Macrodiscontent Across Countries

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Data Availability Statement

Replication data is available on the Harvard Dataverse [link tbd], and the work's complete revision history is available at https://github.com/fsolt/dcpo_discontent.

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Abstract

Public discontent with the political system has become an increasingly salient concern in recent years, with the argument that it undermines democratic stability and effective governance. Nevertheless, the understanding of the nature, trends, and drivers of political discontent remain debated, largely reflecting the constraints from available survey data and items in the construction of measurement. This article takes advantage of state-of-the-art latent-variable modeling to aggregate survey responses and a comprehensive collection of survey data to generate dynamic comparative estimates of public political discontent (PPD) for 136 countries and regions over 56 years (1968–2023). These PPD scores are validated with responses to the individual source-data survey items that were used to generate them as well as the democratic evaluation survey item that was not used in our estimation. Next, a cross-national and longitudinal analysis of PPD in advanced democracies (i.e., OECD countries) highlights that public political discontent has been on a rising trend, rather than merely "trendless fluctuations" as Norris (2011) claimed. Our results reveal that these increased discontents are largely attributable to worsening economic conditions, including low average income, slow growth, and high unemployment rates.

Public discontent with political systems and institutions has become an increasingly salient concern in recent years, particularly as democracies worldwide face mounting challenges to their stability and effectiveness. Widespread political discontent—which undermines public confidence in the political process, erodes the legitimacy of governing institutions, and fuels the rise of populism that threatens liberal democracy (Mudde 2004; Miller 1974; Lipset 1959; Doyle 2011; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2017; Urbinati 2019)——offers a critical lens for understanding and predicting the erosion of democracy and political conflicts. Nevertheless, the nature, extent, and drivers of political discontent remain debated, with some arguing that the level of political discontent is on a clear increasing trend while others claim that political discontent fluctuates without a clear sign of any trend (Jennings et al. 2017; Norris 2011; Foa and Mounk 2016, 2017; Dalton 2004).

This debate is largely attributable to differences in how political discontent is conceptualized and measured. For instance, some scholars define it as dissatisfaction with or a lack of diffuse support for the political system, while others frame it as perceptions of low responsiveness, democratic deficits, or dissatisfaction with the current government (Easton 1975; Muller and Jukam 1983; Norris 2011; Jennings, Stoker, and Twyman 2016). A more pressing issue concerns the incomparability and sparsity of survey data, which have prevented scholars from consistently measuring political discontent across countries and over time. As discussed by Jennings et al. (2017), the fragmented and uneven availability of relevant data has led researchers to rely on different datasets, resulting in conflicting conclusions about the nature, extent, and causes of political discontent.

To address these limitations, this paper introduces a novel dataset on political discontent that relies on a clearer conceptualization and a more rigorous measurement model, combining survey data from a wide range of countries and regions over several decades. Drawing on David Easton's (1965) classic distinction between diffuse and specific support for political systems, we define political discontent as dissatisfaction with or a lack of diffuse support for the political system as a whole, rather than disapproval of specific authorities or the incumbent government. The explicit distinction between diffuse and specific support is highly necessary because they have different levels of variation and different consequences for individuals' political behavior and, in turn, the sustainability of the political system (Citrin 1974; Miller 1974; Craig and Maggiotto 1981; Muller and Jukam 1983). Our conceptualization of political discontent also includes key components of system support, including perceptions of system responsiveness (external efficacy), trust in political institutions and processes, and perceptions of pervasive political corruption, all of which are interrelated and collectively contribute to the broader concept of political discontent.

Moreover, we employ the Dynamic Comparative Public Opinion (DCPO) model to estimate country-year panels of public political discontent around the globe (Solt 2020b) to overcome issues of incomparability and sparseness that often plague survey-based measures of political discontent in previous studies. This approach allows us to combine information from a multitude of survey questions while accounting for differences in question contents and response options. As a result, we generate estimates of the macro-level public's political discontent across 136 countries and regions over 56 years (1968–

2023), which we call Public Political Discontent (PPD) scores. Our PPD scores constitute the largest and most temporally and spatially comprehensive dataset on the topic to date.

We further assess the convergent and construct validity of the PPD scores by examining their strong empirical correlations with three types of indicators: (1) the original individual-level survey items used to construct the scores, (2) independent survey items not included in the source data (e.g., evaluations of democratic performance), and (3) conceptually related variables, such as assessments of recent government policy performance. Across all tests, the PPD scores demonstrate robust validity, confirming their reliability for empirical analysis.

Most importantly, with these PPD scores, we can compare trends and determinants of political discontent across countries and regions over decades in a consistent manner. Specifically, in this paper, we focus on developed OECD countries in order to better engage with the existing literature. First, our findings clearly indicate that political discontent has followed an upward trend over time in developed OECD countries, supporting Foa and Mounk's (2016, 2017) thesis of democratic deconsolidation in developed democracies. Second, among the key factors theorized to influence political discontent, including elections, political institutions, and economic conditions, we find that economic factors emerge as the strongest drivers of discontent, with higher levels of economic development and growth associated with lower discontent and higher unemployment having the opposite effect. In addition, increases in income inequality over time reduce discontent, in accordance with the predictions of system justification and relative power theories. Election years are associated with lower levels of discontent, suggesting that elections can provide an outlet for expressing dissatisfaction and seeking redress, though this effect is weaker than expected. Lastly, power-sharing institutions, such as federalism or parliamentarism, appear to have little impact on discontent, while countries with higher disproportionality in their elections do exhibit somewhat more discontent. These results suggest a greater importance of economic conditions in affecting discontent relative to institutional factors.

By offering a conceptually consistent framework and a comprehensive dataset with strong temporal and spatial comparability, this study contributes to ongoing debates on the trajectories and determinants of political discontent, which have been hindered by inconsistent conceptualization and fragmented survey data. Beyond this contribution, our

focus on political discontent speaks directly to recent debates on democratic backsliding and regime stability. To understand cross-national and temporal variations in regime stability, scholars require more than the rich array of political attitude indicators developed in the literature—such as perceptions of incumbent performance, electoral integrity, or external efficacy. Equally important is attention to a general disposition toward the political system that emerges from individuals' attitudes toward its various components, which we conceptualize as macro level political discontent. Accordingly, the concept of political discontent and the Public Political Discontent dataset developed in this article provide a more encompassing analytical lens for future research on the role of mass attitudes in democratic backsliding and regime stability.

In the following section, we first review key scholarly debates surrounding the concept of political discontent and clarify our own conceptualization. We then outline our measurement strategy, explaining how it addresses incomparability across different survey datasets, and introduce the PPD scores together with evidence from validity tests. Next, we examine trends in political discontent and its determinants in advanced OECD countries, where prior findings remain mixed, to demonstrate the usefulness of our newly constructed data. In conclusion, we discuss the broader implications of our findings and the directions for future research enabled by the PPD data.

Conceptualizing Political Discontent

Public political discontent is widely recognized as a critical factor affecting the stability of political systems. Lipset (1959) argues that public belief in a system's legitimacy is essential for democratic survival. Similarly, Miller (1974) maintains that a democratic political system cannot endure without majority support, as increasing political discontent among the public raises the potential for revolutionary changes to their political and social system. Widespread political discontent also complicates effective governance, which in turn reinforces dissatisfaction and ultimately erodes public perceptions of the system's legitimacy over time (Hetherington 1998). These concerns have driven extensive research on its contents, sources, and implications. However, scholars have conceptualized political discontent in various ways, ranging from a lack of diffuse support for the political system to perceptions of low responsiveness, democratic deficits, political distrust, and

dissatisfaction with the incumbent government (Easton 1975; Muller and Jukam 1983; Norris 2011; Jennings, Stoker, and Twyman 2016). These differences in conceptualization reflect varying analytical purposes, theoretical motivations, and the available opinion survey items at the time.

This paper conceptualizes political discontent as the lack of diffuse support for a political system, drawing primarily on Easton's (1965) influential distinction between diffuse and specific political support. While specific support refers to satisfaction with incumbent performance, diffuse support concerns broader system legitimacy and serves as a 'reservoir of favorable attitudes or goodwill' toward a political system. The theoretical importance of this distinction is well noted in the literature. Scholars have found that low satisfaction with, or trust in, the incumbent government often fluctuates without a systematic pattern and does not necessarily translate into rejection of the regime itself (Citrin 1974; Miller 1974; Craig and Maggiotto 1981). Consequently, specific support is considered variable and less threatening to regime stability, as democratic institutions allow citizens to express dissatisfaction through elections and peacefully change political leadership (Muller and Jukam 1983). On the other hand, the erosion of diffuse support provides the public with a normative incentive to seek radical change to the political system as a whole. In this regard, Jennings et al. (2017) emphasizes that defining discontent in terms of diffuse support enables researchers to distinguish between temporary dissatisfaction and a sustained erosion of system-level legitimacy that could pose a systemic threat.

Our conceptualization of political discontent therefore encompasses several subcomponents related to systematic support. Discontent reflects a lack of external efficacy, that is, a low evaluation of the responsiveness of political authorities in general; a poor evaluation of the trustworthiness and integrity of political authorities in general; and perceptions of the extent of corruption among politicians and public officials (Craig and Maggiotto 1981; Muller and Jukam 1983; Park 2011). External efficacy, as one of key drivers of political discontent, is the belief that the system is unresponsive to the public and prioritizes its own or special interests, which increases the likelihood of the public participating in or endorsing regime-challenging activities that threaten the social and political order (Craig 1980; Jennings, Stoker, and Twyman 2016). Recent studies of populism also highlight that low external efficacy is a main source of anti-system sentiments

among populist supporters (Mudde 2004). Political trust, often used as one of measures of political discontent, is conceptually associated with external efficacy: while external efficacy concerns whether the political system functions according to public demands, political trust concerns whether political authorities act in the public interest regardless of public inputs (Craig 1979). Yet, implications of political trust can vary depending on the specific referents of trust (Van der Meer and Hakhverdian 2017). For instance, trust in political institutions as a system, such as the party system, politicians, or parliament in general, differs from trust in the incumbent government, as the latter reflects specific support, fluctuates with political cycles, and does not threaten systemic stability (Norris 1999; Dalton 2004). Accordingly, our conceptualization incorporates trust in political institutions as a system but not trust in incumbent officeholders.

Previous scholarship also emphasizes the perception of pervasive political corruption as an important aspect of political discontent across political regimes and regions (Anderson and Tverdova 2003; Elia and Schwindt-Bayer 2022; Ecker, Glinitzer, and Meyer 2016; Carothers 2023), as people perceive political authorities as working for their own interests over the public interest (Park 2011; Busby et al. 2018; Hawkins, Kaltwasser, and Andreadis 2020). Resentment toward political corruption fosters broader skepticism toward political institutions and the system, shaping electoral behavior including voting for populist elites who weaponize anti-corruption and anti-establishment narratives (Breitenstein and Hernández 2024; Daniele, Aassve, and Le Moglie 2023; Kolberg-Shah and Shin 2024). Public anger over political corruption has often sparked public protests in authoritarian settings that led to regime collapse (Carothers 2023).

What is *not* considered a component of political discontent in our conceptualization merits further discussion. As noted above, we exclude political trust in the incumbent government or in apolitical institutions, as trust in the government is a type of specific support that fluctuates over time and its lack does not pose a serious threat to the political system (Norris 1999). Additionally, in contrast to previous studies that use support for democracy in the abstract as a predictor for the survival of democratic regimes (Claassen 2020a), we do not consider it to be a component of political discontent. This is because support for democracy in the abstract is too prevalent in every country to be a meaningful or analytically useful measure of the extent of political discontent (Dalton, Sin, and Jou 2007; Inglehart 2003). Its near ubiquity, further, means it relates poorly with measures

of support for actual components of liberal democracy: contestation and participation; civil liberties; and institutional constraints on executive power (Hu et al. 2025; see also Tai, Hu, and Solt 2024). Lastly, we exclude satisfaction with democracy in the abstract because the literature shows that this measure functions more as a type of specific support. People tend to have much higher democratic satisfaction when their preferred politicians or parties win elections, while electoral losers tend to have lower democratic satisfaction (Van Egmond, Johns, and Brandenburg 2020; Singh and Mayne 2023).

This conceptualization of political discontent as a lack of diffuse support for the political system carries important theoretical and empirical implications. By encompassing multiple dimensions of system-level evaluations, including external political efficacy, trust in core political institutions, and perceptions of corruption, this approach underscores the theoretical value of political discontent as a comprehensive indicator of the extent to which citizens perceive the political system as illegitimate, untrustworthy, or unresponsive. This breadth also better situates political discontent within currently growing concerns about declining public confidence in political system, especially in democracies (Norris 2011; Foa and Mounk 2016, 2017; Jennings et al. 2017). Lastly, this conceptualization enables researchers to integrate diverse previous approaches to political discontent, which rely on different measures and often yield conflicting results, within a common and comprehensive framework.

Estimating Public Political Discontent

Questions tapping political discontent as conceived above are common in national and cross-national surveys conducted over the past four decades, but no single question is asked in all countries and years. The result is that the relevant data are incomparable, in that they are generated by many different questions, and sparse, in that for many countries and years no question on political discontent is asked at all. We collected 388 different survey datasets with relevant questions, including a total of 111 distinct survey items that were asked in no fewer than five country-years in countries surveyed at least three times (see online Appendix Section A1). These survey items were asked in 136 different countries over the 56 years from 1968 to 2023 comprising 8,957 country-year-item observations altogether.
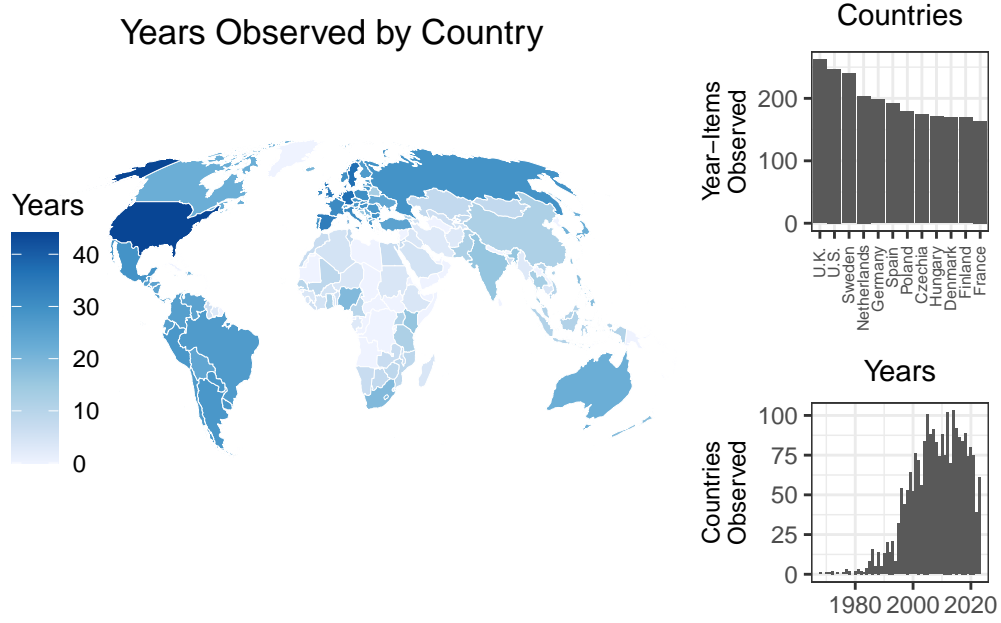
Figure 1: Countries and Years with the Most Observations in the Source Data

To make use of the large and heterogeneous set of survey items, we estimate a latent variable model of the aggregated survey responses using the Dynamic Comparative Public Opinion (DCPO) latent variable model. The DCPO model is a state-of-the-art population-level two-parameter ordinal logistic item response theory model with country-specific item-bias terms.[1]

The DCPO model and similar latent modeling approaches have been used in recent years to model public opinion across countries and over time on a variety of topics, such as policy ideology (Caughey, O'Grady, and Warshaw 2019; Berwick and Caughey 2025), gender egalitarianism (Woo, Allemang, and Solt 2023), political interest (Hu and Solt 2025), and support for gay rights (Woo et al. 2025). Conceptually, this approach is analogous to educational testing, where students may take different test forms containing different items, yet their abilities are placed on a common scale through the estimation of item parameters (De Boeck and Wilson 2004; Fox 2010).

