HOW EUROPEAN PUBLICS AND POLICY ACTORS VALUE AN OPEN SOCIETY

KEY INSIGHTS ACROSS COUNTRIES

Authors:

Dr Jan Eichhorn

Victoria Kupsch

Dr Luuk Molthof

Magali Mohr

OPEN SOCIETY
EUROPEAN POLICY
INSTITUTE

d|part

OPEN SOCIETY
EUROPEAN POLICY
INSTITUTE

d|part

This study forms part of *Voices on Values: How European publics and policy actors value an open society,* a joint project by the Open Society European Policy Institute and d|part. The project was launched in September 2017 in Germany, France, Italy, Greece, Poland and Hungary. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors.

OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS

CONTENTS

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This report forms part of the research project *Voices on Values: How European publics and policy actors value an open society*. Based on original quantitative and qualitative data, it seeks to shed light on what values Europeans care about most, and how these different values interact with each other when juxtaposed. We carried out reviews in six countries: Germany, France, Poland, Hungary, Italy and Greece. In each, a representative public survey was conducted, giving a total of over 6100 respondents as well as over 70 elite interviews with political decision-makers and civil society leaders. The research was led by d|part and the Open Society European Policy Institute, and carried out with the support of a network of partners spanning all six research countries[1]. In addition, based on interviews with EU officials and policy-makers, d|part conducted a study on how policy actors in Brussels view the same values. Alongside this executive report we are publishing a comparative report, country-specific reports and a report on views from Brussels.

1   More about those involved on http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/

INTRODUCTION

Across Europe, democracies are faced with rising populism and mounting pressure from parties of the far right. They challenge some of the core principles on which open societies are based – such as tolerance, pluralism and the protection of minorities and individual freedoms.

At the same time, in an age of 'fake news', bots and algorithms influencing public perceptions and the public sphere encompassing a multitude of online and offline spaces, it has become increasingly difficult to understand public opinion. In several EU countries politicians are calling for stricter immigration laws and a renewed emphasis on national identity. Are these just a few strident voices or do they represent the views of many Europeans?

The *Voices on Values* project seeks to enlighten existing debates about values through an empirical assessment of how Europeans view them, and what they are prepared to trade them off against. Based on an analysis of current debates in six European countries - France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Hungary and Poland - we identified some of the most important values associated with open societies. We then conducted a representative opinion survey and expert interviews across all six countries, asking both the general public, policy actors and civil society leaders to evaluate the importance of these values - in their own right, and in comparison with other values and concerns.

In doing so, *Voices on Values* aims to understand (1) what values Europeans support and how they rate them; (2) how important they consider these values to be vis-à-vis other concerns such as political stability, economic security and the protection of cultural traditions; and (3) whether these values are also shared by political elites.

Our research reveals that more than half of Europeans do not think of the values usually associated with open societies (such as freedom of religion and the protection of minorities) as being opposed to or in contradiction with characteristics of closed societies (such as cultural homogeneity and unquestioning media support for the government). Some 59 per cent of respondents believe that many attributes from both sets of values are important for a good society, even if they are contradictory in terms of democratic theory and from the perspective of policy actors interviewed for this project.

The *Voices on Values* data further demonstrates that an overwhelming majority of Europeans in the six countries surveyed consider the values of an open society to be essential. Even among the people who consider values typically associated with more inward-looking or closed societies important, the vast majority of respondents still support open society values too. This finding implies that open societies in Europe may have broader support than is often assumed, with a hidden majority of Europeans

wanting to live in a country with the characteristics of an open society.

By providing novel insights into how Europeans rate the values studied here, the findings of *Voices on Values* are of significance to other researchers, policy-makers and civil society actors alike. The exploratory design of this research allowed us to investigate Europeans' evaluations of values and their consistency. The results can help improve the quality of public engagement in debates about values.

This introductory report offers an overview of the key insights from within and across all six countries[2]. After a brief introduction to the methodology and theoretical framework underpinning the research for this project, it summarises the key insights from each of the countries and their specific contexts, and identifies main themes across all six.

