



Bennett Institute
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Cambridge

Centre
for the Future
of Democracy

Youth and Satisfaction with Democracy



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

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The Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge aims to become a world leader in achieving successful and sustainable solutions to some of the most pressing problems of our time.

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The Centre for the Future of Democracy was launched in January 2020 to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by democratic politics over the coming century.

Based at the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, the goal of the Centre is to understand the prospects for democracy in broad historical and international perspective, getting beyond the immediate crisis to identify different possible trajectories for democracy around the world. This means distinguishing what is essential to democracy, what is contingent and what can be changed. That requires taking the long view, drawing on the big picture and expanding our imaginative horizons. This is what the Centre hopes to achieve, and in doing so it will connect with work being done across Cambridge in a wide variety of fields, from data science and environmental science to history and philosophy.

The Centre’s aim is to move away from a fixation on the here and now, and beyond the who and what of democratic politics – who is going to get elected, what are they going to do? – to look at the how. How do democratic decisions get made and how can they be made differently? How can the consent of losers and outsiders be achieved? How can new social divisions be bridged? How can the use of technology be brought under democratic control? And if we can’t do these things, how will democracy not merely survive but flourish in the future?

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1. Executive Summary

- In recent years, there has been extensive debate around attitudes to democracy among younger generations. Yet an absence of rigorous, globally comparative data has hindered the ability to draw firm conclusions.
- This report takes advantage of the largest-ever global dataset on democratic legitimacy – combining data from over 4.8 million respondents, 43 sources and 160 countries between 1973 and 2020.
- Using this combined, pooled dataset, we are able to show how satisfaction with democracy has changed over time among four generations – millennials, Generation X, baby boomers, and the interwar generation – over the past quarter of a century, across all major regions of the world.
- We find that across the globe, younger generations have become steadily more dissatisfied with democracy – not only in absolute terms, but also relative to older cohorts at comparable stages of life.
- However, the “populist wave” of 2015 to date signals a possible trend reversal.
- We explore the question of whether populist mobilisation has the potential to reverse the “democratic disconnect” between youth and democracy – or will only lead to greater democratic disillusionment in the future.

2. Key Findings

Globally, youth satisfaction with democracy is declining – not only in absolute terms, but also relative to how older generations felt at the same stages in life. There are notable declines in four regions: Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, western Europe, and the “Anglo-Saxon” democracies, including the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States.

In developed democracies, a major contributor to youth discontent is economic exclusion. Higher levels of youth unemployment and wealth inequality are associated with rising dissatisfaction in both absolute *and* relative terms – that is, a growing gap between assessments of democratic functioning between youth and older generations.

In the emerging democracies of Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and southern Europe, we also find signs of transition fatigue, as generations come of age who lack either memory of authoritarian rule or the experience of the democracy struggle.

However, countries that have elected populist leaders have seen a recovery in youth satisfaction with democracy. On average, individuals aged 18-34 see a 16 percentage-point increase in satisfaction with democracy during the first term in office of a populist leader. Where moderate politicians have narrowly beaten or succeeded a populist rival, we find no comparable increase.

We find this not only in cases where left-wing populists are elected, but also under right-wing populism. The major exception is the presidency of Donald Trump in the United States.

Yet if the effect of populism is initially to boost youth satisfaction with democracy, its longer-term effects are less clear. Though “populism in power” can temporarily increase youth democratic contentment, once populists are in office for more than two terms, this presages a major democratic legitimacy crisis.

3. Youth and Democracy

In January of this year, the Cambridge Centre for the Future of Democracy published its inaugural “Global Satisfaction with Democracy 2020” report. This study analysed a global, novel data set combining 25 data sources, 3,500 country surveys, and 4 million respondents between 1973 and 2020, and found widespread democratic disillusionment, in particular in developed democracies.¹

The current report draws upon an expanded and updated version of this dataset with 18 additional survey sources plus another half a million respondents, and moves on to examine one of the core debates in discussions on democratic legitimacy – youth opinions and the generational divide in perceptions of democratic performance.

The Research Background

There is a considerable academic literature on democratic beliefs and practices among younger citizens, including studies of declining electoral participation, membership of political parties, support for and satisfaction with democracy, and openness to support populist or anti-establishment movements.² However, much of this research is derived from a fragmented set of survey sources. Most academic studies focus upon developed democracies, in particular the United States, and there is debate on whether such findings can be generalised.³ Meanwhile a number of recent studies have begun to take advantage of new data from Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia.⁴ While country coverage has improved,⁵ these have typically suffered from a limited scope and time series, making

it difficult to infer whether intergenerational value gaps reflect “age effects” – that will diminish as younger citizens progress in life – or a more fundamental shift in attitudes from one generation to the next over the course of the life-cycle.⁶ Until now, there has not been a genuinely global dataset with complete observations over several decades, making it impossible to establish a basic descriptive overview of how intergenerational gaps in satisfaction with democracy vary across the world at comparable stages of life.

Our Approach

Our work is built upon a simple methodological premise: to combine questions on satisfaction with democracy from the widest possible range of available sources, in order to generate a global “mega-dataset” of almost 4,000 unique country surveys from which to analyse global trends over time.

The results suggest cause for deep concern. Globally, youth satisfaction with democracy is not only declining in absolute terms, but also relative to how older generations felt at comparable stages of life. There are notable intergenerational declines in four regions: Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, southern Europe, and the Anglo-Saxon democracies, including the United Kingdom and the United States. However, just as we find regions of concern, we also find regions and countries in which younger generations exhibit greater democratic contentment compared to their elders – including in the post-communist democracies of central and eastern Europe, in Germany, and in Asia.

¹ R. S. Foa, A. Klassen, M. Slade, A. Rand, and R. Collins. (2020). “The Global Satisfaction with Democracy Report 2020.” Cambridge, United Kingdom: Centre for the Future of Democracy.

² See Dalton, R. (2004). *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*; Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press; and A. J. Martin. (2012). *Young People and Politics: Political Engagement in the Anglo-American democracies*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

³ B. Cammaerts, M. Bruter, S. Banaji, S. Harrison and N. Anstead. (2014). “The Myth of Youth Apathy: Young Europeans’ Critical Attitudes toward Democratic Life.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 58 no. 5: 645-664.

⁴ Resnick, D. and D. Casale. (2014). “Young Populations in Young Democracies: Generational Voting Behaviour in sub-Saharan Africa”. *Democratisation*, 21(6): 1172–1194.

⁵ See Chu, Y., Huang, K.P., Lagos, M. and R. Mattes. (2020). “A Lost Decade for Third-Wave Democracies?” *Journal of Democracy*, 31(2): 166-181.

⁶ L. Diamond and M. Plattner, eds. *How People View Democracy*. (2008). Baltimore, Maryland: JHU Press.

4. The Dataset

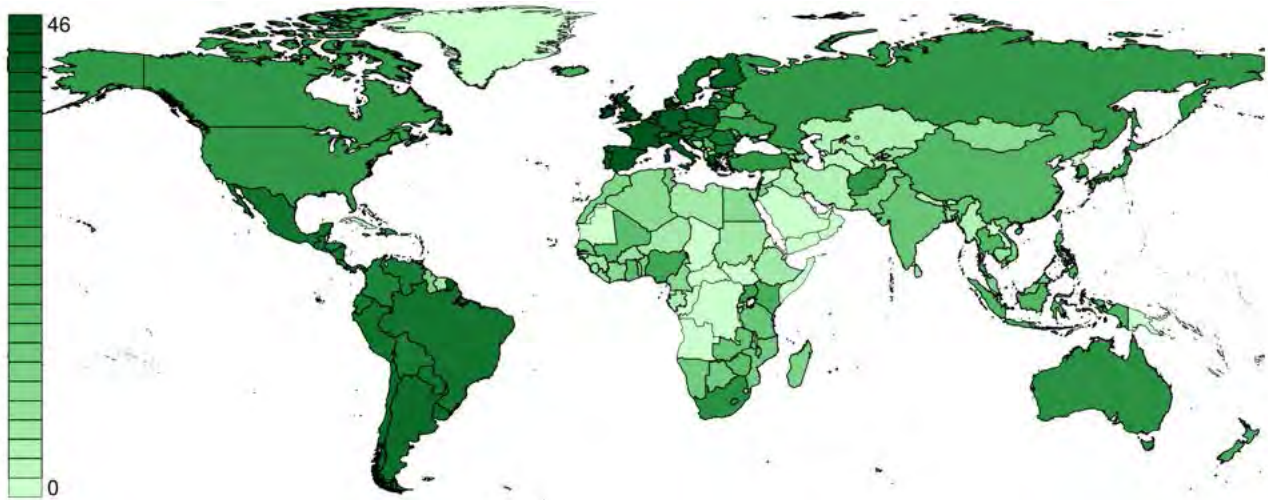


Figure 1: Countries for which data on age and satisfaction with democracy exist in the HUMAN Surveys dataset, by number of years of available data. Both democracies and non-democracies are shown in the above graphic; for this report, only data from electoral democracies are included in the analysis.

In recent years, discussions of youth attitudes to democracy have failed to reach a consensus. In part, this is due to differences between scholars in their choice of survey sources, country coverage, and periods of observation. The wide variety of survey sources now available for comparative analysis – with over 43 different sources identified by this study alone – can generate widely varying impressions of individual country and regional trends.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive answer to questions regarding one measure of democratic legitimacy – satisfaction with democracy – by combining data from almost all available survey sources, using consistent, constant country coverage that is regionally and globally representative, from the earliest possible period to surveys that were fielded in recent months.

The data used in this report represents the views of individuals across most electoral democracies of the world. The surveys have been gathered and standardised by the Human Understanding Measured Across National (HUMAN) Surveys project (www.humansurveys.org), with additional data for 2017–2020 added from individu-

ally commissioned surveys provided by the YouGov-Cambridge Centre for Public Opinion Research.

Satisfaction with Democracy

This report examines one indicator of democratic legitimacy – satisfaction with democracy – across the vast majority of public datasets in which such questions have been asked.

It is important to acknowledge upfront what such questions do, and do not, tell us about civic attitudes to democracy. The answers to such questions primarily tell us how well citizens perceive their political system to be *performing*. They offer a weaker basis for inferring support for liberal or democratic values: younger generations may be strong believers in liberal democracy and yet dissatisfied with the performance of such institutions in practice – or on the flipside, be satisfied with the institutions under which they are governed, even though such institutions fall well short of accepted democratic standards.⁷

That said, there is value in knowing how, why, and when younger citizens are losing faith in the ability of democracy to deliver.

⁷ J. Linde and J. Ekman, “Satisfaction with Democracy: A Note on a Frequently Used Indicator in Comparative Politics.” (2003). *European Journal of Political Research*, 42 no. 3 391-408. ; P. Norris. (2002). “Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism.” Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

While subjective feelings of satisfaction with democracy may in part reflect higher or lower civic standards, the cross-country evidence makes clear that in countries where younger generations face little difficulty in finding a job, hold less debt, can find affordable housing, and are less likely to encounter corruption or discrimination in policing and public services, youth satisfaction with democracy remains overwhelmingly high. In Iceland, Germany, or Taiwan, younger citizens hold political institutions to high standards, and for now, those standards are being met.⁸ There is no evidence that rising expectations have led to a deterioration in democratic legitimacy among youth in these societies. On the other hand, where satisfaction with democracy has fallen from one generation to the next, one can point to concrete factors to explain such declines – ranging from

the growth of youth unemployment in countries hit by the eurozone crisis, to asset exclusion among millennials in Britain and the United States, to the persistence of corruption and poverty in new democracies across Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa.

Second, even if democratic satisfaction and support for democratic values are conceptually separate, they are empirically related. Studies suggest that individuals dissatisfied with democracy are more likely to support populist political parties that eschew liberal democratic norms,⁹ and that where younger voters face systemic economic exclusion, they are more likely to support both left-wing and right-wing populists.¹⁰ In this report, we also find a link from youth dissatisfaction to the rise of populism, as the growth of youth discontent precedes populist breakthroughs, yet reverses with populists in office.

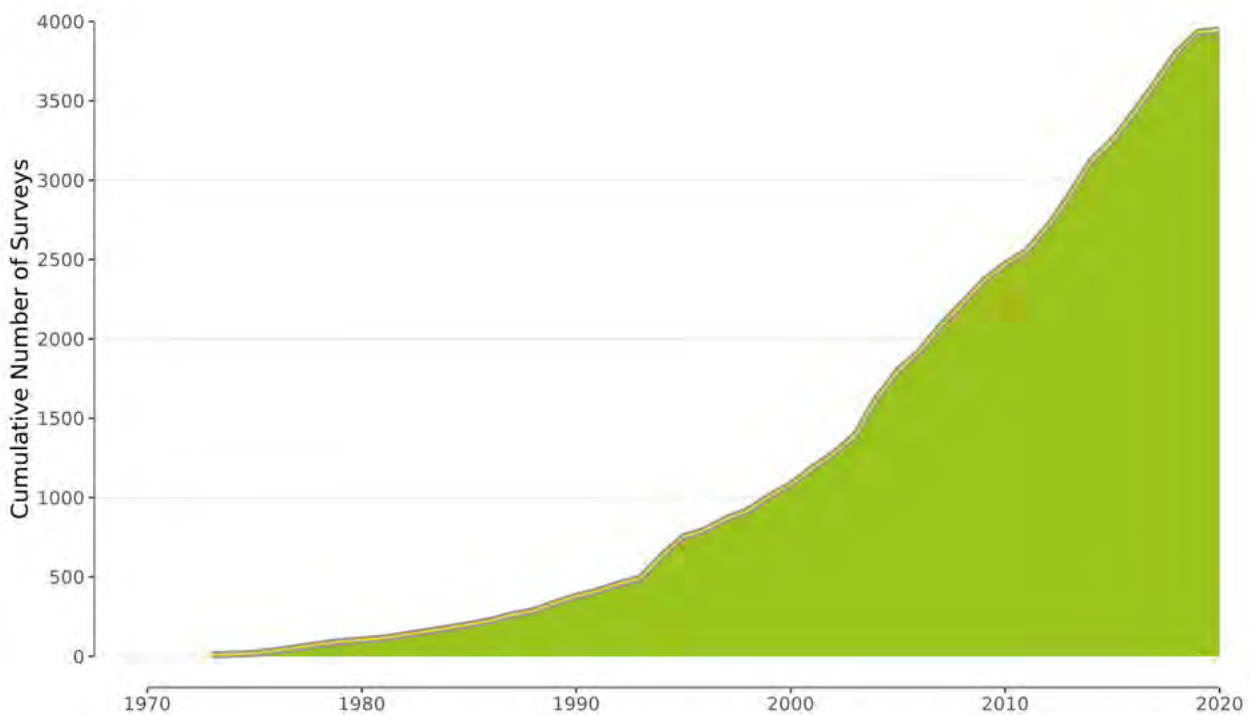


Figure 2: Cumulative number of surveys gathered in to the dataset, 1973–2020.

⁸ M. Ferrín. “An Empirical Assessment of Satisfaction with Democracy.” (2016) in *How Europeans View and Evaluate Democracy*, eds. Mónica Ferrín and Hanspeter Kriesi. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

⁹ R. Wike, L. Silver and A. Castillo. “Many Across the Globe Are Dissatisfied With How Democracy Is Working”. (2017). Washington D.C.:Pew Research Center.

¹⁰ See P. Zagórski, J. Rama and G. Cordero. (2019). “Young and Temporary: Youth Employment Insecurity and Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties in Europe.” *Government and Opposition*, 1-22; R.S. Foa and Y. Mounk. (2019). “Youth and the Populist Wave,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 45(9-10): 1013–1024; and Santana, A. and J. Rama. (2018). “Electoral Support for Left Wing Populist Parties in Europe: Addressing the Globalization Cleavage,” *European Politics and Society*, 19(5): 558–576.

Data Selection and Validity

i) Semantic Equivalence and Item Selection

In order to ensure that our data represents a valid measurement of satisfaction with democracy, the survey questions aggregated in our dataset are subject to strict standards of semantic equivalence. First, they must ask citizens about their degree of satisfaction with democracy in their country; items using similar, yet related terminology are excluded. So too are items asking people their views regarding democracy in general. Second, they must be coded on a response scale that allows for *verifiable* equivalence with other survey response scales (see Appendix Section III, on Testing for Semantic Equivalence, and Section IV on Sensitivity Analysis).

ii) Generalisability

Third, in order to ensure the results that we present are consistent over time and accurately reflect the average citizen in each regional grouping – having recoded responses into satisfied and dissatisfied and ascertained the percentage for each category – rolling averages are generated by country, while regional averages are generated by merging country surveys to a quarterly or annual data series and taking the population-weighted average of the most recent observation for all countries in that region over time (see Appendix Section II, on Aggregation Methodology). The use of population weighting is especially important in regions where a large number of small -or micro- states may disproportionately leverage country averages, generating a misleading impression of the evolution of civic attitudes in these zones.

iii) Sample Consistency

Finally, a constant-country sample is used for all time periods when presenting aggregated data. This is to ensure that changes on charts

are not due to countries dropping in and out of the dataset, but are only due to changes in actual collected data. We ensure this by only including country cases which are covered by survey data from the start of the observation period through to the end, and “rolling over” survey results in periods in which no new survey data was collected – in effect, using the “most recent” survey observation for each country in each time period. Fortunately, because the dataset includes such a large number of survey sources, for many regions – eastern and western Europe, Latin America, North America, and northeast Asia – there are few countries that lack consistent data, and many countries that now report multiple observations per year. For the global series, the weighting of regions is shown in Figure 3, while individual data sources are listed in Table 1.

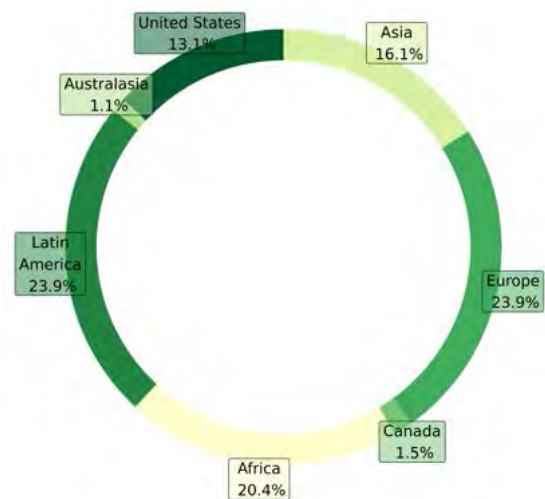


Figure 3: *Weighting of regions in the world aggregate starting in 1995, based on countries available for the period under observation that report comparable respondent age data. Note that India, for which our survey data begins only in 2002, is not included in this sample due to limited comparable data points, but will be added in future rounds.*

Source	Surveys	Countries	Years
Afrobarometer	170	37	1999–2018
American National Election Studies	7	1	1996–2016
AmericasBarometer	189	33	2004–2019
ANU Poll	5	1	2008–2014
Arab Transformations Project	6	6	2013–2014
Asia Barometer	41	25	2003–2007
Asian Barometer Survey	51	19	2001–2016
Australian Election Study	10	1	1996–2019
Australian Survey of Social Attitudes	2	1	2005–2015
Australian Voter Experience	1	1	2016
British Election Study	9	1	1997–2017
British Social Attitudes	2	1	2004–2005
Canadian Election Study	9	1	1996–2003
Candidate Countries Eurobarometer	52	13	2002–2004
Central and Eastern Eurobarometer	10	10	1997
Comparative National Elections Project	42	24	1993–2018
Comparative Study of Electoral Systems	133	47	1996–2018
Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe	26	15	1990–2001
EU Neighbourhood Barometer	94	16	2012–2014
European Election Study - Voter Study	106	32	1989–2019
European Quality of Life Surveys	33	33	2016
European Social Survey	213	36	2002–2019
European Values Study	80	47	1999–2009
Flash Eurobarometer	171	17	1994–1995
Global Attitudes and Trends	102	50	2007–2018
Icelandic National Election Study	7	1	1999–2017
IntUne (Integrated and United) Mass Survey	35	18	2007–2009
International Social Survey Programme	73	47	2004–2016
Irish National Election Study	2	1	2002–2007
Israel National Election Studies	11	1	1999–2019
Kenya Democratization Survey Project	1	1	2006
Latinobarómetro	373	19	1995–2018
New Europe Barometer	10	13	2001
New Zealand Election Study	8	1	1996–2008
Polish General Social Survey	7	1	1992–2002
Politbarometer	59	3	1977–2018
South African Social Attitudes Survey	17	1	2003–2014
Standard and Special Eurobarometer	1538	35	1973–2019
Survey of the Afghan People	12	1	2006–2019
United States General Social Survey	3	1	2000–2014
Voice of the People Series	121	69	2005–2007
World Values Survey	93	45	1996–2020
YouGov Surveys	11	10	2019–2020

Table 1: Data sources used in this study, showing number of survey observations, countries covered, and years of available data.



www.humansurveys.org

The survey data for this report was compiled as part of the Human Understanding Measured Across National (HUMAN) Surveys project, which specialises in formatting, merging, and harmonising freely available and nationally representative public opinion surveys from around the world. The project provides unprecedented temporal and geographical coverage on selected topics such as satisfaction with democracy, making it possible to study long-term trends with greater accuracy, reliability, and generalisability across more regions of the world than ever before.

The goal of the project is to enable formatting and including any variable from any nationally representative survey. Each variable and source added to the project is subsequently available for all future research studies, meaning the additions accumulate and offer the possibility of increasingly complex analyses.

The project maintains three data warehouses for different levels of analysis: micro-level individual responses, macro-level aggregated country-survey scores, and country-year scores. Of the 18 million individuals in the full database, this report uses 4.8 million respondents, four of the 15 thousand national surveys, 160 of the 183 countries, and 43 of the 59 data sources currently available.

The Presentation of Data in this Report

- 1. Data for regional or global scores are averaged based on population-weighting.** This ensures that figures reflect an estimated average for the pool of all individuals in the region under consideration, and are not disproportionately influenced by trends in small -or micro- states.
- 2. A constant-country sample is used when presenting aggregated data.** This is to ensure that changes on charts are not due to countries dropping in and out of the dataset, but are only due to changes in actual collected data. We ensure this by only including country cases which are covered by survey data at the start of the observation period and the end, and “rolling over” survey results in periods in which no new survey data was collected – in effect, using the “most recent” survey observation for each country. Fortunately, because the dataset includes such a vast number of observations, for many regions – eastern and western Europe, Latin America, North America, and northeast Asia – there are few countries that lack consistent data, and many countries with multiple observations per year.
- 3. Regional averages use rolling averages in order to smooth between years.** This is done for the regional averages to smooth over cases where a “rogue poll” in a large country can cause a sudden yet temporary shift in the weighted mean.

5. Intergenerational Change: The Global Picture

In the world as a whole, young people today are less satisfied with the performance of democracy than older generations. Thus while a majority of millennials, defined as those who were born between 1981 and 1996, today express “dissatisfaction” with the way democracy works in their countries, a generation ago those at a comparable age – in their twenties and thirties – remained largely satisfied with democratic performance (Figure 4).

Similarly, while most members of “Generation X” – those born between 1965 and 1980, who are now aged between 40 and 55 – are now also dissatisfied with democracy’s performance, at no point in the past did a majority of “baby boomers” feel the same degree of discontent.

Defining Four Generations

1. **Millennials** are those coming of age in the twenty-first century, born between 1981 and 1996.
2. **Generation X** came of age in the 1990s, born between 1965 and 1980.
3. **Baby boomers** are the “1960s and 1970s generation”, born 1944–1964.
4. **The interwar generation** refers to those born between 1918 and 1943, prior to decolonisation in Africa and Asia and inbetween the two world wars.

