



## ESS Round 6 - Question Module Design Final Template<sup>1</sup>

**Module Title:** Europeans' understandings and evaluations of democracy

**Module Authors:** Hanspeter Kriesi, Leonardo Morlino, Pedro Magalhães, Sonia Alonso and Mónica Ferrín<sup>2</sup>.

### SECTION A: Theoretical background, aims and objectives

#### Dissatisfaction and the quality of democracy

Citizens' attitudes towards their democratic systems have become a major topic in the social sciences over the recent years. One of the reasons for the emphasis on democracy is the changing context of established democracies resulting from the most recent wave of democratization and the interest in the consolidation of democracy in the transition countries. A second reason is that, with the breakdown of the state-socialist regimes in Eastern Europe and the fall of the so-called iron curtain, researchers studying political support and democratic attitudes observed a decline in satisfaction with the working of democracy in some established democracies of Western Europe (among others, see, Gunther, Montero and Torcal 1997; Klingemann 1999; Dalton 1999; Pharr and Putnam 2000; Norris 2001; Dalton 2004; Montero and Torcal 2006). In spite of this apparent trend of "democratic dissatisfaction", existing indicators on people's views about their democratic regime in industrialized democracies paint a less clear picture than the one assumed by these authors. Indeed, although dissatisfaction appears as a persistent and widespread phenomenon in Western democracies, it is also true that there is a great deal of variation across and within countries regarding their levels of satisfaction with the performance of particular regimes (Dogan 2005). Until now, however, no study has provided with specific data on what particular aspects people are dissatisfied with in their democracies. More critically, this has impeded a systematic analysis of the causes of citizens' dissatisfaction and its variation across European countries.

Explanations on the causes of dissatisfaction with the political system among the mass public have mainly taken two different perspectives. The micro-level perspective has focused on citizens' attitudes and evaluations whereas the macro-level perspective has focused on institutions and socioeconomic structures. These perspectives have been applied independently from one another and with little, if any, cross-fertilization. During the last fifteen years, the macro-level perspective has been enriched by the elaboration of several indices of democracy (Coppedge and Reinicke 1991; Gastil 1991; Vanhanen 1997, 2000 and 2003; Marshall and Jagers 2001; for a summary of this literature, see Munck and Verkuilen 2002). These indices measure the quality of existing democracies according to some theoretical yardstick of what democracy ought to be. However, they confront two main problems. First, they do not provide enough variance when applied to Western established democracies<sup>3</sup>. Second, they have not been complemented by data which allows us to investigate the relationship between these 'objective' properties of the political systems and people's views about how the regime works.

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<sup>2</sup> The team is also composed of Mark Franklin, Bernard Wessels, Mariano Torcal, Braulio Gómez, Alexander Trechsel, Radek Markowski, Wolfgang Merkel and Todd Landmann.

<sup>3</sup> In order to put an end to this deficit, the Democracy Barometer project, a Swiss-German collaboration of the NCCR Democracy in Zurich, has developed a macro-level index that makes it possible to differentiate among the quality of OECD democracies (Bühlmann et al. 2008; Bühlmann, Merkel, Weßels 2007).

Concerning the micro-level perspective, and despite the historical evolution towards a nearly universal acceptance of democracy as the best form of government, it has not yet been empirically established what people think about their democracies, and how they evaluate them. Firstly, neither regarding support nor regarding satisfaction has there been a clear concern for the need to relate these indicators to a referent, that is, to ascertain what sort of democracy is supported by citizens, or what it is about democracy that they find unsatisfactory. Secondly, existing indicators- support and satisfaction- have yielded somewhat frustrating results both as dependent and independent variables. Particularly missing is an understanding of the relationship between support (or satisfaction) on the one hand and political behaviour on the other. We need therefore better specified and more exhaustive measures of people's standards regarding what democracy is as well as people's concrete evaluations of regime performance in different dimensions so as to be able to comprehensively investigate the role of democratic attitudes in people's political behaviour.

This project shall address these limitations regarding both the macro and the micro perspectives. First, we shall bring clarity to the often used indicators of *support for* and *satisfaction with* democracy. Second, we shall create individual-level indicators designed to permit comparison with the existing macro-level indices on the quality of democracy. Thirdly, we shall be able to tackle on the causes of dissatisfaction and the effects of democratic attitudes on people's political behaviour. In order to do this, we shall focus our analysis on (a) people's beliefs and expectations about what a democracy should be, and (b) people's evaluations of their own democracies.

#### **Understanding support for democracy and satisfaction with democracy**

Few concepts have been so confusedly used in the literature as political support. Departing from Easton's conceptualization (1975), the same indicators have indistinctly been used both to measure different concepts and different indicators have been employed to assess the same concept. This has made research on this field particularly difficult. The module proposed here intends to bring more clarity to this area of research. Two specific deficits are addressed.