---

2   A full set of reports for each country with all details and comparative analyses will be published in February 2019 on http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/

SETTING THE CONTEXT: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Questions of openness and of tolerance - of who is included and excluded, to whom certain rights and freedoms apply, and how these can and should be protected by rule of law - are inherent to current debates about values in Europe. In France, for example, they are reflected in heated debates about individual freedoms, such as the right of Muslim women to wear burkinis and, more generally, the interplay between freedom of religion and the French principle of *laïcité*[3]. In Germany, discussions about a German *Leitkultur,* about what German values are and what requirements newcomers must meet to become part of German society, have resurfaced.[4] In Hungary the government has passed legislation that criminalises individuals or NGOs supporting migrants in asylum claims, thereby impairing the fundamental human right to claim asylum and restricting the work of NGOs.[5] With the goal of curbing migration, the Italian governing coalition that came to power in June 2018 has ordered the closure of Italian seaports, criminalised NGOs involved in migrant rescue and passed a law that withdraws humanitarian protection status.[6] The Polish government has introduced measures

that endanger the rule of law and threaten the independence of Polish courts.[7] In Greece, debates about how the country should deal with people arriving on its shores are bound up with those addressing the consequences of its economic crisis. [8]

Questions of openness and values thus have salience across Europe; however, the concept of an 'open society' has different meanings across countries, and the term is commonly used only in some national debates. So how to assess the relative importance of values associated with an open society? Which values should be chosen in the first place?

In order to study how European publics and policy actors view open society values, we decided to conduct an empirical assessment of existing debates around values. For this purpose, the researchers from the six countries identified the core conflicts around values in current political and public debates that are common to all six, and then selected the most contested values. These include freedom of religion and of expression, pluralism, rule of law and protection of minority rights. Although these values

---

3   Quinn, B. (2014, August 24). French police make woman remove clothing on Nice beach following burkini ban. *The Guardian.*

4   Connolly, K. (2017, May 5). Shake hands and read Goethe: attempt to define German values draws ire. *The Guardian.*

5   Reuters Budapest (2018, June 20). Hungary passes anti-immigrant 'Stop Soros' laws. *The Guardian.*

6   Giuffrida, A. (2018, September 24). Italian government approves Salvini bill targeting migrants. *The Guardian.*

7   Broniatowski, M. (2017, December 1). Warsaw defies EU with proposed changes to judiciary. *POLITICO Europe.*

8   Makris, A. (2017, March 21). Majority of Greeks See Migrants as a Social and Economic Threat, EKKE Survey Finds. *Greek Reporter.*

are challenged to different degrees and in different ways across the six countries, they are all part of the fundamental values and law of the EU, as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union:

"The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail." [9]

These values enshrined in Article 2 TEU are not novel or exclusive to EU law, but based on the Western tradition of political philosophy. Indeed, philosophers such as Karl Popper understood these values and principles as part of a set of values underpinning an 'open society'. [10] For the purposes of this research project, we chose to focus on freedoms (e.g. freedom of religion, of speech and of the press), individual rights and their protection (e.g. minority rights) as well as the principles of pluralism, tolerance and non-discrimination. In the following analysis, we refer to these as 'values of an open society.'

To gain meaningful insights into what values Europeans consider to be most important, this research did not assume that different publics share the idea of an open society as a fixed set of values, nor did we use the term 'open society' in the survey. As the term is little used in countries such as France and Italy and has varying meanings in others, its use in a survey could have limited the validity of the results.

Instead, in a representative public survey, we asked people to evaluate the importance of specific values for a 'good society'. We therefore presented respondents with a list (in random order) of 14 values, half of which are associated with an open society and half with more authoritarian and inward-looking attitudes that usually appear in closed societies (see Table 1). We asked respondents to evaluate each of these 14 attributes separately and then examined empirically whether those values associated with an open or closed society were rated similarly high or low, in order to see whether they are understood as forming part of a coherent set or not. [11]

---

9   European Union (2007). Treaty of Lisbon Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community, 13 December 2007, 2007/C 306/01, Art. 2.