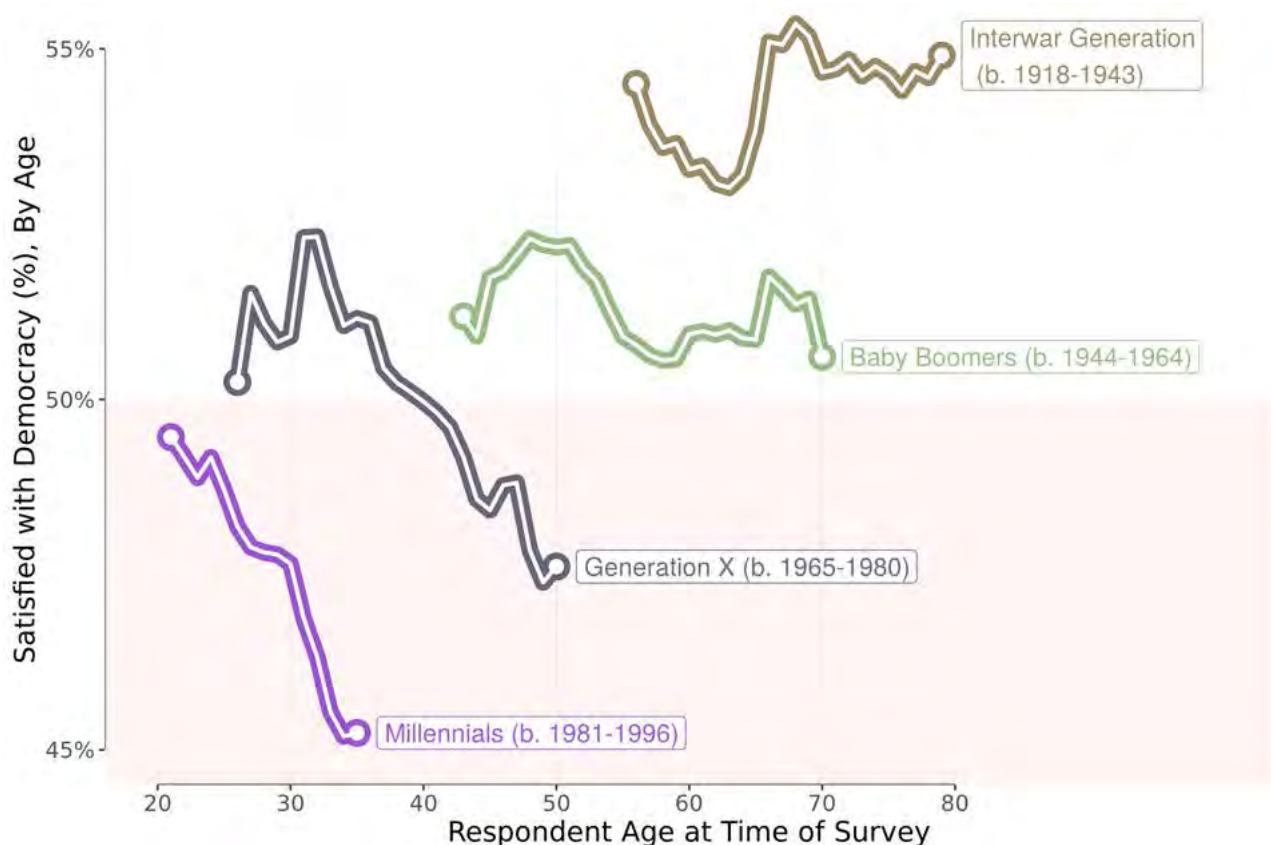


Figure 4: Satisfaction with democracy by age and generational cohort, for 75 countries across the world in all regions. Data was first aggregated to the country–age level for each cohort, and then, aggregated globally based on country population-weighting in order to provide a representative estimate of the opinions of global democratic citizenry. A constant country sample is used in each age bracket. Each generational cohort is less satisfied with democracy than the prior cohort was at the same age in life. Contrary to the view that generational differences are merely a “life-cycle effect” – with people becoming less critical of democracy as they grow older – in fact, younger cohorts have become more dissatisfied as they have aged.



Figure 5: Satisfaction “deficit” among millennials, 1995–2020, relative to baby boomers, across 75 countries of the world. In the 1990s, the gap was in “surplus” as millennials were more satisfied with democracy than their parents’ generation. However, the gap has since turned negative, as millennials have become dissatisfied at a faster rate than older generations. Change from 1995–2020 statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level, based on population-weighted standard errors.

And yet, it has not always been this way. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, as the first cohort of millennials were in their late teens and university years, millennial satisfaction with democracy was in fact higher than among their parents’ generation. Only following the early 2000s recession did millennial satisfaction with democracy begin to trend downwards, before crashing lower with the global financial crisis (Figure 5).

Explaining the Democratic Disconnect

This suggests that the “democratic disconnect” is not a given, but the result of concrete factors in millennial life trajectories. So in what ways have democratic institutions succeeded or failed over the past several decades to deliver outcomes that matter for younger generations – and why has youth satisfaction with democracy reached such lows?

In the rest of this report, we seek to understand the causes of this democratic disconnect. Taking advantage of the largest comparative dataset on satisfaction with democracy, we find that while some regions suffer from an especially acute intergenerational divide

in democratic contentment – notably, southern Europe, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the English-speaking democracies of North America, Great Britain, and Australia – some regions, such as northeast Asia, have avoided the generational democracy divide, while others, notably in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, have steadily consolidated the legitimacy of their democratic institutions among younger generations over time.

We then look in to specific reasons as to why satisfaction with democracy appears to have diverged between older and younger generations, and why some regions and countries have avoided a youth legitimacy crisis. In developed democracies, rising wealth inequality and youth unemployment have left younger generations with lower incomes, higher costs of living, and less financial wealth than prior generations. This has especially affected the lives of millennials in developed democracies, and in particular the United States, Australia, Great Britain, and countries in southern Europe that were hit by the eurozone crisis. Meanwhile, in transitional democracies a process of intergenera-

tional replacement is underway, with cohorts coming of age that lack formative memories of authoritarian rule or the democracy struggle. Among this generation, attitudes to democracy are significantly more critical. This is most likely because individuals judge the performance of democracy not in comparison to the authoritarian past, but on the basis of its ongoing challenges – including persistent corruption, absence of the rule of law, and failure to deliver public goods and services.

The Global Picture

However, the results are not all negative. Just as there are regions where younger generations are more critical of democracy than their parents or grandparents were at the same age, so too are their countries where millennials appear to be more content. For example in most of northern Europe, in northeast Asia, and in the post-communist democracies of the former Soviet bloc, younger generations are actually more satisfied than their elders were in the past.

Figure 6 shows these differences on a country by country basis, by comparing the average “intergenerational gap” in satisfaction between three generations at the same stage in life – the gap between millennials and Generation X at age 30, between Generation X and baby boomers at age 50, and between baby boomers and the interwar generation at age 70.

The good news is that about as many countries show satisfaction with democracy rising as do falling across the generations. The bad news, however, is that most of the world’s most populous democracies – including the United States, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, France, and the United Kingdom – exhibit declines. Conversely, Germany, South Korea, and Ukraine stand out among large democracies where intergenerational satisfaction has increased. Out of 2.3bn individuals represented in the global cross-country sample, 1.6bn (seven out of ten) are in countries with declining democratic satisfaction from one generation to the next, while only 0.7bn (three in ten) live in countries with rising intergenerational contentment.

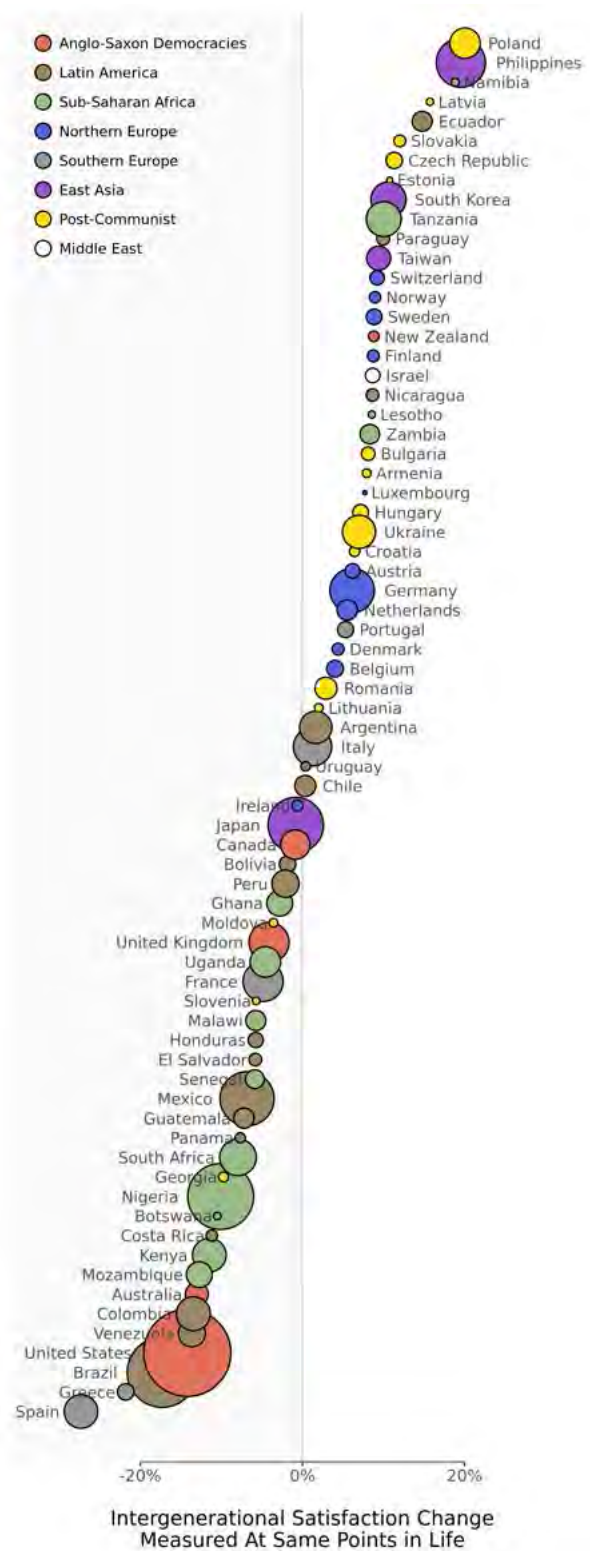


Figure 6: Average intergenerational satisfaction shift, by country, comparing cohorts at identical points in life. The intergenerational shift is the average of the gap between millennials and Generation X at age 30, between Generation X and baby boomers at age 50, and between baby boomers and the interwar generation at age 70. While countries are evenly split between those with rising and falling intergenerational change, the world’s most populous democracies are disproportionately among the latter.

6. Regional Trends

In this section, we show these global shifts in intergenerational change in greater detail. We do so by comparing six major regions: western Europe, eastern Europe, Latin America, northeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and the “Anglo-Saxon” democracies (the United States and Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom).

As noted, in most regions younger generations are less satisfied with democracy than previous cohorts at the same age, yet the global decline in satisfaction with democracy among younger generations is being driven by four regions – southern Europe, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Anglo-Saxon democracies, including Britain and the United States. Other regions however show an improving trend, seen notably in northern Europe, East Asia, and the post-communist democracies of the former Soviet bloc (Figure 7).¹¹

Examining changes over the life trajectory by region for each of the four generational categories – millennials, Generation X, baby boomers, and the interwar generation – reveals further important differences. In some regions, such as northeast Asia, we find some evidence of a life-cycle pattern but no intergenerational break from one birth cohort to the next. Yet other regions, such as western Europe and Latin America, exhibit “generational divergence” – as older generations have become more contented with democracy at the same time as younger cohorts have seen a precipitous decline. And finally, in the “Anglo-Saxon” democracies we see declining satisfaction among all generational groups – led, however, by growing discontent among millennials and Generation X.

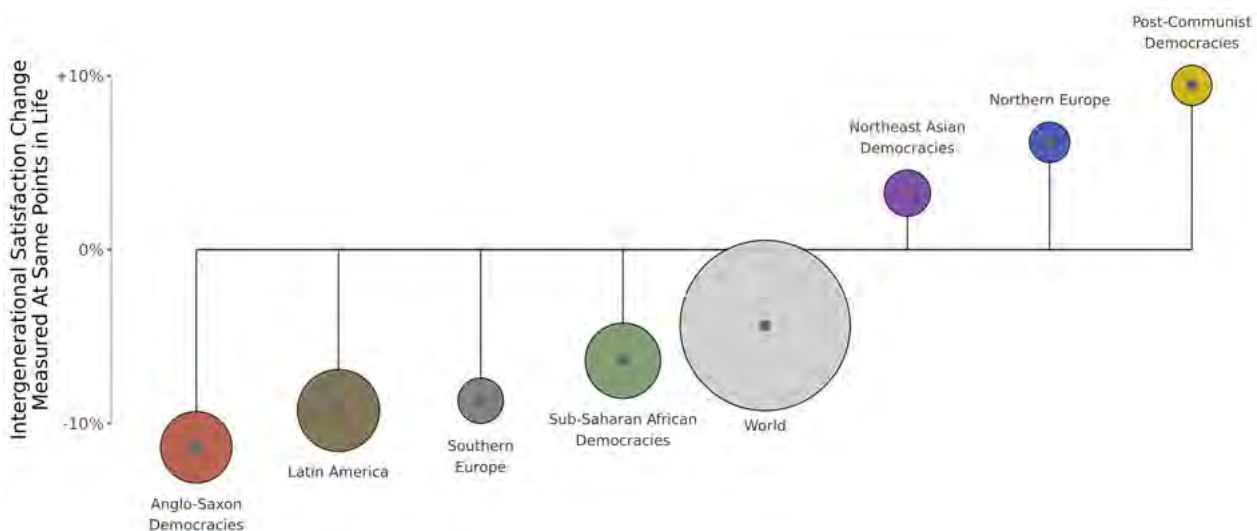


Figure 7: Average intergenerational satisfaction shift, by region, using comparisons at identical points in life. The intergenerational shift is the average of the gap between millennials and Generation X compared at age 30, between Generation X and baby boomers compared at age 50, and between baby boomers and the interwar generation compared at age 70 – the points at which overlap data exist in all 75 countries used in this report. The global decline in satisfaction with democracy among younger generations is being driven by four regions – southern Europe, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Anglo-Saxon democracies, including Britain and the United States. Other regions, however, show an improving trend.

¹¹ Foa, R.S. and Ekiert, G. (2017). “The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society Reassessed”, *European Journal of Political Research*, 56(2): 419–439.

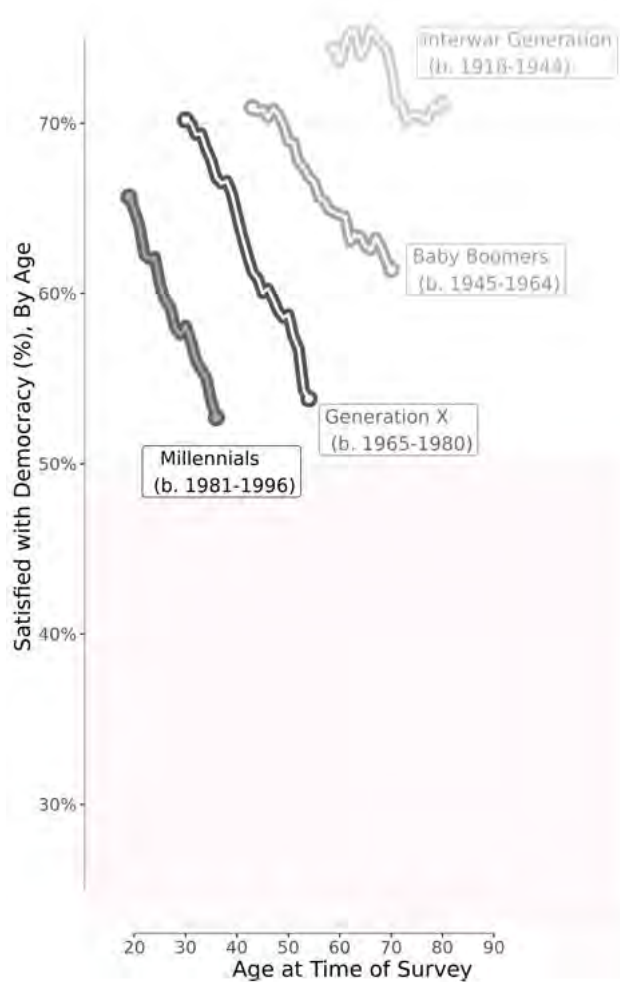
(i) The Anglo-Saxon Democracies

In the “Anglo-Saxon democracies” – the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – satisfaction with democracy has declined over time for all generational groups (Figure 8). Meanwhile there is a consistent pattern of declining intergenerational satisfaction – with each successive birth cohort less satisfied than their elders at the same point in life. This is especially true of the United States and Australia, and to some extent the United Kingdom, though less evident for Canada or New Zealand.

(ii) Northeast Asia

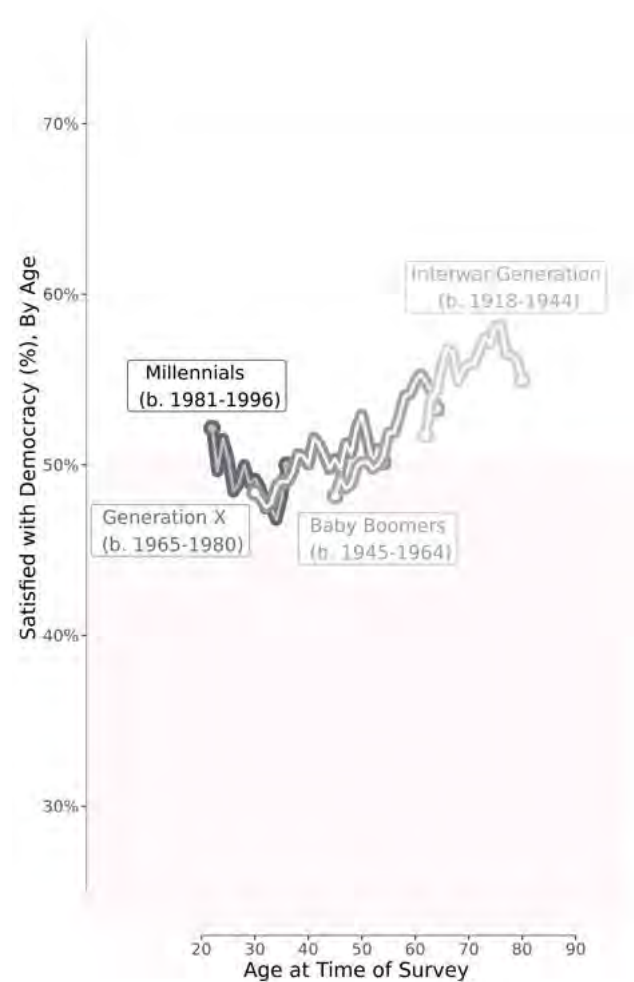
In the developed democracies of northeast Asia – Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan – there is no detectable break between the generations (Figure 9). In the region as a whole, each age group, from millennials through to the interwar generation, exhibits exactly the same degree of democratic satisfaction as the previous one at the same life stage. There is however a subtle life-cycle effect, as East Asians exhibit moderately higher satisfaction as they move through life.

Figure 8: Anglo-Saxon Democracies



Satisfaction with democracy by generational cohort in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Data averaged by country and age, and aggregated using country population weighting.

Figure 9: Northeast Asia



Satisfaction with democracy by generational cohort in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Data averaged by country and age, and aggregated using country population weighting.

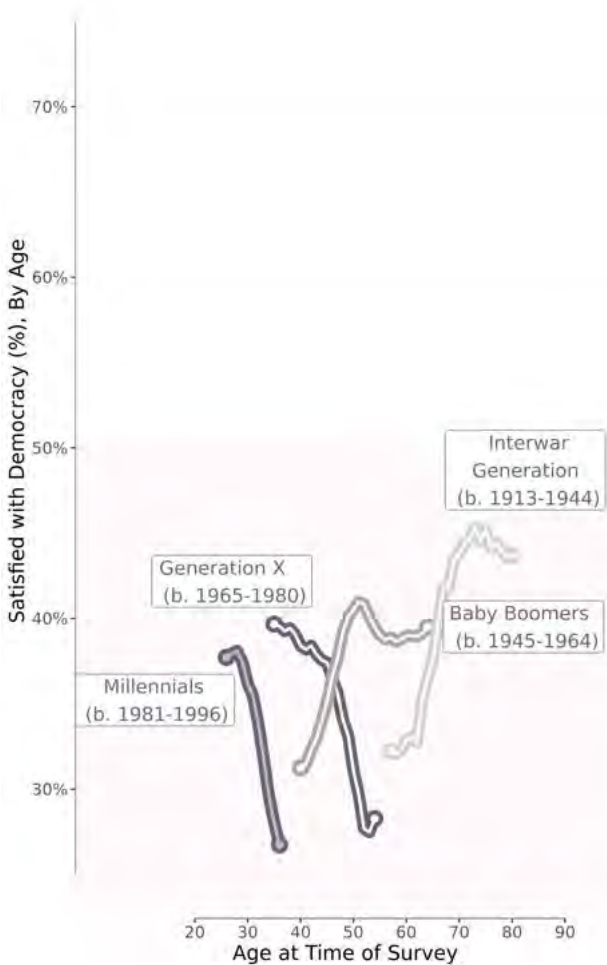
(iii) Latin America

In Latin America, satisfaction with democracy is chronically low. However, there is an important intergenerational divergence. Among the interwar and baby boomer generations, satisfaction with democracy has risen over time, especially during the early years of democratic transition (Figure 10). On the other hand, younger citizens coming of age during this period exhibit steadily declining satisfaction with democracy over the course of their lives, resulting in a wide generation gap.

(iv) Sub-Saharan Africa

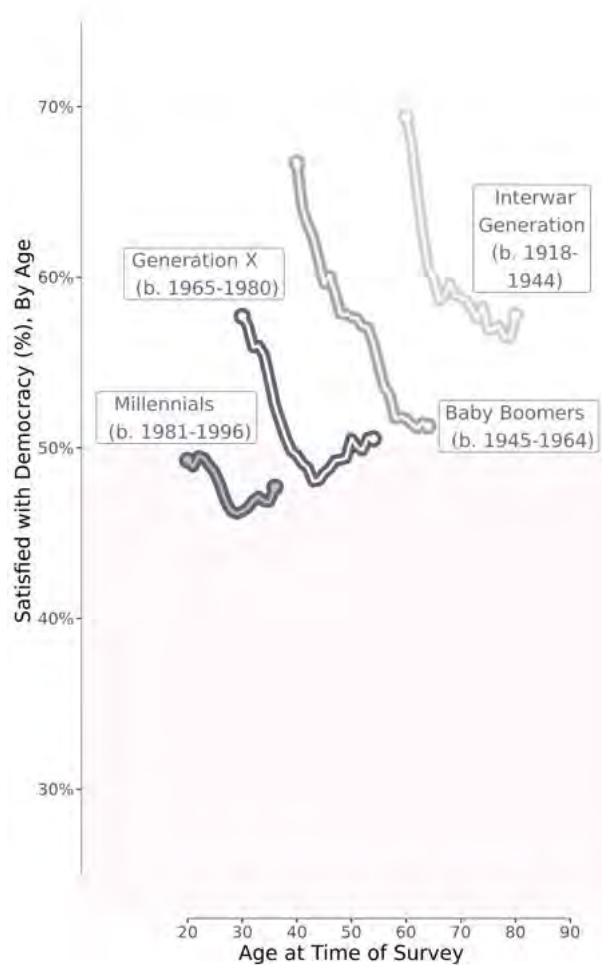
While satisfaction with democracy in sub-Saharan Africa began from a very high level, there is a noticeable intergenerational decline in satisfaction (Figure 11). Each birth cohort, from millennials through to baby boomers, exhibits lower satisfaction than the previous group at the same life stage. Moreover, within each cohort levels of satisfaction have dropped sharply over time, such that majorities of young Africans now express discontent with the performance of democracy in their countries.

Figure 10: Latin America



Satisfaction with democracy by generational cohort in Latin America. Data averaged by country and age, and aggregated using country population weighting.

Figure 11: Sub-Saharan Africa



Satisfaction with democracy by generational cohort in sub-Saharan Africa. Data averaged by country and age, and aggregated using country population weighting.