Democracy is a highly contested notion, difficult to conceptualize and to operationalize. Most indicators of democratic support and satisfaction with democracy circumvent these conceptual difficulties by using the term democracy without any further specification as to what it may mean. Accordingly, previous attempts to study public attitudes to democracy incorporate at least two strong assumptions: first that all respondents have in mind the same concept when responding to the unspecific stimuli; and, as a consequence, that we can compare their responses. Both of these assumptions may be invalid and may lead to erroneous inferences and conclusions. In fact, recent research in the field has been challenging these assumptions, providing evidence that individuals do not share a common view of democracy (Schedler and Sarsfield, 2004; Baviskar and Malone, 2004). To correctly assess citizens' support for democracy and satisfaction with democracy, we need data on citizens' understanding of democracy, i.e. on their expectations with respect to democratic regimes under contemporary circumstances. We need to avoid applying incorrect interpretations of democracy to individuals. Although some cross-national surveys have included some indicators related to the preferred dimensions of democracy (see, for example, WVS 2005), their scope has been limited in that they do not clarify what citizens themselves mean by *democracy*.

In addition, questions on support for democracy (*democracy as the best system*) and satisfaction with democracy (*how satisfied are you with the way democracy works*) have been used as measures of citizens' evaluations of their democratic systems. Yet, these measures are only partial and indirect indicators. On the one hand, it is still unknown what is it in particular that they are evaluating when asked about their satisfaction with democracy. On the other hand, most of their evaluations have been interpreted as output oriented. Indeed, in the vast literature on political support, output performance is assumed to be the driving force behind citizens' evaluations. By contrast, we believe that there is more to democracy than just the evaluation of what it delivers in terms of material goods in comparison with what it ought to deliver (in line

with Linde and Eckman 2003). David Easton has laid the conceptual ground for most of the empirical research done so far (Easton 1976; 1975; 1965; 1979). The criteria used by Easton to evaluate the degree of political support for democracy are based, mainly, on outcome-related performance, despite the prominent role played in his approach by evaluative orientations towards the authorities and the regime. Further refinements of Easton's perspective have conceptualized the evaluative basis of political support for democracy in more detail (Fuchs 1993; 1989; Fuchs, Guidorossi, Svensson 1995). Still, the evaluation criteria applied are rather limited and mainly oriented either toward the behaviour of authorities or to particular outputs (or outcomes). The latest work emphasizing the outcome dimension of democracy's performance-based support is Stein Ringen's "What democracy is good for" (Ringen 2007). The problem with this perspective is that it restricts people's evaluations of their democratic system to a singular aspect, which might not be the most important in terms of democratic performance. Correctly addressing people's evaluations of their democratic system implies broadening the number of dimensions to be evaluated. Only then will we be able to assess how citizens evaluate the quality of their democracies.

Summing up, both major perspectives in the study of democracy have been insufficiently concerned with the need to relate indicators of satisfaction with or support for democracy to individual standards of reference – that is, to assess evaluations of democracy in relation to individuals' understanding of what democracy is or ought to be. Seen in this light, available data for the systematic study of attitudes towards democracy are incomplete. Only a small number of surveys have included appropriate questions about attitudes towards democracy, usually country specific studies (for countries of Latin America see Ai Camp 1998, Baviskar and Malone 2004 or Lagos 2005; for Africa see Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi 2005; and for the ex-U.S.S.R see Reisinger, Miller, Hesli and Miller 1995, Whitefield and Evans 1996). These countries have had special characteristics as democracies: either they are "under democratized" countries or countries that experienced a transition recently. These studies, however, suffer from lack of comparability, both in terms of sampling and in terms of questionnaire design. The proposed ESS module is intended to provide, for the first time, a rigorous and systematic study of attitudes to democracy in Europe.

### **Objectives**

As already mentioned above, this project derives from the combination of two different perspectives, which help to support it theoretically: on the one hand, the literature on public opinion on democracy (particularly, literature focusing on the explanations of political support) and, on the other, the literature on the quality of democracy. Four main objectives underlie this innovative approach:

1. The study of the quality of democracy: what do citizens mean by it?
2. The study of the quality of democracy: how do citizens evaluate their democracy?
3. The study of people's dissatisfaction with democracy: why are they dissatisfied?
4. The study of the quality of democracy at the micro and macro levels: is there a relationship?

#### **1. The study of the quality of democracy: what do citizens mean by it?**

Most of the research on public attitudes towards democracy has placed emphasis on the lack of sophistication among the citizenry. It has been said that the average citizen can hardly say what politics are about (Converse 1963). This is particularly so in relation to the concept of democracy, because of its complexity. People are often assumed to express support for democracy simply as a consequence of social desirability (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, for example), without having a clear understanding of what democracy means or what it should be. Only recently new studies have shed some light on people's conceptions of democracy (Baviskar and Malone 2004; Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi 2005). According to these new findings, people understand what democracy is, although they do it with different levels of sophistication. This has implications of extreme relevance for the study of public attitudes towards democracy. Indeed, if people did not have what we might call a "democratic" definition of democracy, their evaluations would be nonsensical. It is therefore very important to investigate how people define

democracy (*what democracy is and what democracy ought to be*). We will argue, in addition, that people's understandings of what democracy ought to be strongly affect their expectations about the functioning of concrete democracies. In other words, if a particular citizen considers that democracy is primarily about freedom, she will expect to enjoy freedom if she lives in a democracy.