10   Popper, K. (1945). *The Open Society and Its Enemies.* Routledge.

11   A detailed account of the survey methodology, including sampling and questionnaire design can be found on the project website: http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/

TABLE 1

Evaluations of attributes associated with open and closed societies

ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH MORE OPEN SOCIETIES	ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH MORE CLOSED SOCIETIES
People who have recently come to live in [COUNTRY] should be treated equally	As few immigrants as possible should come to [COUNTRY]
Everyone can practise their religion	The government must ensure media reporting always reflects a positive image of [COUNTRY]
Everyone can express their opinion	Everyone must respect the national values and norms of [COUNTRY]
Government-critical groups and individuals can engage in dialogue with the government	Non-Christians can only practise their religion at home or in their places of worship
The rights of minorities are protected	Same sex couples should not kiss in public
All political views can be represented in parliament	The views of the government always represent the views of the majority
Media can criticise the government	The right to citizenship in [COUNTRY] is limited to people whose parents hold [COUNTRY ADJECTIVE] citizenship or are ethnically [COUNTRY ADJECTIVE]

The order of all 14 attributes was randomised in the survey and respondents were asked how essential each attribute was for a good society in their view.

Answer options:
- Absolutely essential
- Rather essential
- Rather not essential
- Not at all essential

Since people do not usually consider values in a vacuum but in relation to other concerns, we then tested how likely respondents were to prioritise these values over other concerns. For this purpose, we examined existing debates about values in Europe and identified what concerns are often cited as in opposition to, or irreconcilable with, the values of an open society. Based on this analysis, we formulated trade-off questions (see Table 2). The resulting trade-offs are artificial in the sense that they contrast values and concerns which are not necessarily in contradiction, but which are often presented that way in current public debates. For example, Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orbán stated that "Migration is dangerous to public security, to our welfare and to the European Christian culture"[12], while former German Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière declared that "We [in Germany] are an open society (...), we are not burka [sic]."[13] Here, migration and immigrants are presented as in opposition to physical and economic security as well as culture, while an open society is presented as incompatible with a particular kind of Islamic dress. To reflect these existing debates about values in Europe and to test to what extent they correspond with respondents' views, we designed artificial trade-off questions. To allow respondents to reject this supposed trade-off too, we provided the option "both are equally important".

---

12   Euronews (2018, February 19). Migration 'dangerous' for EU's Christian culture: Orban.

13   Maizière, T (2017, April 30). „Wir sind nicht Burka": Innenminister will deutsche Leitkultur. *Die Zeit,*

TABLE 2

Trade-off questions

Question: Not all aspects of society are viewed as equally important by all. You will now see a list of statements and we would like you to say which of two options you find more important for a good society or whether you find both equally important.

Which of the following is more important for a good society or are both equally important?

ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH MORE OPEN SOCIETIES	OTHER CONCERN PRESENTED
That people who have recently come to live in [COUNTRY OF RESPONDENT] should be treated equally	That state policies always aim at improving the economic well-being of its citizens
	That social cohesion is safeguarded
That everyone may practise their religion	That [COUNTRY]'s cultural traditions and values are protected
	That all people living in [COUNTRY] share the same cultural values
That everyone can express their opinion	That Christian values are not offended
	That ethnic and national minorities are not offended
That government-critical groups and individuals can engage in dialogue with the government	That the government ensures political stability
	That government policy always focuses on maximising economic growth
That the rights of minorities are protected	That the state ensures that the interests of the majority are safeguarded
	That the state ensures its citizens never feel foreign in their own country
That all political views can be represented in parliament	That all parties represented in parliament adhere to democratic principles
	That there is always a stable majority within parliament
That the media can criticise the government	That the government has a free hand in implementing its policies decisively
	That government decision-making is mostly guided by experts

Answer options:
1. [Option 1: Open society attribute] Clearly more important
2. [Option 1: Open society attribute] A little more important
3. Both equally important
4. [Option 2: Other concern] A little more important
5. [Option 2: Other concern] Clearly more important

Survey respondents could answer these trade-off questions by explicitly prioritising the values associated with open societies, or by choosing other concerns they deemed more important, such as political stability, economic security and the protection of cultural traditions - or they could say that both were equally important. We grouped these responses into three categories: *open society prioritisers*, *open society de-prioritisers* and *open society sympathisers*. These labels reflect the response patterns to the survey questions, but they are not expressions of how people think about themselves in the abstract.

