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Regime support in European democracies



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CONTENTS

LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
INTRODUCTION.....	8
Multi-dimensionality of political support.....	8
Consequences and relevance of political support.....	11
Analytical approaches and explanations of democratic regime support.....	14
The contribution of this dissertation.....	19
Data and methods	25
Main findings	26
CONCLUSIONS	29
SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN	32
REFERENCES.....	36
PUBLICATIONS	43
CURRICULUM VITAE	120

LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation consists of three original publications which are referred to in the dissertation by their respective Roman numbers. The author of the current dissertation is the sole author of all three publications.

- I Lühiste, Kadri (2006). ‘Explaining trust in political institutions: Some illustrations from the Baltic states’, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 39 (4), pp. 475–496;
- II Lühiste, Kadri (2008a). ‘Support for Strongman Rule in Ethnically Divided Societies: Evidence from Estonia and Latvia’, *Democratization*, 15 (2), 297–320;
- III Lühiste, Kadri (2013). ‘Social Protection and Satisfaction with Democracy: a Multilevel Analysis’, *Political Studies*, forthcoming, DOI: 10.1111/1467-9248.12080

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the introductory chapter is to develop a conceptual framework for analysing political support and to discuss the contribution of the current dissertation to the comparative study of political attitudes.

The introductory chapter is structured in six sections. The first section explains and discusses the concept of political support. The second section highlights the consequences of political support and their relevance. The third section discusses evolving research strategies for analysing political support and outlines dominant theoretical explanations of democratic regime support. Next, I explain the approach of the current dissertation and elucidate its contribution to the wider body of literature on political support. Thereafter I give a brief overview of the used data and methods. The sixth section highlights the main findings of the study.

Multi-dimensionality of political support

Political support refers to citizens' orientations towards the main constitutive objects of a political system (Norris 1999a:9, Dalton 2004: 5). Therefore, it is important, first of all, to define conceptually the scope and structure of a political system and to identify the main constitutive objects of a political system.

The need to differentiate and classify the objects of support has been emphasized since early studies of citizens' orientations. Lipset (1960) suggested that we should distinguish between effectiveness, i.e. satisfaction with the performance of the regime and of the incumbents, and legitimacy, i.e. beliefs specifying which institutions are legitimate or accepted as just and proper by the citizenry. Easton (1965) proposed a theoretically more elaborate classification scheme by distinguishing between support for political authorities, for the regime including its values, norms, and institutions, and for the political community. This conceptual framework became the theoretical basis for analysing political support for decades to come. It was also integrated into the concept of political culture as its main component along with process culture and policy culture (Almond and Verba 1963, Almond 1989).

More recent studies have modified and elaborated on the framework suggested by Easton as illustrated on Figure 1. Building upon his initial classification, Norris (1999a) and Klingemann (1999) developed and tested a five-fold conceptualization which distinguishes between political actors, regime institutions, regime performance, regime principles, and the political community as objects of support. Thus they divided the more general object of regime into three distinct levels – institutions, regime performance and regime principles (see Figure 1). Later Dalton (2004) similarly theorized that political support contains values and attitudes toward five major objects of political system: the political community, regime principles, norms and procedures

(which roughly correspond to regime performance), regime institutions, and political authorities. More recently, Fuchs (2007), however, has suggested distinguishing between only three objects of orientations towards a political system: commitment to democratic values (i.e. support for regime principles), support for the democratic regime of the country (i.e. approval of the type of the democratic regime and satisfaction with its functioning), and support for specific political incumbents (see Figure 1).

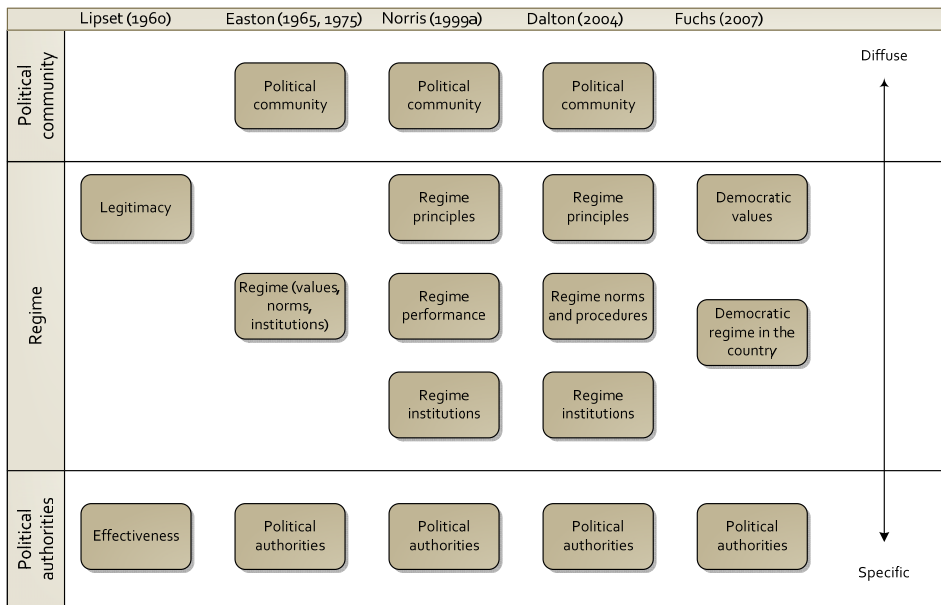


Figure 1. Frameworks for analysing political support

This dissertation adopts the five-fold classification developed by Norris (1999a) which consists of the following dimensions of support:

- Support for the political community – a basic attachment to the nation and a general willingness to co-operate together politically;
- Support for regime principles – beliefs about the best or ideal type of government. This involves choices about whether the system of government should be organized as democratic, authoritarian, military rule or in any other way;
- Satisfaction with regime performance – evaluations of how the regime is functioning in practice as contrasted to the ideal;
- Support for regime institutions – attitudes towards political institutions such as political parties and parliaments, the legal system and police, the state bureaucracy and military;
- Support for political authorities – support for political actors and evaluations of the performance of particular leaders.

The five-fold classification is preferred because it is inclusive and yet elaborate. It involves objects in all three categories: authorities, regime, and community. Drawing a conceptual line between regime principles, performance and institutions as distinct objects of support, it enables us to examine the levels, sources and consequences of orientations towards each political object separately. Also importantly, this analytical framework allows for the possibility that citizens support one regime element, but are critical of some other aspect of the regime. For instance, people may be deeply dissatisfied with the current state of political affairs but still support the underlying principles of democracy. Indeed, this phenomenon of ‘dissatisfied democrats’ has found strong empirical support both in established Western democracies and post-communist democracies (Klingemann 1999, Dalton 2004, Linde 2004, Duvold 2006).

Empirical findings from new and established democracies also support more generally the argument that people make a distinction between different objects of support. Using World Values Survey data from 38 countries and conducting confirmatory factor analysis, Klingemann (1999: 37) clearly demonstrates that the analytically defined objects of political support – political community, regime principles and regime performance – are also kept apart in the minds of the citizens. Results of a principal components analysis of New Europe Barometer data similarly show that the pattern predicted for theoretical reasons does exist – when people think about politics and the political system, they distinguish between regime principles, regime performance, and political institutions (Linde 2004: 87–89). Yet, these distinctions are not always clear-cut (see for instance Duvold 2006: 193–194).