As the concept of democracy has been so recurrently used and there are so many different definitions in existence, we expect that there will be a great deal of variation among the citizens. Of special interest here is the conception of political representation, which is allegedly suffering from a crisis. We are persuaded by Rehfeld (2009) and Mansbridge (2003) that there are recently invented ways of thinking about representation that should be empirically considered by means of looking at other actors than just parties and governments. We must try to encompass the difference between what Mansbridge calls "promissory representation" (the mandate or trustee version) with other understandings of representation.

## **2. The study of the quality of democracy: how do citizens evaluate their democracy?**

Few studies have considered citizens' evaluations of democracy as a measure of the quality of democracy. Except for the Costa Rican example of the Democratic Audit (Vargas Cullel 2004), the Asian (Chu and Chang 2009) and Afrobarometer (Mattes 2010) from 2005 on, and the Spanish and Portuguese surveys on the quality of democracy performed by researchers signing this application (Fortes, Palacios, Vargas-Machuca 2009; Magalhães 2009), no previous research has incorporated the publics' opinions in an assessment of the quality of democracy. Although these evaluations cannot substitute for expert judgements, we affirm that they provide valuable material to complement and provide nuance for indices derived from expert judgements. As the main consumers of democracy, citizens will give us with a richer evaluation on how their democratic systems are performing.

In order to provide such an evaluation, the classical questions on support for and satisfaction with democracy are not enough. High levels of support for democracy have been interpreted, on the one hand, as a sign that citizens in Western countries preferred democracy to any other type of political regime. On the other hand, the question on satisfaction with democracy has been mainly used to test the impact of the political context, as an item which basically captures citizens' satisfaction with the main political actors. However, by using a unique question to evaluate the state of democracy, we are unable to trace which of the components of democracy is being pointed by the citizens; in other words, we are unable to know whether dissatisfaction is the result of a bad functioning of the justice, the lack of transparency of the system, or of any other aspect. We need instead to provide citizens with an adequate instrument to evaluate their democracies. Such an instrument needs to evaluate democracy in all its dimensions, in order to provide a full picture on how citizens judge their democracies. This is the second objective of this project.

## **3. The study of people's dissatisfaction with democracy: why are they dissatisfied?**

The two questions posed above appear to be of fundamental relevance for explaining why people are dissatisfied. Different explanations have been developed to explain levels of satisfaction with democracy: the economic and performance of the system – outputs (McAllister 1999; Listhaug 2006); the procedure of the system – inputs (Miller and Listhaug 1999); the institutional design in a democracy (Frey and Stutzer 2001); the availability of parties with which to identify (Anderson and Guillory 1997), and so on. However, none of these studies has investigated a possibly more proximate source of dissatisfaction: the existence of a gap between citizens' expectations and citizens' evaluations of the democratic system.

Although some studies have tried to incorporate this argument in their explanations of levels of satisfaction with democracy (Pharr and Putnam 2000; Norris 2010), lack of data has made this task impossible. In fact, most of these attempts have been limited to interpretation of the available data and therefore have tested this relationship indirectly. This is therefore the third objective of this project.

**4. The study of the quality of democracy at the micro and macro levels: is there a relationship?**

Lastly, our project deals with a recurrent question in many writings from the early 60s onwards (Almond and Verba 1963; Sniderman, 1975; Putnam 1993; Klingemann and Fuchs 1995; Gibson, 1997; Nevitte 1996; Inglehart, 1997; Pettigrew, 1998, etc.): whether there is correspondence between citizens' orientations and the objective political system. Our aim is to compare citizens' evaluations of the quality of democracy with objective indicators of the quality of democracy. This is interesting for two reasons:

- Firstly, it aims to address for the first time the question to what degree citizens' attitudes line up with the institutions and practices of democracy – a question underlying (but not directly addressed) in political culture studies.
- Secondly, it aims to play a role in providing a more proximate or “democratic” view of how democracies really work. Indeed, citizens' satisfaction with their democracies is also an indicator of the quality of a democracy.

Together with the ESS, the NCCR Barometer is the complementary tool to accomplish these two tasks (see footnote 2). It is therefore of great relevance for our project.

**SECTION B. Brief description of all the concepts to be measured in the module and their expected relationships, either verbally or diagrammatically. Specific details about the concepts and sub concepts are specified in SECTION C.**

A complex concept underlies this module: democracy. Although this concept has repeatedly been discussed in the literature, there is no consensus either about its meaning or about how it should be operationalised. It is therefore extremely difficult to select a valid definition of democracy, to be applied in different contexts and to many different people. In order to partially omit this difficulty, we have decided for a broad concept of democracy, by numbering a set of attributes that compose a democracy – based on Diamond and Morlino's (2005, later on reformulated by Morlino, 2009), and the NCCR's (Bühlmann et al. 2008) conception of democracy. We ended up with 10 attributes (concepts from now on): rule of law, vertical accountability, horizontal accountability, participation, competition, representation, responsiveness, freedom, equality, and support for democracy. These are briefly discussed in the following lines. We expect that these concepts will help to shed new light on the confuse indicators of support for and satisfaction with democracy. First, they allow covering all possible 'democratic' definitions of democracy people have in mind when they think of democracy, and having meaningful answers about people's attitudes towards democracy. Second, they result in precise information on citizens' evaluations of their democratic systems. Third, they allow for comparison between respondents' meaning and evaluations of democracy.

