39 years	0.1128	0.0525	2.1475	0.032*
	40-49 years	0.0687	0.0530	1.2944	0.196
	50-59 years	0.0975	0.0530	1.8381	0.066
	60-69 years	0.2460	0.0658	3.7376	< 0.001 ***
Educational background	Basic education	0.0872	0.0415	2.0983	0.036*
	Secondary education	0.1031	0.0408	2.5286	0.012*
	Higher education	0.0804	0.0507	1.5850	0.113
Type of settlement	Budapest	0.1651	0.0624	2.6479	0.008**
	City	0.0959	0.0357	2.6875	0.007**
	Village	0.0439	0.0460	0.9547	0.340
Region	Central Hungary	0.1591	0.0473	3.3599	< 0.001 ***
	Northern Hungary	0.0808	0.0689	1.1718	0.241
	Northern Great Plain	0.0121	0.0676	0.1794	0.858
	Southern Great Plain	-0.0373	0.0706	-0.5285	0.597
	Southern Transdanubia	0.1793	0.0944	1.8989	0.058
	Central Transdanubia	0.1662	0.0718	2.3142	0.021*
	Western Transdanubia	-0.0078	0.0865	-0.0902	0.928

Table 11. Detailed results of candidate with experience as mayor advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

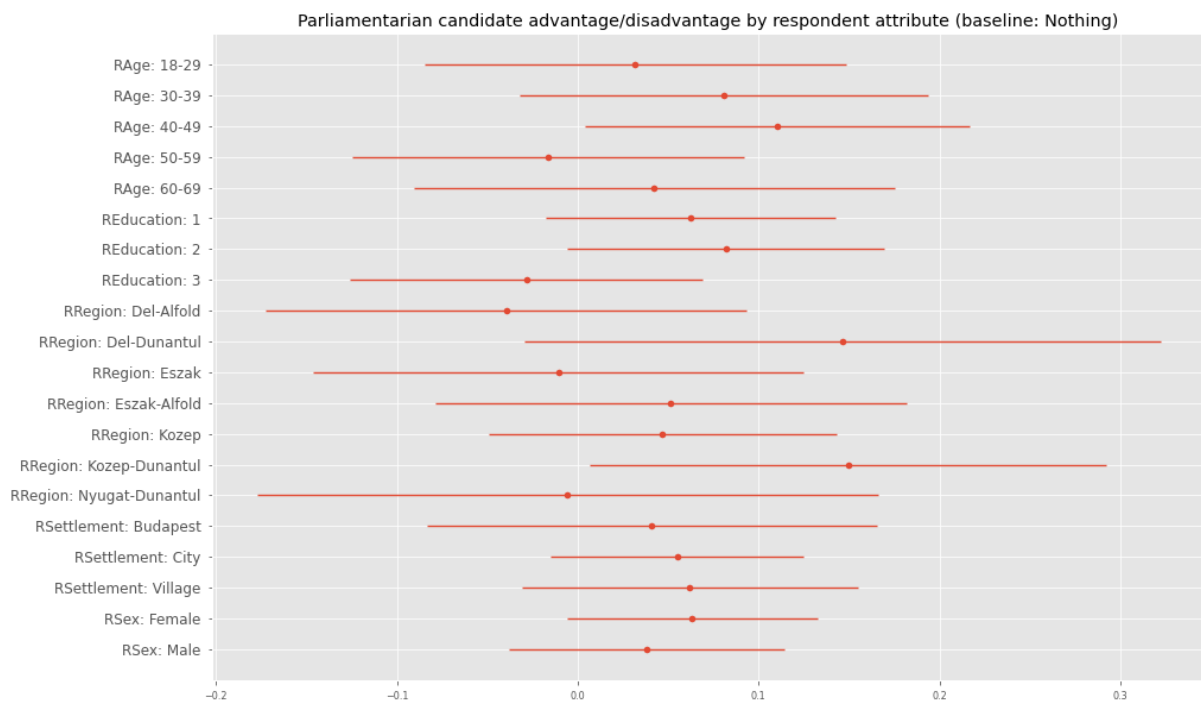


Figure 12. Candidate with parliamentarian advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	z value	p value
Sex	Male	0.0380	0.0389	0.9782	0.328
	Female	0.0633	0.0354	1.7887	0.074
Age	18-29 years	0.0317	0.0595	0.5330	0.594
	30-39 years	0.0808	0.0577	1.4001	0.161
	40-49 years	0.1106	0.0542	2.0390	0.041*
	50-59 years	-0.0162	0.0552	-0.2930	0.770
	60-69 years	0.0423	0.0679	0.6227	0.533
Educational background	Basic education	0.0626	0.0409	1.5310	0.126
	Secondary education	0.0820	0.0447	1.8335	0.067
	Higher education	-0.0283	0.0498	-0.5691	0.569
Type of settlement	Budapest	0.0411	0.0633	0.6489	0.516
	City	0.0551	0.0357	1.5446	0.122
	Village	0.0621	0.0475	1.3075	0.191
Region	Central Hungary	0.0470	0.0490	0.9590	0.338
	Northern Hungary	-0.0107	0.0690	-0.1552	0.877
	Northern Great Plain	0.0516	0.0665	0.7764	0.437
	Southern Great Plain	-0.0395	0.0679	-0.5826	0.560
	Southern Transdanubia	0.1464	0.0897	1.6331	0.102
	Central Transdanubia	0.1495	0.0729	2.0506	0.040*
	Western Transdanubia	-0.0056	0.0876	-0.0635	0.949

Table 12. Detailed results of candidate with experience with parliamentary experience advantage/disadvantage (author's own)

These results present how the characteristics of theoretical candidates may differently affect voters' choices, depending on the voters' own attributes. As there are 5 different attributes for respondents with a total 20 potential values and 7 different characteristics for theoretical candidates with a total of 21 potential values, I have created a summarizing table which shows the cases where there is a statistically significant relationship between respondents' attributes and theoretical candidates' characteristics. These results can be seen in Table 13.

Candidate characteristics Respondent attributes		Sex	Age	Locality	Marital status	Parental status	Political experience	Previous political position		
		Female	32-year-old	Local	Married	2 children	Local	Mayor	Parliamentarian	None
Age	18-29 years old		+	+						
	30-39 years old		+	+	+	+	+	+		
	40-49 years old		+	+					+	
	50-59 years old			+		+				
	60-69 years old	+		+				+		
Education	Basic education	+		+		+		+		
	Secondary education			+		+		+		
	Higher education		+	+						
Region	Southern Great Plain									
	Southern Transdanubia			+						
	Northern	+		+		+				
	Northern Great Plain			+		+				
	Central			+		+		+		
	Central Transdanubia			+				+	+	
	Western Transdanubia			+		+				
Settlement	Budapest			+				+		
	City		+	+		+		+		
	Village	+		+	+	+				
Sex	Female	+		+		+		+		
	Male		+	+				+		

Table 13. An overview of the results for the first vignette (author's own)

After conducting the exploratory AMCE and detailed analyses examining the evaluation of theoretical candidates in relation to voter characteristics, I performed further AMCE and ACIE analyses to test my hypotheses. For better readability, I repeat my previously formulated and presented hypotheses:

Descriptive representation – affinity variables:

H1: Locality is the most significant variable among the candidate attributes (cf. Key, 1949; Nyholt, 2024)

H2: Candidate sex is a significant attribute, with female voters preferring female candidates over male candidates (cf. Brians, 2005; Dolan, 2008)

H3: Candidate age is a significant attribute, with younger voters preferring younger candidates over older candidates (cf. McClean & Ono, 2024)

Trustee model – experience variables:

H4: Voters are more likely to prefer candidates who have local political experience (cf. Put et al., 2019).

H5: Voters tend to prefer candidates who had political position previously (cf. Shugart et al., 2005)

Interaction hypotheses – double bind-double burden; dynamic representation:

H6: The combined effect of having children and being female is stronger than the added effect of having children and being female (cf. Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018)

H7: The combined effect of having children and being younger is stronger than the added effect of having children and being younger (cf. Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018)

H8: The combined effect of having previous political position and being female is stronger than the added effect of political experience and being female (cf. Crowder-Meyer et al., 2015)

H9: The combined effect of having previous political position and being younger is stronger than the added effect of political experience and being younger (cf. Campbell & Cowley, 2018; Teele et al., 2018)

In order to map out the affinity effect of sex, I created two sub-samples: one consisting of men respondents and one of women respondents. I ran the same AMCE models for both subsamples with similar results to the main sample: the sex of the candidate was not a significant factor in choosing the preferred candidate (see Table 14).

Attribute	Level	AMCEs of women respondents			AMCEs of men respondents		
		Estimate	Std. Err	P-value	Estimate	Std. Err	P-value
Sex	Female	0.0045	0.0405	0.912	0.0634	0.0425	0.135
Age	32 years old	-0.1251	0.0409	0.002**	-0.0125	0.0444	0.778
Living place	Non-local	-0.2150	0.0391	<0.001***	-0.2248	0.0394	<0.001***
Family	Family	-0.0392	0.0405	0.333	0.0701	0.0441	0.112
Children	2	0.0331	0.0401	0.409	0.1791	0.0439	<0.001***
Political activity	Country	0.0326	0.0409	0.425	-0.0255	0.0435	0.558
Experience	Mayor	0.0952	0.0499	0.057	0.1107	0.0523	0.034*
	Parliamentarian	0.0262	0.0474	0.580	0.1287	0.0574	0.025*

Table 14. AMCEs on preferences of female and male respondents (author's own)

Age on the other hand was a significant variable with voters preferring younger candidates (see Figure 4 and Table 8). Is this the affinity effect in play? In order to see I divided the sample into two subsamples according to age: one sample consisted of the respondents aged 18-40 and the other sample was of 40+ years old respondents. The cutoff was matched to the characteristics of the candidates, as those between the age of 18-40 can feel closer to the 32-year-old candidate while those who are older 40 can feel closer to the 52-year-old theoretical candidate. According to the results (see Table 15) we can observe an affinity effect among younger respondents who disprefer the 52-year-old candidate. The significance of age disappears for older groups as respondents above 40 do not seem to form a preference for candidates based on their age.

Attribute	Level	AMCEs under the age of 40			AMCEs over the age of 40		
		Estimate	Std. Err	P-value	Estimate	Std. Err	P-value
Sex	Female	0.0249	0.0476	0.601	0.0481	0.0379	0.204
Age	32 years old	-0.1564	0.0477	0.001**	-0.0132	0.0387	0.733
Living place	Non-local	-0.1640	0.0456	<0.001***	-0.2387	0.0355	<0.001***
Family	Family	0.0335	0.0477	0.482	0.0143	0.0385	0.710
Children	2	0.0975	0.0471	0.038*	0.1148	0.0378	0.002**
Political activity	Country	-0.0439	0.0469	0.349	0.0164	0.0384	0.669
Experience	Mayor	0.0056	0.0599	0.925	0.1674	0.0449	<0.001***
	Parliamentarian	0.0392	0.0602	0.515	0.1052	0.0460	0.022*

Table 15. AMCEs on voter preferences under and over the age of 40 (author's own)

In order to make sure that the cutoff itself did not distort the results I performed the same analysis with a cutoff age of 50, arriving to the same conclusion. Results can be seen in Table 16.

Attribute	Level	AMCEs under the age of 50			AMCEs over the age of 50		
		Estimate	Std. Err	P-value	Estimate	Std. Err	P-value
Sex	Female	0.0249	0.0476	0.601	0.0481	0.0379	0.204
Age	32 years old	-0.1565	0.0477	0.001**	-0.0132	0.0387	0.733
Living place	Non-local	-0.1640	0.0456	<0.001***	-0.2387	0.0355	<0.001***
Family	Family	0.0335	0.0477	0.482	0.0143	0.0385	0.710
Children	2	0.0975	0.0471	0.038*	0.1148	0.0378	0.001**
Political activity	Country	-0.0439	0.0469	0.349	0.0164	0.0384	0.669
Experience	Mayor	0.0056	0.0599	0.925	0.1674	0.0449	0.000***
	Parliamentarian	0.0392	0.0602	0.515	0.1052	0.0460	0.022*

Table 16. AMCEs on voter preferences under the age of 50 (author's own)

Figure 13 explores the interactional effects of the candidates' gender and parental status. While having children is generally perceived positively (as also shown in Figure 4), this pattern does not hold equally across candidate profiles. The ACIE analysis reveals a significant penalty for women with two children, while female candidates are slightly preferred over male candidates (noting that this effect is not significant) and candidates with children are strongly preferred over childless candidates, the interaction of being female and having children translates into a strong dispreference. This suggests that, despite the general positive evaluation of parenthood, the combination of being a female and having two children may activate subtle biases or doubts about competence and availability.

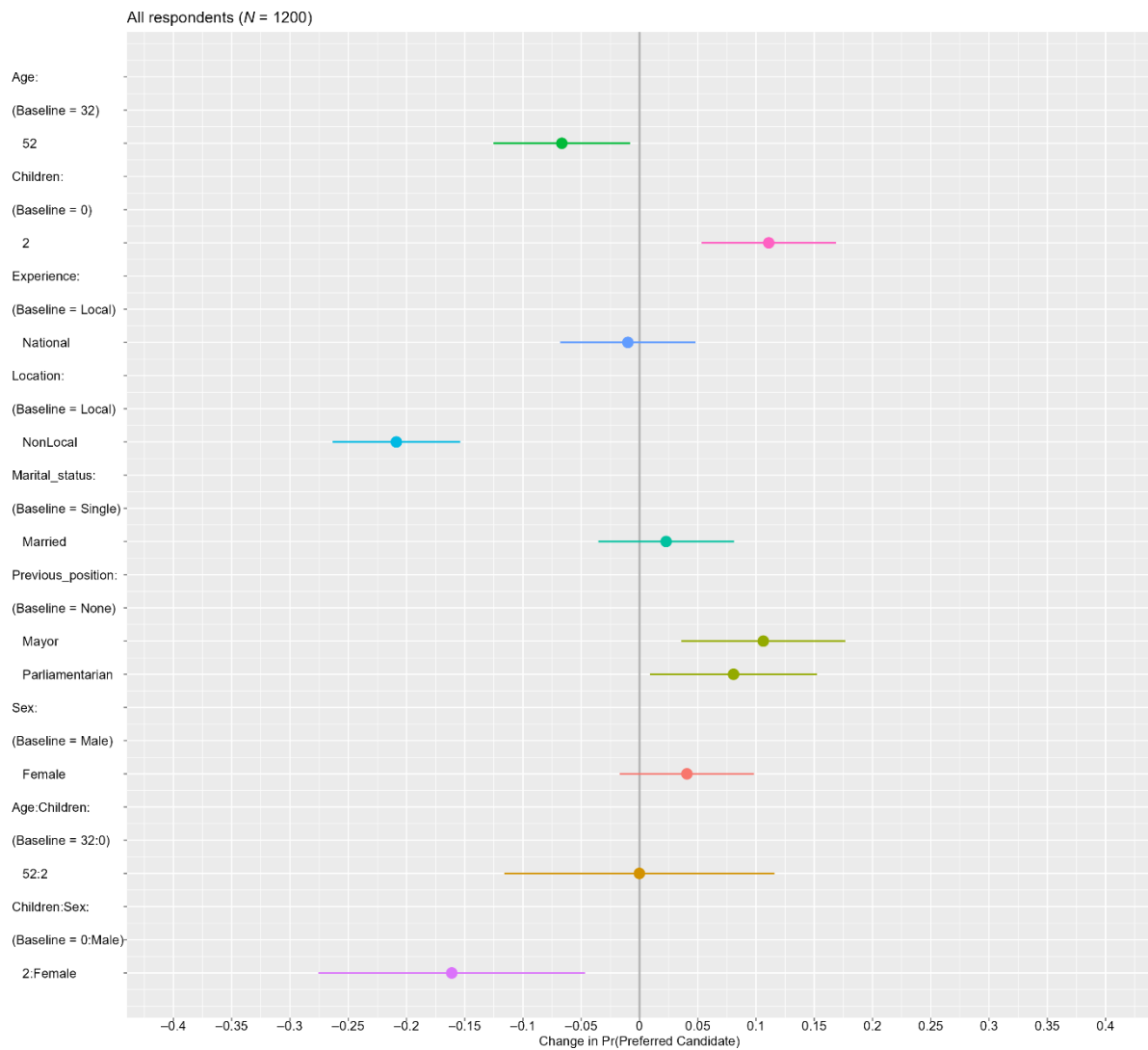


Figure 13. ACIE on interactions of the parental status variable (author's own)

Voters' conceptions of gender roles can also affect their expectations of political experience: are female candidates expected to have more experience to show for their capability? Figure 14 shows the ACIE results of the selected variables among male and female candidates and young and middle-aged candidates.

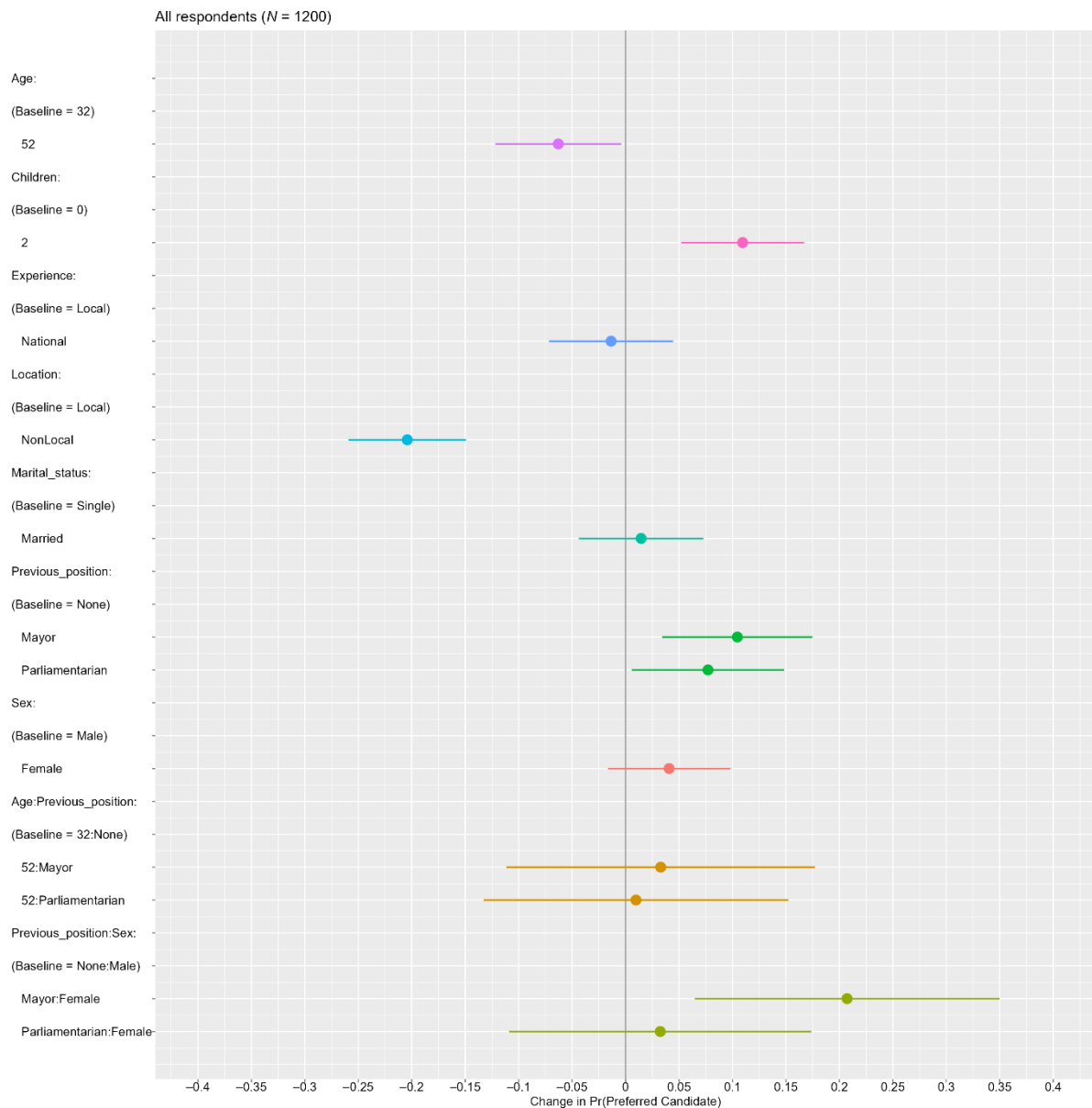


Figure 14. ACIE on interactions of the previous political position variable (author's own)

As Figure 14 shows, three out of the four interaction effects are not statistically significant, suggesting that the evaluated candidate traits do not lead to systematically different preferences across subgroups. One exception stands out: female candidates with prior political experience as a mayor are significantly more preferred than the added effect of being female and having previous experience as a mayor. A similar, though not statistically significant, pattern emerges in the case of parliamentary experience – female candidates are evaluated more positively. This may indicate that leadership experience in a local leader role resonates particularly well when associated with female candidates – possibly because it may reduce concerns rooted in stereotypes about women's competence or authority in political leadership.