Aside from classifying objects of a political system, all major frameworks also suggest that the classes of objects can be ranked. It means that conceptually, the different objects of support can be placed on a continuum ranging from more specific to highly general as depicted on Figure 1. Thus, political incumbents and institutions are considered to be specific, while regime principles and the political community constitute diffuse objects of support (Easton 1965, Norris 1999a, Dalton 1999, 2004, Fuchs 2007).

The Eastonian schema (1965) further suggests that not only the objects of citizens’ orientations, but also the mode of support varies from specific to diffuse. According to Easton, specific support is the direct result of outputs that satisfy specific citizens’ demands. It “flows from the favourable attitudes and predisposition stimulated by outputs that are perceived by members to meet their demands as they arise” (Easton 1965: 273). Diffuse support, by contrast, is not linked directly to specific rewards. It is a sense of attachment to or loyalty for the authorities, regime, or political community that is “not contingent on specific inducements or rewards of any kind, except in the very long run” (Easton 1965: 275). It is support for a political object for its own sake rather than for what the individual expects to derive from it. As a reservoir of good will, diffuse support is not easily depleted through disappointment with outputs

(Easton 1965: 273–278). Reflecting deeper political feelings, diffuse support is affective in its nature.

However, we should be cautious in assuming that the classes of objects of political support and modes of support vary along the same continuum. Findings of several empirical studies suggest that we risk limiting our understanding of mass political support if we assume that citizens' satisfaction with specific objects is the direct result of outputs *per se*, or that public orientations toward general objects are stimulated only by deeper affective feelings. For instance, the studies provide quite convincing evidence that people's beliefs about the ideal form of government depend, among other things, on immediate outputs of the regime such as economic development and delivery of political goods (II, Kotzian 2011, Linde 2012a).

Therefore, we should further elaborate the analytical framework of political support. As Almond and Verba (1989:13) already suggested in their framework for analysing political culture, it is necessary to distinguish between two dimensions – objects of support and modes of orientations. According to the political culture framework, orientations toward each object of a political system may vary in nature. They can be cognitive (knowledge of and belief about the objects), affective (feelings about the political system and its objects), or evaluational (judgments and opinions about political objects) (Almond and Verba 1989: 13–14).

It must be noted that the five-fold classification of Norris captures only the dimension of objects of support. In order to gain a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of political support, the dimension of objects and the dimension of modes of orientations need to be integrated into a two-dimensional conceptual framework (Dalton 1999: 58–59, Pettai 2007). It means that we should distinguish between cognition, instrumental evaluations and affective orientations at each level of political support. For example, at the level of regime principles, we can draw a distinction between being knowledgeable about regime principles, instrumental evaluations about whether the current system of government is likely to yield better outcomes than any known alternatives and deeper beliefs about democratic values.

Altogether, this dissertation considers objects of support and modes of orientations to form two distinct dimensions and regards the question whether and to what extent support for different political objects is related to affective beliefs or, alternatively, to instrumental evaluations of policy outputs, as a relevant subject of empirical research.

Consequences and relevance of political support

The relevance of political support derives from its alleged consequences. The literature on political support is based on the assumption that individual-level values and attitudes sum up to a macro-level condition of “political support” which is consequential for the stability and quality of democracy. The idea that

(political) culture has important social and political consequences dates back to classic work of de Tocqueville (1835) who examined the success of republican representative democracy in America and suggested that it depends, among other things, on the democratic mentality of the nation. In comparative political research the interest in citizens' political mores and values and their relationship with the stability and quality of democratic regimes was revived at the beginning of the 1960s. In his seminal study, Lipset (1960) argued that culture is a crucial element in understanding a country's political development, and that legitimacy beliefs may determine the fate of nations when the effectiveness of governments breaks down. Another classic text of the 1960s, Almond and Verba's path-breaking study *The Civic Culture* (1989), also theorized that stable and effective democracy requires a set of beliefs and attitudes that are in congruence with the democratic political system.

Given the multi-dimensional nature of political support, it is important to bear in mind that citizens' orientations towards different dimensions or objects may have different consequences. Lipset (1960: 69) observed that during the 1920s and 1930s when economic conditions worsened only those societies remained democratic which ranked high on the scale of legitimacy. This implies that subjective legitimacy beliefs have broader political implications than satisfaction with immediate policy outputs. In other words, "not all expressions of unfavourable orientations have the same degree of gravity for a political system" (Easton 1975: 437). A political system may endure a crisis, even though its effectiveness in satisfying popular demands is low, if citizens regard the system as legitimate and its outputs as authoritative (Easton 1975). This means that dissatisfaction with specific political authorities and the immediate outputs of the regime has limited systemic implications and most often does not result in a regime change. Nevertheless, as the object of dissatisfaction becomes more general the political consequences are likely to be broader and graver, as emphasized by several scholars (Dalton 2004:7).

Overall, scholars agree that support for basic political principles or values are an important and necessary condition for democratic legitimacy defined as public beliefs about the validity and appropriateness of the political order (e.g. Linz and Stepan 1996, Diamond 1999, Norris 1999a, Anderson et al. 2005, Thomassen 2007).¹

There is more controversy concerning the consequences of dissatisfaction with more specific objects like political actors and institutions. Empirical evidence suggests that in many advanced industrial democracies, political support for governments and other political institutions has eroded, while

¹ It does not mean that we can equate public support with legitimacy and discard the normative meaning of legitimacy, i.e. justifiable criteria against which political regimes should be assessed (for a detailed discussion of the concept of legitimacy and public support see Ehin 2008). As Ehin (2008: 622) points out, reducing legitimacy to citizens' perceptions and orientations is problematic, because non-democratic and outright repressive regimes may also enjoy high levels of popular support.

support for democratic processes or principles remains stable (e.g. Klingemann 1999, Dalton 1999, 2004). This has led scholars to talk about the emergence of ‘critical citizens’ or ‘dissatisfied democrats’ who have high ideals of democratic governance, but are not satisfied with the way democracy functions in practice (Klingemann 1999: 37, Norris 1999a: 27). The literature on post-materialist value change emphasises that the more critical attitudes towards governments are an integral part of a more general intergenerational value change which, among other things, fosters effective functioning of a democracy (Inglehart 1997, 1990, Inglehart and Welzel 2005). As a result of growing economic security, people are less concerned with material issues, care more about self-expression and quality of life, and want to have more say in issues that they deem relevant. Thus, the emergence of critical is considered as a resource to help improve the democratic governance rather than a threat to a democracy (Budge 1996, Klingemann 1999, Norris 1999a, Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

According to a more pessimistic approach, long-term public discontent with the performance of specific actors and institutions may be a proof of a poorly functioning democracy and may very well lead to scepticism towards democratic principles and in the end negatively affect the legitimacy of the political regime (Booth and Seligson 2009, Gilley 2006, 2009). Assuming that “each kind of support will spill over to the other and influence it” (Easton 1965: 343), several democratic theorists have emphasized that a stable and effective democracy requires the continuing responsiveness of the government to the expectations of its citizens (Dahl 1989, Diamond 1999, Diamond and Morlino 2005, Plattner 2005). Therefore, when inquiring about support for democracy, we should not limit our attention only to general support for democracy as a regime principle, but also explore more specific attitudes of citizens and aim to understand whether and under which circumstances dissatisfaction leads to democracy-promoting behaviour and in which conditions it may result in disillusionment with democratic ideals. A good example of this kind of investigation is a study by Geissel (2008) that explores how satisfaction with regime performance interacts with internal willingness to be politically attentive and how this interaction is associated to individual’s willingness to defend the democratic regime.