**CONCEPT 1: RULE OF LAW (rullaw) – Complex concept**

*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.

**CONCEPT 2: VERTICAL ACCOUNTABILITY (vertacc) – Complex concept**

*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).

One sub-concept measuring vertical accountability is transparency. 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. Fiorini (2005: 16) claims that transparency is 'the most important concept for global democracy in the twenty-first century'.

**CONCEPT 3: HORIZONTAL ACCOUNTABILITY (horacc) – Simple concept**

*Horizontal accountability* – sometimes called institutional accountability (Morlino 2009) – "is the obligation of

the elected political leaders to 'account', to be responsible, to answer for their political decisions to other institutions or collective actors that have the expertise and power to control the behaviour of their governors." (Morlino 2009: 37). It is the system of 'checks and balances' of power among several institutions in a state (executive, legislative and judicial), which allows for effective mutual control.

**CONCEPT 4: PARTICIPATION (particip) – Complex concept**

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'.

**CONCEPT 5: COMPETITION (compet) – Complex concept**

*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.

**CONCEPT 6: REPRESENTATION (reprst) – Complex concept**

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). For that reason, in this module we will put particular emphasis on the question of whether citizens feel that "representative" democracies should be transformed into "participative" democracies (for the explanation on how the concepts of representation and participation will be combined, see section C).

**CONCEPT 7: RESPONSIVENESS (responsv) – Complex concept**

*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).

**CONCEPT 8: FREEDOM (freed) – Complex concept**

*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.

**CONCEPT 9: EQUALITY (equal) – Complex concept**

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.

**CONCEPT 10: SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY (support) – Simple Concept**

This concept provides an overall assessment of support for democracy and specifically for living in a democratic country.

**EXPECTED RELATIONSHIPS**

Because all these concepts are linked to the definition of democracy, we expect them to be positively related to one another. On the one hand, from a theoretical point of view, there are strong interdependencies among the different concepts. It is hard to think of accountability, for example, without the existence of rule of law; or to ensure representation without responsiveness. On the other hand, from an empirical perspective, it is predictable that a democratically oriented person cannot have a strong preference for one of these concepts and radically reject all the others. We expect that a respondent with a democratic orientation will have positive attitudes towards all these concepts, although her attitudes might vary in degree.

Still, there are also some tensions between these concepts, which may be reflected in the respondents' answers. A negative relationship may appear, for example, between representation and participation (liberal democracy vs. participatory democracy); or between freedom and social equality (liberal democracy vs. social democracy). Possible relationships are described in more detail in the next section.



**SECTION C: Complex Concepts**

**COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: RULE OF LAW (rullaw)**

**Complex Concept Description**

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.

First, the protection of essential civil rights needs to be guaranteed by the state. This means protecting each citizen against the state and any other possible aggression from other citizens, as well as ensuring basic liberties for the citizens. In a state of rule of law, everybody respects the law and is protected against the abuses of power. (rullaw1: Individual security and civil order)

Second, all citizens must be equally protected by the law: all must have equal access to the judicial system, and be equally treated by the judicial system. (rullaw2: Accessibility and equality of the judicial system)

Third, for these two previous characteristics to be fulfilled, the judicial system must be independent, so that no arbitrary decision is taken against any person; and to ensure that all citizens are equal before the law, both in terms of rights and obligations.

Fourth, the law must be enforced by the institutions, so that it effectively takes form. Institutions and public administration must be able to ensure that the law is enforced.

We are only able, due to space constraints to include two of these sub concepts in the questionnaire: individual security and civil order, and accessibility and equality of the judicial system.

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

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. Stronger positive relationships are expected, though, with *freedom*.

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: ACCESSIBILITY AND EQUALITY OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM**

**Sub-Concept Description**

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.

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>4</sup>										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E10</b>	...that the courts treat <sup>5</sup> everyone the same <sup>6</sup> ?													
<b>Question item wording - Evaluation</b>														
<b>(STILL CARD 38)</b> Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. <b>READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.</b>														
		Does not apply at all										Applies (Don't completely know)		
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E25</b>	The courts in [country] treat <sup>7</sup> everyone the same <sup>8</sup> .													

<sup>4</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard

<sup>5</sup> 'treat' in the sense of 'deal with'

<sup>6</sup> 'the same' in the sense of 'exactly the same way in the same situation'

<sup>7</sup> 'treat' in the sense of 'deal with'

<sup>8</sup> 'the same' in the sense of 'exactly the same way in the same situation'

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: VERTICAL ACCOUNTABILITY (vertacc)

### Complex Concept Description

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*.

