



# **On the substantive theme and questions of CSES Module 1**

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Supporting Election Studies in Africa  
September 27-28, 2010  
La Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra, Ghana



# The roots of CSES

CSES Module 1 (1996-2001)

Normative arguments

Empirical generalizations

## General Theoretical Focus

**„We want to make theoretical and substantive advances in our understanding of how variation in the institutional arrangements that govern the conduct of elections affect the nature and quality of electoral choice in democratic Polities.**


**Through comparative analysis, where citizens are observed in different settings, the impact of institutions can be established.”**

(“Guiding Principles, Final Report of the 1995-96 Planning Committee”)

# Narrowing the focus: The main themes of the CSES Module 1




- 1) The impact of electoral institutions on citizens' political cognition and behavior
- 2) The nature of political and social cleavages and alignments;
- 3) The evaluation of democratic institutions and processes



„This focus makes it clear that we want to shed light on longstanding and important debates about electoral behavior which have never been answered because theoretically informed and truly comparative studies were missing.“

Source: Final Report of the 1995-96 Planning Committee


# 1) The impact of electoral institutions on citizens' political cognition and behavior



parliamentary versus presidential systems of government,

“[...] if accountability makes retrospective sanctions of the executive more available in presidential than in parliamentary systems, then one should find that voters in presidential systems have greater clarity about the performance of the incumbent government and are more willing to rely on retrospective evaluations in their vote choice.”

# 1) The impact of electoral institutions on citizens' political cognition and behavior



## The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws;

“Do high district thresholds not only discourage parties from contesting seats, but do they also discourage voters from casting their ballots for small parties that hover perilously close to the threshold? ”

# 1) The impact of electoral institutions on citizens' political cognition and behavior



## Political parties.

“Do citizens in fact have more trouble assigning blame under a multi-party system than two-party system, making accountability lower? “






## 2. The nature of political and social cleavages and alignments;

“How do institutional structures affect the nature and intensity of social and political cleavages?”

### 3) The evaluation of democratic institutions and processes



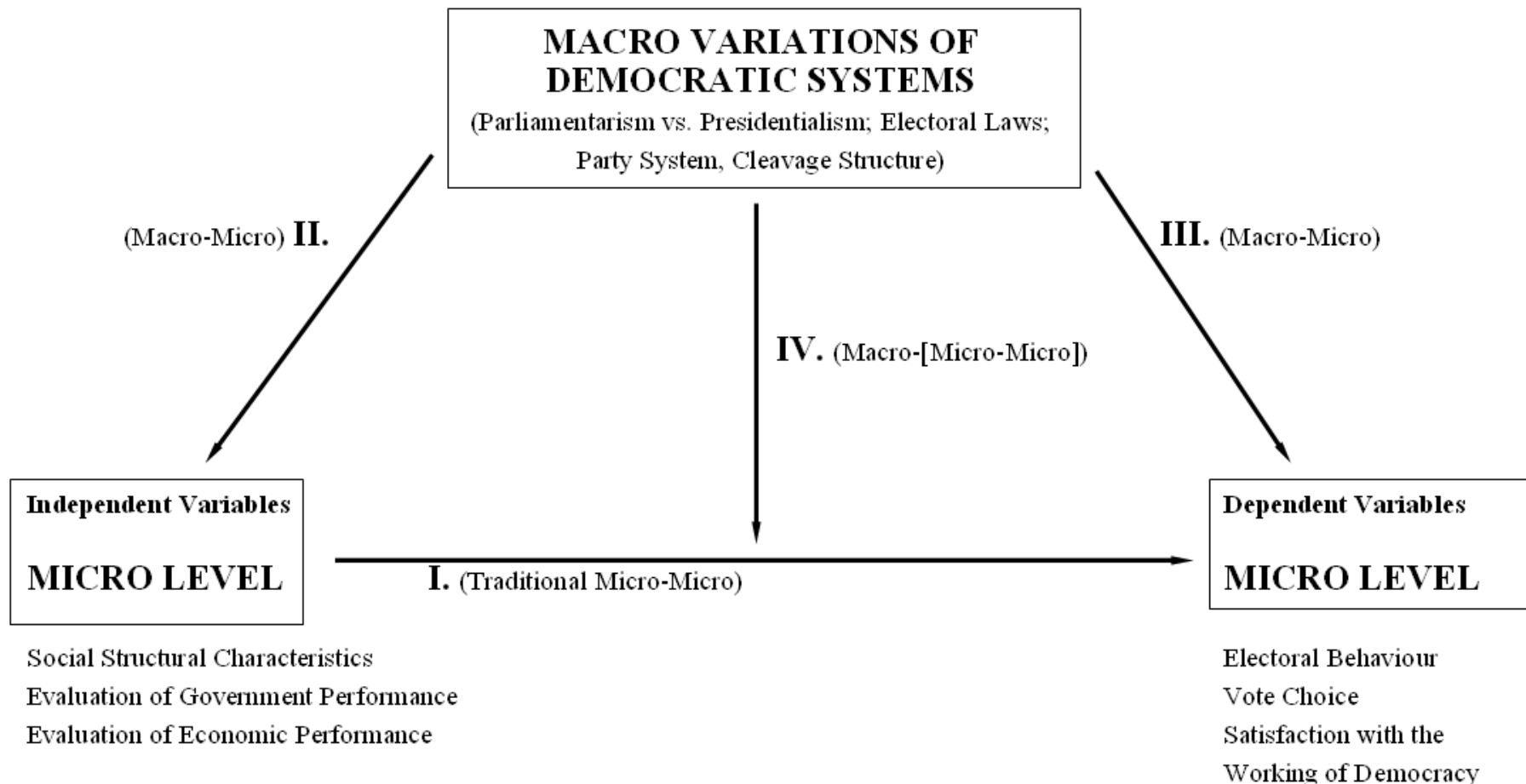
evaluation of the electoral process;

