

# **ESS Round 10**

Rotating module:  
Europeans' understandings and evaluations of  
democracy

## **Module documentation – Pre-test and pilot module development**

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### **Democracy module development timetable**

<b>Meeting / Testing stage</b>	<b>Dates</b>
1st Question Module Design Team (QDT) meeting	27 September 2018
2nd QDT meeting	5 November 2018
11th ESS ERIC National Coordinators (NC) Forum	20-21 November 2018
3rd QDT meeting	12 December 2018
11 <sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) meeting	21 January 2019
4th QDT meeting	18 February 2019
12th ESS ERIC NC Forum	4-5 April 2019
<b>Pre-test (omnibus and cognitive interviews)</b>	<b>April-May 2019</b>
5th QDT meeting	September 2019
<b>Pilot</b>	<b>October-December 2019</b>
13th ESS ERIC NC Forum	19-20 November 2019

## 1 Europeans' understandings and evaluations of democracy

There are four major changes in European democracies that call for a repeat module on democracy: 1) New political forces have come to 'storm the democratic stage'; 2) Referendums – the essential instrument of direct democracy – have troubled both the European democracies and the European Union; 3) For many Europeans, the European Union has become the 'enemy'; and 4) A generation of 'outraged' youth has appeared in Europe, as a consequence of the several crises that have affected European democracies. The European Social Survey is best placed to measure these changes and their implications for European democracy. The first rotating module was fielded in the midst of one of the worst global economic crises, with severe consequences for European democracies (amongst which those we mention above). The repeat module is scheduled in 2020/1, a perfect time span to assess the direction in which democracies are moving following the economic crisis of the early 2010s. By measuring changes in Europeans' attitudes to democracy within and across countries, the ESS will address one of the most crucial themes of today.

### **Theoretical approach**

The ESS Round 6 module on democracy (ESS-6 from now on) introduced and combined two theoretical innovations: the distinction between views ('how democracy should be') and evaluations of democracy ('how democracy actually is'); and the use of a multidimensional concept of democracy, encompassing a large set of democratic attributes. This theoretical frame has proven to be fruitful to provide a better understanding of Europeans' views and evaluations of democracy. It has contributed both to the literature on the quality of democracy and to the literature on political support. The repeat module will replicate the same theoretical framework, expanding on ESS-6.

Briefly referring to the Question Module Design Template of ESS Round 6, our theoretical framework derived from a critical review of the classic Eastonian concept of political support (Easton 1965, 1975) and later developments of the concept (Dalton 2004; Norris 1999, 2011). In particular, we attempted to provide conceptual and measurement clarity in relation to the two main problems of the concept of democratic support: the distinction between diffuse and specific support; and the ambiguity of the concept of democracy. Norris (1999) resolved the problem of distinguishing between diffuse and specific support by affirming that diffuse support is the 'idea of democracy'; while specific support refers to the 'evaluations of democracy'. In a further step, she uses the concepts of 'aspirations' and 'evaluations' in a similar way (Norris 2011). Building on her work, we have distinguished between views and evaluations of democracy, which we believe are much easier to identify empirically. "Views of democracy refer to the citizens' normative ideal of democracy, their ideas about what democracy should be. Evaluations of democracy, instead, refer to citizens' assessment of the way the democratic principles have been implemented in their own country.[...] it is the comparison between the democratic ideals and the actual functioning of democracy that makes for a judgment of a democratic regime" (Ferrín and Kriesi 2016,10). Regarding the ambiguity of the concept of democracy, we have addressed the existing critique related to the assumption that citizens might have different conceptions of democracy (Schedler and Sarsfield 2007; Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005; Bratton 2010), which previous indicators of democratic support did not take into account. We therefore provided a precise definition of democracy with a set of dimensions and sub-dimensions. This allowed not only to come up with a set of indicators that fully matched the theoretical frame, but also to capture

different notions and evaluations of democracy among the Europeans. The empirical analysis of ESS-6 has provided further refinement of our concept of democracy, by clearly distinguishing three models of democracy the Europeans endorse (and combine): the liberal model, the social model and the direct democracy model.

This proposal builds upon this theoretical framework, but expands on the concept of democracy, in order to include ‘competing’ views of democracy. We hence address an issue that we were not able to tackle with ESS Round 6: the fact that citizens might affirm democratic principles and yet at the same time be supportive of non-democratic values (and vote for populist parties, for example) (see Magalhaes 2018 for a similar critique). In order to do so, we re-evaluate the three democratic models in the light of the existing trade-offs that are inherent in any democracy (Boschler and Kriesi 2013)

### **Approach to the format of the items in the module**

#### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

##### *Background:*

- For the Round 6 Democracy module, it was decided that both citizens’ *views* and *evaluations* of democracy would be measured. ‘*Views* of democracy refer to the citizens’ normative ideal of democracy, their ideas about what democracy *should be*. *Evaluations* of democracy, instead, refer to the citizens’ assessment of the way the democratic principles have been implemented in their own country’ (Ferrin & Kriesi, 2016). Citizens’ *views* of democracy were measured by asking respondents ‘how important is x for democracy in general’. Citizens’ *evaluations* of democracy were measured by asking ‘to what extent does x apply in [country]’. Once the decision about how to measure these concepts had been made, there was another decision to make – should the importance and evaluation items be administered ‘pairwise’ or ‘listwise’? In the end, the decision was made to ask the questions ‘listwise’, so all of the ‘importance’ items were asked together first, in a list, followed by all of the evaluation items, in a separate list.

##### *Discussion:*

- Analysis of the Round 6 data indicated that respondents tended to view almost all aspects of democracy that they were asked about as being very important for democracy in general, to the extent that there was little differentiation between items. There was a discussion at the meeting about whether this indicated ‘satisficing’ in relation to the ‘importance’ questions and if so, whether we should we try to make any amendments to the ‘importance’ questions for Round 10, to try to alleviate this potential ‘satisficing’ and perhaps create greater differentiation between the assessed importance of different aspects of democracy.
- The QDT described how one approach to analysing data from the ‘importance’ questions was to turn them into dichotomous variables, where an answer of 10 = 1 and an answer of 0-9 = 0. There is evidence that this approach has worked well. SB made the point that if changes were made to the ‘importance’ questions, they would become ‘new items’, rather than ‘repeat items’ and the data produced by them would not be comparable with the data from the Round 6 ‘importance’ questions.
- After some discussion, it was decided that for Round 10 we will stick with the format of the ‘importance’ items and the ‘evaluation’ items that were used in Round 6. In addition, the items will again be asked in a ‘listwise’ format, as they were in Round 6. Rather than changing the structure of the ‘importance’ items, we will look to tease out differentiation in the perceived relative importance of different aspects of democracy via new question items.

- Some kind of ranking question item for providing greater differentiation in the perceived relative importance of different aspects of democracy, was discussed. Given the potential respondent and interviewer burden that such an item could create, it was noted that it would be important to get National Coordinator feedback on such a question as part of its development.

## 1.1 DIRECT MODEL OF DEMOCRACY

The direct democracy model focuses on the participation dimension (PAR), that is to say, “the entire set of behaviours [...] that allows women and men, as individuals or group, to create, revive or strengthen a group identification or try to influence the recruitment of and decisions by political authorities” (Question Module Design Template of ESS-6). The referendum, in this case, is the instrument that is more often put into force so that citizens take political decisions directly. The direct democracy model is expanded in the repeat module, such as to include ‘competing’ views of democracy. In particular, we consider the fact that populists frequently advocate for unrestrained and unmediated democracies where the people are fully sovereign to decide directly on most policies through direct democracy, and decision-makers are fully responsive to the interests of the people. “Populist actors usually support the implementation of direct democratic mechanisms, such as referenda and plebiscites. [...] Hence, it can be argued that an elective affinity exists between populism and direct democracy, as well as other institutional mechanisms that are helpful to cultivate a direct relationship between the populist leader and his/her constituencies. To put it another way, one of the practical consequences of populism is the strategic promotion of institutions that enable the construction of the presumed general will.” (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017, 17). In order to take care of this, we include an additional subdimension to capture the trade-off of “the people” vs. the politicians taking decisions.



### 1.1.1 Participation (REPEAT)

According to Morlino, participation is “the entire set of behaviours, be they conventional or unconventional, legal or borderline vis-à-vis legality, that allows women and men, as individuals or group, to create, revive or strengthen a group identification or try to influence the recruitment of and decisions by political authorities (the representative and/ or governmental ones) in order to maintain or change the allocation of existing values.” (Morlino 2009: 39). Participation refers, therefore, to the citizens’ capacity and possibilities to take part in a democracy. For Dahl (1989, 2000: 37), effective participation is one of five criteria to be fulfilled by democracies: ‘Before a policy is adopted...., all the members must have equal and effective opportunities for making their views known to the other members as to what the policy should be’. ‘Inclusion of all adults’ is another one of these criteria for Dahl (1989, 2000: 38): ‘All, or at any rate most, adult permanent residents should have the full rights of citizens that are implied by the first four criteria’.

Participation refers to the existing possibilities of any citizen/resident to effectively influence the government or the policy making and may entail different forms. We ask in the ESS about referenda.

#### *Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

The concept of participation is expected to be negatively related to the concept of representation. Participation and representation are indeed the two poles of a continuum. On the one side, strong participation is equivalent to direct democracy, where everybody directly participates in the decision-making process. On the other side, in a strong representation system, there is little room for participation (except from the elections); once the government has been elected citizens cannot influence politics anymore. Accordingly, we expect that stronger preferences for participation are opposed to stronger preferences for representation. Nevertheless, it is possible that the two forms of democracy are perceived to be complementary, i.e. citizens may want both, strong representation and strong participation. ESS 6 data show that Europeans are generally favourable towards referenda (although differently across Europe), and that direct participation is not conceived in opposition to the liberal model of democracy. The concept of participation is also expected to be related to the concept of responsiveness.

### 1.1.1.1 Participation – Forms of participation: Referenda (REPEAT)

There are different, more or less demanding forms of participation in a democracy. The least demanding is probably the vote. Other, more demanding forms include participation in referenda, public deliberation or public assemblies. Because the elections are included in the competition dimension, the use of referenda (public consultations to include all citizens significantly affected by a policy question at local or national levels (Held 2006: 250)), are included. An item is used to measure this sub concept.

#### Early development – Comments

##### Module proposal:

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E8 and E24.

##### Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘Citizens have final say on most important issues by voting on them in a referendum’ (importance and reality), under the direct model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. It is the unique item for the direct democracy model.

##### Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC SAB meeting (21/01/2019):

- The SAB was concerned that direct democracy only has 1 item. The QDT said the original proposal had 2 items on this, but have to make compromises because of the 30 item limit. It was suggested to re-considering having another one. The CST asked what alternatives could be asked – e.g., citizens’ assembly? The QDT did not see how it would be possible to get another item.

#### Pre-test – Items

B4

##### CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>1</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>2</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>1</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

### Pre-test – Results and comments

This concept was pre-tested as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Pilot – Items

D5

FORPMEAN

**CARD 30**

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...** that citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D18

FORPEVAL

**STILL CARD 32**

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** Citizens in [country] have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	

	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D5 and D17).

### 1.1.1.2 Participation – Forms of participation: Deliberation (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

Manin (1987: 360) states that the majority will is legitimate because it is ascertained at the close of a deliberative process in which all the citizens (or at least those who wished to do so) have participated. The source of legitimacy, according to Manin is not the predetermined will of individuals, but rather the process of its formation, that is, deliberation itself. The major contention of deliberative democrats is to bid farewell to any notion of fixed preferences and to replace them with a learning process in and through which people come to terms with the range of issues they need to understand in order to hold a sound and reasonable political judgement (see Held 2006: 233).

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to lack of cross-national comparability in the measure.
- Round 6 items in this concept were:
  - o E2  
Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that voters discuss politics with people they knew before deciding how to vote?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - o E18  
Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. Voters in [country] discuss politics with people they know before deciding how to vote.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 - Applies completely*

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.1.1.3 Participation – Opportunities of effective participation (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

In a democracy, everybody must be equally entitled to participate. First, universal suffrage must be guaranteed, but also the universal entitlement to take part in any other form of participation. In addition, according to the criterion of ‘inclusion of adults’, immigrants should also have the right to participate in the different arenas. See Dahl (2000). On Democracy, p. 38. ‘All, or at any rate most, adult permanent residents should have the full rights of citizens that are implied by the first four criteria.’

With this sub concept we want to measure how inclusive the political system is: whether it opens the possibilities to participate in politics to the immigrants, to facilitate their integration in the system and broaden their rights.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts*

Universal entitlement to participate might be linked to the subjects of representation (see below). We might find both a positive (a) and a negative (b) relationship between opportunities of effective participation and forms of participation. (a) Respondents want more forms of participation and, at the same time, a more inclusive system; (b) respondents want more forms of participation, but restricted to the nationals of their country.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was revised in the initial Round 10 module proposal, but dropped by the QDT before the pre-test.
- Under the proposed concept revisions, the direct democracy model was to be composed of Round 6 item E8 (see Participation – Forms of participation: Referenda, 1.1.1.1, above) and a new item:
  - o And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that the people and not the politicians make our most important policy decisions?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - o Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. The people and not the politicians make our most important policy decisions.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 - Applies completely*

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- The QDT clarified that the Participation concept has been reduced to only one sub-concept (on Referenda, see 1.1.1.1, above), and thus that this concept had been dropped.

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

## 1.2 LIBERAL MODEL OF DEMOCRACY

Liberal democracies are indeed characterized by trade-offs between the principle of freedom, and the principles of political equality and popular sovereignty; or between the liberal and the electoral process components of liberal democracy. As an example, on one side of the trade-off we can find the desirable property of governments and political leaders being fully responsive to the interests and the 'will of the people'; whereas on the other side of these trade-offs we find other desirable features that might limit and constrain governments' responsiveness and popular sovereignty such as the rule of law, or the protection of minorities' rights. Populists tend to exploit these trade-offs that are inherent to contemporary liberal democracies to propose 'competing' models of democracy (Canovan 1999, 2004).

### 1.2.1 Competition (REPEAT)

Competition is a key attribute in any democracy (above all for minimalist theories of democracy). Elections must be competitive in order to be democratic. Competition guarantees that elections are free, open, and fair; and that the leaders are successfully replaced in the government. Competition is crucial, not merely as a defensive mechanism against Leviathan, but because it is a precondition for responsiveness – it obliges the elite to take into account the preferences of the voters.

Free and fair elections are the key institution in a democracy. However, some conditions must be fulfilled if elections are to be competitive (Bartolini 1999). We distinguish between the following sub concepts: ‘compet1.1. Free and fair elections’, and ‘compet1.2. Differentiated offer (decidability)’.

Bartolini (1999, 2000) discusses four concepts of political competition: contestability (open access to electoral contests), decidability (availability of distinctive political offers), availability (of the citizens public), and vulnerability (of incumbents). Decidability (‘differentiated offer’) refers to the availability of distinctive political offers. As long as the voters can only choose between more or less identical political programs, we cannot speak of political competition, even if the access to the political contest is open. In order to have a real choice, the parties competing in the elections need to offer the voters different political programs.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

A positive relationship is found between this concept and all other concepts of the liberal democracy scale.



### 1.2.1.1 Competition – Differentiated offer (Decidability) (REPEAT)

There must be enough parties so as to cover all the preferences of the citizens; parties should offer non-overlapping programs (see description of ‘competition’ for further details).

#### Early development – Comments

##### Module proposal:

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E3 and E19.

##### Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘Different political parties offer clear alternatives’ (importance and reality), under the liberal model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. No empirical redundancy with any of the other items.
  - o 2. Good consistency of the item in the reduced liberal democracy model scale.

#### Pre-test – Items

This concept was not pre-tested.

#### Pilot – Items

D2

DIFOMEAN

##### STILL CARD 30

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...**  
that different political parties<sup>1</sup> offer clear alternatives to one another?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>1</sup> Countries should refer to ‘candidates’ instead of or in addition to ‘political parties’ if this is more appropriate.

D15

DIFOEVAL

**STILL CARD 32**

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** Different political parties<sup>2</sup> in [country] offer clear alternatives to one another.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>2</sup> Countries should refer to ‘candidates’ instead of or in addition to ‘political parties’ if this is more appropriate.

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D2 and D14).

### 1.2.1.2 Competition – Free and fair elections (REPEAT)

The basic principle of any elections is that they are free and fair, that is, nobody is obliged to vote or constrained to vote for a party, he/she does not want to. All votes have the same weight. A single item is used to measure this sub concept.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

All sub concepts of competition are positively related.

#### Early development – Comments

##### Module proposal:

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E1 and E17.

##### Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):

- There was a discussion about the following ‘competition’ question – ‘that national elections are free and fair’. The point was made that although the term ‘free and fair elections’ is widely used and understood in Britain and some other countries, in other countries, the terms ‘free’ and ‘fair’ may be seen as separate concepts, making it hard for respondents to answer the question. The translation expert is to investigate any issues at this question.

##### Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘National elections are free and fair’ (importance and reality), under the liberal model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. One of the core items of democracy for EU citizens, according to ESS Round 6 (58% of respondents given value 10 to this attribute).
  - o 2. Good consistency of the item in the reduced liberal democracy model scale.

#### Pre-test – Items

##### B1

Now some questions about democracy. Later on I will ask you about how democracy is working in [country]. First, however, I want you to think instead about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. There are no right or wrong answers so please just tell me what you think.

##### CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...that national elections<sup>5</sup> are free and fair<sup>6</sup>?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>3</sup>	0

	Extremely <sup>4</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>3</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>4</sup> 'Extremely' in the sense of 'an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc. This applies to all references to 'extremely' throughout section B.

<sup>5</sup> 'National elections' refers to national elections for a country's primary legislative assembly. Under no circumstances should the actual name of a national parliament be included in this question.

<sup>6</sup> Both senses – 'free and fair' – MUST be expressed in all translations; this can be done by using one or two adjectives or by using an idiomatic expression, if this exists.

### Pre-test – Results and comments

This concept was pre-tested as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Pilot – Items

D1

ELECMEAN

Now some questions about democracy. Later on I will ask you about how democracy is working in [country]. First, however, I want you to think instead about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. There are no right or wrong answers so please just tell me what you think.

**CARD 30**<sup>3,4</sup>

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general. **READ OUT**...that national elections<sup>5</sup> are free and fair<sup>6</sup>?

	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

For items D1-D13e, D26, D27a, D27b, D29, D30a, D30b, D32a, D32b, D32c, D32d and D32e countries should

ensure that their translation does not make reference to country-specific terms.

<sup>3</sup> The full scale and the end labels **MUST** appear on the showcard.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout this section.

<sup>5</sup> ‘National elections’ refers to national elections for a country’s primary legislative assembly. Under no circumstances should the actual name of a national parliament be included in this question.

<sup>6</sup> Both senses – ‘free and fair’ – **MUST** be expressed in all translations; this can be done by using one or two adjectives or by using an idiomatic expression, if this exists.

## D14

### ELECEVAL

Now some questions about the same topics, but this time about how you think democracy is working in [country] today. Again, there are no right or wrong answers, so please just tell me what you think.

#### CARD 32

Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT.** National elections<sup>7</sup> in [country] are free and fair<sup>8</sup>.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

For items D14-D25, D28a, D28b, D31a and D31b country-specific terms can be used where appropriate, whilst ensuring functional equivalence with the British English source questionnaire.

<sup>7</sup> ‘National elections’ refers to national elections for a country’s primary legislative assembly. Under no circumstances should the actual name of a national parliament be included in this question.

<sup>8</sup> Both senses – ‘free and fair’ – **MUST** be expressed in all translations; this can be done by using one or two adjectives or by using an idiomatic expression, if this exists in your language.

### Pilot – Results and comments

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Round 10 – Items

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D2 and D13).

### 1.2.1.3 Competition – Viable opposition (Vulnerability) (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

The opposition must be viable. It must be able to effectively oppose the governing party, to avoid the tyranny of the majority (this is an attempt to measure perceived ‘vulnerability of incumbents’).

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to empirical redundancy with Round 6 item E1 (Competition – Free and fair elections).
- Round 6 items in this concept were:
  - E4  
Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that opposition parties are free to criticise the government?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - E20  
Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. Opposition parties in [country] are free to criticise the government.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 - Applies completely*

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.2.2 Freedom (REPEAT)

Freedom refers to the whole set of rights and liberties available to the citizens in a given democracy (Morlino 2009). It ensures not only personal dignity, but also civil and political rights, which should be equal for everybody.

Civil rights above all are rights that protect an individual against infringements by the state. Historically, the most important aspects are the right to own property and the protection of private property against state power. Over time, the list of civil rights has grown and the protection and guarantee of these rights have become one of the minimal conditions for democratic regimes (e.g. freedom of opinion, freedom of association, freedom of information; see Merkel et al. 2003). One item is expected to operationalize the concept of freedom: Freedom of press (E5 and E21 in ESS 6).