An examination of the results from a broad perspective indicates that localism is at the heart of preferences in my data, while other characteristics appear to have moderate impact on voters' decision. The potential explanatory factors behind these phenomena will be presented in the '5.1. Discussion and interpretation of the first vignette results' subchapter of my dissertation.

4.3. Results of the second vignette³

While the first vignette of the quantitative survey experiment research was rather abstract – presenting different theoretical candidates in various scenarios – the second vignette was much more specific, as we provided respondents with a well-defined context to consider and operate within. In this vignette, we asked respondents about their preferences regarding the political decision-making process, framed within different types of crises specified as economic crisis, social crisis and environmental crisis. With this, I am able to answer the question: what do voters expect their representative to do – to get a better understanding on the process-approach of political representation. For better readability, I again present my previously formulated hypotheses related to the second vignette:

Experts' involvement – technocratic approach:

H10: In all types of crises, there is a preference for the involvement of experts in the decision-making process (cf. Ganuza & Font, 2020; Vittori et al., 2024)

H11: The type of “crisis narrative” significantly influences voters' preferences regarding the involvement of experts in decision-making processes (cf. Costa Pinto et al., 2018; Wrtil & Pastorella, 2018)

H12: Voters exhibit a preference for experts' considerations over party lines (cf. Fernández-Vázquez et al., 2023)

Interaction hypotheses – dynamic representation:

H13: The combined effect of a social crisis and a female representative is stronger than the added effect of the social crisis and being a female representative separately (cf. Schneider & Bos, 2019)

³ This subchapter of my dissertation is based on the article titled “*Decision-Making Preferences in Times of Crisis*”, which is a co-authored work with my supervisor and our colleague (Várnagy et al., 2025).

H14: The combined effect of a social crisis and public good-based decision-making (trustee model) is stronger than the added effect of a social crisis and public good individually (cf. Mansbridge, 2003; Saward, 2006a)

H15: The combined effect of an environmental crisis and expert-based decision-making is stronger than the added effect of the environmental crisis and expert-based decision-making separately (cf. Ganuza & Font, 2020; Vittori et al., 2024)

To test my hypotheses, I ran not only AMCE analyses, but also ACIE analyses. In case of the AMCE analyses, I segmented my original sample – consisting of 1,200 respondents – into three smaller subsamples, based on the three different types of crises: economic, social, and environmental. This manipulation allowed me to get a clearer understanding of whether and how the type of crisis context shapes voters preferences. After creating the subsamples, I ran separate AMCE analyses to identify potential variation in how voters evaluate the involvement of different interests and opinions into the decision-making process. As presented in the ‘3.6. *The second vignette*’ subchapter, different types of crises have various characteristics and consequences. These differences can be captured in the results of the three subsamples.

The first subsample focused on the economic crisis condition. In this case, my results suggest that Hungarian voters prefer decision-making based on voters’ interests, which was also the baseline in this particular analysis. Compared to this baseline, my respondents dispreferred expert-based decision-making. Although it is important to note that this is not a statistically significant result. Contrarily, my results show a statistically significant rejection of decision-making based on party programs (-0.552 , $SE = 0.054$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests a strong disapproval of partisan influence in crisis-time decision-making. Lastly, respondents in this subsample show a slight, however not statistically significant preference for decision-making based on what the representative defines as the public good. The detailed results are presented in Figure 15 and Table 17.

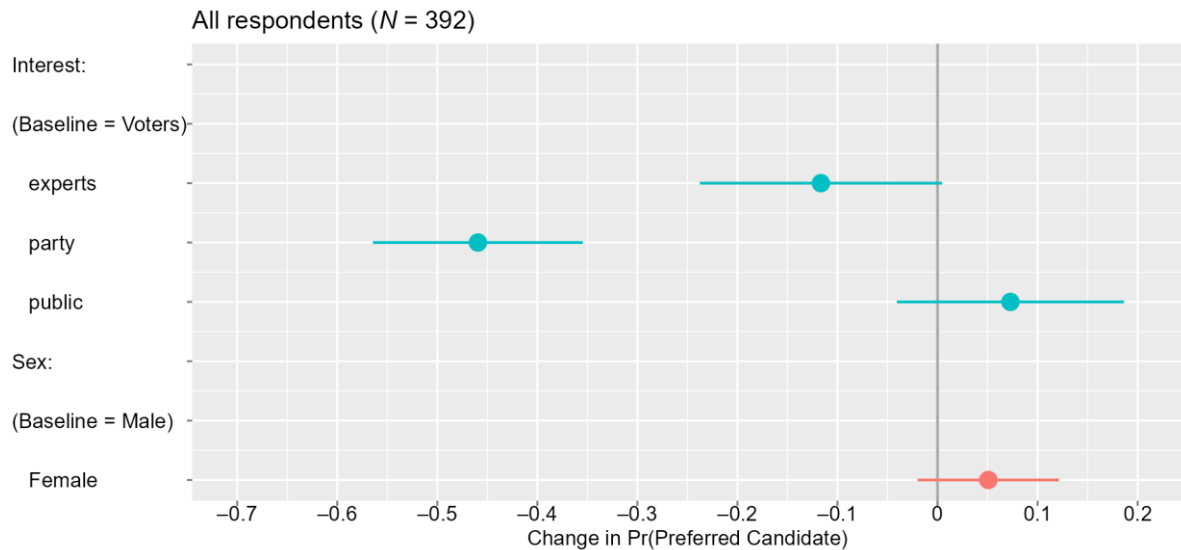


Figure 15. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an economic crisis (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	P-value
Interest	Experts	-0.1166	0.0618	0.059
Interest	Party	-0.4594	0.0535	< 0.001 ***
Interest	Public interest	-0.0728	0.0579	0.209
Sex	Female	0.0507	0.0361	0.160

Table 17. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an economic crisis (author's own)

Compared to an economic crisis, a social crisis confronts people with completely different challenges; thus, resolving it requires a fundamentally different skill set from the representative. These differences are reflected in the results of the AMCE analysis conducted on my social crisis subsample. In case of a social crisis, respondents in this subsample show a stronger rejection of experts, party lines, and the public interest compared to incorporating voters' interests in the decision-making process. All three results are statistically significant. Involving experts in the decision-making process displays a negative effect, with an estimated effect of -0.295, with a standard error of 0.055 and a p-value of less than 0.001. The results of the representative following the party program show a somewhat similar pattern, with an estimated effect of -0.606, with a standard error of 0.048 and a p-value of less than 0.001. Following the public opinion resulted in the estimated effect of -0.145, with a standard error of 0.0546 and a p-value of less than 0.001. As the numbers show, all three variables reach a strong statistical significance, emphasizing a strong disfavor from my respondents in this specific subsample. The detailed results are presented in Figure 16 and Table 18.

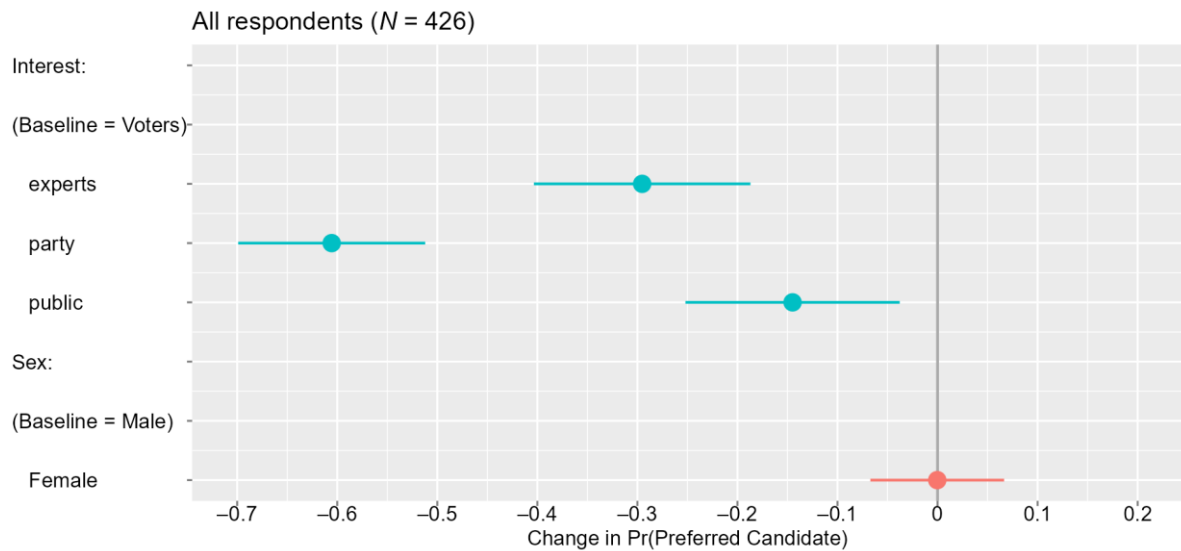


Figure 16. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of a social crisis (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	P-value
Interest	Experts	-0.2952	0.0552	< 0.001 ***
Interest	Party	-0.6056	0.0477	< 0.001 ***
Interest	Public interest	-0.1449	0.0546	< 0.001 ***
Sex	Female	0.0000	0.0341	0.993

Table 18. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of a social crisis (author's own)

The results of the environmental crisis subsample show similar trends to those of the social crisis subsample. Just like in the previous case, in the event of an environmental crisis my respondents consistently reject involving experts, following party programs, and the public opinion in the decision-making process. In this analysis, I only have one statistically significant result, as my respondents in this particular subgroup show a statistically significant rejection of party programs in the decision-making process, with an effect of -0.5515, a standard error of 0.0543, and a p-value of less than 0.001. This signals a strong rejection of party programs. Figure 17 and Table 19 show the detailed results.

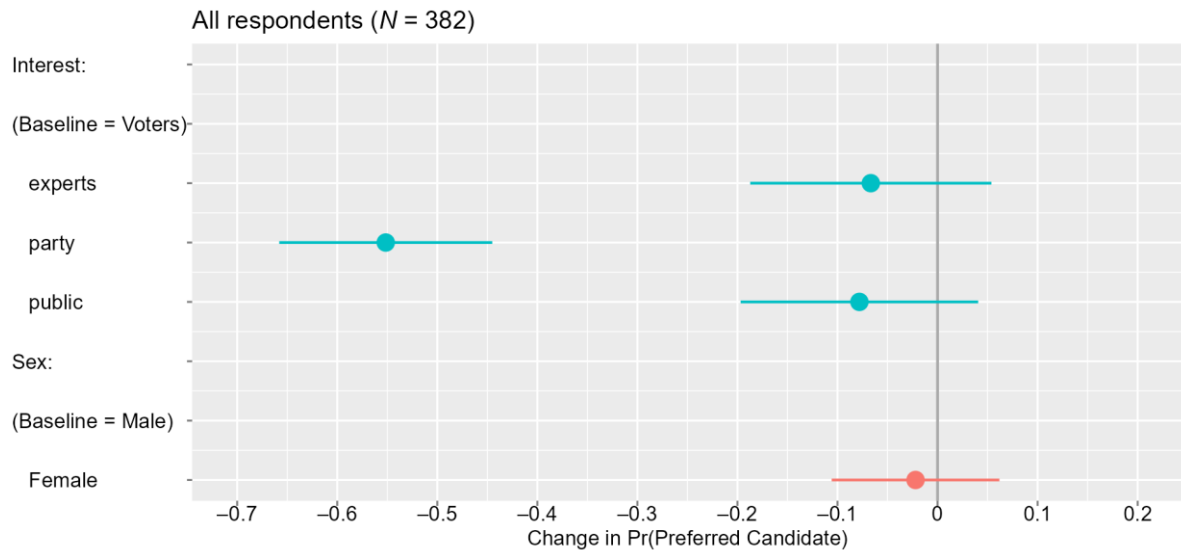


Figure 17. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an environmental crisis (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	P-value
Interest	Experts	-0.0667	0.0615	0.278
Interest	Party	-0.5515	0.0543	< 0.001 ***
Interest	Public interest	-0.0781	0.0605	0.197
Sex	Female	-0.022	0.0428	0.607

Table 19. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process in times of an environmental crisis (author's own)

Based on the results of the subsamples' AMCE analyses, one trend clearly stands out: the respondents are dismissive of experts in the political decision-making process. Regarding the contextual effects of the different types of crises, further analyses were conducted. To get a deeper understanding on voters' preferences regarding the decision-making process – more precisely on voters' preferences regarding the actions of the representative in the decision-making process, I ran an AMCE analysis on my original sample also. This had several purposes and methodological advantages. On the one hand, AMCE analysis performed on the complete original sample provides a larger number of units, which increases the statistical power of the analysis and allows for more reliable estimation of subtle effects. On the other hand, examining the entire sample of 1,200 respondents allows me to determine whether a given effect is linked to a specific crisis situation or whether it is a general preference. This enables the results of the subsamples to be placed in a comprehensive framework, and it is possible to assess where and how the effect of context deviates from the average. Furthermore, the AMCE values calculated for the entire sample show the average effect of the attributes – that is, how each characteristic

influences voter decisions independently of the crisis context. This is an important addition to context-dependent analyses, as it allows me to identify not only differences but also general patterns.

The detailed AMCE results of the original sample are presented in Figure 18 and Table 20. As the results suggest, respondents in the original sample show a statistically significant aversion to the representative following the party program in the decision-making process. Interestingly, the same trend applies to the inclusion of experts into the decision-making process, and to following public opinion. Respondents seem to value representatives who incorporate voters' interests during the decision-making process.

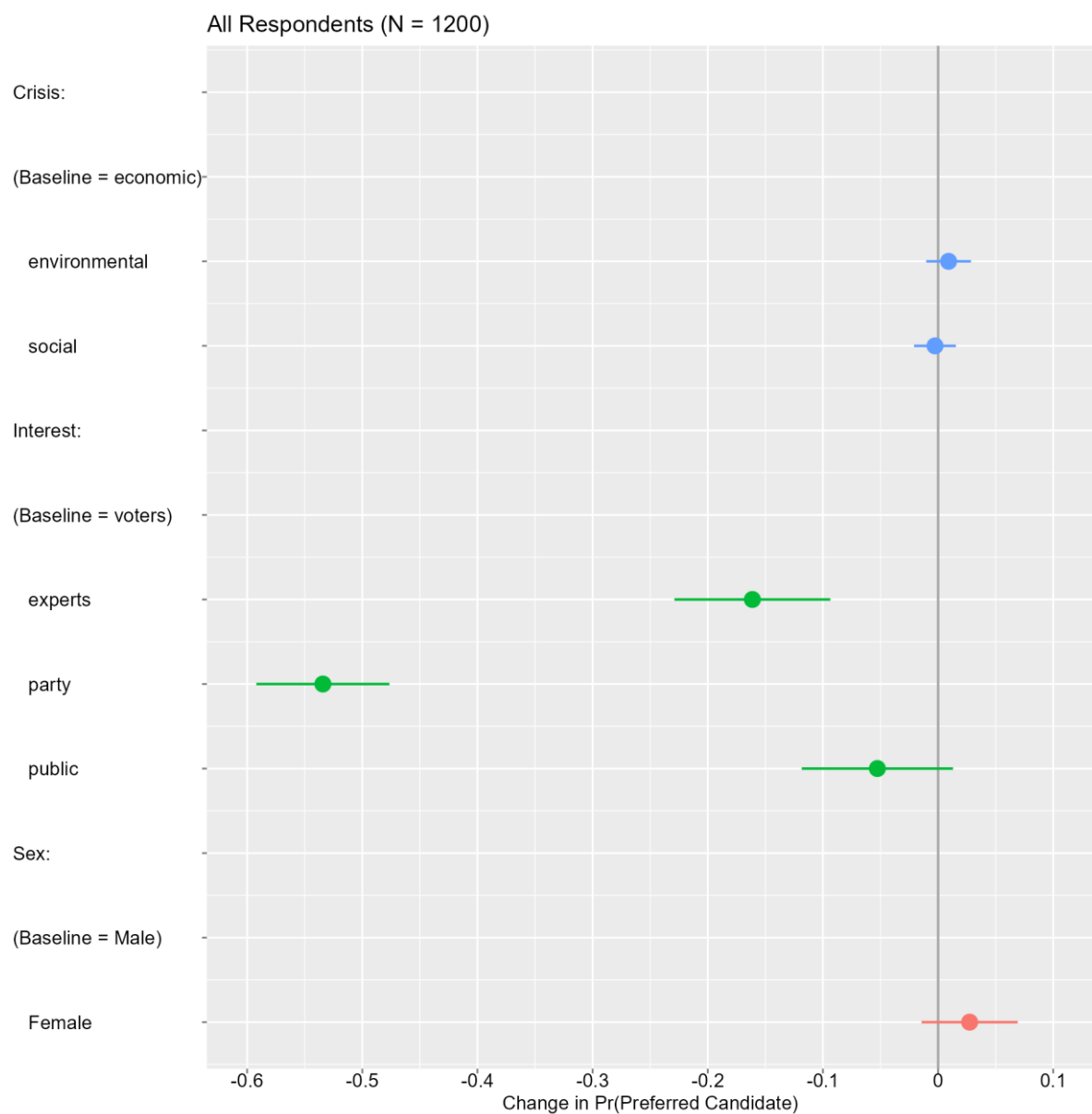


Figure 18. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	z-value	Pr(> z)
Crisis	Environmental	0.0091	0.0099	0.919	0.36
Crisis	Social	-0.0027	0.0093	-0.290	0.77
Interest	Experts	-0.1612	0.0345	-4.672	< 0.001 ***
Interest	Party	-0.5342	0.0295	-18.126	< 0.001 ***
Interest	Public interest	-0.0527	0.0335	-1.574	0.012
Sex	Female	0.0274	0.0213	1.287	0.20

Table 20. AMCEs on preference for the decision-making process (author's own)

The AMCE analyses of the subgroups and the entire sample invariably show that the type of the crisis does not significantly influence voters' preferences regarding the involvement of experts in the decision-making process. Following experts' considerations seems to be the most acceptable in case of an environmental crisis, although neither of these is a statistically significant result.