perceptions of the performance of political parties and representatives as institutions that link citizens to government

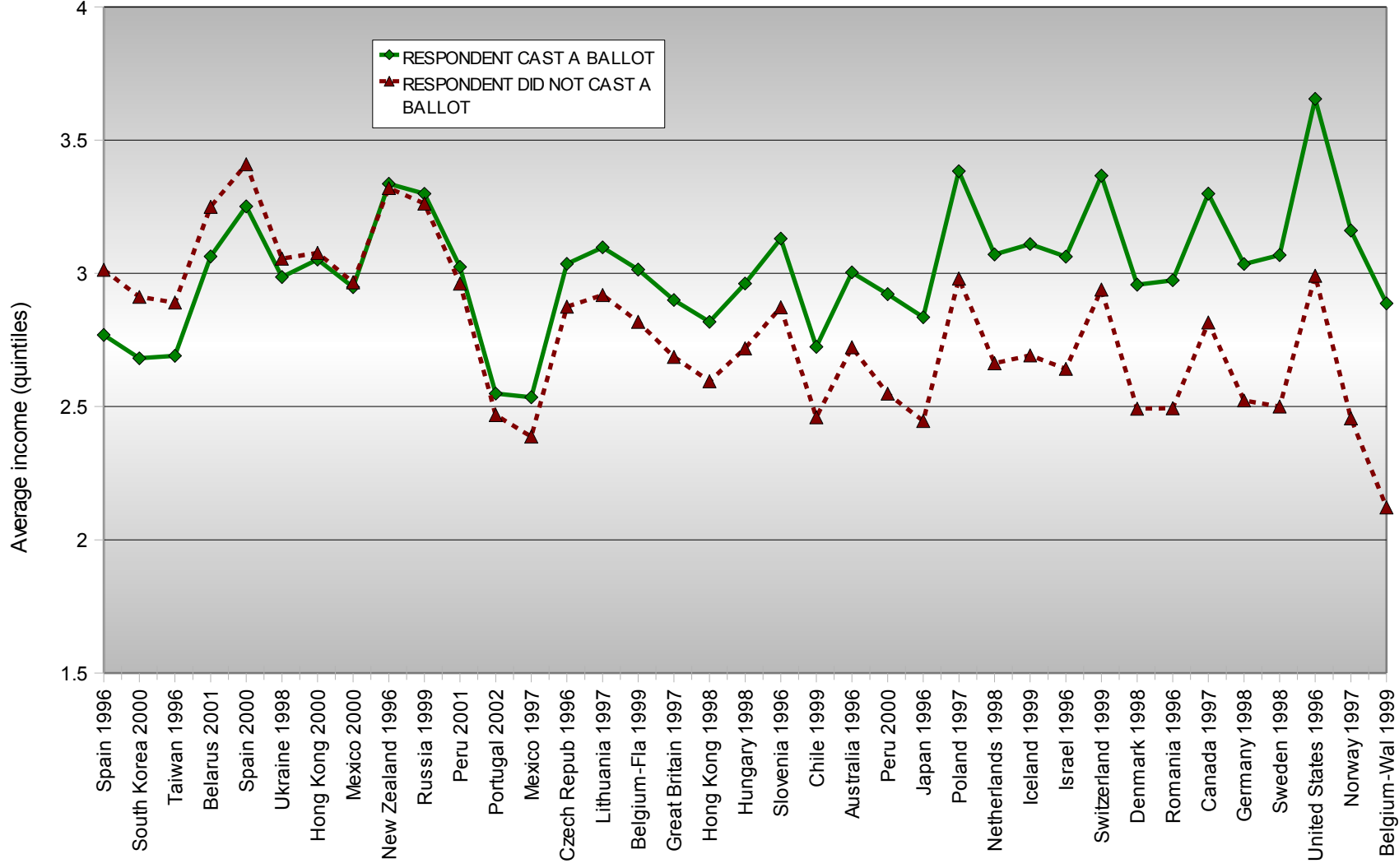
Compare established and 'new' democracies and comparisons across time