The core logic of a latent variable model is that the probability an individual responds affirmatively to a survey question depends on the respondent's position on an underlying latent trait—in this case, political discontent. In the DCPO model, specifically, this relationship is characterized by two groups of parameters that characterize each question, *difficulty* and *dispersion*, along with a third, *country-specific bias parameters*. These

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[1]A comprehensive description of the DCPO model is presented in Solt (2020b) and Appendix Section A2.

parameters are explicitly estimated to address the problem of incomparability across survey questions, survey projects, and survey rounds.

In other words, rather than assuming that different survey items are directly comparable, DCPO treats each question—regardless of its wording or source—as its own imperfect indicator of the latent trait and explicitly estimates, using these three sets of parameters, how responses to that question relate to the underlying quantity of interest. In this way, differences across survey instruments are modeled rather than ignored. Each survey question is therefore treated as a distinct measurement instrument, and the model estimates the characteristics of each instrument so that the latent trait can be recovered despite differences among them.

First, the *difficulty* parameter accounts for the level of the latent trait (i.e., how much political discontent) needed for a respondent to endorse a particular response option of a survey question. That each response evinces varying level of political discontent is most easily seen with regard to the ordinal responses to the same survey item. For example, responding "strongly agree" to the statement "people like me don't have any say about what the government does" exhibits more political discontent than choosing "agree," which is a more discontented response than "disagree," which in turn is more discontented than "strongly disagree." Moreover, and more importantly, the difficulty parameter varies across different survey items to reflect that a respondent may need to feel greater discontent to endorse a specific response option for one question compared to endorsing the same level of response for another question. For example, strongly agreeing that "there is widespread corruption among those who govern the country" likely expresses even more political discontent than strongly agreeing that "people like me can probably vote, but we cannot do anything else to influence politics."

Second, the *dispersion* parameter accounts for the noisiness (measurement error) in a survey question with respect to the latent trait. A survey question may confuse some respondents or may not align cleanly with the concept of political discontent, reflecting a larger dispersion. If such a question is nevertheless used as an indicator of political discontent, it will exhibit high dispersion. On the contrary, the lower the dispersion, the better that changes in responses to the question map onto changes in political discontent.

Third, to allow for the possibility that translation issues or cultural differences result in the same question being interpreted differently in different countries, the model estimates

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country-specific bias parameters that shift the difficulty of all responses for a particular question in a particular country. Together, the model's difficulty, dispersion, and country-specific bias parameters work to generate comparable estimates of the latent variable of political discontent from the available but incomparable source data.

To address sparsity in the source data—unpolled or thinly surveyed years in each country and region—DCPO uses simple local-level dynamic linear models, i.e., random-walk priors, for each country and region. That is, within each country and region, each year's value of public political discontent is modeled as the previous year's estimate plus a random shock. These dynamic models smooth the estimates of public political discontent over time and allow estimation even in years for which little or no survey data is available, albeit at the expense of greater measurement uncertainty.

As a result, we generated estimates of the public's political discontent in all 3,362 country-years spanned by the source data, which we call Public Political Discontent (PPD) scores. The PPD scores cover 136 countries and regions worldwide over a period of 56 years (1968–2023). The dataset is publicly available and open to public use.

## Validating Public Political Discontent

That we can *generate* estimates of political discontent does not automatically mean that they are suitable for analysis. Validation tests of this novel latent variable, as with any new measure, are therefore essential. To assess the validity of the Public Political Discontent (PPD) scores, we conduct three complementary validation exercises: internal convergent validation, external convergent validation, and construct validation. Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4 present the results of these analyses, which together provide evidence of the validity of the PPD measure.

Convergent validation refers to tests of whether a measure is empirically associated with alternative indicators of the same concept (Adcock and Collier 2001, 540). Here, Figure 2 offers 'internal' convergent validation tests (e.g., Caughey, O'Grady, and Warshaw 2019, 686; Hu and Solt 2025, 4): it compares PPD scores to responses to the individual source-data survey items that were used to generate them. On the left, PPD scores are plotted against the percentage of respondents across all country-years who responded "tend not to trust" rather than "tend to trust" to the Eurobarometer's dichotomous question, "How

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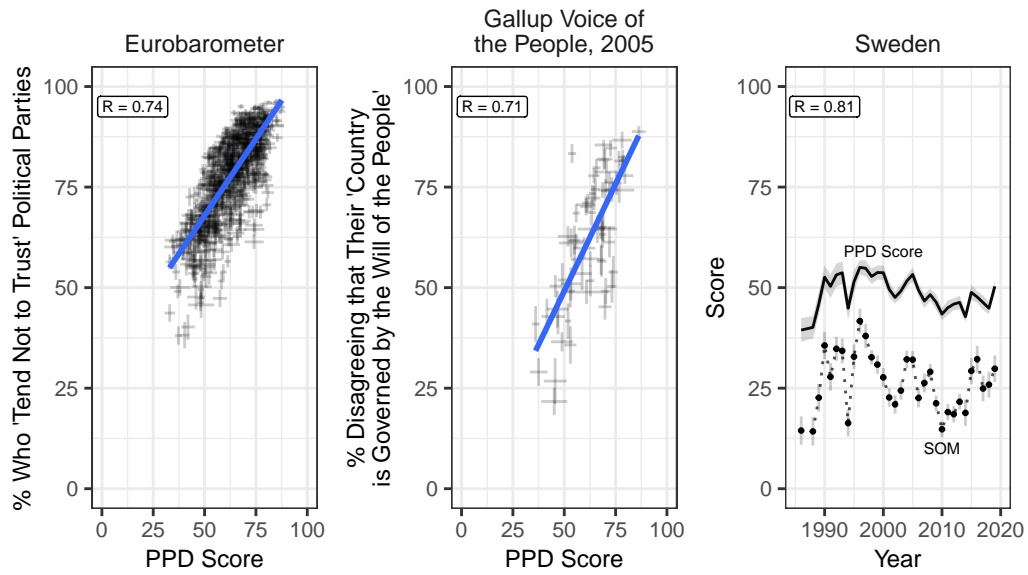
Note: Gray whiskers and shading represent 80% credible intervals.

Figure 2: Internal Convergent Validation: Correlations Between Public Political Discontent and Individual Source-Data Survey Items
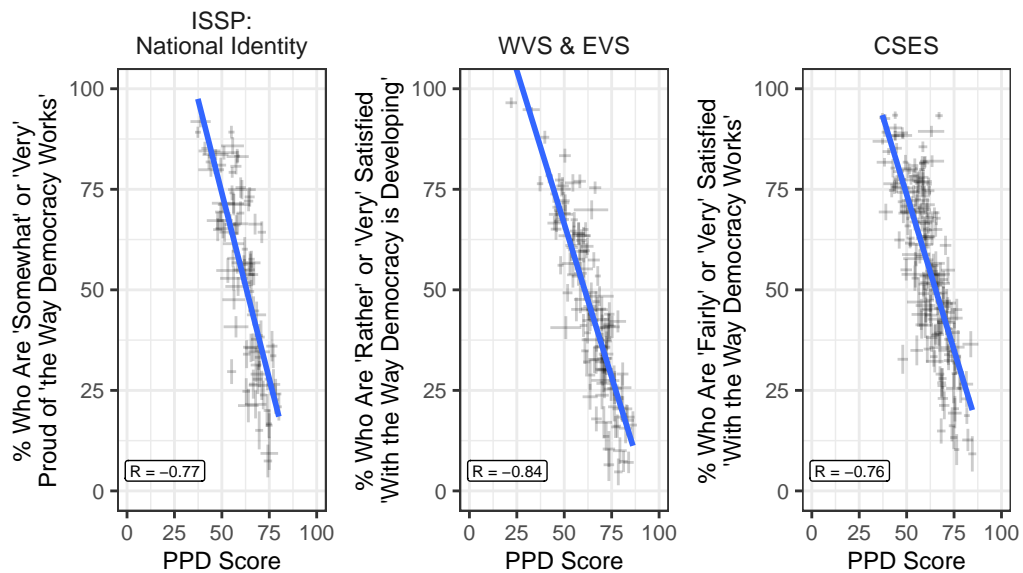
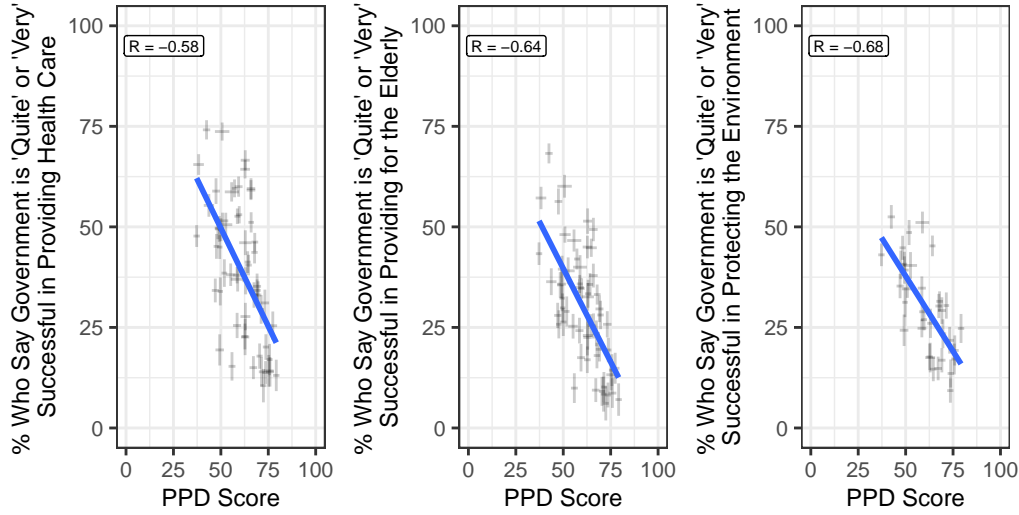Note: Gray whiskers represent 80% credible intervals.

Figure 3: External Convergent Validation: Correlations Between PPD Scores and Evaluations of Democratic Performance

much trust do you have in certain institutions: Political parties?" This is the single most-asked item in the source data. The middle panel compares PPD scores to responses to the question with the most data-rich cross-section, "Would you say your country is governed by the will of the people?" in Gallup's 2005 Voice of the People survey. Finally, the right panel evaluates how well the PPD scores capture change over time by focusing on the item with the largest number of observations for a single country and region in the source data: Sweden's SOM surveys' question, "How much confidence do you have in the way the following institutions and groups do their job: The National Parliament?" In all three cases, the correlations, estimated taking into account the uncertainty in the measures, are strong.

External convergent validation assesses whether a measure is empirically associated with alternative indicators of a closely related concept that are not used in its construction. In Figure 3, we present three external convergent validation tests comparing PPD scores to responses to survey items that were *not* included in the source data used to estimate PPD: items that asked respondents to evaluate "democracy" in their countries and regions. As discussed earlier, we follow Jennings et al. (2017) in considering these questions to tap specific rather than diffuse support—and given our broad geographic scope, we also wish to avoid assuming that respondents necessarily identify the current political system of their country with democracy—and so exclude them from the the latent-variable estimation. Nevertheless, evaluations of democratic performance provide useful alternative indicators of the extent of political discontent and therefore serve as appropriate external benchmarks for validation.

The left panel of Figure 3 shows the correlation between PPD scores and responses from three rounds of the International Social Survey Program's National Identity module, which asked respondents how proud they were of how democracy works in their country. The center panel plots the correlation between PPD scores and respondents' reported satisfaction with "the way democracy is developing" in their countries in the World Values Surveys and European Values Surveys. The right panel draws on data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, showing the correlation between PPD scores and the share of respondents who were at least fairly satisfied "with the way democracy works" in their country. Across countries and years, and for all three of these survey items, our latent-variable measure of political discontent is strongly and negatively corre-

lated with aggregate positive evaluations of a country's democracy. Because these items capture closely related but conceptually distinct evaluations of the political system, they provide strong external benchmarks for assessing whether the PPD measure behaves as theoretically expected.

Note: Gray whiskers represent 80% credible intervals. Data from ISSP Role of Government surveys, 2006 and 2016.

Figure 4: Construct Validation: Correlations Between PPD Scores and Views of Government Success

With the success of these tests of convergent validation, we turn to construct validation. Construct validation refers to demonstrating that a measure is empirically associated with measures of *other* concepts that theory suggests are causally related to the concept the measure seeks to represent (Adcock and Collier 2001, 542). Because discontent with the political system should be closely tied to evaluations of recent government policy performance, we assess construct validity by examining the relationship between PPD scores and public evaluations of government effectiveness.

Figure 4 depicts the relationships between PPD scores and three survey items from the International Social Survey Program Role of Government modules, which measure respondents' assessments of the government's success in providing health care, providing for the elderly, and protecting the environment. All three relationships are negative, as expected, and moderate to strong in magnitude. Together, these results provide evidence of the construct validity of the PPD measure.

The strong performance of the PPD scores in both convergent and construct validation

tests as presented in this section demonstrate that they are an appropriate measure of the political discontent concept we theorize above and therefore are suitable for use in analyses.

Explaining Political Dissatisfaction

We now focus on a group of countries where discontent has attracted particular public and scholarly concern, the advanced democracies of the OECD, in order to demonstrate how the newly constructed PPD dataset can be used to address substantive questions in the literature. In Figure 5, we present the evolution of political discontent over time across these OECD democracies. Substantial differences emerge both across countries and over time, raising important questions about the sources of cross national variation and the drivers of temporal change in political discontent. Existing scholarship offers a range of perspectives on if public political discontent has increased over time and how political and economic contexts shape it, yet empirical findings remain mixed, largely because previous studies rely on different conceptualizations and survey measures. In the following section, we briefly review these theoretical explanations and evaluate their empirical effects using the PPD scores, which provide a comprehensive and unified test of competing explanations.