Research that examines political support as an independent variable also suggests that it is likely to have more direct and practical implications. There is quite convincing evidence that satisfaction with regime performance and political trust have strong effects on electoral turnout. Individuals who believe institutions to be trustworthy are more likely to vote, and societies with high levels of political trust tend to have higher electoral participation rates (e.g. Grönlund and Setälä 2007, Hooghe et al. 2009). Several studies also demonstrate that citizens are more likely to comply with regulations and abide by the decisions of political institutions if they trust these institutions and are satisfied with their performance (e.g. Chanley et. al. 2000, Tyler and Huo 2002, Tyler 2006, Grimes 2008). For instance, citizens are more likely to accept

illegal behaviour and avoid taxes if they perceive the authorities to be untrustworthy (Scholz and Lubell 1998, Marien and Hooghe 2011, Sööt 2013). The empirical findings thus suggest that support for specific institutions and satisfaction with their performance is an essential resource for a democratic society. Low levels of political support reduce electoral participation and make it more difficult to implement rules without extensive monitoring and control systems.

Analytical approaches and explanations of democratic regime support

Questions about the determinants and correlates of regime support, as well as the appropriate ways to study these, have given rise to intense debates for several decades. Why do some people display high levels of support, while others are more critical? Why are there extensive variations across countries, social groups, and over time?

First, we can distinguish between individual-level approaches which view regime support as a bottom-up phenomenon and aggregate-level approaches that consider regime support to be an essentially macro-level construct (see Figure 2). While individual-level analyses examine variation between individuals and concentrates on their characteristics, experiences and perceptions, the contextual approach emphasizes the importance of economic, political and social context and aims at explaining differences between countries.

	Rational perspective	Cultural perspective	Institutional perspective
Individual-level	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">Satisfaction with economic performance</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">Satisfaction with political processes and outputs</div> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">Socialization into the political system</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">Trusting and participative disposition</div> </div>	
Aggregate-level	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">Economic development</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">Political process and outputs</div> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%; text-align: center;">Level of social capital</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; width: 100%; text-align: center;">Institutional design and rules</div>

Figure 2. Dominant Explanations of Regime Support by Level of Analysis

Until the 1990s, the individual-level analytical approach was clearly dominant in research on political support. The focus on individuals as autonomous political actors was at least partly a result of limited availability of data. Most

often, the basis for discussing citizens' attitudes were data from a single national survey, which simply did not allow researchers to explore country-level differences and contextual factors (Dalton and Klingemann 2007: 18). Another limitation of these individual-level studies was that they tended to explain one attitude or value by reference to other perceptions and values held by the individual and thus failed to account for exogenous factors. Furthermore, the fact that the evidence was mostly drawn from advanced industrial democracies led to a neglect of some important research questions such as how citizens react to regime change.

Questions about regime change, alternating political attitudes and the (re)-creation of democratic political cultures were brought into the focus of scholarship on regime support by the collapse of the Soviet Union (e.g. Dalton 1994, Rose et al. 1998, Finkel et al. 2001, Mishler and Rose 2001a, 2001b, 2002, Munro 2002, Dowley and Silver 2002). Importantly, the third wave of democratization came after the institutionalization of survey research and thus resulted in more varied cross-national data. This together with a renewed interest in institutional and contextual theories resulted in an increased focus on country-level variations and led to first attempts to combine individual-level and aggregate-level analytical approaches in order to understand both within- and across-country differences in regime support (Clarke et al. 1993, Anderson and Guillory 1997, Rose et al. 1998, Norris 1999b, Linde 2004). However, a real upsurge in scholarship that combines macro-political and macro-economic features with individual-level data and explores how individual-level effects vary across contexts has occurred due to relevant advances in statistical techniques such as multi-level modelling (Anderson 2007: 591). Also, the more complex theories about citizens' attitudes and behaviour call for better data and more sophisticated analytical approaches. Therefore, the most recent trend in the scholarship of citizens' attitudes towards the political regime is the inclusion of contextual factors and institutional variables in order to account for country-level differences and to understand how different contexts mediate individual-level effects (Wells and Kriekhaus 2006, Anderson and Singer 2008, Huang et al. 2008, Lühiste 2008b, Kotzian 2011, Marien and Hooghe 2011, Newton and Zmerli 2011, Curini et al. 2012, Kumlin and Esaiasson 2012). The most recent publication of the current dissertation similarly aims to benefit from undertaking a multi-level analysis to explore simultaneously individual-level and contextual factors, and their interactions (III).

At both levels of analysis, the main variables associated with regime support can be divided into two sets of factors that correspond to rational and cultural perspectives of regime support. At the aggregate level, recently a third theoretical perspective – the institutional explanation – has also emerged (see Figure 2).

The rational perspective views citizens' attitudes as essentially instrumental. It means that support for regime principles and institutions and satisfaction with the overall regime performance depend foremost on how well the regime is able

to satisfy citizens' needs and demands (Clarke and Dutt 1993, Evans and Whitefield 1995, Anderson and Guillory 1997). Various factors that reflect the regime's ability to satisfy citizens' expectations and that have been associated with regime support can be grouped into economic and political variables as depicted on Figure 2. Among the two, economic performance has definitely received more scholarly attention as a determinant of regime support. Empirical studies provide strong evidence confirming the theoretical assumption that sound economic development constitutes a major force leading individuals to be satisfied or dissatisfied with the political regime (Clarke and Dutt 1993, Anderson and Guillory 1997, Rose et al. 1998, Cusack 1999, Delhey and Tobsch 2000, Bratton and Mattes 2001, Karp et al. 2003, Cho and Bratton 2006, Henderson 2008, Neundorf 2010). These studies demonstrate that country-level economic factors such as level of prosperity, economic growth or unemployment explain cross-national variations, while individual-level differences in regime support are related to individuals' economic evaluations and well-being. Furthermore, even support for more general regimes principles does not appear to be immune to economic dissatisfaction (Davis and Speer, 1991, McDonough et al. 1994; Toka, 1995, Mishler and Rose 2001a, Finkel et al. 2001, Kotzian 2011, Linde 2012a, 2012b). Consequently, there is a nearly universal consensus that both country-level and individual-level economic factors need to be included in models of regime support. Yet, there are still unanswered questions regarding the role of economic performance, such as how its impact varies across individuals or across countries. Could it be that economic performance has a weaker role in shaping attitudes towards the regime in more affluent democracies than in poorer countries where citizens are more concerned about their economic well-being? Whether and how does individual's economic well-being mediate the effects of other factors? The current dissertation aims to address these questions and uncover more nuances in the association between economic performance and citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works (III).