Regarding voters' preferences for experts' considerations and party programs, the results support my presumption, as respondents in the sample show a preference for representatives following experts' considerations over them following party programs. I will elaborate on this result in the '5.3. Discussion and interpretation of the second vignette results' subchapter of my dissertation.

Based on my theoretical framework I can argue that different crisis situations call for different approaches and solutions. 'Soft issues' are linked to women, while 'hard issues' are associated with men. Does this mean that female representatives are better at handling issues like a social crisis? Can this manifest in my this as a preference for female representatives during a social crisis? I also need to emphasize the other side of the same coin. Does this mean that male representatives are better at handling issues like an economic or a social crisis? Do my respondents show a preference for the male theoretical candidate in such scenarios?

Figure 19 explores the interactional effects of the candidates' gender and the type of crisis. While female theoretical candidates are generally perceived neutrally or positively (except in case of an environmental crisis; see Figure 16), this pattern does not hold equally across all scenarios. The ACIE analysis reveals that respondents seem to penalize female theoretical candidates not only in case of an environmental crisis, but in case of a social crisis also. This suggests that the combination of an environmental crisis and a female theoretical candidate, and the combination of a social crisis and a female theoretical candidate triggered a negative effect.

However, I need to emphasize that these results are not statistically significant. Table 21 shows the detailed results.

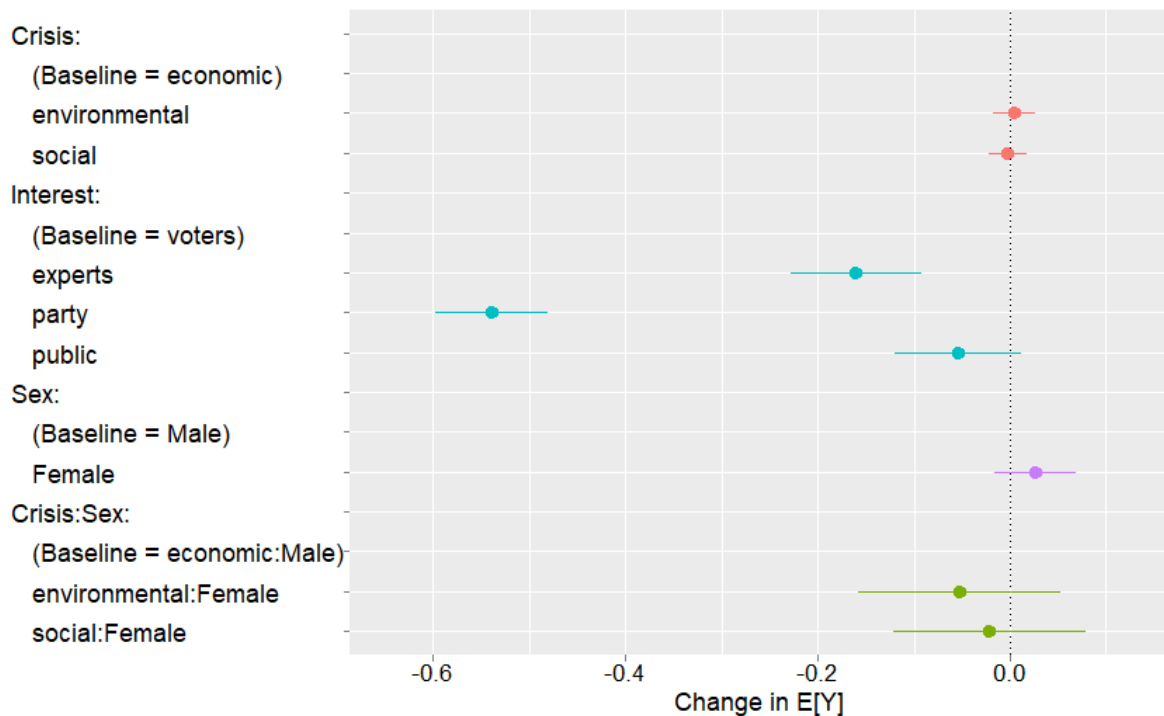


Figure 19. ACIEs on interactions of the gender variable (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	Pr(> z)
Crisis : Sex	Environmental : Female	-0.0527	0.0537	-0.9816	0.326
Crisis : Sex	Social : Female	-0.0215	0.0509	-0.4224	0.673

Table 21. Detailed ACIE results on interactions of the gender variable (author's own)

As presented, different types of crises slightly influence voters' preferences regarding the sex of the theoretical candidate. A new question emerges: does the type of crisis also influence which interests voters consider most important? As I pointed out in subchapter '2.3.3. *Whose interests and opinions to follow?*' of my dissertation, representatives or candidates often consult with their voters, or with experts about certain issues. Do voters have preferences in this sense? Which interests do voters expect representatives to follow in the decision-making process? To answer these questions, I ran another ACIE analysis.

Figure 20 explores the interactional effects of the type of crisis and the different interests representatives may follow in the decision-making process. Based on the previously presented

AMCE results (as also shown in Figure 16), the results of my respondents reveal a rather unambiguous order of preferences. The interests of voters come first, followed by the public opinion, with experts' considerations in third place and the party program in fourth place. Analyzing these preferences in interaction with the different interests, the order of voters' preferences changes. There are two outlier values, with one being an environmental crisis where the theoretical candidate follows experts' considerations. This scenario received the highest relative support from the respondents, although this result is not statistically significant. The other outlier scenario is when a theoretical representative follows the public opinion in a social crisis. This option received the utmost relative rejection, with a statistically significant effect of -0.2184, a standard error of 0.0795, and a p-value of 0.006. Between the two outliers, two more statistically significant effects can be captured. Voters seem to show a strong rejection towards representatives following experts' considerations and party programs in a social crisis. In the case of the former, there is an effect of -0.1719, a standard error of 0.0829, and a p-value of 0.038. In the case of the latter, there is an effect of -0.1448, a standard error of 0.0717, and a p-value of 0.043. Table 22 shows the detailed results.

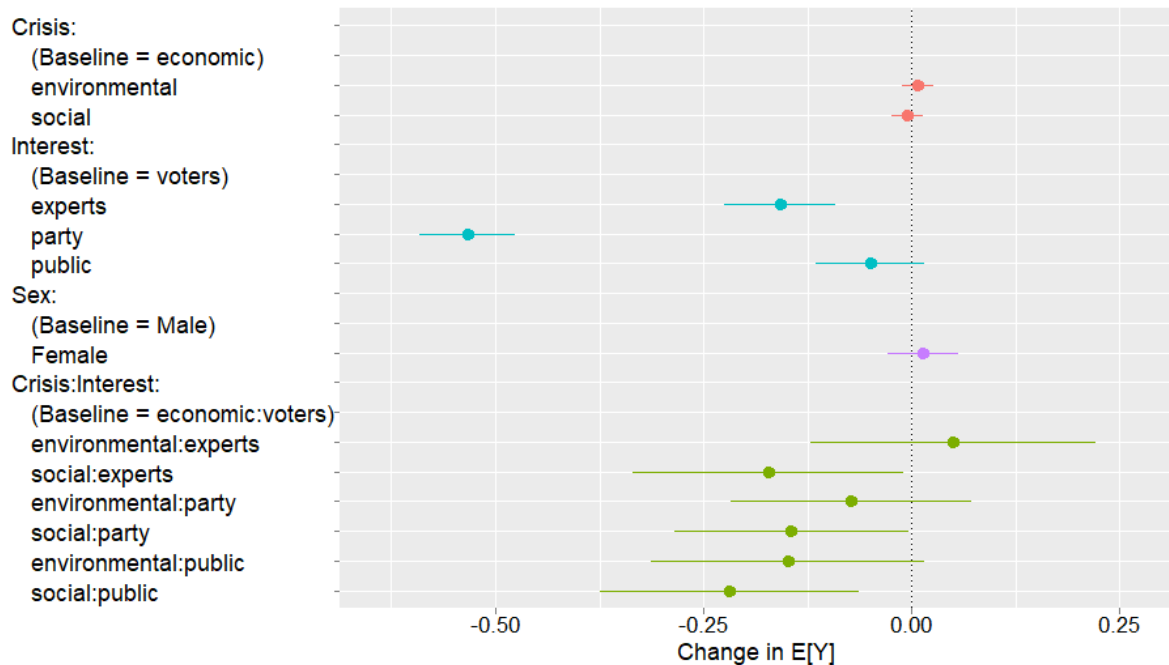


Figure 20. ACIEs on interactions of the interest variable (author's own)

Attribute	Level	Estimate	Std. Err	z value	Pr(> z)
Crisis : Interest	Environmental : Experts	0.0495	0.0872	0.5682	0.570
Crisis : Interest	Social : Experts	-0.1719	0.0829	-2.0727	0.038*
Crisis : Interest	Environmental : Party	-0.0733	0.0738	-0.9931	0.321
Crisis : Interest	Social : Party	-0.1448	0.0717	-2.0191	0.043*
Crisis : Interest	Environmental : Public	-0.1488	0.0836	-1.7796	0.075
Crisis : Interest	Social : Public	-0.2184	0.0795	-2.7490	0.006**

Table 22. Detailed ACIE results on interactions of the interest variable (author's own)

Looking at the AMCE and ACIE results, a rather complex picture seems to be emerging. Respondents in my sample tend to reject not only the representatives who follow party programs in the decision-making process, but the ones following voters' interests also. The sex of the theoretical candidate does not have a significant effect on voters' evaluations, while the type of crisis has. The elaborated discussion of the results and the potential explanatory factors behind them will be presented in the '5.3. Discussion and interpretation of the second vignette results' subchapter of my dissertation.

4.4. Results of the focus group discussion

The premise of the research is that the characteristics associated with the ideal representative overlap with the characteristics of political leaders. During the focus groups, the political representative was not conceptualized as a political leader, i.e., the instructions given during the interviews were related to the political representatives, the ideal political representative. This approach was used to seek answers to my research question, "*What is the personality of the ideal political representative like?*". It is important to underline that the focus group in December was aimed at testing the methodology, so in this section of the study I will focus primarily on the results of the focus group discussion in January.

The representatives drawn in the first block were presented in a variety of ways by the participants. Interesting adjectives and attributes already emerged in this block, for example, the following phrases, among others, appeared in this group: 'caring for others', 'proactive', 'planner and implementer', 'servant', 'representative of all', 'persuasive', 'visionary'. It can be seen that already in this section, results are in line with the literature (cf. Aichholzer & Willmann, 2020; Mondak, 1995).

From the perspective of the present study, the second, main block of the focus group is really informative. In this block, both the December and January groups had 5 × 5, or 25, characteristics of output. In the following I focus on the results of the January focus group.

Participants attached two items to the *Extraversion* dimension - "good communicator" and "communicative". In addition to a general interpretation of the terms, the addition that "good communication skills" implies that the ideal representative is the best possible communicator of information appeared. Both adjectives were placed by the group at the extraversion end of the scale (Hanania, 2017; Scott & Medeiros, 2020).

Four indicators were derived for the *Agreeableness* scale. In examining the meaning of the adjective "cooperative", it was highlighted that in this case, group participants also associated a sense of intrigue with the concept - the group's interpretation was that the ideal representative is uncompromising, helping others if they help him or her. In the case of "good lobbyist", it also appeared that the ideal representative is not opportunistic. The adjective "opinion leader" triggered a lively discussion in the group. Participants highlighted two important aspects of this quality - on the one hand, that there is no subordination to the opinions of other representatives and, on the other hand, that this concept also implies that the ideal representative is able to lead his/her own opinion and that of the community he/she represents. The latter is an excellent link with the trustee model of representation. The fourth indicator on the *Agreeableness* scale is "autonomous". Here, it was added that the ideal representative has his or her own ideas and does not only follow the guidelines of his or her party – this also shows links with the free mandate (role) conception of representation theory. These four adjectives are located in the middle of the scale, with only the adjective "cooperative" being closer to the positive, friendly end of the scale (cf. Aichholzer & Willmann, 2020).

As a result of the focus group discussion, the *Conscientiousness* scale emerged as the most prominent (Roets & Van Hiel, 2009). In this dimension, seven indicators were placed as a result of the participants' agreement. This is where the adjective "being concise" was placed, which in this case, based on the participants' definitions, could be interpreted as a kind of result-oriented work. The group linked the adjective "practical" to this, which implies, among other things, that the ideal representative is organized, has an overview of the whole process and works effectively to implement the plans outlined. Building on this, the third adjective of the dimension is that the ideal representative "has a vision". Here, the discussants referred not only to vision, but also to the fact that a good representative is a visionary who is aware of the weight

and consequences of his or her decisions. The other three attributes associated with the scale converge well with each other, as they focus on the ideal representative's knowledge - "knowledgeable (of issues, people)", "prepared, informed", "thirst for knowledge". The diversity of potential interpretations and approaches emerged in this case as well, as while one participant highlighted that a good representative is aware of their own competences, another participant shifted the focus outside and highlighted that the ideal representative strives to expand their objective knowledge, thus developing a kind of comprehensive competence in world affairs.

The seventh trait, linked to the *Conscientiousness* scale, takes us into the Emotional Stability dimension - the intersection of the two sets is the trait of "perseverance". This is defined by the group as implying that the ideal representative will persevere, whether in a decision or in their community. These seven traits are also at the positive end of the scales, i.e. the conscientious and emotionally stable endpoints. Approached from the representation theory side, this trait can be linked to the free mandate model, where the representative makes autonomous decisions, even against the preference of the electorate.

For the last dimension of the Big Five model, *Openness*, the group unanimously highlighted that the ideal representative is "open" (Caprara et al., 2003; Scott & Medeiros, 2020). This was the case for four out of the five participants. In the participants' understanding, this implies both openness to change and to people's opinions, resulting in a willingness to innovate, and also that the ideal representative encourages others to be open, influencing their community. This factor also included the adjective "malleable", which participants defined in a similar way to the previous one. It can be seen that during the discussion, participants inserted 18 adjectives into one of the Big Five factors.

The remaining 7 adjectives were separated from the above scales. The "outliers" included "honest", "authentic", "passionate", "accepting", as well as "speaking skills (rhetoric)" and "plain language". It is important to highlight that the focus group participants associated the adjective 'passion' with charismatic personality, which is a common feature in studies on the personality of political leaders (Metz & Plesz, 2023; Platow et al., 2006; Shamir, 1994; Sy et al., 2018). The adjective 'accepting' was associated with acceptance of all social minorities. Furthermore, participants agreed that the adjective 'authentic' is a kind of superordinate value that transcends all other attributes. The aggregated results of the second block of the survey are illustrated in Table 23.

Honest Authentic Speaking skills (rhetoric), plain language Passionate Accepting						
Extraverted	Good communicator Communicative					Introverted
Agreeable		Cooperative	Good lobbyist Opinion leader Autonomous			Hostile
Conscientious	Being concise Practical Has a vision Prepared Informed					Spontaneous
Conscientious + Emotionally Stable	Perseverance					Spontaneous + Neurotic
Emotionally Stable						Neurotic
Open	Open Malleable					Closed

Table 23. Extract from the focus group results (author's own)

During the presentation and definition of each adjective, the participants in the discussion explained why they think the given adjective is important in the work of the ideal representative. Among these were traits for which it was clear that they reflected the affinity of the participant (Dolan, 2008; Sevi, 2021) – for example, 'receptive'. However, for other attributes and skills, what emerged was that voters attribute qualities to the ideal representative that they themselves do not possess, or if they do, not to the extent that they would expect the representative to possess. This approach - the free mandate model of political representation (Ilonszki, 2011; Sebők, 2014) – emerged, for example, in the case of the adjectives 'rhetorical skill', 'prepared' and 'informed'.

To conclude the focus group, participants displayed the personality structure of the ideal representative on barometers. These individual results converge well with the results shown in Table 7 in terms of the location of the centroids.

5. Discussion and limitations

5.1. Discussion and interpretation of the first vignette results

In this subchapter of my dissertation, I am going to discuss and present potential interpretation for the results of the first vignette in my survey experiment. Unlike the '4.2. *Results of the first vignette*' subchapter, the presentation in this section of my work is not based on the position of the variables in the vignette, but on their significance as indicated by the results. Based on these results, I can confirm five hypotheses of my work, although one of them only received partial statistical support.

My first hypothesis focused on locality. As indicated by my results, voters primarily prefer their representative to be local. Locality itself already signals a territorial affinity, namely living in the same geographical area. The importance of localism can be interpreted not only through the descriptive approach but also through the trusteeship approach, since in terms of political experience localism is highly valued as well. A clear preference for local candidates can be strategically motivated as these candidates are more inclined to represent local interest and increase spending locally (Childs & Cowley, 2011; Nyholt, 2024). Furthermore living in the same place can indicate shared experiences and depending on the community can also mean shared values and identities (Schulte-Cloos & Bauer, 2023). The strong connection can originate from how representation has been conceptualized and implemented, since historically most representative democracies have some type of geographically defined constituency and constituency-based representation. The data suggests that territorial embeddedness still has

meaning in Hungary and Childs and Cowley's (2011) call for the politics of local presence applies arguing that "*the underlying assumption for descriptive representation of the locality is that such representatives will be a better representative than someone from the outside. This is because they will have a better understanding of the needs of the area and its people and/or because they will have more invested in the area, and thus be keener to see it succeed than a candidate who comes from the outside*" (p. 8). These results confirm the H1 hypothesis.

My second hypothesis addressed the sex-based affinity. The sex of the theoretical candidate was not a significant factor in choosing the preferred candidate. Therefore, the affinity effect of sex does not appear to play a role in voters' choices. Based on these, my H2 is not supported, as I found no significant evidence that female respondents prefer female candidates over male ones.

