



Measuring Public Support for Democracy

A Resource Guide

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This publication has received support from International IDEA's Member States through the Institute's core funding. Grateful acknowledgement is made to the governments of Norway and Sweden, whose generous support made this publication possible.

Text editing: Andrew Mash
Layout: International IDEA
Original design concept: Phoenix Design Aid

Measuring Public Support for Democracy

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This Resource Guide is part of a series designed for readers, including students and practitioners, interested in exploring further some of the themes and issues raised in the first edition of International IDEA's *The Global State of Democracy 2017: Exploring Democracy's Resilience* (International IDEA 2017). The contents of the series reflect the topics of each chapter in the larger report, presenting current and past debates and key concepts related to each topic. This guide complements Chapter 3, 'Threats from within: democracy's resilience to backsliding' (Uribe Burcher and Bisarya 2017).

Individual attitudes to democracy are important for its functioning and survival. Positive attitudes to, and perceptions of, democracy can support collective resistance to state abuse and help prevent modern democratic backsliding. In contrast, negative attitudes to democracy can drive or signal democratic backsliding and even the deconsolidation of democracy. Scholars assume that high levels of public satisfaction with, trust in, and support for democratic institutions correspond to a high quality democracy. However, accurately measuring, analysing and comparing attitudes to democracy can be complex and is the subject of debate.

Cross-national opinion surveys are the most common methodology used by social scientists to measure public attitudes to democracy. This Guide has two aims. First, it informs potential users of opinion survey data on how such data is applied and interpreted, and discusses its potential shortcomings. Rather than dissuading potential users from engaging with opinion survey data, it explains how best to interpret the findings. Second, the Guide lists further reading and provides tools for measuring and understanding levels of support for democracy.

The Global State of Democracy 2017: Exploring Democracy's Resilience aims to provide policymakers with an evidence-based analysis of the state of global democracy, supported by the Global State of Democracy (GSoD) indices, in order to inform policy interventions and identify problem-solving approaches to trends affecting the quality of democracy around the world. The first edition, published in 2017, explores the conditions under which democracy can be resilient and how to strengthen its capacity as a system to overcome challenges and threats.

The full report can be accessed online: <<http://www.idea.int/gsod>>.

1. Introduction

Opinion survey data provides researchers with insights into societies, people's views on democracy and how attitudes to democracy change over time. Cross-national and intergenerational studies of trends in attitudes can help to inform theories of democratic stability, as well as policy approaches to increase citizens' support and the overall quality of democracy. However, potential users of opinion survey data need to be aware of the limitations and biases in this methodology.

This Guide aims to enhance understandings of how to navigate these issues in three ways. First, it provides an overview of what an opinion survey is and how it can be used to measure attitudes to democracy. Second, it provides an overview of recent academic literature on the use of opinion surveys to measure public support of democracy, and the complexities of interpreting such data. The third section explores how survey data informs theories on democratic consolidation—when democracy is established and recognized as the 'only rules of the game' in a country—and stability in countries. After some concluding remarks, the Guide provides an outline of the most common opinion surveys and their geographical and temporal cover. Links to relevant International IDEA publications on the topic are provided throughout.

2. Opinion surveys as a methodology

Generally speaking, it is the industrialized countries that most commonly use surveys of cross-national public opinion, although there is now an increasing use in developing countries and in fragile and conflict-affected states. Not all the results are published: some of the answers given and data collected may be sensitive. Researchers can use data from surveys to compare individual and group views on state-society issues, such as state legitimacy or support for democracy that cannot be measured by other data-gathering methods (Herbert 2013: 3; Neuman 2006).

More concretely, researchers use opinion surveys to measure what participants believe, think or feel about a particular topic, personal experiences of particular democratic institutions, as well as individual beliefs, values, attitudes and opinions, or expectations of democratic performance (Herbert 2013: 2). They aim to measure the subjective in the form of shared mass attitudes. This approach seeks to generalize the public's views of democracy and aspects of democracy as a system of governance.