How differences in the institutional arrangements that govern the electoral process affect the way that citizens' evaluate democracy?

Does citizen satisfaction with the performance of political parties increase with the number and ideological diversity of the political choices that citizens are offered?



- I. Traditional Analysis of Micro-Micro Interdependencies
- II. Macro-Correlates of Cross Country Variation in the Distribution of Independent Micro Level Variables
- III. Macro-Correlates of Cross Country Variation in the Distribution of Dependent Micro Level Variables
- IV. Macro-Correlates of Cross Country Variation in the Strength of Micro-Micro Interrelationships



# Method



The theoretical problem implies the method - parallel collection of comparative data about:

- system-level characteristics (Macro)

- Survey data about individual attitudes, preferences, political behavior

- Operationalization: Theoretical problems into empirical constructs, measurement, survey design

# System-level or “Macro-level” topics



## Part 1. Data on political parties and party systems

### Information about main parties (A-F)

Year founded

Ideological family (The collaborator's own, expert judgment)

International organization

Left-right position (The collaborator's own, expert judgment)

Election results: Votes and seats

# System-level or “Macro-level” topics



Part 2. Data pertinent to the election at which the module was administered

Turnout

Alliances

The most salient factors/issues

# System-level or “Macro-level” topics



## Part 3. Data on electoral institutions

Election method – Head of State/Government

Electoral structure of the legislature

Voting procedures

- Compulsory voting

- Electoral formula

- Thresholds

Types of electoral alliances



# System-level or “Macro-level” topics



## Part 4. Data on regime type

- a. Powers of the head of state
- b. Powers of the head of government
- c. Dissolution of the legislature

## A5034 Electoral Formula

	A5034_1 ELECTORAL FORMULA-LOWER-1ST SEGMENT	A5034_2 ELECTORAL FORMULA-LOWER- 2ND SEGMENT	A5034_3 ELECTORAL FORMULA-UPPER- 1ST SEGMENT	A5034_4 ELECTORAL FORMULA-UPPER- 2ND SEGMENT
11. PLURALITY - SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICTS	CANADA 1997 GERMANY 1998 GREAT BRITAIN 1997 JAPAN 1996 REP. OF KOREA 2000 MEXICO 1997 MEXICO 2000 NEW ZEALAND 1996 RUSSIA 1999 RUSSIA 2000 THAILAND 2001 UNITED STATES 1996		CZECH REP. 1996 UNITED STATES 1996	
12. PLURALITY - MULTI MEMBER DISTRICTS	TAIWAN 1996		MEXICO 1997 MEXICO 2000 POLAND 1997 THAILAND 2001 TAIWAN 1996	
20. MAJORITY	LITHUANIA 1997 UKRAINE 1998	SLOVENIA 1996		
21. MAJORITY - RUN-OFF	BELARUS 2001 HUNGARY 1998		SWITZERLAND 1999	
22. MAJORITY - ALTERNATIVE	AUSTRALIA 1996		AUSTRALIA 1996	
30. PROPOTIONAL REPRESENTATION	CZECH REP. 1996	GERMANY 1998 REP. OF KOREA 2000 LITHUANIA 1997 MEXICO 1997 MEXICO 2000 THAILAND 2001	ROMANIA 1996	TAIWAN 1996