My third hypothesis examined age-based affinity. The effect of age revealed a rather complex pattern. Based on the regression analysis, older candidates are at a disadvantage compared to younger ones in most respondent age groups. However, participants between the ages of 50 and 69 years showed a preference for the older theoretical candidate, which can also be interpreted as a form of the affinity effect. It is important to emphasize, however, that these results are not statistically significant. The complexity of this phenomenon is extremely intriguing. It raises the question: why can the affinity effect be observed only among respondents under the age of 40? Could this reflect a generational phenomenon rather than an age-based affinity effect? If so, it would suggest that the preferences are shifting: while age used to signal experience and/or earned trust from the voter side, younger generations do not interpret age the same way anymore. My data offer limited support for H3: younger candidates are slightly preferred overall, with statistically significant results only among voters under the age of 40.

The fourth and fifth hypotheses of my work investigated the effect of previously held political positions and local political experience. Candidates with a previous political position, particularly those who have served as mayor, represent the second most important variable with a significant effect, as this background is likely to strengthen the image of a local politician who has been in the business of providing for their constituency as I mentioned above. In my model, the effect of political experience is not statistically significant, which may be due to the fact that the baseline category was not defined as having no experience. Therefore, the results of this experiment do not confirm H4, as having political experience at the local or national level does not yield a consistent advantage across candidate profiles. However, H5 is supported, as candidates with previous political positions – such as having served as mayor or as a

parliamentarian – are consistently rated more favorably than those without such a background. My data suggests that localism is at the core of voters’ preferences, although having previously served as a parliamentarian also increases preference. These insights may reflect the concept of the incumbency advantage, as former office-holders, such as mayors, often benefit from increased public recognition, established networks, and a proven record in local affairs (Dahlgard, 2016; Lopes da Fonseca, 2017) a resource that has proved to be valuable in Hungarian politics as well (Dobos et al., 2015). Having served as a mayor is an intriguing aspect of my findings, which may also be interpreted as a potential limitation of my work. I will elaborate on this in the next subchapter, ‘5.2. *Methodological limitations of the first vignette*’ of my dissertation.

In addition to locality and experience, parental status also appears to be a valuable asset in itself. This finding reinforces the conclusion of Campbell and Cowley (2018), who found that politicians with children tended to have higher voters’ evaluations. In my case, the supposed affinity effect could not be examined in detail, due to the lack of information about the marital and parental status of survey experiment respondents. This can be considered as a weakness of my work, which will be further elaborated on in the ‘6. *Conclusion and implications*’ chapter of my dissertation, since this shortcoming is not only related to the first vignette, but to the survey experiment as a whole, and its correction could help to improve the quality and delivery of future research.

Considering that localism is indeed triumphant with local experiences being valued and parental status has a significant effect, it becomes necessary to look deeper into how voters relate to underrepresented groups, namely women and young politicians. Gender is clearly a complex concept that encompasses variables beyond sex alone, one notable being parenthood. Are women more prone to face expectations of having children and thus encounter what Teele (2018) calls as a double bind? Derived from these, my sixth and seventh hypotheses examined the interaction effects in sequence: first between the theoretical candidates’ sex and parental status, and then between the theoretical candidates’ age and parental status. My results support H6: the interaction between the theoretical candidates’ sex and parental status has a strong effect. Interestingly, however, women with two children are statistically significantly penalized. By contrast, I found no evidence in support of H7, as the interaction between age and parental status does not yield a statistically significant effect.

Voters’ conceptions of gender roles can also shape their expectations regarding political experience. Are female candidates expected to have more experience to be considered capable?

Similarly, in the case of age, is there a tension when candidates defy the expected trajectory – are young politicians punished for not having experience? Based on these, my eighth and ninth hypotheses focused on the interaction effects, first between the theoretical candidates' sex and previous political position, and then between age and previous political position. Based on my results, H8 is supported. Female candidates with mayoral experience are evaluated more positively than would be expected based on the main effects alone, and this interaction reaches statistical significance. In contrast, I found no support for H9, as the interaction between being young and having political experience does not exceed the sum of their individual effects.

Summarizing my results, we can assume that besides valuing a candidate who is local and have prior experience as a mayor, respondents show a preference for younger, female candidates, and those with children. Although these characteristics together do not align with traditional family values – since there was no indicated preference for married candidates in the first rounds of analyses – they signal something intriguing. Being a female is associated with '*communal*' traits (Schneider & Bos, 2019). These traits are linked to professions encompassing caring for others. Similarly, having children can be interpreted as indicative of nurturing and providing for others. These thoughts can be linked back to Childs and Cowley's (2011) argumentation regarding local representatives. Do Hungarian voters desire a representative who cares for them, not only in terms of their interests, but also in terms of their overall wellbeing? Or is there something else at play? Looking at the current composition of the Hungarian Parliament, where younger, female representatives are not overly prominent, it prompts the question: Do voters wish for something new, something different from the usual? Does this mean Hungarian voters are looking for a change? Or using the knowledge of political psychology, can their preferences be explained by social identity theory? Perhaps the Hungarian electorate would like to distance themselves from the current MPs by protesting against their current characteristics (thus designating them as the out-group) and simultaneously create a new body of MPs (thus designating a new in-group)? While these questions remain unanswered by the research, they can appoint directions for future research.

From a theoretical perspective, my work offers some intriguing insights. My hypotheses concerning descriptive representation received partial support: based on my results, voters tend to favor theoretical candidates with whom they share certain characteristics or who resemble them in certain ways, such as in terms of locality or age. This finding supports the relevance of descriptive representation theories. Similarly, hypotheses concerning the trustee model also received partial support, indicating that voters show a preference for candidates who have

previously held an elected political position. The most important takeaway from these results is that different models and theories of political representation are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are present at the same time, and can even be interpreted as complementary parts of the same picture. The shifting preferences across age groups also signal the dynamic nature of these concepts: gender and age might be interpreted differently by different social groups.

From a methodological perspective, the results of the first vignette also highlight certain limiting factors. When interpreting voters' preferences, for instance, it is essential to consider contextual characteristics as well as the limitations of the selected variables and their attribute levels defined by the research design. These considerations provide important lessons for the planning and design of the subsequent, more complex models and studies. In the next subchapter of my dissertation, I will present these methodological limitations in detail.

5.2. Methodological limitations of the first vignette

Although the results of the first vignette-looking conjoint are intriguing, there are important lessons to be learned from the formulation of the vignette and conduct of the research. Mainly the choice of variables and the specification of the attribute levels is informative for potential future research.

Regarding gender, I only included male and female potential candidates into the first vignette. Literature puts an emphasis on gender rights in the last decades (Squires, 2008; Waylen, 2010). They do this mainly by focusing on political processes like the process of representation. However, transgender political actors have also appeared on the scene during the last years. For example, Jamie Wallis, who is an MP of the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom. In future research, including “transgender” as another attribute level could be a compelling addition depending on the surveyed population.

In case of age, I specified non-extreme attribute levels. The public political sphere is open in Hungary for anyone over the age of 18 years. The average of MPs in Hungary in 2018 and 2022 was 50 and 52 years respectively. However, both in 2018 and 2022 opposition MPs in the Hungarian Parliament were approximately 10 years younger on average (Republikon Intézet, 2022). Although the significant differences between Hungary and the US, empirical results from the latter quite converge to the Hungarian numbers, as in the US, “*the average member of the House is 58 years at the time of their election*” (Stockemer et al., 2023, p. 1). As these numbers are the average age of MPs in these countries, including older hypothetical candidates into a future survey experiment would be beneficial. At the same time, examining the effect of

age of much younger hypothetical candidates on voters' choice and assessment would be an invaluable addendum to future research.

Locality has been proven as a key influencing factor of voter choice. However, in my survey experiment I specified the concerning attribute level only based on the place of residence. In next research, the change of its conceptualization could mean a step forward. Instead of, or next to place of residence, place of birth would be an interesting development of the survey experiment. Including both of these may not be the best choice, as this logic was contradictory to the guidelines of formulating attribute levels.

Marital and parental status were also kept simple in this recent survey experiment. In addition to the "married" and "single" options for the theoretical candidate, it could be useful to include the "divorced" option in future research. Empirical research conducted in Japan indicate puzzling results, as *"Japanese voters exhibited no preference regarding candidates' marital status or number of children, for female or male candidates. Respondents even seemed to cut females some slack for the special challenges they face balancing family and career, taking away fewer points from women than for men if they were divorced"* (Kage et al., 2019, p. 295). Regarding the number of children, in this research we excluded theoretical candidates with large families. Although the definition of 'large family' varies across countries and cultures, in Hungary, families raising three or more children are considered as 'large' families. In future research, including hypothetical candidates with three or more children would be beneficial to further nuance voters' assessment of representative candidates.

Previous political experience of theoretical candidates also seems to be a key influencing factor in voters' evaluation. Concerning the level at which the hypothetical candidates gained their experience, it has been proved to be less significant than the exact position they held. I only included the parliamentary position and the position of mayor. Future research may include options such as member of the city council or position in the European Parliament. Regarding the attribute level, "held the position of mayor", I also need to emphasize that this level may be a proxy for locality⁴. The theoretical candidate who previously held the position of mayor may resonate more with local knowledge and ties than with relevant political knowledge and experience. This insight needs to be considered in case of future research.

⁴ This methodological limitation is based on the insights and feedback I received at the *"Political Behaviour in Central and Eastern Europe"* workshop, organized by the European University Institute. The workshop took place in Florence, Italy, 19-20 June 2025.

As presented, the levels of the attributes can be enhanced in future research. This survey experiment and its results indicate that the chosen methodology is able to appropriately capture the factors which influence voters' evaluation and choice of candidates. Besides, another potential way for further developing this research could be to include other candidate characteristics into the survey, such as their educational background, or their ethnic background.

Besides the development of the variables and the attribute levels, I also need to highlight one of the most important statistical and methodological limitations of my work. Previous feedback indicated that, in the case of the theoretical candidate characteristics, estimating marginal means could have provided additional insights (see Figure 4). While AMCE results show estimates of the average marginal effects of attribute levels across all profiles, with marginal means we would have been able to compare the average predicted ratings for each attribute level independently. This could have revealed which characteristics were the most preferred. Therefore, this is a significant input for future research, which we will be taking into account.

5.3. Discussion and interpretation of the second vignette results

In this subchapter of my dissertation, I interpret the results of the second vignette experiment. Unlike the presentation in section '*4.2. Results of the second vignette*', the logic of the interpretation here follows the order of the previously formulated and presented hypotheses. The aim of the second vignette was to explore what decision-making processes voters prefer in different crisis situations and how this is influenced by the gender of the theoretical representative and the different types of crises. In this case, voter expectations were determined by the broader context, particularly by the gender of the theoretical representative and by the type of crisis. The results showed complex but clearly discernible patterns. The aim of the discussion is to explore and present the possible interpretations behind the quantitative results of this particular vignette and to show how these results fit into previous theories on political representation and the Hungarian political context.

My tenth hypothesis examined whether voters prefer expert-based decision-making in any type of crisis situation. This assumption is based on the knowledge of political science suggesting that during times of crisis, citizens more often turn to leaders who represent competence and expertise (Falcão et al., 2023; Huddy & Capelos, 2002; Schneider & Bos, 2019). However, my results did not confirm this hypothesis. These results fit well with the characteristics of the Hungarian political culture. Following experts' considerations (the technocratic approach) has

long struggled with a trust deficit in the domestic context with voters often seeing the role of experts as a transfer of political responsibility. It is important to note that the involvement of experts in Hungary often appears to be more of a performative element that serves to legitimize the regime rather than to provide genuine professional basis for decisions (Várnagy et al., 2025). At the same time, I also need to emphasize that in the context presented in the vignette, and thus in the interpretation of the results, this only applies to mediated decision-making. These results do not in themselves rule out the possibility that voters would accept direct expert participation in certain decision-making situations. Respondents generally did not prefer the technocratic approach of political decision-making; in fact, in certain crisis situations – especially during a social crisis – they were explicitly dismissive of decision-making processes during which theoretical representatives rely on experts' considerations. This observation is consistent with the characteristics of Hungarian political culture: expert decision-making suffers from a trust deficit, and voters tend to view it as a transfer of political responsibility. These results clearly reject my H10 hypothesis.

My eleventh hypothesis focused on whether the crisis narrative influences voters' preferences in terms of whether voters prefer the involvement of experts in the decision-making process. The initial assumption here was that the different types of crises – such as an environmental or an economic crisis – could elicit different responses from voters, particularly in terms of how much they accept the involvement of experts in the political decision-making process. However, the results showed no significant difference in the assessment of following experts' considerations between the different types of crises. The stable preferences may be due to the specific characteristics of the Hungarian political environment: a highly centralized party system, populist polarization and a general lack of trust in experts. It is interesting to note that in the case of the environmental crisis, technocratic approach was less rejected; however, this result was not statistically significant. This exceptional case also shows that crisis narratives can elicit different responses, even though these differences did not prove to be statistically significant in this research. Although. Consequently, I must also reject my H11 hypothesis.

My twelfth hypothesis was that voters prefer the involvement of experts' considerations in the decision-making process compared to theoretical representatives following the party program. This assumption is based on the fact that Hungarian voters generally have a deep distrust of political parties, especially decision-makers who mechanically follow party discipline (Várnagy et al., 2025, p. 11). The results clearly confirmed this hypothesis: in all crisis types, decision-making based on the party program was the most rejected. This may be due to the

specific functioning of the Hungarian political system. According to Várnagy et al. (2025, p. 11), party discipline and party patronage are strong in the domestic political arena (Meyer-Sahling & Jager, 2012), while populism and charismatic leadership play a prominent role (Metz & Plesz, 2023). This context contributes to voters' strong rejection of any decision-making process in which theoretical representatives follow the party program. Although the technocratic approach did not receive strong support either, they are still considered more favorably by voters than decision-making following the party program. I also need to highlight that the political system attempts to satisfy decision-making based on voters' interests (delegate model of representation) with various performative elements, such as the institution of national consultation, which appears to demonstrate openness to the will of the voters. In contrast, although the decision-making process based on expert considerations (technocratic approach) was not particularly popular, it was still more positively assessed by the respondents, especially in the case of the environmental crisis. Respondents were therefore less likely to reject expert considerations than decision-making based on party programs, thus confirming my H12 hypothesis. However, I need to shed light on the complexity behind this phenomenon. Although the respondents favor representatives following experts' considerations over party programs in the decision-making process, both experts and party programs are generally rejected by voters in favor of including voters' interests in the decision-making process (Várnagy et al., 2025, p. 11).

In the thirteenth hypothesis, I assumed that the combined effect of a social crisis and a female theoretical representative would be stronger than the effect of the two factors separately. This hypothesis builds on differences among the potential types of crises. According to Blee (2020), 'soft issues' – such as a social crisis – are associated with women. Respondents in my sample tend to penalize female theoretical representatives not only in relation to a social crisis, but also in relation to an environmental one. I need to emphasize that female theoretical representatives are more strongly penalized in the case of the latter. However, neither of these results is statistically significant, which leads me to the rejection of H13.

My fourteenth and fifteenth hypotheses focused on the interaction effects, first between the social crisis and public good-based decision-making, and then between the environmental crisis and expert-based decision-making. Respondents in my sample generally tend to disfavor theoretical representatives who follow their own interpretation of public good in the decision-making process (representing the trustee model). The interaction effect between this type of decision-making and a social crisis statistically significantly amplifies this effect. My results

show strong opposition towards theoretical representatives following the public good in a social crisis. This indicates a disfavor towards the trustee model of political representation. Interestingly, this is the least favored option in the eyes of voters in the case of a social crisis. This result supports my H14. In the context of a social crisis, the second least favored option is following experts' considerations, and the third is following the party program. This is extremely intriguing given the fact that, in general, theoretical representatives following the central party program received the most negative evaluation. Why did voters' opinions change, and thus the results? Why are they more accepting towards following the party program in the case of a social crisis? Results connected to following the party program are also intriguing in the case of an environmental crisis, as this option is proved to be least opposed one, while incorporating experts' considerations in the decision-making process is the only favored one. However, neither of these results is statistically significant, which leads me to the rejection of H15.

Overall, based on my results, I assume that respondents in the sample are most sensitive to a theoretical social crisis, as this scenario resulted in the highest number of statistically significant results.

After the detailed discussion of the hypothesis testing analyses, I will present the most important take away messages of the second vignette. Through the analyses conducted, I revealed some trends that require further research, as they may point to more subtle dimensions of voters' expectations. While interpreting my results, it is important to consider the specific characteristics of the Hungarian political context, which strongly influence voters' preferences. The performative elements of politics – such as the national consultations – create the appearance that voters' interests are reflected throughout the decision-making process, while in reality weak electoral linkages and a substantial representational deficit can be captured (Ilonszki, 1998; Papp, 2018). Derived from these, my results are strongly context-dependent, and different patterns may emerge in other political contexts.

From a theoretical perspective, my work further nuances existing approaches to political representation. Based on the results, I can assume that the delegate model of representation is preferred among my respondents in the context of different crisis situations, meaning representatives who follow their constituents' interests in the decision-making process are the most preferred ones. This is consistent with the existing theories that state in various crisis situations, voters expect more direct and personal representation. As Caramani (2017, p. 63) pointed out, *“Populism's core representation feature is responsiveness (albeit referring to a*

putative popular will). *If leaders fully respond to people's preferences and, in fact, simply implement them in a fully fledged mandate there is little need for accountability.*” Contrarily, theoretical representatives following the public opinion (trustee model) proved to be generally less favored in this research, moreover, in certain types of crises – such as in times of a social crisis – they are even rejected. This shows that respondents in my sample distrust representatives who incorporate the abstract concept of public opinion into their decision-making process. Similarly to that, theoretical representatives following experts' considerations are also disfavored among my respondents. However, in this case certain types of crises – such as an environmental crisis – result in decreased levels of rejection towards theoretical representatives incorporating experts' considerations in the decision-making process. Representatives following the party program consistently appeared as the most rejected option. Regarding this, I must emphasize that according to the AMCE results, respondents in this sample consistently disprefer theoretical representatives who follow party programs across all types of crises. However, statistically significant results in the ACIE analyses appeared only in the social crisis scenario.

From a methodological perspective, the second vignette of my work also provides important lessons, which I will discuss in the next subchapter of my dissertation.

5.4. Methodological limitations of the second vignette

Although the results of the second vignette are both intriguing and valuable, I also gained useful experience regarding the structure and wording of the vignette itself. In this subchapter of my dissertation, I summarize and present these insights with the aim of improving the quality of future research. First, I discuss the operationalization of variables, then the limitations of the research design, and finally the statistical and analytical constraints.

