

items	government	parliament
orders	4.29	3.82
plans through	3.84	4.45
force points	4.96	5.46
avoid delays	6.23	6.21
short processes	5.40	5.43
fast	5.99	5.93
compromises	6.13	5.80
div interests	6.12	5.71
concede	6.07	5.73

Note. Entires are the means for preferences regarding political processes within the parliament and preferences regarding political processes within the government. “1” indicates aspect is not important at all, “7” indicates aspect is very important. Item wordings are presented in footnote 56.

*Table 5.7. Comparison between Preferences Regarding Parliament and Government*

#### 5.3.6. Construct Validity of the Scales

Further analyses were conducted in order to test the construct validity of the scales. The analyses are based on the final survey and include participants from group 1 and group 2 (n = 523). The relationship between both process preferences and process perceptions and a set of variables can be analyzed in order to investigate the construct validity of the scales. Before the results will be presented, the reader will be provided with some descriptive information. Respondents’ process preferences are listed in Table 5.8 along with the mean values and standard deviations. As regards process preferences, a higher mean score in Table 5.8 indicates greater importance attached to that attribute. As regards process perception questions, the higher the mean scores in the Table 5.8, the more the particular attribute applies to decision-making processes in Switzerland. The mean differentials indicate the mean distance between preferences and perceptions. Positive values indicate that preferences exceed perceptions and an attribute is considered to be important but not perceived to be accurate. Negative values indicate that perceptions exceed preferences and an attribute is considered less important but perceived to be accurate.

The most important attributes of political decision-making processes are the respectfulness and the fairness of political behavior. Other typical aspects of consensus democracy such as the consideration of diverging interests, the evading of power struggles and the conceding of points to the other side, are also important to the participants. Attributes of efficiency are also considered to be very important, namely the avoidance of delays and the efficiency of political processes. Factors

considered to be less important by the respondents are that there are no losers to a political process and that political actors are decisive and force their points. As for the process perceptions, the most accurate attribute of decision-making processes in Switzerland is that political decisions are based on compromises. The consideration of diverging interests, another characteristic element of decision-making processes in consensus democracies, is also perceived to be rather accurate. Moreover, politicians are perceived to put plans through and to be decisive and force their points. The subjects consider it least accurate to say that political processes are simple and fast and that political actors make efforts to avoid political quarrels and power struggles.

The comparison of preferences and perceptions shown in Table 5.8 indicates that there are substantial differences between what citizens expect from political processes and what they perceive is actually the case in reality. In the aggregate, respondents think that political processes are deficient in their avoidance of political power struggles. The mean differential is also large for the discrepancy with respect to the avoidance of quarrels and the discrepancy referring to the efficiency of political processes. There is only one differential with a negative sign, which indicates that, in the aggregate, respondents think that the way that political actors force their points surpasses their preferences. The value for this mean differences is, although significant, relatively small.

Items	Preferences			Perceptions			Mean Differential	
	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	(Pref-Perc)	Rank
respect	6.30	1.04	1	3.64	1.23	8	2.66 *	6
fair	6.19	1.02	2	3.65	1.19	7	2.54 *	7,5
div interests	6.13	1.04	3	4.37	1.32	3	1.76 *	11
clear orders	6.07	1.03	4	3.23	1.21	9	2.84 *	5
no power struggles	6.06	1.29	5	2.33	1.33	14	3.73 *	1
concede	5.90	1.14	6	3.95	1.28	6	1.95 *	10
avoid delays	5.87	1.17	7	2.73	1.33	11	3.14 *	2
efficient processes	5.72	1.24	8	2.82	1.22	10	2.90 *	4
no quarrels	5.35	1.61	9	2.30	1.32	16	3.05 *	3
compromise	5.23	1.39	10	5.13	1.30	1	0.10 *	15
no persistence	5.10	1.48	11	2.56	1.20	12	2.54 *	7,5
put plans through	5.10	1.36	12	4.33	1.37	4	0.77 *	13
fast	4.71	1.44	13	2.32	1.07	15	2.39 *	8
hierarchic orders	4.66	1.79	14	3.96	1.58	5	0.70 *	14
simple process	4.48	1.59	15	2.12	1.28	17	2.36 *	9
force points	3.70	1.54	16	4.46	1.31	2	-0.76 *	16
no losers	3.45	1.60	17	2.51	1.29	13	0.94 *	12

Note. Entries are means and standard deviations. For information on item wordings see Appendix 10.2.

