



# REINVENTING THE POPULAR MEANING OF DEMOCRACY IN THE TIMES OF CRISIS IN EUROPEAN PERIPHERY

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# Popular Understanding of Democracy

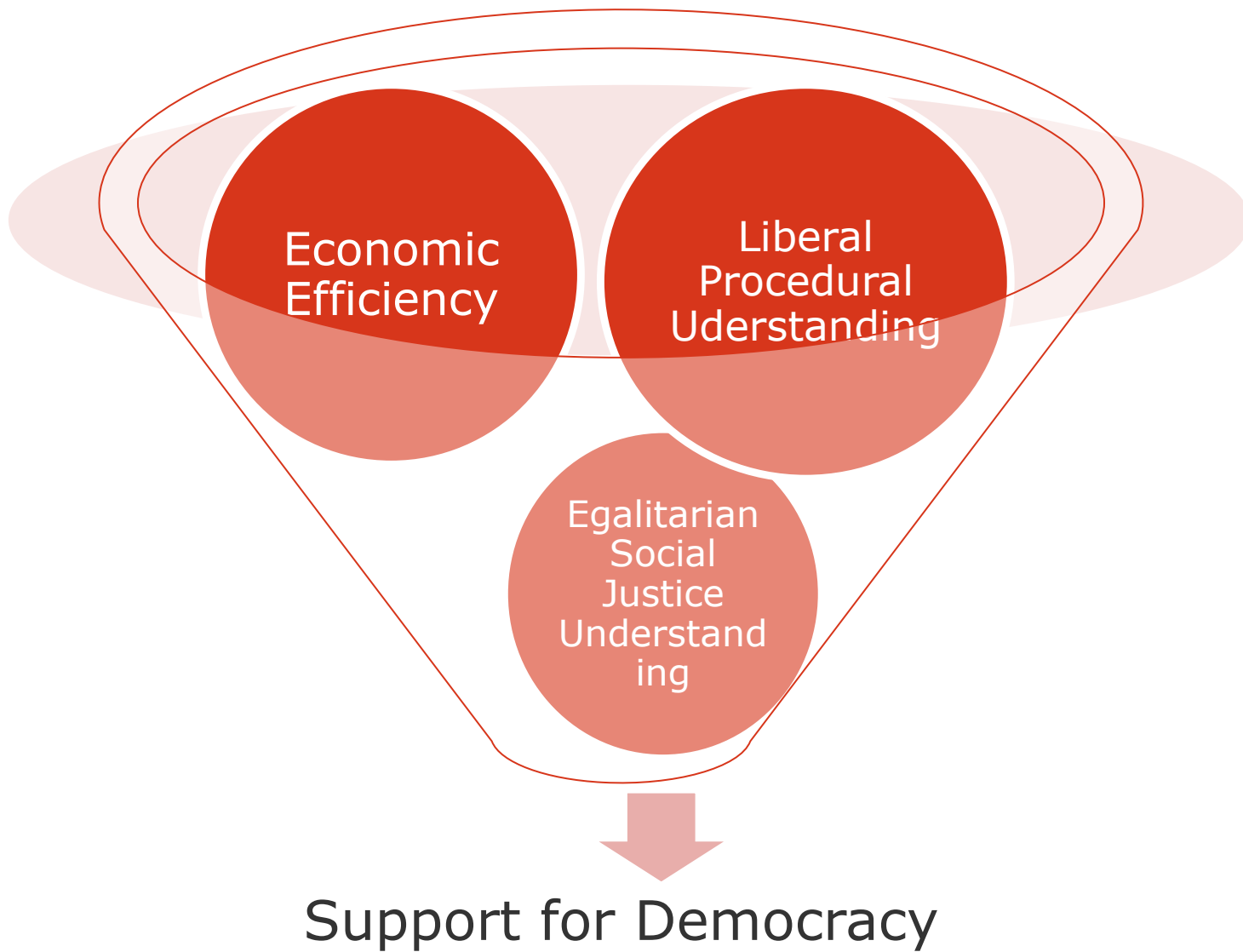
- Why it is important?

- Democracy is a political system which provides conditions for societal decision-making among conflicting social groups under specific conditions of „**system of beliefs**, legitimising the democratic system“ (Lipset 1959: 71)

- „Democracy is not achieved by act of will alone; but men`s wills, through action, can shape institutions and events in directions that reduce or increase the chance of the development and survival of democracy“. (Ibid.)

- Becoming of democracy through meaning attached to it...