### 1.2.2.1 Freedom – Freedom of press (REPEAT)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

Freedom of press refers to the independence of the media from the state to freely inform the people. The media fulfil different functions for democracy: on the one hand, the media have to provide information about the behaviour of the political decision-makers and they have to critically comment on their behaviour, on the other hand, the media have to provide an impartial forum for the debate between the diverse political ideas. In other words, they have to function as a source of information about the government and as a ‘watchdog’ of the government, and they have to provide a ‘market-place’ for political ideas. We introduce two questions for the media functions concerning the government. To operationalize ‘freedom of press’, we opt for the ‘watchdog’ function: media have to „serve as citizens’ eyes and ears to survey the political scene and the performance of politicians and “act as a public watchdog that barks loudly when it encounters misbehaviour, corruption, and abuses of power in the halls of government” (Graber 2003: 143). For the information function, we introduce a question with respect to the sub-concept of transparency (see transp 1.2).

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to empirical redundancy with Round 6 item E1 (Competition – Free and fair elections).
- Round 6 items in this concept were:
  - o E5  
Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the media are free to criticise the government?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - o E21  
Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. The media in [country] are free to criticise the government.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 - Applies completely*

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included both of the items about media (E5 and E6 in Round 6).
- The item remained ‘dropped’ until the pilot stage, when it was re-added.

#### **Pre-test – Items**

This concept was not pre-tested.



**Pilot – Items**

D3

MEDIMEAN

**STILL CARD 30**

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...**  
that the media are free to<sup>9</sup> criticise<sup>10</sup> the government?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>9</sup> 'Are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'.

<sup>10</sup> 'Criticise' in the sense of 'contest' or 'dispute' rather than 'being able to disrupt'

D16

MEDIEVAL

**STILL CARD 32**

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** The media in [country] are free to<sup>11</sup> criticise<sup>12</sup> the government.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>11</sup> 'Are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'.

<sup>12</sup> 'Criticise' in the sense of 'contest' or 'dispute' rather than 'being able to disrupt'

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D3 and D15).

### 1.2.2.2 Freedom – Freedom of expression (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

Freedom of expression is one of the basic liberties a democracy should ensure, basic parts of a complete democratic regime (Dahl 1989). It is the right for every citizen to express ones' own opinion both in the private and public sphere. It is well known that the distribution of the answers to a question about the freedom of expression in the abstract is highly skewed. Thus, Sniderman et al. (1996: 19-23) proposed to ask about freedom of expression for extreme groups, and for most disliked groups. While questions about most disliked groups give even better (i.e. more discriminating) results than extreme groups, such a question was not considered feasible in the present cross-national survey. This is why the second best solution (which asks for freedom to express extreme opinions) was chosen.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts*

A positive relationship is expected between freedom of expression and freedom of association.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was revised in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to space limitations and considering the problems related to the trade-off item format (discussed in the separate module proposal document).
- Round 6 items in this concept were E31, E32, E33, E34, and E35.
- The proposed revision was to:
  - o Drop Round 6 'meaning' item E32, 'How important do you think it is for democracy in general *that everyone is free to express their political views openly, even if they are extreme?*' (and corresponding 'evaluation' item E33);
  - o Revise Round 6 'meaning' item E34, 'How important do you think it is for democracy in general *that those who hold extreme political views are prevented from expressing them openly?*' (and corresponding 'evaluation' item E35), to instead read, 'And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general *that those who hold extreme political views should be prevented from expressing them openly?*' (and a corresponding 'evaluation' item).
- Additional motivation for this revision stemmed from the result in Round 6 that 16.4% of respondents chose the E34/35 option in the forced-choice question (E31). This group of respondents is significantly less supportive of democracy than the respondents who are in favour of complete freedom of expression. The QDT expected therefore that the 'views' item would not only capture the extent to which respondents consider that freedom is important in a democracy, but also illiberal conceptions of democracy.

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The proposed revision was not carried forward after the 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting, and was dropped before the pre-test.

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.2.3 Multi-level democracy (EU) (NEW)

In a multi-level governance structure such as the EU we are likely to witness increasing tensions between the principles of responsiveness and responsibility, as Mair (2009) has observed. As representatives of the national citizen publics, governments are expected to be responsive and accountable to their voters; as responsible governments, they are expected to take into account the increasing numbers of principals constituted by the many veto players who now surround national governments in its multilevel institutional setting. In the case of EU countries, the most important of these veto players is the EU itself. This aspect of multilateral democracies should be apparent to citizens due to increasing powers of oversight that the EU enjoys over, for example, the budgetary policy of the member states. In any case, other multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the UN or the WTO also constrain national governments' manoeuvring space.

The concept of multilevel democracy is restricted to a single dimension: in the European Union - as a multilevel democracy - member states have the duty to be responsible to the EU.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This new Round 10 concept was not proposed in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Early in development, this 'multi-level democracy' concept developed out of the Round 6 concept 'Responsiveness – Responsiveness to other stakeholders' (see 1.2.8.2, below), which had been proposed as a revised concept in the initial Round 10 proposal.

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included the European dimension item referring to whether politicians should take into account the views of other European governments before making decisions (E16 in Round 6, see 1.2.8.2 Responsiveness – Responsiveness to other stakeholders, below).

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- Two possible items were discussed under the new 'multilevel democracy (EU)' concept:
  - o How important do you think it is for democracy in general that all European member states are democratic?
  - o How important do you think it is for democracy in general that members of the European parliament are elected in free and fair elections?
- The CST felt that the description of this concept contains four separate sub-concepts (1 – Anti-EU sentiment; 2 – Importance of countries within EU being democratic; 3 – Importance of EU itself being democratic; 4 – Multilevel democracy, i.e., national decisions being affected by supranational bodies), which are not all reflected in the above two suggested questions. The CST also note the need to be aware that questions will be asked in non-EU countries. The QDT was asked to provide more focused description of what this concept is attempting to measure.
- The QDT acknowledged that the precise dimension(s) of European/multinational government that this concept should cover remain under discussion – i.e., whether it is the democratic

nature of the EU itself or support for supranational bodies in general (e.g., EU) influencing national policies.

- The Round 6 item on multi-level government (see 1.2.8.2 Responsiveness – Responsiveness to other stakeholders, below) was flagged as a possible option. The QDT felt that conceptually, the Round 6 item on multilevel government works well and could be retained. There were some concerns about: 1) high non response rate of this item; 2) lack of cross-country comparability of the item (depends on support for the EU; whether or not the country belongs to the EU; etc.); 3) empirically this item does not scale well with the other items of the liberal democracy model, which might be an indication that the respondents do not relate it with the concept of democracy itself (cognitive interviewing?).
- There may also be interest in tapping other dimensions e.g., attitudes towards how democratic the EU itself is. However, this would need to be considered as a separate sub-concept.
- The QDT to look at the performance of EU items asked in the Round 8 rotating module on Welfare (items E37/E38, variables eusclbf and eudcnbf).
- Three new possible items were developed in this meeting:
  - o Alternative A: ‘How important do you think it is for democracy in general .... that national governments are free to implement the policies they want without interference from international institutions’ (0-10 response scales for meaning and evaluation)
  - o Alternative B: ‘How important do you think it is for democracy in general .... that the European Union is able to control/supervise important decisions adopted by the government’ (0-10 response scales for meaning and evaluation)
  - o Alternative C: ‘How important do you think it is for democracy in general .... that international institutions are able to sanction the government when it violates democratic rules’ (0-10 response scales for meaning and evaluation)

#### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2018):**

- An NC raised that there are two different ideas here regarding multilevel institution: one is European control or supervision of decisions by national countries, and the other is EU punishing countries for decision. The NC highlighted another problem re: the understanding of the multilevel type of governance by respondents. The QDT responded that, interestingly, the anti-European item in Round 6 was considered the least important of all the items. They added that it is an issue for all the new items, which have different dimensions. However, the questionnaire is only able to address a limited number of those dimensions.

#### **Comments from 3<sup>rd</sup> QDT meeting (12/12/2018):**

- It was asked why they are not using EU item from Round 6 to measure this item. The QDT responded that it was not clear what the Round 6 item was measuring.
- QDT propose to narrow the concept of multilevel democracy to refer only to the European Union and to the duty of member states to be responsible towards the EU.
- The multilevel democracy item was proposed for inclusion in cognitive interviewing and omnibus pre-testing.

#### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC SAB meeting (21/01/2019):**

- The SAB was not convinced of the relevance of the multi-level democracy concept, and how it fits in the module. Questions raised included what governments the concept is talking about, and whether this is related to the European Commission. The QDT was asked to think more about this concept.

**Comments from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- Two options are being considered and the first option (alternative A) is preferred:
  - o ‘How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the European Union is able to control/supervise important decisions adopted by the government?’
  - o The group discussed whether to use the term ‘control’ ‘supervise’ ‘sanction’ ‘overturn’ ‘contravene’ ‘intervene in’. It was agreed to use the term ‘intervene in.’ Understanding and examples of this will be explored in cognitive testing.
  - o It was suggested this the word ‘adopted’ is changed to ‘made’ for simplicity.
- It was felt that this item should be used in the cognitive testing and in the omnibus.
- Final wording for testing is: ‘How important do you think it is for democracy in general .... that the European Union is able to intervene in important decisions made by the government?’

**Comments from paper shared for 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (04/04/2019):**

- This new multi-level democracy item is being considered in place of the item asked in Round 6: ‘And how important do you think it is for democracy in general that politicians take into account the views of other European governments before making decisions?’ (0-10 response scales for meaning and evaluation). The QDT had concerns about the high level of item nonresponse and the fact that responses to this item did not scale well with other democracy items in Round 6. Response patterns for the new Round 10 items will be compared to responses to this item in Round 6.

**Pre-test – Items**

**B6a**

[Included in both the pre-test omnibus and the cognitive interviews]

ASK IF EXP1 = 1

**CARD 6**

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that the European Union is able to intervene in important decisions made by [country’s] government?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>7</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>8</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>7</sup>The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>8</sup>‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

### B6b

[Included in both the pre-test omnibus and the cognitive interviews]

ASK IF EXP1 = 2

#### CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that international governing bodies, such as the European Union or the United Nations, are able to intervene in important decisions made by [country's] government?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>9</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>10</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>9</sup>The full scale and the end labels **MUST** appear on the showcard.

<sup>10</sup>'Extremely' in the sense of 'an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc. This applies to all references to 'extremely' throughout section B.

### B12a

ASK IF EXP1 = 1

#### CARD 9

Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

The European Union is able to intervene in important decisions made by [country's] government.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

## B12b

ASK IF EXP1 = 2

### CARD 9

Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

International governing bodies, such as the European Union or the United Nations, are able to intervene in important decisions made by [country's] government.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### Pre-test – Results and comments

Two questions were tested on multi-level democracy (an importance rating question and an evaluation question). Two versions of this question were produced, one that used a single example of multi-level democracy i.e. the EU and one that used two examples (both the EU and the UN).

#### Translation queries:

- During translation it was queried whether 'is able' should translate to: "Being capable/ in the position to" or "Having the right to".
- Translators were advised that to 'being capable/ in a position to' (i.e. internal capacity) was closer to the intended meaning as opposed to 'having a right to' (external capacity).
- Translation of 'intervene' needs to be clearer- does it mean 'punishment or diplomacy.'

#### Omnibus testing:

##### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- Half the omnibus respondents were randomly allocated to the version A questions and half were allocated to the version B questions.
- INR levels are within acceptable parameters across all test countries for version A (i.e. no instances of INR>=7). However, for version B UK INR was 8.1%.
- For B12 UK INR was high for both versions A and B (8.9% and 9.3% respectively).
- The version of the question asked did effect response distributions, with the direction of this effect varying by country. Therefore, the two versions are not functionally equivalent.



### Survey Quality Predictor scores (SQP)

- There was little difference in quality between the SQP scores between the two versions for either the importance or the evaluation items (scores for version B were slightly higher in both).

### Timings data

- We compared the timestamps of concepts operationalised by two wording alternatives. The first comparison is among B6a (mean = ~18.9, sd = ~13.3) and B6b (mean = ~19.8, sd = ~24.5). The means are not significantly different, the sd shows a larger variation in the time spent on item B6b, as this item is longer in number of words, this may only reflect differences in the speed of interviewers reading the data. The second comparison was between B12a (mean = ~17.2, sd = ~18.4) and B12b (mean = ~20.3, sd = ~36.4). The means are not significantly different, as in the case of item B6b, B12b is longer in number of words, that may explain differences in the standard deviation. For both pairs, there is no indication in the timing data about one method performing better (or worse) than the other.

### Substantive analyses

- There is a strong correlation between the both versions of the multilevel democracy item and the item on EU unification in the UK, but not in the other two countries.

### Interviewer feedback

- Omnibus interviewers in the UK and Italy did not raise any issues with either versions of the question tested on multi-level democracy.
- However, interviewers in Bulgaria reported that some participants found these questions difficult. 16.4% of Bulgarian interviewers felt that at least half of the time their respondents found Version A difficult; 14.9% felt that at least half the time their respondents found Version B difficult.
- Some Bulgarian interviewers reported that older people in rural areas felt uncomfortable and admitted they did not know how institutions function. Their lack of knowledge of the functioning of the European Union and the UN made them question how realistic some of the statements were.

### Cognitive interview testing:

- The main issues noted were:
  - o Participants were not thinking about the importance to democracy in general when answering. One participant noted that ‘think about democracy in general’ is in conflict with the question which mentions specifically their country’s relationship to the EU.
  - o Participants gave different answers for the two versions of the question. Participants are not thinking about ‘multi-level democracy’ in general but basing their responses on their feelings towards the named institutions.
  - o Participants considered various things as ‘important decisions.’ There were differences in response mapping depending on whether people were thinking about interventions on domestic policy (e.g. traffic calming measures) or joint policy areas (e.g. the environment, military actions and fundamental rights). Participants described finding the question difficult as they did not know what ‘important decisions’ referred to.

- The cognitive interviewing report recommends that the alternative version of the question is retained (i.e. that mentions both the EU and the UN). This is because:
  - o This question is more in line with the intended measurement concept.
  - o There was some evidence to suggest inclusion of the UN example will make the phrase ‘important decisions’ less broad, as the perception was that UN intervention only applies to selected issues.
  - o Having multiple examples will make the question more relevant to ‘democracy in general’ as it would apply to countries who are not EU member states.

#### CST recommendations:

- In both versions of the question tested participants tend to fixate on the examples given (EU and UN) rather than the more abstract concept of multi-level democracy. The CST recommend that version B (EU and UN) is preferable as:
  - o 1. It is more applicable to ESS countries that are not EU members;
  - o 2. During the cognitive interviews understanding of ‘important decisions’ was less broad in version B (i.e. inclusion of the UN in the question made participants less likely to think of domestic policy areas).
- It is recommended that for the importance item ‘[country’s] government’ should be replaced with ‘governments’: [Using this card] How important is it for democracy in general that international governing bodies, such as the European Union or the United Nations, are able to intervene in important decisions made by governments?
- A general query is that currently the word ‘intervene’ is understood to include different types of persuasive powers i.e., both ‘punishment/ sanctions’ and ‘negotiation/diplomacy.’ Is this in keeping with the QDT’s intended understanding of the item?

#### QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- At the QDT meeting it was discussed how although version B is closer to the measurement concept it would be better to talk about the EU as a proxy for multi-level democracy. There were concerns that survey respondents may have divergent opinions about EU intervention and UN intervention (this was demonstrated in the cognitive interviews) and at least by only mentioning the EU there is complete clarity over what form of multi-level governance is being considered. It was noted that the question would work well for most ESS countries (e.g. EU member countries). It was also felt that it would be possible to ask the question on non-EU member countries as intervention (e.g. diplomacy/ sanctions) can also apply to non-member states.
- The wording of the question agreed for the pilot was: [Using this card] How important is it for democracy in general that important decisions are made by national governments rather than the European Union.

#### **Comments from 13<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2019):**

- An NC queried why this was only EU, and whether it would be asked only in EU countries. The CST responded that it may not make sense to ask this item in non-EU countries.

### Pilot – Items

D11

GOVEU

#### STILL CARD 30

And how important is it for democracy in general that key decisions are made by national governments rather than the European Union?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D24

GVEUEVAL

#### STILL CARD 32

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** Key decisions in [country] are made by the national government rather than the European Union.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### Pilot – Results and comments

In the pilot, two questions were tested on Multi-Level Democracy (an importance rating and an evaluation question).

Overall feedback:

- Little difficulty was recorded from interviewers in both Austria and the UK.
- Very slight positive correlation between European unification going too far and preference for key decisions being made by national governments rather than the EU.

- Very slight correlation with an emotional attachment to Europe and preference for key decisions being made by national governments rather than the EU.
- Some countries queried if they were able to include other levels of governance where decisions were not just made at the national level.

#### D11 feedback:

- The item non-response levels are within acceptable parameters across both test countries (i.e. no instances of  $INR \geq 7$ ).
- D11 found similar results in both countries with national governments making decisions placed as important for democracy. Over half of respondents selected 8, 9 or 10 in both countries.
- The pilot saw less support for multi-level democracy compared to the different wording used in the omnibus in both countries. (Omnibus: Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...that the European Union is able to intervene in important decisions made by [COUNTRY] government?)
- The CST agreed to include the version tested in the pilot for Round 10.

#### D24 feedback:

- The item non-response level is above the desired 7% for D24 in the UK at 11.7.
- Responses were clustered around mid-points for both countries.
- UK saw the statement as applying more completely on average than in Austria.
- High level of midpoint responses for D24, 31.6% in Austria 15.6% in the UK.
- The CST agreed to include the version tested in the pilot for Round 10.

### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D12 and D24).

## 1.2.4 Representation (REPEAT)

The concept of representation makes reference to the translation of votes into policies that represent people's choices. It is the inclusion of citizens' preferences into the political arena (Bühlmann 2010). This classical definition of representation, however, is currently at stake. Indeed, although Western democracies have for a long time been called 'representative democracies', nowadays there is a debate on the function of representation in a democratic regime (Mair 2009). Some voices speak of a crisis of representation and the need to reform it or to replace it by a more participative form of democracy (Pitkin 2004).

Representation refers to the mechanisms through which the votes of the citizens are transformed into policies. Above all, it is a function of the transformation of votes into seats in parliament and government, i.e. of the composition of the two powers, and of the way they govern. There clearly are two visions of representation: a majoritarian and a proportional vision (Powell 2000). Each one of the two has its own advantages and disadvantages. According to the majoritarian vision, representation is more exclusive, according to the proportional vision it is more inclusive.

Representation requires two sub concepts to define it: the subjects of representation, and the type of electoral system. Depending on the features of these elements, we may talk about one representation or another.

reprst1. Subjects of representation: who is represented – the whole diversity of interests in a given society, or only certain interests?

reprst2. Type of electoral system: a crucial factor determining the diversity of representation is the electoral rules. Democracy is majority rule, but there are also rules to include minorities: there may be rules which guarantee a minimal representation for certain minorities, a proportional representation, or an overrepresentation of minorities (of which parity representation is a particularly conspicuous variant). There are two fundamental types of electoral systems which determine the type of representation in a democracy: proportional and majoritarian systems. The first one implies a better correspondence between votes and seats, while the second one facilitates governance, as it typically leads to one-party governments instead of government coalitions.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

A negative relationship is expected between majoritarian and/or more exclusive forms of representation, on the one hand, and more demanding forms of participation, on the other hand (see definition of participation for more details). By contrast, we expect a positive relationship between opportunities of effective participation and proportional and/or more inclusive forms of representations.

#### 1.2.4.1 Representation – Subjects of representation (REPEAT)

Representation may refer to the whole population (including citizens and non-citizens) or to different groups. These are the subjects of representation. We operationalize the concept of subjects of representation by referring to protection of minority groups.

The protection of minority groups is a key aspect of consensus democracies, which are to be distinguished from majoritarian democracies (see Lijphart 1999). In addition to the protection of minorities, we also introduce another key aspect of consensus democracies – the power sharing in coalition governments (see reprst2).

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

We expect a negative relationship between responsiveness to the will of the people and representation of minorities.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E7 and E23.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘Rights of minority groups protected’ (importance and reality), under the liberal model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. Theoretical consistency.
  - o 2. Good consistency of the item in the reduced liberal democracy model scale.

##### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2018):**

- An NC commented that based on studies in Hungary they have found that the understanding of items on rights of minorities were understood very differently in Hungary. The QDT responded that this could be a matter of translation, but noted that this item is still retained in the proposed module. The QDT explained that asking about the rights of the minority is especially important because of their relevance in the political scene and in the political discourse. The QDT also remarked that the concept of minorities always implies issues with cross-national comparability and it might be necessary to know which minorities the respondents are referring to. The QDT reinforced the importance of the item and mentioned that they would consider whether additional information for the interviewers should be added to the questionnaire.