To examine the views of policy actors and civil society leaders, we also conducted semi-structured interviews across all six research countries. Interviewees included decision-makers in politics

or policy (politicians or officials, such as civil servants) as well as representatives of civil society (such as NGOs). While the sample differs between countries, depending on the focus of the respective country, interview participants were always asked to comment on questions related to challenges open societies faced in their country. Additionally, they were asked about their opinions on how the public views open society values, and were presented with findings from our research to discuss similarities and differences compared to their own perspective. We also interviewed policy actors in Brussels to examine whether they, working at the supranational level, hold different views. In total, over 70 interviews were conducted across the six research countries and in Brussels. Findings from these interviews are included in each of the individual country reports and the Brussels report.

CROSS-CUTTING INSIGHTS

ATTITUDES TOWARDS DIFFERENT VALUES

In the comparative survey report "The Hidden Majority"[14], Jan Eichhorn and Magali Mohr reveal that most people in all six countries evaluate the values of an open society jointly. If they found some of the open society attributes essential for a good society (such as freedom of expression or the protection of minorities), they were likely to also rate other open society attributes highly (such as freedom of religion and the chance for civil society organisations to challenge government). Conversely, the same applied: those who valued some closed society attributes highly (such as cultural homogeneity and ethnically exclusive definitions of citizenship) tended to also value other attributes of a more authoritarian society highly. Our research therefore shows that most Europeans intuitively group open society attributes together as one set of values, and attributes associated with closed societies as another, different set.

However, people's views on the relationship between these different sets of values are more complicated. Most of the policy actors and civil society leaders we interviewed believe strongly in open society values, and object to inward-focussed and exclusionary values. For most of the expert interviewees, these represent clear opposites. But the same is not true for a significant part of the public. While a number of survey respondents did value either open or closed society attributes highly and objected to the other set, there was also a substantial group of respondents

who valued both as essential. Overall, 59 percent of respondents valued both, and rated some attributes associated with open societies and some associated with closed societies as essential for a good society. In other words, a majority of respondents do not regard them as opposites.

This finding has serious implications. It means that a positive evaluation of open society attributes does not necessarily predict a negative evaluation of closed society attributes. This is especially important for advocates of an open society. Campaigns or advocacy strategies must not assume that promoting open society values automatically leads to a reduction in support for closed society views, or indeed that opposition to closed society views necessarily means more support for an open society. In fact, our findings suggest that any advocacy strategy must decide whether it seeks to: 1) change attitudes towards certain values of an open society, 2) challenge sympathies for closed society attributes, or 3) do both.

Overall, however, open society attributes attract more support than closed society attributes. In addition to the 59 percent who positively evaluate (some parts of) both sets of values, 32 percent show substantial agreement with open society values and little agreement with closed society attributes (Table 3). At the other end of the spectrum, only 5 percent show agreement with closed society values and little agreement with open society attributes. While there is substantial variation between countries, there is a strong common finding: the vast majority of people who have an affinity to aspects of closed societies still support open society values.

---

14   Voices on Values Report: The Hidden Majority. How Europeans feel about an open society (2019). http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/

Evaluations of different value sets by country (row percentages)

VALUE SCORES	High open society Low closed society	Low open society High closed society	High open society High closed society	Low open society Low closed society
Germany	50	3	44	3
France	41	6	48	5
Italy	29	3	65	3
Hungary	18	6	73	3
Greece	23	7	68	2
Poland	29	5	58	8
All	32	5	59	4

ATTITUDE PROFILES

These findings led us to examine how people evaluate values associated with open societies in relation to other concerns, such as political stability, economic security and the protection of cultural traditions. We were interested in seeing whether people tended to prioritise one over the other, or whether they tended to consider both to be equally important. Our analysis led us to identify three groups: *open society prioritisers*, *open society sympathisers* and *open society de-prioritisers*[15].