# Meaning of Democracy



# PERCEIVED MEANINGS OF DEMOCRACY IN SLOVENIA, 2005 AND 2011



<sup>a</sup> Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means "not at all an essential characteristic of democracy" and 10 means it definitely is "an essential characteristic of democracy". Source: Toš and group., 2011 based on WVS Questionnaire

## PRINCIPLE COMPONENT ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEIVED MEANINGS OF DEMOCRACY, SLOVENIA 2011 (Source: Toš et al., 2011).

<p><i>Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means "not at all an essential characteristic of democracy" and 10 means it definitely is "an essential characteristic of democracy". (WVS 2012 module)</i></p>	Component			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Women have the same rights as men.</b>	<b>0,81</b>	0,10	0,04	0,10
<b>Civil rights protect people from state oppression.</b>	<b>0,77</b>	0,32	0,13	0,01
<b>People choose their leaders in free elections.</b>	<b>0,72</b>	0,03	-0,05	0,41
<b>Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor.</b>	0,12	<b>0,90</b>	-0,03	0,16
<b>The state makes people's incomes equal.</b>	0,32	<b>0,62</b>	0,44	0,05
<b>People obey their rulers.</b>	0,02	0,06	<b>0,95</b>	0,11
<b>People receive state aid for unemployment.</b>	0,19	0,17	0,13	<b>0,92</b>
<b>Cumulative %</b>	27	47	63	78

## A choice of dependent variable

- To test

- how the two components of meaning of democracy affects legitimacy

- "While effectiveness is primarily instrumental, legitimacy **is evaluative**. Groups regard a political system as legitimate or illegitimate to the way in which **its values fit with theirs**."* (Lipset 1981/1984)

- We choose support as containing evaluative dimension (in contrast to satisfaction with functioning)

- Support for democracy index is made of this items:

- "I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country?"

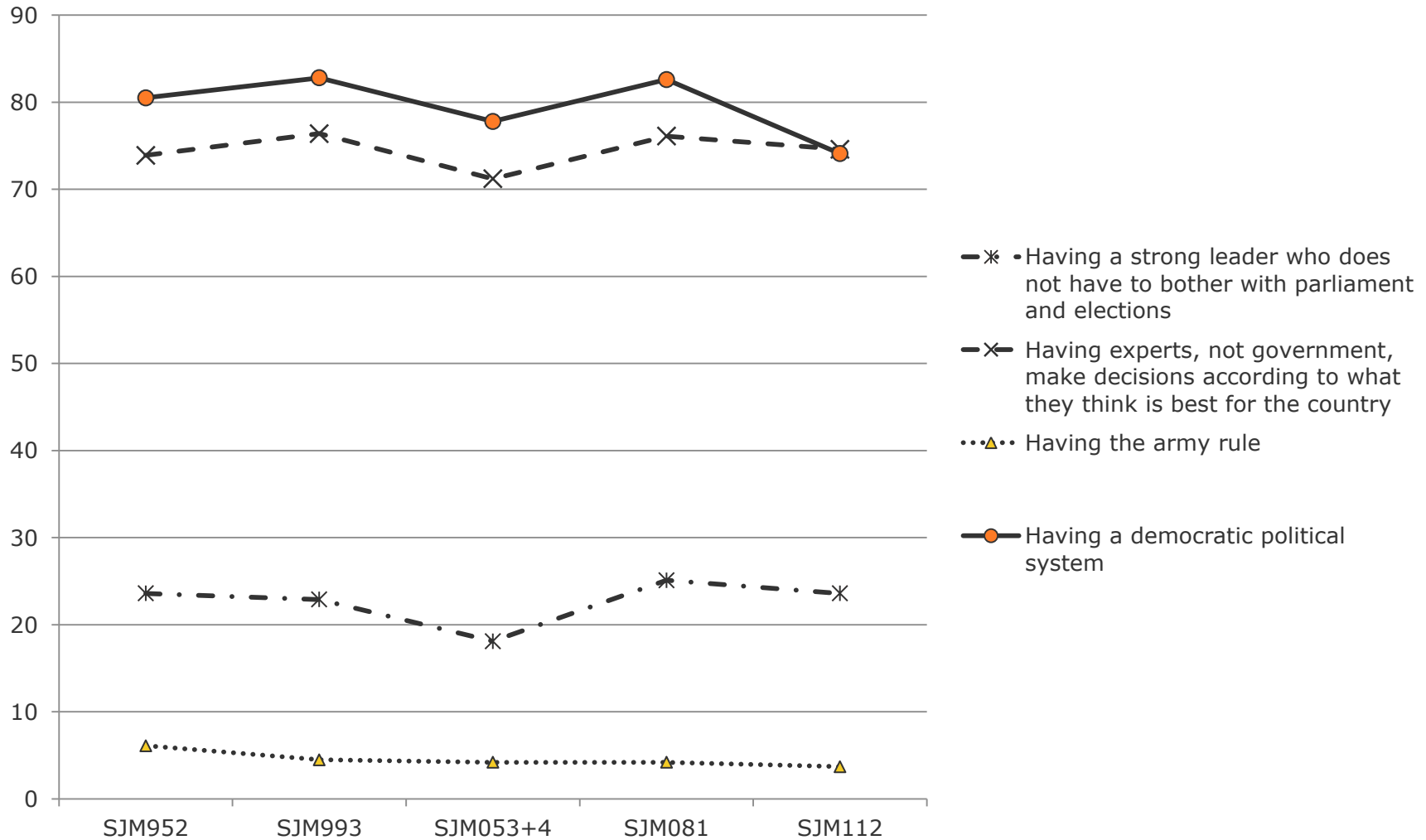
- Having a democratic political system ,,