Regarding the operationalization of variables, I need to emphasize the fact that the framing of the potential crisis situations was rather simplified. I presented these crises in plain wording – for example, “in a social/economic/environmental crisis” – which does not reflect the complexity of such situations in real life. As I pointed out earlier in the ‘3.6. *The second vignette*’ subchapter of my dissertation, different types of crises can occur simultaneously and overlap with one another (Alkiviadou, 2018; Hacker, 2015; Loorbach et al., 2016). On the other hand, I must also address the absence of a baseline, meaning that we did not design a scenario without a crisis, which is another limitation of this work. Without this baseline – a scenario without a crisis – we were only able to compare different crisis situations and the change in

voters' preferences among different crisis types. Representatives and leaders are expected to make decisions not only in times of crisis, so it would be beneficial for future research to also include a non-crisis scenario. This way, we will be able to map out voters' expectations regarding the actions of representatives from a different angle.

The limitations are not confined to the number and wording of the crisis types alone. I also simplified the operationalization of the different decision-making models – that is, the political representation models and approaches. The four categories we used in the research and I presented in my work – voters' interests (delegate model), public opinion (trustee model), experts' considerations (technocratic approach), and party programs (party-label-based approach) – are fundamental, yet not sufficient to capture the full scope of reality. Although we made an attempt to reflect the complexity of voters' choices, especially through the ACIE analyses, the 24 possible scenarios explored in the research cannot fully mirror the intricacies of real-life decision-making. In practice, decision-making can be for more complex, often combining several logics simultaneously. For example, a representative may consult their constituents about a certain issue, such as the construction of a new highway. According to the voters' feedback, and their opinions, they oppose the construction of the highway due to environmental concerns; however, the representative may also consult experts on the subject, who support the project based on rational arguments. The representative might even mediate between these positions according to their own views. The research does not capture this kind of complexity.

Among the limitations of the research design, the first one is closely related to the operationalization of the variables. By simplifying the crisis types and decision-making options, I also simplified the political context. In such settings, respondents' reactions reflect their attitudes rather than their real-life choices. As a result, the generalizability of the results is limited. Another limitation concerns the interpretation of gender effects. While in the case of the first vignette, I managed to connect other variables to the sex variable – such as marital and parental status – I did not do so in the case of the second vignette. Here, the sex variable only referred to the biological sex of the theoretical representative, without taking into account more complex dimensions of gender, such as the theoretical representative's behavior or communication style. Because of this, I was not fully able to examine the gendered expectations in the context of the second vignette. A further challenge for generalization arises from the distorting effect of cultural and political context. As I pointed out in the previous subchapter, *'5.3. Discussion and interpretation of the second vignette results'*, party patronage and party

discipline are strong in the Hungarian political context (Meyer-Sahling & Jager, 2012; Szente, 2018). This aligns with the strong rejection of representatives following the party program, and these parallel phenomena can significantly shape the results of this research, making the generalizability of my results ambiguous. Finally, I must also highlight the issue of missing background variables. The research could have been enriched by incorporating additional factors, such as respondents' personal attitudes toward crises, their trust in various institutions and political actors, or their prior involvement in crisis situations.

Lastly, I must also highlight the statistical and analytical constraints of my work. Although the ACIE analyses allowed me to uncover important dynamics, the majority of the investigated interactions are not statistically significant. In addition, the sample size and, as mentioned earlier, the simplified context both limit the ability to draw strong and generalizable conclusions.

5.5. Discussion and interpretation of the focus group discussion

The present study is situated at the interface of electoral behavior, political psychology and representation theory, where the focus of the study is on the personality traits of political representatives and the preferences of voters. A comparison of the conceptualization of political representation and leadership revealed that while political leaders are often singled out for their assertive, charismatic and decision-making abilities (Platow et al., 2006), political representatives focus on understanding voter preferences, fostering community relations and advocacy. In political theories of representation, the role of representatives is to reflect the interests and will of the electorate (Baaz & Lilja, 2014; Phillips, 2000), in contrast, the role of political leaders is broader. This includes both managing decision-making processes and shaping policy directions. In this context, the study of the personality and personality traits of representatives plays an important role in assessing the effectiveness of political representation and voter satisfaction.

The application of the Big Five model in political science research allows us to analyze in detail the personality and individual personality traits of political representatives, thus understanding how these traits influence voter behaviour and the relationship between representatives and their constituents. Based on the results of the focus group research on which this study is based, it can be concluded that among the Big Five personality dimensions of political representation, Conscientiousness and Openness are of paramount importance, as rated by the interviewees.

The research sheds light on the interconnection between voter behavior, political psychology and political representation theory, and opens up new perspectives for further research on political representation. The results show that voters seek similarities with political candidates - descriptive representation, affinity effects (Dolan, 2008; Sevi, 2021) but they also value personality traits that go beyond their own competences - the (role) perception of representation as a free mandate (Ilonszki, 2011). The results indicate that political representation is not only based on political and party platforms, but also on the personality traits of candidates, which provides a new perspective for understanding the relationship between political representation and voter behavior and contributes to the further development of theories of representation. A deeper understanding of the personalities of political representatives and leaders can facilitate a more effective analysis and evaluation of political systems and processes.

A future research direction could be to study other social groups and different political contexts in order to gain a deeper understanding of the interconnection between voter behavior, political psychology and theories of representation. In addition, it is important to further analyze the similarities and differences between political representation and political leadership in order to gain a more detailed picture of the different roles and functions of political actors in political systems. The results of the research presented in this paper will contribute to a deeper understanding of the theory and practice of political representation.

5.6. Methodological limitations of the focus group discussion

Conducting the focus group discussions in December 2023 and January 2024, allowed me to experience the method's benefits, as presented in the literature. During the first interview in December, I identified weaknesses in the methodology and the designed script. When planning and organizing the pilot group, I did not put appropriate emphasis on ensuring a correct homogeneity-heterogeneity ratio (Vicsek, 2006). The participants formed a rather homogeneous group, which facilitated a safe and comfortable environment; however, this homogeneity led to a strong convergence in participants' perspectives and opinions. Alongside interviewees' recruitment, the designed script indicated some flaws. During the second part of the first focus group discussion back in December, I arbitrarily placed the attributes on the whiteboard, and only then did I explain to the participants the structure and dimensions of the Big Five personality model. This procedure complicated the dialogue among the participants, and it also made the focus group discussion more time-consuming. I applied these two important lessons to further develop the methodology for the January conversation. By incorporating these, I was able to organize a meeting where participants felt comfortable and

free to share their thoughts with the rest of the group. The members were engaged in the discussion and actively contributed to giving me valuable insights into their ideas for the ideal representative.

It is crucial to highlight that the focus group discussions in this research are neither internally nor externally valid, and generalizing their results to the Hungarian population as a whole may be misleading.

This qualitative research was conducted under the “New National Excellence Program”, where resources were limited in terms of time and finances. Despite these constraints, the focus group discussions provided invaluable data. However, it is the methodological insights that I consider as the greatest achievements of this research. As a psychologist, I was focusing on two questions: ‘*Does the Big Five capture representation?*’ and ‘*Are rigorous, standardized psychological tests applicable in such a research context?*’. To answer these, I combined the focus group methodology with a standardized psychological measurement tool, namely the Big Five personality model. As the results indicate, there was only a partial success with the Big Five model. It failed to fully capture all participants’ inputs (see the ‘4.4. *Results of the focus group discussion*’ subchapter for “outlier” values). Nevertheless, my findings also demonstrate that psychological tools and measurement instruments have their place in political science research. Moving forward, my goal is to delve deeper into the intersection of the two disciplines, thus enriching our understanding of political science events and their impact on voters.

6. Conclusion and implications

In my dissertation, I set out to explore the dynamic nature of political representation. My results are consistent with the assumption that political representation is not a static concept but a dynamically changing one that shifts according to different contexts. My work shows that voters interpret and expect the concept of a good representative differently in different situations, both in terms of their characteristics and their actions. Based on this, models and theories of political representation (descriptive, trustee, and delegate) do not apply exclusively; rather, they overlap and complement each other (Besco, 2015; Put et al., 2019).

To explore the phenomenon in depth, I used a vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment combined with focus group discussions. My main aim was to get a better understanding of voters’ expectations and how they evaluate theoretical candidates. In the first vignette, I examined theoretical candidates with different characteristics. Analyses related to this vignette revealed that the first and most important factor which influences voters’ choices is the locality

of the candidate. In the context of my work, locality refers to the spatial proximity between constituents and their representative. However, as local political experience – specifically having held the position of mayor – proved to be the third most important influencing factor, the concept of ‘local PVEA’ (Nyholt, 2024; Put et al., 2019) is also supported by this research results. These suggest that descriptive representation in the research manifested primarily through local affinity, while in the case of the trustee model of representation, political experience gained as a mayor is the most relevant factor. Theoretical candidates’ biological sex, age, and parental status also have a moderate effect on voters’ choices. The analysis by age groups showed that younger and older voters have different attitudes towards the theoretical candidates’ age, which further complicates the concept of political representation. For example, voters aged 18-40 strongly prefer younger candidates, while older voters seem less likely to prefer older candidates (Eshima & Smith, 2022; McClean & Ono, 2024). Analyses also showed that expectations of female representatives are often more complex, especially when parental status comes into play (for example, the dispreference observed toward female candidates with two children). The outcomes of the first vignette are also significant from the perspective of political psychology. Social identity can be formed based on various factors, such as locality, gender, marital and parental status, or even on political positions. Stemming from the results of the research, it might appear that the Hungarian electorate is turning away from the current MPs. My findings point in a completely different direction, both in terms of the age and gender of the current MPs. This can signal another form of social identity, with current representatives forming the out-group and voters and their preferences forming the in-group. These insights and the research questions they raise can provide directions for future research or offer a more applied approach in terms of voters’ behavior.

In the second vignette of my work, I examined theoretical representatives and their actions in a hypothetical crisis situation. The conditions of crises (economic, social, or environmental) require representatives to make considered decisions. This can take various forms, such as involving experts, following the public good, considering the interests of voters, or following the party program. Based on my results, respondents generally favor theoretical representatives who incorporate voters’ interests into the decision-making process. This reflects the idea of the delegate model of representation. The results also show that voters are clearly skeptical about rigidly following party programs, preferring representatives who can adapt to contextual requirements and the needs of voters. Interestingly, in case of an economic crisis, voters tend to prefer theoretical representatives who follow public opinion in the decision-making process

(trustee model). This raises further questions. Why do voters prefer incorporating public opinion over voters' interests only in this case? Which aspect of an economic crisis drives this decision of theirs? Do voters assume that an economic crisis is so complex that it requires broader, society-wide solutions rather than constituency interests? These questions can shape the directions of future research.

Overall, my quantitative results show a rather complex pattern. Parts of the first vignette support the idea of descriptive representation, some findings of the second vignette support the idea of the delegate model of representation, while aspects of both vignettes support the idea of the trustee model of representation. My work confirms that none of these models fully describes the role of representatives and the expectations of voters. The results show that voters consider several aspects simultaneously, which interact with each other and change dynamically in relation to local conditions, social identity, and crisis situations, among others. This supports the process-approach of representation, which takes into account the complexity of voter decisions and the diversity of representative roles. Voters expect similarity and experience, and they expect representatives to monitor and follow not only the will of not only their constituents but, when necessary, broader social interests, while rejecting strict adherence to party programs.

Regarding the qualitative part of my research, namely the representatives' personality traits, *Conscientiousness* and *Openness* proved to be of paramount importance, as rated by my interviewees in the focus group discussions. Through these analyses, my research has not only highlighted significant voters biases towards certain candidate characteristics but also contributed to a deeper understanding of the affinity effect (descriptive aspect of representation), and the process approach of representation.

The limitations within each vignette can be addressed by applying a different conceptualization and operationalization. Within the same methodological universe, the theoretical approach, conceptualization and operationalization, on which the current work is based, can be further developed. Implementing these developments can further deepen our understanding of political representation in the future. However, some inherent limitations of the chosen methodology cannot be resolved within this framework, namely the method's weak external validity (see '3.4. Critiques of the methodology' subchapter). While this limitation has already been elaborated on, I must emphasize the strong internal validity of the survey experiment method. As Babbi (2013) points it out, "*internal validity refers to the possibility that the conclusions drawn from experimental results may not accurately reflect what has gone on in the experiment itself. The threat of internal validity is present whenever anything other than the experimental*

stimulus can affect the dependent variable” (Babbie, 2013, pp. 280-281). When constructing and wording my experiment and its questions, I paid close attention to avoiding the possibility of triggering anything current or relevant for respondents. Based on this, the internal validity of my survey experiment research can be considered strong.

Overall, both methods I applied – the vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment and the focus group discussion – proved to be appropriate choices. The vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment helped me to reveal voters’ preferences and their decision-making processes in detail. It not only pointed out voters’ general preferences but also shed light on how the effects of specific characteristics change depending on voters’ attributes. This methodological approach allowed me to present a deeper understanding of subtle influences in political behavior. Given the lessons learned through my work, future studies can further develop and nuance their research design. They can do so by incorporating more social-demographic questions about respondents. Since we consciously left out questions about marital and parental status of participants – aiming having a shorter survey experiment – we were unable to measure the presumed affinity effect in every aspect of the research. This shortcoming needs to be addressed in the future to better understand the motives behind voters’ choices. Combining quantitative and qualitative research methods has proven to be an effective approach to examining voters’ choices and preferences. The representative sample of the quantitative research made it possible to generalize my first vignette’s results to the Hungarian voters, as this particular vignette did not contain any special attributes that might have biased respondents during completing the task. However, the generalizability of the second vignette’s results is limited, as its wording and research context are strongly influenced by specific circumstances. Nevertheless, these results are invaluable for mapping out voters’ perceptions of the process of representation.

Research results rarely provide fully fledged answers; they rather tend to open more questions and directions, my dissertation included. With this current analysis, we got a better understanding of voters’ preferences. These results and insights contribute to debates on what voters think about good representatives and good representation in contemporary democracies.

As discussed above, my findings highlight the relevance of several descriptive factors (e.g. locality, gender, age), which shape voters’ expectations and their evaluations. The question emerges: What do voters expect female representatives to do? The same logic applies to the other variables of the research – What do voters expect from younger representatives? Or from representatives with children? These questions concern the descriptive aspect of political

representation. Although theories describing descriptive representation have a long history, this research and its results prove their timelessness.

We see voters' descriptive vision regarding legislature; as a next step, we need to examine the representative process more thoroughly. Regarding the results of the second vignette, it became clear that Hungarian voters do not generally favor experts in the representational process in times of crisis; they only prefer them when compared to theoretical representatives who follow party programs. Instead of incorporating experts' considerations, respondents generally favor representatives who follow their voters' interests. What are the further implications of these results? Is there anything else voters might expect from experts other than crisis management? These puzzling questions reveal new gaps in our current knowledge about representation. My findings go beyond the dynamic process approach of political representation by highlighting what I refer to as the *demand for context-responsive representation*. While the dynamic process approach of representation refers to the process itself and its participants, the concept of context-responsive demand indicates that voters' expectations and evaluations of representatives change dynamically according to the situational context.

This demand can primarily be observed in the expectations voters hold regarding representatives' actions and their decision-making. Representatives are expected to actively react to the context, meaning that they make their decisions based on contextual factors such as the type of crisis or voters' expectations.

Based on these, we can assume that voters primarily expect representatives to follow their interests and opinions, yet they also value situational flexibility, for example when experts' considerations or broader societal considerations become relevant in times of crisis.

In the case of theoretical candidate characteristics, we can also capture the dynamic nature of representation and the dynamic nature of voters' expectations and their evaluations. For example, voters generally tend to favor female candidates and candidates with children, yet they show a strong negative preference toward female candidates with children. Besides, respondents in this research show a significant preference for female candidates who previously held the position of mayor. These show that even the evaluation of personal characteristics is intertwined. Gender is complex concept, it is socially constructed, and thus continuously changing. Its aspects and the expectations connected to it are not constant over time. This is an ongoing challenge, which needs to be studied in the future.

It is important to highlight that the context-responsive demand identified in the quantitative part of my work did not appear in the qualitative part, namely the focus group discussions. In future research focusing on personality traits and candidate characteristics, it would be worthwhile to examine context-responsive demand by contextualizing personality traits within specific situations or challenges.

Context-dependent expectations are not by any means Hungarian specifics. Although my work focuses on the Hungarian context, similar patterns can be observed in other countries as well. For instance, in Greece and Italy, voters accepted technocratic governments during financial crises while still expecting their interests to be followed. In Germany, climate-related issues illustrate how experts' considerations and voters interests overlap. We also see such examples outside of Europe, for instance in the United States, where during the Covid-19 pandemic, voters valued experts' considerations while also prioritizing their own interests.

My findings show a convergence with existing theories, not only in the field of representation, but also in the fields of political psychology, voter behavior and political leadership. The results of the two vignettes and the focus group discussions indicate that several models of representation can be present simultaneously in voters' choices. In some cases, they prefer a representative who is like them – locality, affinity effect regarding age. In other cases, respondents show a tendency for the trustee model – candidates with relevant local political experience, or politicians with great rhetorical skills. In other cases, respondents show a preference for the delegate model – representatives following the public opinion in the decision-making process. The leadership literature describes this phenomenon as adaptive leadership or role theory when leaders shift their narratives or *modus operandi* in connection to changing context and/or expectations. These results can alter our approach to representation, as it became apparent that representational models are not exclusive to each other. Based on the findings we can assume that these overlapping expectations imply that democratic legitimacy does not stem from a single representational model but from representatives' ability to adapt to different context-dependent demands. This means that democratic legitimacy can be strengthened when representatives respond flexibly – primarily following voters' interests but also following experts' considerations and public opinion when needed.

Methodologically, the combination of vignette-looking conjoint survey experiments and focus group discussions proved to be valuable, though further integration remains to be done. My aim is to take further steps towards successfully combining theoretical and methodological knowledge from different disciplines in my future research.

The results of this current study hold significant value for various political actors – not only for representatives but also for political strategists and parties. By drawing on these findings, they can better organize and refine their appeal to voters. Understanding the directions and effects of certain candidate characteristics allow for more precisely targeted political campaigns, enabling political actors to convey their messages more effectively. These insights can help them develop strategies that reflect this context-responsive view of representation.

From the perspective of the Hungarian electorate, studies like this are important. Asking such questions about political representation may trigger reflections that would otherwise remain hidden. As citizens entitled to vote, taking part in elections is one of our most important rights and obligations. Elections mean the time and place to articulate our wishes and expectations. To make responsible choices, it is important to know the available options. Perhaps even more importantly, we need to understand what truly matters to us as citizens. What makes us feel that we are well represented, and in the right way? There can be significant individual differences between voters in this regard.

The field of psychology generally emphasizes the importance of individual differences. Political psychology is therefore a valuable complement to theories of political representation and voter behavior. I believe that future studies would benefit from connecting these disciplines in order to gain a more holistic understanding of voters' objectives and behavior.

This research journey has been challenging and insightful. As this research represents the most complex academic projects in my career so far, I have gained a great deal of valuable knowledge and experience over the years completing it. Taking part in designing a vignette-looking conjoint survey experiment and organizing and moderating two focus group discussions was a joyful experience, as I was able to draw on my psychological knowledge in both cases. It is great seeing these two disciplines intertwining and complementing each other. Through this research, I have been reinforced in my belief that combining my background in psychology with my political science knowledge provides meaningful insights.