When considering survey data on attitudes to democracy and governance, it is important to remember that the data is just measuring citizens' perceptions of governance, rather than actual government performance. In a democracy, for example, supporters of an opposition political party might disapprove of the government in power and express

When considering survey data, it is important to remember that the data is measuring citizens' perceptions of governance, rather than actual government performance

RESOURCES

International IDEA publications on assessing democracy

Beetham, D., Carvalho, E., Landman, T. and Weir, S., *Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide* (Stockholm: International IDEA 2013), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/assessing-quality-democracy-practical-guide>>

Kemp, B. and Jimenez, M., *State of Local Democracy Assessment Framework* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2013), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/state-local-democracy-assessment-framework>>

RESOURCES

Selected online surveys

Afrobarometer, <<http://afrobarometer.org/>>

Arab Barometer, <<http://www.arabbarometer.org/content/online-data-analysis>>

Asian Barometer, <<http://www.asianbarometer.org/survey/survey-topics>>

European Social Survey (ESS) <<http://nesstar.ess.nsd.uib.no/webview/>>

European Values Study (EVS), <<http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data-analysis/survey-data/rdc-international-survey-programs/european-values-study/>>

Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP),
<<http://vanderbilt.edu/lapop/interactive-data.php>>

Latinobarómetro, <<http://www.latinobarometro.org/lat.jsp>>

World Values Survey, <<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>>

The Annex to this Guide provides a more comprehensive overview of the countries and questions covered in these surveys.

negative attitudes on government performance, while continuing to support democracy more generally because they believe in the system of elections to challenge the government. This is an example of potential bias within opinion survey data—a response bias known as abstraction (see ‘Abstract support for democracy’ below). Response bias is a general term for cognitive biases that can affect how participants answer a question in a survey, as opposed to how the analyst interprets the answer. In the above example, a survey question asking about an individual’s opinion of the performance of democracy in a country might lead the individual to respond that they ‘disapprove’. This would likely lead to a misinterpretation of the individual’s true opinion. In reality, the participant may be disapproving a particular political party or government’s performance rather democracy’s performance in general.

To manage and limit cognitive biases, the best-known cross-national opinion surveys, such as the World Values Survey or the European Social Survey, ask individuals different questions about democracy in different ways. The online opinion surveys, such as the World Values Survey, Afrobarometer and the European Social Survey (see annex A), use similar questions to measure support for democracy, though there is slight variation between some newer regional surveys and the World Values Survey. This is mainly because of some thematic focus a regional survey may aim to explore, or to reflect the local context. Generally, all surveys ask about the level of confidence or trust in democratic institutions, support for democracy as a political system (compared to alternatives and its suitability for the country), the performance of democracy in the country, and the ideal characteristics of a democracy (for its functioning or important features). For example, the Latinobarómetro survey asks participants about their support for democracy as a political system: ‘Is democracy preferable to other kinds of government?’. It also asks about performance: ‘How democratic is your country today?’; and satisfaction: ‘How satisfied are you with the working of democracy in your country?’ (Latinobarómetro 2014). Users of opinion survey data need to be aware of response biases and how to account for them. Four common response biases are explored below.

Abstract support for democracy

In past opinion survey data collection, when asked about support for democracy, citizens responded overwhelmingly in favour (see e.g. Rose, Mishler and Haerpfer 1998; Inglehart 2003; Chu et al. 2008). These affirmative responses caused researchers to question the validity of the results. The astounding levels of support for democracy across different institutional, cultural and socio-economic contexts raised questions about whether this support was genuine. Did the participants understand the word ‘democracy’ or were they associating it with something else? Kiewiet de Jonge (2016) explored the problem of ‘regime abstraction’, which occurs when participants answer in relation to their perception of an abstract, ideal form of democratic governance, rather than in relation to how democracy is actually performing. In practice, democracy is messier than ideal perceptions.

This abstraction of democracy can happen for three reasons. First, it can occur if participants have had little personal experience of living under democratic rule, such as in post-communist societies (Mischler and Rose 2001). In such cases, opinions of democracy come from a theoretical understanding of what it entails.

A second form of abstraction results from the way in which using the term ‘democracy’ could prime participants to focus their attention on regimes in the abstract, rather than a particular democratic system (Zaller and Feldman 1992). In some cases, participants are not new to the concept of democracy, or have considerable personal experience living in a democracy, but still do not associate the term with the challenges and conditions of implementation and practice in their own country. Participants in democracies can still view democracy as an ideal.