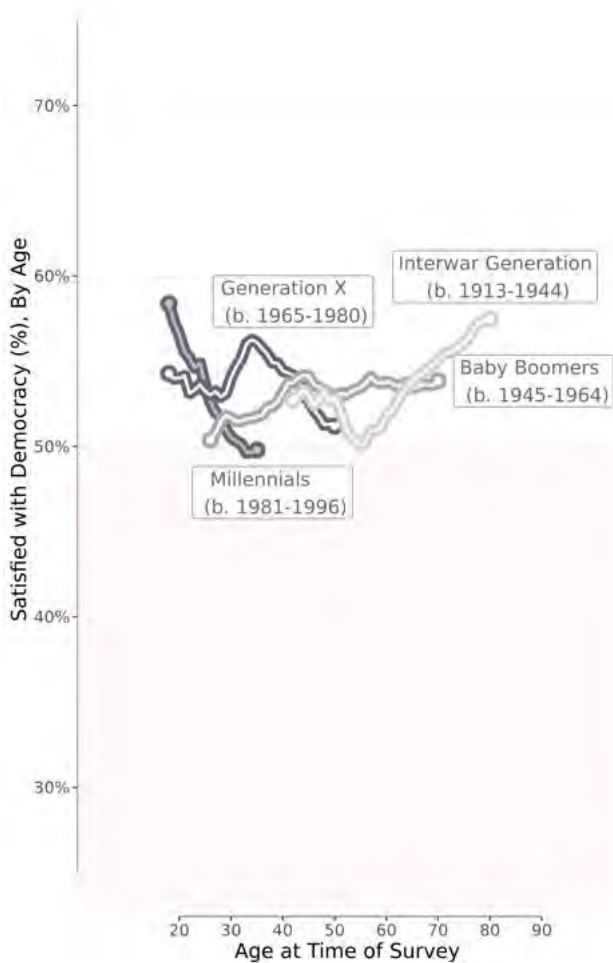
(v) Western Europe

Similar to Latin America, western Europe exhibits a divergent generational pattern – with older generations becoming more satisfied with democracy over the course of their lives, while younger generations become increasingly dissatisfied (Figure 12). Democratic contentment appears to have peaked with the generation that came of age at the end of the Cold War, whereas western European millennials, above all in southern Europe, exhibit lower satisfaction for their age than any prior group.

(vi) Eastern Europe

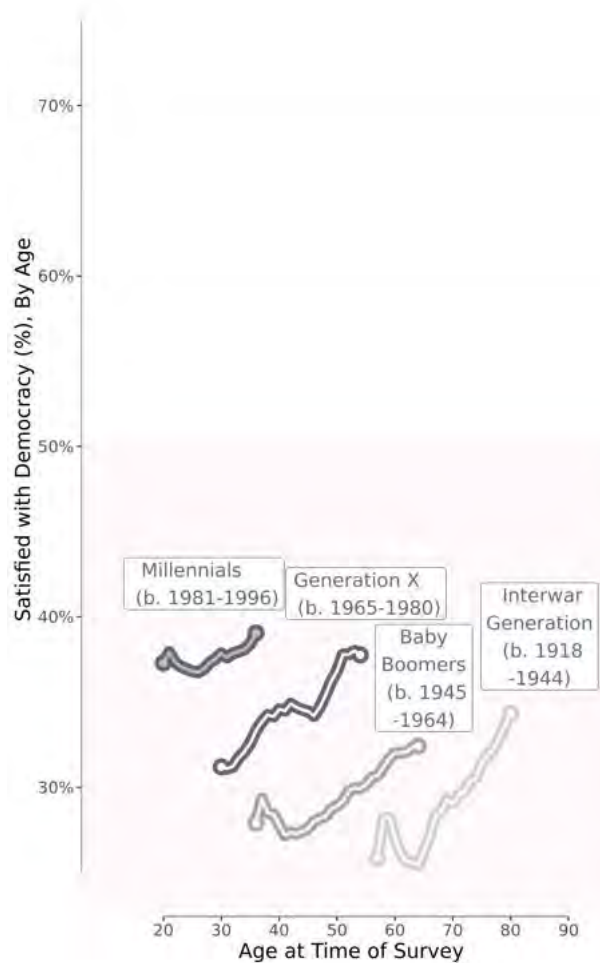
Though overall satisfaction with democracy in eastern Europe remains low, it is the one world region exhibiting a clear “double positive” trajectory – as each generation has higher levels of satisfaction than the last, and satisfaction levels *within* every cohort have risen over time (Figure 13). Eastern European millennials – who came of age after the economic disruption of the 1990s, and following European Union accession – led this rise in democratic contentment, though older generations are now catching up.

Figure 12: *Western Europe*



Satisfaction with democracy by generational cohort in Western Europe. Data averaged by country and age, and aggregated using country population weighting.

Figure 13: *Eastern Europe*



Satisfaction with democracy by generational cohort in Central and Eastern Europe. Data averaged by country and age, and aggregated using country population weighting.

7. Why does the Intergenerational Disconnect Exist?

Why are attitudes to democracy among youth so much more cynical than those of older generations? A commonplace view is that youth dissatisfaction is simply a “life-cycle” effect – in other words, that people start out their lives critical of prevailing institutions, but mellow with the passing of the years. Yet as we have seen, while respondents in some regions, such as eastern Europe or Asia, do appear to have become less critical of democracy as they have aged, in most parts of the world – and notably in the English-speaking democracies of North America and Great Britain – we observe the opposite trend, with people becoming steadily more critical of democratic performance over time.

Might this shift be a result of contingent events in recent decades, such as the aftermath of the global financial crisis, the effects of social media on news and public debate, or the legacy of failures at democracy pro-

motion overseas? Such cross-cutting “period effects” might explain some of the broader global decline. Yet they leave us struggling to explain generational “divergence” - why in Latin America or western Europe, for example, older generations have warmed to their democratic institutions at the same time as younger generations have grown increasingly disillusioned, while in the United States and Great Britain millennials have become critical of democracy at a faster rate.

Rising Inequality

Across the world, among the few variables that covary with the democratic satisfaction gap between old and young are the extents of wealth and income inequality (Figures 14 and 15). A priori, inequalities of financial and housing wealth have a direct bearing on life opportunities for younger generations:

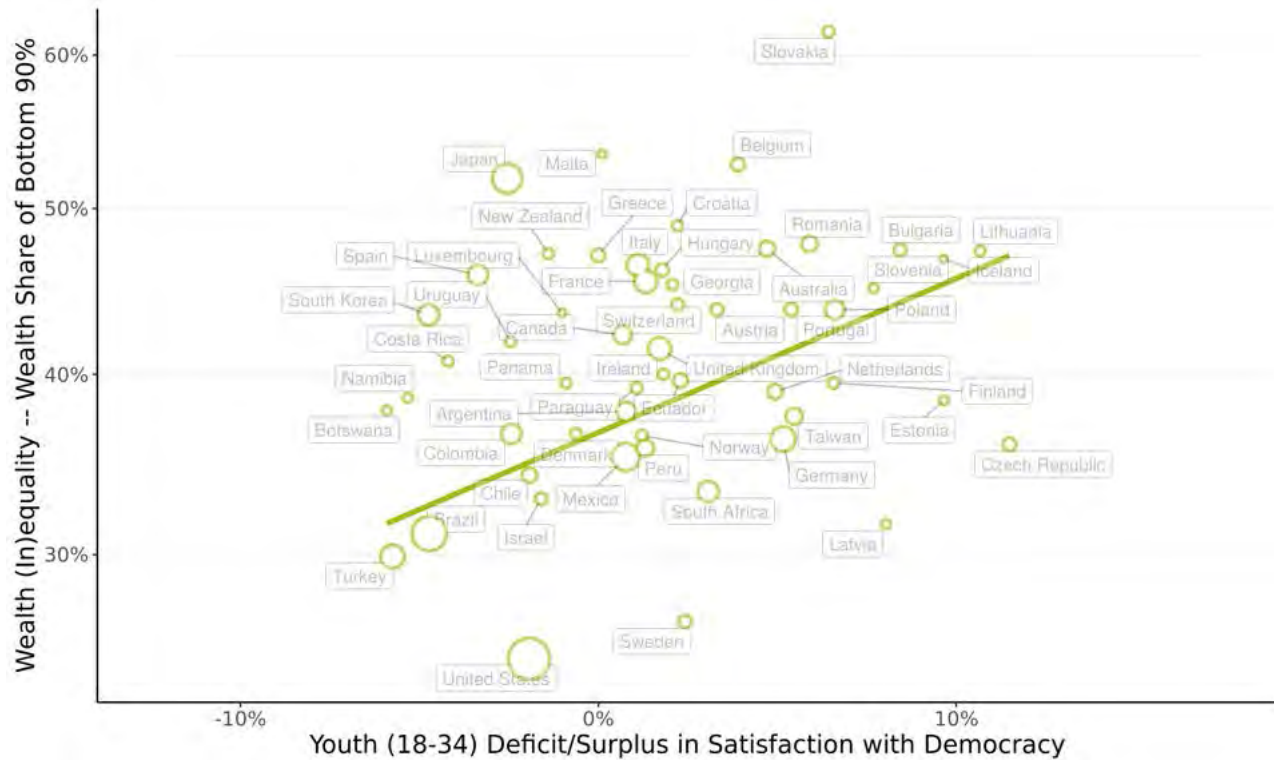


Figure 14: Current wealth (in)equality and the gap between youth (18-34) and non-youth (35+) satisfaction with democracy. Higher levels of wealth inequality today are associated with a wider intergenerational disparity in democratic satisfaction. With the rise in wealth inequality, older cohorts have benefited from lifetime accumulation of housing and financial assets, while younger cohorts suffer from rising housing costs, personal debt, and limited savings. Wealth data from the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report, 2019. Data for countries not reporting wealth by decile imputed from the mean-to-median wealth ratio.

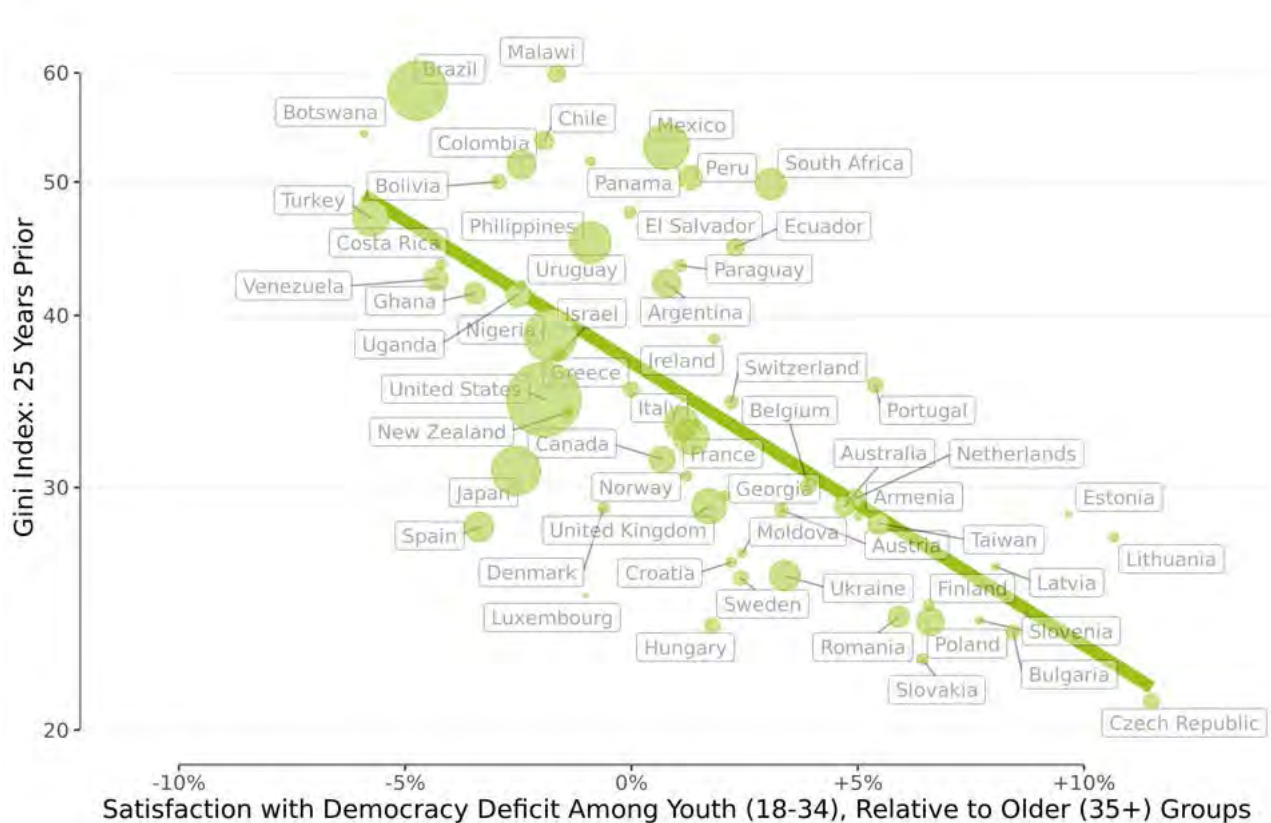


Figure 15: Income inequality 25 years prior, and and the present-day gap between youth (18-34) and non-youth (35+) satisfaction with democracy. High levels of past inequality of earnings predict current attitudinal disparities between the young and old. As Figure 14 shows, this is likely due to the time-lag it takes for income inequalities to translate into disparities of wealth – as reflected in housing prices, rents, and savings – all of which benefit older over younger cohorts.

higher rental costs early in life, greater difficulties accumulating savings, higher debt burdens, a lower chance of owning a home, greater challenges in starting a family, and greater dependence upon the support of parents and relatives. Moreover, this last point illustrates a broader injustice produced by wealth inequality – a society in which the chances of success or failure in life depend less upon hard work and enterprise, and more upon inherited wealth and privilege. In the United States, for example, millennials make up close to a quarter of the population but hold just 3 percent of wealth - when baby boomers held 21 percent of wealth at the same age.¹²

Thus as Figure 14 illustrates, levels of wealth inequality are one of the few covariates of the democratic satisfaction “gap” between older and younger generations. In the post-

communist societies of central and eastern Europe, by contrast, while income inequality has risen dramatically since the collapse of communism, the distribution of wealth remains relatively egalitarian – and this “level playing field” may explain why younger generations remain more contented than older age groups. On the other hand, in the United States or Latin America, the persistence of wealth inequality has presaged a growing intergenerational divide.

Meanwhile, we also find a strong relationship between past income inequality and the current generational gap in satisfaction with democracy (Figure 15). This relationship exists in all periods, though is strongest at a gap of around 25 years. Theoretically, however, such a lagged effect makes sense: it takes time for inequalities of income to feed through into generational disparities of

¹² Emmons, W. R., Kent, A. H. and L.R. Ricketts. (2018). “A Lost Generation? Long-Lasting Wealth Impacts of the Great Recession on Young Families.” The Demographics of Wealth: 2018 Series, Essay No. 2.

wealth. Initial increases in income inequality may even benefit groups at the early to mid-life stage of the careers, relative to those approaching retirement. This may explain the temporary “youth surplus” in democratic satisfaction that we see in eastern Europe, as younger cohorts take advantage of new career and business opportunities. Yet once income inequality becomes embedded in differences of inherited wealth and privilege, the result is greater frustration and resentment in future generations.

Youth Unemployment

In recent years, western economies have formed a dual labour market – with a small number of highly-skilled professional jobs matched by a larger pool of lower-paying service sector occupations. This situation is worsened in much of continental Europe and

Latin America by regulations limiting formal employment and guaranteed benefits to current employees, leaving younger generations with insecure contracts and pay.

When we control for fluctuations in the cyclical level of *overall* unemployment and look instead at excess unemployment among youth, we can see that it covaries over time with youth perceptions of democratic performance. Among the five countries hit hardest by the eurozone crisis, for example – Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain – in years when the disparity between youth unemployment and overall unemployment rates was low, a majority of youth still reported being “satisfied” with democracy (Figure 16). Yet when younger citizens took the brunt of the eurozone crisis, sending youth unemployment rates 25 percentage points above the average, youth assessments of democratic performance soured.

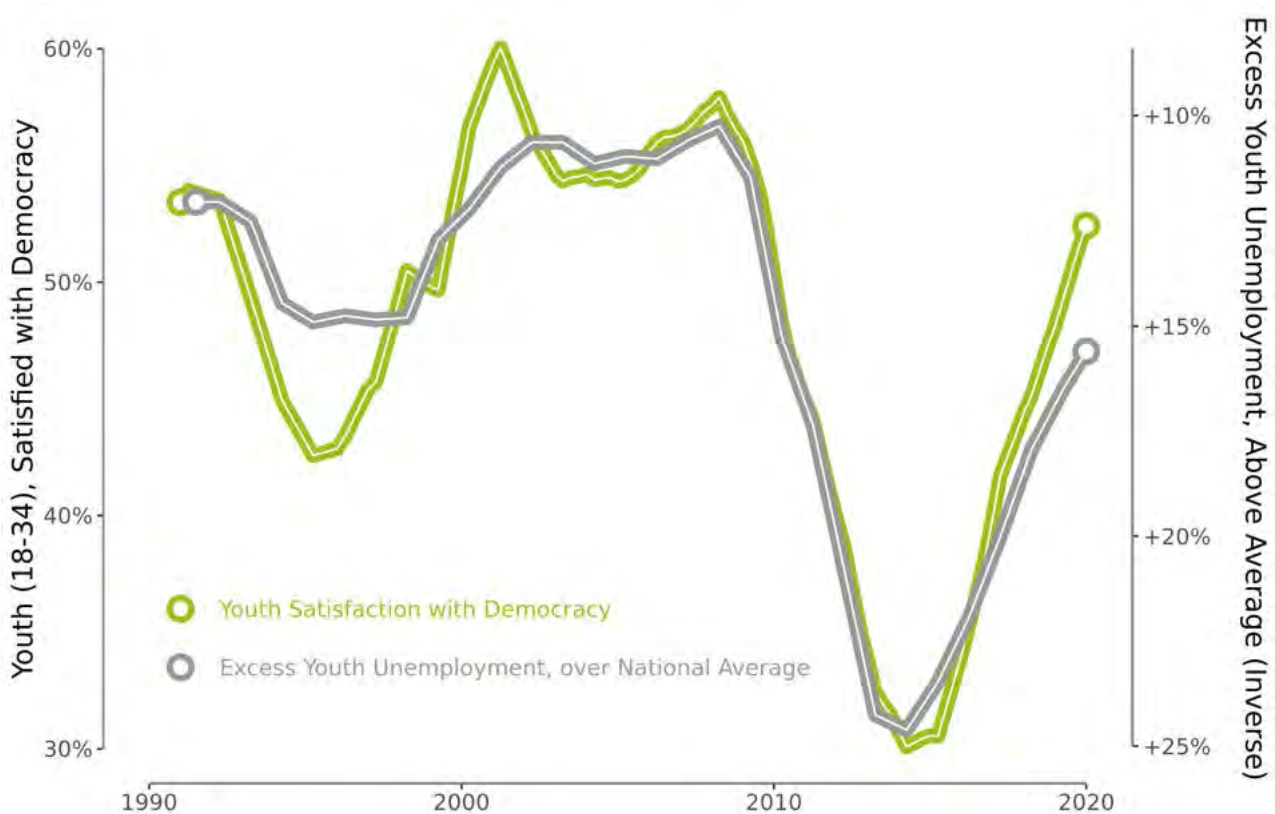


Figure 16: Relationship between excess youth unemployment (the rate of youth unemployment minus the national average unemployment rate) and youth (18-34) satisfaction with democracy, among countries most severely affected by the eurozone crisis: Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain. The close relationship between the exclusion of youth from the labour market and youth discontent suggests a strong economic basis for younger citizens’ political discontent.

Transition Fatigue?

A further factor explaining youth disengagement from democracy may be related to the democratic transition process itself. In recent decades, countries across the world have adopted liberal, multiparty electoral competition, in a process known as the “Third Wave” of democratisation. Starting in southern Europe, where authoritarian regimes came to an end in Greece, Portugal, and Spain in the 1970s, liberal democracy came to Latin America in the 1980s, the former communist bloc in the early 1990s and formerly autocratic regimes across Sub-Saharan Africa in the decades since. Frequently youth activism played a critical role in bringing military juntas and one-party states to an end, as protesters filled the streets demanding po-

litical and civic freedoms.

As formerly banned political parties have successfully contested political office, issues close to the hearts of younger voters – from greater social freedoms in Catholic Europe and Latin America, to opportunities of work and travel in Eastern Europe, to greater respect for human rights in Asia and Africa – have become embedded in the policy environment. As a result, the early years of democratic transition are often associated with a rise in youth satisfaction, both in absolute terms (Figure 17) and relative to older groups (Figure 18).

However, as memory of the struggle for democracy fades, a new generation of voters has come of age in democracies across Europe, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific that is less concerned with the value of democ-

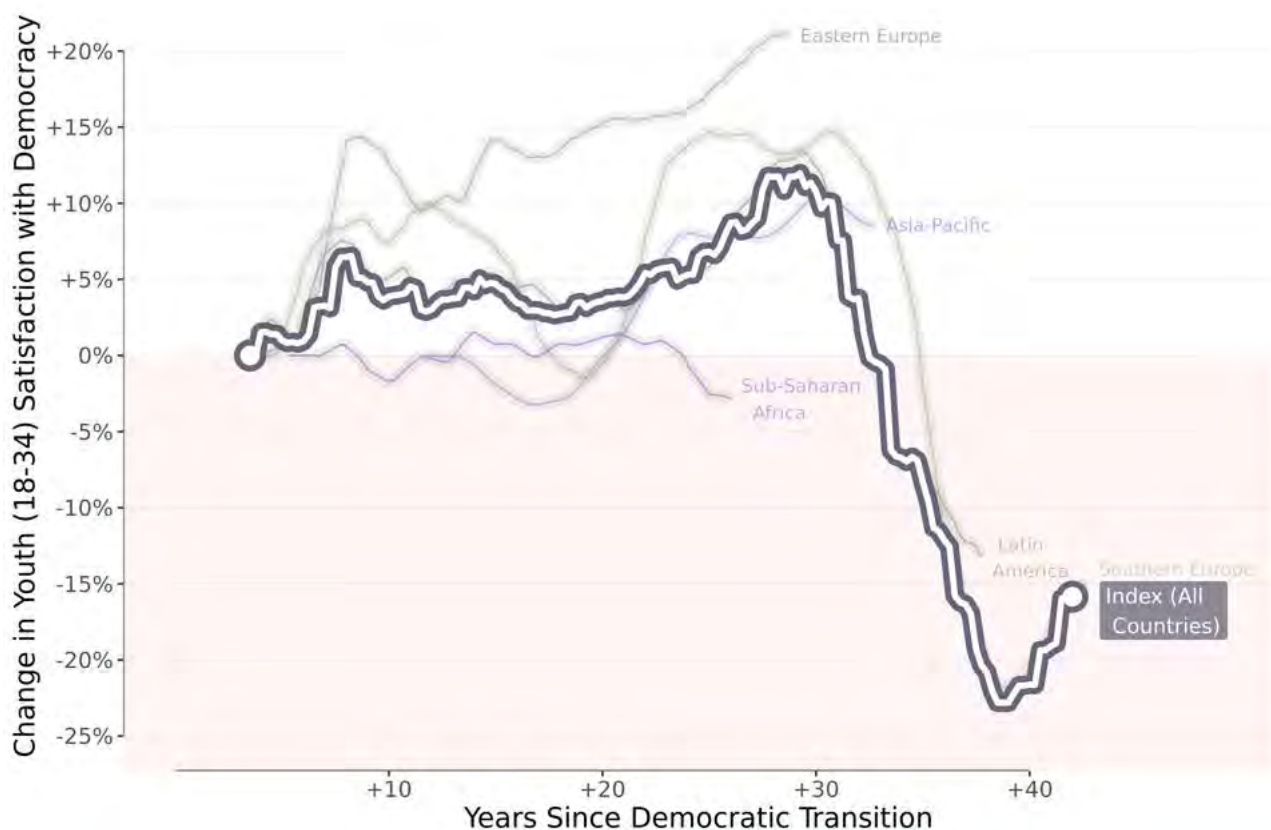


Figure 17: Youth (18-34) satisfaction with democracy, since year of transition. In general, youth satisfaction with democracy tends to rise in the initial decades following the transition to democracy, yet there is a marked decline after 25 years – when new generational cohorts come of age who have no living memory of undemocratic rule.