The category *open society prioritisers* comprises the respondents who tended to prioritise values of an open society over other concerns. They do not necessarily all believe in an open society as a concept or overall category of political views; indeed, the country reports indicate that this term has little currency in the political debates in France and Italy. However, empirically, the survey respondents in this category are the most likely to consider open society values, such as freedom of expression or equal treatment of newcomers, as more important than other concerns, such as political stability, economic security or cultural priorities. Consequently, they are the least likely to trade off values of an open society.

Respondents who were willing to trade off open society values against other concerns, on the other hand, were categorised as *open society de-prioritisers*. While not all of them necessarily support closed societies, they de-prioritise values associated with open societies compared to other concerns.

Finally, we identified a third group of respondents, the *open society sympathisers*. These people are strongly concerned about issues such as political stability, economic security and the protection of cultural traditions, and do not necessarily see open society values as more important than these concerns. However, nor are they willing to trade off open society values against those other concerns. Indeed, the most common response among *open society sympathisers* is that they regard the open society value and the other concern as equally important. By refusing to choose either of them, *open society sympathisers* arguably also reject the political discourse that presents open society values as standing in opposition to other concerns. They believe in the equal treatment of newcomers *and* the protection of economic wellbeing; the freedom of religion *and* the protection of a country's cultural traditions; a government open to dialogue with groups critical of it *and* political stability.

---

15   The three characterisations are reflections of the researchers' interpretation of the analyses, not self-identification categories used by respondents. For more information about our methodology please see Section 2 in this report as well as our project website: http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/

Comprising 21 per cent of respondents in France, 26 per cent in Italy, and between 31 and 35 per cent in Germany, Poland, Hungary and Greece, *open society sympathisers* constitute a considerable group of people across Europe. Apparently less susceptible to simplistic discourses presenting values as mutually exclusive, they are an important target group for anyone seeking to promote an open society and wishing to counter polarisation and the language of division.

Yet policy actors and civil society leaders have so far not engaged well with this third group of people. Probably because of a binary understanding of open society attitudes, people who are concerned with other issues, such as economic or physical security, are often portrayed and understood as being less supportive of an open society. Our research reveals that this is not the case. Indeed, *open society sympathisers* are very similar to prioritisers in their evaluation of many of those core questions. They are, for example, likely to say that migration enriches society and that it is good for the economy, that the political system should focus on ensuring democratic freedoms more than material concerns, and that it is essential that minority rights are protected. In contrast, when comparing *open society sympathisers* with *de-prioritiser*s, the latter are people who hold significantly more closed society views.

In spite of their concern for other issues, *open society sympathisers* must thus be understood as committed to the open society. From a broader perspective, this finding implies that open societies in Europe may have broader support than often expected, with a hidden majority of Europeans wanting to live in an open society.

VIEWS OF EU POLICY ACTORS

In addition to the expert interviews in each of the six case countries, we also conducted interviews with policy actors in Brussels. The aim of these interviews was to get their take on our survey results, the

challenges facing Europe's open societies, and the best strategies for protecting civil rights and liberties.

We spoke to eight European Commission officials – at the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, the Secretariat General, and the European Political Strategy Centre – and two MEPs. We chose them for their expertise on or involvement in policies on migration, security, justice or fundamental rights – areas all intimately linked to the open society.

In a special report on these Brussels interviews,[16] Luuk Molthof explains that nearly all of the interviewees expressed a strong commitment to the protection of civil rights and liberties, with most of them regarding such principles as the freedom of expression, freedom of religion and minority rights as inviolable. However, most also understood that not all Europeans share their (degree of) commitment and that support for an open society comes in different gradations, as indicated by our findings. They also understand that a significant group of Europeans do not automatically prioritise democratic freedoms and rights above economic wellbeing and physical security – or, for that matter, vice versa.