#### **Pre-test**

This concept was not pre-tested.

### Pilot – Items

D4

MINRMEAN

#### STILL CARD 30

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...**  
that the rights of minority groups are protected?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D17

MINREVAL

#### STILL CARD 32

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** The rights of minority groups in [country] are protected.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### Pilot – Results and comments

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Round 10 – Items

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D4 and D16).

## 1.2.4.2 Representation – Type of governmental coalition (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

There are different possible types of governmental coalitions, but the main distinction is between single party governments and coalition governments that include more than one party. This distinction is closely related to the distinction between consensus and majoritarian democracies introduced above. Single party governments concentrate power, while coalition governments divide power between two or more parties.

### Early development – Comments

#### Module proposal:

- This Round 6 concept was revised in the initial Round 10 module proposal, to align better with the standard format of the module.
- In Round 6, five items made up the measure of the type of representation:
  - E41
 

The government in some countries is formed by a single party; in other countries by two or more parties in coalition. Which option on this card describes what you think is best for democracy in general?

*1 - A single party forms the government [ASK E42]*

*2 - Two or more parties in coalition form the government [GO TO E44]*

*5 - (It depends on the circumstances) [GO TO E45]*

*8 - (Don't know) [GO TO E45]*
  - E42
 

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government is formed by a single party?

*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - E43
 

Now for the last question on this topic. Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] is formed by a single party?

*00 - Never / 10 - Always*
  - E44
 

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government is formed by two or more parties in coalition?

*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - E45
 

Now for the last question on this topic. Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] is formed by two or more parties in coalition?

*00 - Never / 10 - Always*
- The proposed revision was to:
  - Drop E41, E42, and E42.
  - Revise E44 to fit the ‘meaning’ item format used throughout the module:
 

And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that there is a large majority for a policy decision?

*00 – Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 – Extremely important for democracy in general*



- Revise E45 to fit the ‘evaluation’ item format used throughout the module:  
Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. There is a large majority for a policy decision.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 - Applies completely*

#### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- Two possible items were discussed:
  - ‘And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that there is a large majority for each policy decision.’
  - ‘Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. There is a large majority for each policy decision.’
- The CST sub-group does not feel that the two suggested questions above relate to the description in the concept, namely the distinction between single party and coalition governments. The suggested questions appear to relate more to the ‘direct model of democracy’, i.e., consulting ‘the people’ on policy decisions. The QDT was asked to provide more focused description of what this concept is attempting to measure. The QDT agreed that the concept of interest was type of governmental coalition and that the question item needed to reflect that e.g. by explicitly mention parties and/or government decision making.
- There remains concern that the item will simply pick up/reflect the type of government present in their country. However, this in itself could be considered interesting. And moving away from a trade-off item to single 11 point importance/evaluation item(s) might mitigate this to some extent and allow for some within country variation.
- Concept to be retained as is. QDT to suggest revised question wording for this item and/or add a note about the options under discussion. The QDT proposed that an alternative formulation for this concept could be: ‘How important is it for democracy in general that two or more parties in coalition form the government’ (0-10 response scales for meaning and evaluation).

#### **Comments from 3<sup>rd</sup> QDT meeting (12/12/2018):**

- The decision was made to drop this sub-concept.

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.2.5 Rule of law (REPEAT)

Rule of law designates the independence, the primacy, and the absolute warrant of and by the law against the state. This requires the same prevalence of rights as well as formal and procedural justice for all individuals (Bühlmann 2010: 7). In the words of Morlino, Rule of law refers “not only to the enforcement of legal norms. It basically connotes the principle of supremacy of law, that is the Ciceronian *legum servi sumus*, and entails, at least, the capacity, even if limited, of authorities to enforce the law, and to have laws that are non-retroactive and in public knowledge universal, stable, predictable and unambiguous.” (Morlino 2009: 34). Rule of law ensures, then, that each individual respects the law, but also that he/she is protected against the abuses from the state or any other person.

The rule of law is the principle that the state is bound to the effective law and acts according to clearly defined prerogatives. The rule of law concerns contention and limitation of state power, but also puts limits to the acts of all individuals or groups, so that each particular individual is protected against arbitrary acts of the others. Four basic, interdependent characteristics are needed so that rule of law is effective, but we are able to measure only one due to space constraints.

All citizens are equally treated by the law, independently of their social, economic or political status. We expect this sub concept can be measured by a single item, about people’s equality before the law. The question refers to the key institution of the legal system – the courts. It would also have been possible to ask about equal treatment by the police, but the courts were given priority due to space limitations.

The principle of rule of law is transversal to all the other attributes of democracy, as the primacy of the law is required so that the other attributes can exist. It is the core element of democracy according to most Europeans in ESS 6.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E10 and E25.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘Courts treat everyone the same’ (importance and reality), under the liberal model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. One of the core items of democracy for EU citizens, according to ESS Round 6 (68% of respondents scored 10).
  - o 2. Good consistency of the item in the reduced liberal democracy model scale.

## Pre-test – Items

B2

### CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that the courts treat<sup>11</sup> everyone the same<sup>12</sup>?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>13</sup>	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general <sup>14</sup>	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>11</sup> 'Treat' in the sense of 'deal with'.

<sup>12</sup> 'The same' in the sense of 'exactly the same way in the same situation'.

<sup>13</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>14</sup> 'Extremely' in the sense of 'an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc. This applies to all references to 'extremely' throughout section B.

## Pre-test – Results and comments

This concept was pre-tested as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

## Pilot – Items

D6

ROLMEAN

### (STILL CARD 30)

And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that the courts treat<sup>13</sup> everyone the same<sup>14</sup>?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77

	Don't Know	88
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Translation notes:

<sup>13</sup> 'Treat' in the sense of 'deal with'.

<sup>14</sup> 'The same' in the sense of 'exactly the same way in the same situation'.

D19

ROLEVAL

(STILL CARD 32)

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT...** The courts in [country] treat<sup>15</sup> everyone the same<sup>16</sup>.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>15</sup> 'Treat' in the sense of 'deal with'.

<sup>16</sup> 'The same' in the sense of 'exactly the same way in the same situation'.

### Pilot – Results and comments

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Round 10 – Items

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D6 and D18).

## 1.2.6 Horizontal accountability (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

Horizontal accountability refers to the traditional division of power between the executive, legislative and judiciary, and the capacity of these institutions to control each other. By horizontal accountability we understand, in accordance with O'Donnell (1994: 61), that elected authorities are surveyed by a network of relatively autonomous institutions and can be pinned down to constitutionally defined, lawful action. Horizontal accountability of power concerns the structure of power. The term includes lawful government action that is checked by division of power between mutually interdependent and autonomous legislative, executive, and judiciary bodies. Courts have to serve as an independent body authorised to execute judicial review of legislative (surveillance of norms) and executive (surveillance of bureaucracy) acts. The guarantee of institutional horizontal autonomy accountability does not imply that the three powers are strictly separated from each other. Horizontal accountability rather means that the three bodies check each other reciprocally, without dominating or interfering with the functional sphere of another power. One item is used to measure horizontal accountability.

The second dimension of Lijphart's (1999) typology of democracies refers to these horizontal checks and balances. He includes five possible criteria: federalism, symmetrical bicameralism, rigid constitution, judicial review and independent central bank. We have chosen judicial review as the criterion, because we believe that it is most likely to be universally applicable and comprehensible across countries.

A relationship is expected to be positive between horizontal accountability and the rule of law. It is indeed part of the rule of law that institutions control each other in the fulfilment of the law. Therefore, a person who puts an emphasis on the rule of law should equally emphasize the existence of horizontal accountability

### **Early development – Comments**

#### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- The Round 6 item in this concept was E11 (And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that the courts are able to stop the government acting beyond its authority?).

#### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT expressed an opinion that the 'Horizontal Accountability' item – 'that the courts are able to stop the government acting beyond its authority' – may not be measuring what we want it to. An action point was assigned for the Translation team to investigate the translation of this question in various countries, particularly countries with a high non-response for this question at Round 6.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. Theoretical consistency – This is the only item for the concept of horizontal accountability.
  - o 2. Good consistency of the item in the reduced liberal democracy model scale.

- However, the QDT also noted that they were not satisfied with having only the importance item for horizontal accountability. They pointed the NCs to the concept of ‘populism’ for an alternative option for this item.

**Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes one repeat item on ‘Courts able to stop government acting beyond its authority’ (importance), under the liberal model of democracy.
- As part of the discussion on the ‘overall view of democracy’ concept, it was mentioned that the item on whether the courts are able to stop governments acting item may be considered to be dropped. This was felt to be an important concept, but it was not possible to design an evaluation item for this concept in Round 6.
- The role of courts may perhaps be captured by a new trade-off item design for the unrestricted sovereignty sub-concept. However, the item will be retained for now.

This concept was dropped ahead of the 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum meeting, and the concept of ‘Unrestricted popular sovereignty’ was developed instead (see 1.3.2, below).

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.2.7 Vertical accountability (REPEAT)

Vertical accountability is defined as the mechanism through which the people control their representatives. It refers to the obligation of incumbent governments to assume responsibility for their acts and to enable voters to respond with electoral sanctions, if the political output does not correspond to their preferences. Accountability combines an obligation of justification on the part of the representatives (they have to explain and justify their decisions to their voters) with the possibility of control on the part of the voters (they can sanction their representatives, if they do not deliver) (Papadopoulos 2007: 470). Another one of the five criteria for a democratic process according to Dahl (1989: 112) is the ‘criterion of enlightened understanding’: ‘Each citizen ought to have adequate and equal opportunities for discovering and validating (within the time permitted by the need for a decision) the choice on the matter to be decided that would best serve the citizen’s interests’. If the process of opinion formation is to lead to enlightened understanding, it presupposes transparency (open access to government information); accessibility to the relevant information about government policies (information about available options), the policy outputs, and the implications of these decisions (policy outcomes); clarity of responsibilities for the decisions taken; and critical evaluations from a diversity of viewpoints.

Vertical accountability relates to the citizens’ control of the government. It is the process through which the citizens ensure that the government remains responsive. The term ‘accountability’ has no exact equivalent in other languages, such as French, Spanish, German, Dutch or Japanese, which do not distinguish semantically between ‘responsibility’ and ‘accountability’ (Bovens 2007). The English meaning of the term is twofold (Strom 2000: 267): an agent (e.g. the government) is accountable to his principal (e.g. the voter) if he is obliged to act on the latter’s behalf, and the latter is empowered to reward or punish him for his performance in this capacity. Strom (2000: 267): ‘Indeed, what makes democratic regimes democratic, is precisely that they contain mechanisms by which the people, the ultimate principals in democratic societies, can select and control their representatives’.

The most evident mechanism of vertical accountability is elections, which allow citizens to control the government. It is during the elections that the citizens can decide whether to vote for (to reward) or not (to punish) the actual government, depending on how they perceive it has been performing. More precisely, it is the regular repetition of elections which constitutes the crucial mechanism that allows voters to influence the decisions of those who govern, i.e. to incite their representatives to be responsive and to hold them accountable (Manin 1995). Based on this repetitive mechanism, the elected representatives are forced to take into account the retrospective (and, we should add, the prospective) judgement of the voters about the policies they have adopted (or are promising to adopt). Repetition creates anticipatory pressure on elected representatives to take into consideration the preferences of the voters (i.e. to be responsive to them), which allows the voters to have an influence on their representatives on a daily basis. However, such pressure only exists, if there is political competition.

### 1.2.7.1 Vertical accountability – Retrospective accountability (REPEAT)

Although we can theoretically distinguish between prospective and retrospective accountability, we measure here only retrospective accountability, as it seems very difficult to formulate a question that correctly taps prospective accountability.

vertacc1. Retrospective accountability: citizens reward or punish the government according to what it has done in the preceding legislature. Because elections are the basic mechanism of accountability, retrospective accountability basically functions through the elections. Citizens vote for a party if they feel this party has done a good job when it was in the government; and they use instead the elections to punish the party if they feel it has done a bad job – that is, they vote for another party or do not vote. An item is employed to measure this sub concept.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

This concept is expected to be positively related to the dimensions of competition and responsiveness, in particular, as competitive elections are the principal mechanism through which accountability is ensured, and because vertical accountability is the best guarantee for the government's responsiveness.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E12 and E26.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on 'Governing parties are punished when they have done a bad job' (importance and reality), under the liberal model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. Theoretical consistency: it is the only item for the concept of vertical accountability.
  - o 2. Good consistency of the item in the reduced liberal democracy model scale.

##### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2018):**

- An NC commented that based on studies in Hungary they have found that the understanding of items on punishing of parties were understood very differently in Hungary. The QDT responded that this could be a matter of translation.

#### **Pre-test – Items**

This concept was not pre-tested.



**Pilot – Items**

D7

VAMEAN

**STILL CARD 30**

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...** that governing parties are punished in elections<sup>17</sup> when they have done a bad job?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>17</sup> ‘Punished in elections’ in the sense of ‘getting fewer votes than in the previous election’.

D20

VAEVAL

**STILL CARD 32**

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** Governing parties in [country] are punished in elections<sup>18</sup> when they have done a bad job.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>18</sup> ‘Punished in elections’ in the sense of ‘getting fewer votes than in the previous election’.

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D7 and D19).

### 1.2.7.2 Vertical accountability – Transparency: Transparency of political decisions (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

Transparency of the political actors is needed if the mechanisms of accountability and responsiveness are to work. There are two components of this sub concept of transparency:

transp1.1. Transparency of political decisions

transp1.2. Availability of alternative sources of information

transp1.1. According to Schedler (1999), being accountable means the obligation of decision makers to answer questions regarding their decisions and/or actions. This obligation can be formal (induced by different checks and balances) or informal (imposed by the public) and has two aspects: information and justification. Answerability implies that the policy-makers inform the public about their actions and decisions, i.e. answerability implies transparency. Evaluating and sanctioning (the following two stages of the accountability chain) are not possible in the absence of access to transparent and comprehensible information. But answerability goes beyond the simple provision of facts and figures. It also demands explanations and justifications of actions and decisions, i.e. a dialogue between account-holders and accountees. Ideally, democracy is characterized by ongoing debates between representatives and represented. This is the idea of interactive or communicative representation (Mansbridge 2009).

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to empirical redundancy with Round 6 item E12 (Vertical accountability – Retrospective accountability).
- Round 6 items in this concept were:
  - o E14  
And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government explains its decisions to voters?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - o E28  
And using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. The government in [country] explains its decisions to voters.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 – Applies completely*

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included the item about explaining decisions to voters (E14 in Round 6). However, this was not pushed forward, and the concept remained dropped.

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.2.7.3 Vertical accountability – Transparency: Availability of alternative sources of information (DROPPED)

(Round 6 Final sub-concept description:)

transp1.2: this aspect refers to the media's information function (see above 'freedom of press').

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to empirical redundancy with Round 6 item E1 (Competition – Free and fair elections).
- Round 6 items in this concept were:
  - o E6  
And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general that the media provide citizens with reliable information to judge the government?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - o E22  
And using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. The media in [country] provide citizens with reliable information to judge the government.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 – Applies completely*

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included both of the items about media (E5 and E6 in Round 6). However, this was not pushed forward, and the concept remained dropped.

##### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2018):**

- An NC commented that based on studies in Hungary they have found that the understanding of items on media were understood very differently in Hungary. The QDT responded that this could be a matter of translation, however that there was already a decision to drop this item.

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.2.8 Responsiveness (REPEAT)

This sub-concept falls under both the Liberal and Populist models of democracy.

Responsiveness is understood as “the capacity to satisfy the governed by executing [government] policies in a way that corresponds to [public] demands”. (Morlino 2009: 41). In the words of Powell, responsiveness is understood as the formation and implementation of policies that citizens want, which requires the formulation and the translation of the wishes of the citizens (Powell 2004: 91).

Responsiveness is an extremely important dimension in any democracy. Democratic responsiveness occurs when the democratic process induces the government to form and implement policies that citizens want (Powell 2004a: 91). If citizens perceive that they are not listened to by the government, vertical accountability is the mechanism that helps to correct for this, by punishing the government that did not sufficiently listen to them. In addition, populists advocate extreme responsiveness, against mainstream political parties whose responsible acts do not respond to “the people” general will (Mair 2002, 2009, 2013). In Round 6, the concept of responsiveness was therefore divided into two sub concepts: responsiveness to the citizens (responsv1) and responsiveness to the ‘will of the people’ (responsv2). Only the former was retained for Round 10.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

A positive relationship is expected between responsiveness and vertical accountability (responsiveness is better if vertical accountability is better). A negative relationship is expected between responsiveness and horizontal accountability. A positive relationship is expected between responsiveness to the citizens and retrospective accountability.

### 1.2.8.1 Responsiveness – Responsiveness to the citizens (REPEAT)

This sub-concept falls under both the Liberal and Populist models of democracy.

Responsiveness refers in the first place to the citizens as a whole. The government should listen to their preferences and take them into account in the decision-making process. The ‘chain of responsiveness’ links the citizens’ preferences to the results of policy-making. Democratic responsiveness occurs when the democratic process induces the government to form and implement policies that citizens want (Powell 2004: 91). The final link in the chain of responsiveness concerns the implementation of public policies. An adequate translation of preferences into seats is only one necessary condition for responsiveness. ‘Doing what the citizens want’ must eventually be reflected in the decisions adopted by the political representatives, i.e. substantive representation is most important for the idea of responsiveness. ‘Democratic representation means that the actions of these policy makers are supposed to be responsive to the wishes of the people’ (Powell 2004b: 273).

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E36, E37, E38, E39, and E40. The QDT proposed that, if it is possible in terms of space constraints and data quality, they would like to keep the trade-off item format of E36-E40, as it uncovers one of the core populist trade-offs.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes one repeat item on ‘Should government change planned policies or stick to planned policies?’, and two repeat items on ‘Change policies/ stick to planned policies’ (importance and reality), under the liberal and populist model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. This item uncovers one of the basic populist trade-offs (see the concept of ‘populism’).

##### **Comments from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- Currently three draft items are included on responsiveness: a binary trade-off item and two scalar items (on government sticking to plans and on government changing plans).
- It was decided to drop the trade-off item (note currently there are currently 22 repeat items in the module and this needs to drop to 20). It was discussed how the trade-off format of question does not work well for follow-up questions on ‘core of democracy’.
- It was felt that these questions should be included in the pre-testing.

##### **Comments from paper shared for 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (04/04/2019):**

- More evidence is desired regarding whether to use a rating scale to measure responsiveness or a trade-off item with a follow-up rating scale. A version of this item was asked in Round 6.
  - o The SAB noted that the Round 6 trade-off items tend to be used less than the rating items.
  - o The rating items are also more in keeping with the new question on core of democracy (concept 12). A single rating item would take up less time to administer.

- However, the framing of the rating item could influence response (for example should the question ask about whether the government should ‘change’ or ‘stick to’ it policies).
- Therefore split-ballot testing in the omnibus will gather data on the impact of asking a simple rating item versus using a trade-off item and follow-up rating scale.

### Pre-test – Items

B15

ASK IF EXP1 = 2

#### CARD 10

Sometimes the government disagrees with what most people think is best for the country. Which one of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy in general?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY.

IF CODE 1, 2, 7 OR 8 NOT MENTIONED EXPLICITLY, PROBE ONCE:

‘PLEASE TRY TO CHOOSE AN ANSWER FROM THIS CARD THAT BEST MATCHES YOUR OPINION’.

Mixed [PLPOLTO + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [PLPOLTO + DKREF]	
LIST	PLPOLTO	
	The government should <u>change</u> its planned policies in response to what most people think	1
	The government should <u>stick to</u> <sup>15</sup> its planned policies regardless of what most people think	2
	(It depends on the circumstances)	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

Translation notes:

<sup>15</sup> ‘Stick to’ in the sense of ‘not change’.

**B16a**

ASK IF CODE 1 AT B15

**CARD 11**

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government changes its planned policies in response to what most people think? Please use this card.

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>16</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>17</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>16</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

**B13a**

ASK IF EXP1 = 1

**CARD 9**

Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

The government sticks to its planned policies regardless of what most people think.

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88



### B8a

ASK IF EXP1 = 1

#### CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that the government sticks to its planned policies regardless of what most people think?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>18</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>19</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>18</sup> The full scale and the end labels **MUST** appear on the showcard.

<sup>19</sup> 'Extremely' in the sense of 'an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc. This applies to all references to 'extremely' throughout section B.

### B16b

ASK IF CODE 2 AT B15

#### CARD 13

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the government sticks to its planned policies regardless of what most people think?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>20</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>21</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>20</sup> The full scale and the end labels **MUST** appear on the showcard.