The first argument deals with the role of elections. Elections provide an opportunity for people to turn their dissatisfaction into ballots for candidates or parties that promise change. Discontented citizens, as a result, gain political fulfillment through voting for a party or a candidate that voices their discontent (Van der Brug 2003; Rooduijn, Van Der Brug, and De Lange 2016). From this perspective, public political discontent should be expected to be lower in years of national elections, in which some of the existing discontent could be addressed. However, existing studies also suggest that the effect of election time on public political discontent could be the opposite. Campaigns expose citizens to more political messages, a significant proportion of which criticize the elites and the system (Lau, Sigelman, and Rovner 2007; López-García and Pavía 2019). Particularly, many advanced democracies are experiencing increased levels of false information during elections, which has become a clear danger to the integrity of political process (Bennett and Livingston 2018). If so, public political discontent may be expected to be higher at
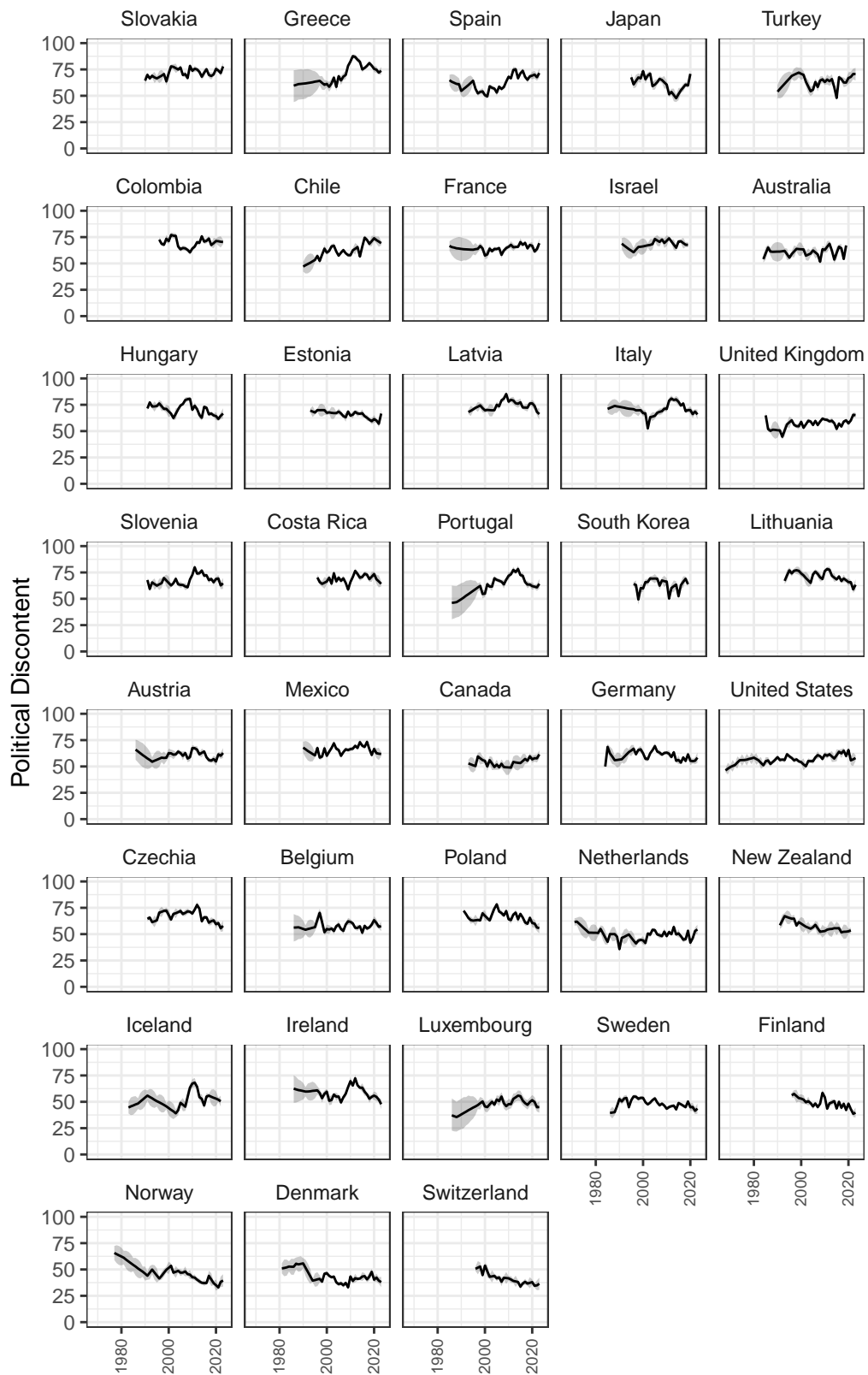
Note: Countries are ordered by their most recent political discontent score;
gray shading represents 80% credible intervals.

Figure 5: Political Discontent Scores Over Time Within OECD Democracies

election times.

A second potential source of public political discontent is the distribution of power created by political institutions. According to prominent democratic theories (Lijphart 1999; Powell 2000; Norris 2008), power-sharing systems—parliamentarism, federalism, and proportional electoral rules—aim to generate governments that facilitate broad inclusion and participation, while power-concentrating systems prioritize efficient and accountable majority rule. Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer (2010) argues that power-sharing systems not only encourage actual political participation, but also send symbolic signals of inclusiveness to citizens. If so, the publics in countries with parliamentary systems, federalism, and proportional electoral rules should be more likely to perceive themselves as being included and represented in the system and so feel less discontent.

Lastly, economic conditions are argued to be salient sources of political discontent (Quaranta and Martini 2016). For one thing, unfavorable economic conditions fuel social discontent and anxiety about the future among the public, which can easily evolve into anti-establishment sentiment (Kinnvall and Svensson 2022). For another, economic indicators are usually used by people to evaluate the performance of the system or government policies (Becher and Donnelly 2013). Hence, poor economic conditions, such as low average incomes, slow growth, and high unemployment are likely to hurt perceptions of institutional quality and so increase public political discontent. Income inequality may work similarly, but such arguments as system justification theory, which contends that greater inequality triggers in the disadvantaged a psychological need to accept and defend the existing system (see, e.g., Jost 2019), and relative power theory (see, e.g., Solt 2008), which instead sees more inequality as increasing the influence of the rich over the attitudes of the poor, suggest that worsening inequality may actually *reduce* discontent.

The data we use to test these hypotheses are as follows. The Democratic Electoral Systems (DES) dataset updated in Bormann and Golder (2022) provides information about the timing of elections, yielding a dichotomous variable coded one in election years and zero when no election was held. We measure three institutional variables in the same fashion as Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer (2010). Parliamentarism is coded dichotomously, one in pure parliamentary systems and zero otherwise, and is sourced from the DES. The federalism variable is also dichotomous: countries with strong federal systems (see Lijphart 1999) are coded one and all others coded zero. The Gallagher

least-squares index of disproportionality, which measures the disparity between parties' vote shares and their seat shares (Gallagher 1991, 40–41; 2023), provides our measure of the proportionality of the electoral system. We draw data on economic conditions from two sources. GDP per capita, national GDP growth, and unemployment are from OECD.Stat (OECD 2024). The Gini index of disposable income inequality comes from the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (Solt 2020a).

The resulting dataset comprises all thirty-eight OECD countries and a total of 1217 country-years. The number of country-years observed per country ranges from sixteen (Turkey) to forty-three (the United States) consecutive years (mean: 32 years, median: 31 years). The advantage in data availability over pooling the responses to a single question is clear: even among these relatively data-rich countries, the two richest single items available—the Eurobarometer's questions on trust in national parliaments and in political parties—each provide only fewer than half as many country-years for analysis, 582 observations, and these Eurobarometer data naturally entirely exclude the nine OECD members outside Europe.

Pooled time series like these, as Shor et al. (2007) demonstrates, are most appropriately analysed using Bayesian multilevel models with varying intercepts for countries and years. Varying intercepts for each country account for the heteroskedasticity across our spatial units that is generated by omitted variable bias and other sources while also permitting us to include predictors like parliamentarism and federalism that do not vary over time. Varying intercepts for each year take into account 'time shocks' that operate on all of our countries simultaneously (Shor et al. 2007, 171–72).

We also use the 'within-between random effects' specification (see Bell and Jones 2015). This specification involves decomposing each of our time-varying predictors into its country mean and the difference between each country-year value and the country mean. The time-varying difference variables capture the short-term effects of the predictors, while the time-invariant country-mean variables reflect their long-run, "historical" effects (Bell and Jones 2015, 137). As Bell and Jones (2015) shows, this is a superior approach for addressing omitted variable bias and endogeneity than fixed effects and other commonly used TSCS specifications.

Finally, we use a Bayesian analysis that allows us to directly incorporate into our model the quantified measurement uncertainty in the data for political discontent and for income

inequality, with the estimated values of these two variables treated as random draws from distributions with unknown true means but known standard deviations (McElreath 2016, 425–31; see also Kurz 2023, 15.1.2; Tai, Hu, and Solt 2024). We estimate the model using the `brms` R package (Bürkner 2017).

Notes: Dots indicate posterior means; whiskers, from thickest to thinnest, describe 80%, 90%, and 95% credible intervals; shading depicts the posterior probability density function. Number of country–year observations: 1217.
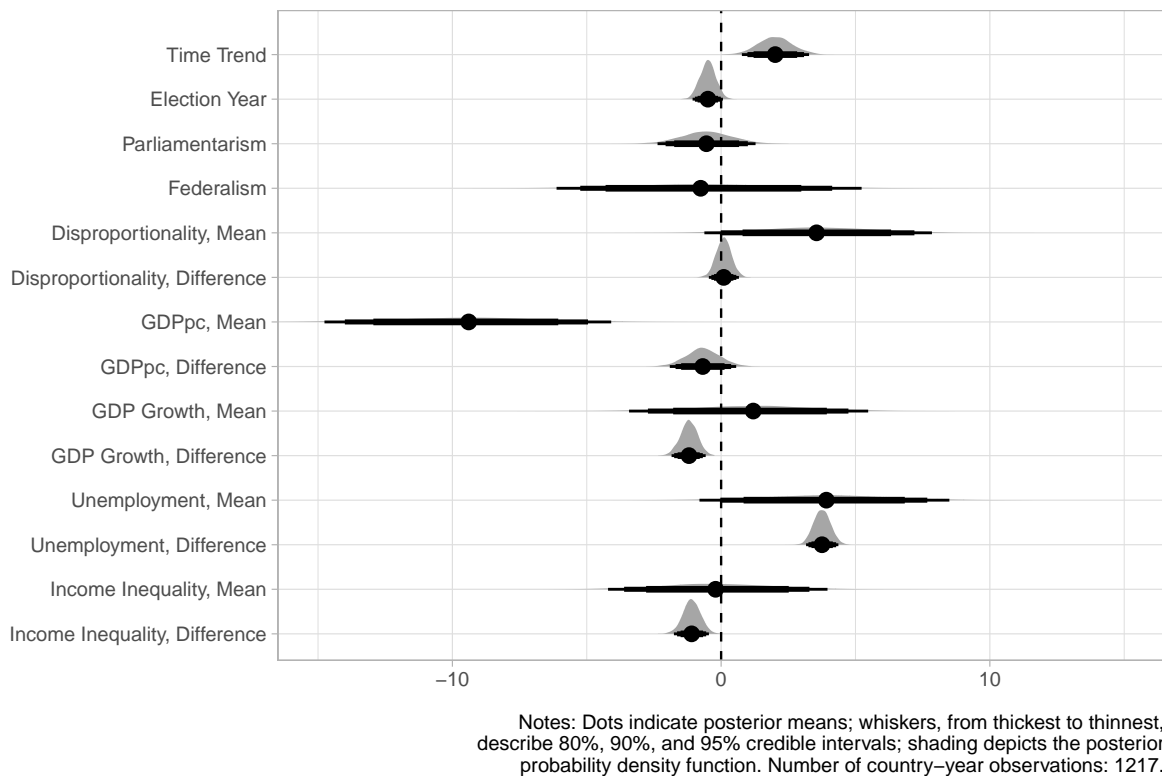
Figure 6: Predicting Public Political Discontent in OECD Countries

The results of this analysis are displayed in Figure 6.[2] Narratives of increasing political discontent over recent decades find support in these results. The time trend indicates that discontent has been, on average and net of the other included variables, rising over time in the OECD countries by 0.1 points (95% credible interval: 0.04 to 0.16 points) per year. By this evidence, election years appear to diffuse rather than exacerbate discontent: PPD scores are estimated to be 0.5 points lower in years with elections, with 95.6% of the posterior distribution less than zero. However, the magnitude of this effect is relatively modest compared to other factors, indicating that a single electoral event may be insufficient to meaningfully reduce system-level political discontent among the public.

The hypothesis that power-sharing institutions reduce discontent with politics, on the other hand, finds limited support. Countries with parliamentary or federal systems do

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[2]Table A3 in online Appendix Section A3 provides a tabular version.

not exhibit less political discontent than those without, and short-run changes in dispro-portionality do not trigger declines in PPD scores either. Consistent with the arguments of Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer (2010), though, countries with higher mean dispropor-tionality do exhibit more discontent than those with lower mean values: a two-standard-deviation higher mean Gallagher index was associated with 3.6 points more political discontent, and 94.9% of the posterior distribution of this parameter is positive.

The evidence of the importance of economic conditions is, however, strong. Even among these advanced economies, countries with greater mean GDP per capita have lower levels of political discontent: a country one standard deviation above the mean is estimated to have a PPD score 9.4 (95% c.i.: 14.8 to 4.1) points lower than a country one standard deviation below the mean. In the short run, increases in GDP per capita also appear to reduce discontent, with a two-standard-deviation increase associated with 0.7 (95% c.i.: 1.9 to 0.6) points less political discontent (85.6% of the posterior distribution of this parameter was negative). Although mean GDP growth exhibits no evidence of a long-term influence of growth on discontent, in the short run, discontent moves sharply in the opposite direction as growth: a two-standard-deviation increase in growth yields 1.2 (95% c.i.: 1.8 to 0.6) points less political discontent. Unemployment has a major effect on discontent in this analysis. The estimate for the long-term, historical effect of unemployment on political discontent as evidenced by differences in mean levels across countries is 3.9 (95% c.i.: -0.8 to 8.5) points. Year-to-year differences in unemployment work similarly: a two-standard-deviation increase in unemployment has an immediate effect of increasing discontent by 3.8 (95% c.i.: 3.2 to 4.4) points. And, although cross-country mean differences show little impact, increases in income inequality over time work to reduce discontent in accordance with the predictions of system justification and relative power theories, with a two-standard-deviation rise prompting a 1.1 (95% c.i.: 1.8 to 0.5) point fall in PPD scores.

Conclusions

The research on public political discontent has witnessed many inconsistent findings re-garding its temporal trends, causes, and consequences. These inconsistencies largely reflect conceptual fragmentation and measurement constraints arising from the limited

availability and comparability of survey items. To address these limitations, this article advances a clearer conceptualization of political discontent as a lack of Easton's (1965) diffuse support for the political system, integrating multiple dimensions of system-level evaluations emphasized in prior research. This conceptualization underscores the theoretical value of political discontent as a comprehensive indicator of citizens' perceptions of the political system as unresponsive, untrustworthy, or illegitimate. By centering diffuse support, our approach also situates political discontent within growing scholarly concerns about declining public confidence in political systems. More broadly, this framework offers researchers a clearer reference point for defining the scope and content of political discontent in future studies.