N between 484 (hierarchic orders) and 504 (respect)

\*  $p < .001$  by t-test

*Table 5.8. Mean Process Preferences – Perceptions Differentials*

Table 5.9 shows calculations of the general magnitude of the discrepancies across the 17 items. The table indicates the proportion of respondents whose perception of political processes matches, falls short of, or surpasses their preferences. For instance, a respondent is coded as having congruent preferences and perceptions if the respondent considers it to be extremely important that political decisions are based on compromises and also thinks that political decisions are based on compromises. If an attribute is coded as extremely important, and the respondent perceives that it is does not apply at all, the respondent is coded as having preferences that exceed perceptions. If an attribute is coded rather less important, and the respondent perceives that it does fully apply, the respondent is coded as having perceptions that exceed preferences. It is notable that for just a few aspects perceptions exceed preferences for a considerable proportion of respondents. This is the case for the following aspects: Political actors put heir plans through, political decisions are based on compromises, political actors force their points, and political actors make use of hierarchical orders. In contrast, about nine out of ten respondents perceive that political processes are less efficient, less fair and less shaped by clear orders than they should be. For a large majority of respondents, too, preferences exceed perceptions as regards the avoidance of political delays, the respectfulness of political actors, the political actors' evading of power struggles and political quarrels, and the rapidness of political decision-making. In general, the findings indicate that political processes do not match individual expectations on most of the measured attributes.

<b>Items</b>	<b>Congruent preferences and perceptions</b>	<b>Preferences exceed perceptions</b>	<b>Perceptions exceed preferences</b>
respect	6.9	89.5	3.6
fair	5.8	91.3	3.0
div interests	13.8	79.8	6.4
clear orders	7.0	90.2	2.9
no power struggles	6.3	84.8	8.9
concede	13.3	81.1	5.6
avoid delays	5.5	89.6	4.9
efficient processes	5.3	92.3	2.4
no quarrels	6.5	89.2	4.3
compromise	28.8	39.0	32.3
no persistence	9.4	83.4	7.2
put plans through	25.5	23.6	50.9
fast	10.6	85.0	4.4
hierarchical orders	26.9	51.4	21.7
simple process	9.6	81.0	9.4
force points	20.6	52.9	26.5
no losers	27.3	56.8	15.9

Note. Proportion of respondents whose perception of political processes matches, falls short of, or surpasses their preferences. For information an the items wordings, see Appendix 10.2.

N between 484 (hierarchical orders) and 504 (respect)

*Table 5.9. Relationship between Process Preferences and Perceptions*

The questionnaire contains ten items that measure citizens' political support. The items either refer to the government, the parliament, democracy, or political actors. The items were measured on a 10-point scale, with 1 indicating low support and 10 indicating high support.<sup>57</sup> Table 5.10 shows the aggregate levels of political support for the government, the parliament, political actors, and democracy that the respondents in the sample have. On average, support is lowest with respect to politicians, followed by support for the parliament. Support for the Swiss government is even higher, and the highest levels of political support were indicated with respect to democracy. In general, the political support of the study's participants appears to be stronger than the national average. In a national representative survey conducted in June 2008, only 41 percent of the respondents indicated that they trust the government (gfs.bern, 2009b), for instance.

57 The following items were used to measure political support. **trust government**: Please tell me on a score of 1-10 how much you personally trust each of the following institutions. 1 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust...government. **trust parliament**: Please tell me on a score of 1-10 how much you personally trust each of the following institutions. 1 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust ... parliament (National Council and Council of States). **performance government**: How good or bad do you consider the present general performance of the government? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates very bad, 10 indicates very good. **performance parliament**: How good or bad do you consider the present general performance of the parliament? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates very bad, 10 indicates very good. **performance politicians**: How good or bad do you consider the present general performance of politicians in Switzerland altogether? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates very bad, 10 indicates very good. **satisfaction politicians**: How satisfied are you with the way politicians in Switzerland altogether solve the nation's problems? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates not satisfied at all, 10 indicates very satisfied. **trust politicians**: How much do you trust politicians in Switzerland altogether to act as they really should? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates no trust at all, 10 indicates very much trust. **satisfaction democracy**: On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Switzerland? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates not at all satisfied, 10 indicates very satisfied. **ideal democracy**: To what extent does democracy as it exists in Switzerland correspond to your personal version of an ideal democracy? Please answer according to the following scale, 1 indicates no correspondence to personal vision at all, 10 indicates full correspondence to personal vision.