Many of the interviewees had strong views about how to respond to some of our main findings and on how to strengthen Europe's open societies. The interviews helped us identify two broad strategies. The first would focus on improving democratic trust by genuinely listening to European citizens' concerns while simultaneously actively challenging any misunderstandings about, for instance, migration or globalisation. The second would focus on tackling the perceived trade-off between civil rights and liberties on the one hand and security and wellbeing on the other, by creating and implementing policies at EU level that would protect not only democratic freedoms and the rule of law, but also employment and physical security.

---

16   The report will be published in February 2019 on the project website http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/.

FINDINGS FROM COUNTRY CASE-STUDIES

One of the main strengths of this research is its two-level design: the survey results not only offer us important general and cross-cutting insights into the state of democratic values in Europe, but they also shed important light on country-specific developments. To contextualise the country-specific findings, each country team produced its own report with a particular focus and observations.[17]

GERMANY

In the German country report, Luuk Molthof and Magali Mohr focus specifically on the relationship between national identity and pride, on the one hand, and open society attitudes, on the other.

Germany's past has made Germans acutely aware of the dangers of nationalism, and celebrations of Germanness are still largely taboo. But this taboo is coming under pressure, as many Germans seem to want to move past feelings of guilt and shame. Yet some fear national pride may boost Germany's far right and endanger the country's tolerant and open society.

The survey results and interview data show that despite the sensitivity around the subject, Germans feel a latent sense of national pride. This is true of the general public as well as political elites. Whether more overt expressions of this pride pose a danger to an open society depends on what that pride is based on. Our research has found that if it is based on pride

in the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law), the welfare state, Germany's tolerance towards newcomers or its role in European integration, then German patriotism need not endanger an open society. On the contrary, it even promotes its values. More caution is warranted when it comes to pride in Germany's cultural legacy, its economic power and its role as an innovation leader.

Yet our research has found that a majority of respondents take pride in attributes associated with support for an open society. This is why the authors encourage German politicians and civil society leaders invested in an open society to actively engage in the conversation about national identity and pride.

FRANCE

Although the term 'open society' has little traction in France, the democratic principles at the core of an open society are embodied by France's republican national motto of freedom, equality and fraternity (*liberté, égalité, fraternité*). French respondents overwhelmingly support freedom of thought and expression, along with the rule of law. Principles specifically concerned with openness, however, are less well regarded.

In the French country report, Catherine Fieschi, Paul Gaudric and Paul Lagneau-Ymonet identify two topics that apparently diverge from the principles of an open society: law enforcement and migration.

---

17   All of the reports will be published in February 2019 on the project website http://voicesonvalues.dpart.org/

On the former, the authors observed a readiness to accept tougher security measures even if this means a trade-off on some fundamental rights. This is perhaps unsurprising, given France's recent experience of terrorist attacks.

On migration, there is strong demand for the government to do no more than it does at present to 'welcome migrants.'

Drawing on their expert interviews, the authors claim that the most promising initiatives to promote open society values in France – those that have had the most success – have sought to address such principles constitutionally and through the culturally specific lexicon of the Republic: liberty, equality, and fraternity. Indeed, one of the most striking findings from their research is how well the legal apparatus is upholding democratic values and creating pressure for more openness in applying these values widely. It is on that ground that the authors suggest NGOs and CSOs will make most headway.

POLAND

In the Polish country report, Filip Pazderski traces the origins of Poland's open society through the Solidarity movement of the 1980s and the post-communist transition of the early 1990s. Although the country has since gone through a significant political and economic transformation, the recent success of authoritarian populism and the undermining of democratic institutions by the PiS government have raised questions about how entrenched democratic values really are in Poland.

The expert interviews Pazderski conducted paint a sobering picture of the Solidarity movement's democratic legacy. While the movement and the ensuing democratic transition have had a lasting impact on the country's political system, some interviewees expressed disappointment with the limited degree to which the movement's 'open' principles seem to have taken root.