Notes: “Democratic transition” defined as successive years when a country’s “liberal democracy” score as assessed by the V-Dem project rose and remained above 0.25. Regional lines are population-weighted by country. “Southern Europe” includes Portugal, Spain and Greece. “Eastern Europe” excludes Russia. Asia-Pacific combines South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines.

racy as an ideal, and more concerned with its functioning in practice – including the ability to address problems of youth unemployment, corruption, inequality and crime. Increasingly, the legitimacy of democracy therefore hinges on its performance – or failure – to face these mounting social challenges. Where this balance falls short, satisfaction with democracy declines, leaving voters more easily mobilised by anti-system parties promising to sweep aside existing institutions and deliver “real change”.

This can be seen from the sharp decline in both absolute and *relative* youth satisfac-

tion with democracy when cohorts with little memory of undemocratic governance come of age (Figures 17 and 18, from 30-year mark onwards). With the notable exception – for now – of the formerly communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, youth satisfaction with democracy has begun to decline precipitously following the first generation of democratic governance, both in absolute terms and relative to older age cohorts who were part of the “democracy generation” that fought to establish democratic governance and form the core support base of the parties that have governed in the decades since.

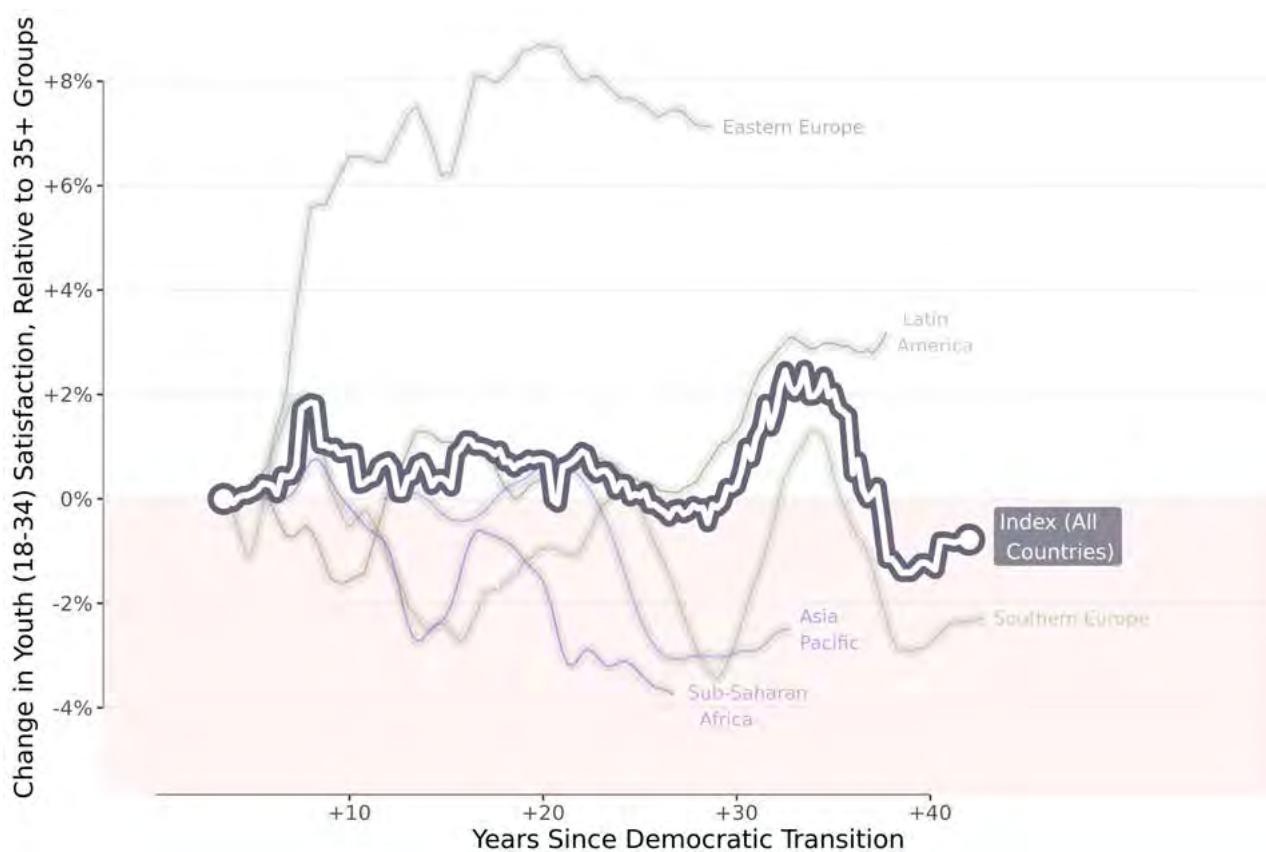


Figure 18: Youth (18-34) satisfaction with democracy, relative to older age groups (35+), since year of transition. In the early years of democratic transition, youth satisfaction tends to be higher, with a particular outlier in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. However, when new generational cohorts come of age lacking a memory of undemocratic rule, relative youth satisfaction appears to decline.

Notes: “Democratic transition” defined as successive years when a country’s “liberal democracy” score as assessed by the V-Dem project rose and remained above 0.25. Regional lines are population-weighted by country. “Southern Europe” includes Portugal, Spain and Greece. “Eastern Europe” excludes Russia. Asia-Pacific combines South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. Due to the leveraging effect of Eastern Europe, a separate average is shown with this region excluded.

The Promise of a Better Tomorrow? European Union Accession and Youth Satisfaction with Democracy

For younger citizens in new and developing democracies, membership of the European Union promises myriad possibilities: ranging from opportunities to travel, to engage in foreign study, to work overseas. Beyond these tangible benefits, European Union accession is often part of a broader narrative – the “return to Europe” following the demise of authoritarian regimes.

Empirical data suggests that there was a “youth satisfaction dividend” to the process of European Union accession. During the run-up to EU membership, the easing of travel visas, trade restrictions, and harmon-

isation with EU laws produced a tangible increase in youth satisfaction relative to older age groups.

However, the data also suggest that this effect was relatively short-lived, as in the year following EU accession youth satisfaction with democracy reverted to the societal baseline. With the membership process complete, optimism may have faded as younger citizens in new member states again faced their domestic political challenges – ranging from endemic corruption, to spatial inequality, to polarisation over issues of national identity or social values.

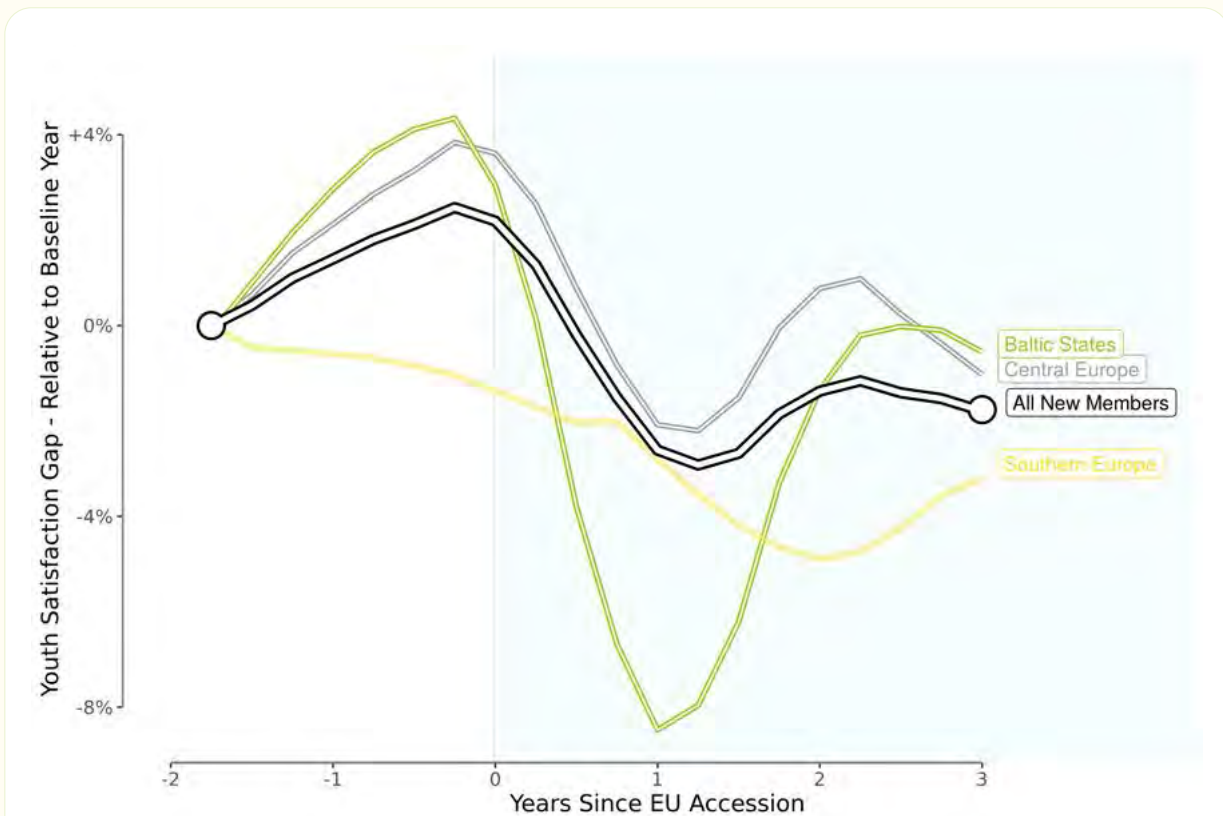


Figure 19: EU accession and the age satisfaction divide. All regional averages based on population-weighting. “Southern Europe” includes Spain, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus, and Malta. The “Baltic States” are Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. “Central Europe” includes Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Croatia, as well as Romania and Bulgaria.

Apathy versus Antipathy

How should we interpret the finding that youth satisfaction with democracy has been declining over time and by generation? The most benign interpretation is that youth disillusionment reflects only “apathy” with respect to the functioning of democratic institutions *in practice*, rather than hostility to liberal democratic ideals per se. Low levels of voter turnout may be consistent with a continuing high level of engagement in other forms of civic activism such as protest or volunteering, and low satisfaction with the functioning of democracy may reflect higher standards for probity in public office. On this view, the logical outcome of youth disillusionment is not populism, but rather such events as the 2017 “candle-light” revolution in South Korea – which campaigned for an end to executive corruption – or the “anti-system” movement that swept Volodymyr Zelensky to power in Ukraine in 2019.

In support of this view, studies have shown that many young respondents who express dissatisfaction with democracy nonetheless continue to state that democracy is the best form of government. Young people may feel that democracy is failing because politicians running for office do not seem to represent today’s youth neither in terms of ideology nor identity. For example, in a survey of 7,201 young Europeans, 44% claimed that they “cannot find parties or candidates they want to win” because they do not align with their political beliefs.¹³ Scholars claim that the inability for politicians to connect both in terms of ideology and identity is not necessarily an attack on the core tenets of democracy, but rather a critique of its functionality.

However, an alternative interpretation is that youth disengagement reflects not merely apathy, but also a rising sense of frustration with the ability of existing democratic processes to deliver tangible change. The result of such frustration may be a growing “antipathy” to core liberal ideals such as compromise, consensus, acceptance of political opponents as

legitimate, and support for third-party institutions such as the media, judiciary, or legislative checks and balances. While most respondents across the world express support for democracy as an ideal, this view is still consistent with a “populist” understanding of democracy in which political competition is viewed as a zero-sum contest between right and wrong, and in which political opponents, lacking equal moral legitimacy in the right to contest public office, therefore become justifiable targets of harassment, demonisation, exclusion from public debate, and measures to tilt the electoral process in one’s favour.

Across western democracies, for example, there is marked gap in the willingness of younger generations to view political opponents as having equal moral legitimacy (Figure 20), and a similar gap in willingness to believe that decent, well-informed individuals could reach differing political views (Figure 21). In addition, as we explore in the next section, there is also a marked tendency for younger citizens to react positively to the election of populist parties and candidates – both of the political left and the political right – as well as showing little enthusiasm for attempts to revive the political centre. This suggests that both the rhetoric of populist leaders, and their willingness to flout democratic norms, may be less offensive to younger generations than to older cohorts. Finally, some evidence does suggest that not only youth satisfaction, but also youth support for democratic governance has waned. In a survey conducted in 2017 for the TUI Stiftung, for example, YouGov found that almost half of European youth (48%) no longer regard democracy as the “best form of government”, with majorities taking this stance in France (58%) and Italy (55%), with most skeptics saying that democracy is “just as good or bad” as other forms of government.¹⁴

All of this implies an interpretation of the survey data that is neither as optimistic as the view that younger generations are merely “frustrated” or “critical” supporters of liberal democracy, or the more alarmist view that younger generations have become

¹³ B. Cammaerts, M. Bruter, S. Banaji, S. Harrison and N. Anstead. (2014). “The Myth of Youth Apathy: Young Europeans’ Critical Attitudes toward Democratic Life.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 58 no. 5: 645-664.

¹⁴ TUI Stiftung/YouGov. (2017). “Young Europe 2017: The Youth Study of the TUI Stiftung.”

sympathetic to “authoritarian” values. At the turn of the century, British sociologist Colin Crouch proposed that western democracies had transformed steadily into what he termed “post-democracies.”¹⁵ In such a society, democracy increasingly becomes a formal shell as the “energy and innovative drive pass away from the democratic arena

and into small circles of a politico-economic elite.” When this occurs, Crouch claimed, voters become apathetic, ultimately leading to the further decline of civic engagement and greater managerial control of politics. Millennials, growing up in such a “post-democratic” system, and yet facing real challenges in respect to debt, housing affordability, and the

Youth Attitudes and the Populist Style – “Manichaeism”

A defining feature of populism is its “anti-pluralism” – in that rather than seeing society as a wide spectrum of competing viewpoints and interests, to be sifted through elections, representative institutions, and the slow churn of the policymaking process, populists instead portray society as divisible into two camps – good against bad, the “pure” versus the deplorable. Such an approach is fundamentally in conflict with the foundational principle of democratic politics, which requires partisans to accept their opponents’ equal dignity and moral worth – and by consequence, their equal right to express their viewpoints, organise, and contest public office.

It is not surprisingly therefore to find that across the world, the citizens of mature

democracies are far more likely to believe that the people they disagree with politically are no different in moral value from themselves. For a founding principle of democratic politics is the separation of political and civil rights from any question of personal moral standing – with such rights granted universally, whereas by definition, moral integrity cannot (Figure 20).

However, in these same democracies there is a striking intergenerational difference, with younger citizens significantly less likely to share the opinion that those whom they disagree with are equally moral to themselves. Nor does this simply appear to be an effect of age: for in developing democracies there is little difference between older and younger generations.

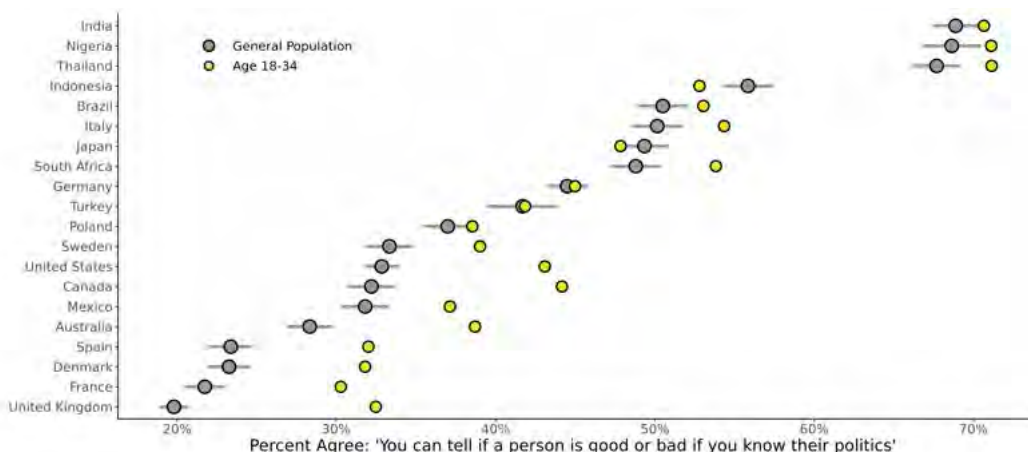


Figure 20: Percent who agree with the view that “you can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics”. 90% confidence interval indicated by grey bars. Across western democracies, younger generations are significantly more “Manichaeism” – seeing political opponents as inherently morally flawed. Source: YouGov-Cambridge Globalism Project, 2019.

¹⁵ C. Crouch. (2004). *Post-Democracy*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Polity Press.

security of employment, correctly perceive existing political institutions as offering few options capable of addressing their needs and concerns. As a result of this disconnect from democracy, there is a genuine shift not only in relation to engagement in democratic processes such as voting in elections or joining established political parties, but also to the value of “really-existing” liberal democracy as a political system and cynicism regarding the value of democratic norms such as com-

promise, free exchange of ideas, or the independence of third-party institutions that may block transformative change. The logical outcome of these value shifts is an increased propensity toward populism – in the sense of novel anti-system movements led by “authentic” politicians promising to overthrow the entire system of “managerial politics” and deliver a radical break from the artificial choices perceived in establishment parties and candidates.

Youth Attitudes and the Populist Style – Legitimacy of Alternative Viewpoints

Just as democratic politics requires acceptance of the moral legitimacy of one’s opponents, so too does it require a belief in the equality of reason – the ability of decent, informed individuals to reach nonetheless political conclusions that are different from one’s own. Yet in the age of social media “truth bubbles” and “reinforcement bias” – the tendency to absorb news from sources that reconfirm rather than challenge one’s

views – this core democratic presumption has eroded. Younger cohorts across the west are significantly more likely to view their political opponents as “misinformed,” rather than differing in values, interests, or insights potentially missed. By contrast, very few older individuals in the stable, mature democracies of the west – in particular Sweden, Germany, and the United Kingdom – share such an attitude.

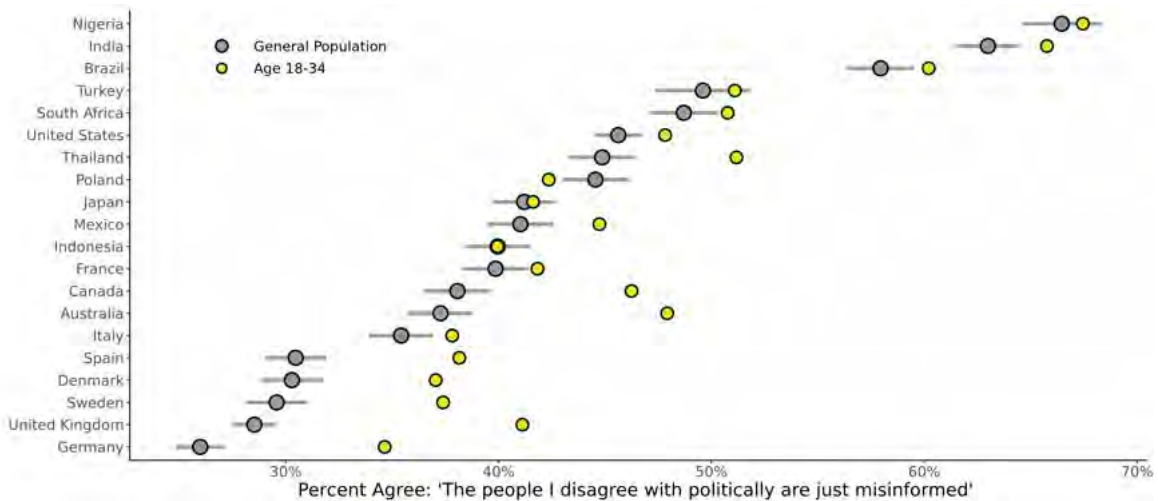


Figure 21: Percent who agree with the view that “the people I disagree with are just misinformed”. 90% confidence interval indicated by grey bars. Across western democracies, younger generations are significantly more “ideological” – seeing political beliefs as a matter of certitude, rather than ambiguity, nuance, and respectful disagreement. A comparable generational divide, however, is not found in developing democracies. YouGov-Cambridge Globalism Project, 2019.

8. The Populist Wave: A Trigger for Youth Re-engagement?

Among scholars seeking to explain youth disengagement from democracy, one of the most famous theses is Colin Crouch’s suggestion that western nations are becoming “post-democracies,” in which managerial politics has reduced the space for genuine ideological competition, leading to apathy and cynicism among younger generations. As political parties began to adopt corporate strategies of polling and public relations in the 1990s, together with a consensus on economically and socially liberal policies, the incentives for political participation may have diminished – not least of all when career politicians increasingly appear staid and “inauthentic.”

Less widely noticed, however, was that in 2016 Crouch revised his argument. Noting the apparent re-energization of participation in democracy by young people in western societies behind outsiders willing to break the mould of established norms, he claimed that populist movements – rather than encouraging democratic dissolution – could

“suggest a democratic re-awakening.”¹⁶ Since 2016, other scholars and commentators have noted this shift, observing the swaths of millennials who have supported populist parties and candidates, ranging from the “Corbyn Wave” in Great Britain in 2017, to Marine Le Pen’s mobilisation of the youth vote in France, to the Five Star Movement’s political breakthrough in Italy in 2018, to the ascent of *Podemos* to coalition government in Spain. The populist wave has only continued to galvanize young people in democracies and has seemingly reversed longstanding trends of youth disengagement from politics.

Populism and Youth Satisfaction

So how does populist mobilisation covary with youth satisfaction with democracy? Figure 22 shows the proportion of individuals aged 18-34 years who express being “satisfied” with democracy in their countries, by comparing two groups: youth in democra-

¹⁶ C. Crouch. (2016). “The March Towards Post-Democracy, Ten Years On.” *The Political Quarterly*, 87(1), 71-75.



Figure 22: Democracies of the 2015- “populist wave” include Brazil (Bolsonaro, 2018-), the United States (Trump, 2016-), Poland (Law and Justice, 2015-), the Philippines (Duterte, 2016-), Italy (Five Star Movement and the League, 2018-), the Czech Republic (Babiš, 2017-), Greece (Syriza, 2015-9), Spain (Podemos, 2019-), and Mexico (López Obrador, 2018-).

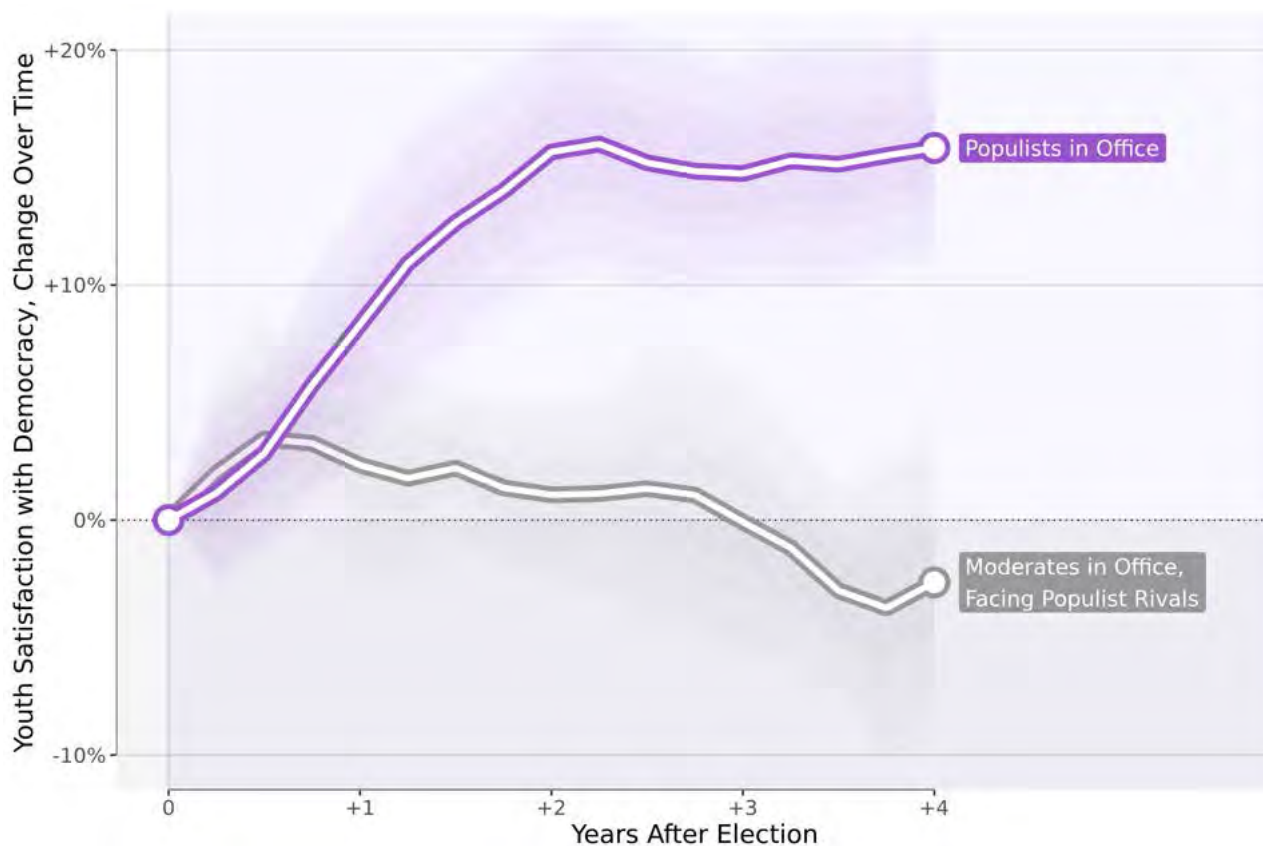


Figure 23: Youth satisfaction with democracy before and after election victories by populists and moderate candidates, where moderates faced a populist challenger. On average, youth satisfaction with democracy increases by 16 percentage points during a first populist term in office, but exhibits no change when office is instead won by a moderate or status quo politician. Confidence intervals shown in bands for the 50%, 68%, 90%, and 95% thresholds, based on country case variation in each category. Underlying cases and trajectories are shown in Figures 25, 26, 28 and 29.

cies that elected a populist leader during the “populist wave” of 2015 to present, and those in democracies that did not do so. Obviously, there is some extent to which declining civic contentment has contributed to the populist breakthrough, as youth satisfaction was declining steadily during the five years prior to the election of populist leaders. However, during the populist wave itself, a curious reversal has begun. Countries electing populist leaders exhibit a sharp turnaround in popular disenchantment with democracy – to the point that in such countries, young people now have *higher* satisfaction with democracy on average than in other democracies.