Third, abstraction may be a problem in opinion survey research when the term causes confusion about whether participants are referring to their perceptions of a regime and political system, or their perceptions of a government. For example, as noted above, a participant might state their dissatisfaction with democracy while actually referring to their dissatisfaction with the current government. Ironically, these participants could be strong supporters of democracy since they favour the ‘rules of the game’ by accepting that a government can be changed by democratic means.

Kiewiet de Jonge’s study concludes that this abstraction can lead to substantive and statistically significant biases in the aggregated opinion survey data, at least in Latin America (Kiewiet de Jonge 2016: 712). Focusing on questions of performance or trust in democratic institutions can help to avoid abstraction in survey data. In sum, priming participants to think of democracy in action rather than as an ideal type of government can help to reduce abstraction biases.

Assumed impact on regime outcome

Scholars commonly use opinion data to study political culture and its relationship with democratic stability. Almond and Verba’s 1963 research project, ‘Civic Culture, Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations’, pioneered the quantitative ‘cultural approach’ to the study of democracy. Since then, related studies have used opinion survey data to explore various types of trends and patterns, such as the attitudes of citizens in both transitional regimes and ‘consolidated’ democracies with high levels of stability and social legitimacy. The primary assumption behind this approach is that a stable democracy depends on citizens accepting democracy as ‘the only game in town’ (di Palma 1990). This assumes a causal relationship between attitudes to democracy and the stability or instability of democratic regimes.

Focusing on questions of performance in democratic institutions can help to avoid abstraction in survey data

More recent studies have criticized this approach. Factors other than citizens' attitudes may have a greater influence or explanatory power for the stability of a regime or political system. For example, Fails and Pierce's quantitative study finds no correlation between positive opinions on democracy and the stability of a democratic regime (Fails and Pierce 2010). They state that 'conventional linking of mass attitudes with stability and deepening of democracy has no empirical support' (2010: 185). Similarly, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) argue that economic development is more important than attitudes to democracy. They claim that economic development shapes political culture and attitudes: not the other way around. When using opinion surveys to measure mass attitudes to democracy, it is important to be aware of previous researchers' assumptions about 'what causes what' (Kiewiet de Jonge 2016).

The meaning of 'democracy' bias

In addition to the above issue of abstraction, what participants associate with democracy may lead to overinflated support for the concept of democracy. The word 'democracy' as presented in survey questions can mean different things to different people (Bratton 2002), such as liberty and elections, peace, social welfare or even economic development (Bratton 2002: 44). Coppedge et al. (2011) identify six major conceptions of democracy, distinguishing between democracies that are electoral, liberal, majoritarian, participatory, deliberative or egalitarian (Coppedge et al. 2011: 254). Survey participants, therefore, may not be sharing their opinion of or support for democracy, but rather their support for an associated concept or institution (Booth and Seligson 2009). Asking participants what democracy 'means for them' can help surveys control for this form of bias. For example, the World Values Survey, Afrobarometer and the Arab Barometer all ask participants this question, providing multiple-choice answers such as 'peace', 'income inequality' and 'elections', among others.

This bias in meaning becomes even more important when comparing attitudes to democracy over time or across generations in a particular society. For example, individuals who grew up in new democracies may associate 'democracy' with elections and term limits, while younger individuals in the same country might link 'democracy' with government responses to reproductive or environmental rights. In this example, the younger generation takes functioning elections and respect for term limits for granted, but may mark lower on support for democracy for performance-related reasons. In addition, for the younger generation, the democratic system might fail to reflect their more progressive values, while the older generation continues to view democracy as performing well. Alexander and Welzel (2017), Inglehart (2003, 2016) and Norris (1999, 2017) argue that moral values change over time. As moral values change, the meaning of support for democracy also changes. Alexander and Welzel (2017) support this approach, arguing that the moral values on which citizens base their support for democracy have changed over time, especially in established democracies where citizens have become more liberal, for example, on issues of gender. Variations in inter generational values therefore affect perceptions of democracy and how these are measured (Alexander and Welzel 2017).