# District-level data



electoral returns,

turnout,

the number of candidates, lists, seats.

# CSES public opinion survey – the main areas



Voter turnout and vote choice (current and previous election)

Candidate and party evaluations

- PID & sympathy scores

- Candidate recognition and interaction with representatives

Current and retrospective economic evaluations,

Evaluation of the electoral system itself,

Standardized socio-demographic measures  
(including **political information** items!)

# Public opinion questionnaire – example questions

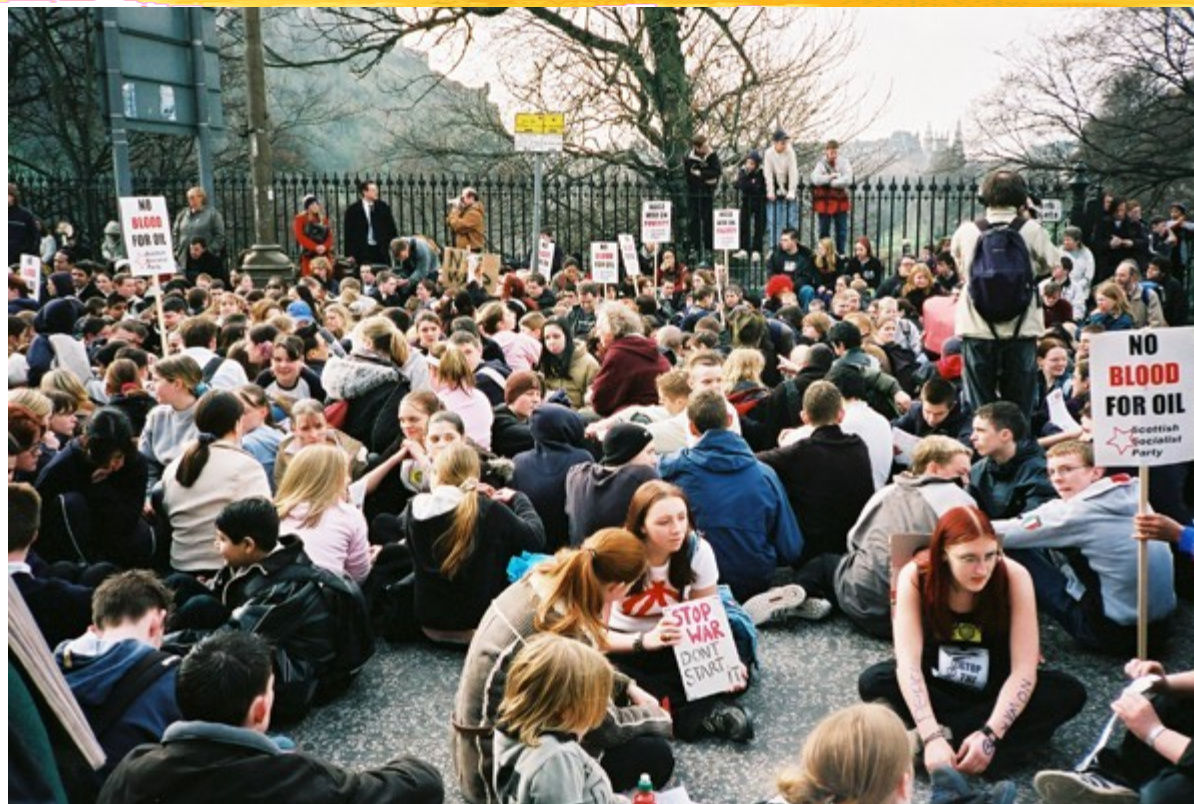


Evaluations of the system responsiveness and of the representatives

Q13. Some people say it makes a difference who is in power. Others say that it doesn't make a difference who is in power. Using the scale on the card (...), where would you place yourself?