As emphasized by several authors, people do not only expect material benefits, they also presume delivery of political goods, such as the absence of political oppression, impartiality of the authorities, and protection of political rights (Evans and Whitefield 1995, Bratton et al 2005, Huang et al. 2008, Linde 2012a). Recent studies that systematically examine the effects of both economic performance and political performance provide mixed results concerning the question which of the two is the more important building block of regime support. Multiple studies demonstrate economic evaluations and economic development to be the strongest determinant of various aspects of regime support (e.g. Cusack 1999, McAllister 1999, Delhey and Tobsch 2000, Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck 2002, Karp et al. 2003, Wagner et al. 2009, Neundorf 2010, Kotzian 2011). However, recent studies that focus on the influence of citizens' perceptions of political procedures and outputs find that these political perceptions are more strongly associated with regime support

than economic conditions (Bratton and Mattes 2001, Mishler and Rose 2002, Bratton et al. 2005, Chu et al. 2008, Huang et al. 2008, Linde 2012a). Hence, the relevance of political performance vis-à-vis economic development remains a contested issue in the scholarship on the sources of public support for political regimes. Therefore, the current dissertation also examines the relative importance of economic performance and the delivery of political goods in explaining popular regime support (I, II).

Although economic evaluations and political performance are the most commonly studied performance-based factors, the rational perspective does not assume that citizens should expect their political system to deliver only economic and political goods. Indeed, recent studies provide some evidence that democratic regime support is also related to welfare provision and its outcomes (Anderson and Singer 2008, Gilley 2009, Newton and Zmerli 2011). But this relationship requires more research. Therefore, a main aim of the current dissertation is to examine the association between social protection and citizens' satisfaction with democracy (III).

The cultural perspective considers regime support to be a cultural phenomenon that is related to deeper affective beliefs that people acquire through socialization. The argument is that citizens learn to support and accept the system and its institutions, as they are socialized into it by multiple socialization agents such as parents, school, and the local community (Almond and Verba 1989). While the effects of socialization have been difficult to study in Western democracies, regime change in Central and Eastern Europe provided an excellent opportunity for testing the socialization hypothesis. Examining generational differences in support for democratic regimes, multiple studies demonstrate that people who are socialized into a democratic political regime during their early adulthood are more supportive of regime principles, have more confidence in its institutions, and are more satisfied with democratic performance (e.g. Gibson 1996, Mishler and Rose 1996, Linde 2004; Neundorf 2010).

From the cultural perspective, another relevant question is which basic norms and beliefs attained through socialization are most relevant for democratic regime support. Since the first civic culture surveys the "faith in people" has been identified as a determinant of confidence in politicians and democratic institutions (Lane 1959, Almond and Verba 1989). More recently, the social capital literature also emphasizes the role of declining interpersonal trust as a major source of the decreasing levels of support for political leaders and the institutions of government in advanced democracies (Putnam, 1992, 2000). However, empirical studies that have tried to uncover the relationship between trust in other people (often labelled as social trust) and democratic regime support over the last couple of decades report contradictory findings. Several studies conclude that there is no clear positive association between social and political trust (Aberg, 2000, Newton and Norris 2000, Newton 2001, 2006, Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck 2002; Uslaner 2002, Delhey and

Newton 2005, Kim 2005). But the most recent studies have found stronger associations between social and political trust (Jagodzinski and Manabe 2004, Zmerli and Newton, 2008, Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009, Campbell 2011, Newton and Zmerli 2011). The current dissertation also aims to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between social trust and confidence in political institutions at the individual level (I).

Aiming to establish the impact of social trust, it is important to consider that culture and social capital are macro-constructs. Even if there is no strong association at the individual level, it may still be that the level of social trust and the 'civicness' of the community are related to aggregate-level differences in regime support. In other words, it may be more important that an individual lives in a society with a high level of social capital rather than how much she personally trusts other people. Indeed, compared to individual-level findings, there is clearer evidence that cross-national levels of aggregate social and political trust are positively associated (for an overview see Newton and Zmerli 2011: 172).

Last but not least, in order to examine how socialization and other cultural factors are related to regime support, we must carefully consider what is the collectivity into which people are socialized and with whom they share common values. Conventionally, nation-states are assumed to form the entities to which a political culture can be attributed (Fuchs 2007). Thus, most studies on regime support (including the above cited aggregate-level studies of institutional trust) treat countries as the unit of analysis and do not consider other important aggregates such as cultural or ethnic groups. Nevertheless, the few studies that specifically focus on countries with significant ethnopolitical cleavages show that major political culture variables and effects vary greatly across ethnic groups (Silver and Titma 1998, Silver and Dowley 2000, Dowley and Silver 2002, 2011). For instance, while among members of the titular majority, greater social engagement is associated with higher levels of support for democracy, the more mobilised members of ethnic minority groups have been found to be less supportive of democracy than the more passive members (Dowley and Silver 2002). This and other findings about ethnic differences suggest that assuming that people in an ethnically divided country share a common political culture can lead to erroneous inferences and to overlooking important sources of variation in political attitudes. The publication on approval of authoritarian alternatives in ethnically divided societies, therefore, discusses and demonstrates how to consider ethnic groups as the unit of analysis and adapt cultural indicators to the context of ethnically divided countries (II).

The institutional perspective focuses on institutional design and rules and how they constrain or facilitate certain attitudes and behaviour. Although the impact of institutional design and rules on individuals' attitudes and behaviour has figured in the study of comparative politics for long time (e.g. Verba et. al 1978), research on democratic regime support has only recently started to explore how political institutions influence and mediate citizens' orientations.

The main reasons behind the limited academic attention to the role of institutions in this context have been scarcity of relevant data and methodological difficulties. In order to explore how country-level differences in regime support relate to differences in institutional set-up, the research design must encompass a large set of countries which can be meaningfully compared and still exhibit enough variation in institutional features such as electoral systems, parliamentarist-presidentialist structures, and the federal-unitary set-up. Nevertheless, there are studies that have examined institutional effects and have found that differences in institutional designs and rules indeed explain cross-national variation in regime support (Anderson and Guillory 1997, Norris 1999b, Huang et al. 2008, Lühiste 2008b, Wagner et al. 2008). Furthermore, combining individual-level and institutional factors some authors have succeeded in demonstrating how institutions, such as electoral rules, mediate individual-level effects. Thus, the difference in satisfaction with democracy between supporters of governing parties and others have been shown to be smaller in countries with a proportional electoral system, compared to democracies with a majoritarian system (Anderson and Guillory 1997, Wells and Krieckhaus 2006, Lühiste 2008b).

The different theoretical perspectives on the predictors of regime support should not be regarded as being incompatible. Both rational and cultural approaches, for instance, conceive democratic support as a product of experience. They differ principally in terms of the time-frame they adopt and in terms of the types of experiences that they regard as most relevant (Huang et al. 2008: 48). There are also successful attempts to combine these two perspectives into one theoretical model. The life-long learning model proposed by Richard Rose and companions explains how generational differences in socialization are updated by short-term effects, such as the performance of the new regime (Rose and McAllister 1990, Rose et al. 1998, Mishler and Rose 2002). The theoretical model of life-long learning has also found empirical support in a recent study, which demonstrates that the variation between evaluations of democratic performance of different generations reduce as citizens become more positive about the economic situation (Neundorf 2010).