References

- Abbott, O. (2016). Posthumanist Perspectives and the Chernobyl Disaster: Dances of Agency, Temporal Emergence, and Disaster Risk Management. *International Journal of Mass Emergencies & Disasters*, 34(2), 231–249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/028072701603400203>
- Achen, C. H., & Bartels, L. M. (2016). *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government* (Revised edition). Princeton University Press.
- Adams, B. E., Lascher, E. L., & Martin, D. J. (2021). Ballot Cues, Business Candidates, and Voter Choices in Local Elections. *American Politics Research*, 49(2), 186–197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X20943559>
- Aguilar, R., Cunow, S., Desposato, S., & Barone, L. S. (2015). Ballot Structure, Candidate Race, and Vote Choice in Brazil. *Latin American Research Review*, 50(3), 175–202.
- Aichholzer, J., & Willmann, J. (2020). Desired personality traits in politicians: Similar to me but more of a leader. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 88, 103990. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2020.103990>
- Alexander, D., & Andersen, K. (1993). Gender as a Factor in the Attribution of Leadership Traits. *Political Research Quarterly - POLIT RES QUART*, 46, 527–545. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106591299304600305>
- Alkiviadou, N. (2018). Sustainable Enjoyment of Economic and Social Rights in Times of Crisis. *European Journal of Law Reform*, 20(4), 3–27. <https://doi.org/10.5553/EJLR/138723702018020004001>
- Allen, D. (2021). *Democracy in the Time of Coronavirus*. University of Chicago Press. <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/D/bo126364474.html>
- An audit of political engagement* (4; p. 4). (2007). The Electoral Commission/Hansard Society. <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/migrations/en-uk/files/Assets/Docs/Archive/Polls/political-engagement.pdf>
- Arowolo, D. (2015). DEMOCRACY AND BICAMERALISM IN NIGERIA: ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, Vol. 3, 1–11.
- Arter, D. (2014). Clowns, ‘Alluring Ducks’ and ‘Miss Finland 2009’: The Value of ‘Celebrity Candidates’ in an Open-List Pr Voting System. *Representation*, 50(4), 453–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344893.2014.982693>
- Arzheimer, K., & Evans, J. (2012). Geolocation and voting: Candidate–voter distance effects on party choice in the 2010 UK general election in England. *Political Geography*, 31(5), 301–310. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2012.04.006>
- Arzheimer, K., & Evans, J. (2014). Candidate geolocation and voter choice in the 2013 English County Council elections. *Research & Politics*, 1(2), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168014538769>

- Atkeson, L. R. (2003). Not All Cues Are Created Equal: The Conditional Impact of Female Candidates on Political Engagement. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(4), 1040–1061. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2508.t01-1-00124>
- Baaz, M., & Lilja, M. (2014). Understanding Hybrid Democracy in Cambodia: The Nexus Between Liberal Democracy, the State, Civil Society, and a “Politics of Presence.” *Asian Politics & Policy*, 6(1), 5–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12086>
- Babbie, E. R. (2013). *The Practice of Social Research*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Badas, A., & Stauffer, K. E. (2019). Voting for women in nonpartisan and partisan elections. *Electoral Studies*, 57, 245–255. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2018.10.004>
- Bansak, K., Hainmueller, J., Hopkins, D. J., & Yamamoto, T. (2018). The Number of Choice Tasks and Survey Satisficing in Conjoint Experiments. *Political Analysis*, 26(1), 112–119. <https://doi.org/10.1017/pan.2017.40>
- Barker, D. C., & Carman, C. J. (2012). *Representing Red and Blue: How the Culture Wars Change the Way Citizens Speak and Politicians Listen*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199796564.001.0001>
- Bartels, L. M. (2002). Beyond the Running Tally: Partisan Bias in Political Perceptions. *Political Behavior*, 24(2), 117–150.
- Bassi, A., Morton, R. B., & Williams, K. C. (2011). The Effects of Identities, Incentives, and Information on Voting. *The Journal of Politics*, 73(2), 558–571. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381611000284>
- Bertsou, E. (2022). Bring in the experts? Citizen preferences for independent experts in political decision-making processes. *European Journal of Political Research*, 61(1), 255–267. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12448>
- Bertsou, E., & Pastorella, G. (2017). Technocratic attitudes: A citizens’ perspective of expert decision-making. *West European Politics*, 40(2), 430–458. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2016.1242046>
- Besco, R. (2015). Rainbow Coalitions or Inter-minority Conflict? Racial Affinity and Diverse Minority Voters. *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne de Science Politique*, 48(2), 305–328.
- Bíró-Nagy, A., & Szabó, A. (2022). *Youth Study Hungary 2021—Discontent, Polarisation, Pro-Europeanism*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/19115-20220419.pdf>
- Bittner, A. (2011). *Platform or Personality?: The Role of Party Leaders in Elections* (1st edition). Oxford University Press.
- Blee, K. (2020). Where Do We Go from Here? Positioning Gender in Studies of the Far Right. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 21(4), 416–431. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2020.1851870>
- Bøggild, T. (2020). Politicians as Party Hacks: Party Loyalty and Public Distrust in Politicians. *The Journal of Politics*, 82(4), 1516–1529. <https://doi.org/10.1086/708681>

- Bøggild, T., Campbell, R., Nielsen, M. K., Pedersen, H. H., & vanHeerde-Hudson, J. A. (2021). Which personality fits personalized representation? *Party Politics*, 27(2), 269–281. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068819855703>
- Brians, C. L. (2005). Women for Women?: Gender and Party Bias in Voting for Female Candidates. *American Politics Research*, 33(3), 357–375. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X04269415>
- Bryan, O. (2002). *Formulating Attributes and Levels in Conjoint Analysis*. Sawtooth Software, Inc. <https://sawtoothsoftware.com/resources/technical-papers/formulating-attributes-and-levels-in-conjoint-analysis>
- Buonocore, G., & Pettoello-Mantovani, M. (2023). Climate changes, economic downturn and children's health. *Global Pediatrics*, 4, 100053. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gped.2023.100053>
- Burke, E. (1975). *On Government, Politics and Society* (B. W. Hill, Ed.). Fontana.
- Cain, B., Ferejohn, J., & Fiorina, M. (1987). *The Personal Vote: Constituency Service and Electoral Independence*. Harvard University Press.
- Calhoun, C. (1995). Standing for Something. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 92(5), 235–260. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2940917>
- Campbell, A., Converse, P. E., Miller, W. E., & Stokes, D. E. (1980). *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press. <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/A/bo24047989.html>
- Campbell, R., & Cowley, P. (2014). What Voters Want: Reactions to Candidate Characteristics in a Survey Experiment. *Political Studies*, 62(4), 745–765. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12048>
- Campbell, R., & Cowley, P. (2018). The impact of parental status on the visibility and evaluations of politicians. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 20(3), 753–769. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148118775032>
- Campbell, R., Cowley, P., Vivyan, N., & Wagner, M. (2019). Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots. *The Journal of Politics*, 81(3), 937–951. <https://doi.org/10.1086/703131>
- Capelos, T., & Exadaktylos, T. (2015). ‘The Good, the Bad and the Ugly’: Stereotypes, Prejudices and Emotions on Greek Media Representation of the EU Financial Crisis. In G. Karyotis & R. Gerodimos (Eds.), *The Politics of Extreme Austerity: Greece in the Eurozone Crisis* (pp. 46–68). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137369239_4
- Caprara, G., Barbaranelli, C., Consiglio, C., Laura, P., & Zimbardo, P. (2003). Personalities of Politicians and Voters: Unique and Synergistic Relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 849–856. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.849>
- Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., & Zimbardo, P. G. (2002). When Parsimony Subdues Distinctiveness: Simplified Public Perceptions of Politicians' Personality. *Political Psychology*, 23(1), 77–95. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00271>

- Caprara, G. V., Schwartz, S., Capanna, C., Vecchione, M., & Barbaranelli, C. (2006). Personality and Politics: Values, Traits, and Political Choice. *Political Psychology*, 27(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2006.00447.x>
- Caprara, G. V., & Vecchione, M. (2013). Personality approaches to political behavior. In *The Oxford handbook of political psychology*, 2nd ed (pp. 23–58). Oxford University Press.
- Caramani, D. (2017). Will vs. Reason: The Populist and Technocratic Forms of Political Representation and Their Critique to Party Government. *American Political Science Review*, 111(1), 54–67. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055416000538>
- Caramani, D. (2020). Introduction: The technocratic challenge to democracy. In E. Bertsou & D. Caramani (Eds.), *Caramani, Daniele (2020). Introduction: The technocratic challenge to democracy. In: Bertsou, Eri; Caramani, Daniele. The technocratic challenge to democracy. London: Taylor & Francis, 1-26. (pp. 1–26). Taylor & Francis.* <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-188218>
- Carmines, E. G., & Stimson, J. A. (1980). The Two Faces of Issue Voting. *The American Political Science Review*, 74(1), 78–91. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1955648>
- Carnes, N. (2013). Class, Opinions, and Choices. In *White-Collar Government: The Hidden Role of Class in Economic Policy Making* (Illustrated edition, pp. 85–108). University of Chicago Press.
- Carnes, N., & Lupu, N. (2016). Do Voters Dislike Working-Class Candidates? Voter Biases and the Descriptive Underrepresentation of the Working Class. *The American Political Science Review*, 110(4), 832–844.
- Carver C. S., & Scheier M. E. (2006). *Személyiségpszichológia*. Osiris Kiadó. <https://osiriskiado.hu/konyveink/193-szemelyisegpszichologia-masodik-atdolgozott-kiadas.html>
- Ceccobelli, D., & Di Gregorio, L. (2022). The Triangle of Leadership. Authenticity, Competence and Ordinariness in Political Marketing. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 21(2), 113–125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2022.2060644>
- Celis, K. (2012). On Substantive Representation, Diversity, and Responsiveness. *Politics & Gender*, 8(4), 524–529. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X12000542>
- Celis, K., & Childs, S. (2018). Conservatism and Women’s Political Representation. *Politics & Gender*, 14(1), 5–26. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X17000575>
- Celis, K., & Childs, S. (2020). *Feminist Democratic Representation*. Oxford University Press.
- Celis, K., Childs, S., Kantola, J., & Krook, M. (2008). Rethinking Women’s Substantive Representation. *Representation*, 44, 99–110. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344890802079573>
- Charness, G., Rigotti, L., & Rustichini, A. (2007). Individual Behavior and Group Membership. *The American Economic Review*, 97(4), 1340–1352.
- Chen, Y., & Li, S. X. (2009). Group Identity and Social Preferences. *The American Economic Review*, 99(1), 431–457.

- Childs, S., & Cowley, P. (2011). The Politics of Local Presence: Is there a Case for Descriptive Representation? *Political Studies*, 59(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2010.00846.x>
- Chiru, M., & Enyedi, Z. (2022). Who wants technocrats? A comparative study of citizen attitudes in nine young and consolidated democracies. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 24(1), 95–112. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13691481211018311>
- Chong, D. (2013). Degrees of Rationality in Politics. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, & J. S. Levy (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (2nd edition, pp. 96–129). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199760107.013.0004>
- Coffé, H., & Michels, A. (2014). Education and support for representative, direct and stealth democracy. *Electoral Studies*, 35, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2014.03.006>
- Collignon, S., & Sajuria, J. (2018). Local means local, does it? Regional identification and preferences for local candidates. *Electoral Studies*, 56, 170–178. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2018.07.003>
- Costa Pinto, A., Cotta, M., & Tavares de Almeida, P. (2018). Beyond Party Government? Technocratic Trends in Society and in the Executive. In A. Costa Pinto, M. Cotta, & P. Tavares de Almeida (Eds.), *Technocratic Ministers and Political Leadership in European Democracies* (pp. 1–27). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62313-9_1
- Cotta, M., & Best, H. (2000). Between Professionalization and Democratization: A Synoptic View on the Making of the European Representative. In H. Best & M. Cotta (Eds.), *Parliamentary Representatives in Europe 1848–2000: Legislative Recruitment and Careers in Eleven European Countries* (pp. 493–526). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198297932.003.0013>
- Cox, G. W., & McCubbins, M. D. (1986). Electoral Politics as a Redistributive Game. *The Journal of Politics*, 48(2), 370–389. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2131098>
- Crowder-Meyer, M., Gadarian, S. K., & Trounstein, J. (2015). Electoral institutions, gender stereotypes, and women’s local representation. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 3(2), 318–334. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2015.1031803>
- da Silva, L. P. (2025). Media Influence and Spatial Voting: The Role of Perceived Party Positions. *Political Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-025-10031-9>
- Dahlberg, S., Linde, J., & Holmberg, S. (2015). Democratic Discontent in Old and New Democracies: Assessing the Importance of Democratic Input and Governmental Output. *Political Studies*, 63(S1), 18–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12170>
- Dahlgaard, J. O. (2016). You just made it: Individual incumbency advantage under Proportional Representation. *Electoral Studies*, 44, 319–328. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.09.004>
- Dalton, R. J., Farrell, D. M., & McAllister, I. (2011). The Dynamics of Political Representation. In M. Rosema, B. Denters, & K. Aarts (Eds.), *How Democracy Works:*

Political Representation and Policy Congruence in Modern Societies (pp. 21–37). Amsterdam University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048513369-003>

Dargent, E. (2014). *Technocracy and Democracy in Latin America: The Experts Running Government*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107446663>

Däubler, T., Bräuninger, T., & Brunner, M. (2016). Is Personal Vote-Seeking Behavior Effective? *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 41(2), 419–444.

Dietrich, B. J., Lasley, S., Mondak, J. J., Remmel, M. L., & Turner, J. (2012). Personality and Legislative Politics: The Big Five Trait Dimensions Among U.S. State Legislators. *Political Psychology*, 33(2), 195–210.

Dobos, G., Kurtán, S., & Várnagy, R. (2015). A jelöltválasztási folyamat a választási rendszer reformja előtt és után. In G. Ilonszki (Ed.), *Pártok, jelöltek, képviselők* (pp. 120–137). Szabad kéz. <https://real.mtak.hu/73006/>

Dolan, K. (2008). Is There a “Gender Affinity Effect” in American Politics? Information, Affect, and Candidate Sex in U.S House Elections. *Political Research Quarterly*, 61(1), 79–89.

Dolan, K. (2010). The Impact of Gender Stereotyped Evaluations on Support for Women Candidates. *Political Behavior*, 32(1), 69–88.

Dovi, S. (2018). Political Representation. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2018th ed.). Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/political-representation/>

Downs, A. (1957). *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1st edition). Harper and Row.

Duell, D., & Valasek, J. (2019). Political polarization and selection in representative democracies. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 168, 132–165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2019.10.004>

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573–598. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573>

Edwards, W. (1961). Behavioral Decision Theory. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 12(Volume 12, 1961), 473–498. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.12.020161.002353>

Elliott, C., & Stead, V. (2018). Constructing Women’s Leadership Representation in the UK Press During a Time of Financial Crisis: Gender capitals and dialectical tensions. *Organization Studies*, 39(1), 19–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840617708002>

Eshima, S., & Smith, D. M. (2022). Just a Number? Voter Evaluations of Age in Candidate-Choice Experiments. *The Journal of Politics*, 84(3), 1856–1861. <https://doi.org/10.1086/719005>

Evans, J. (2017). Candidate Location and Vote Choice. In K. Arzheimer, J. Evans, & M. S. Lewis-Beck (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Electoral Behaviour* (1–2, pp. 654–667). SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473957978>

- Evans, J., Arzheimer, K., Campbell, R., & Cowley, P. (2017). Candidate localness and voter choice in the 2015 General Election in England. *Political Geography*, 59, 61–71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.02.009>
- Falcão, F., Sousa, B., Pereira, D. S. M., Andrade, R., Moreira, P., Quialheiro, A., Jalali, C., & Costa, P. (2023). We vote for the person, not the policies: A systematic review on how personality traits influence voting behaviour. *Discover Psychology*, 3(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44202-022-00057-z>
- Fazio, R. H., & Olson, M. A. (2003). Attitudes: Foundations, functions, and consequences. In M. A. Hogg & J. Cooper (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 139–160). Sage.
- Fearon, J. D. (1999). Electoral Accountability and the Control of Politicians: Selecting Good Types versus Sanctioning Poor Performance. In A. Przeworski, B. Manin, & S. C. Stokes (Eds.), *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation* (pp. 55–97). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139175104.003>
- Fenno, R. F. (1978). *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Little, Brown.
- Fernández-Martínez, J. L., & Font Fábregas, J. (2018). The devil is in the detail: What do citizens mean when they support stealth or participatory democracy? *Politics*, 38(4), 458–479. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395717741799>
- Fernández-Vázquez, P., Lavezzolo, S., & Ramiro, L. (2023). The technocratic side of populist attitudes: Evidence from the Spanish case. *West European Politics*, 46(1), 73–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2022.2027116>
- Frangonikolopoulos, C. A. (2014). Politics, the Media and NGOs: The Greek Experience. *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, 15(4), 606–619. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15705854.2014.952127>
- Gal, D. (2022). The Weak Foundations of Conjoint Analysis: Methodological limitations for assessing consumer preferences and estimating damages in litigation settings. *Westlaw Today*, 1–4.
- Galambos, L. (2023). *Technokrata kormányok Európában: Válság és felelősségáthárítás* [Phd, Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem]. <https://phd.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/1280/>
- Gallagher, M. E., & Allen, S. H. (2014). Presidential Personality: Not Just a Nuisance. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 10(1), 1–21.
- Ganuza, E., & Font, J. (2020). Experts in Government: What for? Ambiguities in Public Opinion Towards Technocracy. *Politics and Governance*, 8(4), 520–532. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v8i4.3206>
- Garzia, D. (2014). *Personalization of Politics and Electoral Change* (1st edition). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Garzia, D., Ferreira da Silva, F., & De Angelis, A. (2022). Partisan dealignment and the personalisation of politics in West European parliamentary democracies, 1961–2018. *West European Politics*, 45(2), 311–334. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2020.1845941>