Social desirability bias

Social desirability bias may also contribute to over-supportive attitudes to democracy. The explanations for this type of bias focus on the fact that attitudes are not measured in controlled environments. Typically, surveys are conducted by an interviewer asking an interviewee a set of questions in person. Social desirability refers to the social pressures a

What participants associate with democracy may lead to overinflated support for the concept of democracy

participant may feel in an interview setting, and the impact this dynamic might have on their responses. For example, the word ‘democracy’ usually carries positive connotations and as a result, social pressure could lead the survey participants to overstate their support for democracy or understate their preference for dictatorship in front of the interviewer.

Multiple scholars have noted and worked to address this problem, but fully controlling for social desirability bias is impossible—especially on topics as sensitive as political views and values. Users of survey data must therefore be aware of this bias (Booth and Seligson 2009; Inglehart 2003; Kiewiet de Jonge 2016). However, since all participants are exposed to this bias to a certain extent, it is arguably in some way already ‘controlled’ for.

The word ‘democracy’ as presented in survey questions can mean different things to different people

THE GLOBAL STATE OF DEMOCRACY

Opinion surveys in the Global State of Democracy report and indices

The first edition of International IDEA’s *Global State of Democracy* (GSoD) report explores current challenges to democracy and enabling conditions for its resilience. The report draws on multiple sources of information, including the newly developed Global State of Democracy (GSoD) indices. Among other data sources, the report uses public opinion surveys, such as in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Chapter 3 ‘Threats from within: democracy’s resilience to backsliding’ comes to its key finding by comparing the GSoD indices with data from public opinion surveys (specifically the World Values Survey, the Afrobarometer and Latinobarómetro). It examines public attitude towards democracy during modern democratic backsliding events—when leaders with authoritarian tendencies increase their political power by manipulating the instruments of democracy. The chapter bases this on Bermeo’s typology of democratic backsliding, which distinguishes between modern and traditional forms of democratic backsliding (see Bermeo 2016; Uribe Burcher and Bisarya 2017).

Interestingly, the study shows that the public’s attitude towards democracy is not weakened during and after modern democratic backsliding events but, rather, is strengthened. The measurement aggregated scores from opinion surveys for their questions ‘is democracy your preferred system of government?’ and ‘is it good having a democratic political system?’.

This Resource Guide illustrates some of the caveats of using opinion surveys. However, in the chapter these were mitigated by not comparing specific scores in the selected countries, but looking instead at the change in those perceptions in each country before and after the backsliding events. This was then compared to scores with control countries for each region (where no backsliding event took place). Therefore, while some of the biases explored in this Resource Guide are applicable to the data used, as the study compares country changes over time, the impact of such a bias is ameliorated. For example, if one country is likely to have conditions for social desirability bias, data is compared within the country. Therefore, if present, any such bias would influence the country’s score both before and after the event, eliminating a bias’ influence on this score, as it is a measurement of difference. Accordingly, no bias is carried to the country-level of comparison.

In contrast, the GSoD indices do not use opinion surveys data for a number of reasons. These include limited coverage in terms of years and countries, the dissimilar standards generally applied by participants (both within and across countries and time periods), the large differences in terms of nuanced knowledge about the general dynamics and performance of political institutions, and circumstances where citizens might be afraid to express their honest understanding of the lay of the land. Indicators based on surveys of the public (such as opinion surveys) were therefore not used. In contrast, surveys of the mass public are used to construct the Democracy Barometer, the World Governance Indicators, the Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index and the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.

3. Recent scholarly debate: The deconsolidation of democracy?

There is a rich scholarly debate on opinion survey data and how to measure and interpret it. Scholars have used opinion data for many decades to explore aspects of political culture in a country and how these might indicate democratic legitimacy. In 2016, Foa and Mounk published a controversial study drawing on cross-national opinion survey data from the World Values Survey to claim that democracy is facing ‘deconsolidation’, or unravelling, due to falling levels of support among the younger generations. Controversially, the authors argue that support for democracy as a system of government is in decline. Previously, studies interpreted the same trends as evidence for declining trust in institutions and the performance of democracy (e.g. parliaments, political parties, government, etc.), or changes in social values, rather than as evidence of deconsolidation.

Scholars have used opinion data for decades to explore aspects of political culture

Is democracy deconsolidating?