Items	Mean	SD
trust government	6.39	1.97
performance government	6.04	1.88
trust parliament	5.81	1.72
performance parliament	5.51	1.63
trust politicians	4.89	1.71
performance politicians	5.47	1.48
satisfaction politicians	5.33	1.67
satisfaction democracy	7.16	1.77
ideal democracy	7.19	1.78

Note. Entries are the means. “1” indicate low levels of support, “10” indicates high level of support. N between 492 (performance parliament) and 506 (satisfaction democracy). Item wordings are presented in footnote 57.

*Table 5.10. Respondents’ Level of Political Support*

In order to investigate variables that are related to respondents’ process preferences, perceptions and the discrepancy between both, factor scores for process preferences, process perceptions and the discrepancy between both were built. The measurement model for citizens’ process preferences as described in Section 5.3.1 indicates that there are three dimensions of process preferences, each being reflected by three items. Likewise, there are three dimensions of process perceptions, each being reflected by three items (see Section 5.3.2). The according nine attributes out of the initial 17 attributes were selected; the items are shown in Table 5.11. For each of the three process dimensions (efficiency, competition and consensus-orientation) a factor score was built. More precisely, the nine process preferences, process perceptions and preferences-perceptions differential items were each subjected to a separate factor analysis using principal components extraction with oblique rotation which does not presume orthogonal factors. The factor loadings were put to work to derive factor scores for each survey respondent. Regression method was selected to construct the factor scales. Table 5.11 shows the results for the factor analyses.

Respondents’ process preferences are contingent upon their political ideology. A political right position is positively associated with the importance of efficiency ( $r = .150$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and competition ( $r = .293$ ,  $p < .001$ ), whereas consensus-orientation is less important ( $r = -.204$ ,  $p < .001$ ). There also is a correlation between age and preferences, indicating that all three preference dimensions – consensus ( $r = .203$ ,  $p < .001$ ), efficiency ( $r = .203$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and competition ( $r = .208$ ,  $p < .001$ ) – are more important, the older the subjects are. The competitiveness of political processes is also more important for respondents with high levels of income ( $r = .119$ ,  $p < .001$ ). High income levels are also associated with lower preferences regarding the

consensus-orientation of political processes ( $r = -.136, p < .001$ ). Moreover, women ( $M = -.207$ ) consider efficiency significantly less important than men ( $M = .073, F = 7.886, df = 1, p < .001$ ). No association was found between political interest and process preferences.

The perception of political processes is correlated with age, indicating that an older age is associated with the perception of political processes as less efficient ( $r = -.212, p = .005$ ). A high level of formal education is correlated with the perception that political processes are consensus oriented ( $r = .227, p < .001$ ). Women are more likely to indicate that consensus-orientation is a characteristic of political processes than men ( $M_{\text{Women}} = -.173, M_{\text{Men}} = .081, F = 5.985, df = 1, p = .015$ ); whereas men are more likely to say political processes are competitive than women ( $M_{\text{Women}} = .199, M_{\text{Men}} = -.085, F = 7.455, df = 1, p = .007$ ). Respondents with high levels of political interest are more likely to perceive processes as consensus oriented ( $r = .154, p < .001$ ).

Items	Preferences			Perceptions			Preferences-Perceptions Differential		
	Factor 1:	Factor 2:	Factor 3:	Factor 1:	Factor 2:	Factor 3:	Factor 1:	Factor 2:	Factor 3:
	Consensus	Efficiency	Competition	Consensus	Efficiency	Competition	Consensus	Efficiency	Competition
concede	<b>.800</b>	.084	-.027	<b>.776</b>	-.012	-.074	<b>.702</b>	.161	-.156
div interests	<b>.841</b>	.005	-.050	<b>.835</b>	.067	.067	<b>.812</b>	.101	-.074
compromise	<b>.769</b>	-.090	.058	<b>.779</b>	-.134	-.017	<b>.826</b>	-.184	.144
fast	-.052	<b>.981</b>	-.064	.115	<b>.543</b>	.404	.055	<b>.772</b>	.089
simple process	-.088	<b>.848</b>	.067	-.108	<b>.850</b>	-.137	-.070	<b>.883</b>	-.010
avoid delays	.141	<b>.745</b>	.056	-.025	<b>.849</b>	-.069	.035	<b>.829</b>	.037
force points	.048	.084	<b>.653</b>	.147	.109	<b>.606</b>	.078	.102	<b>.667</b>
put plans through	-.113	-.066	<b>.818</b>	-.261	-.094	<b>.519</b>	-.066	-.132	<b>.745</b>
hierarchical orders	.057	.016	<b>.757</b>	-.061	-.138	<b>.657</b>	-.038	.154	<b>.642</b>