<sup>21</sup> 'Extremely' in the sense of 'an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc. This applies to all references to 'extremely' throughout section B.

**B17a**

ASK IF CODE 1, 5, 7 OR 8 AT B15

**CARD 12**

Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] today changes its planned policies in response to what most people think?

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Never	0
	Always	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**B17b**

ASK IF CODE 1, 5, 7 OR 8 AT B15

**CARD 14**

Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] today sticks to its planned policies regardless of what most people think?

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Never	0
	Always	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pre-test – Results and comments**

Two alternative versions of the responsiveness items were tested, each asked of a random half of the sample. Version A followed the standard 11 point not important/extremely important format of most items within the democracy module. Version B first asked respondents to make a forced choice between two alternatives and then rate their choice in terms of importance/evaluation.

In both cases respondents were asked to rate the importance of the facet of democracy and to evaluate to what extent it applied in their country. Version B is a repeat of how this concept was asked in R6.

Translation queries:

- None.

## Omnibus testing:

### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- Does forced choice lead to high INR? Version B INR slightly lower than for Version A (Table 1) in GB, about the same in BG but higher in Italy (9.6%).
- Does forced choice lead to a choice? In GB and IT, a similar, and relatively high, proportion said “It depends on circumstances” for Version B – which was a hidden code- as choose mid point for Version A. However, in BG there is relatively low use of the hidden “It depends” category for Version B compared with use of mid point for Version A.
- Both high INR in IT and high use of hidden code in GB and IT suggests respondents may struggle with forced choice.
- Does question formation make a difference to responses? We can compare Version B to Version A grouped into 3 categories as shown below. Question format – and presenting respondents with alternatives to choose from – appears to make a difference. Despite clear priority given to responsiveness in forced choice version (especially in BG), more respondents rate government sticking to its plans as important (6<) than not important (4>), perhaps suggesting acquiescence bias and reluctance to say things might not be important.
- There are also differences across countries. Based on Version B, respondents in BG are the most in favour of responsiveness. However, based on Version A respondents in BG are most in favour of government sticking to its plans (highest mean score and most likely to rate 8-10 for importance).
- Questions asking respondents who made a forced choice to rate the importance of that choice behave as expected i.e. nearly all respondents rate their choice 5< and there is very little INR. Also comparing distribution of responses rating importance of “govt sticks to policies” responses following the forced choice are more heavily skewed towards the higher end of the scale.
- It is notable that respondents in favour of responsiveness rate this trait significantly higher than respondents in favour of government sticking to its policies rate that trait.
- The fact that question format makes such a difference suggests careful thought should be given as to which version is chosen. Forced choice item may be more informative but possibly presents more of a burden to respondents, adds to the item count, and would use a different question format than most of the module. However, the forced choice item was used in Round 6.
- The distributions for the two versions of the evaluation questions show higher levels of item non-response noted in the evaluation items following the forced choice format (version B) in the GB and Italian omnibus sample.
- Comparison of Q17a vs Q17b suggests evaluations of government changing its policies are less positive than evaluations of government sticking to its policies i.e. there is seen as being a lack of responsiveness.

### Survey Quality Predictor scores (SQP)

- We compare B16a and B16b, the main difference is that in version ‘b’, the question changes from “changes its planned policies” in the former to “sticks to its planned policies”, in the latter. The difference in measurement quality is below the threshold (<0.05) to consider differences, however, questions B17 are similar to questions B16a and B16b, but they contain a direct imperative request by starting the question with “please tell me...”, which shows a significant improvement in the measurement quality (B16a=0.696 and B17a=0.725). Overall, B17a has the highest prediction, 0.725. Both B17a/b have acceptable quality.

- B15 the predicted quality falls in the “ambiguous” category, therefore we suggest revising the wording of the module as there is room for improvement.

#### Timings data:=

- Timings data across the board indicates that forced choice questions take longer to administer than ratings items (and that is before the additional follow-up questions are taken into account). B15, the forced choice item had a mean administration time exceeding 25 seconds. The average question administration time for the democracy module as a whole was ~19.9 seconds.
- We compare the time spent in follow up questions after respondents have chosen either a preference for ‘changes’ in policy or for ‘sticking to them’ in question B15. Turns out that respondents preferring ‘changes’ spent about the same time in the follow up question B16a (mean = ~18.9, s.d. = 13.3) than those who chose ‘sticking to...’: B16b (mean = ~19.8, s.d. = 24.5). Follow up question using method A: B17a (mean = ~19.9, s.d. = 12.7) took significantly longer than B17b (mean = ~16.6, s.d. = 12.7). It took more time to think about how frequently the government changes its policies, rather than thinking how frequently it sticks to them.
- B17a can be considered the ‘typical’ item of the module, that is, the timestamp is the closest to the average one.

#### Substantive analyses:=

- In the trade-off format the stronger preferences are that ‘the government should change its planned policies’ and that ‘the government respects the rulings’ (except in Bulgaria). Mean value for the single item ‘the government should stick’ is around 5.5 in all countries; whereas the mean value for the single item ‘the government always follows the will of the people’ ranges from 5.2 in the UK to 7.3 in Bulgaria. It is hard to judge whether the information provided by the two types of formats is contradictory since different respondents answered the two formats, but there seems to be some inconsistency between the two formats, specially in the UK and Italy.
- Mean values of the importance items derived from the forced-choice questions are much higher than the mean values of the single importance items.
- Average of the anti-elitism item is high, but not too high except in Bulgaria.
- We would expect a positive correlation between anti-elitism, responsiveness to the people (responsive\_tchange) and unrestricted popular sovereignty (unressov\_s and unressov\_twill). The anti-elitism correlates positively with responsiveness to the people, and unrestricted popular sovereignty (Table 11 overleaf). Patterns of correlation between responsiveness to the people and unrestricted popular sovereignty are less consistent across countries, in both formats.
- Using the same strategy as in ESS-6 (0/9=0 & 10=1) with the populist items in the single format, Mokken scaling shows there is yet one scale with the three items. We get equally strong scales if we cut at 9 or if we cut at 8. Given that the three items form strong scales, we can add them up to get a populism scale, which has values from 0 (no item=1) to 3 (all items=1). Depending on where we cut, we get different distributions for the resulting scale, of course. When we cut at 10, roughly 60 percent of the sample are at 0. If we cut at 8/10=1, we get a much more equal distribution.
- Note however that the responsiveness item has not been reversed, and 10 means that respondents prefer that the government stick to its planned policies.

Interviewer feedback and comments from technical report:=

- Not included in interviewer questionnaire.
- Technical report notes high INR and use of hidden code for Q15, and queries whether forced choice item should be retained.

CST recommendations:

- The CST discussed how the longer administration times and the higher levels of INR at the trade-off question were noteworthy. However, it was also discussed how these findings by themselves were not evidence that the simple scaled question is better; longer administration time and higher levels of INR could be indicative that respondents are thinking more about the trade-off question rather than simply acquiescing to the first statement presented.
- The CST would like to have further discussions with the QDT regarding whether the trade-off format question and/or it's follow up scales could be used in the populism scale they are developing.

QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- At the QDT meeting it was agreed that the Round 6 versions of the questions should be retained (version B: the trade-off and follow up scales).

**Pilot – Items**

At the next questions, I'll first ask you to choose between two options. Then I'll ask how important you think your choice is for democracy in general. Finally, I'll ask you to think about this issue in [country] today. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers, so please just tell me what you think.

D26

PLPOLTO

**CARD 33**

Sometimes the government disagrees with what most people think is best for the country. Which one of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy in general?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY.**

IF CODE 1, 2 OR 8 NOT MENTIONED EXPLICITLY, PROBE ONCE:

'PLEASE TRY TO CHOOSE AN ANSWER FROM THIS CARD THAT BEST MATCHES YOUR OPINION'.

Mixed [PLPOLTO + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [PLPOLTO + DKREF]	
LIST	PLPOLTO	
	The government should <u>change</u> its planned policies in response to what most people think	1
	The government should <u>stick to</u> <sup>19</sup> its planned policies regardless of what most people think	2
	(It depends on the circumstances)	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	

	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

Translation notes:

<sup>19</sup> 'Stick to' in the sense of 'not change'.

D27a

RESCMEAN

ASK IF CODE 1 AT D26 (IF D26 = 1)

**CARD 34**

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government changes its planned policies in response to what most people think? Please use this card.

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D28a

RESCEVAL1

ASK IF CODE 1, 5, 7 OR 8 AT D26 (IF D26 = 1, 5, 7, 8)

**CARD 35**

Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] today changes its planned policies in response to what most people think?

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Never	0
	Always	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D27b

RESCMEAN2

ASK IF CODE 2 AT D26 (IF D26 = 2)

**CARD 34**

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government sticks to its planned policies regardless of what most people think? Please use this card.

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D28b

RESCEVAL2

ASK IF CODE 2 AT D26 (IF D26 = 2)

**CARD 35**

Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] today sticks to its planned policies regardless of what most people think?

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Never	0
	Always	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D26, D27a, D28a, D27b, D28b).

### 1.2.8.2 Responsiveness – Responsiveness to other stakeholders (DROPPED)

(Round 6 final concept description:)

Responsiveness can also be applied to particular groups in a society. Indeed, it is the mechanism through which the government takes into account the interests of organised groups in a society. It is also important that the government pays attention to these groups.

In a multi-level governance structure such as the EU, as Mair (2009) has observed, the parties who routinely govern are exposed to the increasing tension between their role as representatives of the national citizen publics, and their role as responsible governments. As representatives of the national citizen publics, they are expected to be responsive and accountable to their voters; as responsible governments, they are expected to take into account the increasing number of principals constituted by the many veto players who now surround government in its multi-level institutional setting. Key stakeholders who need to be taken into account in such a context are the governments of other member states.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to high ‘Don’t know’ responses and lack of cross-national comparability in the measure.
- Round 6 items in this concept were:
  - o E16  
And how important do you think it is for democracy in general that politicians take into account the views of other European governments before making decisions?  
*00 - Not at all important for democracy in general / 10 - Extremely important for democracy in general*
  - o E30  
And to what extent does this statement apply in [country]? Politicians in [country] take into account the views of other European governments before making decisions.  
*00 - Does not apply at all / 10 - Applies completely*

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- In the 1<sup>st</sup> QDT Meeting, the QDT highlighted some areas missing from the proposed module that they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion at this stage – including item E16 on the European dimension, referring to whether politicians should take into account the views of other European governments before making decisions.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- During the 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting, it was discussed whether to use this Round 6 item on multilevel government to measure the new concept on ‘multilevel democracy’. Further development notes are recorded under that new concept (see 1.2.3 Multi-level democracy (EU), above).

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.



## 1.3 POPULIST MODEL OF DEMOCRACY

Three elements in particular are common in the populist discourse and impose a number of trade-offs between different democratic dimensions: people-centrism, anti-elitism and unrestricted popular sovereignty (Canovan 1999; Mudde 2004; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017). Populists have a radical conception of “the people”, who is understood as homogeneous, pure and virtuous. “The people” embody the general will and exercise popular sovereignty without any limit. Antithetic to “the people” is the elite, a corrupt minority that holds most power positions in society and works solely for their own benefit. Implied is yet another characteristic common to populist parties: antipluralism. Since “the people” embody the general will, there is no room in the populist views for the existence of a variety of interests and/or social and political groups in society. These elements constitute the basis of the populist critique to the liberal model of democracy (and to mainstream parties as its main representatives), which is framed as the “tension between the power of the people on the one hand (the popular/populist will), and, on the other, the constitutionalist provisions which protect the citizen from the government, and the arbitrary exercise of power” (Meny and Surel 2001, 8). Populists exploit therefore one of the main democratic trade-offs, namely, that between responsiveness and responsibility (Mair 2013), and question the model of liberal representative democracy.

Populists contest European democracies as strict defenders of “democracy by the people” (Meny and Surel 2000; Meny and Surel 2002). As a consequence, the populist model of democracy is characterized by an extreme view of vertical accountability, where only voters can hold politicians accountable and, at the same time, decision-makers fully explain and justify all their actions and decisions to citizens. As a consequence, this view of democracy disregards fundamental liberal principles like horizontal accountability mechanisms or ‘checks and balances’ and denies the possibility that decision-makers can be held accountable by stakeholders other than citizens. Populists advocate extreme responsiveness, against mainstream political parties whose responsible acts do not respond to “the people” general will (Mair 2002, 2009, 2013). The populist model of democracy has indeed a restricted view on who should be represented: “the people” and its general will are the sole genuine subject of representation; contradicting the pluralist model of democracy, by which all different interests in society (including different minority groups) have to be represented in parliament. This contradiction is inherent in the trade-off between majority vs. proportional representation. A restricted view of representation applies also to the agent of representation: populists, in their ideal conception of the people combined with their anti-elitism, oppose “the people” to the elites as representatives. Whereas in liberal democracies representation is put in the hands of an elite selected through competition, populists advocate direct representation by the people (see below on direct democracy). In a sense, this contradiction reflects the classic distinction between the trustee vs. the delegate model of representation (Eulau et al. 1959). The trustee model, by which a group of “enlightened/expert” trustees puts into practice what is best for society, contradicts the delegate model whereby the representative should clearly act as delegate of “the people”, representing the common will in the parliament.

According to the ideational definition of populism, which has become the dominant definition in the field of the study of populism, populism conceives of society as split into two internally homogeneous and antagonistic camps – the virtuous people and the corrupt elite and argues that politics should be an unrestricted expression of the sovereignty of the people (Mudde 2004: 543).

### 1.3.1 Anti-elitism (NEW)

Literature on populism has not been very extensive on the conceptualization of anti-elitism. Generally, anti-elitism refers to the "condemnation of the corrupt, homogenous elite", the elites are seen as corrupt, betraying, and deceiving the people (Schulz et al. 2017). "The elite is accused of being alienated from the people, of having no idea what ordinary people find important and of only representing its own interests (Barr 2009; Goodwyn 1978; Laclau 2005; Mudde 2004). The accusations differ from arrogance and selfishness to incompetence and corruption. In most cases these allegations go hand in hand. Like people-centrism, anti-elitism is dependent on the context and can take different forms. It could be directed to a political elite (politicians in general, political parties, the 'established' political order), an economic elite (business elites, bank executives or capitalism in general), a cultural elite (intellectuals), a media elite (journalists) or a legal elite (judges). No matter which type of elite is criticized, the general message is the same: that of a conflict between those without power (the people) and those with power (the elite)." (Rooduijn 2013: 575).

Whereas some studies on populism have measured citizens' anti-elitist attitudes (Castanho Silva et al 2018); others refer to citizens' elitist attitudes (Akkerman et al. 2014; Schulz et al 2017). Neither conceptually nor empirically are these two concepts antithetic. Most previous studies on populism phrase the anti-elitist items as respondents' opinions about general truths such as that the elite/politicians/etc. are corrupt/bad/etc. (e.g. "The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves", Castanho Silva et al. 2017). This type of items tends to be skewed towards the negative opinions. There are very few examples that use alternative operationalizations and refer to the people vs. the politicians, and in relation to some function of the political system (e.g. "MPs in Parliament very quickly lose touch with ordinary people." Schulz et al. 2017). None of the items used in previous studies does refer to democracy. It is important to keep this in mind, when evaluating potential indicators (see, for example, Castanho Silva et al. forthcoming).

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This new concept was not included in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- However, the overarching concept of populism was included in the initial Round 10 module proposal. The QDT proposed developing one new item for this measure, to complement repeated items on Responsiveness (E36-E40 in Round 6) and a revised item on Representation.

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT was asked to expand upon the explanation of what they are wanting to measure in relation to the concept of 'populist democracy'.
- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included the concept of anti-elitism, as another dimension of populism.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- The CST sub-group feels that more clarity is required on which specific aspects of populism the QDT are intending to measure. For example, the items attached to the 'anti-elitism' concept do not resonate with a sense of 'corrupt elites'. Also, how is the 'unrestricted popular

sovereignty’ concept different from other concepts, such as ‘system response’. The QDT was asked to provide a more focused description of what they are attempting to measure within the populist dimension.

- The QDT confirmed that the items will be formulated using the same 11-point format as existing items. The two concepts should be treated as sub-concepts of popular democracy.
- The QDT felt that the sub-concept definition for anti-elitism is clear. However, it is not clear that the question items proposed fully reflect this concept. It was acknowledged that anti-elitism is sometimes considered in terms of system responsiveness and that the existing core items would be considered by some as measures of anti-elitism. Any new/additional question items to tap this sub-concept will require further work to focus on the anti-elite/corruption angle mentioned in the concept description.

#### **Comments from 3<sup>rd</sup> QDT meeting (12/12/2018):**

- The anti-elitism sub-concept needs further fleshing out to provide more detail of what is actually being explored.
- The QDT to check the different wordings used by previous studies to measure populist attitudes and, where available, check the data as well.

#### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC SAB meeting (21/01/2019):**

- The SAB noted it is very difficult to define items on populism. Many different definitions of populism exist.
- Two extra elements: people = virtuous; elite = corrupt, and people as one, no pluralism.
- The SAB felt that the last of the proposed items on populism was best.
- The SAB also questioned whether people know what ‘elite’ means.

#### **Comments from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- Four possible versions of this item were discussed:
  - o Alternative A: How important is it for democracy in general that elected politicians are ordinary citizens?
  - o Alternative B: How important is it for democracy in general that elected politicians belong to an elite/an enlightened elite?
  - o Alternative C: How important do you think it is for democracy in general that ordinary people will have more influence on the political decisions than the present political elite?
  - o Alternative D: How important do you think it is for democracy in general to be represented by ordinary citizens rather than by professional/specialized politicians?
- In the meeting it was agreed that of the four alternatives, Alternative D was the most promising. Several modifications were discussed:
  - o It was agreed that ‘ordinary citizens’ should be replaced with ‘ordinary people’ to simplify.
  - o It was agreed that the term ‘professional politicians’ should be replaced with ‘the political elite.’ This makes it clearer the measure is specifically about anti-elitism.
  - o The term ‘current political elite’ was discussed and dismissed on the grounds that in some countries the current situation may not be viewed as elitist. The term ‘current’ may encourage respondents merely to answer based on dissatisfaction with current government rather than their considering the elitism aspect.
  - o It was also queried whether it was clear what ‘represented’ meant e.g. does it mean that: ordinary people act as representatives in parliament (i.e. are politicians)? or that

democratic systems represent the wishes of ordinary people rather than just the elite?  
It was felt the latter was more the intended meaning.

- The question to take forward to testing should be: ‘How important do you think it is for democracy in general to be represented by ordinary people rather than by the political elite?’ This question should be included in the cognitive testing phase. Comprehension of the statement should be explored, including understandings of ‘ordinary people’ ‘political elite’ and ‘represented.’
- An alternative suggestion discussed was: ‘It is important for democracy that people and not politicians make our most important policy decisions’. This suggestion has not been taken up for the time-being, partially as it was felt that this question might infer referenda, which is not the intended meaning.

**Comments from paper shared for 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (04/04/2019):**

- It was discussed whether the term ‘views’ was ambiguous- this will be checked in the cognitive interviewing, along with understandings of ‘elite’ and ‘ordinary people.’

**Pre-test – Items**

**B5**

[Included in both the pre-test omnibus and the cognitive interviews]

**CARD 6**

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**that the views of ordinary people<sup>24</sup> prevail over the views of the political elite?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>22</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>23</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>22</sup> The full scale and the end labels **MUST** appear on the showcard.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

<sup>24</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

## B11

Now some questions about the same topics, but this time about how you think democracy is working in [country] today. Again, there are no right or wrong answers, so please just tell me what you think.

### CARD 9

Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

The views of ordinary<sup>25</sup> people prevail over the views of the political elite.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>25</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translations should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’.

### Pre-test – Results and comments

Translation queries:

- Feedback regarding B5:
  - o In terms of the Italian translation it was suggested the word could “classe” could be used in future translations.
- Feedback regarding B11:
  - o A translation query across languages was whether translations for ‘ordinary people’ should err towards either:
    - "the greater number of people": or
    - a slightly pejorative "ordinary"?
  - o We want to avoid terms such as ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.
  - o We also want to avoid ‘citizens’ as this infers a specific group e.g., those with citizenship rights.
  - o Translation guidance given for pre-testing was as follows: We want to avoid both the following understandings as far as possible:
    - 1) the views of the majority against an elitist minority OR
    - 2) ‘ordinary’ as being negatively loaded.
  - o Despite this guidance there was a concern that in some languages it is difficult to find a translation for ‘ordinary people’ that does not sound pejorative.
  - o Translation guidance was amended to say that If no adequate non-pejorative word for ‘ordinary’ could be found the translation could simply use the term ‘the people.’