The debate that followed Foa and Mounk’s study illustrates the complexities of interpreting and using opinion survey data. Case selection and comparing attitudes across generations can be complex due to the broad range of potential biases described above. Foa and Mounk make two claims regarding the crisis of democratic legitimacy. First, that citizens in consolidated democracies in Europe and the USA have ‘become more cynical about the value of democracy as a political system’ (Foa and Mounk 2016: 7). Second, they claim that youth living in these countries are now ‘more willing to express support for authoritarian alternatives’ (Foa and Mounk 2016: 7).

Critics of the study argued against their country selection and their definition of what counts as a ‘consolidated’ democracy. Voeten (2017), and Alexander and Welzel (2017), for example, argue that Foa and Mounk only chose countries in Europe that displayed the trends they were looking for (‘cherry picking’), and that they have mislabelled newer democracies as ‘consolidated’. For example, Poland was labelled as a case of a consolidated democracy, even though for the data collected in 1995, Poland had only been a democracy for four years. Furthermore, Inglehart (2016) argues that declining support for democracy was prevalent among youth in the USA but not in the European countries examined.

In contrast to Foa and Mounk’s study, Norris (1999, 2017), Voeten (2017), and Alexander and Welzel (2017) argue that ‘millennials’ (those born between 1980 and 2000) are not becoming less supportive of democracy. Rather, young people have always been less supportive of democracy as a regime type than older generations, and tend to become more supportive of democratic institutions with age. Cynical views of democracy might also be related to a life-cycle effect rather than a generational effect. This debate led to further exploration of youth and political attitudes. For example, scholars such

RESOURCES

Relevant International IDEA publications

S. Bitar and A. Lowenthal (eds), *Democratic Transitions: Conversations with World Leaders* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2015), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/democratic-transitions-conversations-world-leaders>>

Lopez Pintor, R and Gratschew, M., *Voter Turnout since 1945: A Global Report* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2002), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/voter-turnout-1945-global-report>>

as Neundorff, Smets and García-Albacete (2013) argue that political views form in early adulthood (up to 25 years of age) and tend to remain consistent over time, and that factors such as an individual's socio-economic background and the education level of their parents are also determinants.

Declining trust in democracy as a system or in its institutions?

Previously, scholars such as Dalton (2005, 2006), Norris (1999), and Inglehart and Welzel (2005) used modernization theory to explain declining levels of trust in political institutions. This approach suggests that electorates become dissatisfied and increasingly critical of the political elite as new value systems and 'post-material' issues (i.e. issues that value self-expression and quality of life, such as environmentalism and gender equality, over economic and physical security) arise in political discourse. Citizens' preferences, attitudes and values change as a consequence of the rationalization, secularization and bureaucratization entailed in development (Inglehart and Welzel 2005: 1). However, these issues are more challenging for politicians to 'solve' compared to earlier generations' concerns with basic economic security. This produces citizens who are dissatisfied with political parties, governments, public officials and politicians that are unable to address important social problems.

In addition, because post-industrial societies have greater access to education, and political and organizational resources, citizens have more capacity to question and challenge traditional processes of representative democracy and political elites (Dalton 2005: 140; Norris 1999). Consequently, societies are less trustful of political institutions, such as political parties. Norris (1999), for example, refers to this phenomenon as 'critical citizens'. Paradoxically, the increasing number of 'critical citizens' is an indicator of increasing political sophistication in younger generations that are less satisfied with the performance of their government, rather than expressing discontent with the system itself. In this sense, critical citizens are actually more appreciative of democracy as a regime type specifically because it provides them with the tools to vote governments out of office (Foa and Mounk 2016).

Paradoxically, the increasing number of 'critical citizens' is an indicator of increasing political sophistication in younger generations

RESOURCES

Relevant International IDEA resources on measuring public support for democracy

Beetham, D., Carvalho, E., Landman, T. and Weir, S., *Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2013), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/assessing-quality-democracy-practical-guide>>

Brunell, P., *Evaluating Democracy Support: Methods and Experiences* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2007), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/evaluating-democracy-support-methods-and-experiences>>

Hassan, H., *Religion, Identity and Democracy: The Arab Spring, Transition to Democracy at a Crossroads* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2011), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/religion-identity-and-democracy-arab-spring-transition-democracy-crossroads>>

Sisk, T., *Democracy at the Local Level* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2014), <<http://www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/democracy-local-level>>