Moreover, using a state-of-the-art latent-variable model, we construct a novel dynamic comparative measure of public political discontent across 136 countries over 56 years and demonstrate its validity across multiple analyses. With this new dataset, we clearly show a clear rising trend of political discontent across OECD countries, challenging Norris (2011)'s claim that the changes in political discontent are merely "trendless fluctuations" and lending support to Foa and Mounk's (2016, 2017) thesis of democratic deconsolidation in developed democracies. Our analysis further reveals the rise of political discontent in the public is largely driven by worsening economic conditions, including low income, slow growth, and high unemployment. Elections appear to diffuse political discontent only modestly, suggesting that system-level political discontent cannot be meaningfully alleviated by electoral events alone. Unlike prior research that relies on single-country evidence (Jennings et al. 2017), our findings draw on the most comprehensive information available across countries and over time, providing firmer empirical grounding for ongoing debates over the trajectories and sources of political discontent.

The time-series cross-national Public Political Discontent (PPD) dataset presented in this article is publicly available on the Harvard Dataverse, and it has broad implications for future research. The growing phenomenon of democratic backsliding across diverse regions has generated extensive scholarly inquiry into its underlying causes, with public support for democracy often treated as a central explanatory factor. Yet empirical findings remain mixed (Claassen 2020b; Tai, Hu, and Solt 2024), in part because measures of democratic support tend to be uniformly high and therefore lack the discriminatory power needed to capture meaningful variation in citizens' democratic commitment (Dalton, Sin,

and Jou 2007; Inglehart 2003). Public political discontent offers a potentially more informative analytical lens for studying democratic backsliding given its close association with regime-challenging attitudes and behaviors (Craig 1980).

Furthermore, examining the relationship between political discontent and the rise of populism—a prominent contemporary challenge to liberal democracy (Mudde 2004; Urbinati 2019)—as well as its implications for effective governance and public perceptions of political legitimacy (Hetherington 1998; Miller 1974; Lipset 1959), would shed light on how political discontent shapes political engagement and democratic stability. Finally, because the dataset covers most countries and regions worldwide, including non-democracies, it enables systematic analyses of how the causes and consequences of political discontent vary across regime types and so promises new insights into the extent of the importance of public opinion for regime stability.

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Macrodiscontent Across Countries

Online Supplementary Materials

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A1 Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent

Following Jennings et al. (2017) and Easton (1965), we conceptualize political discontent as the lack of diffuse political support among the public. This lack is in turn understood as encompassing low external efficacy, that is, perceptions of government unresponsiveness; a lack of trust in the political system; and perceptions of pervasive corruption. National and cross-national surveys have often included questions tapping such political discontent for over a half century, but the resulting data are both sparse, that is, unavailable for many countries and years, and incomparable, generated by many different survey items. We identified 111 such survey items that were asked in no fewer than five country-years in countries surveyed at least twice; these items were drawn from 388 different survey datasets. These items are listed in Table A1 below, along with the dispersion (α) and difficulty (β) scores estimated for each from the DCPO model. Lower values of dispersion indicate questions that better identify publics with a higher level of trust from those with lower. Items have one less difficulty score than the number of response categories.

To avoid data-entry errors by automating data collection, the `DCPOtools` R package was used to compile the responses to these questions. The current version of this software facilitates the entire practical data generation process: from facilitating the acquisition of original survey datasets and converting them into R standard format for quicker loading; through standardizing country names, identifying survey years, and extracting the desired survey items; to restructuring the resulting data for analysis with the DCPO model. The primary objective is to limit manual interventions, thereby maximizing reproducibility and reducing the error potential inherent in human-operated data preparation tasks. The survey dataset codes listed in Table A1 correspond to those used in that package.

The survey items in these source data were asked in a total of 136 different countries in at least two time points over 56 years, from 1968 to 2023, resulting in 8,957 country-year-item observations. The number of items observed for each country-year in the source data is displayed in Figure A1 and Figure A2 below. The PPD scores of country-years with more observed items are likely to be estimated more precisely. The estimates for country-years with fewer (or no) observed items rely more heavily (or entirely) on the random-walk prior and are therefore less certain.

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
trust_parties2	735	How much trust do you have in certain institutions? Political parties	1 tend to trust / 2 tend not to trust	1.06	0.04	eb
trust_parl2	734	How much trust do you have in certain institutions? National parliament	1 tend to trust / 2 tend not to trust	0.70	1.18	eb
trust_parl4	637	How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Parliament?	0 not at all / 1 a little / 2 somewhat / 3 a lot	0.25	0.29, 1.34, 2.31	lb, asianb, afrob
trust_parties4	461	How much trust do you have in political parties?	1 none at all / 2 not very much trust / 3 quite a lot of trust / 4 a great deal of trust	0.21	0.28, 1.30, 2.24	lb, asianb, kobar, icenes, sasianb

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent *(continued)*

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
big2	373	Would you say that this country is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?	1 run by a few big interests / 2 run for all the people	0.29	1.00	wvs, anes, lb, nsss
will2	296	Would you say that your country is governed by the will of the people?	1 yes / 2 no	0.62	1.16	gallup
trust__parl11	270	Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. [Country's] parliament?	0 no trust / 123456789 / 10 complete trust	0.49	-0.76, -0.31, 0.34, 0.83, 1.18, 1.69, 1.98, 2.35, 2.70, 3.01	ess, issp, ress, fsdelection
trust__pol11	258	Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Politicians?	0 no trust / 123456789 / 10 complete trust	0.51	-1.41, -1.03, -0.39, 0.21, 0.66, 1.22, 1.55, 1.93, 2.33, 2.71	ess, ress, fsdelection
say5	246	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	1.00	-1.31, 0.50, 1.36, 2.99	bes, cnep, issp, ases, gles, icnl, belgiumes, aes, nzes, caucasusb
trust__parties11	236	Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Political parties?	0 no trust / 123456789 / 10 complete trust	0.50	-1.37, -1.00, -0.37, 0.23, 0.67, 1.24, 1.58, 1.97, 2.37, 2.75	ess, ress, fsdelection
trust__parl5	217	How much confidence do you have in: Parliament	1 complete confidence / 2 a great deal of confidence / 3 some confidence / 4 very little confidence / 5 no confidence at all	0.42	-0.46, 0.63, 1.55, 2.33	issp, lits, som, pgss
corrupt4	217	There is corruption in national institutions in	1 totally agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 totally disagree	0.83	-1.51, -0.07, 2.14	eb
care4c	177	The interests of people like you are well taken into account by the political system in	1 totally agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 totally disagree	1.06	-0.81, 1.45, 3.17	eb, feb
right4	159	How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?	1 none of the time / 2 some of the time / 3 most of the time / 4 just about always	0.55	-0.48, 1.27, 3.00	eb, anes, lb, asianb
corrupt__pol4	135	Now I am going to read you a list of things that may be problems in our country. Please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all: corrupt political leaders	1 very big problem / 2 moderately big problem / 3 small problem / 4 not a problem at all	0.75	-2.10, -0.67, 0.92	pew

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
corrupt_officials4126		Taking into account your own experience or what you have heard, corruption among public officials is	1 very common / 2 common / 3 uncommon / 4 very uncommon	1.10	-1.99, -0.04, 1.93	amb
care7	123	Those who govern this country are interested in what people like you think	1 strongly disagree / 23456 / 7 strongly agree	0.51	-0.17, 0.37, 0.94, 1.46, 1.90, 2.35	amb
trust_parties5	120	To what extent do you trust the following institutions? Parliament	1 complete distrust / 2 some distrust / 3 neither trust nor distrust / 4 some trust / 5 complete trust	0.40	-0.58, 0.51, 1.42, 2.15	lits, som
rigged2	114	Speaking generally, do you think that the elections in this country are clean or rigged?	1 are clean / 2 are rigged	0.14	1.69	lb
say5a	113	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?	1 not at all / 2 very little / 3 some / 4 a lot / 5 a great deal	0.48	-0.39, 0.57, 1.65, 2.67	ess, wvs
corrupt4a	111	How widespread do you think the problem of corruption is in	1 very widespread / 2 fairly widespread / 3 fairly rare / 4 very rare	0.67	-1.06, 0.47, 2.37	eb
corrupt_party2	111	Do you think that the giving and taking of bribes, and the abuse of positions of power for personal gain, are widespread among any of the following? Political parties	0 not mentioned / 1 mentioned	1.54	1.31	eb
right5	109	Most of the time we can trust people in government to do what is right	1 Strongly agree / 5 Strongly disagree	0.70	-1.40, 0.55, 1.57, 2.91	issp, usgss
get5	108	Most politicians are in politics only for what they can get out of it personally	1 agree strongly / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 disagree strongly	0.49	-0.78, 0.37, 1.11, 2.15	issp
corrupt_pol2	106	Do you think that the giving and taking of bribes, and the abuse of positions of power for personal gain, are widespread among any of the following? Politicians at the national level	0 not mentioned / 1 mentioned	1.11	1.47	eb
say4	103	However you look at it, people like me have no influence on what the government does	1 completely agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 completely disagree	1.14	-1.97, 0.19, 2.24	allbus, uspew, cnep, itanes, jgss, asianb, kobar, cnes, canadianes, cdem, pewrel
satis_gov21	99	Here is a scale for ranking how our system of government works. Where on this scale would you put our current system of governing with free elections and many parties?	minus-100 the worst / -90 to 90 / 100 the best	0.43	-0.49, -0.28, 0.13, 0.38, 0.62, 1.13, 1.31, 1.51, 1.74, 1.93, 2.26, 2.37, 2.50, 2.62, 2.72, 3.04, 3.13, 3.25, 3.43, 3.59	neb
trust_mp7	87	How much trust do you have in Members of Parliament in general?	1 no trust / 23456 / 7 a great deal of trust	0.45	-0.49, 0.22, 0.87, 1.55, 2.12, 2.64	besip, neb
sat_officials4	87	How satisfied are you with the way the people now in national office are handling the country's affairs?	1 very satisfied / 2 fairly satisfied / 3 fairly dissatisfied / 4 very dissatisfied	0.43	-0.46, 1.24, 2.53	wvs

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent *(continued)*

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
big4a	77	Generally the state/government is run for the benefit of all the people	1 completely agree / 2 mostly agree / 3 mostly disagree / 4 completely disagree	0.33	0.81, 1.75, 2.57	pew
trust_parties7	77	To what extent do you trust each of these political institutions to look after your interests? Political parties	1 no trust / 23456 / 7 great trust	0.45	-0.61, -0.06, 0.59, 1.34, 1.97, 2.48	neb
care5a	74	The government does not care much about what people like me think	1 disagree strongly / 2 somewhat disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 somewhat agree / 5 agree	0.76	-1.16, 0.35, 1.07, 2.39	issp, canadianes
sat_parties4	74	In your opinion, how is the work the political parties are doing	1 very good / 2 good / 3 bad / 4 very bad	0.44	-0.90, 1.05, 2.57	politbarometer, lb
say5b	73	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?	1 not at all / 2 very little / 3 some / 4 a lot / 5 a great deal	0.82	-2.39, -0.85, 0.90, 2.44	ess
corrupt_official	70	And in your opinion, about how many public officials in [COUNTRY] are involved in corruption?	1 almost none / 2 a few / 3 some / 4 quite a lot / 5 almost all	0.60	-0.93, 0.53, 1.70, 3.14	issp
corrupt_pol5a	70	In your opinion, about how many politicians in [COUNTRY] are involved in corruption?	1 almost none / 2 a few / 3 some / 4 quite a lot / 5 almost all	0.54	-0.84, 0.44, 1.46, 2.71	issp
care4a	64	In your opinion are politicians concerned with what people like yourself think?	1 a lot / 2 some / 3 a little / 4 not at all	0.57	-0.17, 1.20, 2.33	pew, uspew, fnes
say5e	60	The ordinary person has no influence on politics	1 strongly disagree / 2 disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 agree / 5 strongly agree	1.10	-1.85, 0.43, 1.53, 3.69	issp, ines
will2a	59	Which of the following words describes your perception of the government of [this country]? READ OUT. Responds to the will of the people	0 not mentioned / 1 mentioned	0.11	0.59	gallup
care5	55	I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.65	-1.42, 0.06, 0.94, 2.37	ases, asiab, icnl, aes, caucasusb
corrupt_official	52	How widespread do you think bribe taking and corruption is in this country?	1 almost no public officials engaged in it / 2 a few are / 3 most are / 4 almost all public officials are engaged in it	0.44	-0.49, 1.24, 2.42	wvs
resp_gov4	52	How well do you think the government responds to what people want?	1 very responsive / 2 somewhat responsive / 3 not very responsive / 4 not responsive	1.09	-1.98, 1.15, 4.30	asianb
corrupt_pol5	49	Thinking about politicians of [COUNTRY], how many to you think are involved in corruption?	1 none / 2 less than half / 3 half of the politicians / 4 more than half / 5 all	0.75	-1.67, -0.01, 1.12, 2.66	amb
parties7	48	To what extent do political parties listen to people like you?	1 not at all / 23456 / 7 a lot	0.51	-0.86, -0.23, 0.50, 1.15, 1.72, 2.30	amb
rep_parties7	47	Thinking about political parties in general, to what extent do [nationality] political parties represent their voters well?	1 not at all / 23456 / 7 a lot	0.44	-0.58, 0.06, 0.81, 1.47, 2.02, 2.54	amb
corrupt_gov4a	43	How widespread corruption in national government	1 almost everyone is corrupt / 2 most officials are corrupt / 3 not a lot of officials are corrupt / 4 hardly anyone is involved	0.39	-0.47, 0.88, 2.21	asianb

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
care5d	41	Some people say that political parties in Australia care what ordinary people think. Others say that political parties in Australia don't care what ordinary people think. Where would you place your view on this scale from 1 to 5?	1 political parties care what ordinary people think / 234 / 5 political parties don't care what ordinary people think	1.29	-1.67, 0.22, 2.14, 3.54	cses, aes, nzes
care4	41	Politicians don't care much about what people like me think	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.56	-0.33, 1.11, 2.34	pew, cnep, fsdelection
care5f	37	Politicians don't care much about what people like me think	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.73	-1.51, 0.17, 0.96, 2.40	cnep, nzes
care4f	36	Do you think that the political leaders are concerned about the issues that interest you?	1 a lot / 2 fairly / 3 a little / 4 not at all	0.74	-1.59, -0.31, 1.82	lb
say5c	35	Generally speaking, people like me don't have the power to influence government policy or actions	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.92	-2.07, -0.22, 0.94, 2.81	asiab
big5b	34	Do you think that the leaders of political parties in this country are more concerned with serving the interests of the people, or more concerned with advancing their own political ambitions, or haven't you heard enough to say?	1 more to serve their own political ambitions – strongly agree / 2 more to serve their own political ambitions - agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 more to serve the people – agree / 5 more to serve the people – strongly agree	0.79	-1.33, -0.07, 0.33, 1.66	afrob
corrupt_mp4	33	How many are corrupt? Members of Parliament	1 none / 2 some of them / 3 most of them / 4 all of them	0.08	0.73, 2.05, 2.88	lits
corrupt_officials4	33	How many are corrupt? Government officials	1 none / 2 some of them / 3 most of them / 4 all of them	0.19	0.57, 2.08, 2.97	lits
care2c	33	Which statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right. Most government officials care what people like me think [OR] Most government officials DO NOT care what people like me think	1 most government officials care / 2 most government officials do not care		NA	pew
corrupt_gov5	33	There is widespread corruption among those who govern the country	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.39	-0.41, 0.41, 1.04, 2.12	asiab
right4e	33	Please indicate to what extent you trust the following institutions to operate in the best interests of society. Parliament	1 trust a lot / 2 trust to a degree / 3 don't really trust / 4 don't trust at all	0.78	-0.38, 1.76, 3.40	asiab
touch5a	33	Generally speaking, the people who are elected to the [NATIONAL PARLIAMENT] stop thinking about the public once they're elected	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.48	-0.77, 0.32, 1.06, 2.18	asiab
say4e	32	People like me have too little influence in what the Government does	1 strongly agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 strongly disagree	1.17	-1.83, -0.30, 1.70	eb
say4f	32	Voting gives people like me some say about how government runs things	1 completely agree / 2 mostly agree / 3 mostly disagree / 4 completely disagree	2.02	-0.10, 3.51, 6.01	pewrel, uspew
vote5	31	Political parties are only interested in my vote and not in my opinions	1 completely agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 completely disagree	0.70	-1.58, 0.19, 0.98, 2.42	bsa, bes, gles, icnl, belgiumes, nores