- Goodyear-Grant, E., & Croskill, J. (2011). Gender Affinity Effects in Vote Choice in Westminster Systems: Assessing “Flexible” Voters in Canada. *Politics & Gender*, 7(2), 223–250. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X11000079>
- Griffiths, A. P., & Wollheim, R. (1960). How Can One Person Represent Another? *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume*, 34(1), 187–224. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aristoteliansupp/34.1.187>
- Gschwend, T., & Zittel, T. (2015). Do constituency candidates matter in German Federal Elections? The personal vote as an interactive process. *Electoral Studies*, 39, 338–349. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2014.04.010>
- Ha, S. E., & Lau, R. R. (2015). Personality Traits and Correct Voting. *American Politics Research*, 43(6), 975–998. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X14568551>
- Hacker, B. (2015). Under Pressure of Budgetary Commitments: The New Economic Governance Framework Hamstrings Europe’s Social Dimension. In A. Lechevalier & J. Wielgoths (Eds.), *Social Europe: A Dead End* (pp. 133–158). Djøf Publishing. <https://www.htw-berlin.de/forschung/online-forschungskatalog/publikationen/publikation/?eid=8071>
- Hainmueller, J., Hangartner, D., & Yamamoto, T. (2015). Validating vignette and conjoint survey experiments against real-world behavior. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 112(8), 2395–2400. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1416587112>
- Halperin, S., & Heath, O. (2020). *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills*. Oxford University Press.
- Hanania, R. (2017). The personalities of politicians: A big five survey of American legislators. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 108, 164–167. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.12.020>
- Hawley, G. (2013). Issue Voting and Immigration: Do Restrictionist Policies Cost Congressional Republicans Votes? *Social Science Quarterly*, 94(5), 1185–1206.
- Hayes, D. (2005). Candidate Qualities through a Partisan Lens: A Theory of Trait Ownership. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(4), 908–923. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2005.00163.x>
- Höhmman, D. (2020). When Do Men Represent Women’s Interests in Parliament? How the Presence of Women in Parliament Affects the Legislative Behavior of Male Politicians. *Swiss Political Science Review*, 26(1), 31–50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12392>
- Holian, D. B., & Prysby, C. L. (2014). *Candidate Character Traits in Presidential Elections* (1st edition). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315769080>
- Horiuchi, Y., Smith, D. M., & Yamamoto, T. (2020). Identifying voter preferences for politicians’ personal attributes: A conjoint experiment in Japan. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 8(1), 75–91. <https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2018.26>
- Huddy, L. (2013). From Group Identity to Political Cohesion and Commitment. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, & J. S. Levy (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (p. 0). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199760107.013.0023>

- Huddy, L., & Capelos, T. (2002). Gender Stereotyping and Candidate Evaluation. In V. C. Ottati, R. S. Tindale, J. Edwards, F. B. Bryant, L. Health, D. C. O'Connell, Y. Suarez-Balzacar, & E. J. Posavac (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Politics* (pp. 29–53). Springer US. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4615-0569-3_2
- Huddy, L., Mason, L., & Aarøe, L. (2015). Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity. *American Political Science Review*, 109(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055414000604>
- Huddy, L., & Terkildsen, N. (1993). Gender Stereotypes and the Perception of Male and Female Candidates. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(1), 119–147. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111526>
- Hughes, R., & Huby, M. (2004). The construction and interpretation of vignettes in social research. *Social Work and Social Sciences Review*, 11(1), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.1921/17466105.11.1.36>
- Ilonszki, G. (1998). Representation Deficit in a New Democracy: Theoretical Considerations and the Hungarian Case. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 31(2), 157–170.
- Ilonszki, G. (2011). Képviselési szerepek, politikai intézmények, képviselési deficit. Két évtized változásai. In R. Tardos, Z. Enyedi, & A. Szabó (Eds.), *Résztétel, képviselés, politikai változás* (pp. 267–290). Demokrácia Kutatások Magyarországi Központja Közhasznú Alapítvány. <https://m2.mtmt.hu/api/publication/1771313>
- Ilonszki, G. (2012). Role Stability in the Context of Institutional and Positional Change. In M. Blomgren & O. Rozenberg (Eds.), *Routledge & CRC Press* (pp. 162–183). Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/Parliamentary-Roles-in-Modern-Legislatures/Blomgren-Rozenberg/p/book/9781138110861>
- Ilonszki, G., & Edinger, M. (2007). MPs in Post-Communist and Post-Soviet Nations: A Parliamentary Elite in the Making. *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 13(1), 142–163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13572330601165436>
- Ilonszki, G., & Schwarcz, A. (2013). Hungarian MPs in the context of political transformation (1990–2010). In E. Semenova, M. Edinger, & B. Heinrich (Eds.), *Parliamentary Elites in Central and Eastern Europe* (pp. 54–73). Routledge.
- Ilonszki, G., & Vajda, A. (2019). Women's Substantive Representation in Decline: The Case of Democratic Failure in Hungary. *Politics & Gender*, 15(2), 240–261. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X19000072>
- Ilonszki, G., & Ványi É. (2011). Miniszteri fluktuáció és intézményi változások Magyarországon, 1990-2010. *Politikatudományi Szemle*, 20(3), Article 3.
- Jankowski, M. (2016). Voting for locals: Voters' information processing strategies in open-list PR systems. *Electoral Studies*, 43, 72–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2016.06.005>
- Johns, R., & Davies, G. A. (2014). Coalitions of the willing? International backing and British public support for military action. *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(6), 767–781. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343314544779>

- Johnson, T. S., & Thomson, S. B. (2023). Times of Crisis: Women and Leadership. In A. Singh (Ed.), *International Handbook of Disaster Research* (pp. 2461–2469). Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-8388-7_183
- Johnston, R., & Pattie, C. (2006). *Putting Voters in Their Place: Geography and Elections in Great Britain*. Oxford University Press, U.S.A.
- Joly, J., Soroka, S., & Loewen, P. (2019). Nice guys finish last: Personality and political success. *Acta Politica*, 54(4), 667–683. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-018-0095-z>
- Judge, D. (1999). *Representation: Theory and Practice in Britain*. Routledge.
- Kaarbo, J. (2017). Personality and International Politics: Insights from Existing Research and Directions for the Future. *European Review of International Studies*, 4(2+3), 20–38.
- Kage, R., Rosenbluth, F. M., & Tanaka, S. (2019). What Explains Low Female Political Representation? Evidence from Survey Experiments in Japan. *Politics & Gender*, 15(2), 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X18000223>
- Kahneman, D. (2003). Maps of Bounded Rationality: Psychology for Behavioral Economics. *American Economic Review*, 93(5), 1449–1475.
- Kal Munis, B. (2021). Place, candidate roots, and voter preferences in an age of partisan polarization: Observational and experimental evidence. *Political Geography*, 85, 102345. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102345>
- Kantorowicz-Reznichenko, E., Dabrowska, J., & Kantorowicz, J. (2023). *Ann or Peter? Gender Stereotypes and Leadership during a Pandemic Crisis*. OSF. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/3xp9z>
- Key, V. O. (1949). *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Vintage Books.
- Kirkland, P. A., & Coppock, A. (2018). Candidate Choice Without Party Labels: New Insights from Conjoint Survey Experiments. *Political Behavior*, 40(3), 571–591. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-017-9414-8>
- Kjaer, U. (2015). Urban Political Leadership and Political Representation: The Multifaceted Representational Role of Danish Mayors. *Urban Affairs Review*, 51(4), 563–577. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1078087414537610>
- Kovarek, D. (2022). Distributive politics as behavioral localism: Evidence from a vignette experiment in Hungary. *Research & Politics*, 9(3), 20531680221122280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20531680221122279>
- Krimmel, K., Lax, J. R., & Phillips, J. H. (2016). Gay Rights in Congress: Public Opinion and (Mis)representation. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(4), 888–913. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfw026>
- Krosnick, J. A. (1999). Survey research. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 50, 537–567. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.50.1.537>
- Krueger, R. A. (1988). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (p. 197). Sage Publications, Inc.

- Kurebwa, J. (2015). *A Review of Hanna Pitkin's (1967) Conception of Women's Political Representation*. 5(11), 11.
- Lavezzolo, S., Ramiro, L., & Fernández-Vázquez, P. (2022). Technocratic attitudes in COVID-19 times: Change and preference over types of experts. *European Journal of Political Research*, 61(4), 1123–1142. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12491>
- Lavine, H. G., Johnston, C. D., & Steenbergen, M. R. (2012). *The Ambivalent Partisan: How Critical Loyalty Promotes Democracy*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199772759.001.0001>
- Lawless, J. L. (2004). Politics of Presence? Congresswomen and Symbolic Representation. *Political Research Quarterly*, 57(1), 81–99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3219836>
- Loorbach, D., Avelino, F., Haxeltine, A., Wittmayer, J. M., O’Riordan, T., Weaver, P., & Kemp, R. (2016). The economic crisis as a game changer? Exploring the role of social construction in sustainability transitions. *Ecology and Society*, 21(4).
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26270000>
- Lopes da Fonseca, M. (2017). Identifying the Source of Incumbency Advantage through a Constitutional Reform. *American Journal of Political Science*, 61(3), 657–670.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12287>
- Lord, C. G., Ross, L., & Lepper, M. R. (1979). Biased assimilation and attitude polarization: The effects of prior theories on subsequently considered evidence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37(11), 2098–2109. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.37.11.2098>
- Louwerse, T. (2011). The Spatial Approach to the Party Mandate¹. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 64(3), 425–447. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gsr012>
- Madrid, R., Merolla, J. L., Yanez Ruiz, A., & Schroedel, J. R. (2022). The Relevance of Religion for Political Office: Voter Bias Toward Candidates from Different Religious Backgrounds. *Political Behavior*, 44(2), 981–1001. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-022-09782-6>
- Mansbridge, J. (1999). Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent “Yes.” *The Journal of Politics*, 61(3), 628–657. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2647821>
- Mansbridge, J. (2003). Rethinking Representation. *The American Political Science Review*, 97(4), 515–528.
- Matson, M., & Fine, T. S. (2006). Gender, Ethnicity, and Ballot Information: Ballot Cues in Low-Information Elections. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly*, 6(1), 49–72.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/153244000600600103>
- Mayhew, D. R. (2004). *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (Second edition). Yale University Press.
- McClean, C. T., & Ono, Y. (2024). Too Young to Run? Voter Evaluations of the Age of Candidates. *Political Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-024-09920-2>

- McConnaughey, C. M., White, I. K., Leal, D. L., & Casellas, J. P. (2010). A Latino on the Ballot: Explaining Coethnic Voting Among Latinos and the Response of White Americans. *The Journal of Politics*, 72(4), 1199–1211. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381610000629>
- McGregor, R. M., Moore, Aaron, Jackson, Samantha, Bird, Karen, & Stephenson, L. B. (2017). Why So Few Women and Minorities in Local Politics?: Incumbency and Affinity Voting in Low Information Elections. *Representation*, 53(2), 135–152. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344893.2017.1354909>
- Meredith, M. (2013). *Heterogeneous Friends-and-Neighbors Voting* [Working paper].
- Metz, R. (2021). The missing link: Studying political leadership from the followers' perspective. *Politics*, 44(3), 437–452. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02633957211056227>
- Metz, R., & Plesz, B. (2023). An insatiable hunger for charisma? A follower-centric analysis of populism and charismatic leadership. *Leadership*, 17427150231167524. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17427150231167524>
- Meyer-Sahling, J.-H., & Jager, K. (2012). Party Patronage in Hungary: Capturing the State. In P. Kopecký, P. Mair, & M. Spirova (Eds.), *Party Patronage and Party Government in European Democracies* (pp. 163–185). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199599370.003.0009>
- Miller, W. E., & Stokes, D. E. (1963). Constituency Influence in Congress. *The American Political Science Review*, 57(1), 45–56. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1952717>
- Mondak, J. J. (1995). Competence, Integrity, and the Electoral Success of Congressional Incumbents. *The Journal of Politics*, 57(4), 1043–1069. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2960401>
- Morris, D. (1999). *Behind the Oval Office: Getting Reelected Against All Odds* (First Edition). Renaissance Books.
- Mügge, L. M., van der Pas, D. J., & van de Wardt, M. (2019). Representing their own? Ethnic minority women in the Dutch Parliament. *West European Politics*, 42(4), 705–727. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2019.1573036>
- Nai, A., Maier, J., & Vranić, J. (2021). Personality Goes a Long Way (for Some). An Experimental Investigation Into Candidate Personality Traits, Voters' Profile, and Perceived Likeability. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 3. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpos.2021.636745>
- Newman, B. I. (1999). Introduction. In B. I. Newman (Ed.), *Handbook of Political Marketing* (1st edition, pp. 1–20). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Norris, P. (2001). The Twilight of Westminster? Electoral Reform and its Consequences. *Political Studies*, 49(5), 877–900. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00345>
- Novák A. (2024). Választói elképzelések az ideális képviselőről. *Századvég folyóirat*, 181–200.
- Nyholt, N. (2024). Why Do Voters Prefer Local Candidates? Evidence from a Danish Conjoint Survey Experiment. *Political Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-024-09919-9>

- Ono, Y., & Burden, B. C. (2019). The Contingent Effects of Candidate Sex on Voter Choice. *Political Behavior*, 41(3), 583–607.
- Ortega, C., Recuero, F., & Oñate, P. (2025). Gender affinity effects between female voters and women leaders in parliamentary elections: Cross-national evidence (1996-2016). *Party Politics*, 31(2), 335–350. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688231221124>
- Paolino, P. (1995). Group-Salient Issues and Group Representation: Support for Women Candidates in the 1992 Senate Elections. *American Journal of Political Science*, 39(2), 294–313. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111614>
- Papp, Z. (2017). Candidate Features and Candidate Selection Patterns in Hungary, 1994–2010. *International Journal of Sociology*, 48(1), 76–93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207659.2018.1414507>
- Papp, Z. (2018). Challenging the Odds: Incumbency Disadvantage, Local Ties, and Electoral Performance in Hungary, 1994–2010. *East European Politics and Societies*, 32(3), 518–543. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325417725785>
- Papp, Z. (2021). The Mandate Divide in Policy Representation: The Substantive Representation of Agricultural Interests in the Hungarian Parliament. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 74(2), 276–295. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gsaa002>
- Papp, Z. (2024). *Emergency politics and citizens' evaluation of democracy. Results from a conjoint experiment in Hungary.*
- Papp, Z., & Nkansah, G. B. (2023). The political component of COVID-19 vaccine choice: Results from a conjoint experiment. *Public Health*, 217, 33–40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2023.01.014>
- Papp, Z., & Zorigt, B. (2018). Political Constraints and the Limited Effect of Electoral System Change on Personal Vote-Seeking in Hungary. *East European Politics and Societies*, 32(1), 119–141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325417736809>
- Pedersen, H. H., & Rahat, G. (2021). Political personalization and personalized politics within and beyond the behavioural arena. *Party Politics*, 27(2), 211–219. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068819855712>
- Penney, J., Tolley, E., & Goodyear-Grant, E. (2016). *Race and gender affinities in voting: Experimental evidence.* Queen's University, Department of Economics, Kingston (Ontario).
- Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 19, pp. 123–205). Academic Press. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60214-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60214-2)
- Petty, R. E., & Wegener, D. T. (1999). The elaboration likelihood model: Current status and controversies. In S. Chaiken & Y. Trope (Eds.), *Dual-Process Theories in Social Psychology* (pp. 37–72). The Guilford Press.
- Phillips, A. (1994). Dealing With Difference: A Politics of Ideas Or A Politics of Presence? *Constellations*, 1(1), 88–91. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8675.1994.tb00005.x>
- Phillips, A. (1995). *The Politics of Presence.* Oxford University Press, USA.

Phillips, A. (2000). Democracy and the Representation of Difference and The Politics of Presence: Problems and Developments. *Democracy and the Representation of Difference and The Politics of Presence*.

Philpot, T. S., & Walton, H. (2010). One of Our Own: Black Female Candidates and The Voters Who Support Them. In T. S. Philpot & I. K. White (Eds.), *African-American Political Psychology: Identity, Opinion, and Action in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (pp. 101–122). Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230114340_7

Pitkin, H. F. (1967). The Concept of Representation. In *The Concept of Representation*. University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520340503>

Platow, M. J., van Knippenberg, D., Haslam, S. A., van Knippenberg, B., & Spears, R. (2006). A special gift we bestow on you for being representative of us: Considering leader charisma from a self-categorization perspective. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 45(2), 303–320. <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466605X41986>

Put, G.-J., Smulders, J., & Maddens, B. (2019). How local personal vote-earning attributes affect the aggregate party vote share: Evidence from the Belgian flexible-list PR system (2003–2014). *Politics*, 39(4), 464–479. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395718811969>

Rahn, W. M. (1993). The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing about Political Candidates. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37(2), 472–496. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2111381>

Redlawsk, D. P., & Lau, R. R. (2013). Behavioral Decision-Making. In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (2nd edition, pp. 130–164). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199760107.013.0005>

Reeve, A., & Ware, A. (1992). *Electoral Systems: A Comparative and Theoretical Introduction*. Routledge.

Reingold, B., & Swers, M. (2011). An Endogenous Approach to Women's Interests: When Interests Are Interesting in and of Themselves. *Politics & Gender*, 7(3), 429–435. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X11000201>

Republikon Intézet. (2022). *Az országgyűlés összetétele 7 megállapítás az új magyar parlamentről* (p. 4). Republikon Intézet. <https://republiikon.hu/media/109520/republikon-22-05-17-az-uj-parlament.pdf>

Ribbagen, C. (2013). *Technocracy within representative democracy: Technocratic reasoning and justification among bureaucrats and politicians*. 83.

Roberts, D. C., & Wolak, J. (2023). Do Voters Care about the Age of their Elected Representatives? *Political Behavior*, 45(4), 1959–1978. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-022-09802-5>

Robinson, E., & Fisher, J. (2005). *General Election 2005: What the Voters Saw*. New Politics Network.