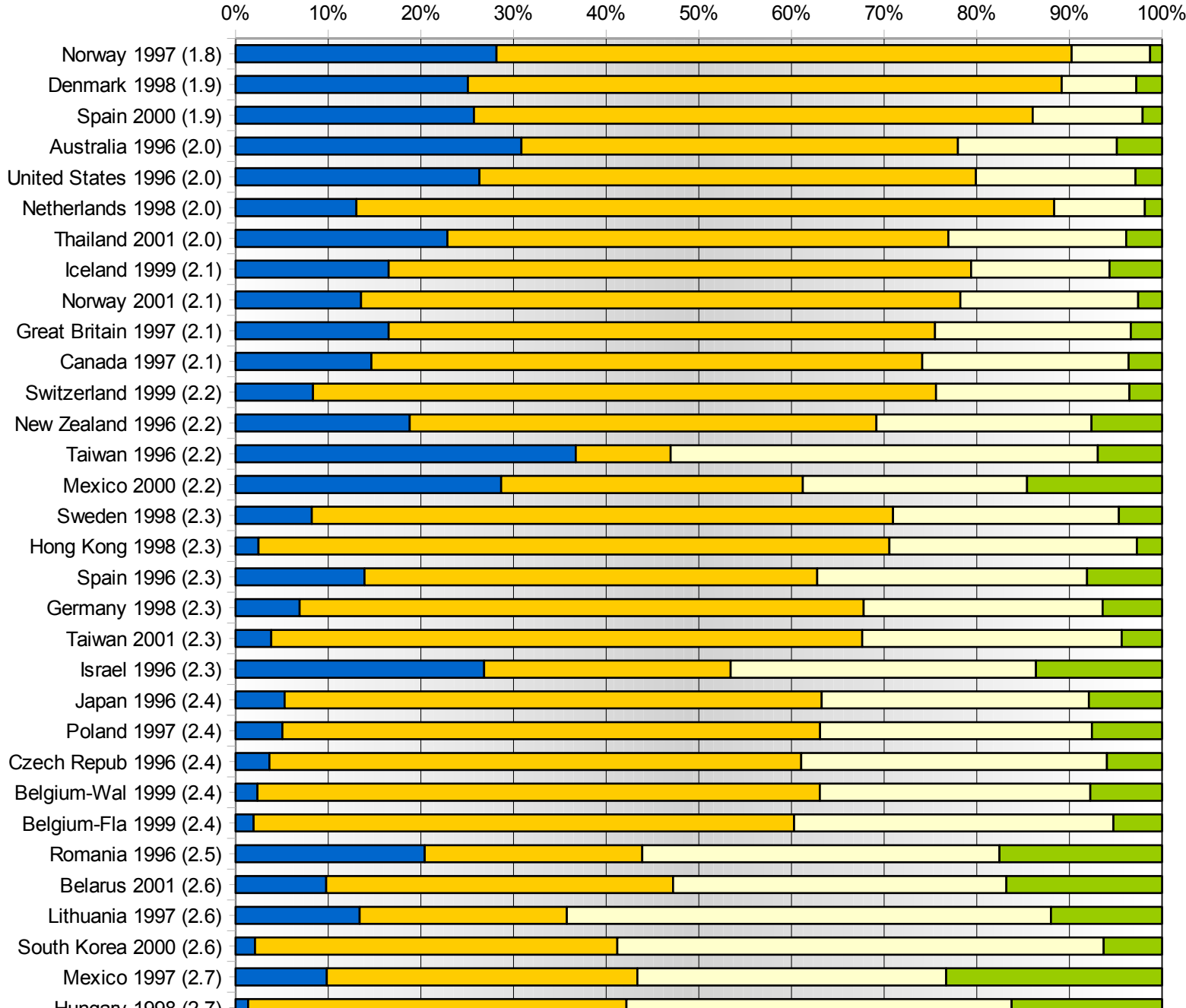
Q11. Some people say that members of [Congress / Parliament] know what ordinary people think. Others say that members of [Congress / Parliament] don't know much about what ordinary people think. Using the scale on the card (...), where would you place yourself?