4. Conclusion

Used correctly, opinion survey data can provide researchers and policymakers with important insights into societies and their views of democracy. Cross-national and intergenerational studies on trends in attitudes can help inform theories and policy approaches, and spark debates on political regime trends. However, as this guide has shown, opinion surveys alone cannot fully measure ‘how democratic’ a society is due to the broad range of potential biases within opinion surveys. This overview of recent debates in the literature on attitudes to democracy illustrates the challenges linked to the use of such data to make broad generalizations about the ‘consolidation’ or ‘deconsolidation’ of democracy. This should not dissuade potential users of opinion survey data but rather inform them of how to be a critical consumer of opinion data and the studies that use it.

Annex A. Frequently used cross-national opinion surveys

Survey name; year of first survey wave	Geographical cover	Common survey questions used to measure support for democracy
Afrobarometer; 1999	38 African countries: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	<p>Political system (<i>There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?</i>): One party rule; Military rule; Electing leaders; Political parties; Limited presidential term limits; Government accountable to citizens</p> <p>Support for democracy: Is democracy preferable to other kinds of government; in some circumstances a non-democratic government can be preferable; it doesn't matter what kind of government we have (single question, multi-choice)</p> <p>Performance: How democratically is this country being governed today? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Characteristics and function of democracy (<i>What does democracy mean to you?</i>): Nothing; Civil liberties; Popular rule; Elections; Peace; Human development; Justice; Majority rule; Rule of law; Self-determination; Mutual respect; Working together; Other positive meanings; Conflict/confusion; Corruption; Hardship; Other negative meanings; Civilian government; Change of leadership; Don't understand</p> <p>Confidence in institutions (<i>How confident are you in x?</i>): President; Parliament/National Assembly; Local government; Courts; Army; Police; National electoral commission; the Ruling party; the Tax department; Opposition parties</p>
Arab Barometer	11 Middle Eastern countries: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen	<p>State of democracy and performance: If you were to evaluate the state of democracy and human rights in your country today, how would you say they are? (Single question, multiple choice answers) In your opinion, to what extent is your country democratic? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Political system: To what extent do you think democracy is appropriate for your country? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Characteristics and function of democracy (<i>Which of the following features would you say is the most important features of democracy?</i>): Income redistribution; Secular law; Welfare state; Independence from the military; Protection of civil rights; Income equality; Rule of law</p> <p>Authoritarian versus democratic values (<i>To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following?</i>): Under a democracy system, the country's economic performance is weak; Democratic regimes are indecisive; Democratic systems are not effective at maintaining order and stability; Despite its problems, democracy is better than other systems; Citizens in this country are not ready for democracy</p> <p>Confidence in institutions (<i>How confident are you in x?</i>): Armed forces; Police; the Press; Parliament; National government; Judiciary; Political parties; the Media; the Civil service; Electoral institution</p>

Survey name; year of first survey wave	Geographical cover	Common survey questions used to measure support for democracy
Asian Barometer; 2001	Limited Asia and Pacific country coverage. 15 Countries have so far completed at least one survey: Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand	<p>Confidence in institutions (<i>To what extent do you trust x?</i>): Branches of the government; the Media; the Military; NGOs</p> <p>Political system: What kind of government would you like to have in this country? (Single question, multi-choice)</p> <p>(How would you rate various types of political systems as a way of governing this country?) One party rule; Military rule; Electing leaders; Political parties; Limited presidential term limits; Government accountable to citizens</p> <p>Performance of democracy: On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy is developing in our country? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Do you think democracy is suitable for your country? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Authoritarian versus democratic values (<i>To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following?</i>): Under a democracy system, the country's economic performance is weak; Democratic regimes are indecisive; Democratic systems are not effective at maintaining order and stability; Despite its problems, democracy is better than other systems; Citizens in this country are not prepared for democracy</p>
European Social Survey; 2002	35 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom	<p>Confidence in institutions (<i>To what extent do you trust x?</i>): Parliament; Legal system; Police; Politicians; Civil service; Political parties; European Parliament; United Nations</p> <p>Performance of democracy: How much would you say the political system in your country allows you to have a say in what the government does? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in your country? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p>
European Values Study, previously known as the European Value Systems Study Group (EVSSG); 1981–2008	European and North American countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, United States Albania,* Armenia,* Azerbaijan,* Belarus,* Bosnia and Herzegovina,* Croatia*, Cyprus,* Northern Cyprus,* Georgia,* Greece,* Kosovo,* Luxembourg,* Macedonia (Republic of),* Moldova (Republic of),* Montenegro,* Russian,* Serbia,* Switzerland,* Turkey,* Ukraine* *2008 wave only	<p>Confidence in institutions (<i>To what extent do you trust x?</i>): Parliament; Legal system; Police; Politicians; Political parties; Civil service; Government; European Parliament; United Nations</p> <p>Performance of democracy: On the whole how satisfied are you with the way democracy is developing in our country? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Political system (<i>How would you rate various types of political systems as a way of governing this country?</i>): One party rule; Military rule; Electing leaders; Political parties; Limited presidential term limits; Government accountable to citizens</p>