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent *(continued)*

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
say2	27	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 agree / 2 disagree	0.59	1.17	issp, anes, npes, cnes
corrupt_pol4a	27	Most politicians are corrupt. Does this statement describe	1 very well / 2 somewhat well / 3 not too well / 4 not well at all	0.48	0.48, 1.33, 2.20	pew
right4d	27	Please indicate to what extent you trust the following institutions to operate in the best interests of society. Your central government	1 trust a lot / 2 trust to a degree / 3 don't really trust / 4 don't trust at all	0.78	0.31, 2.33, 4.10	asiab
trust_pol4	26	How much trust do you have in Danish politicians in general	1 great trust / 2 trust / 3 little trust / 4 hardly any trust	0.38	-0.88, 0.69, 1.82	som, dkes
care2a	24	Do you ever feel that the people running the country don't really care what happens to people like you	1 yes / 2 no	2.08	0.05	eb
right4b	22	How much do you trust British governments of any party to place the needs of the nation above the interests of their own political party?	1 almost always / 2 most of time / 3 some of time / 4 almost never	0.41	-0.53, 0.70, 1.83	bsa
care11	21	How much would you say that politicians care what people like you think?	0 not at all / 123456789 / 10 completely	0.60	-1.81, -1.41, -0.70, -0.08, 0.38, 0.88, 1.24, 1.69, 2.14, 2.52	ess
say11a	21	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?	0 not at all / 123456789 / 10 completely	0.75	-1.91, -1.52, -0.78, -0.15, 0.33, 0.91, 1.32, 1.88, 2.41, 2.81	ess
say11b	21	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?	0 not at all / 123456789 / 10 completely	0.56	-1.37, -1.02, -0.40, 0.12, 0.50, 0.94, 1.28, 1.72, 2.15, 2.52	ess
touch4	21	Those elected to parliament soon lose touch with the problems of ordinary people	1 strongly agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 somewhat disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.78	-1.43, 0.01, 1.72	uspew, fsdelection, itanes
care2b	20	Some people say that the deputies and senators are concerned about what people think. Others say that they aren't. Which statement is closest to your way of thinking?	1 the deputies and senators are concerned about what people think / 2 the deputies and senators aren't concerned about what people think		NA	npes, lb
equal4	19	Under our present system of government do you think people like yourself are treated equally and fairly by government	1 definitely agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 disagree somewhat / 4 definitely disagree	0.51	-0.11, 1.36, 2.51	neb
corrupt_gov3	19	Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?	1 quite a few / 2 not many / 3 hardly any	0.59	-0.04, 1.41	anes
vote2	19	Parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions	1 agree / 2 disagree	0.97	0.91	anes, npes
care4b	19	Government officials seriously consider citizens' opinions	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.53	-0.69, 0.80, 2.21	fsdelection, kobar, arabb

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent *(continued)*

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
touch5	18	Those elected to Parliament soon lose touch with the people	1 agree strongly / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 disagree strongly	0.56	-1.51, 0.05, 0.70, 2.11	bsa, bes, icnl
say4b	18	Under our present system of government how much influence do you think people like yourself can have on government?	1 a lot of influence / 2 some influence / 3 not much influence / 4 no influence	0.86	-1.87, 0.07, 1.71	neb
say4d	18	I can have influence on the national government	1 agree / 2 quite agree / 3 rather disagree / 4 disagree	0.87	-0.97, 0.03, 1.45	eurasiab, fsdelection
right4c	17	And how much do you trust politicians of any party in Britain to tell the truth when they are in a tight corner?	1 just about always / 2 most of the time / 3 only some of the time / 4 almost never	0.62	-1.56, -0.29, 1.29	bsa
big2a	16	In general, would you say the government is run for the benefit of all the people in	1 benefit all / 2 benefit few groups	0.51	1.26	pew
big4b	16	How much of the time do you think elected leaders, like parliamentarians or local councilors, try their best: To look after the interests of people like you?	0 never / 1 some of the time / 2 most of the time / 3 always	0.38	-0.73, 0.25, 1.83	afrob
say4a	16	How much of the time do you think elected leaders, like parliamentarians or local councilors, try their best: To listen to what people like you have to say?	0 never / 1 some of the time / 2 most of the time / 3 always	0.26	-0.61, 0.32, 1.69	afrob
care5b	15	Politicians do not care about what people like me think	1 completely agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 partly agree-disagree / 4 somewhat disagree / 4 completely disagree	0.43	-0.75, 0.32, 1.02, 1.91	bes, besip, gles, autnes
right2	15	The people who run the country are more concerned with themselves than with the good of the country	1 tend to agree / 2 tend to disagree	0.41	0.70	eb
care4d	14	Politicians don't care much about what people like me think	1 completely agree / 2 tend to agree / 3 tend to disagree / 4 completely disagree	0.93	-1.38, 0.44, 2.07	allbus, belgiumes, cnes, canadianes, cdem
care2	13	I don't think public officials care much what people like me think	1 agree / 2 disagree	0.79	0.47	politbarometer, anes, cispol
care3	13	Public officials don't care much what people like me think	1 agree / 2 disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree	0.51	0.78, 1.16	anes
say3	13	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 agree / 2 disagree / 3 neither agree nor disagree	0.58	1.12, 1.41	anes
care5e	13	If people like me let the politicians know what we think, then they will take our opinions into account	1 completely agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 completely disagree	1.40	-3.25, -1.17, 0.40, 2.67	dkes, belgiumes
care11a	12	How much weight do politicians attach to opinions presented to them by ordinary people	0 none at all / 123456789 / 10 very large	0.58	-1.71, -1.41, -0.85, -0.31, 0.15, 0.72, 1.04, 1.45, 1.89, 2.34	cid
trust_mp4	12	In general, how much confidence do you have in the way the following groups do their job? - Parliamentarians	1 very high trust / 2 quite high trust / 3 quite low trust / 4 very low trust	0.51	-1.14, 0.41, 1.58	som

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent *(continued)*

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
trust_pol5a	12	Do you think that politicians are in general trustworthy, that many of them are trustworthy, some are trustworthy, few, or perhaps none?	1 in general / 2 many / 3 some / 4 few / 5 none	0.80	-1.12, 0.18, 1.94, 3.73	icenes
touch2	10	Generally speaking those we elect to Congress in Washington lose touch with people pretty quickly	1 agree / 2 disagree	1.42	-0.17	anes, npes
right5a	10	You can generally trust that our political leaders make the right decisions for the country	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	1.04	-1.98, 0.51, 1.52, 2.95	dkes
say5d	10	People like me can vote, but we can't do anything else to influence politics	1 completely agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 yes and no / 4 somewhat disagree / 5 completely disagree	1.28	-0.57, 1.05, 1.33, 2.95	nores
big5	10	Would you say the government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?	1 entirely run for the big interests / 2 mostly run for the big interests / 3 about half and half / 4 mostly run for the benefit of all / 5 entirely run for the benefit of all	0.57	-1.06, 0.43, 1.60, 2.82	nsss, aes
right4a	10	In general, do you feel that the people in government are too often interested in looking after themselves, or do you feel that they can be trusted to do the right thing nearly all the time?	1 Usually look after themselves / 2 Sometimes look after themselves / 3 Sometimes can be trusted to do the right thing / 4 Usually can be trusted to do the right thing	0.59	0.12, 1.10, 1.79	aes
big5a	10	The New Zealand government is largely run by a few big interests	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.57	-0.79, 0.74, 1.33, 2.55	nzes
self_min4	9	Ministers and state secretaries are primarily concerned about their personal interests	1 fully agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 fully disagree	0.66	-0.79, 1.48, 2.73	npes
trust_pol5	8	Danish politicians in general are trustworthy	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither agree nor disagree / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.05	0.00, 0.51, 0.90, 1.15	fsdelection, dkes, formpubop
say7	8	People like me don't have any say about what the government does	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 somewhat agree / 4 neither agree nor disagree / 5 somewhat disagree / 6 disagree / 7 strongly disagree	0.50	-0.62, 0.20, 0.63, 0.92, 1.37, 2.13	norcs, eass, jgss
big4c	8	The nation is run by a powerful few and ordinary citizens cannot do much about it	1 strongly agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 somewhat disagree / 4 strongly disagree	1.01	-1.23, 1.08, 3.69	asianb
corrupt_gov4	8	Now I am going to read you a list of things that may be problems in our country. Please tell me if you think it is a very big problem, a moderately big problem, a small problem or not a problem at all: government corruption	1 very big problem / 2 moderately big problem / 3 small problem / 4 not a problem at all	0.30	-1.90, -0.90, 0.15	pew
trust_parl7	7	Please tell me for each institution or organisation how much trust you place in it: Bundestag	1 no trust at all / 23456 / 7 great deal of trust	0.59	-0.85, 0.04, 0.89, 1.69, 2.36, 3.03	allbus
right5b	7	You can trust the government to do what is right most of the time	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 neither / 4 disagree / 5 strongly disagree	0.53	-0.64, 1.20, 1.84, 3.02	nzes
say2a	6	The average person has considerable influence on politics	1 agree / 2 disagree	1.15	0.00	issp

Table A1: Survey Items Used to Estimate Public Political Discontent *(continued)*

Survey Item Code	Country-Years	Question Text	Response Categories	Dispersion	Difficulties	Survey Dataset Codes*
trust_parl3	6	I am going to name some institutions in this country. Would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?	1 a great deal of confidence / 2 only some confidence / 3 hardly any confidence at all	0.40	0.10, 1.72	pgss
vote4	6	Political parties are only interested in people's votes, not their opinions	1 strongly agree / 2 somewhat agree / 3 somewhat disagree / 4 strongly disagree	0.59	-0.79, 0.51, 1.62	fsdelection, itanes
corrupt_pol4b	6	How widespread do you think corruption is among Icelandic politicians?	1 very widespread / 2 quite widespread / 3 not very widespread / 4 hardly happens at all	0.39	-0.32, 0.94, 1.90	icenes
say4h	5	People like me have no influence on what the different governments do	1 strongly agree / 2 agree / 3 disagree / 4 strongly disagree	1.16	-0.43, 0.58, 1.77	formpubop

* Survey dataset codes correspond to those used in the DCPOtools R package.

Table A2: Source Survey Information

Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
aes1993	Jones, Roger; McAllister, Ian; Denemark, David; Gow, David, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 1993", doi:10.4225/87/ZZ3NOB, ADA Dataverse, V1, UNF:6:3C/DZ94Ci0V2mfL02PVpXw==
aes1996	Jones, Roger; McAllister, Ian; Gow, David, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 1996", doi:10.4225/87/NSDHWM, ADA Dataverse, V1, UNF:6:V05mNiOGYLZnBaihME2SIA==
aes1998	Bean, Clive; Gow, David; McAllister, Ian, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 1998", doi:10.4225/87/FFBWUU, ADA Dataverse, V2, UNF:6:pmAXB4lfnfvlseqWTWKOkg==
aes2001	Bean, Clive; Gow, David; McAllister, Ian, 2001, "Australian Election Study, 2001", doi:10.4225/87/CALXMK, ADA Dataverse, V1, UNF:6:8dudxHV83HO/5+itv3DNjA==
aes2004	Bean, Clive; McAllister, Ian; Gibson, Rachel; Gow, David, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 2004", doi:10.4225/87/G9ITIO, ADA Dataverse, V1, UNF:6:Qer+KzJrJC+zlC3Gm6qDmw==
aes2007	Bean, Clive; McAllister, Ian; Gow, David, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 2007", doi:10.4225/87/ZBUOW0, ADA Dataverse, V1, UNF:6:D7a6fhN+szVMSQF9xIh5+A==
aes2010	McAllister, Ian; Bean, Clive; Gibson, Rachel Kay; Pietsch, Juliet, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 2010", doi:10.4225/87/CYJNSM, ADA Dataverse, V2, UNF:6:3iyzr2dBihOrVkbafFkRZA==
aes2013	Bean, Clive; McAllister, Ian; Pietsch, Juliet; Gibson, Rachel Kay, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 2013", doi:10.4225/87/WDBBAS, ADA Dataverse, V3, UNF:6:6gMySFLvbEH1ccG58om4Sg==
aes2016	McAllister, Ian; Makkai, Toni; Bean, Clive; Gibson, Rachel Kay, 2017, "Australian Election Study, 2016", doi:10.4225/87/7OZCZA, ADA Dataverse, V2, UNF:6:TNnUHDn0ZNSlIM94TQphWw==
aes2019	McAllister, Ian; Bean, Clive; Gibson, Rachel; Makkai, Toni; Sheppard, Jill; Cameron, Sarah, 2019, "Australian Election Study, 2019", doi:10.26193/KMAMMW, ADA Dataverse, V2
afrob2	Afrobarometer, 2006, Afrobarometer Merged Round 2 Data (16 countries) (2004) [Dataset]
afrob3	Afrobarometer, 2008, Afrobarometer Merged Round 3 Data (18 countries) (2005) [Dataset]
afrob4	Afrobarometer, 2010, Afrobarometer Merged Round 4 Data (20 countries) (2008) [Dataset]
afrob5	Afrobarometer, 2015, Afrobarometer Merged Round 5 Data (34 countries) (2011-2013) [Dataset]
afrob6	Afrobarometer, 2016, Afrobarometer Merged Round 6 Data (36 countries) (2016) [Dataset]
afrob7	Afrobarometer, 2020, Afrobarometer Merged Round 7 Data (34 countries) (2019) [Dataset]
afrob8	Afrobarometer, 2023, Afrobarometer Merged Round 8 Data (34 countries) (2022) [Dataset]
allbus	GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences (2020): German General Social Survey (ALLBUS) — Cumulation 1980-2018. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5276 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13483
amb_argentina2018	LAPOP (2020) Argentina LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2018 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_argentina2021	LAPOP (2023) Argentina LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_argentina2023	LAPOP (2023) Argentina LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_belize2023	LAPOP (2023) Belize LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_bolivia2021	LAPOP (2022) Bolivia LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_bolivia2023	LAPOP (2023) Bolivia LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_brazil2021	LAPOP (2022) Brazil LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_brazil2023	LAPOP (2023) Brazil LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_canada2021	LAPOP (2022) Canada LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_canada2023	LAPOP (2023) Canada LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_chile2021	LAPOP (2022) Chile LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_chile2023	LAPOP (2023) Chile LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_colombia2021	LAPOP (2022) Colombia LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_colombia2023	LAPOP (2023) Colombia LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_combo	LAPOP (2020) 2004-2018 LAPOP AmericasBarometer Merge, v1.0FREE [Dataset]
amb_costarica2021	LAPOP (2022) Costa Rica LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_costarica2023	LAPOP (2023) Costa Rica LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]

Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
amb_dominicanrepublic2021	LAPOP (2022) Dominican Republic LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_dominicanrepublic20	LAPOP (2023) Dominican Republic LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_ecuador2018	LAPOP (2020) Ecuador LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2018 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_ecuador2021	LAPOP (2022) Ecuador LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_ecuador2023	LAPOP (2023) Ecuador LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_elsalvador2021	LAPOP (2022) El Salvador LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_elsalvador2023	LAPOP (2023) El Salvador LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_guatemala2021	LAPOP (2022) Guatemala LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_guatemala2023	LAPOP (2023) Guatemala LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_guyana2021	LAPOP (2022) Guyana LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_haiti2021	LAPOP (2022) Haiti LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_haiti2023	LAPOP (2023) Haiti LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_honduras2021	LAPOP (2022) Honduras LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_honduras2023	LAPOP (2023) Honduras LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_jamaica2021	LAPOP (2022) Jamaica LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_jamaica2023	LAPOP (2023) Jamaica LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_mexico2021	LAPOP (2022) Mexico LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_mexico2023	LAPOP (2023) Mexico LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_nicaragua2021	LAPOP (2022) Nicaragua LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_panama2018	LAPOP (2020) Panama LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2018 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_panama2021	LAPOP (2022) Panama LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_panama2023	LAPOP (2023) Panama LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_paraguay2021	LAPOP (2022) Paraguay LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_paraguay2023	LAPOP (2023) Paraguay LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_peru2021	LAPOP (2022) Peru LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_peru2023	LAPOP (2023) Peru LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_suriname2023	LAPOP (2023) Surinam LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_uruguay2018	LAPOP (2020) Uruguay LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2018 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_uruguay2021	LAPOP (2022) Uruguay LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2021 v1.2 [Dataset]
amb_uruguay2023	LAPOP (2023) Uruguay LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2023 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_us2010	LAPOP (2020) United States LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2010 v1.0 [Dataset]
amb_us2018	LAPOP (2020) United States LAPOP AmericasBarometer 2018 v1.0 [Dataset]
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eb833	European Commission, Brussels (2018). Eurobarometer 83.3 (2015). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5998 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13133.
eb843	European Commission, Brussels (2019). Eurobarometer 84.3 (2015). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6643 Data file Version 4.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13249.
eb852	European Commission, Brussels (2020). Eurobarometer 85.2 (2016). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6694 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13438.
eb861	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2020). Eurobarometer 86.1 (2016). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6697 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13542.
eb862	European Commission, Brussels (2020). Eurobarometer 86.2 (2016). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6788 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13602.
eb873	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 97.3 (2022). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7888 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14055.
eb881	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 88.1 (2017). GESIS, Cologne. ZA6925 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13896.
eb882	European Commission, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 88.2 (2017). GESIS, Cologne. ZA6927 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13918.
eb883	European Commission, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 88.3 (2017). GESIS, Cologne. ZA6928 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13938.
eb891	European Commission, Brussels (2023). Eurobarometer 89.1 (2018). GESIS, Cologne. ZA6963 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14082.
eb902	European Commission, Brussels (2019). Eurobarometer 90.2 (2018). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7488 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13289.
eb903	European Commission, Brussels (2019). Eurobarometer 90.3 (2018). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7489 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13254.
eb912	European Commission, Brussels (2019). Eurobarometer 91.2 (2019). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7562 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13318.
eb915	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2019). Eurobarometer 91.5 (2019). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7576 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13393.
eb923	European Commission, Brussels (2020). Eurobarometer 92.3 (2019). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7601 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13564.
eb924	European Commission, Brussels (2020). Eurobarometer 92.4 (2019). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA7602 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13652.
eb931	European Commission, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 93.1 (2020). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7649 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13866.
eb941	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 94.1 (2020). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7749 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13927.
eb943	European Commission, Brussels (2023). Eurobarometer 94.3 (2021). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7780 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14076.
eb953	European Commission, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 95.3 (2021). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7783 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13826.
eb961	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 96.1 (2021). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7846 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13882.
eb963	European Commission, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 96.3 (2022). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7848 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13908.
eb972	European Commission, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 97.2 (2022). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7887 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14033.
eb975	European Commission and European Parliament, Brussels (2022). Eurobarometer 97.3 (2022). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7888 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14055.
eb982	European Commission, Brussels (2023). Eurobarometer 98.2 (2023). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7953 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14081.
eb994	European Commission, Brussels (2024). Eurobarometer 99.4 (2023). GESIS, Cologne. ZA7997 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14167.
ess1	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2019). ESS1 - integrated file, edition 6.6 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess1e06_6

Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
ess10	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2023). ESS10 integrated file, edition 3.0 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess10e03_0
ess2	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2012). ESS2 - integrated file, edition 3.6 (Italy not included) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ESS2E03_6
ess2_it	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2012). ESS2 - Italy country file from main questionnaire [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess2it
ess3	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2018). ESS3 - integrated file, edition 3.7 (Latvia and Romania not included) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ESS3E03_7
ess4	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2019). ESS4 - integrated file, edition 4.5 (Austria and Lithuania not included) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess4e04_6
ess4_at	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2022). ESS4 - Austria (Fieldwork period 01.11.10 to 28.02.11) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess4at
ess4_lt	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2022). ESS4 - Lithuania (no design weights) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess4lt
ess5	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2019). ESS5 - integrated file, edition 3.4 (Austria not included) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess5e03_5
ess5_at	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2022). ESS5 - Austria (fieldwork period 24.05.13 to 10.10.13) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess5ate1_1
ess6	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2019). ESS6 - integrated file, edition 2.4 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess6e02_6
ess7	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2018). ESS7 - integrated file, edition 2.3 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess7e02_3
ess8	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2019). ESS8 - integrated file, edition 2.1 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess8e02_3
ess9	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2020). ESS9 - integrated file, edition 2.0 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess9e03_2
ess9_ro	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2020). ESS9 - Romania (participating on pilot basis) [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess9roe01
eurasiab2001	Eurasia Barometer (2001). Eurasia Barometer 2001.
eurasiab2010	Eurasia Barometer (2010). Eurasia Barometer 2010.
feb450	European Commission, Brussels (2017). Flash Eurobarometer 450 (Future of Europe – Views from Outside the EU). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6856 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.12846.
fnes1995	Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Mayer, Nonna, Boy, Daniel. French National Election Study, 1995. [distributor], 1996-11-21. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR06806.v1
formpubop1999	Togby, Lise. 2014. "Surveys About the Formation of Public Opinion 1999-2003." SFI-The Danish National Centre for Social Research
formpubop2000	Togby, Lise. 2014. "Surveys About the Formation of Public Opinion 1999-2003." SFI-The Danish National Centre for Social Research
formpubop2001	Togby, Lise. 2014. "Surveys About the Formation of Public Opinion 1999-2003." SFI-The Danish National Centre for Social Research
formpubop2002	Togby, Lise. 2014. "Surveys About the Formation of Public Opinion 1999-2003." SFI-The Danish National Centre for Social Research
formpubop2003	Togby, Lise. 2014. "Surveys About the Formation of Public Opinion 1999-2003." SFI-The Danish National Centre for Social Research
fsdelection2019	Grönlund, Kimmo (Åbo Akademi University) and Borg, Sami (Tampere University): Finnish National Election Study 2019 [dataset]. Version 2.0 (2021-09-15). Finnish Social Science Data Archive [distributor]. https://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:fsd:T-FSD3467
fsdelection_combo	Election Study Consortium and Karvonen, Lauri (Åbo Akademi University) and Paloheimo, Heikki (University of Tampere) and Borg, Sami (University of Tampere) and Grönlund, Kimmo (Åbo Akademi University) and Kestilä-Kekkonen, Elina (University of Tampere): Finnish National Election Studies 2003-2019: combined data [dataset]. Version 1.0 (2017-11-03). Finnish Social Science Data Archive [distributor]. https://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:fsd:T-FSD2556
gallup_vop2000	Gallup International, Inc. Voice of the People Millennium Survey, 2000. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2009-08-18. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR24661.v1
gallup_vop2004	Gallup International, Inc. Voice of the People, 2004. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2009-04-30. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR24681.v1
gallup_vop2005	Gallup International, Inc. Voice of the People, 2005. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2007-07-16. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR04636.v1
gallup_vop2007	Gallup International, Inc. Voice of the People, 2007. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2010-03-03. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR21441.v1

Table A2: Source Survey Information *(continued)*

Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
gallup_vop2012	WIN/Gallup International Association. Voice of the People End of Year Survey, 2012. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2015-03-09. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR35201.v2
gles1994	Falter, Ju_rgen W.; Gabriel, Oscar W.; Rattinger, Hans; Schmitt, Karl (2015): Political Attitudes, Political Participation and Voting Behavior in Reunified Germany 1994 GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA3065 Data file Version 3.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.11973
gles1998	Falter, Ju_rgen W.; Gabriel, Oscar W.; Rattinger, Hans (2015): Political Attitudes, Political Participation and Voting Behavior in Reunified Germany 1998 GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA3066 Data file Version 4.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.11968
gles2002	Falter, Ju_rgen W.; Gabriel, Oscar W.; Rattinger, Hans (2015): Political Attitudes, Political Participation and Voting Behavior in Reunified Germany 2002. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA3861 Data file Version 3.0.0, doi:10.4232/1.11967
gles2009	GLES (2015). Short-term Campaign Panel (GLES 2009). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5305 Data file Version 5.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.12198.
gles2013	Rattinger, Hans; Roßteutscher, Sigrid; Schmitt-Beck, Rüdiger; Weßels, Bernhard; Wolf, Christof; Plischke, Thomas; Wiegand, Elena (2016): Short- term Campaign Panel 2013 (GLES). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5704 Datafile Version 3.2.0, doi: 10.4232/1.12561.
gles2017	GLES (2019). Short-term Campaign Panel (GLES 2017). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6804 Data file Version 7.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13323.
icenes1983	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 1983", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00001, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:krmQ/NST5UWdwbJ3OlWJ8A== [fileUNF]
icenes1987	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2020, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 1987", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00002, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V3, UNF:6:QFUhkaIXJfohv9z5T/HpeA== [fileUNF]
icenes1991	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 1991", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00003, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:CF1aHW7xsn83iJFjIACP5Q== [fileUNF]
icenes1995	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 1995", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00004, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:soAWhg5QnLVM64/ItiByow== [fileUNF]
icenes1999	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 1999", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00005, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:yiZ5815qg7DAqc5e2QPVMQ== [fileUNF]
icenes2003	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Eva Heiða Önnudóttir; Einar Mar Þórðarson; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2003", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00006, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:2wWd5vKJmBmyz2NzoDiPQQ== [fileUNF]
icenes2007	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Eva Heiða Önnudóttir; Einar Már Þórðarson; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2007", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00007, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:e2fn43HO5Jo1AYE4ttePGw== [fileUNF]
icenes2009	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Önnudóttir, Eva Heiða; Þórðarsson, Einar Már; Félagsvísindastofnun, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2009", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00008, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:/udEf4H4VtlzK7Qi4e7mwA== [fileUNF]
icenes2013	Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Hulda Þórisdóttir; Eva Heiða Önnudóttir, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2013", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00009, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:a7ePGbqQoIlklFeypfRa6Q== [fileUNF]
icenes2016	Önnudóttir, Eva Heiða; Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Þórisdóttir, Hulda; Helgason, Agnar Freyr, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2016", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00010, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:dqN69a8RixTJARkwphBO9w== [fileUNF]
icenes2017	Önnudóttir, Eva Heiða; Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður; Þórisdóttir, Hulda; Helgason, Agnar Freyr, 2021, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2017", https://doi.org/10.34881/1.00011, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:ypxLPvXbfVrTPNiu+DKBJg== [fileUNF]
icenes2021	Önnudóttir, Eva Heiða; Helgason, Agnar Freyr; Þórisdóttir, Hulda; Ólafsson, Jón Gunnar; Harðarson, Ólafur Þórður, 2023, "Íslenska kosningarannsóknin 2021", https://doi.org/10.34881/0ERQOZ, GAGNÍS (DATICE), V1, UNF:6:7uXWgb9Md/iOOtP7lyrMvA== [fileUNF]
icnl1985	A.J.A. Felling; J. Peters; P.L.H. Scheepers, 2009, "Individual changes in the Netherlands 1985-1990", https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xp9-367a, DANS Data Station Social Sciences and Humanities, V3
icnl1990	A.J.A. Felling; J. Peters; P.L.H. Scheepers, 2009, "Individual changes in the Netherlands 1985-1990", https://doi.org/10.17026/dans-xp9-367a, DANS Data Station Social Sciences and Humanities, V3
ines_long	INES (2008). Irish National Election Study 2002-2007.
issp1985	ISSP Research Group (1986). International Social Survey Programme: Role of Government I - ISSP 1985. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA1490 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.1490.
issp1991	ISSP Research Group (1993). International Social Survey Programme: Religion I - ISSP 1991. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA2150 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.2150.
issp1996	ISSP Research Group (1999). International Social Survey Programme: Role of Government III - ISSP 1996. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA2900 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.2900.
issp1998	ISSP Research Group (2000). International Social Survey Programme: Religion II - ISSP 1998. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA3190 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.3190.
issp2001	ISSP Research Group (2003). International Social Survey Programme: Social Relations and Support Systems - ISSP 2001. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA3680 Data file Version 1.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.3680.
issp2004	ISSP Research Group (2012): International Social Survey Programme 2004: Citizenship I (ISSP 2004). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA3950 Data file Version 1.3.0, doi: 10.4232/1.11372