- and inverse of

- "--- Having a strong leader...,,

- and

- "How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?"



I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? (% very good+fairly good)

Source: Toš and group, 2011.



# Hypothesis

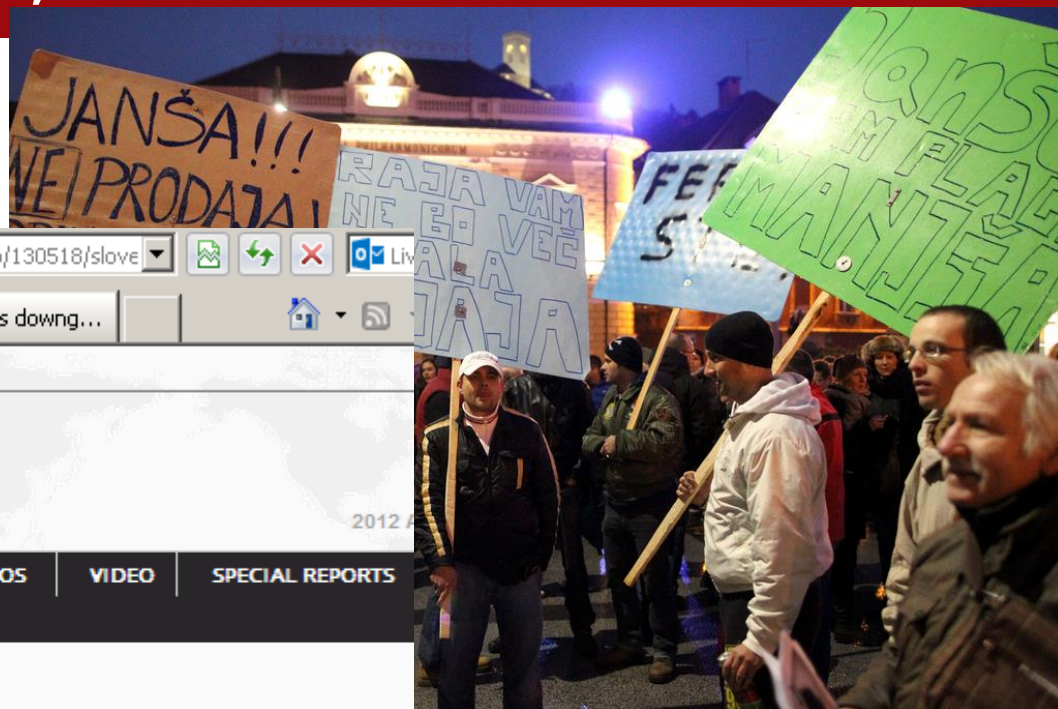
**Liberal** component will prevail in generating a support for democracy due to congruence of citizens' values and meaning of ,ideal` object of support;

**Social Justice** component: support for democracy based on values of equality will be more ambivalent (between demands based on self-interests and common interests that values regarding democracy would ideally contain);

In a context of group of countries in East European periphery, where values of equality are dominant, and constant pressure towards social benefits reduction is present, an effect would be negative



# Protests in Ljubljana, 30.11.2012



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## Slovenia says reforms on track despite ratings downgrade

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# PREDICTORS OF THE SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY (OLS regression, standardised coefficients, significant are bold typed)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Meaning of democracy</i>				
Liberal	<b>0,39</b>	<b>0,33</b>	<b>0,32</b>	<b>0,3</b>
Social	<b>-0,12</b>	-0,06	-0,05	-0,06
<i>Values</i>				
Equality (redistribution)		<b>-0,09</b>	<b>-0,09</b>	-0,06
Equality (vs. Merit)		-0,06	-0,04	0
Equality (vs. liberal-capitalist)		-0,02	-0,02	0
Liberal morality		0,05	0,02	0,06
Gender equality		<b>0,18</b>	<b>0,15</b>	<b>0,12</b>
<i>Social identities group of variables</i>			(…)	
<i>Assessments of the social conditions group of variables</i>			(…)	
R2	<b>0,12</b>	<b>0,18</b>	<b>0,21</b>	<b>0,26</b>