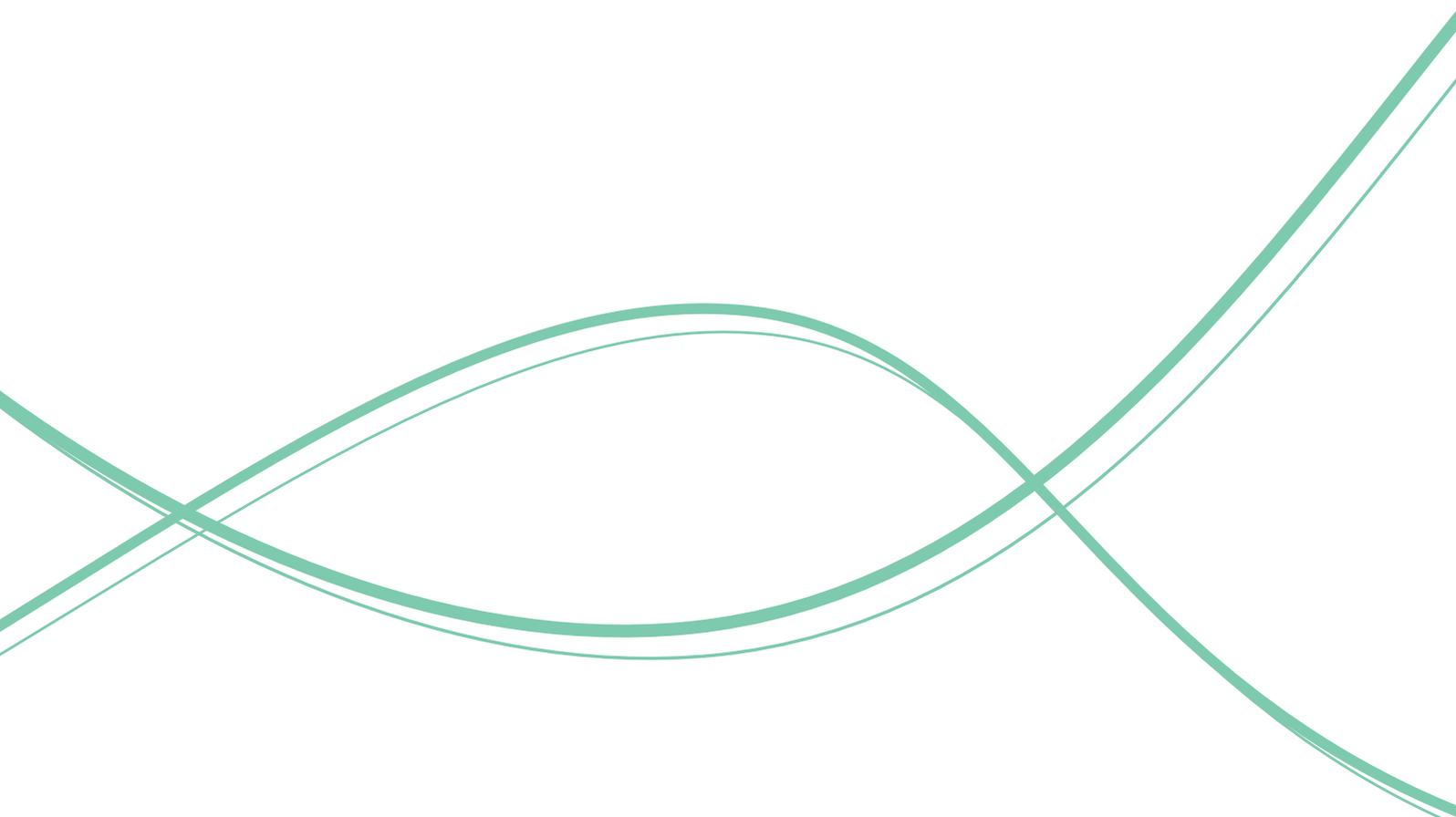
Survey name; year of first survey wave	Geographical cover	Common survey questions used to measure support for democracy
Latinobarómetro; 1995	18 Latin American and Caribbean countries and Spain: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, Spain, Uruguay, Venezuela	<p>Support for democracy: Is democracy preferable to other kinds of government?; in some circumstances a non-democratic government can be preferable; it doesn't matter what kind of government we have. (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Satisfaction with democracy: How satisfied are you with the working of the democracy in your country? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Support for democracy: To what extent do you agree that democracy may have its problems but it is the best system of government? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Performance of democracy: How democratic is your country today? (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Confidence in institutions (<i>How confident are you in x?</i>): Armed forces; Police; Press; Parliament; National government; Judiciary; Political parties; the Media; the Civil service; Electoral institution</p>
Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP); 2004	37 countries, mostly from the Americas: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Israel, Jamaica, Madagascar, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela	<p>Support for democracy: To what extent do you think that one should support the political system of this country? (Single question, multiple choice answers) Is democracy preferable to other kinds of government? In some circumstances a non-democratic government can be preferable; it doesn't matter what kind of government we have. (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Confidence in institutions (<i>To what extent do you trust x?</i>): Political institutions; Armed forces; Police; Press; Parliament; National government; Judiciary; Political parties; the Media; the Civil service; Electoral institution</p> <p>Performance of democracy: How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in your country (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p>