Roets, A., & Van Hiel, A. (2009). The ideal politician: Impact of voters' ideology. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 46(1), 60–65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2008.09.006>

- Rosar, U., Klein, M., & Beckers, T. (2008). The frog pond beauty contest: Physical attractiveness and electoral success of the constituency candidates at the North Rhine-Westphalia state election of 2005. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(1), 64–79. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2007.00720.x>
- Rosenthal, C. S. (1995). The Role of Gender in Descriptive Representation. *Political Research Quarterly*, 48(3), 599–611. <https://doi.org/10.2307/449004>
- Saalfeld, T., & Bischof, D. (2013). Minority-Ethnic MPs and the Substantive Representation of Minority Interests in the House of Commons, 2005–2011. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66(2), 305–328. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gss084>
- Sanbonmatsu, K. (2002). Gender Stereotypes and Vote Choice. *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(1), 20–34. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3088412>
- Sanbonmatsu, K. (2003). Political Knowledge and Gender Stereotypes. *American Politics Research*, 31(6), 575–594. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X03255167>
- Sanbonmatsu, K., & Dolan, K. (2009). Do Gender Stereotypes Transcend Party? *Political Research Quarterly*, 62(3), 485–494. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912908322416>
- Sapiro, V. (1981). Research Frontier Essay: When Are Interests Interesting? The Problem of Political Representation of Women. *The American Political Science Review*, 75(3), 701–716. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1960962>
- Sartori, G. (1970). Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics. *American Political Science Review*, 64(4), 1033–1053. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1958356>
- Savigny, H. (2007). Focus Groups and Political Marketing: Science and Democracy as Axiomatic? *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9(1), 122–137. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2007.00253.x>
- Saward, M. (2006a). Representation. In A. Dobson & R. Eckersley (Eds.), *Political Theory and the Ecological Challenge* (pp. 183–199). Cambridge University Press. <http://www.cambridge.org/catalogue/catalogue.asp?isbn=9780521838108>
- Saward, M. (2006b). The Representative Claim. *Contemporary Political Theory*, 5(3), 297–318. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300234>
- Saward, M. (2008). Representation and democracy: Revisions and possibilities. *Sociology Compass*, 2(3), Article 3.
- Saward, M. (2017). Performative Representation. In M. Brito Vieira (Ed.), *Reclaiming Representation: Contemporary Advances in the Theory of Political Representation* (pp. 75–94). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315681696-4>
- Schneider, M. C., & Bos, A. L. (2019). The Application of Social Role Theory to the Study of Gender in Politics. *Political Psychology*, 40, 173–213.
- Schulte-Cloos, J., & Bauer, P. C. (2023). Local Candidates, Place-Based Identities, and Electoral Success. *Political Behavior*, 45(2), 679–698. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-021-09712-y>

- Schwarz, N. (1999). Self-reports: How the questions shape the answers. *American Psychologist*, 54(2), 93–105. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.2.93>
- Scott, C., & Medeiros, M. (2020). Personality and political careers: What personality types are likely to run for office and get elected? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 152, 109600. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.109600>
- Sebők M. (2014). *Hatalom szabályok nélkül. Kormány és törvényhozás viszonya pénzügyi válság idején*. MTA TK PTI : Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó. <http://real.mtak.hu/21813/>
- Semenova, E. (2024). The Determinants of Parliamentary Turnover in Central and Eastern European Countries, 1990–2022. In *Elites of Post-Transformation* (pp. 35–62). Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/chapter-detail?id=1227644>
- Sevi, S. (2021). Do young voters vote for young leaders? *Electoral Studies*, 69, 102200. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102200>
- Shamir, B. (1994). Ideological Position, Leaders' Charisma, and Voting Preferences: Personal vs. Partisan Elections. *Political Behavior*, 16(2), 265–287.
- Sher, S., & McKenzie, C. R. M. (2006). Information leakage from logically equivalent frames. *Cognition*, 101(3), 467–494. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2005.11.001>
- Shugart, M. S., Valdini, M. E., & Suominen, K. (2005). Looking for Locals: Voter Information Demands and Personal Vote-Earning Attributes of Legislators under Proportional Representation. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(2), 437–449.
- Sidanius, J., & Kurzban, R. (2013). Toward an Evolutionarily Informed Political Psychology. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, & J. S. Levy (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (Second edition, pp. 205–236). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199760107.013.0007>
- Simien, E. M. (2009). Clinton and Obama: The Impact of Race and Sex on the 2008 Democratic Presidential Primaries. In W. J. Crotty (Ed.), *Winning the Presidency 2008* (pp. 123–134). Paradigm Publishers.
- Simien, E. M., & Hampson, S. C. (2017). HILLARY CLINTON AND THE WOMEN WHO SUPPORTED HER: Emotional Attachments and the 2008 Democratic Presidential Primary. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 14(1), 93–116. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1742058X16000382>
- Simon, H. A. (1947). *Administrative behavior* (pp. xvi, 259). Macmillan.
- Simon, H. A. (1957). *Models of man: Social and rational* (First Edition). Wiley.
- Smith, D. M. (2018). *Dynasties and Democracy: The Inherited Incumbency Advantage in Japan* (1st edition). Stanford University Press.
- Soroka, S. N., & Wlezien, C. (2004). Opinion Representation and Policy Feedback: Canada in Comparative Perspective. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne de Science Politique*, 37(3), 531–559. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423904030860>

- Squires, J. (2008). The Constitutive Representation of Gender: Extra-Parliamentary Re-Presentations of Gender Relations¹. *Representation*, 44(2), 187–204.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00344890802080464>
- Stimson, J. A., Mackuen, M. B., & Erikson, R. S. (1995). Dynamic Representation. *American Political Science Review*, 89(3), 543–565. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2082973>
- Stockemer, D., Thompson, H., & Sundström, A. (2023). Young adults' under-representation in elections to the U.S. House of Representatives. *Electoral Studies*, 81.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2022.102554>
- Stokes, D. E., & Miller, W. E. (1962). Party Government and the Saliency of Congress. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 26(4), 531–546.
- Sullivan, J. L., Aldrich, J. H., Borgida, E., & Rahn, W. (1990). Candidate appraisal and human nature: Man and superman in the 1984 election. *Political Psychology*, 11(3), 459–484.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/3791660>
- Sy, T., Horton, C., & Riggio, R. (2018). Charismatic leadership: Eliciting and channeling follower emotions. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(1), 58–69.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.12.008>
- Szente, Z. (2018). Az országgyűlési képviselők jogállása, frakciók vs. Szabad mandátum. In *A házszabályon túl* (pp. 29–49). Országgyűlés Hivatala.
- Tajfel, H. (Ed.). (1978). *Differentiation Between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Academic Press.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Talani, L. S. (2020). The 2014/2015 Refugee Crisis in the EU and the Mediterranean Route. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 22(3), 448–464.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.2020.1752561>
- Tausanovitch, C., & Warshaw, C. (2018). Does the Ideological Proximity Between Candidates and Voters Affect Voting in U.S. House Elections? *Political Behavior*, 40(1), 223–245. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-017-9437-1>
- Tavits, M. (2010). Effect of Local Ties On Electoral Success and Parliamentary Behaviour: The Case of Estonia. *Party Politics*, 16(2), 215–235.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068809341053>
- Teele, D. L., Kalla, J., & Rosenbluth, F. (2018). The Ties That Double Bind: Social Roles and Women's Underrepresentation in Politics. *American Political Science Review*, 112(3), 525–541. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055418000217>
- Teles, F. (2015). The Distinctiveness of Democratic Political Leadership. *Political Studies Review*, 13(1), 22–36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1478-9302.12029>
- Thompson, D. (1988). *Democracy and the Welfare State* (pp. 131–155). Princeton University Press.

- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory* (pp. x, 239). Basil Blackwell.
- van der Zwan, R., Tolsma, J., & Lubbers, M. (2020). Under what conditions do ethnic minority candidates attract the ethnic minority vote? How neighbourhood and candidate characteristics affected ethnic affinity voting in the Dutch 2017 parliamentary elections. *Political Geography*, 77, 102098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2019.102098>
- Van Dijk, R. E., & Van Holsteyn, J. (2022). Fit for Office? The Perception of Female and Male Politicians by Dutch Voters. *Politics of the Low Countries*, 4(1), 75–99. <https://doi.org/10.5553/PLC/000028>
- van Noord, J., Kuppens, T., Spruyt, B., & Spears, R. (2023). When and Why People Prefer Higher Educated Politicians: Ingroup Bias, Deference, and Resistance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 49(4), 585–599. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672221077794>
- Várnagy, R. (2023). Hungary: Political Developments and Data in 2022. The Tumultuous Year of the Status Quo. *European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook*, 62(1), 213–229. <https://doi.org/10.1111/2047-8852.12426>
- Várnagy, R., Novák, A., & Badics, J. (2025). Decision-Making Preferences in Times of Crisis. *Politics and Governance*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.9178>
- Vicsek L. (2006). *Fókuszcsoport*. Osiris Kiadó. https://www.libri.hu/konyv/vicsek_lilla.fokuszcsoport.html
- Vittori, D., Pilet, J.-B., Rojon, S., & Paulis, E. (2023). Technocratic Ministers in Office in European Countries (2000–2020): What’s New? *Political Studies Review*, 21(4), 867–886. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14789299221140036>
- Vittori, D., Rojon, S., & Pilet, J.-B. (2024). Beyond parliamentarism: How do citizens want to decide on divisive policies? *Comparative European Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41295-024-00379-3>
- Waylen, G. (2010). A Comparative Politics of Gender: Limits and Possibilities. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(1), 223–231. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592709992805>
- Webster, S. W., & Pierce, A. W. (2019). Older, Younger, or More Similar? The Use of Age as a Voting Heuristic*. *Social Science Quarterly*, 100(3), 635–652. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12604>
- Weßels, B. (2007). Political Representation and Democracy. In R. J. Dalton & H.-D. Klingemann (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (pp. 833–849). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199270125.003.0045>
- Williams, M. S. (1998). *Voice, Trust, and Memory: Marginalized Groups and the Failings of Liberal Representation*. Princeton University Press.
- Wlezien, C., & Soroka, S. N. (2007). The Relationship between Public Opinion and Policy. In R. J. Dalton & H. Klingemann (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (pp. 799–817). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199270125.003.0043>

Wojcieszak, M. (2014). Preferences for Political Decision-Making Processes and Issue Publics. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 78(4), 917–939.

Wrátil, C., & Pastorella, G. (2018). Dodging the bullet: How crises trigger technocrat-led governments. *European Journal of Political Research*, 57(2), 450–472.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12234>

Wüest, R., & Pontusson, J. (2022). Voter preferences as a source of descriptive (mis)representation by social class. *European Journal of Political Research*, 61(2), 398–419.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12511>

Appendix 1: The survey experiment

D1. Please state your gender!

Required

- ☐ 1. Male
- ☐ 2. Female

D2. Please state your current age!

Required

1.

D3. What is your highest level of education?

Required

- ☐ 1. Max. 8 classes primary school
- ☐ 2. Technical school, vocational school
- ☐ 3. Secondary school
- ☐ 4. College, university

D4. Your place of residence by type of settlement:

Required

- ☐ 1. Budapest
- ☐ 2. County seat
- ☐ 3. City
- ☐ 4. Village

D5. Your place of residence by county:

Required

- ◉ 1. Bács-Kiskun county
- ◉ 2. Baranya county
- ◉ 3. Békés county
- ◉ 4. Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county
- ◉ 5. Budapest
- ◉ 6. Csongrád-Csanád county
- ◉ 7. Fejér county
- ◉ 8. Győr-Moson-Sopron county
- ◉ 9. Hajdú-Bihar county
- ◉ 10. Heves county
- ◉ 11. Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county
- ◉ 12. Komárom-Esztergom county
- ◉ 13. Nógrád county
- ◉ 14. Pest county
- ◉ 15. Somogy county
- ◉ 16. Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg county
- ◉ 17. Tolna county
- ◉ 18. Vas county
- ◉ 19. Veszprém county
- ◉ 20. Zala county

K1. Based on the brief description below, which MEP do you think would be best suited to represent you?

Required

- ◉ 1. Tamás is a 32-years-old young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 2. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 3. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 4. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. He was active in local politics before his election and has also held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 5. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 6. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 7. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 8. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 9. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 10. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. He was active in local politics before his election and has also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 11. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 12. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 13. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.

- ◉ 14. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 15. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 16. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 17. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 18. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 19. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 20. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. He is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 21. is a 32-years-old young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 22. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 23. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 24. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician living in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 25. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 26. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 27 Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.

- ◉ 28. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 29. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. He was active in local politics before his election and has also held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 30. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 31. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 32. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 33. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 34. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 35. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 36. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 37. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 38. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 39. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 40. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 41. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.

- ◉ 42. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 43. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. He is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 44. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 45. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 46. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 47. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 48. Tamás is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 49. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 50. Tamás is a 52-years-old middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 51. Tamás is a 52-years-old middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 52. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 53. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 54. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 55. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.

- ◉ 56. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 57. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 58. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is married with no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 59. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 60. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 61. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 62. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 63. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician, who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 64. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 65. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 66. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 67. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 68. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 69. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. He was active in national politics before his election, although he did not hold an elected position.

- ◉ 70. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 71. Tamás is 52 years old, middle-aged politician and lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 72. Tamás is 52 years old, middle-aged politician, who lives in his constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 73. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Prior to his election, he was active in national politics and also held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 74. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 75. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 76. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 77. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 78. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 79. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 80. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 81. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 82. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 83. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.

- ◉ 84. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is a family man with no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 85. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 86. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 87. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 88. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Prior to his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 89. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 90. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has two children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 91. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 92. Tamás is 52 years old, a middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 93. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in national politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 94. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election, he was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 95. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 96. Tamás is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in his own constituency. Tamás is single and has no children. Before his election he was active in local politics, although he did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 97. Eszter, 32, young politician, living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.

- ◉ 98. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 99. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 100. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. She was active in local politics before her election and has also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 101. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 102. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 103. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 104. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 105. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 106. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 107. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 108. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 109. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 110. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 111. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.

- ◉ 112. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in local politics before her election and has also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 113. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 114. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 115. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 116. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 117. Eszter is 32 years old, a young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 118. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 119. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 120. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election she was active in local politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 121. Eszter is a 32-years-old young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 122. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 123. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 124. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 125. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.

- ◉ 126. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election she was active in local politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 127. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 128. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman, no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 129. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman, no children. Before her election she was active in national politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 130. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman, no children. Before being elected, she was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 131. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 132. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 133. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 134. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 135. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 136. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 137. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 138. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 139. Eszter is a 32-years-old young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held the position of mayor.

- ◉ 140. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 141. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 142. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 143. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 144. Eszter is a 32-years-old, young politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 145. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 146. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 147. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 148. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 149. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 150. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election she was active in local politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 151. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is married with no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 152. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is married with no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 153. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is married with no children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.

- ◉ 154. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is married with no children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 155. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is married with no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 156. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is married with no children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 157. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 158. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 159. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 160. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 161. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 162. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 163. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 164. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who lives in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 165. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 166. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held the position of mayor.
- ◉ 167. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.

- ◉ 168. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician living in her constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 169. Eszter is 52, a middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 170. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 171. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 172. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 173. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 174. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with two children. Before her election she was active in local politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 175. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 176. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 177. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. She was active in national politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 178. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman, no children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 179. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 180. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is a family woman with no children. Before her election she was active in local politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 181. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and also held a mayoral position.

- ◉ 182. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 183. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in national politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 184. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and also held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 185. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 186. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has two children. Before her election she was active in local politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 187. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Prior to her election, she was active in national politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 188. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 189. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in national politics, although she did not hold an elected position.
- ◉ 190. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Prior to her election, she was active in local politics and held a mayoral position.
- ◉ 191. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. Before her election, she was active in local politics and held a parliamentary position.
- ◉ 192. Eszter is a 52-years-old, middle-aged politician who does not live in her own constituency. Eszter is single and has no children. She was active in local politics before her election, although she did not hold an elected position.

K3b. In a crisis situation, it may be necessary to reassess decision-making criteria.

In your opinion, what is the best representative approach in the case of <CRISIS 1>?

Required

- ⊙ 1. Katalin says that in an economic crisis, the interests of the electorate are particularly important. In a crisis, the interests of the people come first.
- ⊙ 2. Katalin believes that in an economic crisis, the expert perspective is particularly important. In a crisis situation, professionalism is paramount.
- ⊙ 3. Katalin believes that in an economic crisis, the people's perspective is particularly important. In a crisis situation, the public interest is paramount.
- ⊙ 4. Katalin believes that in an economic crisis, a united party platform is particularly important. In a crisis situation, party discipline takes precedence.
- ⊙ 5. Katalin believes that in a social crisis, the interests of the electorate are particularly important. In a crisis, the interests of the people are paramount.
- ⊙ 6. Katalin believes that in a social crisis, the expert perspective is particularly important. In a crisis situation, professionalism is paramount.
- ⊙ 7. Katalin believes that in a social crisis situation, the people as a whole are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the public interest is paramount.
- ⊙ 8. Katalin believes that in a social crisis, a united party platform is particularly important. In a crisis situation, party discipline takes precedence.
- ⊙ 9. Katalin believes that in an environmental crisis, the interests of the electorate are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the interests of the people are paramount.
- ⊙ 10. Katalin believes that in an environmental crisis, expert considerations are particularly important. In a crisis situation, professionalism is paramount.
- ⊙ 11. Katalin believes that in an environmental crisis, the people as a whole are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the public interest is paramount.
- ⊙ 12. Katalin believes that in an environmental crisis, a united party platform is particularly important. In a crisis situation, party discipline takes precedence.
- ⊙ 13. In an economic crisis, the interests of the electorate are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the interests of the people are paramount.
- ⊙ 14. In an economic crisis, Kálmán believes that the expert perspective is particularly important. In a crisis situation, professionalism is paramount.
- ⊙ 15. In an economic crisis, Kálmán believes that the people's perspective is particularly important. In a crisis situation, the public interest is paramount.
- ⊙ 16. In an economic crisis, Kálmán believes that a united party platform is particularly important. In a crisis situation, party discipline takes precedence.
- ⊙ 17. In a social crisis, Kálmán believes that the interests of the electorate are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the interests of the people are paramount.
- ⊙ 18. According to Kálmán, in a social crisis situation, expert considerations are particularly important. In a crisis situation, professionalism is paramount.
- ⊙ 19. According to Kálmán, in a social crisis situation, the people as a whole are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the public interest is paramount.

- ⦿ 20. In a social crisis, Kálmán believes that a united party platform is particularly important. In a crisis situation, party discipline is paramount.
- ⦿ 21. In an environmental crisis, Kálmán believes that the interests of the electorate are particularly important. In a crisis situation, the interests of the people are paramount.
- ⦿ 22. According to Kálmán, in an environmental crisis situation, expert considerations are particularly important. In a crisis situation, professionalism is paramount.
- ⦿ 23. In an environmental crisis, Kálmán believes that the people as a whole are of particular importance. In a crisis situation, the public interest is paramount.
- ⦿ 24. In an environmental crisis, Kálmán believes that a united party platform is particularly important. In a crisis situation, party discipline takes precedence.

D6. Who is your representative in Parliament?
--

Required

1.

Appendix 2: Focus group discussion guide

1. Introduction

- Presentation of my research project
- Explanation of the purpose and goals of the focus group

2. Warm-up activity – drawing task

- Instruction: “Please draw your ideal representative.”
- Prompt for discussion: What should we know about this person?

3. Main activity – post-its

- Task: Each participant writes down the five most important characteristics they believe a good representative should possess.
- The characteristics are grouped under five columns corresponding to the Big Five personality traits:
 - Extraversion
 - Agreeableness
 - Conscientiousness
 - Emotional stability
 - Openness

4. Presentation of the Big Five model

- Brief explanation of each personality dimension

5. Group discussion of the five dimensions and the “outlier” values

- Where are the overlaps? Which traits are closely related?
- Which characteristics appeared most frequently? These received special attention.
 - Why are they considered important?
 - To which aspect(s) of the representative's job are they relevant?
- Which of the five trait dimensions received the least attention?
 - Why? Why are these considered less important?
- Examination of the “outlier” traits (i.e., those that did not clearly fit into any category)
 - Can we group them into subcategories?
 - If yes, what label would best describe each group?
 - Why are these traits considered important?

6. Closing activity – personality barometers

Participants individually placed the *ideal representative* on the five dimensions:

Extraverted		Introverted
Agreeable		Hostile
Conscientious		Spontaneous
Emotionally stable		Neurotic
Open		Closed

7. Closing the session

- Final reflections and wrap-up