### Omnibus testing:

#### Interviewer feedback

- Feedback regarding B5:
  - o Omnibus interviewers in the UK and Italy felt that respondents sometimes found B5 difficult.
  - o In the UK 17.5% of omnibus interviewers stated that respondents felt found these questions difficult at least half of the time.
  - o In Italy 33.3% of omnibus interviewers stated that respondents found this question difficult at least half of the time. Interviewers reported that respondents had difficulties in understanding the word “élite” and asked for clarification over what this meant.

#### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- Feedback regarding B11:
  - o INR levels are within acceptable parameters across all test countries (i.e. no instances of  $INR \geq 7$ ) for both questions

### Cognitive interview testing:

- In general, the question on anti-elitism worked relatively well in the cognitive interviewing. However, there were issues related to the block of questions (on asking importance of democracy in general) that were raised in the probing of this question. The main issue raised in testing is that it is unclear if participants respond in terms of how important it is for democracy in general. Some people were basing their answers on what they felt was ‘important for their country’ or ‘happening in their country’ or ‘important’ rather than what they felt was ‘important for democracy in general’.
- There were some variations in examples given of a ‘political elite’. Despite the variation there is no evidence of country-level differences in understanding that could be attributable to translation error or lack of cultural equivalence
- It should be noted the question assumes the existence of a political elite. In Finland and France this assumption was queried and some participants explicitly rejected the idea there was an ‘political elite’ in government in their country. This example illustrates that rather than thinking of democracy in general, participants were often thinking about the perceived situation in their own countries.
- Recommendations from the cognitive testing were to retain current question wording but to repeat instructions about ‘thinking about democracy in general’ in the question stem i.e. ‘... please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite?’
- An interviewer clarification should be provided as follows for all items in this block: ‘Please think about whether this is important for democracy in general not whether this happens in [country]’.

### CST recommendations:

- Based on the internal CST meeting on 29th August our recommendations to the QDT are to retain this question in its current format for the pilot. The question stem (please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general) should be embedded in the question (rather than the introduction) so it is consistently read out.

- The word ‘ordinary’ should be retained and included in translation. Translation guidance should be added to state that ‘ordinary people’ should not sound pejorative when considered as part of the whole statement (i.e. it should infer the opposite of elite). ‘Political class’ may be suitable substitution in translation but elite should not be changed to class in the source language.
- The QDT need to confirm whether the minor variations in understanding of ‘elite’ is acceptable to QDT.
- The translation expert does not recommend changing to class- could be used in translation but not in source

#### QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- At the QDT meeting it was discussed how, for the pilot, they would like to run an experiment looking at three versions of the question that use different formulations/ equivalents of ‘political elite.’ The wordings to test in the pilot are as follows:
  - o Version A: Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite?
  - o Version B: Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the elite?
  - o Version C: Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of people in positions of power?

#### **Comments from 13<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2019):**

- An NC commented that ‘People in positions of power’ would likely measure something different, e.g., economic power rather than political. The QDT responded that this was confirmed in cognitive interviews and that they hope to confirm which wording works better in the pilot.
- An NC asked whether findings from cognitive interviews and advance translation will identify possible translations of difficult concepts in time for Translation meeting. The QDT responded that one finding was that translation of ‘ordinary people’ could affect measurement.
- An NC asked whether the QDT have taken into account CSES data.

#### **Pilot – Items**

EXPERIMENT 3 – SPLIT BALLOT DESIGN: We are going to test three new items on anti-elitism. Create random split variable EXP3, which will NOT BE SHOWN to respondents. Each experimental group should include approximately 1/3 of respondents. This variable should be populated at the start of the interview.

#### **EXP3**

Measurement method received for item on anti-elitism

- 1 - Method A: Political elite
- 2 - Method B: Elite
- 3 - Method C: People in positions of power

D10a

ANTIELIIMa

ASK IF EXP3 = 1

**STILL CARD 30**

Please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people<sup>20</sup> prevail over the views of the political elite?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>20</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

D10b

ANTIELIIMb

ASK IF EXP3 = 2

**STILL CARD 30**

Please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people<sup>21</sup> prevail over the views of the elite?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>21</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole



to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

D10c

ANTIEMIIMc

ASK IF EXP3 = 3

**STILL CARD 30**

Please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the views of ordinary people<sup>22</sup> prevail over the views of people in positions of power?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>22</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

D23a

ANTIELEVALa

ASK IF EXP3 = 1

**STILL CARD 32**

Still using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country].

In [country] the views of ordinary people<sup>23</sup> prevail over the views of the political elite.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77

	Don't Know	88
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Translation notes:

<sup>23</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

### D23b

#### ANTIELEVALb

ASK IF EXP3 = 2

#### STILL CARD 32

Still using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country].

In [country] the views of ordinary people<sup>24</sup> prevail over the views of the elite.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>24</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

### D23c

#### ANTIELEVALc

ASK IF EXP3 = 3

#### STILL CARD 32

Still using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country].

In [country] the views of ordinary people<sup>25</sup> prevail over the views of people in positions of power.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	

	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>25</sup> For the term ‘ordinary people’ the translation should not sound pejorative, like ‘normal / average / simple’ but just express neutrally the opposite to ‘elite’. Consider how the question reads as a whole to determine if ‘ordinary people’ sounds pejorative. Do not translate ‘ordinary people’ to ‘general public’ or ‘general population’ as this may infer a majority.

### **Pilot – Results and comments**

In the pilot, two questions were tested on anti-elitism (an importance rating and an evaluation question). Three variations in wording were also tested, randomly assigned to each respondent. The questions tested and the three variations are shown above.

Overall feedback:

- In general respondents in both Italy and the UK found the questions easy.
- There were questions from countries around how to translate the terms ‘elite’ and ‘ordinary people’ as well as what was meant by prevail.
- Most understood ‘ordinary people’ to be the average citizen, a few in Austria interpreted this as those with lower education.
- ‘Political elite’ (A) was mostly interpreted as politicians and those in government/parliament in both countries.
- ‘Elite’ (B) was interpreted more broadly more references to wealth. Some respondents in both Austria and the UK sought clarification as to what was meant by ‘elite.’
- ‘People in positions of power’ (C) was interpreted in the UK as mostly encompassing politicians. In Austria it was interpreted more broadly including ‘business leaders.’
- There were questions from countries around how to translate the terms ‘elite’ and ‘ordinary people’ as well as what was meant by prevail.
- The mean time taken for each variation of the question varied from 25.2 for D10a to 27.0 for D10c with D10b falling in the middle at 26.0. The variation was not sufficient for there to be a statistically significant difference between the means.
- It was agreed to select D10a and D23a from the versions tested in the pilot. These versions refer to ‘the political elite’.

D10 feedback:

- The item non-response did not exceed 7% for any versions of D10 in any version or country.
- Version a (political elite) elicited the most anti-elitist response, with answer options being the most concentrated towards the high end of the scale (extremely important for democracy).
- Version b (elite) had slightly less respondents selecting the highest responses, but in general there were similar responses to Version a.

- Version c (people in positions of power) had the greatest variance between answer options in both countries, but for the UK especially the difference between those selecting the highest scale answers between versions is not notable.
- The mean time taken for each variation of the question varied from 25.2 for D10a to 27.0 for D10c with D10b falling in the middle at 26.0. The variation was not sufficient for there to be a statistically significant difference between the means.
- The CST agreed to select D10a for the mainstage. This version refers to ‘the political elite’.

#### D23 feedback:

- The item non-response went above 7% for UK in D23b and D23c but was below 7% for D23a and all Austrian variants.
- In the UK results were much more anti-elitist than in omnibus.
- Answer options had greater variance in evaluation questions D23a/b/c.
- The CST agreed to select D23a for the mainstage. This version refers to ‘the political elite’.

#### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D10 and D22).

### 1.3.2 Unrestricted popular sovereignty (NEW)

Unrestrained popular sovereignty implies 1) that the power is left to the people, that is, that there is a direct connection between the people and the political power; and 2) that the power of the people to decide is unlimited by the traditional democratic checks and balances (e.g. courts, parliament, etc.). In this sense populist democracy is “illiberal” (Caramani, 2017).

Items to measure this concept should, therefore, reflect a trade-off between the primacy of the “people” and its “will” and the existence of institutions that can constrain the realization of the “will of the people”.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This new concept was not included in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- However, the overarching concept of populism was included in the initial Round 10 module proposal. The QDT proposed developing one new item for this measure, to complement repeated items on Responsiveness (E36-E40 in Round 6) and a revised item on Representation.
- The eventual ‘unrestricted popular sovereignty’ concept incorporates elements of the Round 6 concepts of Responsiveness – Responsiveness to the citizens (see 1.2.8.2, above) and Horizontal accountability (see 1.2.6, above).

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT was asked to expand upon the explanation of what they are wanting to measure in relation to the concept of ‘populist democracy’.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- The CST sub-group feels that more clarity is required on which specific aspects of populism the QDT are intending to measure. For example, the items attached to the ‘anti-elitism’ concept do not resonate with a sense of ‘corrupt elites’. Also, how is the ‘unrestricted popular sovereignty’ concept different from other concepts, such as ‘system response’. The QDT was asked to provide a more focused description of what they are attempting to measure within the populist dimension.
- The QDT confirmed that the items will be formulated using the same 11-point format as existing items. The two concepts should be treated as sub-concepts of popular democracy.
- The QDT felt that the sub-concept on unrestricted sovereignty and exactly what the restoration of popular sovereignty entails needs to be made clearer. Perhaps by picking up on the point mentioned later on about the people deciding without restrictions e.g., from the courts.
- It may make sense to tap this sub-concept with a trade-off item i.e., will of the people vs... However, parliament is probably not the right institution for the trade off. The courts could be considered as an alternative.
- Two alternatives were discussed in the meeting:
  - o Alternative A: What do you think is best for democracy in general?
    1. That the politicians in the [country] parliament always follow the will of the people, even if they are against the rulings of the national courts OR

2. That the politicians respect the rulings of the national courts, even if those are not in line with the will of the people.
- Alternative B: What do you think is best for democracy in general?
  1. That the politicians in the [country] parliament always follow the will of the people  
OR
  2. That the politicians in [country] parliament adopt the decisions they consider best for the country, even if those are not in line with the will of the people.

**Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2018):**

- The QDT noted that the measure for the concept of populism is a work in progress. Initial idea was to measure the importance and evaluation of concept but there are difficulties operationalizing the dimensions.
- The QDT commented that the idea was to give the people a list of items and let them chose the three most important items. However, there are a couple of people choosing more than three items.
- An NC noted that this item on populism is challenging but a very important one. Respondents have different understanding about what it is populism. The NC remarked on the importance of conducting cognitive pretesting to check for understanding of respondents. The QDT responded that it is indeed a challenging item, but there are already definitions that help operationalize the concept. One is the ideational concepts of democracy. Another is the perspective of people centralism, based on the idea of people against the elite, and getting power back to the people. Part of the process is to decide what understanding of populism we want to measure.
- An NC commented that, regarding the operationalization of populism, it might be worthwhile having a look at the fifth wave of the CSES questions. They also faced issues of cross-national comparability. The QDT responded that they have the data from other surveys were these items have been fielded. This empirical evidence would help the QDT make the decisions on the items.
- An NC asked whether the QDT considered the role of experts and technocrats opposed to politicians. The QDT confirmed that it was considered but it was decided to not use it, since it is difficult to operationalize. The QDT considered technocracy but decided to stick to populism because it is easier to transform into questions for surveys.
- The CST asked the QDT to elaborate on the trade-offs of the two different ranking techniques for the suggested item. The QDT explained that one idea is to present the items respondents have selected as most important and ask to rank them in the importance between them. It is very clear that the priorities of citizens should be measured and that it might be rather a technical or methodological question on how to best implement this item in the questionnaire.
- An NC commented that, from a user perspective, the data should give an indication of the most important or least important notions of democracy. The QDT explained that the problem is that if respondents say that all elements are important, the researchers cannot distinguish between the elements. Therefore the QDT would like to weight the important items by letting respondents rank them. The CST commented that it could be very well the case that some items are equally most important. They mentioned the importance of the pre-testing in this case, and that it could show whether there are any underlying reasons for respondent non-differentiation of the answers.
- An NC asked what would happen in the case that respondents have different baselines for the importance (for example, four items with scale of 8 as most important). The NC asked whether the QDT would like to weight considering the different baselines. The QDT

responded that this is another part of the idea behind the ranking. Most people tend to rate 10, but if people rate 8 or 9 this should be considered.

- SCP asked whether the QDT has considered a random ordering of the answer option for the selection of the most important elements of democracy. The QDT confirmed that they have considered it and that it should be done, especially with the CAPI System. The QDT added that if this item is included it should be done with a random ordering of the answer options. The CST noted that currently countries use different CAPI systems and that it be investigated whether it is feasible.
- An NC commented that interviewers are instructed not show the computer screen to respondent, which is why in the case of 10 items it might be necessary to have showcards, which in turns makes randomization much more difficult. It would be most feasible if the respondents only need to rank the three most important items. The CST commented that it might be possible to use the paper showcards and a numbering of the answer options to help respondents in the ranking of the most important three items instead of having to read aloud the answer most important items.

#### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC SAB meeting (21/01/2019):**

- The SAB noted that in some countries the courts are not trusted – e.g. Poland – therefore the situation in the country might contaminate the item.

#### **Comments received from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- There are currently two options under consideration, a trade-off question (Alternative A) and a scalar option (Alternative B).
  - o Alternative A : What do you think is best for democracy in general?
    1. That the politicians in the [country] parliament always follow the will of the people, even if they are against the rulings of the national courts OR
    2. That the politicians respect the rulings of the national courts, even if those are not in line with the will of the people
  - o Alternative B: How important is it for democracy in general that the MPs always follow the will of the people, even if they are against the rulings of the national courts?
- Suggestions were made on how to improve both alternatives.
  - o For alternative A it was agreed the phrase ‘politicians in the [country] parliament’ should be replaced with ‘The government’. This is for consistency with other items which as these do not mention specific countries.
  - o Alternative B should say ‘The Government’ and not ‘MPs’ (again for consistency with other items)
  - o For both alternatives the term ‘National courts’ should be dropped in favour of ‘courts.’
  - o It was queried whether ‘minorities’ could be used as an alternative to ‘courts.’ It was decided to stick with courts for time-being to maintain distinction between other items (i.e. concept 6.1 subjects of representation).
- There is an interest in retaining both alternatives in testing to try and ascertain which is better. The option of a split ballot test on the omnibus was discussed, to test a single rating scale item and a trade-off item with follow up rating scales. The items should also be on the ‘long list’ for cognitive testing.
- The two alternatives to take forward for testing are as follows:

- Alternative A: What do you think is best for democracy in general? 1. That the Government always follow the will of the people, even if they are against the rulings of the courts OR 2. That the Government respect the rulings of the courts, even if those are not in line with the will of the people
- Alternative B: How important is it for democracy in general that the Government always follow the will of the people, even if they are against the rulings of the courts?

**Comments from paper shared for 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (04/04/2019):**

- Reasons for response selection will be explored in the cognitive interviews as will understanding of ‘the courts.’

**Pre-test - Items**

**B9a**

[Included in both the pre-test omnibus and the cognitive interviews]

ASK IF EXP1 = 1

**CARD 6**

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...** that the government always follows the will of the people, even if that is against the rulings of the courts?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>26</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>27</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>26</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

**B14a**

ASK IF EXP1 = 1

**CARD 9**

Using this card, please tell me to what extent you think each of the following statements applies in [country]. 0 means you think the statement does not apply at all and 10 means you think it applies completely . **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**



The government always follows the will of the people, even if that is against the rulings of the courts.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### B18

ASK IF EXP1 = 2

#### CARD 15

Which one of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy in general?

**INTERVIEWER:** CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY.

IF CODE 1, 2 OR 8 NOT MENTIONED EXPLICITLY, PROBE ONCE:

‘PLEASE TRY TO CHOOSE AN ANSWER

FROM THIS CARD THAT BEST MATCHES YOUR OPINION’.

Mixed [POPPE + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [POPPE + DKREF]	
LIST	POPPE	
	The government always follows the will of the people, even if that is against the rulings of the courts	1
	The government respects the rulings of the courts, even if those are not in line with the will of the people	2
	(It depends on the circumstances)	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

### B19a

ASK IF CODE 1 AT B18

#### CARD 16

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government always follows the will of the people, even if that is against the rulings of the courts? Please use this card.

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
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MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>28</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>29</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>28</sup>The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

### B19b

ASK IF CODE 2 AT B18

#### CARD 17

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government respects the rulings of the courts, even if those are not in line with the will of the people?

	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

#### Pre-test – Results and comments

Two alternative versions of the unrestricted sovereignty items were tested, each asked of a random half of the sample. Version A followed the standard 11 point not important/extremely important format of most items within the democracy module. Version B first asked respondents to make a forced choice between two alternatives and then rate their choice in terms of importance.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the facet of democracy. Evaluation questions were not asked.

#### Translation queries:

- There are a number of queries regarding the translation of ‘courts.’
  - o In French it seems strange to speak of "courts" in the plural. What’s more, it makes of “courts” a unity, whereas in fact not all courts are on the same level compared to the

State and citizens. It was suggested in the French context "the justice" would be a better translation. A similar issue was raised in Italy. In a constitutional system like Italy ruling of the courts should be translated as "costituzione" (constitution) rather than "tribunali" as in previous translations.

- Finland raised the issue of how to translate the term 'courts' in relation to this question. It was noted that Finland and other Nordic countries do not have a constitutional court, i.e. there is no court that would take any action against any politicians for passing unlawful legislation. Instead they have a constitutional law committee in the Parliament which takes care of issues like that, but it is not a 'court' per se. There was a query as to whether "constitutional law committee of the Parliament" would be a fit translation. An alternative suggestion was "...is against the legal system".

### Omnibus testing:

#### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- Overall evaluation of this question/sub concept: Both versions of the question lead to high INR, especially in GB and IT as well as high use of mid point (Version A, GB) and hidden "it depends" code (Version B, IT). This suggests there may be some problems of understanding.
- When comparing the two versions:
  - Does forced choice lead to high INR? Version B INR higher in all three countries.
  - Does forced choice lead to a choice? High use of hidden "it depends" code especially in IT.
- Both high INR and high use of hidden code suggests respondents may struggle with forced choice.
- Does question formation make a difference to responses? We can compare Version B to Version A grouped into 3 categories as shown below. Question format - and presenting respondents with alternatives to choose from – appears to make some difference.
- Based on Version B (Q18) Attitudes are skewed in favour of respecting ruling of courts in GB and IT whilst opinion evenly split in BG. This is despite a majority in IT and BG rating following the will of the people 6< on the importance scale if asked Version A.
- The fact that question format makes a difference suggests careful thought should be given as to which version is chosen. Forced choice item may provide different information but possibly presents more of a burden to respondents, adds to the item count, and would use a different question format than most of the module.

#### Survey Quality Predictor scores (SQP)

- B19a and B19b have the same answer options but ask the questions inversely. B19a asks about the importance of the government respecting the rule of courts even if the will of the people goes against the rule, while on B19b is asks the opposite. Although the difference among methods is not significant, these two questions have lower measurement quality than most of the questions from the 'Democracy' module that were evaluated with SQP, they are likely penalized by the higher number of abstract nouns (complex language). Overall, B19a has the lowest prediction, 0.612.

#### Timings data

- Timings data indicate the forced choice format does take longer to administer (see module overview for more information on timings).

- Choosing an option in B18 was not related to the time spent in the follow up questions, the mean time for B19a was ~20.5 seconds (s.d. 20.8) and the mean time for B19b was ~20.3 (s.d. 15.1), they are not significantly different. In summary, timing data does not provide information about whether a wording option perform differently.

#### Substantive analyses

- In the trade-off format the stronger preferences are that ‘the government should change its planned policies’ and that ‘the government respects the rulings’ (except in Bulgaria). Mean value for the single item ‘the government should stick’ is around 5.5 in all countries; whereas the mean value for the single item ‘the government always follows the will of the people’ ranges from 5.2 in the UK to 7.3 in Bulgaria (Table 9). It is hard to judge whether the information provided by the two types of formats is contradictory since different respondents answered the two formats, but there seems to be some inconsistency between the two formats, specially in the UK and Italy.
- Mean values of the importance items derived from the forced-choice questions are much higher than the mean values of the single importance items.
- Average of the anti-elitism item is high, but not too high except in Bulgaria.
- We would expect a positive correlation between anti elitism, responsiveness to the people (responsive\_tchange) and unrestricted popular sovereignty (unressov\_s and unressov\_twill). The anti elitism correlates positively with responsiveness to the people, and unrestricted popular sovereignty (Table 7). Patterns of correlation between responsiveness to the people and unrestricted popular sovereignty are less consistent across countries, in both formats.
- Using the same strategy as in ESS-6 (0/9=0 & 10=1) with the populist items in the single format, Mokken scaling shows there is yet one scale with the three items (Table 8). We get equally strong scales if we cut at 9 or if we cut at 8. Given that the three items form strong scales, we can add them up to get a populism scale, which has values from 0 (no item=1) to 3 (all items=1). Depending on where we cut, we get different distributions for the resulting scale, of course. When we cut at 10, roughly 60 percent of the sample are at 0. If we cut at 8/10=1, we get a much more equal distribution.
- Note however that the responsiveness item has not been reversed, and 10 means that respondents prefer that the government stick to its planned policies.