World Values Survey; 1984	Almost global, 2010–2014 wave: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Cyprus, Chile, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Haiti, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Zimbabwe	<p>Confidence in democratic institutions (<i>How confident are you in x?</i>): Armed forces; the press; the courts; the government (in your nation's capital); political parties; parliament; the civil service; various civil society organizations; various regional organizations</p> <p>Political system (<i>What political system is good for the governing of this country?</i>): A strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections; Experts, not government make decisions according to what they think is best; Army rule; Democratic political system</p> <p>Characteristics and function of democracy (<i>How essential is this characteristic of democracy/what characterizes democracy?</i>): Income redistribution; Secular law; Welfare state; Independence from the military; Protection of civil rights; Gender rights; Income equality; Rule of law</p> <p>Importance of democracy: <i>How important is it to you that this country is governed democratically?</i> (Single question, multiple choice answers)</p> <p>Performance: How democratically is this country being governed today? (Single question, multi-choice)</p>

Sources: Afrobarometer, 'The Online Data Analysis Tool: Data Points', 2017, <<http://afrobarometer.org/>>, accessed 9 June 2017; Arab Barometer, 'Arabbarometer Data Analysis', 2013, <<http://www.arabbarometer.org/content/online-data-analysis>>, accessed 9 June 2017; Asian Barometer, 'Survey Topics', n.d., <<http://www.asianbarometer.org/survey/survey-topics>>, accessed 9 June 2017; European Social Survey (ESS), 'Online Analysis: ESS Data', n.d., <<http://nesstar.ess.nsd.uib.no/webview/>>, accessed 9 June 2017; European Values Study (EVS), 'Question Retrieval', 2008, <<http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data-analysis/survey-data/rdc-international-survey-programs/european-values-study/>>, accessed 9 June 2017; Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), 'Interactive Data Analysis Tool', 2017, <<http://vanderbilt.edu/lapop/interactive-data.php>>, accessed 9 June 2017; Latinobarómetro, 'Latinobarómetro Análisis de datos', n.d., <<http://www.latinobarometro.org/lat.jsp>>, accessed 9 June 2017; World Values Survey, 'Online Analysis: Survey Questions', n.d., <<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>>, accessed 9 June 2017.

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