Nor is this jump simply the result of individual outliers. Rather, it reflects a consistent pattern across cases. This is shown by

the fairly narrow error margins in Figure 23, which takes a paired comparison of populist versus “moderate” governments in countries where populist parties have stood a reasonable chance of entering office. Moreover, as we explore further in the following sections, it can also be seen on a case-by-case basis. Surprisingly, perhaps, we also find this youth satisfaction effect present among both “left-wing” and “right-wing” populist cases. This is likely a reflection of the fact that in some countries, right-wing populists have managed to mobilise youth support: for example, in the 2017 elections in France, “over half of voters below 25 years old supported either Le Pen or Mélenchon,”¹⁷ while in Poland’s 2019 election “20% of voters under 30 chose the “radical right,” against barely 1% of those over 60.”¹⁸

¹⁷ J. Bamat. (2017). “Mélenchon and Le Pen Win Over Youth in French Vote.” *France 24*. April 24.

¹⁸ Schneider, F. (2019). “Why Young Poles Voted for “National-Liberals””, *VoxEurop*, October 24.

Latin America and the Pink Tide

Beginning in the late 1990s, Latin American countries were swept by a wave of left-wing governments, often referred to as the pink tide. Some of these leaders, such as Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, Evo Morales of Bolivia and Rafael Correa of Ecuador, were overtly populist, deploying radical rhetoric to position themselves as the voice of the people against corrupted elites and institutions. Others, such as Michelle Bachelet of Chile, offered a more moderate centre-left platform, focusing upon improved socio-economic standards and quality of life. Yet others, such as Lula da Silva of Brazil, campaigned for office on a populist platform,

but moderated their style in the presidency, while in Argentina Néstor Kirchner and his wife Cristina Fernández de Kirchner began on a moderate platform under the former, before developing an increasingly populist stance under the latter’s presidency from 2007 to 2015.

Regardless of the degree of populism, Figure 24 below shows that young people’s satisfaction with democracy increased following the election of “pink tide” leaders. Barring one exception, this effect seems to have been universal, with satisfaction rising by 12 percentage points by the end of the first term of office.

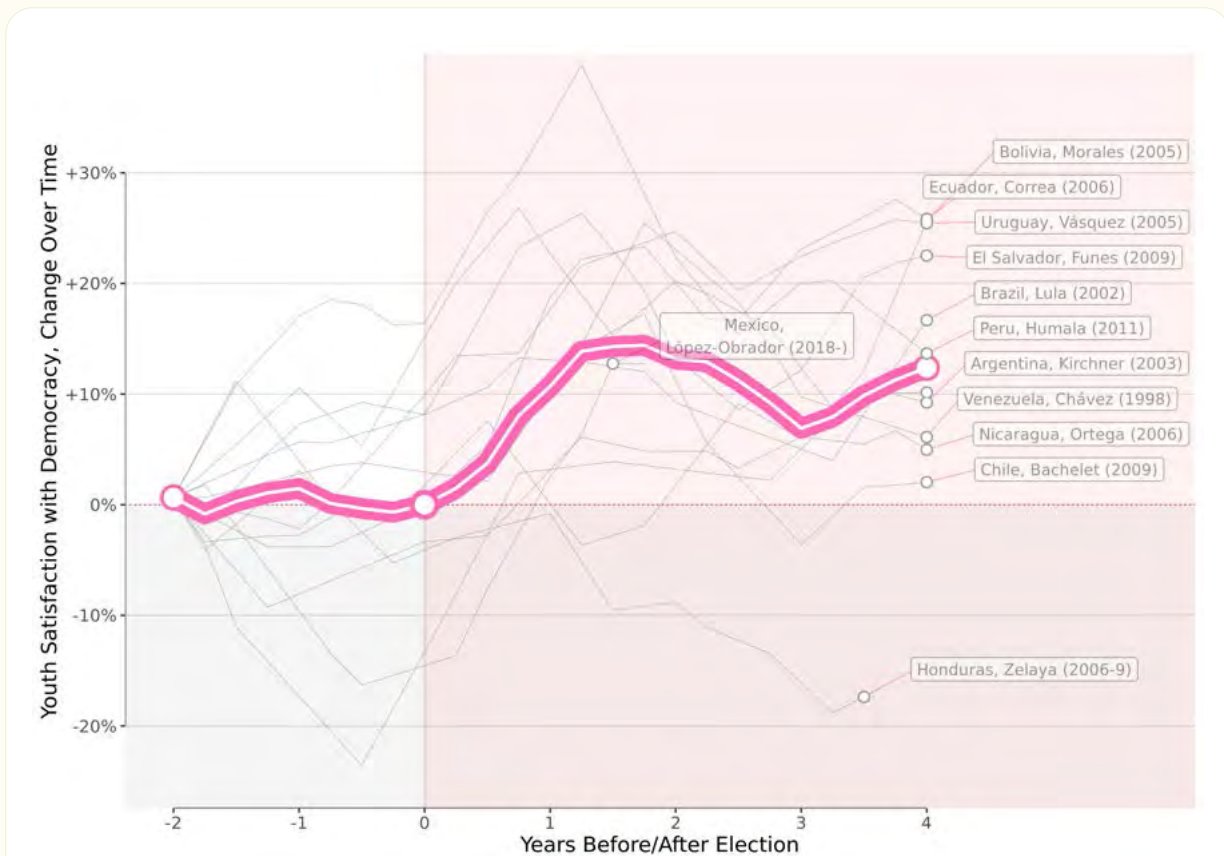


Figure 24: Youth satisfaction with democracy before and following the election of “pink tide” governments in Latin America. Following the election of a “pink tide” administration, youth satisfaction with democracy rose on average by 12 percentage points by the end of the first term.

Youth Satisfaction under Left-Wing Populism

In general, youth mobilisation has aided the breakthrough of new left-wing movements. From Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, to Syriza in Greece, to *Podemos* in Spain or Ortega in Nicaragua, left-wing populism has tapped the discontent of young people throughout Latin America and southern Europe, angry at the prevalence of youth unemployment, unequal access to state benefits, and the prevalence of bribery and corruption.

Figure 25 below shows that in the first two years of a left-wing populist administration, there is a marked increase in young people’s satisfaction with democracy. This effect is universal across cases, with especially large increases occurring in Mexico following the 2018 election of López Obrador, in Bolivia following the 2005 election of Evo Morales, and in Ecuador following the 2006 election of Rafael Correa.

After the first two years in office, some coun-

tries do see a mild disillusionment effect – such as in Argentina under Néstor Kirchner, or during the first term in office of Hugo Chávez. Yet on average by the end of four years of a left-wing populist government, youth satisfaction with democracy remains 16 percentage points higher than before.

Notably, this effect appears to be independent of the economic cycle. Populists who governed throughout the shocks of the global financial crisis – such as Evo Morales in Bolivia, Rafael Correa in Ecuador or Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua – saw no drop in youth democratic approval during that period. Even more surprisingly, perhaps, the effect is present even when populist governments were responsible for the economic crisis that took hold during their term of office. In Greece, though Syriza’s 2015 referendum on the European Union bailout agreement tipped the country back into a severe recession, youth satisfaction with democracy nonetheless continued to rise.

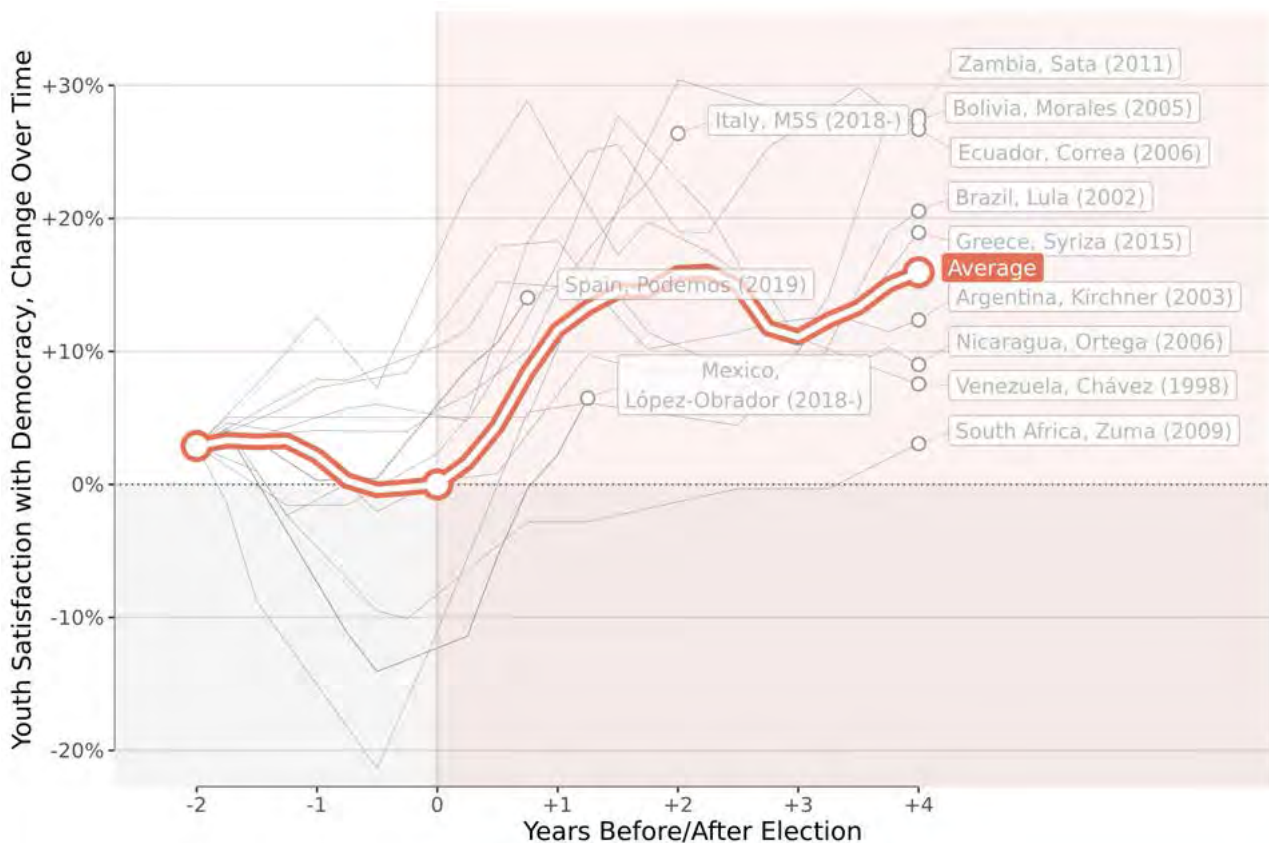


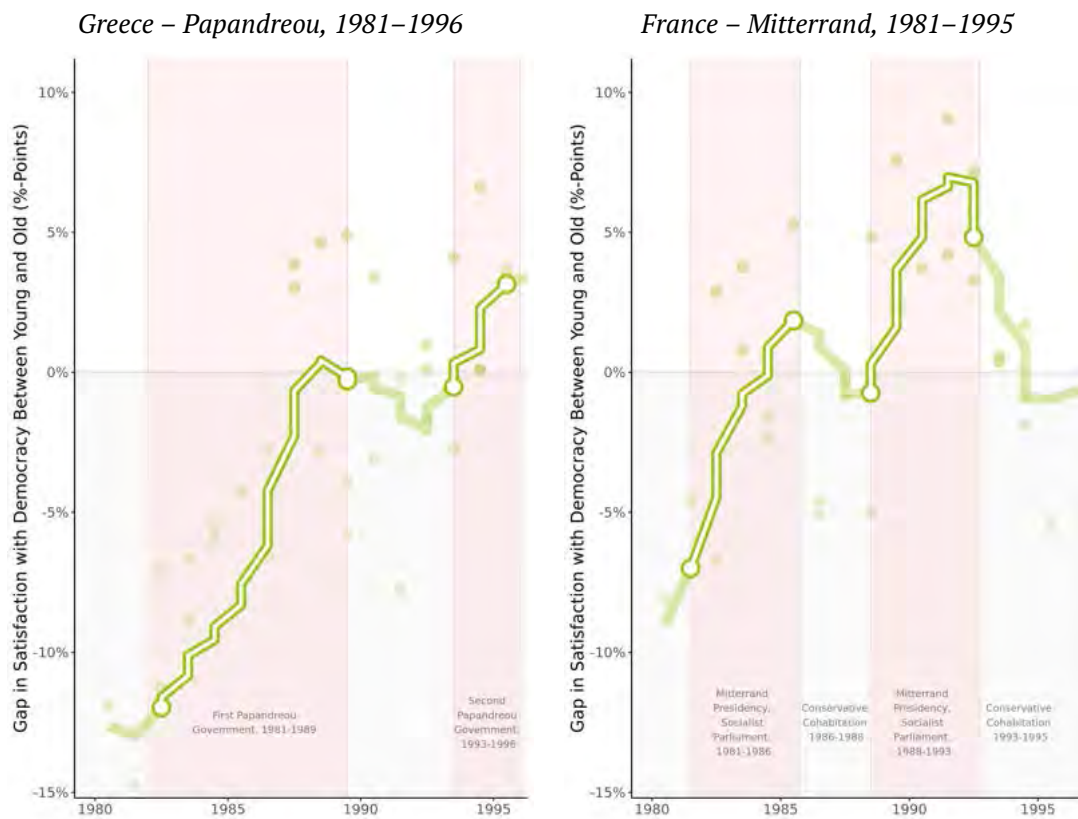
Figure 25: Youth satisfaction with democracy before and after left-wing populist election victories (or succession in office, in the case of Jacob Zuma in South Africa), with individual cases shown. A positive effect is found in all cases in the sample, with an especially strong increase during the first two years in office.

Earlier Left Mobilisation Waves - France and Greece

Long-term evidence from Western Europe suggests that the youth re-engagement in democratic politics seen with anti-system left-wing governments has occurred historically. Former Greek premier Andreas Papandreou – who famously declared that “there are no institutions, only the people” – is often seen as a model left-populist. Papandreou combined firebrand rhetoric with sweeping social reforms. Similarly in France, François Mitterrand ascended to the presidency in 1981 promising a “rupture with capitalism”, governing in coal-

ition with the French Communist Party to deliver nationalisation, a wealth tax, and an extensive social benefits.

In both cases, youth satisfaction with democracy began in substantial deficit – well below that of older age cohorts. By the end of their first terms, however, both had succeeded in raising youth satisfaction to level with the national average. This suggests a broader pattern whereby anti-systemic left challengers are capable of rejuvenating democratic politics.



“Deficit” (surplus) in youth (age 18-34) satisfaction with democracy vis-a-vis older respondents (age 35+) in Greece during the Papandreou years, 1981–1996. Youth satisfaction rose significantly during the Papandreou decade, but fell after his ousting in 1989 until his 1993 return.

“Deficit” (surplus) in youth (age 18-34) satisfaction with democracy vis-a-vis older respondents (age 35+) in France during the Mitterrand years, 1981–1995. Note how relative satisfaction fell during the years of “cohabitation,” when Mitterrand ruled with a conservative premier.

Youth Satisfaction: Right-Wing Populism

If rising levels of youth satisfaction with democracy under left-wing populist governments are to be expected, what may appear more surprising is that the effect appears similar during the first tenure in office a right-wing populist government (Figure 26).

In every single instance except one – the presidency of Donald Trump in the United States – respondents aged 18-34 became more satisfied with democracy during the first two years in office of a right-wing populist leader or party, though youth approval of Trump’s performance has also risen over time (see Figure 27). This jump has been especially sharp in Brazil under Jair Bolsonaro, but was also seen in Austria after Jörg Haider’s FPÖ entered government in 2000, in Hungary following the 2010 election of Viktor Orbán, and on both occasions (2005–7 and 2015 to date) that the *Law and Justice* party entered office in Poland.

These results suggest, therefore, that the

distinction between “left” and “right” wing populism may present something of a false dichotomy. Both the style of politics, and the substantive issues addressed by such parties, may be appealing to very similar electoral demographics – including younger voters who are disengaged from mainstream democratic politics. This is especially the case where conservative populists address issues of social justice and unemployment in left-behind regions, such as Viktor Orbán’s workfare programme in Hungary, or Jarosław Kaczyński’s commitment to build a “Polish version of the welfare state.”

But it may also more generally be the case in societies where widespread distrust of political elites has followed major corruption scandals – such as the *Lava Jato* (“Car Wash”) investigations in Brazil (2014–16), the *Rywin Affair* in Poland (2002–4), or the *Tangentopoli* (“Bribesville”) scandal in Italy (1992–4) – making new voters open to new parties of either left or right promising to overturn the establishment.

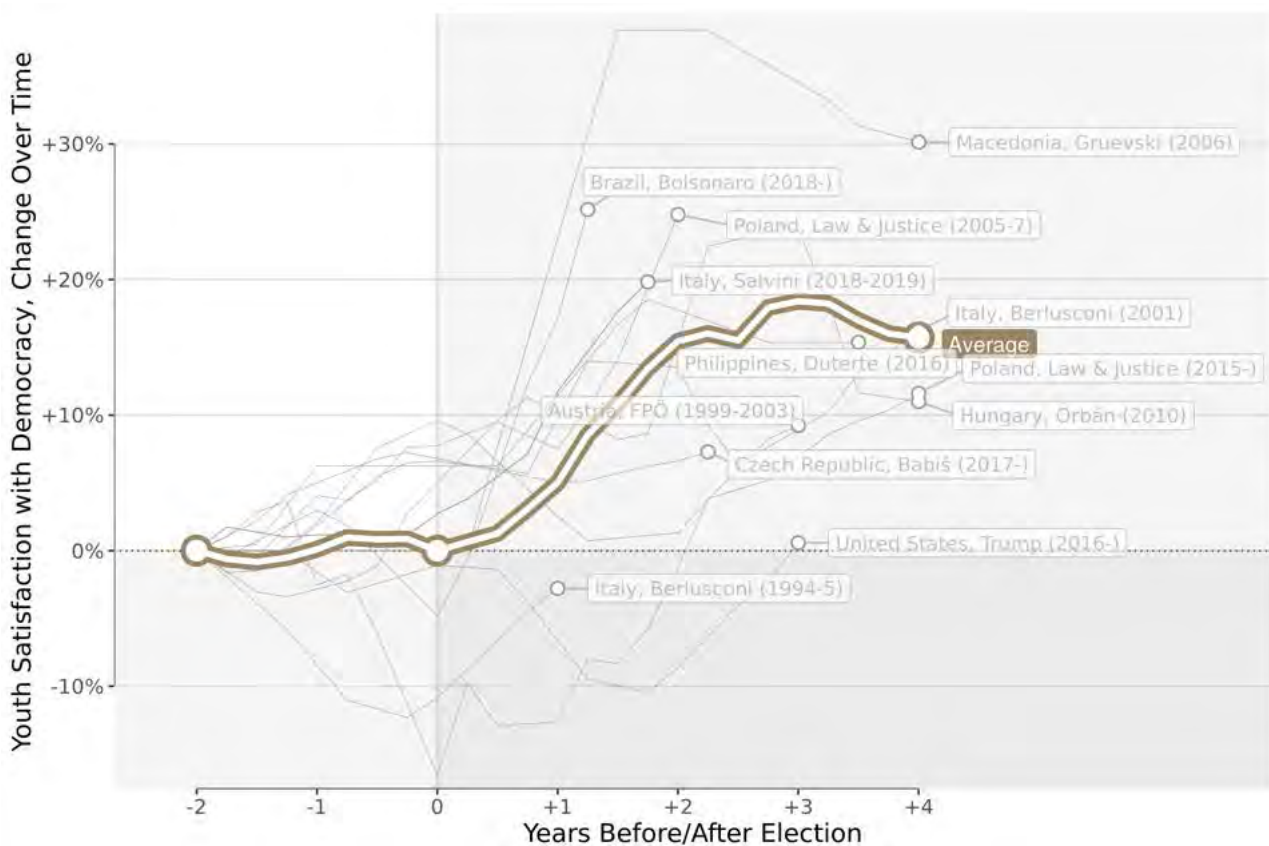


Figure 26: Youth satisfaction with democracy in the years before and after the election victory of a right-wing populist party or candidate. Youth satisfaction with democracy rises in all cases by the end of a first term in office, with especially large gains in developing democracies. Turkey from 2002–6 (Erdogan) and India from 2014–8 (Modi) not included due to limited observations, though both saw a large increase.

Does the Populist Style of Politics Resonate with Younger Voters?

Donald Trump's Rising Approval Among Youth - And Alienation of Older Americans

After the November 2016 election of Donald J. Trump as President of the United States, it was widely believed that he would take a more “presidential” tone in public office. However, such expectations were wide from the mark, as his four years in office have largely replicated the tone of his presidential campaign – characterised by social media controversy, endorsement of conspiracy theories, bombastic rhetoric, and populist attacks on the media and public institutions.

How has this affected his standing with the American public? As is typical for Republican candidates, Donald Trump won the 2016 election with disproportionate support from older Americans, while under-

performing among younger generations. On the first day of polling following his inauguration, 63% of Americans aged 65 and above approved of his performance, compared to just 37% of 30-44 year-olds and 35% among the under-30.

By the end of his “populist presidency”, however, a curious reversal has set in, as older Americans have become steadily alienated by his bombastic tone, while millennials have responded positively. Americans aged 30-44 no longer differ substantially from the U.S. average in their opinion of how Donald Trump is handling his presidential role, while those aged 18-29 have seen an even larger (+8%) increase, albeit from a lower initial level.