#### Interviewer feedback and comments from technical report

- The interviewer reports from GB and IT indicate that some respondents found the question difficult to understand due to length and complexity and that it was tricky to follow the statements. In IT, respondents struggled to comprehend how it was possible for the government to follow the will of the people if it was against the ruling of the courts - as they did not think that case would ever be applicable since the government is obliged to follow the courts’ and tribunals decisions in IT. This suggests that respondents have missed that this question was intended to measure what was best for democracy ‘in general’ rather than in IT.
- The omnibus technical report suggest that – given feedback from interviewers and high INR – states this item be considered for deletion.

#### Cognitive interview testing:

- The cognitive interviews revealed various issues with question B9a (please note the forced choice alternative to this question was not tested in the cognitive interviews).
- The main issue with B9a was it did not consistently measure the intended concept. Participants did not consistently think about the role of constitutional /supreme/ international

courts in regulating governments. This question was understood as being about governments going against checks and balances to satisfy public opinion. Therefore, this question is not measuring attitudes towards ‘unrestricted popular sovereignty’ per se.

- Participants had various interpretations of the question. Some participants suggested it was about whether government should follow public demand for stricter sentencing. Others thought it was about whether government should act in miscarriages of justice. Participants who gave high answers sometimes talked about how the criminal justice system is flawed and how if there is an injustice the government should intervene. Generally participants found it difficult to think of examples of government/ court interactions and this made the question too abstract.
- The question was difficult to answer due to ambivalence in attitudes. Participants felt that there was a need to uphold both the will of the people and rulings of the courts. It was difficult to map this view onto a single importance scale (as opposed to a trade-off item).
- There are also issues with this question due to lack of cultural equivalence. The main issue noted is that Finland does not have an equivalent of a constitutional court, and therefore it is less clear what this question is meant to refer to in Finland. In the UK some participants incorrectly inferred this question was about their attitude to Brexit.
- The cognitive report recommends that the question does not work well in the current form due to an absence of face-validity. Participants are not aware of the government and court interaction and there are issues with cultural portability. As these issues cannot be corrected by alternative question phrasing we recommend this question is dropped.

#### CST recommendations:

- Based on the findings related to lack of face-validity and cultural equivalence the CST recommend this question is dropped. We welcome discussions with the CST on whether a different item could be trialled in the pilot to allow for three items to be used in the new populism scale (for example a variant of the item B99 could be trialled in the pilot).

#### QDT final recommendations for the pilot:

- At the QDT meeting it was agreed the current example used to measure unrestricted popular sovereignty (i.e. going against the rulings of the courts) is not understood as intended and does not measure the concept of unrestricted popular sovereignty. Therefore, an alternative was proposed that attempts to access this concept more directly.
- The new question proposed for the pilot is as follows: (Using this card) please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general that the will of the majority cannot be stopped by the rules.

#### **Comments from 13<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2019):**

- Several NCs queried which rules were being referenced, e.g., ‘constitutional rules’? The QDT responded that the intended meaning is ‘rule of law’.
- Several NCs flagged a problems with structure of the question. What does 0 mean? Will people understand what they have to answer if they think majority can be stopped by the rules? Perhaps too cognitively difficult because of the negation (‘cannot’).
- An NC suggested using ‘will of the people’ to capture populism and perhaps say ‘under any circumstances’.

**Pilot – Items**

D12

RESWMEAN

**STILL CARD 30**

And how important is it for democracy in general that the will of the majority cannot be stopped by the rules?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D25

RESWEVAL

**STILL CARD 32**

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** In [country] the will of the majority cannot be stopped by the rules.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pilot – Results and comments**

In the pilot, two questions were asked on the concept of unrestricted popular sovereignty; an importance question to democracy in general and an evaluation country on how much it applies in the respondent's country.

Overall feedback:

- In both D12 and D25 there were problems on understanding what was meant by 'rules.' Clarification was requested. There were questions on whether a lack of understanding of the term 'the rules' may have been a factor in a high don't know rate. The lack of cognitive testing meant that it is hard to say how much of a factor this was.

#### D12 feedback:

- Most common response for both countries was 10 – ‘extremely important for democracy in general’ - 28% in Austria and 25% in UK. Responses generally clustered to top end of scale - in Austria 69% selected one of 7/8/9/10; in UK this was 60%. 14% selected the midpoint (code 5) in Austria, 13% in the UK. Bottom end of the scale (not at all important for democracy in general) quite rarely selected - just 1% in each country selecting 0; in Austria 5% selecting codes 0-3; 7% in UK.
- High level of item non-response in UK - 12.1% (11.7% DK and 0.3% REF). 6.3% overall in Austria - 6.0% DK and 0.3% REF.
- For D12 timing, mean in UK is 26 secs and median is 17; for Austria mean is 25 secs and median is 19 secs.
- Some respondents commented D12 was not an easy question to understand (in both countries) though no specific examples of difficulty were included.
- The CST agreed to change the wording to ‘And how important is it for democracy in general that the will of the people cannot be stopped?’

#### D25 feedback:

- Compared with D12, responses at D25 were more evenly divided across the response scale. For both countries, the most common response was 5 - 25% for Austria and 16% for the UK. The ‘applies completely’ (10) end point was selected far less than at D12 - 4% for Austria and 9% for the UK. Quite a high level of midpoint (5) response in Austria - 28% (19% in UK).
- Item non-response was also high - 9% for Austria (all DK), and 15% for UK (14% DK and 1% REF).
- There was no separate timestamp for D25, so no timing analysis was conducted.
- In the UK interviewer feedback noted some respondents were unsure about what was meant by ‘rules’ in D25, for example whether it included parliamentary process.
- The CST agreed to change the wording to ‘In [COUNTRY] the will of the people cannot be stopped’.

### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D11 and D23).

### 1.3.3 Populism vs. Technocracy (NEW)

“Populism stresses responsiveness and requires voters to delegate authority to leaders who equate the general interest with a putative will of the people.” “Technocracy stresses responsibility and requires voters to entrust authority to experts who identify the general interest from rational speculation.” (Caramani 2017) [*Caramani, Daniele (2017). “Will vs. Reason: The Populist and Technocratic Forms of Political Representation and Their Critique to Party Government”. American Political Science Review, 111(1): 54-67.*]

#### Early development – Comments

##### Module proposal:

- This new concept was not directly included in the initial Round 10 module proposal. It emerged through the development of the populism concept.

#### Pre-test – Items

B99

[Asked in cognitive interviews only]

##### CARD A5

Sometimes there is disagreement over what is best for the country. Which one of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy in general?

**INTERVIEWER:** CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY.

IF CODE 1, 2, 7 OR 8 NOT MENTIONED EXPLICITLY, PROBE ONCE:

‘PLEASE TRY TO CHOOSE AN ANSWER FROM THIS CARD THAT BEST MATCHES YOUR OPINION’.

Mixed [POPPE + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [POPPE + DKREF]	
LIST	POPPE	
	When making decisions, it is better for the Government to follow the opinion of the people rather than the opinion of experts	1
	When making decisions, it is better for the Government to follow the opinion of experts rather than the opinion of the people	2
	(It depends on the circumstances)	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8



## **Pre-test – Results and comments**

One extra question on populism was tested in the cognitive interviews only (not the omnibus). The question tested is shown below.

### Translation queries:

- During translation it was noted that ‘experts’ are ‘people’ too.
- It was queried whether the translation should be ‘ordinary people’ (citizens) or ‘people’ as ‘the nation’ (a collective subject). Translation guidance for the CI was to translate ‘people’ in a similar context to B5 i.e. ordinary people (but without the adjective ordinary’. We wish to avoid the idea of a ‘collective subject’ i.e. the nation or the ‘general population.’
- German: Used ‘a’ country rather than ‘the country.’

### Omnibus testing:

- Not included in Omnibus. It should be noted from the omnibus testing that trade-off items took longer to administer than rating questions.

### Survey Quality Predictor scores (SQP)

- B99 (not tested in the omnibus) also had an SQP score generated (0.609). Questions tested in the democracy module had scores ranging from ambiguous (0.6>0.7) to acceptable (0.7>0.8); making this item at the lower end of this range.

### Cognitive interview testing:

- No major issues were detected with this question during testing. The question was considered difficult by some. However, this was due to the topic area being asked about, not the framing of the question per se.
- An explicit ‘It depends’ code could be offered but this could lead to high proportions of survey respondents opting for this code. If not the spontaneous codes ‘It depends’ and ‘Don’t know’ are not mutually exclusive, and therefore could be combined.
- Participants in all countries were able to give a suitable rationale for their response. No specific issues were detected with the trade-off format. Understanding of the question appeared to be consistent across countries. The exception to this was that some UK participants based their answers specifically on Brexit rather than other forms of populism.
- Participants were asked to comment on whether either of the response options should be rephrased (the aim being to retain meaning whilst insuring the options are balanced). Some participants, who had answered ‘follow the opinion of experts’ felt it would be better to say ‘facts’ given by experts or ‘research’ rather than opinion. This idea had been discussed in the development stage and discarded in trying to keep the framing as neutral as possible. One participant felt the word ‘independent’ should be added to ‘experts’ but again this suggestion would impact the neutrality of the question.

### CST recommendations:

- No major issues were detected with this item in the cognitive interviews. Therefore, we would like to include the current item in the pilot to collect quantitative data on how well it is performing.
- Please note we would like the QDT to add a sub-concept name and description to QDDT.

### QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- It was agreed that this question should be trialled in the pilot so quantitative data can be collected on its performance. Follow up scaler items would need to be included also (in keeping with those used for the existing trade-off items e.g. on responsiveness).

### Pilot – Items

D29

POPPE

#### CARD 36

Sometimes there is disagreement over what is best for the country. Which one of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy in general?

**INTERVIEWER:** CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY.

IF CODE 1, 2, 7 OR 8 NOT MENTIONED EXPLICITLY, PROBE ONCE:

‘PLEASE TRY TO CHOOSE AN ANSWER FROM THIS CARD THAT BEST MATCHES YOUR OPINION’.

Mixed [POPPE + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [POPPE + DKREF]	
LIST	POPPE	
	When making decisions, it is better for the government to follow the opinion of the people <sup>26</sup> rather than the opinion of experts	1
	When making decisions, it is better for the government to follow the opinion of experts rather than the opinion of the people	2
	(It depends on the circumstances)	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

Translation notes:

<sup>26</sup> ‘The people’ should be translated to infer ordinary people (but without the adjective ordinary). We wish to avoid the idea of a ‘collective subject’, i.e. the nation or the ‘general population’

D30a

POPPEMEAN1

ASK IF CODE 1 AT D29 (IF D29 = 1)

#### CARD 37

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that, when making decisions, the government follows the opinion of the people rather than the opinion of experts? Please use this card.

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	

SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### D31a

#### POPPEEVAL1

ASK IF CODE 1, 5, 7 OR 8 AT D29 (IF D29 = 1, 5, 7 OR 8)

#### CARD 38

Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] today follows the opinion of the people rather than the opinion of experts?

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Never	0
	Always	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### D30b

#### POPPEMEAN2

ASK IF CODE 2 AT D29 (IF D29 = 2)

#### CARD 37

How important do you think it is for democracy in general that, when making decisions, the government follows the opinion of the experts rather than the opinion of the people? Please use this card.

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D31b

POPPEEVAL2

ASK IF CODE 2 AT D29 (IF D29 = 2)

**CARD 38**

Using this card, please tell me how often you think the government in [country] today follows the opinion of experts rather than the opinion of the people?

Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [RESCEVAL2 + DKREF]	
SCALE	RESCEVAL2	
	Never	0
	Always	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pilot – Results and comments**

In the pilot, three questions were asked for this concept. The first (D29) asked which is more important following experts or the will of the people. The second asked how important the answer chosen is for democracy. The third asked the respondent to evaluate how much the government in their country goes along with the choice the respondent made in D29. All three questions and their alternates are listed above.

Overall feedback:

- Respondents understood both ‘experts’ and ‘the people’ in the same way as the cognitive sample.
- The CST agreed to drop this concept (all five items to be removed) because the mid-scale clustering in the evaluation item suggested it wasn’t working the way it was intended.

D29 feedback:

- Item non-response was low for both countries (<7%).
- The time for question D29 is considerably higher than the module’s mean (mean=31, SD=14.4)- most likely due to the change from a scalar format to a trade-off format.
- 78% of participants who answered the debriefing Qs thought the question D29 was easy.
- In GB there were a few instances of participants changing their survey answer to D29 at the respondent debriefing probes. This reversed the direction of the results and the follow questions received (e.g. from pro to anti or neutral response or vice versa). This occurred in 6 cases (8% of RD cases).
- Interviewers note some requests for repetition at these items but nothing major. Interviewer suggested shortening the introductory text at D29.

D30a/b feedback:

- Low item non-response for both countries and both variants.
- Follow up items did not take that long. The mean time for D30a was 19.9 seconds (SD=10) and the mean time for D30b was 20.2 (SD=10.1).

D31a/b feedback:

- Quite high level of midpoint (5) response - D31a - 20% UK/30% Austria; D31b - 27% UK/23% Austria.
- The item non-response was over 7% for D31a in the UK.
- Follow up items did not take that long. The average time spent in D31a is 33.6 seconds (SD = 17.9) and the average time of D31b is 22.8 (SD = 10.3).

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

## 1.4 SOCIAL DEMOCRACY MODEL

The social model of democracy takes as its point of departure the classic Marshallian view that the state has social responsibilities for its citizens, namely to ensure a minimum of social welfare. This view has been taken to include social equality (SE) as a dimension of democracy, based on the fact that, in order to be politically equal, social and economic differences ought to be reduced to a minimum (O'Donnell 2004). The fundamental dimension of the social model of democracy is social equality, which is defined as “the elimination of social and economic differences that would stand in the way of the exercise of political equality.” (Question Module Design Template of ESS-6). Equality is composed of two sub-dimensions, namely 1) the reduction of social differences among the citizens (social equality); and 2) the guarantee of a minimal standard of living to all citizens (economic security). In the repeat module, we would like to add a new sub-dimension that takes into account the sharp economic crisis that has affected most European democracies and the extent to which democracy was unable to avoid and/or confine the crisis (which is at the root of most citizens' discontent with democracy). The third sub-dimension builds on the idea that for an effectively working, just and transparent democracy one needs to have a set of socially approved and formally legitimized set of norms, rules and procedures that control wild market forces (Linz and Stepan 1996). Economic governance guarantees that the government is able to limit the adverse economic consequences derived from the market to its citizens.

### 1.4.1 Equality (REPEAT)

Traditionally, Equality has been given two different interpretations in the discussion on democracy. On the one hand, it is understood as Political Equality. On the other hand, it may refer to Social Equality. Political Equality ensures that all citizens have equal opportunities to participate politically in a society, equal opportunities to access the law, and to receiving equal treatment before the law and the political institutions. Social Equality is the elimination of social and economic differences that would stand in the way of the exercise of political equality.

There are two different traditions in the definition of equality, which we try to include in our module. In order to do so, we distinguish two sub concepts as constituents of equality: social equality; and welfare.

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

We expected a negative relationship between equality and rule of law. We find in ESS6 that there is a positive relationship between the two, indicating that the two dimensions of democracy are complementary (against previous literature). Yet the degree of complementarity varies much across countries: while in some countries the relationship between the two is positive and very strong (e.g. Hungary, Ireland); in some other countries the relationship is still positive but very weak (e.g. Norway, Denmark).

### 1.4.1.1 Equality – Welfare: Protection against poverty (REPEAT)

The welfare sub concept of equality is an extension of both the social and political equality. On the one hand, welfare is needed so that everybody can effectively participate in political life. Indeed, political equality is not enough to ensure that people can participate in politics, because people need the means (economic, but also educational) to be able to participate in politics. A minimum standard of life is therefore necessary. In addition, ensuring a minimum welfare to the people helps to reduce differences between poor and rich and therefore is a step towards social equality. On the other hand, the government should be able to protect the citizens against the adverse consequences of the economy (such as in the last economic crisis) and protect citizens' welfare.

People need the means (economic, but also educational) to be able to participate in politics. As such, a minimum standard of life is necessary.

#### Early development – Comments

##### Module proposal:

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E13 and E27.

##### Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘Government protects all citizens against poverty’ (importance and reality), under the social model of democracy.

#### Pre-test – Items

##### B3

##### CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**that the government protects all citizens against poverty?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>30</sup>	0
	Extremely <sup>31</sup> important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>30</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard.



<sup>31</sup> ‘Extremely’ in the sense of ‘an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by ‘completely’, ‘fully’, ‘absolutely’, ‘totally’, etc. This applies to all references to ‘extremely’ throughout section B.

### Pre-test – Results and comments

This concept was pre-tested as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Pilot – Items

D8

POVMEAN

#### STILL CARD 30

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...**  
that the government protects all citizens against poverty?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D21

POVEVAL

#### STILL CARD 32

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** The government in [country] protects all citizens against poverty.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D8 and D20).

### 1.4.1.2 Equality – Welfare: Economic Governance (NEW->DROPPED)

In the repeat module, we would like to add a new sub-dimension that takes into account the sharp economic crisis that has affected most European democracies and the extent to which democracy was unable to avoid and/or confine the crisis (which is at the root of most citizens' discontent with democracy). The third sub-dimension builds on the idea that for an effectively working, just and transparent democracy one needs to have a set of socially approved and formally legitimized set of norms, rules and procedures that control wild market forces (Linz and Stepan 1996). Economic governance guarantees that the government is able to limit the adverse economic consequences derived from the market to its citizens.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This new concept was included in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- The proposed new item would be part of the social democracy model, and be worded as '...that the government is able to respond to the economic needs of the country (without any constraints).'

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT have made a suggestion for an additional third sub-concept/item under the 'equality' concept, relating to economic governance ('a government's ability to respond to the economic needs of the country'). There was an action for the QDT to think about what they are trying to measure with the 'economic governance' item and amend the QDDT accordingly.
- There was a discussion at the meeting about what 'constraints' the government needs to be free of – 'the markets', supranational institutions such as the EU, IMF, or World Bank or something else.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- One possible item was discussed:
  - o 'How important is it for democracy in general that the government regulates economic markets to protect the citizens' welfare?'
- The CST sub-group feels that this item is ready to be put to National Coordinators for feedback. However, QDT to clarify whether 'welfare' refers to the welfare state or a more general concept.
- Post-meeting, the QDT suggest replacing 'welfare' with 'wellbeing' in the question wording.

##### **Comments from 3<sup>rd</sup> QDT meeting (12/12/2018):**

- The CST sub-group commented that item should refer to 'people living in [COUNTRY]' rather than 'citizens'.
- Continued discussion about whether question is clear enough. The CST sub-group doubts that 'regulates economic markets' will be an understandable phrase for a large number of respondents.

**Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC SAB meeting (21/01/2019):**

- The SAB said it is great to see equality items in the module. It was suggested that educational equality could also be important. The QDT agreed that this would be good, but there is limited space.
- The SAB discussed whether people understand the term ‘markets’.

**Comments from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- The current proposed item is: ‘How important is it for democracy in general that the government regulates the economy to protect the citizens?’
- The SAB suggested changing the term ‘the economy’ to ‘economic markets’ or ‘the market’. However, it was felt that in English this would infer the ‘stock market’, and this reading is too specific. However, it was also felt that the term regulating ‘the economy’ is also too broad. The term ‘regulates businesses’ was also suggested.
- The group also discussed whether the term should be ‘national economy’. There were mixed views on this suggestion.
- The end consensus was to explore what examples are generated in the cognitive interviews if using ‘regulates the economy.’ During the cognitive interviews understanding of the alternative ‘regulates the markets’ will also be explored. Therefore, the current wording will be retained for testing.
- This item will be included in omnibus testing alongside the existing item on protecting citizens against poverty to see how the two items relate to one another.

**Pre-test - Items**

B7

ECOGMEAN

CARD 6

Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...that the government regulates the economy to protect the citizens?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

## B7

### ECOGMEAN-ALT

[Asked in cognitive interviews only]

Please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...that the government regulates the markets to protect the citizens?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### Pre-test – Results and comments

One question was tested on economic governance (an importance rating) in the omnibus. An alternative version of the question (which asked about ‘the markets’ rather than ‘the economy’) was included in the cognitive interviewing phase of testing only. Both questions are shown below.