Table A2: Source Survey Information *(continued)*

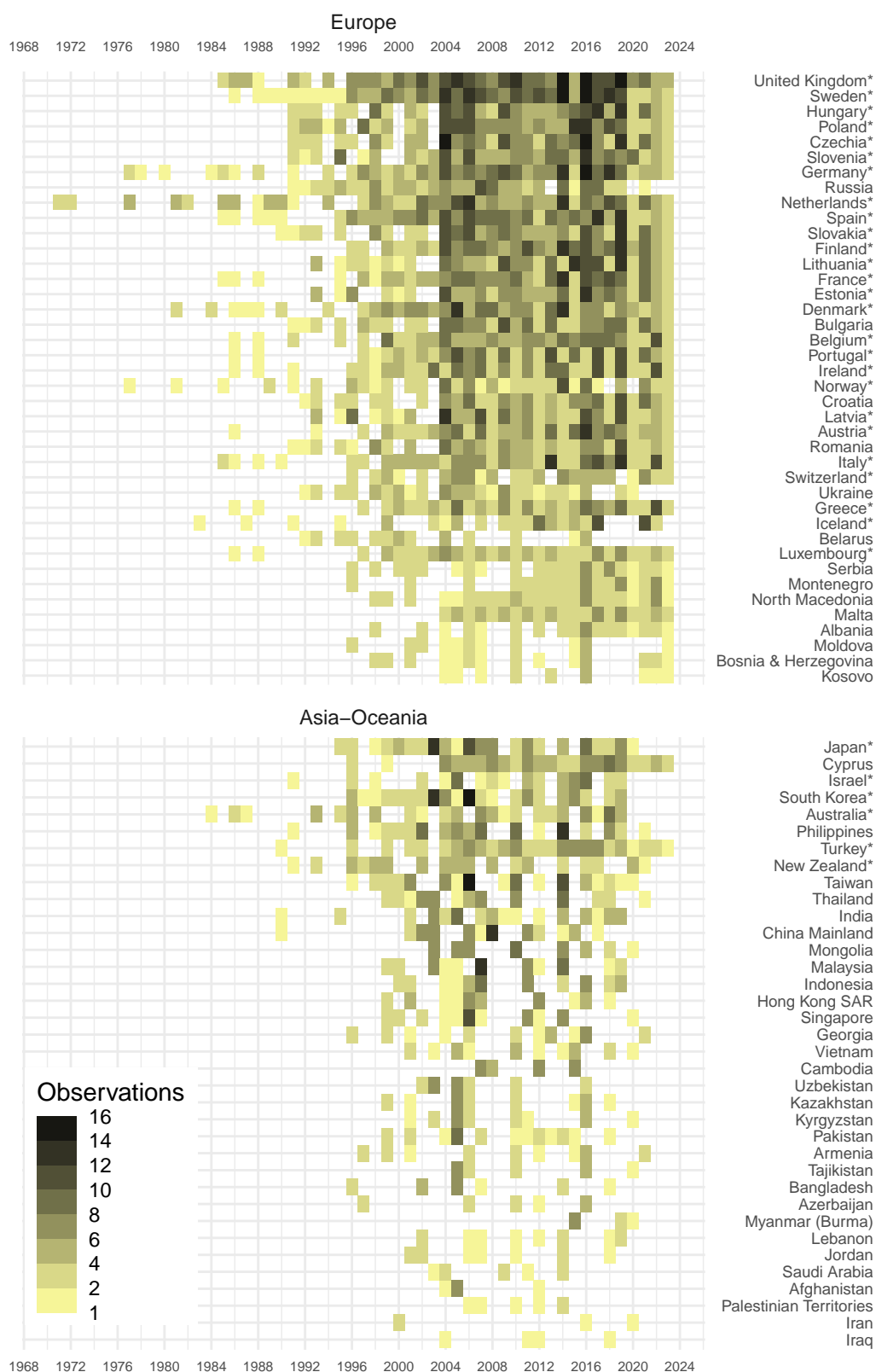| Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
issp2006	ISSP Research Group (2021). International Social Survey Programme: Role of Government IV - ISSP 2006. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA4700 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13707.
issp2008	ISSP Research Group (2018). International Social Survey Programme: Religion III - ISSP 2008. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA4950 Data file Version 2.3.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13161.
issp2010	ISSP Research Group (2019). International Social Survey Programme: Environment III - ISSP 2010. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5500 Data file Version 3.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.13271.
issp2014	ISSP Research Group (2016): International Social Survey Programme: Citizenship II ISSP 2014. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6670 Data file Version 2.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.12590
issp2016	ISSP Research Group (2018): International Social Survey Programme: Role of Government V ISSP 2016. GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6900 Data file Version 2.0.0, doi: 10.4232/1.13052
issp2017	ISSP Research Group (2023). International Social Survey Programme: Environment IV - ISSP 2020. GESIS, Cologne. ZA7650 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14153.
issp2020	ISSP Research Group (2023). International Social Survey Programme: Environment IV - ISSP 2020. GESIS, Cologne. ZA7650 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.14153.
itanes2001	Istituto Cattaneo, Italian National Election Studies, 2001 [Dataset]
itanes2013capi	Istituto Cattaneo, Italian National Election Studies, 2013 [Dataset]
jgss	Tanioka, Ichiro, Iwai, Noriko, Nitta, Michio, and Sato, Hiroki. Japanese General Social Surveys (JGSS) Cumulative Data, 2000-2003. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2008-12-08. https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR04472.v1
jgss2008	Osaka University of Commerce, Japan, Institute of Social Sciences, University of Tokyo, Japan, and Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (2015). Japanese General Social Survey 2008 (JGSS 2008). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5294 Data file Version 3.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.12361.
jgss2010	Iwai, Noriko, Tanioka, Ichiro, and Maeda, Yukio (2015). Japanese General Social Survey 2010 (JGSS 2010). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA5352 Data file Version 3.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.12362.
jgss2012	JGSS Research Center, Osaka University of Commerce, Japan (2016). Japanese General Social Survey 2012 (JGSS 2012). GESIS Data Archive, Cologne. ZA6427 Data file Version 2.0.0, https://doi.org/10.4232/1.12604.
kobar1996	Shin, Doh Chull, 2010, Korea Barometer Survey 1996 [dataset]
kobar1997	Shin, Doh Chull, 2010, Korea Barometer Survey 1997 [dataset]
kobar1998	Shin, Doh Chull, 2010, Korea Barometer Survey 1998 [dataset]
kobar1999	Shin, Doh Chull, 2010, Korea Barometer Survey 1999 [dataset]
kobar2001	Shin, Doh Chull, 2010, Korea Barometer Survey 2001 [dataset]
kobar2004	Shin, Doh Chull, 2010, Korea Barometer Survey 2004 [dataset]
kobar2010	Shin, Doh Chull, 2013, Korea Barometer Survey 2010 [dataset]
lb1995	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 1995. June 27, 2014
lb1996	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 1996. June 27, 2014
lb1997	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 1997. June 27, 2014
lb1998	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 1998. June 27, 2014
lb2000	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2000. June 27, 2014
lb2001	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2001. June 27, 2014
lb2002	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2002. June 27, 2014
lb2003	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2003. June 27, 2014
lb2004	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2004. June 27, 2014
lb2005	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2005. June 27, 2014
lb2006	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2006. June 27, 2014
lb2007	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2007. June 27, 2014
lb2008	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2008. June 27, 2014
lb2009	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2009. June 27, 2014
lb2010	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2010. June 27, 2014
lb2011	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2011. February 27, 2017
lb2013	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2013. February 27, 2017
lb2015	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2015. February 27, 2017
lb2016	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2016. February 5, 2017
lb2017	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2017. January 17, 2018
lb2018	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2018. March 3, 2019
lb2020	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2020. September 30, 2021
lb2023	Corporación Latinobarómetro. Latinobarómetro 2023. December 9, 2023
lits_wave1	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and World Bank (2006). Life in Transition Survey I.
lits_wave2	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and World Bank (2010). Life in Transition Survey II.
lits_wave3	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and World Bank (2016). Life in Transition Survey III.
neb_combo	Aarts, Kees, Bojan Todosijevic, and Harry van der Kaap. Dutch Parliamentary Election Study Cumulative Dataset, 1971-2006. ICPSR28221-v1. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2010-09-13. http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR28221.v1
norcs2013_1	Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth et al. (2024). Norwegian Citizen Panel Round 1, 2013 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2065-V9
norcs2014_3	Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth et al. (2024). Norwegian Citizen Panel Round 3, 2014 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2165-V11
norcs2015_4	Elisabeth Ivarsflaten et al. (2024). Norwegian Citizen Panel Round 4, 2015 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2342-V12
norcs2015_5	Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth et al. (2024). Norwegian Citizen Panel Round 5, 2015 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2343-V11
norcs2016_6	Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth et al. (2024). Norwegian Citizen Panel Round 6, 2016 [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2344-V11
nores2013	Institute for Social Research and Statistics Norway. (2022) Norwegian Election Survey 2013. [Data set] Sikt. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD2215-V3

Table A2: Source Survey Information *(continued)*

Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
nores_combo1	Statistics Norway et al. (2022) Norwegian Election Survey time series 1977-1997. [Data set] Sikt. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD1760-1-V3
nores_combo2	Statistics Norway and Institute for Social Research. (2022) Norwegian Election Survey time series, 2001-2009. [Data set] Sikt. https://doi.org/10.18712/NSD-NSD1760-2-V7
npes_combo	Aarts, Kees, Bojan Todosijevic, and Harry van der Kaap. Dutch Parliamentary Election Study Cumulative Dataset, 1971-2006. ICPSR28221-v1. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2010-09-13. http://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR28221.v1
nsss_combo	Kelley, Jonathan; Bean, Clive; Evans, Mariah D. R., 2019, "National Social Science Survey Integrated Data, 1984-1988", https://doi.org/10.26193/J3CN67, ADA Dataverse, V2
nzes1993	Vowles, Jack; Aimer, Peter; Catt, Helena; Miller, Raymond; Lamare, Jim, 2019, "1993 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/9ODFXU, ADA Dataverse, V6
nzes1996	Vowles, Jack; Banducci, Susan; Karp, Jeffrey; Aimer, Peter; Catt, Helena; Miller, Raymond; Denmark, D, 2019, "1996 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/O0LRZZ, ADA Dataverse, V6
nzes1999	Vowles, Jack; Banducci, Susan; Karp, Jeffrey; Aimer, Peter; Miller, Raymond; Sullivan, Ann, 2019, "1999 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/UNGIXJ, ADA Dataverse, V6
nzes2002	Vowles, Jack; Banducci, Susan; Karp, Jeffrey; Aimer, Peter; Miller, Raymond, 2019, "2002 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/9DE0X4, ADA Dataverse, V6
nzes2005	Vowles, Jack; Banducci, Susan; Karp, Jeffrey; Miller, Raymond; Sullivan, Ann, 2022, "2005 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/WJ8DGC, ADA Dataverse, V3
nzes2008	Vowles, Jack; Banducci, Susan; Karp, Jeffrey; Miller, Raymond; Sullivan, Ann; Curtin, Jennifer, 2022, "2008 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/6CVEYM, ADA Dataverse, V3
nzes2011	Vowles, Jack; Cotterell, Gerard; Miller, Raymond; Curtin, Jennifer, 2022, "2011 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/YZDMF3, ADA Dataverse, V3
nzes2014	Vowles, Jack; Coffé, Hilde; Curtin, Jennifer; Cotterell, Gerard, 2022, "2014 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/MF9DNL, ADA Dataverse, V3
nzes2017	Vowles, Jack; McMillan, Kate; Barker, Fiona; Curtin, Jennifer; Hayward, Janine; Greaves, Lara; Crothers, Charles, 2022, "2017 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/28JJFB, ADA Dataverse, V3
nzes2020	Vowles, Jack; Barker, Fiona; Krewel, Mona; Hayward, Janine; Curtin, Jennifer; Greaves, Lara; Oldfield, Luke, 2022, "2020 New Zealand Election Study", doi:10.26193/BPAMYJ, ADA Dataverse, V3
pew2002	Pew Research Center (2002). Summer 2002 Survey Data.
pew2007	Pew Research Center (2007). Spring 2007 Survey Data.
pew2009	Pew Research Center (2009). Fall 2009 Survey Data.
pew2010	Pew Research Center (2010). Spring 2010 Survey Data.
pew2011	Pew Research Center (2011). Spring 2011 Survey Data.
pew2012	Pew Research Center (2012). Spring 2012 Survey Data.
pew2013	Pew Research Center (2013). Spring 2013 Survey Data.
pew2014	Pew Research Center (2013). Spring 2013 Survey Data.
pew2015	Pew Research Center (2015). Spring 2015 Survey Data.
pew2016	Pew Research Center (2016). Spring 2016 Survey Data.
pew2017	Pew Research Center (2017). Spring 2017 Survey Data.
pew2018	Pew Research Center (2018). Spring 2018 Survey Data.
pew2019	Pew Research Center (2019). Spring 2019 Survey Data.
pewrel2009_afr	Pew Research Center (2010). Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa.
pewrel2015_ee	Pew Research Center (2017). Eastern European Survey Dataset.
pgss	Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw, 2019, Polish General Social Survey, 1991-2010 [dataset]
politbarometer_combo	Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, Mannheim (2017): Politbarometer 1977-2016 (Gesamtkumulation). GESIS Datenarchiv, Köln. ZA5100 Datenfile Version '1.0.0' doi:10.42232/1.5100
ress2014	European Social Survey European Research Infrastructure (ESS ERIC). (2018). ESS7 - Russia [Data set]. Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research.
sasianb1	Hu Fu Center for East Asian Democratic Studies, South Asian Barometer Wave 1 Merge [Dataset], April 18, 2017
som_combo	University of Gothenburg, SOM Institute. (2024). The National SOM Survey Cumulative Dataset (Version 13) [Data set]. University of Gothenburg. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5878/7k7n-yn39
usgss	Davern, Michael; Bautista, Rene; Freese, Jeremy; Herd, Pamela; and Morgan, Stephen L.; General Social Survey 1972-2022. [Machine-readable data file]. Principal Investigator, Michael Davern; Co-Principal Investigators, Rene Bautista, Jeremy Freese, Pamela Herd, and Stephen L. Morgan. NORC ed. Chicago, producer, 2023. Berkeley, CA: Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program (http://sda.berkeley.edu), University of California/ISA, distributor, 2023.
uspew2006_12val	Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. (2007). Pew Research Center Poll No. 2006-12POL: December 2006 Political Communications Study.
uspew2009_val	Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. (2009). Pew Research Center: April 2009 Values Survey (Version 2) [Dataset]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. doi:10.25940/ROPER-31095980
uspew2011_09wk	Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Pew Research Center Poll: September 2011 Generations Survey, 2011 [Dataset]. Roper No.31096044, Version 2. Princeton Survey Research Associates International [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research [distributor]. doi:10.25940/ROPER-31096044
uspew_valcombo	Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Pew Research Center Poll: 1987 to 2003 Values Merge File, 1987 [Dataset]. Roper No.31095812, Version 3. Princeton Survey Research Associates International [producer]. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research [distributor]. doi:10.25940/ROPER-31095812

Table A2: Source Survey Information *(continued)*

Survey Dataset Code*	Citation
wvs_combo	Inglehart, R., C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez-Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin and B. Puranen (eds.). 2022. World Values Survey: All Rounds - Country-Pooled Datafile. Madrid, Spain and Vienna, Austria: JD Systems Institute and WVSA Secretariat. Dataset Version 3.0.0. doi:10.14281/18241.17

* Survey dataset codes correspond to those used in the DCPOtools R package.