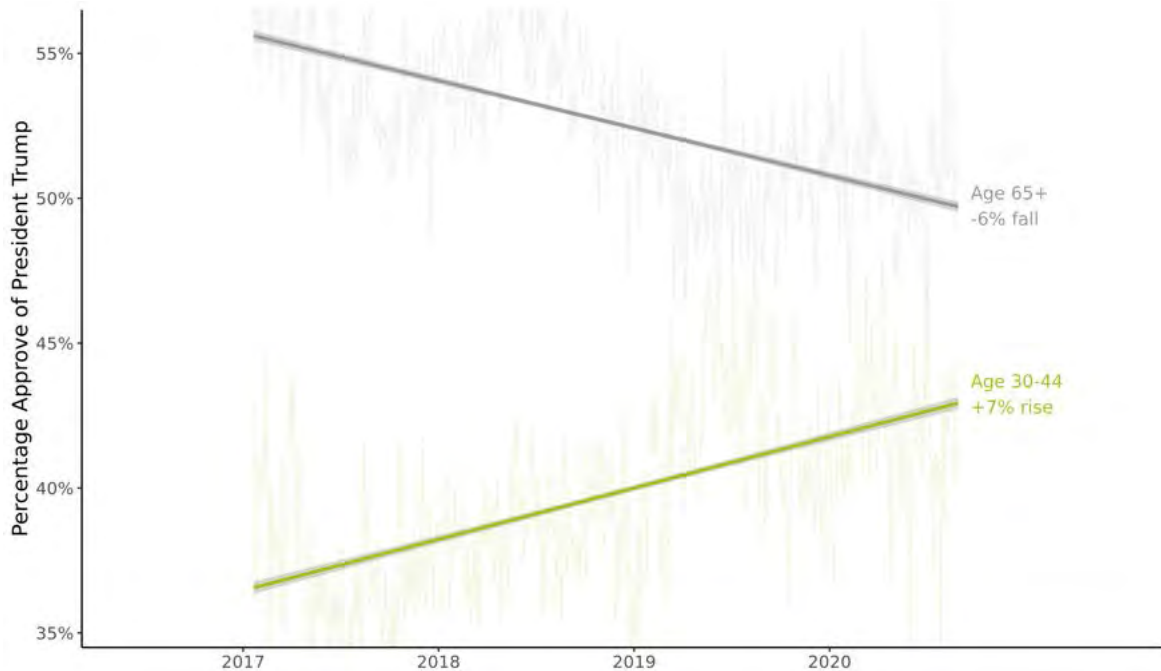


Figure 27: Daily approval (“somewhat approve” and “strongly approve”) of how Donald J. Trump is handling the presidency, 2017–2020. Valid responses only. The evidence suggests that Donald Trump’s populist style of governance – with its twitterstorms, conspiracy theories, and bombastic rhetoric – has steadily alienated older Americans (65+) over the course of his presidency. However, Americans in the millennial to Generation X age group have actually warmed to his style, such that there is no longer a significant gap between this cohort’s attitude to President Trump and that of the U.S. public as a whole. Source: YouGov, 2017–20.

Reviving the Political Centre – What Happens When Moderates Beat Populists?

In recent years, there have been several attempts to revive the political centre in a manner that is appealing to younger voters. Perhaps the most noteworthy example is French president Emmanuel Macron’s move to found a new political party, *La République en Marche!* (LREM), staffed by young volunteers and featuring members of parliament selected from generally younger and generally apolitical backgrounds. However other less sweeping attempts have included the brief premiership of Matteo Renzi in Italy, at the time the youngest person to hold the office at 39 years old, or Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential election campaign, which brought in swathes of young volunteers to support a candidate who – at 47 years of age – marked a stark contrast from his 72-year old opponent, Senator John McCain.

However, thus far there is little evidence to suggest that such attempts to revitalise the political centre have durably revived youth satisfaction with democracy. Two years into the presidency of Emmanuel Macron, millennial discontent with democracy in France had again reverted to its all-time lows. Matteo Renzi’s premiership of Italy failed to bring

young Italians back to the political centre, who instead migrated to populist firebrand Beppe Grillo’s Five Star Movement. And while Barack Obama remains personally popular with younger Americans, it did not revive the moderate wing of his own party, whose candidate in the 2016 presidential election – Hillary Clinton – received the electoral support of just a quarter of Americans aged less than 30, as over half abstained from voting at all.

Taking a more systematic comparison across countries, the evidence suggests a general pattern. A small bounce in youth satisfaction for one or two years is then followed by accelerated discontent, and renewed populist mobilisation (Figures 28 and 29).

When Left-Wing Populists Lose

First, when moderate politicians govern in the shadow of a left-wing populist challenger, youth satisfaction initially rises, even when the latter had mobilised significant youth support. This has been the case in Greece since the victory of *New Democracy* over *Syriza* in 2019, and for Theresa May following her victory against Jeremy Corbyn in the 2017 British general election, at least during the period when her party was still attempting to

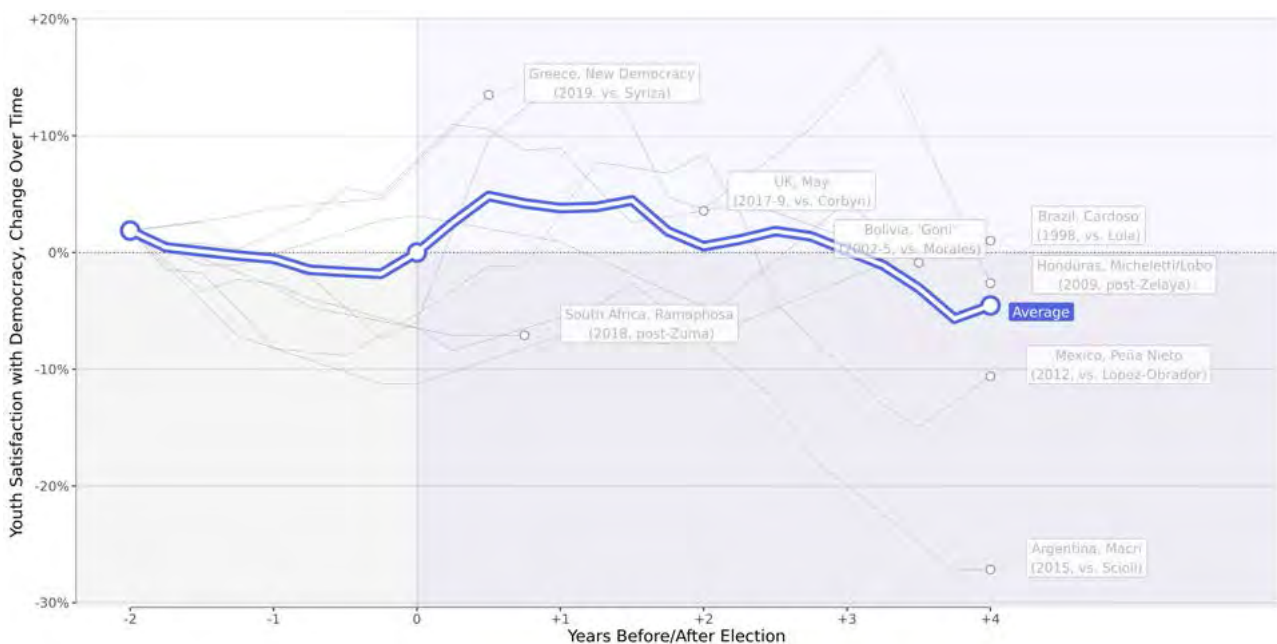


Figure 28: Youth satisfaction with democracy when moderate politicians hold office in the wake of left-wing populist challengers. An initial positive post-election effect is observed in the first two years, followed by renewed disillusionment. On average, youth satisfaction declines by one percentage point by the end of the term.

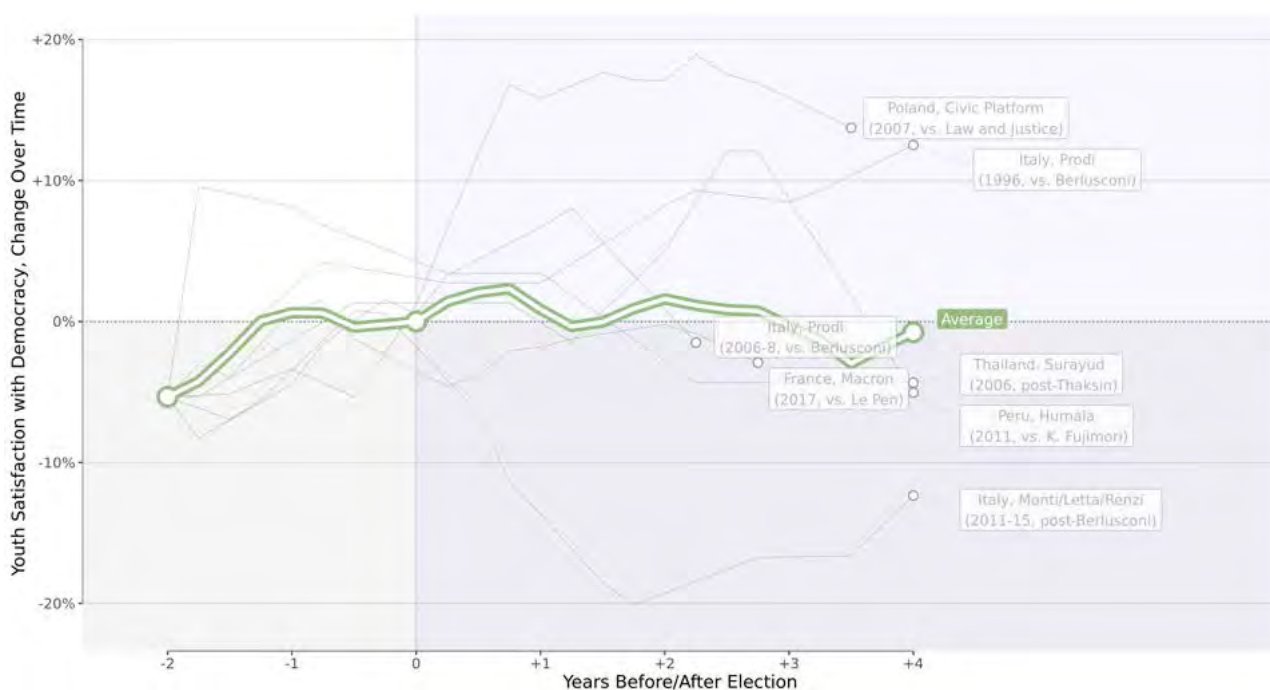


Figure 29: Youth satisfaction with democracy when moderate politicians hold office in the wake of right-wing populist challengers. An initial positive post-election effect lasts around two years, followed by a return to baseline. On average, youth satisfaction declines by five percentage points by the end of the term.

navigate a “softer” Brexit trajectory comprising continued access to the European Single Market and Customs Union.¹⁹

After this point, however, the trajectory is universally negative. Especially sharp declines were seen in Mexico during the latter half of Peña Nieto’s administration, and in Argentina during the “post-populist” government of Mauricio Macri. And in both cases, left-wing populism was not defeated, merely postponed: Peña Nieto’s 2012 opponent, López Obrador, ousted his party from office in 2018, while Macri’s populist predecessor, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, did the same in 2019. Meanwhile, May’s failure to pass a Brexit compromise was followed by fresh elections in 2019, opposing the “economic populism” of Corbyn’s Labour Party to the more overtly “populist conservatism” of her successor, Boris Johnson.

When Right-Wing Populists Lose

What about those cases where moderate politicians prevail against a populist can-

didate of the right? Here there are fewer cases, yet the record is similar. In France, a rise in youth satisfaction during Emmanuel Macron’s first year was followed by the lowest levels of youth contentment on record. In Italy, a “post-populist” administration has replaced Silvio Berlusconi on three occasions – in 1995, 2006, and 2011 – yet only once, in the late 1990s, did it see a sustained period of relative youth contentment. At other times disillusionment was accompanied by renewed populist mobilisation, resulting in Berlusconi’s return to office in 2008, and a landslide victory for Matteo Salvini’s (Northern) League and the anti-establishment Five Star Movement in 2018.

The evidence suggests, therefore, very few instances in which moderates have managed to break the populist pattern. In large part, that is because populism is not simply a force that feeds on itself, but one which feeds upon prevailing resentments in society. To the extent that societies have managed to move beyond populism, it is typically because a populist party itself transforms into a more

¹⁹ This culminated in the 2018 “Chequers Plan,” which attempted to negotiate continued trade integration under a specific “rulebook” for British participation. Being seen by Conservative hardliners as too close to continued EU membership, it resulted in cabinet resignations by David Davis and Boris Johnson. Later rejected by the European Union, the failure to find a middle road began the end of May’s premiership.

moderate establishment force - as Greece's PASOK did following the Andreas Papandreou years - or because a populist leader, having resorted to increasingly authoritarian measures to retain their hold on power, produces a systemic crisis that is followed by a moment of complete democratic refoundation.

Riding the Populist Tiger?

All of the foregoing suggests a contrarian conclusion. If attempts to "revive the political centre" have generally failed to re-engage younger generations with the democratic process, and efforts to "contain" populism have similarly proven unsuccessful, then might populism itself be the revitalising force that is required to reconnect younger generations with democracy? After all, in countries that have recently elected populist leaders, youth satisfaction has risen, while previous waves of populist mobilisation - in Greece in the 1980s, in France preceding the election of François Mitterrand, and in Latin America during the pink tide - also saw a reversal of the democratic disconnect.

The argument deserves serious consideration. Given the dependence of populism upon preexisting resentments in society - whether due to wealth inequalities between the generations, spatial inequality between successful and "left-behind" regions, social exclusion among ethnic minorities or indigenous peoples, or anger at the corruption of prevailing political elites - it is important to acknowledge that populist parties do, often, take measures in office aimed at addressing these disparities. In Latin America, populists of the "pink tide" used the resource boom of the 2000s to finance widespread social benefits to poorer groups in society. In Hungary and Poland, recent welfare policies have reduced income inequalities between large cities and rural areas. In 1980s Greece, Andreas Papandreou massively expanded public sector employment, providing jobs to

the large pool of unemployed baby boomers that had recently entered the workforce. And while corruption generally deteriorates under populist administrations, in India the country has improved its *Transparency International* score by 14 places since the election of Narendra Modi in 2014 on a platform of revolt against the scandals that had embroiled the previous Congress government, while Turkey improved by 22 places during the first decade of Erdoğan's tenure of office as prevailing corruption networks were displaced.²⁰

Where populists do succeed in defusing the bases of resentment that propel them to office, there exists the possibility of their gradual transformation into a more "moderate" establishment force, peacefully alternating power with opposition parties. In Greece, Andreas Papandreou's PASOK party made such an evolution in the 1990s.²¹ In France, Charles de Gaulle's *Rassemblement du Peuple Français* ("Rally for the French People") initially stressed populist and "Bonapartist" themes in the 1950s, but was dissolved and relaunched several times before eventually settling into Jacques Chirac's more moderate conservative party of the 1970s, the *Rassemblement pour la République* ("Rally for the Republic"). Though it is too early to be sure, signs of a similar evolution can be detected in Italy's Five Star Movement since Luigi Di Maio replaced populist firebrand Beppe Grillo as its leader in September 2017. Meanwhile in Latin America several politicians, including Brazil's Lula da Silva, have campaigned on populist platforms before moderating their positions and rhetoric in office. Once in power, his government then turned to practical policies to alleviate structural poverty and exclusion - such as the *Bolsa Família*, estimated to account for 20% of the drop in inequality between 2001 and 2006.²²

Populist Paralysis

However, if in the short term the impact of populism may be salutary for democratic

²⁰ Important to note however is that Turkey's corruption ratings have since deteriorated - in particular since the coup attempt of 2016, and Erdoğan's constitutional reforms the following year, which centralised power around his office.

²¹ See T.S. Pappas and P. Aslanidis (2015) "Greek Populism: A Political Drama in Five Acts", in Pappas and Kriesi (eds.) *European Populism in the Shadow of the Great Recession*.

²² United Nations Development Program. (2006). "Cash Transfer Programmes in Brazil: Impacts on Inequality and Poverty."

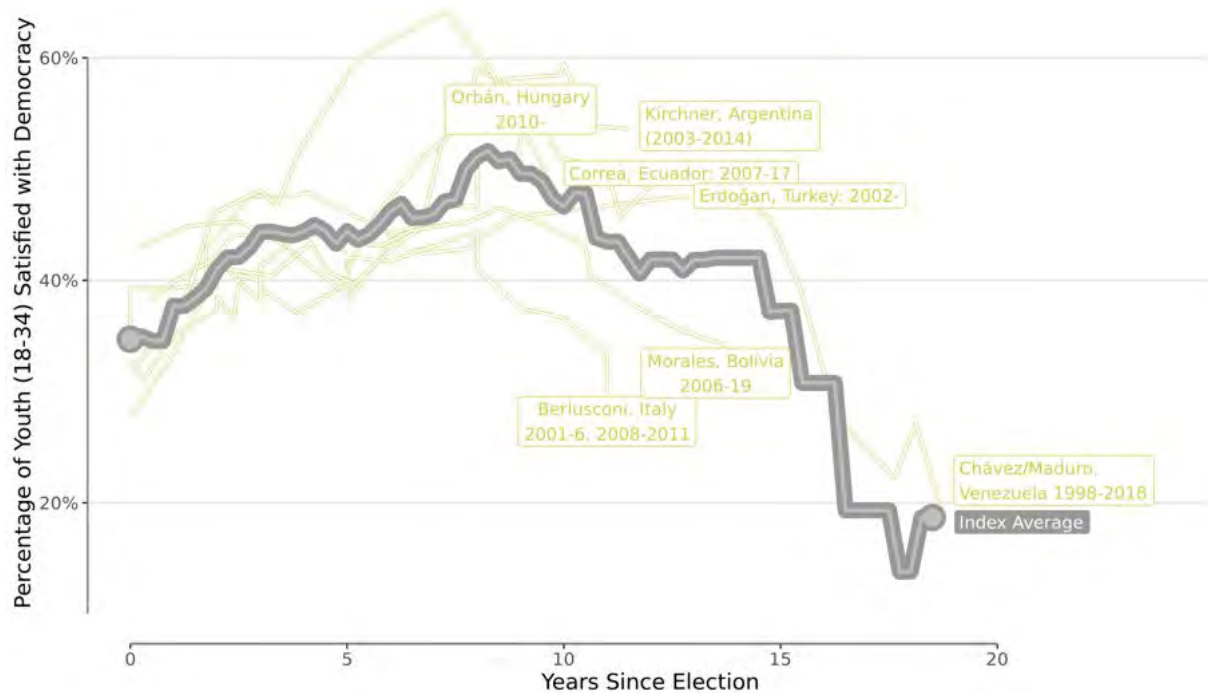


Figure 30: Youth satisfaction with democracy during the period in office of populist governments lasting more than two terms. While youth satisfaction shows a rising trend during the first two terms of office, from the onset of the third term, satisfaction tends to decline sharply – as populist leaders become ensnared in the consequences of economic mismanagement, scandals surrounding their abuse of office, and increasingly blatant attempts to curtail democratic competition and hold on to power.

legitimacy, its longer-term consequences are more ambiguous. Inherent in the nature of populism – with its artificial division of society into the “pure” people and the “corrupted” elite – is a tendency to accumulate conflicts between the ruling party or movement and the institutions designed to restrain executive abuse of power. After a period of months or years, populist leaders find that their grandiose promises are too impractical to be delivered, while other policies are frustrated by institutional resistance from the legislature, civil service, international organisations, and courts. Frequently, populists bring this resistance upon themselves, initiating fights against constraining institutions in the name of “the will of the people” rather than working to build coalitions. Further, populists often disregard accepted norms of democratic governance and rule of law, disburse resources via party networks, and violate international treaties and public contracts.²³

This marks the onset of a new phase in populist governance: “populist paralysis.” Governments become steadily unable to function due to internal gridlock, conflict with the legislature and courts, standoffs with international organisations such as the IMF or EU, and civil servants that frustrate policy from within. Aware that popular support is fading, populists often then begin to constrain civil rights and political liberties.

If “populism in power” has the effect of reviving youth satisfaction with democracy, its long-term consequences are therefore more disconcerting. Figure 30 shows that when populist governments last more than two terms, young people’s satisfaction with democracy declines at first gradually, and then, precipitously. If populism is a healthy corrective to democratic failures in addressing public frustrations and the complacency of political elites, it may be a remedy best taken in small doses.

²³ Wang, Y.T. (2020). “Clientelistic Parties and Satisfaction with Democracy,” *Party Politics*, 26(4): 402–414.

9. Conclusion: Youth, Populism and Democracy

In recent years, it has become commonplace to argue that there is a “disconnect” between younger generations and the democratic process. However, until now such claims have lacked comprehensive, comparative data from which to draw conclusions. In this report we have presented results from the most complete global dataset on satisfaction with democracy over the past three decades, allowing us to compare not only how youth attitudes differ from those of older respondents, but also to compare how each generation – from millennials through to baby boomers – differs from prior generations at the same points in life.

What we find is deeply concerning. Across the world, younger generations are not only more dissatisfied with democratic performance than the old, but also more discontent than previous generations at similar life stages.

So why has this “democratic disconnect” emerged, and how might it be bridged? For now, we can sketch two broad conclusions. First, in the developed democracies of North America, Great Britain, Australia, and southern Europe, there is a growing intergenerational divide in life opportunities. The impact of the eurozone crisis in the periphery and decades of rising wealth inequality have left younger citizens facing growing difficulty in finding secure employment, owning a home, starting a family, or getting ahead in life independent of inherited wealth and privilege. For this reason, youth discontent frequently expresses itself in the form of left-wing populism – led by politicians prepared to break with economic orthodoxy, and implement a transformative agenda addressing youth debt, unemployment, and wages. Yet where right-wing populists such as Marine Le Pen’s National Rally (*Rassemblement National*) in France or the *Vlaams Belang* in Belgium have pivoted towards interventionism, youth support has flowed to anti-system challengers on the right.²⁴

Meanwhile in developing democracies in Asia, Latin America, and sub-Saharan Africa, a generation after the democratic transitions

of the 1970s to 1990s many countries continue to struggle with endemic challenges of corruption, state weakness, and absence of the rule of law. While older generations who lived through the “democracy struggle” continue to view their newfound institutions positively – and are often active members of the political parties shaping democratic politics in the wake of authoritarianism’s demise – younger citizens have grown up only in the shadow of democracy’s shortcomings. This intergenerational divide is especially acute in developing democracies where such failures have been exposed via widespread corruption scandals, such as the *Lava Gato* investigations in Brazil, or South Africa’s rolling wave of exposés since the Gupta report of 2016. In these democracies, a rising proportion of younger voters have been attracted to anti-system candidates promising to overthrow the existing party apparatus. This appears true regardless of whether such movements promise a centrist programme of democratic renewal – as Volodymyr Zelensky, arguably, did in Ukraine in 2019 – or like Brazil’s Jair Bolsonaro, express overt sympathy with the authoritarian past.

The broader question we are left with, then, is this: how can faith in democracy be restored in the face of systemic discontent and populist mobilisation? If there is an answer here, it may be to focus less upon “populism” as a threat and more upon democracy’s founding promise – to represent the concerns of citizens, and deliver effective and timely policy solutions. The rise of populism signals that existing structures have failed to address longstanding resentments in society, ranging from inequalities of wealth, to economic insecurity, to malfeasance among economic and social elites. If the populist challenge shocks moderate parties and leaders into taking measures to reverse these trends – rather than engaging in cosmetic attempts to rebrand the politics of the past – then the populist wave may still prompt democracy’s rebirth, rather than the onset of its gradual decay.

²⁴ Hinnant, L. (2019). “Europe’s Far-Right Parties Hunt Down the Youth Vote,” *Associated Press News*, May 16.

Methodological Annex

Methodology I: Data Sources

Survey Sources

Public opinion on satisfaction with democracy is drawn from forty-three different nationally representative survey sources that were formatted and merged by the HUMAN Surveys project. We supplemented this with aggregated measures of satisfaction with democracy from the most recent years of Pew Research's Global Attitudes and Trends series, since the respondent survey data was not available to the public at the time of publication. We additionally included survey data from YouGov for recent years to get to most up-to-date picture of global satisfaction with democracy.

The report draws upon the aggregated responses of almost five million survey respondents from 160 countries between 1973 and 2020. The merged data represents almost 4000 country-survey observations. Many countries were surveyed multiple times a year by different survey sources, providing greater reliability from repeated measurements. Data comes from the rounds, waves, years, or modules containing selected satisfaction with democracy variables that were listed in Table 1 at the start of this report.

Survey Items

The following questions and answers are used on different surveys to measure satisfaction with democracy. There may be minor differences from the version asked on surveys, such as the layout of the questions and direction or order of the answers. HUMAN Surveys reorders and recodes answer values for consistency to facilitate harmonization of target variables. The formatted versions are displayed here, but all original responses were maintained. All non-valid and unusable answers were recoded into four standard missing values wherever possible (do not know, refused, not applicable, and missing), but these were all treated as missing data when aggregating national scores for analysis.