The contribution of this dissertation

The aim of this dissertation is to examine determinants of mass political support in European democracies. More specifically, the three publications that form the dissertation study three objects of regime support – trust in political institutions (I), support for authoritarian regime alternatives (II) and satisfaction with the way democracy works (III).

The writing and publication of the articles fell into the period marked by intensified interest in mass political support as well as significant methodological and technical advancements in the study of comparative political

behaviour. The increased interest in citizens' orientations towards the political system has been driven, on one hand, by the collapse of the Soviet Union and, on the other hand, by tremendous social changes. The wave of global democratization that came with the collapse of the Soviet Union provided a unique opportunity to address questions about changing political norms and attitudes and the (re-)creation of political cultures with new, more varied cross-national data. Modernization and the emergence of information society have enabled scholars to study changes in citizens' attitudes, behaviour and their relationship with the elites (Dalton and Klingemann 2007: 18). Since modern, well-educated and well-informed publics tend to be more critical in their evaluations of how political actors, institutions and democratic regimes work, researchers studying public attitudes and political behaviour have become increasingly interested in spill-over effects of support for different levels of the political system. Much of this research is concerned with the question of whether and under which conditions 'critical citizens' may become disillusioned with the underlying democratic principles (e.g. Rose et al. 1998, Klingemann 1999, Mishler and Rose 2001a, Dalton 2004, Linde 2004, Ehin 2007, Huang et al. 2008, Kotzian 2011). The practical relevance of this question has become increasingly evident in the context of the recent economic downturn and growing public discontent.

The intensified interest in citizens' values and attitudes has coincided with some notable advances in statistical methods which can also be traced in the empirical analysis of this dissertation. Due to methodological difficulties, most studies on regime support that were published before the turn of the millennium focused either on studying individual-level variations or country-level differences. Studies combining the two levels in their research design were rare. Furthermore, those studies (e.g. Clarke and Dutt 1993, Anderson and Guillory 1997, Rose et al. 1998, Norris 1999b) that sought to explore individual-level characteristics and contextual factors simultaneously violated important assumptions of the employed statistical procedures. Using ordinary least squares regression and assigning the values of country-level variables to each individual within the country, they ignored the assumption that all observations are independent (Goldstein 2003, Rasbash et al. 2012, Wells and Kriekhaus 2006). Recent advances in statistical methods help overcome this problem by computing robust standard errors or by applying the procedures of multi-level modelling. These methodological improvements are important for understanding complex interactions between individual-level factors and contexts and can more reliably advance our knowledge about the correlates of popular regime support.

As Dalton and Klingemann (2007: 18) conclude, "there has never been a richer opportunity to study the choices of citizens across regime forms and between old and new democracies". The current dissertation aims to take advantage of this opportunity and contribute to our understanding of the sources

of regime support in old and new democracies, including in ethnically divided societies.

With the aim of improving our understanding of democratic regime support, the publications that form this dissertation examine public regime support from different angles and address the following research questions:

- I Which factors influence public trust in political institutions in post-communist democracies?
- II Which factors influence support for authoritarianism in new and ethnically divided democracies? Whether and how do these factors vary by ethnic group?
- III Whether and how is the scope and quality of social protection related to citizens' satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in European welfare states?

The main theoretical expectations informing the performed empirical analysis are summarized on Figure 3. The first two studies constituting this dissertation combine rationalist performance-based and cultural approaches to explain trust in institutions and support for strongman rule in ethnically divided societies. They contribute to our understanding of regime support by investigating its correlates in a new context and addressing the question of how these correlates vary by ethnic group. The third study combines individual-level and country-level analytical approaches into a multi-level analysis with a specific focus on the relationship between social protection and public satisfaction with regime performance. It adds to the literature on regime support by outlining the theoretical and practical reasons why in a European democracy the scope and quality of social protection is likely to be associated with democratic regime evaluations, and how the strength of this association may be conditioned by other factors such as an individual's economic situation or ideological leanings. The following sections discuss the approaches and contributions of the empirical analysis in more detail.

The first two studies employ empirical data from the Baltic countries – post-communist democracies with ethnocultural cleavages. The analysis focusing on political trust is among the first studies testing theories of institutional trust with data from ethnically diverse European democracies. This feature enables me to test existing explanations of institutional trust in a new setting, while also controlling for the effect of ethnicity. The research on approval of strongman rule in Estonia and Latvia (II) focuses even more explicitly on examining whether and how patterns of support for authoritarianism differ by ethnic group. Thus, both studies expand research on regime support into national contexts that differ significantly from the habitual testing grounds of the relevant theories, i.e. long-established and ethnically homogenous democracies.

Expanding research into different contexts creates an opportunity to address novel questions, the neglect of which may limit our understanding of factors underlying public attitudes and behaviour. As pointed out by Rose (2007: 296),

the fact that regime change cannot be studied in long-established democracies is not a reason for ignoring its impact on political behaviour in post-communist countries where regime change has recently occurred. Similarly, we should not ignore the potential impact of ethnicity on democratic regime support just because it cannot be explored in ethnically homogenous democracies.

In order not to omit contextually critical information, the analysis focusing on the approval of strongman rule adapts both the rationalist performance-based and cultural approaches to the realities of ethnically heterogeneous societies. To explore the impact of socialization, it is necessary to define what the collectivity into which people are socialized is, and what unit of aggregation forms “a meaningful entity and not just an artificial construction” (Fuchs 2007: 174). Fuchs (2007) suggests that in today’s nation-state democracies, citizenship enables us to draw clear borders between those who belong to the collectivity and those who do not. He points out that in Western democracies, historically evolved collectivities are both formally and subjectively defined and thus form meaningful entities to which a political culture can be attributed. To what extent this holds for ethnically divided countries, however, is another question. There is quite convincing evidence that both levels and sources of regime support vary with ethnicity (Silver and Dowley 2000, Dowley and Silver 2002). Based on it, I reason that in countries with ethnopolitical cleavages we should be cautious in assuming that there is one national political culture into which people are socialized. As the study on support for strongman rule shows, the socialization agents and experiences of the majority group and of the minority group may differ significantly and these differences should be taken into account when testing cultural hypotheses of regime support (II).

Also importantly, the study on support for strongman rule integrates Brubaker’s triangular configuration theory with the rationalist performance-based perspective. According to the triangular configuration theory, relationships between national minorities, the newly nationalizing states and the external homeland form a ‘triangular configuration’, a central aspect of which is reciprocal interfield monitoring (Brubaker 1995). Building on this framework, I argue that in ethnically divided societies like Latvia and Estonia, regime evaluations of ethnic minorities may depend not only on the economic and political success of the country of residence, but also on conditions in their ‘external ethnocultural homeland’ (Brubaker 1995). Accounting for perceived conditions in the external homeland is particularly important if the external homeland happens to have a different (non-democratic) form of government. Positive perceptions of regime performance in the non-democratic homeland may easily be positively associated with support for authoritarian regime principles in the country of residence. The study on support for authoritarianism in Estonia and Latvia sheds some light on these relationships.