# Public opinion questionnaire – example questions

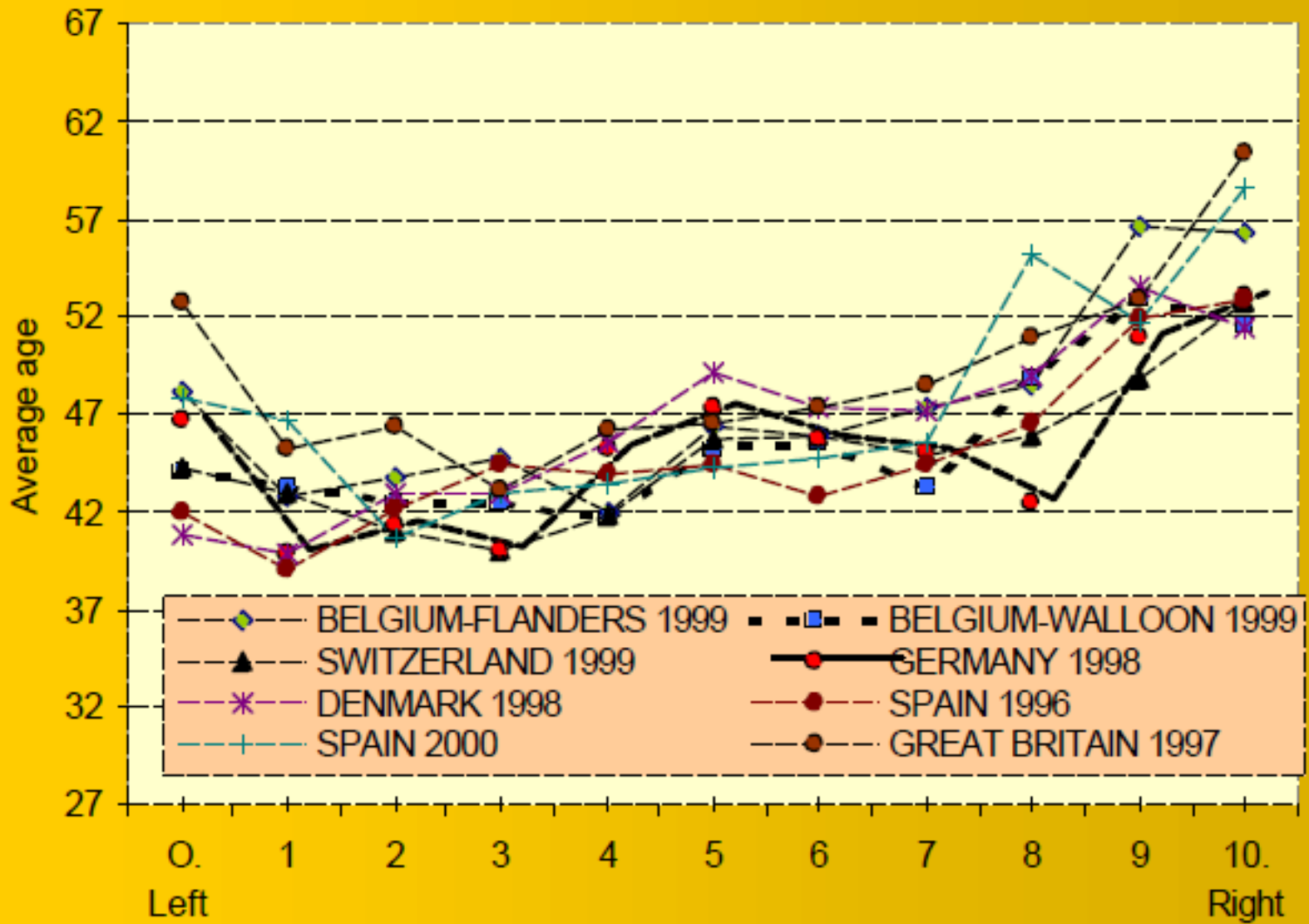


Q1. On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in [country]?