The survey results demonstrate that support for basic democratic principles is generally high, but Poles tend to embrace a majoritarian definition of democracy. They support basic principles that apply to all people in society, such as freedom of expression. However, other principles, such as the protection of minority rights, receive general support but are traded off more easily against other concerns.

Also of note is the finding that young Poles (aged between 18 and 34) tend to be less supportive of open society values and more supportive of closed society values than their older peers. This suggests that specific engagement strategies need to be aimed at the younger generation.

HUNGARY

Democracy and pluralism have been under attack in Hungary since 2010, when the Fidesz government began to weaken democratic checks and balances. In the Hungarian country report, Bulcsú Hunyadi, Csaba Molnár and Veszna Wessenauer use the results from our survey as well as their own expert interviews to explain why public opposition to the government's anti-democratic measures has not been more widespread.

The survey results demonstrate that while Hungarians do in theory value civil rights and liberties, in practice they often hold conflicting and sometimes contradictory views of what constitutes a good society. Most Hungarians value freedom of expression, the ability of groups critical of the government to engage with it, and freedom of the press. However, many Hungarians also want the government to ensure that media reporting about Hungary is positive.

In addition, Hungarians, like the Poles, have a majoritarian understanding of democracy. Their strong desire for political, cultural, and economic stability often overrides their commitment to civil rights and liberties, in particular when the rights of minorities are concerned. A majority of

the Hungarian population is strongly opposed to immigration. The authors trace these anti-immigration attitudes to the government's effective anti-immigration campaign, started in 2015. However, they also note that the population's attitudes are more nuanced than generally thought and that respondents show far less hostility to non-natives already living in Hungary than government rhetoric does.

An interesting observation is the fact that Hungarians, just like Poles, seem to attach more importance to the ability of NGOs to criticise the government than do some of the other societies surveyed. This should offer some perspective for civil society in Hungary, especially in light of the shrinking of civic space in the country.

ITALY

In the Italian country report, Federico Quadrelli explains that even though the term 'open society' has little traction in Italy, most Italians do support many open society values. This is particularly true of those values enshrined in the Italian constitution, echoing some of the findings from the German case study. Provisions such as freedom of expression and freedom of religion receive widespread support.

However, many Italians express a willingness to trade off certain open society principles for economic wellbeing and social cohesion. Of the six countries surveyed, Italy has the largest percentage of *open society de-prioritisers* (49 percent of the population).

Drawing on his interviews, Quadrelli explains that the readiness of some Italians to trade off open society principles is likely to be tied to concerns about the economic crisis and migration, both issues that are being instrumentalised and activated by the two populist parties now in government.

GREECE

The survey results for the Greek case study demonstrate that support for open society principles in Greece is generally high. As in the other countries surveyed, respondents particularly valued freedom of expression. Respondents in Greece, more so than those in the other countries, also placed a high value on ensuring that all views are represented in parliament.

However, the survey also reveals significant concerns about migration, with over 50 percent of respondents viewing it as a potential threat to society. These attitudes are connected to strong feelings of economic insecurity which may have translated into an inward looking perspective for some people in Greece.

In the Greek case, socio-demographic variables appear to have a substantial impact on value attitudes, more consistently than in most of the other countries surveyed. Younger and more educated Greeks hold more pronounced open society views and are less likely to identify with ethnic or nationalistic ideals.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Most of the issues discussed here have deep roots in the countries' respective histories and are strongly influenced by recent government choices, people's perceptions and the overall political climate.

Early on in this research, it became apparent that the term 'open society' is not universally known or understood. Our expert teams from France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Hungary and Poland were very clear that the understanding of the term in their respective countries would sometimes be far from that of political theorists. While this was a challenge for the survey design, it is also an important starting point for further analysis.