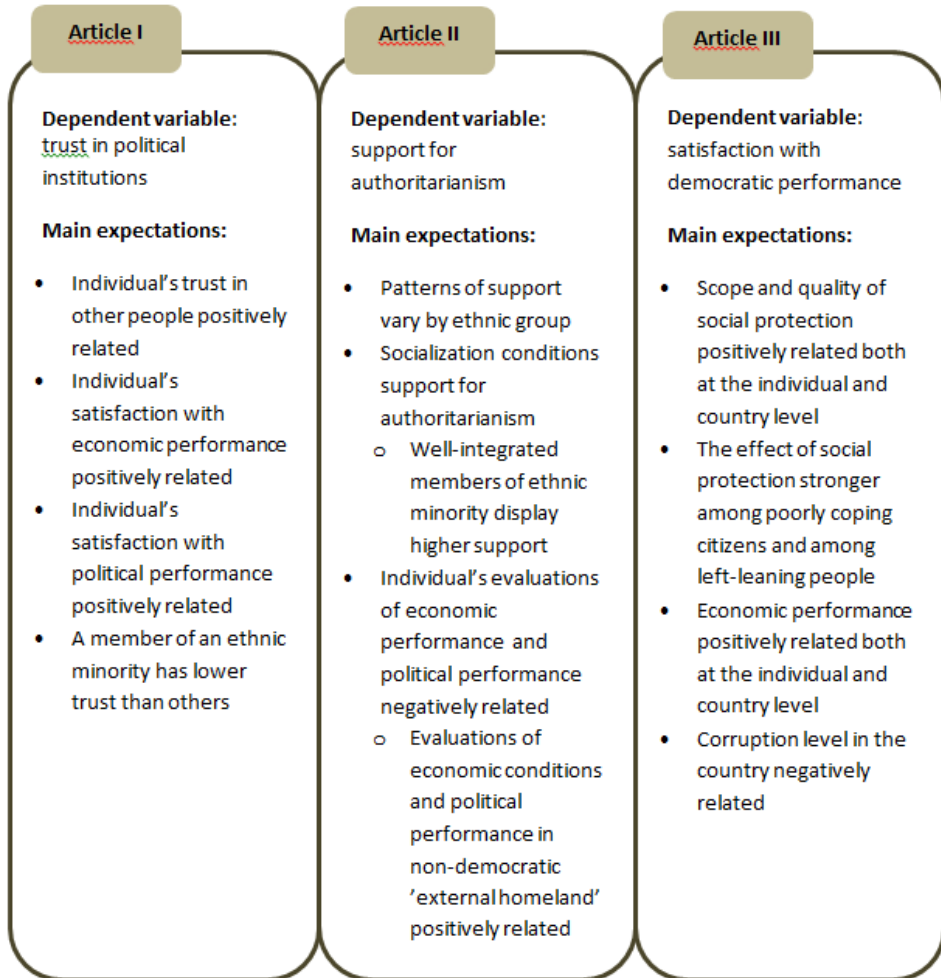


Figure 3. Dependent variables and main expectations of the publications

The analysis of the association between social protection and satisfaction with democratic performance is wider in its scope and explores a relationship that has received undeservedly little attention in the rich empirical literature on satisfaction with democracy. The studies that involve the rational perspective explore primarily how economic performance and delivery of political goods such as fair treatment and respect of individual liberties are associated with regime support. While past research has helped us to understand some economic and political factors behind regime support, it has neglected a significant area of government intervention – social protection. The third publication aims to fill this gap and shed light on the relationship between social protection and satisfaction with democracy.

This dissertation adds to the theory on democratic support by highlighting the theoretical link between welfare provision and democracy and outlining reasons why in European countries, in particular, citizens' satisfaction with democratic performance is likely to be related to the scope and quality of social protection. Based on democratic theories, I argue that social protection is essential for democracy for various reasons such as the need to alleviate the conflict between democracy and capitalism, to enhance the democratic ideal of political equality and to promote the stability of democratic regimes. Given these theoretical links and the fact that social provision has become a major area of government action, I suggest incorporating indicators of welfare state performance into rationalist models of regime support along with the more commonly-used economic and political factors.

The wider scope of Article III enables me to examine individual-level variations while also addressing the question how differences in national social, economic and political conditions shape citizens' evaluations. While earlier studies have mostly explored individual-level differences, the current study on evaluations of democratic performance contributes to our understanding of both individual-level and contextual factors behind public satisfaction with regime performance. Analysing individuals in context is the only way to test the universalist assumption that individual attitudes are unaffected by national contexts and to understand the role of diverse social, economic and political contexts (Rose 2007: 297). However, any effect we find for contexts is only an average for the population as a whole and it may hide significant heterogeneity and 'contingent effects', i.e. differential effects of individual-level factors depending on the environment (Anderson 2007: 592, 597). For instance, in well-off societies where publics have been found to display post-materialist values (Inglehart 1990, 2005), economic satisfaction may have a weaker association with evaluations of democratic performance than in economically less developed countries where people are more concerned about their economic well-being. Therefore the current study not only studies contextual factors, but carefully examines how their effects vary across countries and aims to account for this variation, as well. While providing an example of how to study individuals in context, the analysis of social protection and satisfaction with democracy significantly contributes to our knowledge on how individual-level and contextual factors and their interactions are associated with citizens' evaluations of democratic performance.

To sum up, the contribution of the publications is four-fold:

- Examining aspects of regime support in ethnically divided societies, the dissertation tests rationalist performance-based hypotheses and cultural explanations in new settings and uncovers differences between ethnic groups;
- Adapting cultural and rationalist explanations to include minority-specific indicators, the dissertation contributes to the two main theoretical perspectives of regime support;

- Outlining theoretical links between democracy and social protection and empirically examining the rarely studied association, the dissertation contributes both to the theoretical literature on regime support as well as to our understanding of factors underlying citizens' satisfaction with democracy;
- The empirical analysis of satisfaction with democratic performance provides an example of analysing individuals in context and thereby enhances our understanding of both individual-level and country-level factors and their interaction effects.

Data and methods

All empirical analyses of the dissertation are based on analyses of secondary data (see Figure 4). The articles on political trust and support for authoritarianism use New Baltic Barometer data from 2001 and 2004, respectively. The study on social protection combines individual-level data from the fourth round of European Social Survey with country-level indicators from Eurostat and Transparency International.