### 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.

## SUB CONCEPT NAME: RETROSPECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

### Sub-Concept Description

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 sub concepts

A positive relationship is expected between transparency and retrospective accountability, and between

transparency and responsiveness.

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general (Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E12</b>	...that governing parties are punished in elections <sup>9</sup> when they have done a bad job?												

**Question item wording – Evaluation**

**(STILL CARD 38)** And using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

		Does not apply at all										Applies completely (Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E26</b>	Governing parties in [country] are punished in elections <sup>10</sup> when they have done a bad job.												

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: TRANSPARENCY**

**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

<sup>9</sup> 'Punished in elections' in the sense of 'getting fewer votes than in the previous election'  
<sup>10</sup> 'Punished in elections' in the sense of 'getting fewer votes than in the previous election'

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).

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

**Question item wording – transp1.1. - Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...

		Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>11</sup>											Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88			
<b>E14</b>	...that the government explains its decisions to voters?															

**Question item wording – transp1.1. - Evaluation**

**(STILL CARD 38)** And using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

		Does not apply at all											Applies completely		(Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88			
<b>E28</b>	The government in [country] explains its decisions to voters.															

**Question item wording – transp1.2. - Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...

		Not at all important for democracy in general											Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88			
<b>E6</b>	...that the media provide citizens with reliable <sup>12</sup>															

<sup>11</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard

<sup>12</sup> 'reliable' in the sense of 'accurate'

information to  
judge<sup>13</sup> the  
government?

**Question item wording – transp1.2. - Evaluation**

**STILL CARD 38)** Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

		Does not apply at all										Applies (Don't completely know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E22</b>	The media in [country] provide citizens with reliable <sup>14</sup> information to judge <sup>15</sup> the government.												

<sup>13</sup> 'judge' in the sense of 'to assess' or 'evaluate' any aspect of the government

<sup>14</sup> 'reliable' in the sense of 'accurate'

<sup>15</sup> 'judge' in the sense of 'assess' or 'evaluate' any aspect of governments

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: PARTICIPATION (particip)

### Complex Concept Description

Participation refers to the existing possibilities of any citizen/resident to effectively influence the government or the policy making. We divide it here into two sub concepts: the opportunities of effective participation, that is, who can effectively participate (particip1), and the different forms of participation (particip2).

### 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.

## SUB CONCEPT NAME: OPPORTUNITIES OF EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

### 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 sub 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.

### Question item wording – Meaning

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...

		Not at all important for democracy in general <sup>16</sup>										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E9</b>	...that immigrants <sup>17</sup> only get the right to vote in national elections <sup>18</sup> once they become citizens?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>There is no corresponding evaluation item for this sub-concept.</b>														

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: FORMS OF PARTICIPATION**

**Sub-Concept Description**

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, only the other types of participation are included as sub concepts of this concept.

particip2.1. Referenda: use of referenda/ public consultations to include all citizens significantly affected by a policy question at local or national levels (Held 2006: 250). An item is used to measure this sub concept.

particip2.2. Deliberation: 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).

**Question item wording – Meaning - particip2.1. Referenda**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E8</b>	...that citizens have the final say on the	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

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

<sup>17</sup> 'immigrants' in the sense of 'people who come to live in one country from another country'

<sup>18</sup> 'national elections' refers to national elections for the country's primary legislative assembly. Under no circumstances should the actual name of a national parliament be included in this question



most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums?

**Question item wording – Evaluation - particip2.1. Referenda**

**(STILL CARD 38)** Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

		Does not apply at all										Applies (Don't completely know)	
<b>E24</b>	Citizens in [country] have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums.	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

**Question item wording – Meaning - particip2.2. Deliberation**

**CARD 37** Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general (Don't know)	
<b>E2</b>	...that voters discuss politics with people they know before deciding how to vote?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

**Question item wording – Evaluation - particip2.2. Deliberation**

**CARD 38** 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.**

		Does not apply at all										Applies (Don't completely know)	
<b>E18</b>	Voters in [country] discuss politics with people they know before deciding how to vote.	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: COMPETITION (compet)

### Complex Concept Description

Free and fair elections are the key institution in a democracy. However, some characteristics have to be fulfilled if elections are to be competitive (Bartolini 1999). We distinguish between the following sub concepts:

compet1.1. Free and fair elections

compet1.2. Differentiated offer (decidability)

compet1.3. Viable opposition (vulnerability)

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). We originally tried to operationalize all four of them, but ended up operationalising two.

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.

Vulnerability ('viable opposition') refers to the possibility of challengers to unseat the incumbents: The translation of political preferences into seats can only reflect the preferences of the citizens, if incumbents are vulnerable and not protected by gerrymandering, the asymmetrical allocation of campaign funds, or traditional loyalty of voters, and if the voters are to some extent available, i.e. open to the different options offered by the parties.

### Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts

A positive relationship is expected between all these elements and vertical accountability.

## SUB CONCEPT NAME: ELECTIONS FREE AND FAIR

### Sub-Concept Description

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 sub concepts

All sub concepts of competition are expected to be positively related. Reflective items; the three items are expected to be part of a latent concept of competition.