Figure A1: Source Data Observations by Country/Region and Year

Figure A2: Source Data Observations by Country/Region and Year, cont.
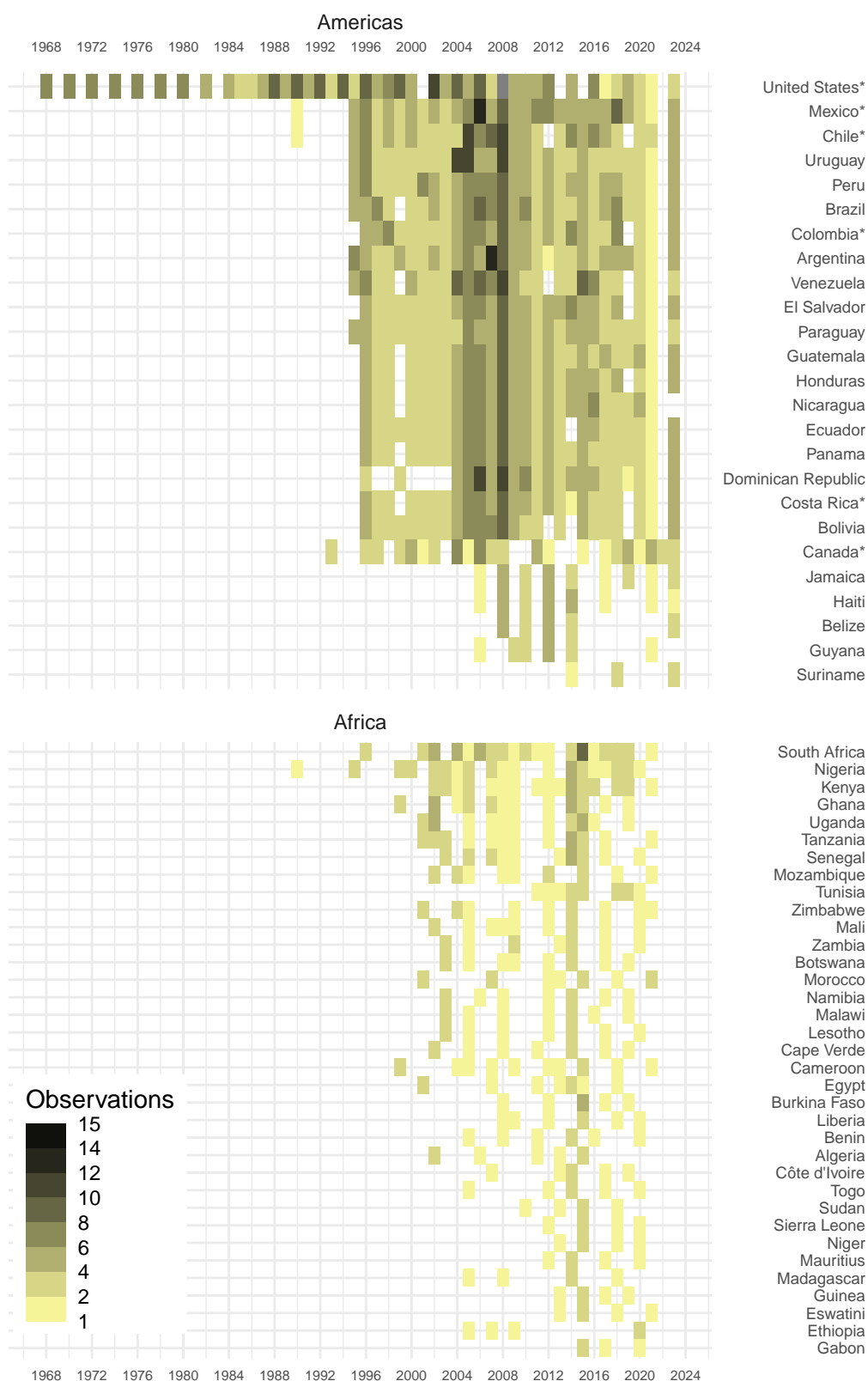
Starred countries are OECD democracies, the sample employed in the analysis of public political discontent presented in the main text.

A2 The DCPO Model

Several recent studies have developed latent variable models of aggregate survey responses based on cross-national survey data (see Claassen 2019; Caughey, O'Grady, and Warshaw 2019; McGann, Dellepiane-Avellaneda, and Bartle 2019; Kołczyńska et al. 2024). To estimate the extent of political discontent in the public across countries and over time, this study employs the latest of these methods suited to data that are both incomparable and sparse, the Dynamic Comparative Public Opinion (DCPO) model elaborated in Solt (2020b). Solt (2020b) demonstrates that the DCPO model provides a better fit to comparative survey data than the models put forward by Claassen (2019) or Caughey, O'Grady, and Warshaw (2019). The McGann, Dellepiane-Avellaneda, and Bartle (2019) model depends on dense survey data unlike the sparse data on political discontent described in the preceding section. Kołczyńska et al. (2024) builds on each of these earlier models, but the MRP approach developed in that work is suitable only when the available survey data are dense and when ancillary data on population characteristics are available, making it similarly inappropriate for this application. The dyad ratio algorithm employed in Peterson et al. (2022), meanwhile, leverages only over-time variation within a single country and not variation across countries, making it less geared toward generating cross-national estimates (see Caughey, O'Grady, and Warshaw 2019, 686).

The DCPO model is a population-level two-parameter ordinal logistic item response theory (IRT) model with country-specific item-bias terms. The central challenge the model addresses is that the source data comprise heterogeneous surveys that differ in question wording, response scales, sampling designs, and field administration—differences that, if ignored, would render cross-national and over-time comparison meaningless. Rather than assuming comparability, DCPO treats each survey question as its own imperfect indicator of the latent trait and explicitly estimates the parameters that link observed responses to the underlying quantity of interest. Three sets of parameters do the substantive work of resolving incomparability; a fourth mechanism handles sparsity. Each is discussed in turn below, followed by the formal specification of the model.

A2.1 Addressing Incomparability

The first parameter set, *difficulty* (β_{qr}), represents the level of the latent trait needed for a respondent to endorse a particular response option of a survey question. That each response evinces a varying level of political discontent is most easily seen with regard to the ordinal responses to the same survey item: responding "strongly agree" to the statement "people like me don't have any say about what the government does" exhibits more political discontent than choosing "agree," which is a more discontented response than "disagree," which in turn is more discontented than "strongly disagree." More importantly, the difficulty parameter varies across different survey items. For example, strongly agreeing that "there is widespread corruption among those who govern the country" likely expresses even more discontent than strongly agreeing that "people like me can probably vote, but we cannot do anything else to influence politics." By estimating separate difficulty parameters for every response category of every question, DCPO places all items on a common scale—enabling comparison even when the original questions differ substantially in wording and response options. This is the primary mechanism by which the model converts heterogeneous survey data into commensurable information about a single latent trait.

The second parameter set, *dispersion* (α_q), captures each question's noisiness relative to the latent variable. A survey question may confuse some respondents or may not align cleanly with the concept of political discontent; such a question will exhibit high dispersion. On the contrary, the lower the dispersion, the better that changes in responses to the question map onto changes in discontent. The dispersion parameter matters because it downweights noisier items when the model forms its estimate, so poorly performing questions exert less influence on the results. This feature directly addresses the concern that stitching together diverse surveys might simply average over incompatible signals: instead, the model learns how informative each question is and lets more informative questions shape the estimates more strongly. As shown in Table A1, the dispersion estimates indicate that the survey items differ in noise but, overall, contribute informative signals about the single latent variable of political discontent.

The third parameter set, *country-specific item bias* (δ_{kq}), shifts the difficulty of all responses for a particular question in a particular country. Translation issues, cultural differences in response styles, or other idiosyncrasies of a country can render the same survey item not equivalent in its performance there relative to other national contexts; this lack of equivalence is made empirically distinguishable from a difference in discontent by the country's contemporary responses to other included survey items. The δ_{kq} terms absorb these country-level deviations in an item's performance, preventing them from biasing cross-national comparisons. Estimating δ_{kq} requires repeated administrations of question q in country k, so when responses to question q are observed in country k in only a single year, the DCPO model sets δ_{kq} to zero by assumption, increasing the error of the model by any country-item bias that is present. Questions that are asked repeatedly over time in only a single country pose no risk of country-specific item bias, so δ_{kq} in such cases are also set to zero.

Together, these three parameter sets represent not a "magic trick" but rather the standard logic of item response theory applied at the population level: each survey question is treated as its own imperfect measurement instrument, and the model estimates the characteristics of every instrument so that the underlying trait can be recovered despite the instruments' differences. This approach is not only increasingly commonly employed in political science, as noted above, but also analogous to that used in educational testing, where students take different test forms that contain different items, yet their abilities are placed on a common scale through the estimation of item parameters (De Boeck and Wilson 2004; Fox 2010).

A2.2 Addressing Sparsity

To address the sparsity of the source data—the fact that many country-year cells contain no observations at all, and even many observed country-years have only one or a few survey items—DCPO uses simple local-level dynamic linear models, i.e., random-walk priors, for each country. Within each country, each year's value of public political discontent is modeled as the previous year's estimate plus a random shock. These dynamic priors smooth the estimates over time and allow estimation even in years for which little or no survey data are available, albeit at the expense of greater measurement uncertainty: the posterior intervals for unobserved or thinly observed country-years are wider, transparently reflecting the limitations of the source data.

A2.3 Sampling, Item Nonresponse, and Question Sensitivity

Because the DCPO model operates on aggregate response distributions rather than individual-level microdata, several design-level features of the source surveys merit explicit discussion.

Sampling strategy differences within countries. The surveys that contribute data to a given country-year often differ in their sampling designs—probability versus non-probability samples, varying population definitions (e.g., age cutoffs, minority inclusion, territorial exclusions), and different weighting procedures. DCPO mitigates these differences in two ways. First, survey weights, where available, are incorporated in the source data (and the `DCPOtools` package applies them automatically), which reduces distortions from known design features. Second, country-specific item bias terms can absorb persistent, systematic survey-specific shifts within a country–item series. However, because the DCPO model does not poststratify to external population margins, time-varying sample-representation differences within a country–item series may not be fully removed.

This is a limitation the model shares with many cross-national survey aggregation strategies, and it underscores the importance of the validation tests presented in Appendix @ref(sec-app-validation), which assess whether these residual design effects are consequential enough to undermine the resulting estimates.

Item nonresponse. Missing responses at the item level—whether from respondents declining to answer a question or from "don't know" responses excluded by the survey organization—reduce the effective sample size (n_{ktqr}) for the affected question in a given country-year. The DCPO model accommodates this straightforwardly: n_{ktqr} reflects only respondents who provided a substantive response, and the beta-binomial likelihood accounts for the resulting sampling variability. When item nonresponse is extensive, the effective sample shrinks, widening the posterior uncertainty for that observation and thereby limiting its influence on the country-year estimate.

Question sensitivity and differential nonresponse. Certain survey questions—such as those about corruption or trust in political institutions—may induce differential non-response or social-desirability bias, producing response distributions that deviate from what the latent trait alone would predict. The DCPO model addresses this through two channels. First, if sensitivity inflates the noise in a question's responses, the dispersion parameter (α_q) absorbs this excess variability, effectively downweighting the question's contribution to the estimate. Second, if a question's sensitivity operates differently across national contexts—for example, because political conditions make certain topics more taboo in some countries than in others—the country-specific item bias term (δ_{kq}) captures these context-dependent deviations. These mechanisms do not eliminate sensitivity-related measurement error entirely, but they prevent it from systematically distorting the cross-national estimates by isolating it in question-level and country-question-level parameters rather than allowing it to propagate into the latent trait.

A2.4 Formal Specification

DCPO models the total number of survey responses expressing at least as much discontent as response category r to each question q in country k at time t, y_{ktqr}, out of the total number of respondents surveyed, n_{ktqr}, using the beta-binomial distribution:

$$a_{ktqr} = \phi \eta_{ktqr} \tag{1}$$

$$b_{ktqr} = \phi(1 - \eta_{ktqr}) \tag{2}$$

$$y_{ktqr} \sim \text{BetaBinomial}(n_{ktqr}, a_{ktqr}, b_{ktqr}) \tag{3}$$

where ϕ represents an overall dispersion parameter to account for additional sources of survey error beyond sampling error and η_{ktqr} is the expected probability that a random person in country k at time t answers question q with a response at least as discontented as response r.[1]

This expected probability, η_{ktqr}, is in turn estimated as follows:

$$\eta_{ktqr} = \text{logit}^{-1}\left(\frac{\bar{\theta}'_{kt} - (\beta_{qr} + \delta_{kq})}{\sqrt{\alpha_q^2 + (1.7 * \sigma_{kt})^2}}\right) \tag{4}$$

In this equation, β_{qr} represents the difficulty of response r to question q, that is, the degree of political discontent the response expresses. The δ_{kq} term represents country-specific item bias: the extent to which all responses to a particular question q may be more (or less) difficult in a given country k due to translation issues, cultural differences in response styles, or other idiosyncrasies that render the same survey item not equivalent across countries. The dispersion of question q, its noisiness in relation to the latent variable, is α_q. The mean and standard deviation of the unbounded latent trait of public political discontent are $\bar{\theta}'_{kt}$ and σ_{kt}, respectively.

Random-walk priors are used to account for the dynamics in $\bar{\theta}'_{kt}$ and σ_{kt}, and weakly informative priors are placed on the other parameters.[2] The dispersion parameters α_q are constrained to be positive and all survey responses are coded with high values indicating more political discontent to fix direction. The difficulty β of "run by a few big interests" to the oft-asked question "would you say that this country is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?" is set to 1 to identify location, and for each question q the difficulties for increasing response categories r are constrained to be increasing. The sum of δ_{kq} across all countries k is set to zero for each question q:

$$\sum_{k=1}^{K} \delta_{kq} = 0 \tag{5}$$

Finally, the logistic function is used to transform $\bar{\theta}'_{kt}$ to the unit interval and so give the bounded mean of political discontent, $\bar{\theta}_{kt}$, which is our parameter of interest here.

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[1] The ordinal responses to question q are coded to range from 1 (expressing the least political discontent) to R (expressing the most political discontent), and r takes on all values greater than 1 and less than or equal to R.

[2] The dispersion parameters α_q are drawn from standard half-normal prior distributions, that is, the positive half of N(0, 1). The first difficulty parameters for each question, β_{q1}, are drawn from standard normal prior distributions, and the differences between βs for each r for the same question q are drawn from standard half-normal prior distributions. The item-bias parameters δ_{kq} receive normally-distributed hierarchical priors with mean 0 and standard deviations drawn from standard half-normal prior distributions. The initial value of the mean unbounded latent trait for each country, $\bar{\theta}'_{k1}$, is assigned a standard normal prior, as are the transition variances $\sigma_{\theta'}^2$ and σ_{σ}^2; the initial value of the standard deviation of the unbounded latent trait for each country, σ_{k1}, is drawn from a standard lognormal prior distribution. The overall dispersion, ϕ, receives a somewhat more informative prior drawn from a gamma(4, 0.1) distribution that yields values that are well scaled for that parameter.

Table A3

	(1)
Time Trend	0.099
	[0.038, 0.162]
Election Year	−0.491
	[−1.062, 0.066]
Parliamentarism	−0.547
	[−2.366, 1.282]
Federalism	−0.761
	[−6.124, 5.228]
Disproportionality, Mean	0.444
	[−0.078, 0.980]
Disproportionality, Difference	0.021
	[−0.099, 0.143]
GDPpc, Mean	−0.319
	[−0.502, −0.139]
GDPpc, Difference	−0.044
	[−0.123, 0.036]
GDP Growth, Mean	0.532
	[−1.525, 2.436]
GDP Growth, Difference	−0.196
	[−0.301, −0.094]
Unemployment, Mean	0.627
	[−0.129, 1.361]
Unemployment, Difference	0.688
	[0.579, 0.800]
Income Inequality, Mean	−0.016
	[−0.329, 0.309]
Income Inequality, Difference	−0.386
	[−0.618, −0.160]
Num.Obs.	1217
R2	0.784
RMSE	4.65

Unstandardized coefficients with associated 95-percent credible intervals in brackets below.

A3 Numeric Results

A3.1 Tabular Version of Results Presented in Figure 6

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