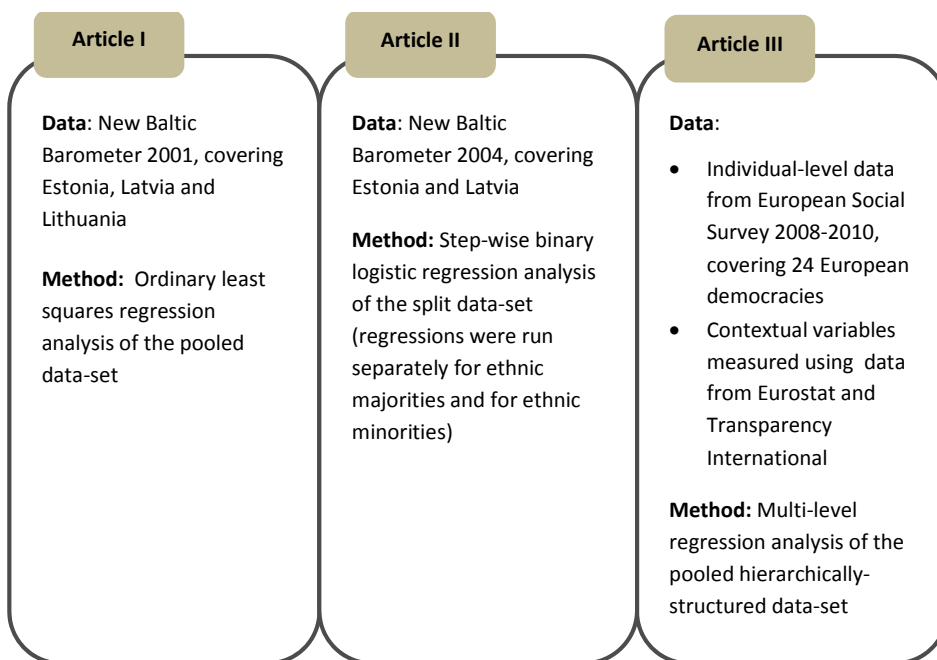


Figure 4. Data and methods employed to study regime support

Although all three studies use regression analysis, there are important differences in their methodological approaches that reflect recent advances in statistical methods. In order to examine the correlates of political trust, I conduct an ordinary least squares regression analysis of the pooled data-set of individuals' responses. Due to more complex theoretical expectations, the study on approval of strongman rule employs a somewhat more sophisticated methodological approach. Aiming to explore whether and how patterns of support for authoritarianism differ by ethnic group, separate models are developed and tested for the titular ethnic group and ethnic minority. A stepwise method is employed when modelling support among ethnic minority, because it enables me to establish how adding minority-specific variables to the model influences its fit to the data and explanatory power.

Because the study on social protection and democracy has a wider scope and aims to examine both individual-level and country-level variations in satisfaction with democratic performance, it employs a multi-level approach. Assuming that the studied population has a hierarchical structure and breaking down the variation and error terms between the two levels, the multi-level regression analysis enables me to simultaneously include individual-level and country-level predictors, explore variation of contextual effects, and model cross-level interactions to account for the coefficient variations (Goldstein 2003, Rasbash et al. 2012).

Main findings

The results of the three studies demonstrate that European citizens judge their political regimes primarily based on their economic success. The empirical findings show that ethnically mixed new democracies do not differ in this respect from established and relatively homogeneous democracies. Perceptions of economic performance were found to be significantly related to confidence in political institutions (I), and to support for authoritarian alternatives (II). The multi-level analysis of satisfaction with democratic performance demonstrates that cross-national differences in the satisfaction level depend on a country's wealth measured as GDP per capita, while within-country variation in democratic satisfaction is associated with individuals' economic evaluations. The positive relationship between economic performance and regime support is well in line with the results of previous studies. Indeed, the consistency of economic effects, regardless of time points and methodological approach, suggests that the relationship is robust.

A more novel finding regarding economic performance demonstrates how the importance of citizens' economic evaluations depends on the wealth of the country. The analysis conducted in the article III reveals that there is a negative cross-level interaction between individuals' economic evaluations and a country's wealth measured as GDP per capita: the relationship between

democratic satisfaction and perceptions about economic development gets weaker as the country becomes richer (III). This finding supports the argument that in wealthier societies, economic issues lose their relative importance as people become more concerned about non-materialist issues and embrace post-materialist values (Inglehart 1977, 1990, Inglehart and Welzel 2005). However, it does not mean that economic performance becomes irrelevant. Even in the wealthiest European democracies, citizens' economic evaluations and satisfaction with democratic performance still appear to be statistically and substantially significantly associated (III).

The findings about the impact of political performance are not as consistent. Individuals who believe that officials are not corrupt and that human rights are respected were found to display higher levels of trust in political institutions, all else being equal (I). Among Estonians and Latvians, support for authoritarianism is lower among people who believe that regular elections make politicians do what people want, while Russian-speakers who evaluate the performance of the current political system more positively are found to display lower approval of authoritarian alternatives than Russian-speakers with more negative evaluations. Nevertheless, some evaluations about political performance are not associated with support for regime principles (II) and I also fail to demonstrate an expected negative relationship between a country's corruption level, measured using the Corruption Perception Index, and citizens' satisfaction with democratic performance. Overall, perceptions about the delivery of political goods appear to have some impact on regime support, but the findings are less robust than the conclusions about the relevance of economic performance.

The most important finding regarding the rational explanation according to which citizens' political values and attitudes depend on instrumental calculations is that people do not expect democratic regimes to deliver only economic benefits and political goods. As the study on satisfaction with the performance of democracy hypothesized and demonstrated, European citizens' satisfaction with the way democracy works is clearly related to the scope and quality of social protection. Country-level variation in democratic satisfaction is found to depend on the outcomes of welfare provision, while within-country differences are related to individuals' perceptions about welfare state performance in areas like health care, support for elderly people and unemployment support. Exploring how the effect varies with individual's income and ideological dispositions, it further appears that perceptions about social protection are more strongly associated with democratic satisfaction among poorly coping citizens and among people with leftist views (III). Thus the results point to the importance of exploring variations across societal sub-groups, because the estimated average effect can hide significant heterogeneity, as well as theoretically and empirically relevant interactions.

Another relevant finding is that in ethnically mixed countries, specific determinants of regime support which reflect economic and political

performance are likely to vary by ethnic group. The effort of adapting the performance-based explanation by integrating it with Brubaker's triangular configuration theory was well rewarded. The empirical results of the study on the approval of authoritarian alternatives provides evidence that an ethnic minority's support for strongman rule is associated not only with evaluations of economic and political conditions in the country of residence but also with their perceptions of economic conditions in the 'ethnocultural homeland' (II).

Overall, the results point to the need to contextualize our research, especially in new settings such as new democracies with ethnopolitical cleavages. In line with previous studies, the findings display clear differences between ethnic groups (Silver and Titma 1998, Silver and Dowley 2000, Dowley and Silver 2002). Studying the society as a whole and overlooking these variations would considerably limit our understanding of factors underlying regime support. In the Baltic countries, members of ethnic minorities are found to display significantly lower level of confidence in political institutions (I) and to be more supportive of authoritarian alternatives (II). Furthermore, the empirical results also suggest that different socialization agents and life experiences lead to different patterns of support among different ethnic groups. For instance, age and education were found to have inverse effects among the titular nationalities and the ethnic minority. While among ethnic Estonians and Latvians, younger and better-educated people appear to be less supportive of strongman rule, among the Russian-speaking population the effects of belonging to a younger generation and having a higher education were exactly the opposite (II). Without differentiating between ethnic groups by testing separate models or including interaction terms, these differences would go unnoticed. For instance, it may explain why another study which also employs NBB data but does not estimate effects by ethnic group finds negligible effects of age and education on support for authoritarian alternatives (Duvold 2006: 216–217).

Last but not least, the findings also shed light on the relevance of social trust, socialization and life experiences. Trust in other people is found to be the strongest correlate of political trust, all other things being equal (I) and indicators which reflect different socialization experiences such as age and education are found to be related to all three aspects of regime support (even if the relationship has an inverse sign among different ethnic groups) (I, II, III). Among ethnic minorities, societal integration into the political community also appears to play a significant role: well-integrated members of the ethnic minority display lower levels of support for authoritarian alternatives (II).