#### Translation queries:

- In Polish it was felt that the word most akin to ‘regulate’ has negative connotations i.e. akin to ‘interfere.’ The query was to whether the translation should use the most similar word to the English or whether a more neutral verb would be preferred for the testing. For pre-testing the Polish team was told a neutral sounding verb would be preferred.
- Queries were made regarding how to translate ‘government’ and whether alternatives such ‘authorities’ or ‘state’ could be used. The response was that B7 is a very similar item / concept as B3 [an existing rotating module question] so the same translation of government as used in B3 should ideally be used here.

#### Omnibus testing:

##### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- The response distributions and average values for B7 in table 1 and 2 below.
- INR levels are within acceptable parameters across all test countries (i.e. no instances of  $INR \geq 7$ ).

##### Substantive analyses

- There was a correlation between B7 and the existing item B3 (protection against poverty).

##### Interviewed feedback and comments from technical report

- No issues were raised with B7 by omnibus interviews or in the omnibus technical report.

### Cognitive interview testing:

- As with other questions in this block participants did not consistently think about importance to democracy in general when answering. There was also a clustering of answers towards the high end of responses: participants were unclear how to respond if they thought economic governance was important, but not important to democracy in general.
- The cognitive interview found that the phrase ‘regulates the economy’ was subject to broad interpretation. The alternative ‘regulates the markets’ was also subject to broad interpretation. Participants explicitly reported that both the terms were too general or vague. The examples given for both terms cover a wide range of different aspects, some of which appear unrelated to the subject. This suggests that participants had either not very clear or very different ideas of what was meant when responding.
- Of the two versions tested, the alternative version ‘regulates the markets’ seems to encompass more examples on regulating businesses (taxation, regulation of business, imports and exports and workers rights). Control over the pricing of goods was also mentioned. However, examples related to macro-economic policy (interest rates, inflation etc) were not mentioned in this version.
- The original version ‘regulates the economy’ did make some participants think of macro-economic policy. Regulation of businesses and markets were also mentioned. However, in the original version some participants thought very broadly about any government spending including spending on healthcare and welfare. Therefore, it is unclear whether the original question is conceptually different to item B3 ‘That the government protects all citizens against poverty.’ Some participants focused on the protection of citizens (including from terrorism) and did not focus on regulating the economy.
- Our recommendation would be that the alternative question tested in the cognitive interviews (‘regulates the markets’) has less conceptual overlap with B3 and is therefore the better option. However, we require the QDT to comment on whether the examples given are in line with the question’s intended meaning. It might be that the overall concept of economic governance by government is too abstract to measure.

### CST recommendations:

- Interpretations of both versions of the questions were broad. We would welcome a steer from the QDT about which interpretation is closest to their intended meaning of the question. It is the view of the CST that the alternative version ‘regulates the markets’ may be preferential as this generated less heterogeneous examples.

### QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- At the QDT meeting it was agreed that this item could be dropped as it did not measure the target construct in the intended way and it is too similar conceptually to the existing item B3 (protecting citizens from poverty).

## **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was not included in the final Round 10 module.

### 1.4.1.3 Equality – Social equality (REPEAT)

Social equality means that every citizen has a similar income, that there are no big differences among rich and poor in a society. Social democratic models of democracy emphasize social equality as the essential characteristic of democracy (Held 2006).

*Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts:*

A positive relationship is expected between social equality and welfare.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was repeated in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- Round 6 items in this concept were E15 and E29.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes two repeat items on ‘Government takes measures to reduce differences in income levels’ (importance and reality), under the social model of democracy.
- The QDT recorded the reasons for repeating this item as:
  - o 1. There are only two items that operationalize the social democracy model.

#### **Pre-test – Items**

This concept was not pre-tested.

#### **Pilot – Items**

D9

EQUAMEAN

STILL CARD 30

(IF NECESSARY: How important do you think it is for democracy in general...) **READ OUT...**  
that the government takes measures to reduce differences in income levels?

Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMMEAN + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMMEAN	
	Not at all important for democracy in general	0
	Extremely important for democracy in general	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

D22

EQUAEVAL

**STILL CARD 32**

(IF NECESSARY: To what extent do you think each of the following statements applies in [country]?) **READ OUT** The government in [country] takes measures to reduce differences in income levels.

Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [DEMEVAL + DKREF]	
SCALE	DEMEVAL	
	Does not apply at all	0
	Applies completely	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

**Pilot – Results and comments**

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

**Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D9 and D21).



## 1.5 OVERALL VIEW OF DEMOCRACY

### 1.5.1 Core of democracy (NEW)

This concept is aimed at capturing the most essential dimension of democracy.

We propose to include a new general concept on the “meaning of democracy”. The idea is that one dimension of democracy prevails upon all the others in citizens’ views of democracy. As such, this concept is aimed at uncovering the dimension of democracy citizens consider is essential in a democracy. From an empirical point of view, we believe this item will allow 1) correcting for satisficing and over-reporting of the views items; and 2) providing an additional tool to test the validity of the items in ESS-6.

We expect to use this concept to weight the importance given to all other dimensions of democracy.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This new concept was proposed in the initial Round 10 module proposal.
- The QDT included a new item that asks respondents to choose the dimension of democracy they consider is essential in a democracy. They believed this item would allow 1) correcting for satisficing and over-reporting of the views items; and 2) providing an additional tool to test the validity of the items in Round 6.
- The QDT highlighted several development considerations when proposing this concept. Details can be found in the separate proposal document on the ESS website. In summary, the QDT suggested taking two main aspects into account:
  - o 1) the number of response categories offered to the respondents (considering the trade-off between the number of categories that can be offered to the respondents in order to keep the task relatively easy, and the ideal number of dimensions the team would like to ask about); and
  - o 2) where the item is introduced in the questionnaire (such that it neither contaminates the answers of the repeat module nor it gets influenced by the previous questions).

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- The CST sub-group feels that this concept is ready to be presented to National Coordinators for feedback.

##### **Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2018):**

- Ideally, the QDT would like to operationalize this item as follows: Each interviewee would be presented the list of attributes that she/he has scored 10 in the importance items and either 1) asked to choose the three essential characteristics of democracy; or 2) asked to order the list of attributes from the most essential to the least essential characteristic of democracy.

##### **Comments from 3<sup>rd</sup> QDT meeting (12/12/2018):**

- Continuation of discussion about how this is going to be difficult to measure but that QDT are very keen to try. One of the aims of this item is to use it for weighting.

- Issue of how options will be presented to respondents to pick from. Is making the respondent chose their most important item making them have a false choice. What if they think 2 things are equally important for democracy? The QDT to provide a breakdown of the proportions of people who give more than one item the same highest score.
- Will someone's first choice with a score of 9 be treated the same way as someone's first choice with a score of 6?
- Current proposal from the QDT is:
  - o 1. Present the respondents with the items they have rated 10 (or the highest value, in case they have rated no item as 10) and ask them to choose the three most essential for democracy (1st, 2nd, and 3rd).
  - o 2. Randomize the list of items presented to the respondents.

**Comments from 11<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC SAB meeting (21/01/2019):**

- The SAB was not convinced of the need for this concept. The results of Round 6 data showed that in Europe social democracy is an important part of the package alongside the other elements of democracy. This is not the case in the US. It was queried why we are trying to unpick this by forcing respondents to choose the most important.
- The SAB suggested the possibility of asking an open question about what the respondent thinks is the most important part of democracy.

**Comments received from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- The team are in the process of developing a question that aims to capture respondents' views on the most essential characteristics of democracy. This question will be ranking task.
- Different options for operationalizing this new question were discussed. It was thought this question should either:
  - o 1. Ask respondents to select the most important dimensions of democracy based on their prior survey answers (i.e. asking them to rank the most important for all items they previously rated as 8-10); or
  - o 2. Ask all respondents the same question regardless of their prior responses. In this option it was thought that the list of features of democracy should be reduced to 5 options (based on 5 dimensions). It was felt that existing data could be used to help determine which items to use (i.e. select items that are already known to be rated highly based on ESS6 data).
- Only rating scale items could would be used in this ranking task (not trade-off items).
- The advantage of the second approach is that it would be easier to operationalize. All respondents would be exposed to the same question. They would also be able to view the answer options to aid them in the completion of the task. This could be done using showcards (although different versions of these may need to be produced to prevent primacy effects etc). The option of a reversed showcard was discussed.
- The disadvantage of the second approach was it was felt that there may be more danger of satisficing if done this way. It was noted that it would unclear how to treat respondents who gave inconsistent answers between the rating exercise and the ranking exercise, and what the implication of this would be for any data weighting strategy devised.
- Based on these discussions it was decided that the questionnaire design team would pursue the first option further, and look at which five statements that think should compose the ranking task.
- The QDT suggested wording for the question and items to include:

- Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general.

Using this card please tell me which of these five items you think is the most important for democracy in general (RANDOMIZE).

1. That national elections are free and fair
  2. That the courts treat everyone the same
  3. That the government protects all citizens against poverty
  4. That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly on referendums
  5. That citizens be represented by ordinary people rather than by the political elite
- It was felt that the final ranking question should be positioned after all the individual importance ratings. It was felt all the country-based evaluation questions would then come after the rating questions (so the overall order is all importance ratings, the new ranking question and then all the country-based evaluation questions).
  - It was felt that any question designed should be included in both the cognitive interviews and the omnibus. It was discussed that in order for the context to be similar all the other importance ratings questions should ideally be included in the pre-testing interviews (both the cognitive and the omnibus). However, this may not be possible given the space considerations.

#### **Comments from paper shared for 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (04/04/2019):**

- Both strands of testing will include the Round 6 questions on free and fair elections/equality of treatment by courts etc to mimic the context of the overall democracy module. The omnibus will explore the extent to which answers to the ranking question are consistent with earlier ratings. Cognitive interviews will explore participants' views on the difficulty of this task and explore reason's given for inconsistencies (if any).

#### **Pre-test – Items**

EXPERIMENT 2 – SPLIT BALLOT DESIGN: We are going to ask questions about understandings and evaluations of democracy using different cards to randomly allocated subgroups within the sample.

Create random split variable EXP2 which will NOT BE SHOWN to respondents. Each experimental group should include approximately 50% of respondents. This variable should be populated at the start of the interview.]

**EXP2** Card order received for democracy item

- 1 Method A
- 2 Method B

#### **B10a**

[Included in both the pre-test omnibus and the cognitive interviews]

ASK IF EXP2 = 1

#### **CARD 7**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which **one** of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That national elections are free and fair	1
	That the courts treat everyone the same	2
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	3
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	4
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

### B10b

ASK IF EXP2 = 2

#### CARD 8

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which **one** of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the views of ordinary people <sup>32</sup> prevail over the views of the political elite	1
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	2
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	3
	That the courts treat everyone the same	4
	That national elections are free and fair	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

Translation notes:

<sup>32</sup> For the term 'ordinary people' the translations should not sound pejorative, like 'normal / average / simple' but just express neutrally the opposite to 'elite'.

## **Pre-test – Results and comments**

### Translation queries:

- The response option ‘that the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite’ should be translated in the same way as item B5; anti-elitism.

### Omnibus testing:

#### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- INR levels are within acceptable parameters across all test countries for version A (i.e. no instances of  $INR \geq 7$ ). However, for Version B INR in the Italy was 8.7%.
- As anticipated the reversing the order of the question did impact the response pattern, with participants being more likely to select options that appear when they appeared higher up the showcard (an order effect).
- In the UK this order effect did not impact on the ranked distributions. However, in Bulgaria and Italy the order effect was large enough to change the ranked distributions.

#### Timings data

- B10 (both versions) was the question in democracy module with the longest administration time. The slowest item in the module was B10b with a mean time of ~34.9 (sd = ~30.7). Item B10a scored second with an average of ~33.4 seconds and a sd of ~24.3 seconds. The distribution of timings for these items (Fig 1 and Fig 2 overleaf ) indicates that there is a lot of variability in the time spent among respondents, thus this is interpreted as that they are more challenging, although no differences were found across gender or age groups. Only these two items deviate considerably from the module’s mean. This is possibly related to the complexity of the task, or the fact basic question formulation is novel compared to previous scalar items.

#### Substantive analyses

- Many respondents who reported ‘10’ in one of the scales did not choose this option in the core of democracy. Note, this will be influenced by the fact that respondents can select 10 for multiple importance of democracy questions scalar questions but can only select one item at B10. Table 3 (below) shows the mean value given at the corresponding scalar statement for each item selected at B10.

#### Interviewer feedback

- Interviewers from the omnibus indicates that B10 did not pose difficulties for many respondents.

### Cognitive interview testing:

- The cognitive interviews detected no major issues with this question. Some participants stated that it was difficult to give an answer to B10 as the question requires a lot of thought (since all options were important to democracy to some extent). All cognitive participants ultimately managed to choose one thing that was most important for democracy in general and justify their response. This was the case even for participants who had previously rated multiple items equally in questions B1-B5 (i.e. given multiple 10 scores to scalar items). In some cases participants gave answers at B10 that were inconsistent with earlier scalar items (e.g. they did not code the item at B10 that they had given the highest score to in the scalar questions). However, participants in these cases still confirmed they felt their response to B10 reflected their views. It was commented on that B10 elicits more accurate attitudes as it is easier to

answer which feature is most important when all the items are posed in direct comparison with one another.

#### CST recommendations:

- They are positive about the inclusion of B10 going forward. However, the variations in results for this question depending on the order of presentation is a cause of concern. If this question is retained we would recommend 5 way randomisation rather than 2 way changes in ordering. We recommend trialling this approach in the pilot and also checking procedures for randomisation in each country to ensure correct showcard versions are consistently used.
- It should be noted that due to the administration time required for this item we would consider it equivalent to two items. We would also like to check how the QDT intend to use this variable in their analysis i.e. is it still be considered as a weighting variable or will the descriptive data generated also be used?

#### QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- It was agreed at the QDT meeting that this question should be retained by with 5-way randomisation. The end dataset should include both non-merged responses for this question (i.e. so it is possible to see which order of presentation was presented) and a derived variable showing all responses regardless of order of presentation.
- It was discussed how interviewers should be specifically instructed to prompt people to give one answer if they initially choose multiple options (Interviewer: If more than one answer given prompt to respondent to select one only).
- The positioning of this item was also discussed e.g., whether the question should come after all of the meanings items or at the very end of the democracy block. A split ballot experiment is recommended for the pilot whereby this is tested.

#### **Pilot – Items**

Create random split variable EXP4 which will NOT BE SHOWN to respondents. Each experimental group should include approximately 50% of respondents. This variable should be populated at the start of the interview.

#### **EXP4 Allocation**

- 1 - Position after D12
- 2 - Position at the end of section D (Democracy)

Create random split variable EXP5 which will NOT BE SHOWN to respondents. Each experimental group should include approximately 20% of respondents. This variable should be populated at the start of the interview.

#### **EXP5 Allocation**

- 1 - Order A
- 2 - Order B
- 3 - Order C
- 4 - Order D
- 5 - Order E

D13a

COREDEMA

ASK IF EXP4 = 1 AND EXP5 = 1

**CARD 31 ORDER A**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That national elections are free and fair	1
	That the courts treat everyone the same	2
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	3
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	4
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D32a

COREDEMA

ASK IF EXP4 = 2 AND EXP5 = 1

**CARD 39 ORDER A**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That national elections are free and fair	1
	That the courts treat everyone the same	2
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	3
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	4
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D13b

COREDEMB

ASK IF EXP4 = 1 AND EXP5 = 2

**CARD 31 ORDER B**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	1
	That national elections are free and fair	2
	That the courts treat everyone the same	3
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	4
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D32b

COREDEMB

ASK IF EXP4 = 2 AND EXP5 = 2

**CARD 39 ORDER B**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	1
	That national elections are free and fair	2
	That the courts treat everyone the same	3
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	4
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8



D13c

COREDEMC

ASK IF EXP4 = 1 AND EXP5 = 3

**CARD 31 ORDER C**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	1
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	2
	That national elections are free and fair	3
	That the courts treat everyone the same	4
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D32c

COREDEMC

ASK IF EXP4 = 2 AND EXP5 = 3

**CARD 39 ORDER C**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	1
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	2
	That national elections are free and fair	3
	That the courts treat everyone the same	4
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D13d

COREDEM

ASK IF EXP4 = 1 AND EXP5 =4

**CARD 31 ORDER D**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	1
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	2
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	3
	That national elections are free and fair	4
	That the courts treat everyone the same	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D32d

COREDEM

ASK IF EXP4 = 2 AND EXP5 =4

**CARD 39 ORDER D**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	1
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	2
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	3
	That national elections are free and fair	4
	That the courts treat everyone the same	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D13e

COREDEME

ASK IF EXP4 = 1 AND EXP5 = 5

**CARD 31 ORDER E**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the courts treat everyone the same	1
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	2
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	3
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	4
	That national elections are free and fair	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

D32e

COREDEME

ASK IF EXP4 = 2 AND EXP5 = 5

**CARD 39 ORDER E**

Now I want you to think again about how important you think different things are for democracy in general. Using this card please tell me which one of these five things you think is most important for democracy in general. **CODE ONE**

Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [COREDEM + DKREF]	
LIST	COREDEM	
	That the courts treat everyone the same	1
	That the government protects all citizens against poverty	2
	That citizens have the final say on the most important political issues by voting in referendums	3
	That the views of ordinary people prevail over the views of the political elite	4
	That national elections are free and fair	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	7
	Don't Know	8

### **Pilot – Results and comments**

In the pilot, one question on the concept ‘Core of democracy’ was tested, two experiments were run, a positioning experiment (the experiment was shown to some at the beginning of the experiment and to some at the end) and a response order experiment. The two positions are D12 and D32 while the orders are indicated by the letters a-e, above.

#### Overall feedback:

- Low item non-response - 4% in UK (with no major difference between versions) and 0% in Austria.
- Once all versions are combined, in both countries the option 'that national elections are free and fair' was most commonly selected (32% Austria and 34% UK). All options were selected by at least a reasonable minority of respondents - the lowest % was 10% for 'that courts treat everyone the same' in Austria. This was seen as much more important in the UK (26%). This can be seen below in Table 1.
- In the omnibus survey, there were large response list order effects for Bulgaria but much smaller for the UK and Italy. The order effects in the pilot were also quite small.
- No substantial timing variation between versions for the UK median times range from 34 and 38 seconds for D13 and 33 and 40 seconds for D32. Timings per variation were not available in Austria median length for D13 and D32 were 41 and 43 seconds respectively.
- It was noted that national elections should have an annotation explaining to which elections this referred.
- Austrian interview agency commented that some respondents struggled with the number of response options. UK interview agency found the large number of showcards from the response order experiment problematic. Some query on whether 'free' was meant in monetary terms or without restriction.

#### List order experiment feedback:

- There were some differences in responses based on the order the list was presented in. However, the sample sizes for each order were quite small (c. 50-70 respondents) and the general trend of most/least common responses held for most of the orders. E.g. in the UK, that national elections are free and fair was the most common response for three versions and second most common in the other two (with percentages selecting this between 24% and 44%). In Austria, this was the most common response for all 5 versions (between 29% and 42%).
- The CST agreed to include five different versions of the item based on different orders of the response list (as tested in the pilot). Each respondent will receive one of the five versions.
- Additional discussion was needed about whether to include the showcards in the main showcard set or as a separate set, and about whether to assign respondents to one of the five versions in advance of the interview or through randomisation in the script within the interview.

#### Placement of questions experiment feedback:

- Main difference in both countries was that option 3 (that the government protects all citizens against poverty) was more commonly selected at the end of the module compared with when asked earlier (17% to 25% in UK; 13% to 23% in Austria). Option 2 (that the courts treat

- everyone the same) a little less commonly selected at the end, especially in Austria (31% to 23%). Possible that after relating issues to their country people may respond differently?
- The CST agreed to include this item at the end of the Democracy module.

### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (items D28a, D28b, D28c, D28d, D28e – as well as D28Order, D28CheckA, D28CheckB, D28CheckC, D28CheckD, D28CheckE).

### 1.5.2 Regime support (NEW)

This concept comes close to Easton's concept of diffuse support (in this case support for the regime): the “Reservoir of favourable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate inputs to which they are opposed or the effect of which they see as damaging to their wants.” (Easton, 1965: 273). The regime is divided by Easton into three sub-objects: (a) the regime as values and principles, which “impose constraints on the purposes for which the energies and resources of the system may be committed.” (Easton, 1965: 194); (b) the regime as norms and procedures, which are those “norms that specify the way in which members of a system are expected to behave in political life.” (Easton, 1965: 200); and (c) the regime as structure, which is defined as a stable set of roles that “consist of regularized patterns of behaviour and expectations about the way in which the occupants of particular positions in society will behave and of how others ought to behave toward them.” (Easton, 1965: 206). In this case, two types of regime are considered: 1) democracy and 2) autocracy.