### Question item wording - Meaning

**CARD 37** Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10			88
<b>E1<sup>19</sup></b>	...that national elections <sup>20</sup> are free and fair <sup>21</sup> ?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10			88
<b>Question item wording – Evaluation</b>															
<b>CARD 38</b> 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. <b>READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.</b>															
		Does not apply at all										Applies completely		(Don't know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10			88
<b>E17</b>	National elections <sup>22</sup> in [country] are free and fair <sup>23</sup> .	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10			88

<sup>19</sup> For items E1 – E16 and items E31, E32, E34, E36, E37, E39, E41, E42 and E44, countries should ensure that their translation does not make reference to country-specific terms.

<sup>20</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>21</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.

<sup>22</sup> 'National elections' refers to national elections for the country's primary legislative assembly

<sup>23</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.

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: DIFFERENTIATED OFFER**

**Sub-Concept Description**

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).

**Question item wording - Meaning**

**CARD 37** Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		<b>Not at all important for democracy in general<sup>24</sup></b>											<b>Extremely<sup>25</sup> important for democracy in general (Don't know)</b>	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E3</b>	...that different political parties <sup>26</sup> offer clear alternatives to one another?													

**Question item wording: Evaluation**

**CARD 38** 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.**

		<b>Does not apply at all</b>											<b>Applies completely (Don't know)</b>	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E19</b>	Different political parties <sup>27</sup> in [country] offer clear alternatives to one another.													

<sup>24</sup> The full scale and the end labels MUST appear on the showcard

<sup>25</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 E.

<sup>26</sup> Countries should refer to 'candidates' instead of or in addition to 'political parties' if this is more appropriate

<sup>27</sup> Countries should refer to 'candidates' instead of or in addition to 'political parties' if this is more appropriate

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: VIABLE OPPOSITION**

**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 (see above: this is an attempt to measure perceived 'vulnerability of incumbents').

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**CARD 37** Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		<b>Not at all important for democracy in general</b>										<b>Extremely important for democracy in general (Don't know)</b>	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E4</b>	...that opposition parties <sup>28</sup> are free to <sup>29</sup> criticise <sup>30</sup> the government?												

**Question item wording – Evaluation**

**CARD 38** 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.**

		<b>Does not apply at all</b>										<b>Applies completely (Don't know)</b>	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E20</b>	Opposition parties <sup>31</sup> in [country] are free to <sup>32</sup> criticise <sup>33</sup> the government <sup>34</sup> .												

<sup>28</sup> 'opposition parties' in the sense of 'parties which are in the legislature but are not part of the government'; if a country does not have 'opposition parties' they should refer instead to 'political parties'.

<sup>29</sup> 'are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'

<sup>30</sup> 'criticise' in the sense of 'contest or dispute' rather than 'being able to disrupt'

<sup>31</sup> 'opposition parties' in the sense of 'parties which are in the legislature but are not part of the government'; if a country does not have 'opposition parties' they should refer instead to 'political parties'

<sup>32</sup> 'are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'

<sup>33</sup> 'criticise' in the sense of 'contest or dispute' rather than 'being able to disrupt'

<sup>34</sup> A country specific word for 'the government' may be used here if appropriate. This applies to E20, E21, E27, E28, E29, E38, E40, E43 and E45.

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: REPRESENTATION (reprst)

### Complex Concept Description

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. There is also likely to be a positive relationship between representation and responsiveness: the more the government is responsive to the demands of the people, the better the citizens are represented.

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: SUBJECTS OF REPRESENTATION**

**Sub-Concept Description**

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 sub concepts**

There should be a relationship between subjects of representation and effective forms of participation. Respondents who prefer more inclusive forms of participation should also tend to be more in favour of an inclusive representation.

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E7</b>	...that the rights of minority groups are protected?													

**Question item wording – Evaluation**

**(STILL CARD 38)** Using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

		Does not apply at all										Applies (Don't completely know)	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E23</b>	The rights of minority groups in [country] are protected.												

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: TYPE OF GOVERNMENTAL COALITION**

**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.

**Question item wording – Meaning AND Evaluation**

**ASK ALL**

**E41 CARD 45** The government in some countries is formed by<sup>35</sup> 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?

**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’.**

A single party forms the government	1	<b>ASK E42</b>
Two or more parties in coalition form the government	2	<b>GO TO E44</b>
(It depends on the circumstances)	5	<b>GO TO E45</b>
(Don't know)	8	

**ASK IF CODE 1 AT E41**

**E42 CARD 46** How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government is formed by a single party? Please use this card.

**Not at all  
important for  
democracy in  
general**

**Extremely  
important for  
democracy in  
general**

**(Don't  
Know)**

00    01    02    03    04    05    06    07    08    09    10    88

<sup>35</sup> 'formed by' in the sense of 'made up of'



**E43 CARD 47 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?

<b>Never</b>											<b>Always</b>	<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10		88

**GO TO END TIME SECTION E**

**ASK IF CODE 2 AT E41**

**E44 CARD 46** How important do you think it is for democracy in general that the government is formed by two or more parties in coalition? Please use this card.