Politbarometer:

“What would you say about democracy in [Country] in general? Are you... 0 = rather dissatisfied, 1 = rather satisfied”

AmericasBarometer, IntUne - Integrated and United, Survey of the Afghan People, British Election Study, Israel National Election Studies:

“In general, would you say you are very satisfied, satisfied, unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = very dissatisfied, 1 = dissatisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3 = very satisfied”

Asian Barometer Survey, European Values Study, Latinobarómetro, World Values Survey, Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, New Europe Barometer, Australian Election Study, Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, Candidate Countries Eurobarometer, Standard and Special Eurobarometer, Global Attitudes and Trends, EU Neighbourhood Barometer, New Zealand Election Study, YouGov Surveys, Flash Eurobarometer, Comparative National Elections Project, European Election Study - Voter Study, Canadian Election Study, Icelandic National Election Study:

“On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]. Are you ...? 0 = not at all satisfied, 1 = not very satisfied, 2 = fairly satisfied, 3 = very satisfied”

Voice of the People Series, New Europe Barometer:

“Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement. Is that strongly or slightly? In general, I am satisfied with democracy. 0 = disagree strongly, 1 = disagree slightly, 2 = agree slightly, 3 = agree strongly”

American National Election Studies, British Election Study:

“On the whole, are you satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = not at all satisfied, 1 = not very satisfied, 2 = fairly satisfied, 3 = satisfied”

Arab Transformations Project:

“How satisfied are you with the following: The way democracy is developing in our country? 0 = defi-

nitely dissatisfied, 1 = rather dissatisfied, 2 = quite satisfied, 3 = definitely satisfied”

European Election Study - Voter Study:

“Some people are for the present government of your country. Others are against it. Putting aside whether you are for or against the present government, on the whole are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in your country?? 0 = not at all satisfied, 1 = not very satisfied, 2 = fairly satisfied, 3 = very satisfied”

Israel National Election Studies:

“In general, to what extent are you satisfied with [Country’s] democracy? 0 = not satisfied at all, 1 = not so satisfied, 2 = quite satisfied, 3 = very satisfied”

Politbarometer:

‘What would you say about democracy in [Country]? For example, regarding our political parties and whole political system? Are you... 0 = very dissatisfied, 1 = dissatisfied, 2 = satisfied, 3 = very satisfied”

Afrobarometer, Comparative National Elections Project:

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = [Country] is not a democracy, 1 = not at all satisfied, 2 = not very satisfied, 3 = fairly satisfied, 4 = very satisfied”

Asia Barometer, Australian Voter Experience:

“Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the following aspects of your life. The democratic system. 0 = very dissatisfied, 1 = somewhat dissatisfied, 2 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat satisfied, 4 = very satisfied”

European Election Study - Voter Study:

“On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = not at all satisfied, 1 = not very satisfied, 2 = neither, 3 = fairly satisfied, 4 = very satisfied”

South African Social Attitudes Survey:

“How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way

democracy is working in [Country]? 0 = very dissatisfied, 1 = dissatisfied, 2 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 = satisfied, 4 = very satisfied”

Afrobarometer:

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = [Country] is not a democracy, 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat satisfied, 5 = very satisfied”

Polish General Social Survey:

“Now I would like to ask you about democracy in [Country]. Taking everything into consideration, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the kind of democracy that exists in [Country]? 0 = there is no democracy in [Country], 1 = very unsatisfied, 2 = unsatisfied, 3 = rather unsatisfied, 4 = rather satisfied, 5 = satisfied, 6 = very satisfied”

Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe:

“Are you completely satisfied or completely dissatisfied with the way in which democracy is working in [Country] today? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 9 = completely satisfied”

Standard and Special Eurobarometer, European Election Study - Voter Study:

“On the whole, to what extent would you say you are satisfied with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 9 = completely satisfied”

European Quality of Life Surveys:

“On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [country]? Please tell me on a scale of 0 to 9, where 0 means very dissatisfied and 9 means very satisfied. 0 = very dissatisfied, 9 = very satisfied”

World Values Survey:

“On a scale from 0 to 9 where “0” is “not satisfied at all” and “9” is “completely satisfied”, how satisfied are you with how the political system is functioning in your country these days? 0 = not satisfied at all, 9 = completely satisfied” (note: question follows two

previous items on democracy: the importance of living in a democracy, and how democratically the respondent feels the country is being governed)

European Social Survey:

“And on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = extremely dissatisfied, 10 = extremely satisfied”

International Social Survey Program, Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, British Social Attitudes, United States General Social Survey:

“On the whole, on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is very poorly and 10 is very well: How well does democracy work in [Country] today? 0 = very poorly, 10 = very well”

Standard and Special Eurobarometer:

“Now I would like you to indicate on this scale to what extent you are satisfied with your present situation in the following respects: The way democracy is functioning in [Country]? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 10 = completely satisfied”

Methodology II: Aggregation Methodology

This report draws on almost five million individual respondents in 160 countries between 1973 and 2020. There are close to 4000 country-survey observations aggregated from 43 different sources as part of the HUMAN Surveys project.

Before aggregating data from individual survey sources, we first recode responses to satisfaction with democracy questions in to a binary classification: as either “satisfied” or “dissatisfied.” This allows us to state the percentage of respondents in a given country in a given month who are satisfied with the performance of democracy in their country. Answers of “neither” or “neutral” were omitted when creating this binary classification, but this affected a relatively small number of responses and survey questions.

The overwhelming majority of observations in our dataset derive from survey indicators based upon a symmetrical 4-point scale, asking respondents about their degree of satisfaction with democracy in their country. As such –and given that we create a binary classification– these pose few dilemmas regarding possible differences in meaning (absence of semantic equivalence). For other indicators we had to first test for semantic equivalence, which is dealt with in the next section.

After reducing indicators to a binary (satisfied/dissatisfied) classification, we then took the mean average for each polling observation: the

percentage who are satisfied (or dissatisfied) with the condition of democracy in their country, at that exact point in time. In cases where there were multiple parallel surveys from different sources covering the same country during the same period, the mean scores from these overlapping surveys are again averaged.

The data presented in the individual country charts in this report shows the outcomes for each poll within that country, at the point (month and year) in which the survey was conducted.

For regional charts, population-weighting by country was used to generate a weighted average “as if” we had conducted a stratified random survey sample in that region, sampling based on the population of each constituent country unit.

In addition, for regional charts we also ensured a constant country sample in each year (or quarter, for quarterly annual charts) by “rolling forward” country observations in periods in which there was no new survey, thus using the “most recent” information for each country before aggregation. For the 1995 series used in Figures 5 and 16, some countries entered the time series shortly after 1995 but not in 1995 itself: for these cases data were “rolled back” to 1995 to ensure constant country representation, in this case with the most recent observation being in the future rather than in the past.

Methodology III: Testing Semantic Equivalence for Non-Standard Satisfaction Items

The vast majority of polling observations in our dataset derive from 4-point scale questions regarding satisfaction with democracy, whereby two points indicate some degree of satisfaction (e.g. “fairly satisfied” and “very satisfied”) and two points indicate some degree of dissatisfaction (e.g. “not very satisfied” and “not satisfied at all”). Because they are ordered scales with four items around a midpoint – using the same substantive question keywords (democracy and satisfaction) – few concerns arise regarding the semantic equivalence of the resultant averages.

However, the same cannot be said for a range of additional satisfaction with democracy survey items that depart from a 4-step scale, for example using a 3-step scale with a single middle category, or asking respondents to rate their degree of satisfaction on a 10-point scale. Which of these can be recoded to a “semantically equivalent” satisfied vs. dissatisfied dichotomy – and if so, how should the items be recoded such that they appropriately match the result that a 4-step scale would have attained?

Fortunately, because so many surveys are conducted at the same time as other surveys within each country, we have a simple means of checking for semantic equivalence: to examine the common sample of country-year observations for each indicator, and see which survey recodings, if any, correlate sufficiently with our baseline 4-item response scale results.

The Results

We present in this section the results of the semantic equivalence tests for the items that were ultimately included in our final dataset. They include scatter plots of country-year observations using only the 4-point scales against country-year results of a range of recoding possibilities for our non-standard items, together with a 45-degree line – representing what we should expect to see if there is perfect equivalence. A weighted regression line of fit through the actual shared observations is also shown for comparison.

While we were able to find semantic equivalents for the large majority of survey items, several measures failed our tests and were eventually excluded from the dataset.

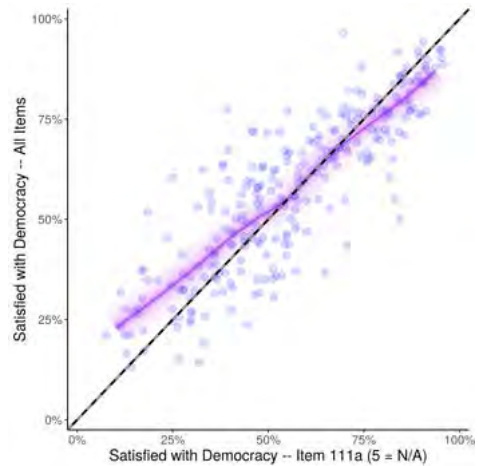
1. **All 3-item survey questions were excluded from the dataset.** In these cases, no possible recoding produced an unbiased range of values equivalent to those of the 4-item scale. This is most likely because the language of the middle value was not neutral, but leaned towards or away from satisfaction (e.g. “somewhat satisfied”).
2. **Several items with insufficiently equivalent question wording were excluded.** For example, items on satisfaction with government, which did not specifically mention democracy, failed tests of semantic equivalence, as did a survey question on “pride” in one’s democracy.

The 11-Point Satisfaction With Democracy Scale (A)

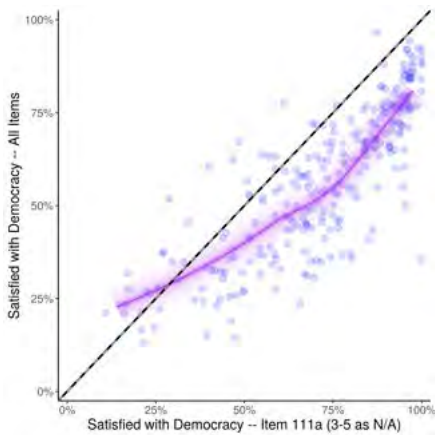
“And on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = extremely dissatisfied, 10 = extremely satisfied”

This is the 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale is used in the European Social Survey (ESS) dataset. Instead of respondents being asked whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy in their country, they were asked to rate their satisfaction on an 11-point scale from 0 to 10 inclusive.

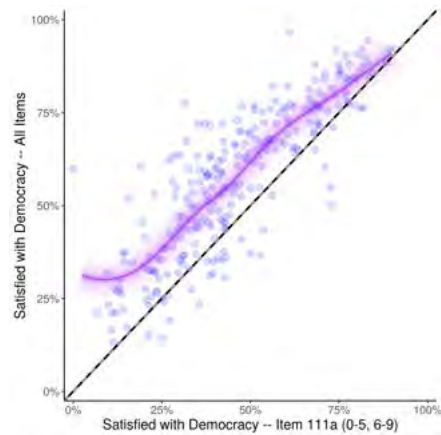
To find a semantically equivalent recoding, we test five alternative recodings of the satisfaction scale, starting with the intuitive split of classifying values of 5 and below as dissatisfied, and values of 6 and above as satisfied. This is found to be negatively biased; yet recoding 5 as a midpoint (N/A) value produces a close approximation.



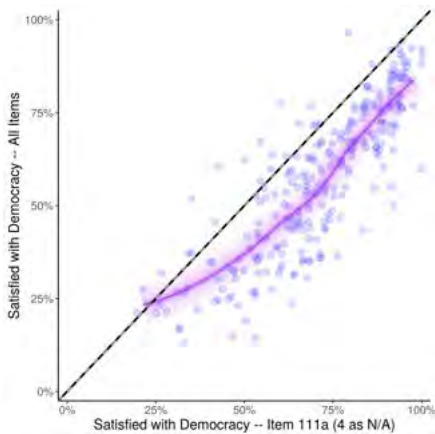
(1) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 5 as N/A midpoint (0-4 dissatisfied, 6-10 satisfied).



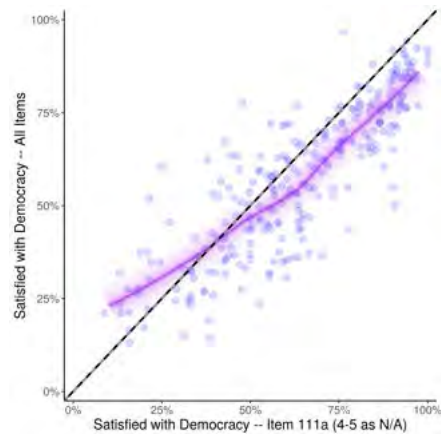
(2) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 3-5 as N/A midpoints (0-2 dissatisfied, 6-10 satisfied).



(3) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with no midpoint: i.e. 0-5 as dissatisfied, 6-10, satisfied.



(4) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 4 as midpoint (0-3 as dissatisfied, 5-10 satisfied).

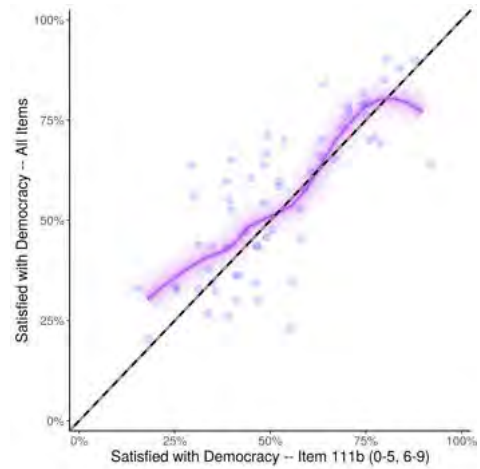


(5) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 4-5 as midpoints (0-3 as dissatisfied, 6-10, satisfied).

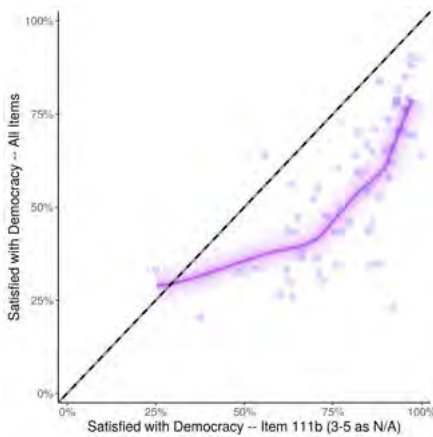
The 11-point Satisfaction with Democracy Scale (B)

“On the whole, on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is very poorly and 10 is very well: How well does democracy work in [this country] today? 0 = very poorly, 10 = very well”

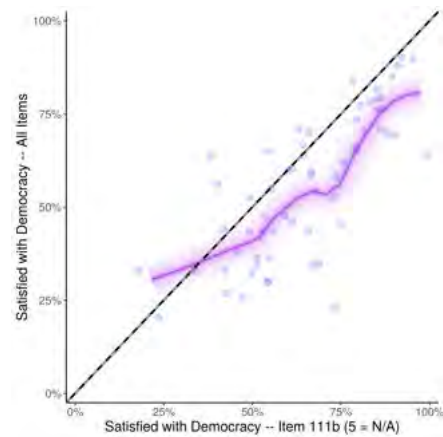
The 11-point scale used by the International Social Survey Program, Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, British Social Attitudes, and United States General Social Survey asks respondents about how well democracy is performing. We find that the shift in question formulation – from one’s own personal feeling of satisfaction to an objective assessment of democratic performance – makes respondents more positive, on average: recoding the mid-point (5) to N/A in this instance biases results upwards. The equivalent recoding for this item is to exclude the midpoint, and re-code 0-5 as dissatisfied, and 6-10 as satisfied.



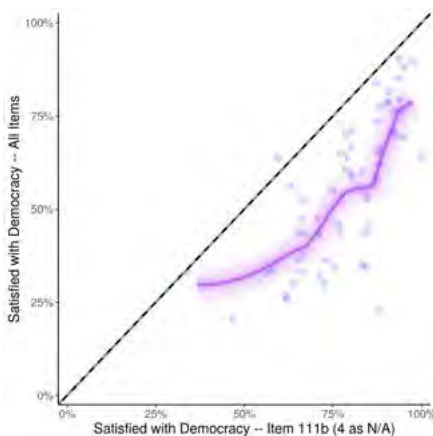
(1) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with no midpoint: i.e. 0-5 as dissatisfied, 6-10, satisfied.



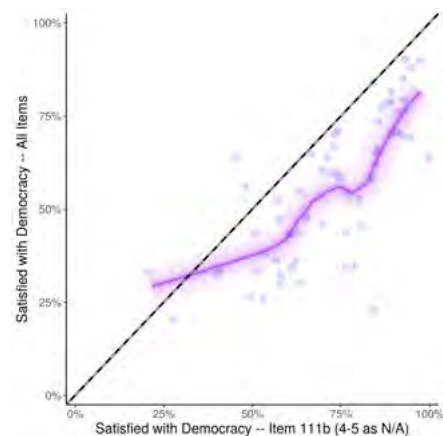
(2) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 3-5 as N/A midpoints (0-2 dissatisfied, 6-10 satisfied).



(3) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 5 as N/A midpoint (0-4 dissatisfied, 6-10 satisfied).



(4) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 4 as midpoint (0-3 as dissatisfied, 5-10 satisfied).

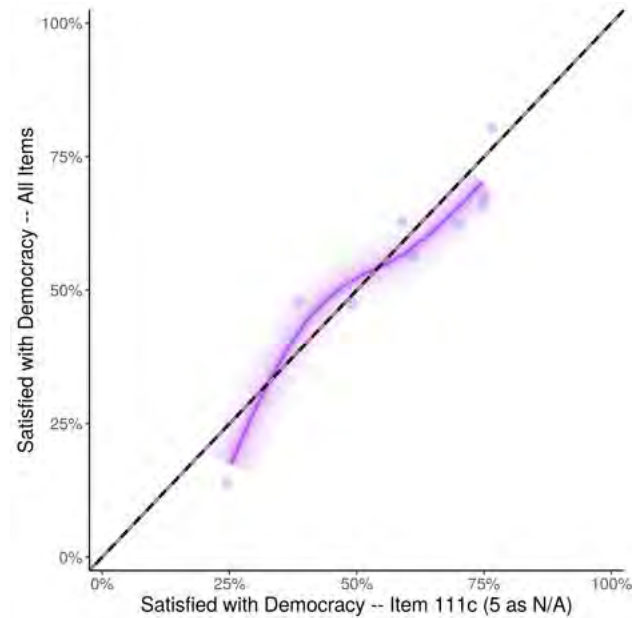


(5) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 4-5 as midpoints (0-3 as dissatisfied, 6-10, satisfied).

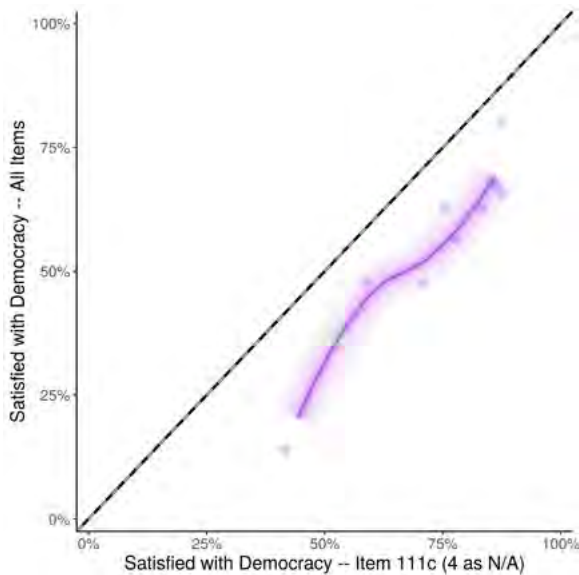
The 11-point Satisfaction with Democracy Scale (C)

“Now I would like you to indicate on this scale to what extent you are satisfied with your present situation in the following respects: The way democracy is functioning in [Country]? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 10 = completely satisfied”

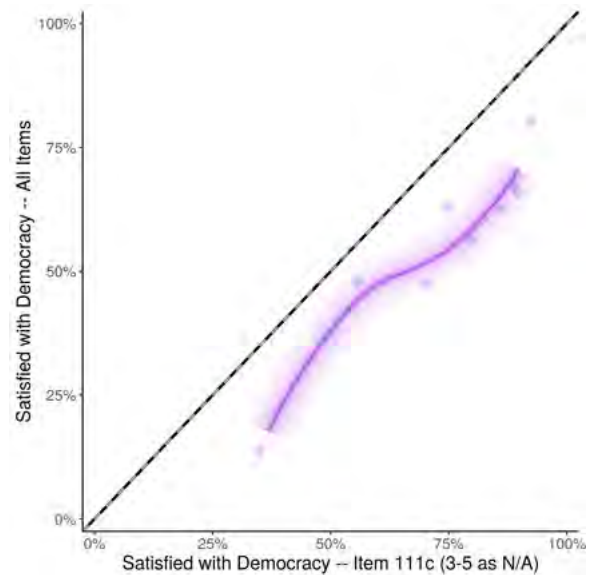
This 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale was featured in the early Eurobarometer surveys of the 1970s, for a limited number of countries in Western Europe. In common with the later 11-point scale used by the European Social Survey (ESS) – with which it shares a common phraseology – we find that a recoding of the middle value (5) to N/A is the most equivalent when compared to the 4-point scale used in later surveys. This implies, again, that respondents use the 5 value as a neutral or non-response, and express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with democracy at values above or below this point, respectively.



(1) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point (0-10) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-4 as dissatisfied and 6-9 satisfied.



(2) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point (0-10) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-3 as dissatisfied and 5-10 satisfied.



(3) Semantic equivalence test for 11-point (0-10) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-2 as dissatisfied and 6-10 satisfied.

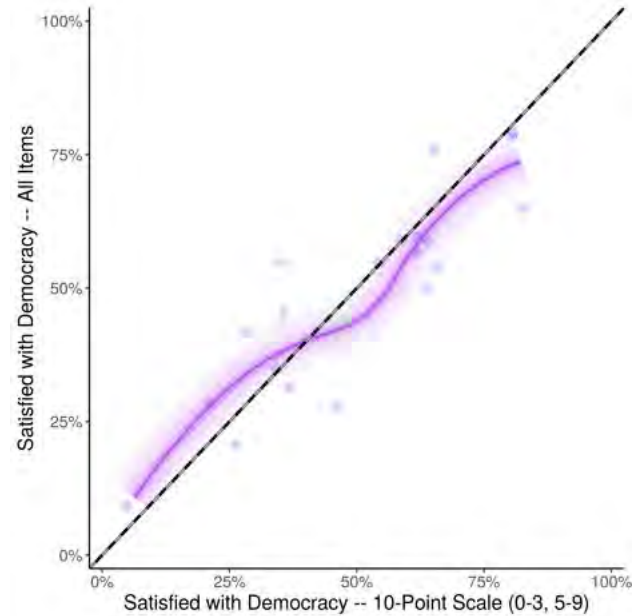
The 10-point Satisfaction with Democracy Scale (A)

“Are you completely satisfied or completely dissatisfied with the way in which democracy is working in [this country] today? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 9 = completely satisfied”

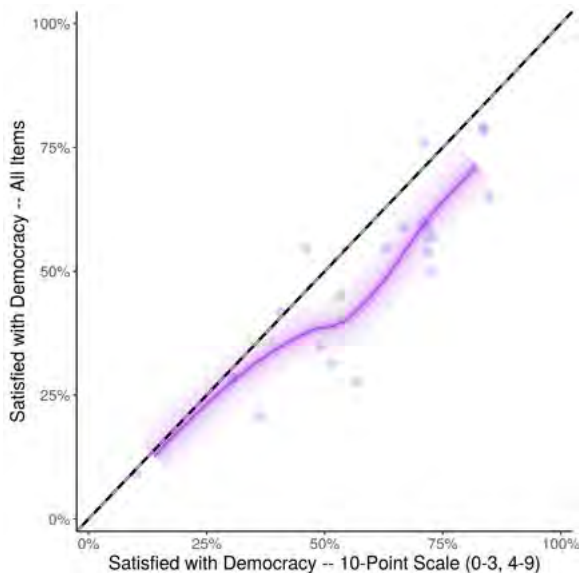
“On the whole, to what extent would you say you are satisfied with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 9 = completely satisfied”

The 10-point satisfaction with democracy scale asks respondents to rate their satisfaction on a numerical scale from 0 to 9 inclusive, and appears (in slightly different forms) in both the Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe (CDCEE) surveys, fielded in 1990-2 and 1998-2001, and in a single round of the Eurobarometer surveys in 1988.