### Respondents' satisfaction with democracy...

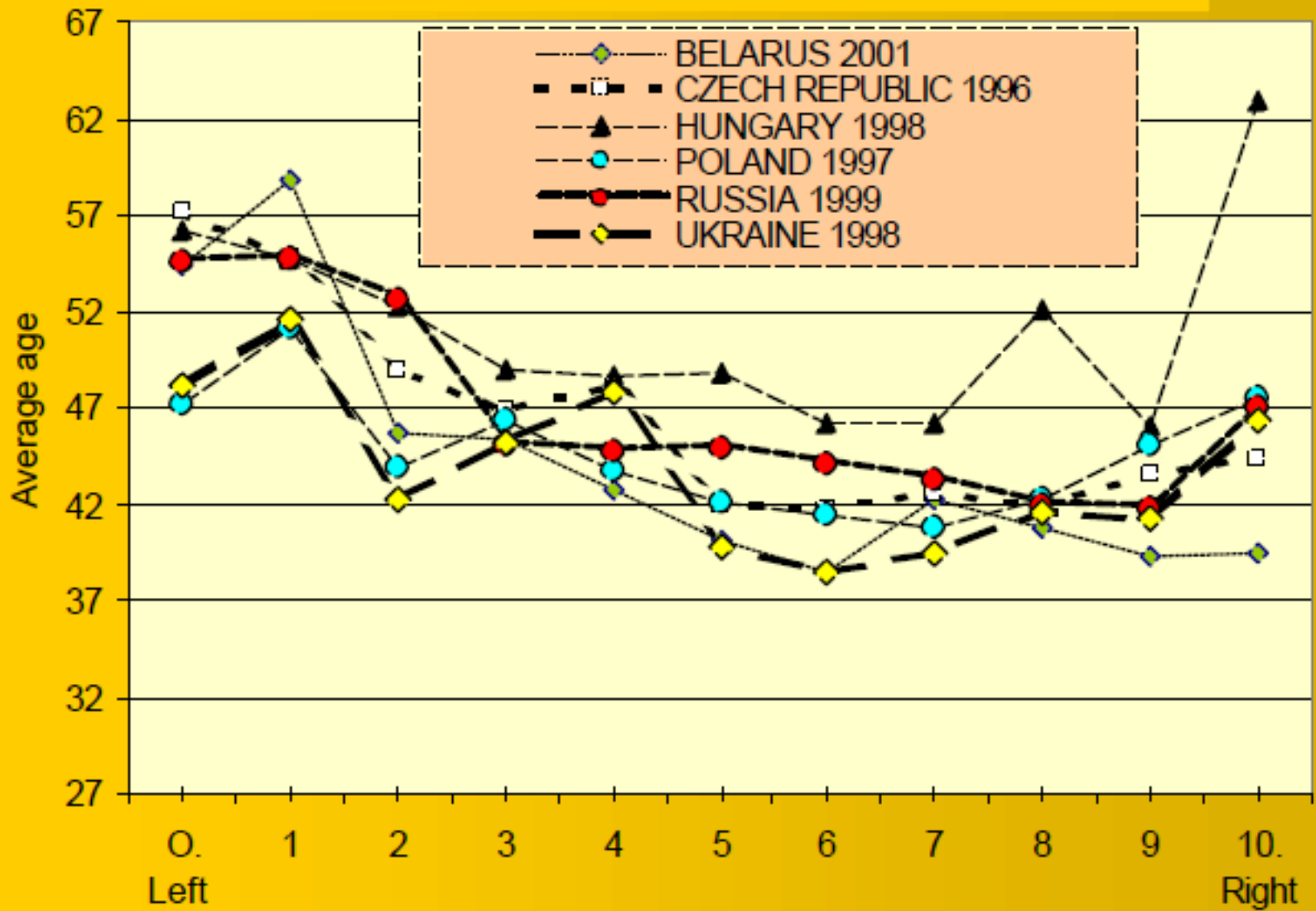


## Left-Right self-placement and Age in some West European Countries





## Left-Right self-placement and Age in some Eastern European Countries





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