Note. Items loading on a particular factor are shown in bold. Pattern matrix is shown. For information on the items wordings, see Appendix 10.2. N between 484 (hierarchical orders) and 504 (respect)

Table 5.11. Factor Analysis of Perceptions, Preferences, and Discrepancies Items

There also is a positive correlation between age and the discrepancy dimensions; older people are more likely to possess larger preferences-perceptions discrepancies on all three dimensions – consensus-orientation ( $r = .127, p < .001$ ), efficiency ( $r = .152, p < .001$ ), and competition ( $r = .164, p < .001$ ) – than younger people. High levels of formal education ( $r = -.182, p < .001$ ) and income ( $r = -.179, p < .001$ ) go together with a less intense discrepancy as regards the consensus-orientation of political processes. And the more a respondents leans towards the political right, the less intense is the consensus discrepancy ( $r = -.161, p < .001$ ), but the more intense is the competition discrepancy ( $r = .214, p < .001$ ). With respect to gender, the findings suggest that for women the consensus-discrepancy is larger than for men ( $M_{\text{Women}} = .166, M_{\text{Men}} = -.065, F = 4.821, df = 1, p = .029$ ). Men, in contrast, perceive a larger competition discrepancy than women ( $M_{\text{Women}} = -.281, M_{\text{Men}} = .117, F = 14.409, df = 1, p = .000$ ).

In order to investigate the relationship between the discrepancy factors and political support, the items measuring political support were subjected to a factor analysis using principal components extraction with oblique rotation which does not presume orthogonal factors.<sup>58</sup> The factor loadings were put to work to derive factor scores for each survey respondent. Regression method was selected to construct the factor scales. Two factors are distinguished. The first factor describes support for the Swiss government. The second factor describes a general attitude of political support that encompasses support for the parliament, politicians, and democracy. High levels of the efficiency discrepancy factor ( $r = -.201, p < .001$ ) and the competition discrepancy factor ( $r = -.150, p < .001$ ) are significantly associated with lower levels of political support for the government. High levels of the efficiency discrepancy factors ( $r = -.354, p < .001$ ) and the consensus discrepancy factor ( $r = -.251, p < .001$ ) are significantly associated with lower levels of political support for the parliament, politicians, and democracy.

#### 5.4. *Summary and Discussion*

Because no standardized scales to measure citizens' preferences regarding political decision-making processes and according perceptions currently exist, one important aim of this study was the development and validation of a standardized scale for the measurement of citizens' process preferences and process perceptions. This chapter, then, proposed the first systematic scales to measure process preferences and related perceptions of political processes. For the measurement of process preferences, a measurement model was developed, tested and validated on another independent sample. Three dimensions of process preferences were distinguished: consensus-orientation, competition and efficiency. A theory-driven correlated factors model was tested on two independent samples using CFA. Whereas the first sample did indicate modification on the model, the second sample was used to validate the modified model. Further comparisons with alternative models did indicate that the model is superior to a one-factorial model, which underlines discriminant validity. The process preference scale encompasses three dimensions with three indicators each: consensus-orientation (concede a point, consider diverging interests, compromises), competition (force their points, put their plans through, hierarchical orders), and efficiency (fast decision-making, simple and short processes, avoid delays). Adapting the measurement model of the process preferences scale, a scale measuring citizens' perception of political processes was developed. In addition, evidence was provided for the discriminant validity between process preferences and process

58 Results from the factor analysis are, based on the pattern matrix, for factor 1: satisfaction government .870, performance government .904, for factor 2: trust parliament .616, performance parliament .594, performance politicians .609, satisfaction politicians .711, trust politicians .643, satisfaction democracy .899, ideal democracy .882. Item wordings are presented in footnote 89.