### 1.5.2.1 Regime support – Support for autocracy (NEW)

Favourable attitudes towards an autocratic regime. An autocratic regime is one where: 1) there are no free and fair elections; or 2) the power is concentrated in a single person/body; or 3) there are no limits to the power of the governor/government. Ideally, we should measure support for the different attributes of an autocracy as we do with democracy. This is however impossible due to space constraints, and therefore we propose to operationalize it by tapping into one of these three main characteristics of autocracy.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This new concept was not included in the initial Round 10 module proposal.

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included the concept of autocracy ('a strong leader who does not need to bother with parliament').
- The CST is seriously considering adding item(s) measuring authoritarianism to the ESS Core questionnaire. CST to keep the QDT informed of the progress of the work of the Core Question Review team regarding this.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- A proposed item to measure this concept was discussed: 'How important do you think it is for your country to have a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections?'
  - o The CST sub-group feels that 'don't have to bother with' is idiomatic.
  - o Also, we do not feel there is a need for 'strong' in 'strong leader'. This has connotations of leaders such as Margaret Thatcher or Angela Merkel, who work within a democratic system and do have constraints on their power, whereas we understand the aim of the question to be about measuring support for an autocratic system of government.
  - o Also, the end of the question is potentially double-barrelled, as it talks about being accountable to 'parliament' and 'elections'. It may be better to focus on one or the other.
- The CST suggest presenting the a different version of this item to the NCs for comment: 'How important do you think it is for your country to have a leader who can make decisions without having to answer to parliament?'
- The QDT responded that the proposed item was based on one fielded in WVS. However, they clarified that the exact formulation of the WVS item was slightly different so comparisons between WVS and ESS could not be made. The CST sub-group emphasised that any items taken from existing cross-national surveys still needed to go through the ESS questionnaire design process and would not necessarily be implemented directly from other surveys.
- It was discussed that to ensure the item captures support for autocracy rather than just a strong executive and/or populist leaders, the word "strong" should be removed.
- It was also agreed that the key issue was regarding the restriction of elections rather than parliament.

- It was also discussed whether the word democracy should be inserted in the question to make the formulation the same as other items in the module. (However, given that autocracy is being set up as an alternative to democracy, the QDT queried whether this make sense.)
- New question wording proposed: ‘How important do you think it is for your country to have a leader who can make decisions without having to worry about elections?’
  - o It was again raised that ‘worry about’ may, like ‘bother’, cause some issues in translation. However, it was decided to propose this version to NCs at the upcoming ESS ERIC NC Forum for their feedback.

**Comments from 3<sup>rd</sup> QDT meeting (12/12/2018):**

- The CST noted that we need to remain aware of possibility of core review inserting question on authoritarianism into ESS core. However, it is not guaranteed that this will happen, so need to separately continue developing autocracy item.
- The QDT to propose several alternatives of the indicator on support for autocracy for pre-test.

**Comments from 4<sup>th</sup> QDT meeting (18/02/2019):**

- Currently there are three alternatives under consideration on support for autocracy. However, there was criticism from the SAB that all three alternatives are too mild.
- The group discussed whether or not the item should focus on ‘violation of free and fair elections’ or ‘violation of the rule of law’ and which is more important as the key concept.
- In the end it was agreed to combine alternative A and alternative C to include both concepts.
- It was also felt that phrasing should be ‘breaks the rules’ rather than ‘bends the rules’ as this is a stronger statement. Therefore, the final statement to take forward to testing should be: ‘How important do you think it is for the country to have a strong leader in government, even if the leader breaks the rules to get re-elected?’
- The QDT noted a suggestion to substitute ‘rules’ by ‘law’.
- It was felt that this item should be on the ‘long list’ for cognitive interviewing (i.e. space permitting). The QDT expressed a strong preference for including this item in cognitive interviewing, to make sure it captures attitudes towards autocracy.

**Comments from paper shared for 12<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (04/04/2019):**

- The existing item on ‘support for democracy’ (How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?) will be included in the omnibus testing alongside this item.
- ‘..leader in government’ should be translated to convey ‘the head of the executive branch of government’.

**Pre-test – Items**

A7

[Asked in cognitive interviews only]

**CARD A2**

How important do you think it is for the country to have a strong leader in government, even if the leader breaks the rules to get re-elected? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely<sup>2</sup> important.

Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]	
MIXED	Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]



SCALE	ACCEPT	
	Not at all acceptable	0
	Completely acceptable	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>1</sup> 'Leader in government' should be translated to convey 'the head of the executive branch of government'.

<sup>2</sup> 'Extremely' in the sense of 'an ending point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might be represented also by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc.

### **Pre-test – Results and comments**

#### Translation queries:

- A number of translations queries were raised in relation to A7. These included:
  - o How country-specific should the "leader in government" be in the translation. I.e. in Germany, the head of the executive brand of government is the 'KanzlerIn' Should we translate to KanzlerIn (which would indicate the head of the German Government" or to a generic "head of government".
  - o Should "rules" be translated in the sense of general or in terms of laws ?/ "Breaks the rules" meant as metaphorical or really means fixing the elections?
- Responses to these queries were the translation of 'leader in government' should be generic as far as possible so not to infer a specific individual or country. Rules should be translated as 'general rules' rather than 'laws.' There was a deliberate decision to avoid the terms 'laws' in the English version.
- Post testing it was noted that translations of the word 'strong' have additional positive connotations. The word 'powerful' may be less likely to have these connotations.

#### Omnibus testing:

##### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- INR levels are within acceptable parameters across all test countries (i.e. no instances of  $INR \geq 7$ ).

##### Substantive analyses

- As expected, the mean level of support for autocracy is much lower than that of support for democracy in all three countries.
- Against expectations, support for autocracy is not negatively correlated to support for democracy, except in Italy. Support for autocracy is however negatively correlated with anti-authoritarianism in all three countries: the stronger the support for autocracy, the less the support for authoritarian values.
- Support for democracy is only positively and significantly (although weakly) correlated to anti-authoritarianism in the UK. There is no significant correlation in Italy and Bulgaria.
- Support for autocracy correlates also negatively with a scale of anti-authoritarianism.

- Controlling for gender, age and education, regression analysis confirms the relationship between support for autocracy and support for democracy, and anti-authoritarianism.
- Inconsistency between support for democracy and support for autocracy (measured as the percentage of respondents who answer 7 or more in both items) is the high in all countries. Less than 25% of respondents are consistent in all three countries (7 or more in support for democracy and 3 or less in support for autocracy).
- Inconsistent respondents are more highly educated than inconsistent respondents in all three countries.
- Inconsistent respondents are more anti-authoritarian than consistent respondents.
- The QDT suggest the following possible reasons for inconsistencies between the item on support for autocracy and the item on support for democracy:
  - o Either the item of support for democracy or the item of support for autocracy fail to measure the concept.
  - o There is lots of social desirability with the item of support for democracy, this is why it does neither correlate negatively with support for autocracy nor positively with anti-authoritarianism.
  - o In the view of respondents, there is no contradiction between support for democracy and support for autocracy. BUT: there is a negative correlation between support for democracy and authoritarianism in the UK and Italy (not significant), and a positive one (although not significant) in Bulgaria.
  - o Respondents only take into account the first element of the question (strong leader) in their answers, as suggested by CI.
- Based on the cognitive interviewing we would suggest option a and option d appear to be the most likely (see subsequent section).

#### Interviewer feedback and comments from technical report

- Interviewer feedback from GB and BG suggested that the question was ambiguous and confusing. In GB, respondents were unsure which rules were being referred to or what ‘strong leaders’ meant. In BG, the use of two clauses within one question was confusing and difficult to answer leading to some respondents only considering one aspect rather than considering the ‘if’ condition as well.
- Interviewers also made occasional comments on items A8-A11 (attitudes to authoritarianism). Both the GB and IT interviewers reported that occasional difficulties were experienced – in particular with understanding what was meant by ‘leaders’ in IT. Both the GB and IT interviewers reported that occasional difficulties were experienced – in particular with understanding what was meant by ‘leaders’ in IT.

#### Cognitive interview testing:

- The cognitive interviewing revealed problems with the response mapping that undermine the face validity of A7 support for autocracy.
- Some participants who gave high responses (indicating support for autocracy) expressed the opposite view on probing (e.g. that they felt leaders should never break the rules to get re-elected). As all response errors made were in the same direction it is likely that this question would over-estimate prevalence support for autocracy.
- Similar issues were noted on all test countries. Therefore, the problem is with source questionnaire design not the translation.

- The question was difficult as it was double-barrelled. It was unclear to participants how to answer if they thought it was important to have both a strong leader and a leader who does not break the rules. This led to responses that did not match underlying attitudes.
- The question as a whole was difficult to parse. Participants found it difficult to match their views onto the available answer categories. Some people focused on the first element of the stem ‘strong leader’ rather than the second part ‘who breaks the rules to get re-elected.’ Participants gave various caveats to their answers.
- There is a mismatch between the question stem and the answer options. The question stem is meant to indicate a trade-off (i.e. between strong leadership and abiding by the rules) but the response options are an importance answer scale. Again, this could have contributed to problems in response mapping.
- Participants also had some inconsistent understandings of what ‘breaks the rules to get re-elected’ could mean. Some participants considered minor infractions (such as making unrealistic claims when campaigning) whilst others were thinking of serious infractions (criminal activities and election rigging).
- The cognitive report recommends dropping this question or replacing it with a trade-off format of question. An alternative suggestion was adding ‘Having a strong leader’ to the ‘core of democracy’ question. This would not measure ‘support for autocracy’ but would measure whether respondents put more value on ‘strong leaders’ as opposed to the actual democratic principles measured throughout the module.

#### CST recommendations:

- The CST conclude that the support for autocracy item, in its current form, should be dropped. The evidence suggests that the current item is not well understood and that the current measure over-estimates support for autocracy.
- We recommend the question is either dropped entirely or a dichotomous question should be introduced. Our suggestion for such a question is: ‘Is it acceptable for election laws to be broken, if the result is a strong leader in government?’ Yes / No.

#### QDT final recommendations for pilot:

- At the QDT meeting it was agreed that the current item was not fit for purpose. However, it was felt that a binary question would not need the needs of QDT in terms of their analysis.
- No consensus was reached regarding the new question wording in the meeting. However, it was felt that the question should refer in some ways to ‘breaking election laws/ not adhering to the principles of free and fair elections.’ It was also felt the scale used should be on ‘acceptability’ rather than importance.
- It was agreed that both HQ and the QDT would draft some alternative questions up to three if which could be tested in the pilot using a split ballot experiment.

#### **Comments from 13<sup>th</sup> ESS ERIC NC Forum (20/11/2019):**

- An NC noted that in some parliamentary democracies with coalitions in government, PM is not elected.
- An NC queried why ‘preferred’ rather than ‘a politician’? The QDT responded that this was because the item is mediated by party identity.
- An NC suggested to adapt version C to refer to adapting/changing rules in order to have strong government.
- An NC said that this item is still double-barrelled because of implicit reference to powerful leader AND to rule breaking.

### Pilot – Items

EXPERIMENT 2 – SPLIT BALLOT DESIGN: We are going to test three new items on support for autocracy.

Create random split variable EXP2, which will NOT BE SHOWN to respondents. Each experimental group should include approximately 1/3 of respondents. This variable should be populated at the start of the interview.]

**EXP2** Measurement method received for item on autocracy

- 1 - Method A: Simple acceptability version 1
- 2 - Method B: Scenario acceptability
- 3 - Method C: Simple acceptability version 2

B44a

SUPAUTa

ASK IF EXP2 = 1

**CARD 20**

How acceptable is it for a country to have a powerful leader who changes rules to get re-elected?

Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]	
SCALE	ACCEPT	
	Not at all acceptable	0
	Completely acceptable	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

B44b

SUPAUTb

ASK IF EXP2 = 2

**CARD 20**

Imagine that your most preferred politician is elected [Prime Minister / President] and also has a comfortable governing majority. How acceptable would it be for them to change rules to help them win the next election?

Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]	
SCALE	ACCEPT	
	Not at all acceptable	0

	Completely acceptable	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

B44c

SUPAUTc

ASK IF EXP2 = 3

**CARD 20**

How acceptable is it for election laws to be broken if the result is a powerful leader?

Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]	
SCALE	ACCEPT	
	Not at all acceptable	0
	Completely acceptable	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### **Pilot – Results and comments**

In the pilot, three variants of a question were tested on support for autocracy. The three variants can be found above.

#### Overall feedback:

- The INR exceeded 7% in the UK for B44b but was under 7% for all other variation in the UK and for all variations in Austria.
- The previously dropped question was done so due to too high a mean support for autocracy. All three pilot variants used in the experiment appear to be an improvement on the old version as they have lower mean scores.
- Austria had a lower mean support for autocracy in all three variations than the UK.
- B44b received the highest mean support in both countries with B44c receiving the lowest.
- Timings data from the UK showed variation between the mean times taken for the different variations. The mean time for B44a, B44b and B44c were 21, 33 and 26 seconds respectively. Although there was no statistically significant difference between B44a and B44c, t-tests found a statistically significant difference between B44a and B44b and B44b and B44c.
- One issue raised with the old omnibus questions was that there was the old support for autocracy item was not inversely correlated with the support for democracy items. In contrast, pilot data shows there is a significant negative correlation between all the new versions of the support for autocracy item and the support for democracy item (this time in keeping with expectations).

- In Austria the relationship was significant between supdem and all three variants of this item. In the UK the relationship was only significant for B44b and B44c.
- There was a positive correlation between all new variants and authoritarianism items (in line with expectations). The findings on significance were mixed by version and country.
- It was noted that in versions A and C, the question formulated used “powerful leader” and in version B the question used “prime minister/president”- the opinion of respondents may shift according to the subject used.
- All versions were generally described as easy in UK debriefing questions. In both countries respondents reported they were able to understand all the statements.
- In the UK there were instances of respondents changing their answers in the respondent debriefing probes. This included changes where the answer changed from pro to anti or vice versa. This occurred across all three variations so does not point to a version that is better on the basis of internal consistency.
- The term ‘leader’ was seen as having some issues with translation. Potential translations included ‘head of government’ or ‘strong leading personality.’ There was also a question of whether it had to be translated with a neutral connotation.
- The term ‘rules’ was seen as unclear in B44a. ‘Laws’ or ‘electoral rules / laws’ were suggested as alternatives.
- The term ‘most preferred’ was seen as unnecessary as ‘preferred’ would be sufficient.
- ‘Election laws’ in B44c was seen as ambiguous as it was not clear if the right to vote was meant or the laws for electoral campaigns.
- The CST agreed to test two alternative versions in an online access panel in the UK and Austria:
  - o How acceptable would it be for [COUNTRY] to have a strong leader who is above the law? (0-10 scale from ‘Not at all acceptable’ to ‘Completely acceptable’.)
  - o How acceptable would it be for [COUNTRY] to have a strong leader who changes rules to get re-elected? (0-10 scale from ‘Not at all acceptable’ to ‘Completely acceptable’.)
- The support for democracy item, and possibly the core items on authoritarianism, will also be included in the online survey so we can test for correlations with the above items.
- It was agreed to have further consultations with NCs on any possible issues with the translation of ‘above the law’, and to review the placement of this item in ESS10 if it were to be included.

### Extra online testing – Items

#### B25

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

Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]	
SCALE	EXTIMP	
	Not at all important	0
	Extremely important	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	

	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### C26

Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?  
Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.

Mixed [AGREE5 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]	
SCALE	AGREE5	
	Agree strongly	1
	Agree	2
	Neither agree nor disagree	3
	Disagree	4
	Disagree strongly	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### C27

Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?  
What [country] needs most is loyalty towards its leaders.

Mixed [AGREE5 + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]	
SCALE	AGREE5	
	Agree strongly	1
	Agree	2
	Neither agree nor disagree	3
	Disagree	4
	Disagree strongly	5
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

## A1

### ASK SAMPLE A (RANDOM 50% OF SAMPLE)

How acceptable would it be for [country] to have a strong leader who is above the law?

Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]	
SCALE	ACCEPT	
	Not at all acceptable	0
	Completely acceptable	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

## A2

### ASK SAMPLE B (RANDOM 50% OF SAMPLE)

How acceptable would it be for [country] to have a strong leader who changes rules to get re-elected?

Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [ACCEPT + DKREF]	
SCALE	ACCEPT	
	Not at all acceptable	0
	Completely acceptable	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

## Extra online testing – Results and comments

### Distributions and Item Non-Response (INR)

- In both countries (Austria and Great Britain), item non-response rates were twice as high for the ‘changes rules’ item (A2) (10% and 15%, respectively) than for the ‘above the law’ item (A1) (5% and 8%, respectively). Online methodology may give higher item non-response rates compared with interviewer administered survey, but results suggest ‘changes rules’ item may less clear to respondents.
- There were higher means, medians and modes for ‘changes rules’ item (A2) in both countries.
- In UK, still a reasonable minority at high values in scale for ‘above the law’ (A1) in UK - 18% select 8, 9 or 10 (21% for ‘changes rules’ (A2)).
- In Austria, high values in scale used much less commonly for both items - 9% selected codes 8, 9 or 10 for ‘above the law’ and 8% for ‘changes rules’.
- Midpoint (5) used slightly more commonly for ‘changes rules’ (A2) than ‘above the law’ (A1) (9% vs. 5% in UK and 11% vs. 8% in Austria).



### Substantive analyses

- All correlations with support for democracy are in direction expected but generally quite weak. Stronger negative correlations between support for democracy and support for autocracy for ‘above the law’ than ‘changes rules’.
- All correlations with authoritarianism (obedience and respect) are in direction expected. Support for autocracy item with the strongest correlation to authoritarianism differs between countries.
- All correlations with authoritarianism (loyalty towards leaders) in direction expected. Support for autocracy item with the strongest correlation to authoritarianism differs between countries.
- The ‘above the law’ version was carried forward into the final questionnaire.

### **Round 10 – Items**

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (B37a).

In addition, C26 and C27 from the extra online testing (above) were added as new ESS Core questions (i.e., not part of the rotating module on Democracy) in Round 10 (B38 and B39).

### 1.5.2.2 Regime support – Support for democracy (REPEAT)

This concept measures favourable attitudes in general towards democracy.

*Expected relationships with other complex and simple concepts:*

This overall assessment of the importance of democracy should positively correlate with all the concepts characterizing specific aspects of the democracy.

#### **Early development – Comments**

##### **Module proposal:**

- This Round 6 concept was dropped in the initial Round 10 module proposal, due to space limitations.
- The QDT was reluctant to drop this, noting that panel data from the Spanish case (Torcal, Martini, and Serani 2016) seem to suggest that these two items perform better than the classic indicators in measuring support for the idea of democracy in general. However, to meet the 30-items limit, it was initially decided not to repeat these items.
- Round 6 items in this concept were positioned outside the main democracy module, and instead in the ESS Core, as items B18d and B18e.

##### **Comments from 1<sup>st</sup> QDT meeting (27/09/2018):**

- The QDT highlighted some areas that are currently missing from the proposed module, which they would like to keep in consideration for inclusion, at this stage. This included the concept of general support for democracy. In Round 6, the following questions were included within section B of the ESS core questionnaire, though the items was actually part of the Democracy module: ‘How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important’; ‘How democratic do you think [country] is overall? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all democratic and 10 is completely democratic’.
- The CST commented that it is important that serious consideration is given to including these ‘general support for democracy’ questions in Round 10.

##### **Comments from 2<sup>nd</sup> QDT meeting (05/11/2018):**

- It was mentioned that the proposed Round 10 module currently includes one repeat item on ‘How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important’, under overall view of democracy.

#### **Pre-test – Items**

A6

##### **CARD A2**

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important.

Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]	
MIXED	Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]

SCALE	EXTIMP	
	Not at all important	0
	Extremely <sup>27</sup> important	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

### Pre-test – Results and comments

This repeat item was included in cognitive interviewing only to provide context for the support for autocracy item being tested. It was not pre-tested in the omnibus.

### Pilot – Items

B25

DEMIMP

CARD 10

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important.

Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]		
MIXED	Mixed [EXTIMP + DKREF]	
SCALE	EXTIMP	
	Not at all important	0
	Extremely <sup>27</sup> important	10
MISSING_GROUP	DKREF	
	Refusal	77
	Don't Know	88

Translation notes:

<sup>27</sup> 'Extremely' in the sense of 'an end point on the scale where nothing can go beyond it. This might also be represented by 'completely', 'fully', 'absolutely', 'totally', etc.

### Pilot – Results and comments

This concept was piloted as a repeat item, without intention to analyse it independently.

### Round 10 – Items

This concept was included in the final Round 10 module (B25a).