Both the quantitative and qualitative research confirm these predictions: in France and Italy especially, the term 'open society' does not have much meaning in public and political debates. Using or hearing the term would mostly serve to confuse arguments or debates. In Poland and Greece, the term is not used in its own right, but people make sense of it in the country context. This comes with at least some risk at a time of often xenophobic debates on migration and other policies, and the term could easily be taken too literally. For Hungary and Germany, the situation is different again, as in both countries the term itself is used frequently in political discourse. In Hungary, government campaigns against organisations that would describe themselves as advocating open society values have led to a certain familiarity with the term, but have also given it negative associations. In Germany, by contrast,

people's understanding of the term is more positive, and it is used regularly in public debates.

Given how differently the concept of an open society is used (or not) in public and political discourse, it is remarkable how coherent we found people's understanding of it across all six countries. Most people tend to either value characteristics reflective of an open society highly overall, or not. The concept seems to have some underlying meaningfulness, even if it is not in common use across all countries and has different associations in some. While the same applies to characteristics more reflective of closed societies, we need to be careful not to assume that public views are as polarised as the political discourse suggests. Many people hold views that reflect both value sets. But just 5 per cent of people in all six countries *only* support closed society values.

This provides important opportunities for engagement and the chance to develop better communication strategies. While we can learn from these cross-country findings, it is crucial that these insights are understood within the particular context of each country, both in terms of its political and cultural traditions, but also current developments.

From a broader perspective, our *Voices on Values* research implies that open societies in Europe may have broader support than often expected, with a very large hidden majority of Europeans wanting to live in an open society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Broniatowski, M. (2017, December 1). Warsaw defies EU with proposed changes to judiciary. POLITICO Europe.
Retreived from: https://www.politico.eu

Connolly, K. (2017, May 5). Shake hands and read Goethe: attempt to define German values draws ire.
The Guardian. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com

De Maizière, T (2017, April 30). „Wir sind nicht Burka": Innenminister will deutsche Leitkultur. *Die Zeit*.
Retrieved from: https://www.zeit.de

Euronews (2018, February 19). Migration 'dangerous' for EU's Christian culture: Orban. *Euronews*.
Retrieved from: https://euronews.com

European Union (2007). Treaty of Lisbon Amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing
the European Community, 13 December 2007, 2007/C 306/01.

Giuffrida, A. (2018, September 24). Italian government approves Salvini bill targeting migrants. *The Guardian*.
Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com

Popper, K. (1945). *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Routledge.

Quinn, B. (2014, August 24). French police make woman remove clothing on Nice beach following burkini ban.
The Guardian. Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com

Reuters Budapest (2018, June 20). Hungary passes anti-immigrant 'Stop Soros' laws. *The Guardian*.
Retrieved from: https://www.theguardian.com

AUTHORS

Dr Jan Eichhorn, Founding partner and research director at d|part

Jan coordinated the design of the *Voices on Values* project and oversaw the research. He holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Edinburgh and a BA in Integrated Social Sciences from Jacobs University Bremen. In addition to his research work, Jan is a Senior Lecturer in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh.

Victoria Kupsch, Project Lead at d|part for Voices on Values

Victoria was in charge of implementing the overall concept and coordinated the work between country researchers and the Open Society European Policy Institute and d|part. She is Co-Founder of the European Democracy Lab and developed and oversaw projects as head of programme before joining d|part. Victoria holds a BA in Communication studies and Politics from Erfurt University and an MSc in Democracy and Comparative Politics from University College London.

Dr Luuk Molthof, Research Fellow at d|part

Luuk is head qualitative researcher within the *Voices on Values* project. Luuk completed his PhD in Political Science at Royal Holloway, University of London. His thesis examined Germany's role in European monetary history and provided an explanation for Germany's reaction to the euro crisis. Luuk holds an MSc in Modern Chinese Studies from the University of Oxford and an MA in International Relations from the University of Warwick. He obtained his BA in Liberal Arts and Sciences from Maastricht University in the Netherlands.

Magali Mohr, Research Fellow at d|part

Magali is head quantitative researcher on the *Voices on Values* project. Before joining d|part, she was a business consultant in a market research company in London. She is also project coordinator at the Foundation FUTURZWEI. Magali holds a BA in European Studies from Maastricht University and an MSc in Global Migration from University College London.