<b>Not at all important for democracy in general</b>											<b>Extremely important for democracy in general</b>	<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10		88

**ASK IF CODE 2, 5 OR 8 AT E41**

**E45 CARD 47 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?

<b>Never</b>											<b>Always</b>	<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10		88

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: RESPONSIVENESS (responsv)

Complex Concept Description
<p>Responsiveness is an extremely important dimension in any democracy. Democratic <i>responsiveness</i> 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 listen 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. However, citizens are not the only stakeholders that governments have to take into account: as representatives of the national populations, the mainstream parties, i.e. the parties who routinely govern, are expected to be responsive and accountable to their voters; as responsible governments, they are expected to take into account an increasing number of principals constituted by the many veto players who now surround government in its dispersed multi-level institutional setting (Mair 2009): the central banks and other independent regulatory agencies, the courts, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the WTO, the UN and its various offshoots and so on. The concept of responsiveness is therefore divided into two sub concepts: responsiveness to the citizens (responsv1) and responsiveness to other stakeholders (responsv2).</p>
Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts
<p>A positive relationship is expected between responsiveness and representation (representation is better if responsiveness is better), and between responsiveness and vertical accountability (responsiveness is better if vertical accountability is better).</p>

## SUB CONCEPT NAME: RESPONSIVENESS TO THE CITIZENS

Sub-Concept Description
<p>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 <i>responsiveness</i> 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 <i>implementation</i> 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).</p>
Expected relationship with other sub concepts
<p>A positive relationship is expected between responsiveness to the citizens and retrospective accountability.</p>
Question item wording – Meaning AND Evaluation
<p><b>ASK ALL</b>  <b>E36 CARD 42</b> Sometimes the government disagrees with what most people think is best for the country. Which <u>one</u> of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy <u>in general</u>?</p>

**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'.**

The government should <u>change</u> its planned policies in response to what most people think	1	<b>ASK E37</b>
The government should <u>stick to</u> <sup>36</sup> its planned policies regardless of what most people think	2	<b>GO TO E39</b>
(It depends on the circumstances)	5	<b>GO TO E38</b>
(Don't know)	8	

**ASK IF CODE 1 AT E36**

**E37 CARD 43** 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.

<b>Not at all important for democracy in general</b>											<b>Extremely important for democracy in general</b>	<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10		88

**ASK IF CODE 1, 5 OR 8 AT E36**

**E38 CARD 44** 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?

<b>Never</b>											<b>Always</b>	<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10		88

**GO TO E41**

<sup>36</sup> 'stick to' in the sense of 'not change'

**ASK IF CODE 2 AT E36**

**E39 CARD 43** 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.

Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general	(Don't Know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

**E40 CARD 44** 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?

Never										Always	(Don't Know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: RESPONSIVENESS TO OTHER STAKEHOLDERS**

**Sub-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.

**Expected relationship with other sub concepts**

No expectations regarding the relationship between responsiveness to the citizens and responsiveness to other stake holders. A positive relationship is expected between responsiveness to other stake holders and representation of a diversity of interests.

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**(STILL CARD 37)** And how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		<b>Not at all important for democracy in general</b>										<b>Extremely important for democracy in general (Don't know)</b>	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E16</b>	...that politicians take into account the views of other European <sup>37</sup> governments before making decisions?												

**Question item wording – Evaluation**

**(STILL CARD 38)** And to what extent does this statement apply in [country]?

		<b>Does not apply at all</b>										<b>Applies (Don't completely know)</b>	
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88
<b>E30</b>	Politicians in [country] take into account the views of other European <sup>38</sup> governments before making decisions.												

<sup>37</sup> 'European' in the sense of geographically, not only EU countries

<sup>38</sup> 'European' in the sense of geographically, not only EU countries

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: FREEDOM (free)

Complex Concept Description
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). Two items are expected to operationalize the concept of freedom.
Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts
A positive relationship is expected between rule of law and freedom.

## SUB CONCEPT NAME: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

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 sub concepts		
A positive relationship is expected between freedom of expression and freedom of association.		
Question item wording – Meaning AND Evaluation		
<p><b>E31 (CARD 39)</b> There are differing opinions on whether or not everyone should be free to<sup>39</sup> express their political views openly in a democracy, even if they are extreme<sup>40</sup>. Which <u>one</u> of the statements on this card describes what you think is best for democracy <u>in general</u>?</p> <p><b>INTERVIEWER: CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY.</b></p> <p><b>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'.</b></p>		
Everyone should be free to express their political views openly, even if they are extreme	1	<b>ASK E32</b>

<sup>39</sup> 'are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'

<sup>40</sup> 'extreme' in the sense of 'far from moderate'

Those who hold extreme political views should be prevented from expressing them openly	2	<b>GO TO E34</b>
(It depends on the circumstances)	5	<b>GO TO E33</b>
(Don't know)	8	

**ASK IF CODE 1 AT E31**

**E32 CARD 40** 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? Please use this card.

Not at all important for democracy in general											Extremely important for democracy in general	(Don't Know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

**ASK IF CODE 1, 5 OR 8 AT E31**

**E33 CARD 41** Using this card, to what extent do you think everyone in [country] today is free to express their political views openly, even if they are extreme?