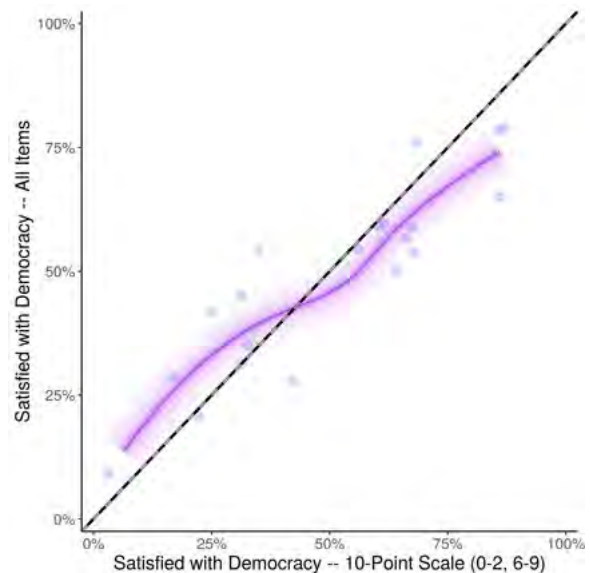
While an intuitive approach might be to split the first 5 and last 5 points – that is, recoding to 0-4 dissatisfied, and 5-9 satisfied – we found that this resulted in estimates that were heavily biased to lower reported satisfaction. We suspect this may be due to a tendency for respondents to have used “4” as a neutral category; after considering a range of recodings, we found the most equivalent results when either omitting the response category of 4, or recoding it as positive.



(1) Semantic equivalence test for 10-point (0-9) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-3 as dissatisfied and 5-9 satisfied.



(2) Semantic equivalence test for 10-point (0-9) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-3 as dissatisfied and 4-9 satisfied.



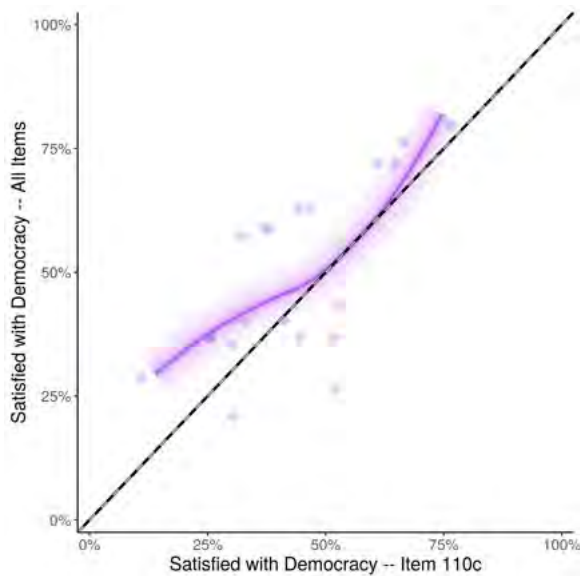
(3) Semantic equivalence test for 10-point (0-9) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-2 as dissatisfied and 6-9 satisfied.

The 10-point Satisfaction with Democracy Scale (B)

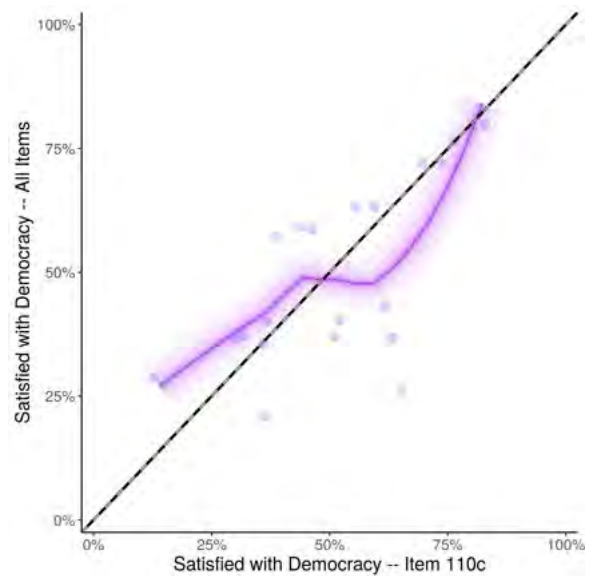
“On a scale from 0 to 9 where “0” is “not satisfied at all” and “9” is “completely satisfied”, how satisfied are you with how the political system is functioning in your country these days? 0 = not at all satisfied, 9 = completely satisfied” (this question follows two previous items on democracy: the importance of living in a democracy, and how democratically the respondent feels the country is being governed)

This 10-point satisfaction scale is used in the current round of the World Values Survey, fielded from 2017 to 2019. Due to the large number of non-democratic regimes in the World Values Survey sample, the item refers to “the political system” rather than to the “democratic system”, as in earlier surveys. However it follows two preceding questions that ask directly about the condition of democracy in one’s country, setting a contextual frame for an evaluation of democratic performance.

In order to check whether the question formulation has affected its interpretation in a way that deviates significantly from other satisfaction with democracy items, we check the satisfaction/dissatisfaction coding of this item against the results of standard satisfaction with democracy items in the same country-years. In this case, a simple recoding “down the middle” of 0-4 (dissatisfied) and 5-9 (satisfied) provides the highest correspondence with standard satisfaction with democracy items.



(1) Semantic equivalence test for 10-point (0-9) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, on a simple split coding (0-4 dissatisfied, 5-9 satisfied).



(2) Semantic equivalence test for 10-point (0-9) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 4 recoded to NA (0-3 dissatisfied, 5-9 satisfied).

5-Point and 6-Point Satisfaction With Democracy Scales

5-point scale

“Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with [...] The democratic system. 0 = very dissatisfied, 1 = somewhat dissatisfied, 2 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat satisfied, 4 = very satisfied”

6-point scale

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [this country]? 0 = [Country] is not a democracy, 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat satisfied, 5 = very satisfied”

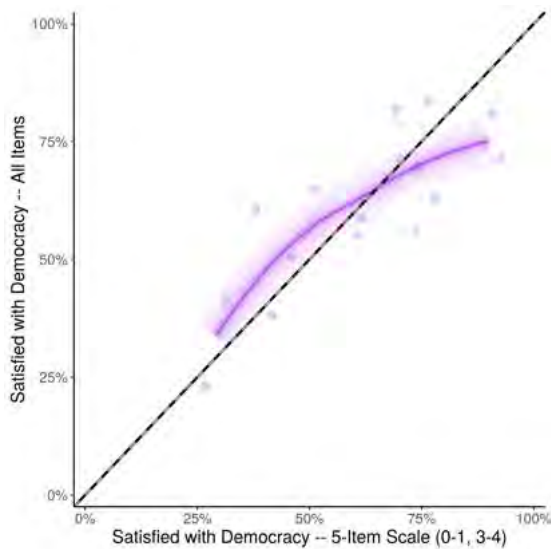
Whereas the conventional 4-point satisfaction with democracy scale (used since the 1970s by Eurobarometer) offers a clean recoding into “satisfied” and “dissatisfied” respondents, the 5-point satisfaction with democracy scale, used by Asia Barometer from 2003-7 and the Australian Voter Experience survey, leaves a dilemma of how to code the middle value. A neutral response to a satisfaction prompt could be coded as not being satisfied, or could be coded as equivalent to N/A (undecided).

To find a semantically equivalent recoding, we test both of these. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the recoding of the middle value to not satisfied introduces a negative bias. However, recoding the

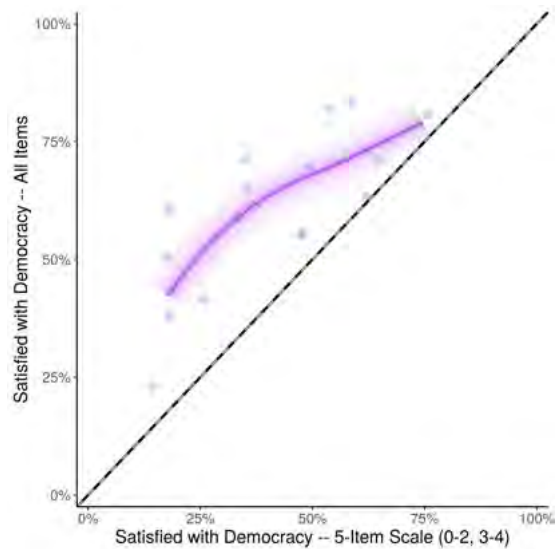
midpoint to N/A produces a close approximation to a satisfied/dissatisfied recoding of the 4-item scale.

A further variant is a 6-point satisfaction with democracy scale that also offers an additional “negative” response: to say that the country is “not a democracy”. Such an item was fielded only by Afrobarometer during their first wave. This introduces a semantic dilemma, as it could either be treated as the most negative possible response on an ordinal scale, or as equivalent to a non-response – a refusal to answer the question.

In practice, however, only a very small number (< 2%) of interviewees offer this response when asked, such that it is best coded as N/A.



(1) Semantic equivalence test for 5-point satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 2 as midpoint (0-1 as dissatisfied, 3-4 satisfied).

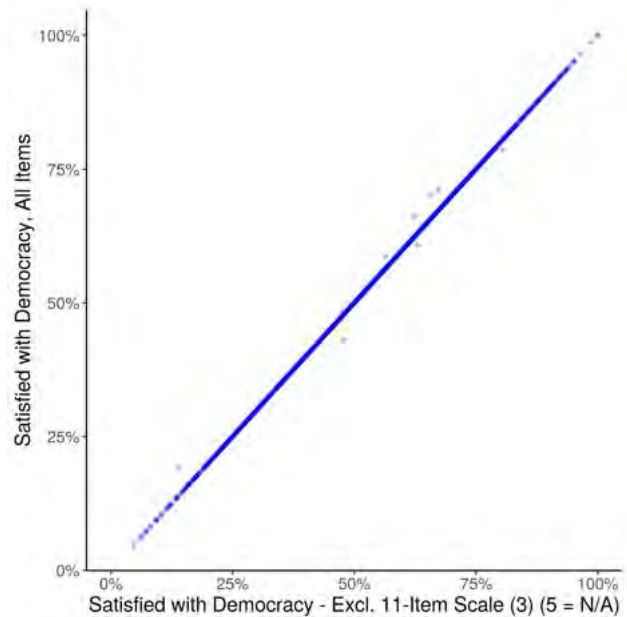


(2) Semantic equivalence test for 5-point (0-4) satisfaction with democracy scale and other items, with 0-2 as dissatisfied and 3-4 satisfied.

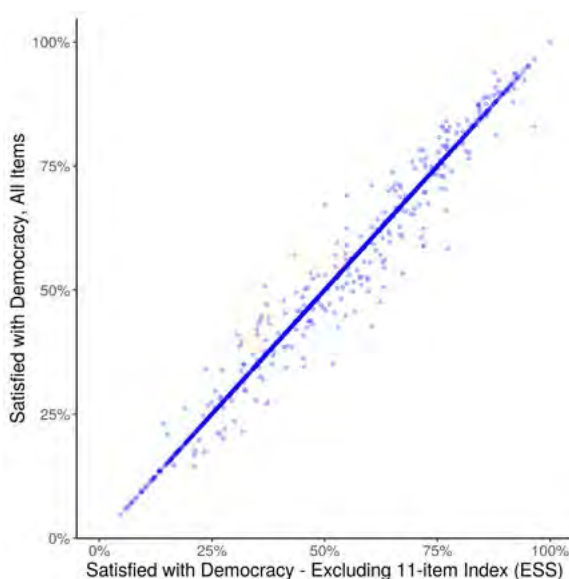
Methodology IV: Sensitivity Analysis

To test that our results are robust to alternative decisions regarding inclusion or exclusion of different satisfaction with democracy question formulations, we conducted a series of alternative aggregations: excluding each measure one by one from the dataset and checking to see how this changes the resultant values, and checking the plot of all country-year observations with and without the source question. If a measure was found to have a disproportionate or biasing effect upon index scores, it was excluded.²⁵

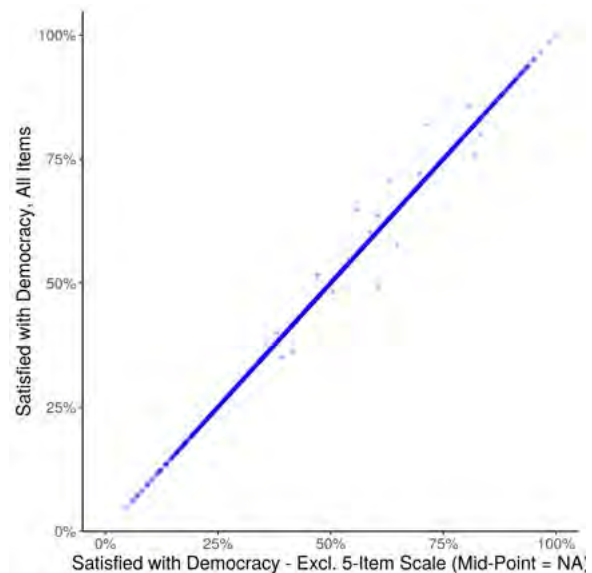
As indicator selection for inclusion within the final dataset had to first pass a semantic equivalence test, the sensitivity analysis reveals that the inclusion or exclusion of individual survey sources has only a marginal effect on the resultant satisfaction with democracy averages.



Sensitivity to exclusion of 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale. “Now I would like you to indicate on this scale to what extent you are satisfied with your present situation in the following respects: The way democracy is functioning in [this country]? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 10 = completely satisfied.” 5 treated as N/A midpoint.



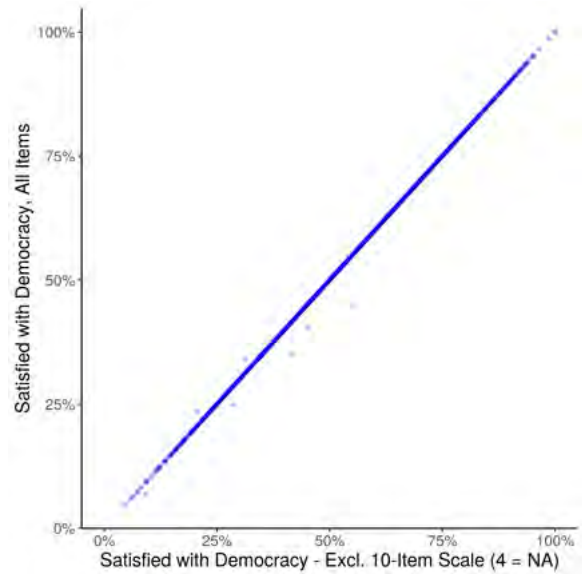
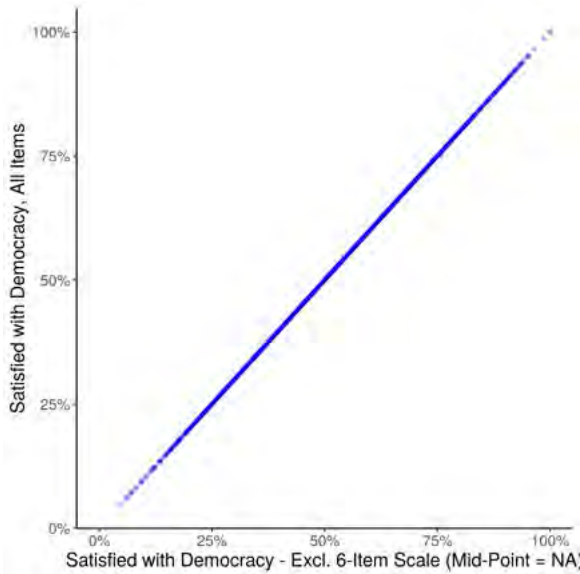
Sensitivity to exclusion of 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale. “On the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = extremely dissatisfied, 10 = extremely satisfied.” Over a large number of observations, there are no outliers and a high correlation.



Sensitivity to exclusion of 5-item satisfaction with democracy scale, with mid-point values recoded to N/A. “Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with [the democratic system]. 0 = very dissatisfied, 1 = somewhat dissatisfied, 2 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 = somewhat satisfied, 4 = very satisfied.” No outliers.

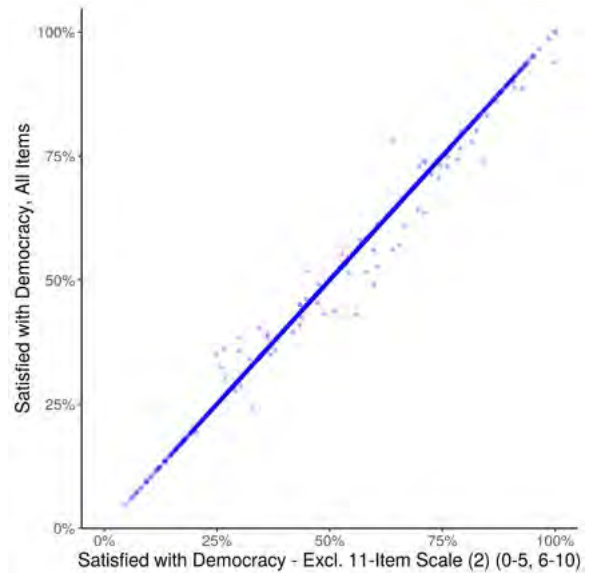
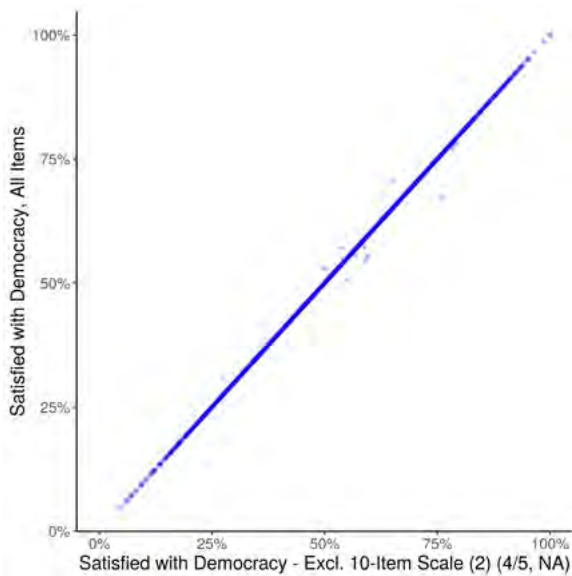
²⁵ Michaela Saisana, Andrea Saltelli and Stefano Tarantola. “Uncertainty and Sensitivity Analysis Techniques as Tools for the Quality Assessment of Composite Indicators” (2005). *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 168, 307-323.

Sensitivity Analysis Plots (Continued)



Sensitivity to exclusion of 6-point satisfaction question: “Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = [Country] is not a democracy, 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat satisfied, 5 = very satisfied.” Midpoint and “not a democracy” recoded N/A. Few cases but no outliers.

Sensitivity to exclusion of 10-point (0-9) satisfaction with democracy scale. “Are you completely satisfied or completely dissatisfied with the way in which democracy is working in [Country] today? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 9 = completely satisfied.” With “4” recoded as N/A midpoint. Minor discrepancies exist but no substantial outliers.



Sensitivity to exclusion of 10-point satisfaction with democracy scale. “On the whole, to what extent would you say you are satisfied with the way democracy works in [Country]? 0 = completely dissatisfied, 9 = completely satisfied.” 4/5 treated as midpoint N/A values. No outliers.

Sensitivity to exclusion of 11-point satisfaction with democracy scale. “On the whole, on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is very poorly and 10 is very well: How well does democracy work in [Country] today? 0 = very poorly, 10 = very well.” (1-5, dissatisfied, 6-10, satisfied). Many observations, no substantial outliers.

Methodology V: The Measurement of Populism

What is Populism?

Populism is indisputably “one of the main political buzzwords of the 21st century.”²⁶ The origins of populism stem from the US’s 19th century People’s Party which believed in increased economic regulation and nationalisation, whilst simultaneously preaching antipathy towards immigrants. Until recently the study of populism was largely centred upon Latin America, but the concept has since been applied in an increasingly wide variety of political contexts. As a result, its definition is often unclear, “overused”, and misused, and thus it is important to define it carefully.²⁷

According to Cas Mudde, populism is an, “ideol-

ogy, a movement, and a syndrome”; which Moffitt argues has three main aspects: “the appeal to ‘the people’ versus ‘the elite’; ‘bad manners’, and crisis, breakdown or threat.”²⁸

The Populist Case Series

This dataset is a list of cases of elections of populists. Cases were drawn from existing comparative datasets such as the Tony Blair Institute and London School of Economics / University of Melbourne populism project. Elections were selected where a populist party or candidate enters office succeeding a moderate (non-populist) politician.

Country	Party or Leader	Year of Election	Right or Left
Italy	Berlusconi	1994	Right
		2001	Right
		2008	Right
Venezuela	Chávez	1998	Left
Austria	Haider	1999	Right
Brazil	Lula	2002	Left
Turkey	Erdoğan	2002	Right
Argentina	Kirchner	2003	Left
Bolivia	Morales	2005	Left
Poland	Law and Justice	2005	Right
		2015	Right
Ecuador	Correa	2006	Left
Nicaragua	Ortega	2006	Left
Macedonia	Gruevski	2006	Right
South Africa	Zuma	2009*	Left
Hungary	Orbán	2010	Right
Zambia	Sata	2011	Left
Greece	Syriza	2015	Left
United States	Trump	2016	Right
Philippines	Duterte	2016	Right
Czech Republic	Babiš	2017	Right
Italy	M5S	2018	Left
Italy	Salvini	2018	Right
Mexico	López-Obrador	2018	Left
Brazil	Bolsonaro	2018	Right
Spain	Podemos	2019	Left

Table 2: Populist parties in power, 1994–2020. *Date of succession.

²⁶ See C. Mudde and C. R. Kaltwasser (2017) “Populism: A Very Short Introduction.”; and T.S. Pappas (2019) *Populism and Liberal Democracy: A Comparative and Theoretical Analysis*.

²⁷ R. Cohen “It’s Time to De-Popularize Populist”. (2018). *The New York Times*. July 13.

²⁸ B. Moffitt. (2016). *The Global Rise of Populism : Performance, Political Style, and Representation*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

The Moderate Case Series

Young people's satisfaction with democracy increased with the election of both left and right wing populist leaders. The following cases were used to test the counterfactual argument: what happens when populist leaders lose or fail to gain office? This research found that when left and right wing populist leaders lose, on average, young people's satisfaction with democracy de-

clines. The following series is a list of moderate leaders.

Cases were selected where: i) a populist party or candidate lost a re-election bid against a moderate challenger; ii) populist politicians were forced from office following systemic crises or scandals; iii) a populist party or politician was the leading electoral rival against a moderate candidate, but failed to win election to office.

Country	Party or Leader	Year of Election	Populist Challenger (Left or Right)
Greece	New Democracy	2019	Syriza (Left)
United Kingdom	Theresa May	2017	Corbyn (Left)
South Africa	Ramaphosa	2018*	Zuma (Left)
Bolivia	'Goni'	2002	Morales (Left)
Brazil	Cardoso	1998	Lula (Left)
Argentina	Macri	2015	Scioli/Kirchner (Left)
Mexico	Peña Nieto	2012	López-Obrador (Left)
Honduras	Micheletti/Lobo	2009	Zelaya (Left)
Italy	Prodi	1996	Berlusconi (Right)
Italy	Prodi	2006	Berlusconi (Right)
Italy	Monti/Letti/Renzi	2011*	Berlusconi (Right)
France	Macron	2017	Marine Le Pen (Right)
Thailand	Surayud	2006	Thaksin (Right)
Peru	Humala	2011	K. Fujimori (Right)
Poland	Civic Platform	2007	Law and Justice (Right)

Table 3: Moderates winning against or succeeding populists, 1994–2020. *Date of succession.

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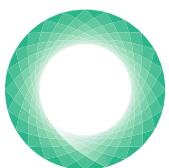
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