For comparison, the same variables as PREDICTORS OF THE SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY

R2	0,01	0,07	0,13	0,48
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	West Germany	Spain	Norway	Sweden	Finland	Poland	East Germany	Slovenia	Bulgaria	Romania	Serbia
Model 1											
Meaning of democracy: Liberal	0,46 ***	0,52 ***	0,34 ***	0,50 ***	0,58 ***	0,48 ***	0,29 ***	0,44 ***	0,40 ***	0,31 ***	0,66 ***
- Social	0,08 *	0,07 *	0,09 **	0,02	0,01	-0,10 *	0,01	-0,07	0,04	-0,12 **	-0,15 ***
Model 2											
Meaning of democracy: Liberal	0,36 ***	0,42 ***	0,23 ***	0,42 ***	0,50 ***	0,41 ***	0,21 ***	0,32 ***	0,40 ***	0,28 ***	0,59 ***
- Social	0,11 **	0,04	0,06 *	0,03	0,01	-0,03	0,03	-0,02	0,04	-0,05	-0,15 ***
Equality (vs. Merit)	-0,08 *	0,08 *	0,07 *	-0,01	0,08 *	-0,02	0,09 *	-0,07	0,09	0,02	-0,11 **
Equality (vs. liberal-capitalist)	-0,05	-0,05	-0,03	-0,03	0,00	-0,14 ***	-0,02	-0,16 ***	-0,14 **	-0,20 ***	0,05
Equality (redistribution)	-0,07	0,07	-0,01	0,05	-0,02	-0,06	-0,09 *	0,01	-0,03	-0,07	-0,06
Gender equality	0,11 **	0,11 **	0,14 ***	0,09 **	0,09 **	0,06	0,12 ***	0,22 ***	0,03	0,03	0,06
Liberal morality	0,13 ***	0,13 ***	0,11 ***	0,05	0,10 **	0,12 **	0,04	0,05	0,05	0,15 ***	-0,04
Living conditions	0,08 *	-0,02	0,00	0,01	0,03	-0,06	-0,04	0,04	0,02	-0,03	0,07
Individual material condition	-0,02	0,04	-0,04	0,01	0,01	0,01	0,12 **	0,03	0,05	0,08	0,05
Generalised trust	0,09 **	-0,03	0,14 ***	0,03	0,01	0,13 **	0,06	0,05	0,00	0,03	0,07 *
Human rights (respected)	0,14 ***	0,07 *	0,21 ***	0,04	0,13 ***	0,05	0,15 ***	0,09 *	0,06	0,10 **	0,05
Education (university)	0,08 *	-0,04	0,17 ***	0,13 ***	0,06	0,09 *	0,02	0,08	0,12 **	-0,01	0,00
Political orientation (right)	-0,13 ***	-0,09 **	0,00	-0,03	-0,08 **	-0,03	-0,12 ***	0,03	0,08	0,01	0,09 **
Gender (female)	-0,02	0,00	-0,01	-0,04	-0,01	0,01	-0,02	-0,03	0,00	-0,08 *	-0,06
Age	0,06	-0,01	0,12 ***	0,02	0,04	0,07	0,10 **	0,21 ***	-0,04	0,06	-0,02
R2 Model 1 / Model 2	.24/.35	.30/.36	.13/.31	.25/.28	.34/.39	.22/.30	.08/.17	.18/.31	.17/.22	.11/.22	.35/.42



## MAKING OF DEMOCRACY

- The strong, unconditional, effect of a liberal procedural understanding based on congruence of meaning, together with gender equality values, serves as a stabilising factor for the functioning of the regime.

## SEARCHING FOR DEMOCRACY

- Understanding of democracy based on egalitarian values is indeed more self-interested – in times of cuts in social benefits support is expressed in a negative sense, as a demand directed toward political system for giving insurance against an insecure future;
- A trap of conflicting demands authorities are faced with:
  - Redistribution vs. Economic, Financial, Budgetary efficiency and accountability;
  - Even more social protests activities are likely to occur if scepticism about democratic political system is widespread
  - Deficit in Legitimacy of decision making – Institutional reforms needed?
- Future work...

## Background literature

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