Not at all											Completely	(Don't Know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

**GO TO E36**

**ASK IF CODE 2 AT E31**

**E34 CARD 40** How important do you think it is for democracy in general that those who hold extreme political views are prevented from expressing them openly? Please use this card.

Not at all important for democracy in general											Extremely important for democracy in general	(Don't Know)
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

**E35 CARD 41** Using this card, to what extent do you think those who hold extreme political views in [country] today are prevented from expressing them openly?

<b>Not at all</b>										<b>Completely</b>		<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: FREEDOM OF PRESS**

**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 misbehavior, 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 below transp 1.2).

**Question item wording - Meaning**

**ASK ALL**

**CARD 37** Using this card, please tell me how important you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		<b>Not at all important for democracy in general</b>										<b>Extremely important for democracy in general</b>		<b>(Don't know)</b>
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E5</b>	...that the media are free to <sup>41</sup> criticise <sup>42</sup> the government?													

**Question item wording – Evaluation**

**CARD 38** 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.**

<sup>41</sup> 'are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'

<sup>42</sup> 'criticise' in the sense of 'contest' or 'dispute' rather than 'being able to disrupt'



		Does not apply at all										Applies completely		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E21</b>	The media in [country] are free to <sup>43</sup> criticise <sup>44</sup> the government.													

## COMPLEX CONCEPT NAME: EQUALITY (equal)

Complex Concept Description
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 three sub concepts as constituents of equality: political equality; social equality (equal1); and welfare (equal2). We assume that political equality can be measured through 'accessibility and equality of the judicial system', and we drop this concept due to space constraints.
Expected relationship with other complex and simple concepts
A negative relationship is expected between equality and rule of law and between equality and freedom. Previous literature has indeed found that there tend to be different conceptions of democracy, especially in ex-communist countries: the liberal vs. the social conception of democracy (Thomassen 1995; Fuchs 1999; Hoffertbert and Klingemann 2001).

## SUB CONCEPT NAME: SOCIAL EQUALITY

Sub-Concept Description
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 sub concepts
A positive relationship is expected between social equality and welfare.
Question item wording - Meaning
<b>STILL CARD 37</b> And still thinking <u>generally</u> rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy <u>in general</u> ... <b>READ OUT</b> ...

<sup>43</sup> 'are free to' in the sense of 'are allowed to'

<sup>44</sup> 'criticise' in the sense of 'contest or dispute' rather than 'being able to disrupt'

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E15</b>	...that the government takes measures to reduce differences in income levels?													
<b>Question item wording – Evaluation</b>														
<b>(STILL CARD 38)</b> And using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. <b>READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.</b>														
		Does not apply at all										Applies completely		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E29</b>	The government in [country] takes measures to reduce differences in income levels.													

**SUB CONCEPT NAME: WELFARE**

**Sub-Concept Description**

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. On the other hand, ensuring a minimum welfare to the people helps to reduce differences between poor and rich and therefore is a step towards social equality.

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT**...

		Not at all important for democracy in general										Extremely important for democracy in general		(Don't know)
		00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
<b>E13</b>	...that the government protects all citizens against poverty?													

**Question item wording – Evaluation**

**(STILL CARD 38)** And using the same card please tell me to what extent you think each of these statements applies in [country]. **READ OUT EACH STATEMENT AND CODE IN THE GRID.**

		<b>Does not apply at all</b>										<b>Applies (Don't completely know)</b>	
<b>E27</b>	The government in [country] protects all citizens against poverty.	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

**SECTION D: Simple Concepts**

**SIMPLE CONCEPT NAME: HORIZONTAL ACCOUNTABILITY (horacc)**

**Simple 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.

**Question item wording – Meaning**

**STILL CARD 37** And still thinking generally rather than about [country], how important do you think it is for democracy in general...**READ OUT...**

		Not at all important for democracy in general									Extremely important for democracy in general	(Don't know)	
<b>E11</b>	...that the courts are able to stop the government acting beyond its authority?	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88

**There is no corresponding evaluation item for this sub-concept.**

**SIMPLE CONCEPT NAME: SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY (support)**

Simple Concept Description												
<p>This overall assessment of the importance of democracy should positively correlate with all the concepts characterizing specific aspects of the democracy. Also, the evaluation item is expected to positively correlate with the core ESS item measuring overall satisfaction with democracy.</p>												
Question item wording – Meaning												
<b>ASK ALL</b>												
<p><b>B18d CARD 6</b> 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.</p>												
<b>Not at all important</b>										<b>Extremely important</b>		<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	
Question item wording - Evaluation												
<p><b>B18e CARD 7</b> 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.</p>												
<b>Not at all democratic</b>										<b>Completely democratic</b>		<b>(Don't Know)</b>
00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	88	

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