The two studies that tested the relative explanatory power of performance-based and cultural approaches did not succeed in decisively establishing which of the two approaches constitutes a more powerful explanation of regime support. Rather, the conclusion is that in order to uncover relevant nuances in patterns of regime support, we must include different approaches into our research and examine how the average effects of commonly studied factors vary across social sub-groups and between countries.

CONCLUSIONS

The central aim of this dissertation was to identify and examine determinants of mass political support in European democracies by addressing the following research questions:

- I Which factors influence public trust in political institutions in post-communist democracies?
- II Which factors influence support for authoritarianism in new and ethnically divided democracies? Whether and how do these factors vary by ethnic group?
- III Whether and how is the scope and quality of social protection related to citizens' satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in European welfare states?

By expanding the scope of research on regime support into ethnically divided new democracies, I was able to address some novel questions and to test some of the paradigm's core theories in new and different national contexts. By drawing data from a wider set of European democracies, I explored relationship between the scope and quality of social protection and democratic regime evaluations that has received very limited attention in previous studies.

The findings of this dissertation, summarized in the previous section, have both practical and academic implications. Altogether, the findings of the dissertation suggest that any government wishing to increase public regime support must aim at improving economic development. Citizens' satisfaction with the economic situation was found to influence all the studied aspects of regime support. Even public support for underlying regime principles was found to be not immune to economic dissatisfaction.

However, the governments should not only worry about economic indicators and how people feel about the economy. The findings of the current dissertation clearly indicate that citizens expect their governments to provide more than economic prosperity. Evaluating the regime, its institutions and performance citizens also take into account how well the political system is able to deliver political goods, such as protection of individual human rights and fair treatment (I, II), and how good is the level of social protection (III). While improving procedures and fighting corruption does not necessarily require resources, social protection is crucially resource-dependent. Therefore, meeting the demands for more and better welfare provision is likely to be a more difficult task. There may also be a contradiction between public expectations of welfare provision and economic development. But even under the conditions of limited resources, the composition of social protection expenditure is a question of political priorities. The findings of the current dissertation suggest that a government wishing to promote political equality and increase satisfaction with the functioning of democracy should foremost focus on measures that tackle

poverty and social exclusion rather than policies that support relatively well-off groups (III).

The findings about the impact of ethnicity are not relevant only for Baltic governments, but for any European democracy that has historical ethnopolitical cleavages or face growing ethnic diversity. Firstly, governments should bear in mind that the stability of a democracy depends not only on the support of the majority population but also on the distribution of support for regime principles across significant societal subgroups. Recent demonstrations and unrests in Western democracies, where most participants belonged to ethnic minorities, further underline the importance of evenly spread regime support. A relatively small but strongly disillusioned minority can pose a serious threat to the functioning and stability of a democracy.

It is important to bear in mind that patterns of regime support may significantly vary by ethnicity. Among immigrant populations different factors may explain dissatisfaction and distrust towards regime authorities than among titular nationalities. The evidence from Estonia and Latvia, for instance, suggests that limited societal integration requires more attention as a reason behind distrust and dissatisfaction. Perceptions about economic and political success of a non-democratic ethnocultural homeland may also influence immigrants' orientations towards political authorities in the country of residence (II). Depending on the specific country, it may call for efforts for incorporating ethnic minority into common information field and reducing the importance of media that is controlled by a non-democratic government.

Both the effort of studying regime support in a novel context and the attempt to uncover the impact of social protection contribute to the theoretical literature and analytical models of popular regime support. This dissertation enriches the theoretical literature by elaborating and adapting both the rational and cultural perspectives to include minority-specific indicators, and by outlining theoretical links between democracy and social protection. The empirical analysis of support for strongman rule in ethnically divided societies provides an example of how to regard ethnic groups as the unit of analysis and how to explore minority-specific factors (II). The multilevel analysis of satisfaction with democratic performance offers an example of analysing individuals in context and modelling cross-level interaction effects (III).

The dissertation also casts light on promising avenues for future research. First, the growing ethnic diversity of today's nation-states should receive more attention in the research on citizens' orientations. As the findings of the current dissertation suggest, it is important to contextualize our research and not to treat ethnically divided societies as they were ethnically homogenous. In an ethnically heterogeneous country, ethnic groups are more likely to have common values than the society as a whole (III). I was able to address the questions on ethnicity and its impact by exploring data from the Baltic countries. The next step would be to expand the scope to other democracies that have traditionally been or have recently become ethnically more diverse. For

example, future studies could improve our understanding of public regime support by exploring how new immigrants adopt a democratic political culture and thus testing the theoretical model of re-learning regime support proposed by Mishler and Rose (2002). Given the increasing ethnic diversity, it would also be worthwhile to analyse which kind of government actions are most likely to promote public regime support across relevant social groups.

Altogether, the current dissertation included only European democracies. Therefore the findings cannot be generalised to all democracies, let alone all countries. As a result of the employed data, the study has some other relevant limitations, as well. Due to limited variation in institutional arrangements among the studied countries, I was not able to explore the impact of political institutions. The nature of the available data also did not allow me to conduct cross-time analysis and draw causal inferences. Future research on public regime support may benefit from employing time-series analysis and testing the relevant hypotheses in empirical settings that would enable researchers to examine the impact of institutional arrangements.

SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Kodanike toetus poliitilisele režiimile Euroopa demokraatias

Käesoleva dissertatsiooni eesmärk on uurida kodanike toetust poliitilisele režiimile Euroopa riikides ja täiustada meie teadmisi seda mõjutavatest teguritest. Dissertatsioon koosneb kolmest eelretsenseeritud ja rahvusvaheliselt tunnustatud teadusajakirjas avaldatud publikatsioonist ning sissejuhatavast peatükist, mis loob publikatsioonidele ühtse teoreetilise raamistiku, selgitab nende teoreetilist ja empiirilist panust ning toob välja olulisemad analüüsitulemused.

Kodanike poliitilisi hoiakuid ja väärtuseid uurivas teaduskirjanduses on saanud valdavaks arusaam, et poliitiline toetus on **mitmetahuline kontseptsioon**. Kodanike toetus poliitilisele süsteemile hõlmab nende hoiakuid erinevate süsteemi tahkude või elementide suhtes ning neid elemente on võimalik reastada konkreetsuse-üldistatuse teljel (Easton 1965, Norris 1999a, Dalton 2004, Fuchs 2007). Süsteemi põhilisi osi on vajalik eristada, sest need on olemuslikult erinevad, kodanikud võivad neisse väga erinevalt suhestuda ning rahulolematuse erinevate elementidega võib tuua kaasa erinevaid tagajärgi sõltuvalt sellest, milline on elemendi konkreetsuse-üldistatuse tase. Näiteks võivad inimesed olla väga kriitilised valitsuse igapäevase tegevusega ja sellega, kuidas demokraatia tervikuna toimib, kuid ometigi olla veendunud, et demokraatia valitsemisvormina on siiski parim kõigest võimalikest alternatiividest (Klingemann 1999, Dalton 2004).

Kriitilisus konkreetsete poliitikute ja institutsioonide suhtes ei ohusta otseselt demokraatliku režiimi stabiilsust ja kestmist, sest võimukandjaid on võimalik välja vahetada ja institutsioonide toimimist parendada ilma demokraatlikke aluspõhimõtteid muutmata. Toetuse puudumine demokraatiale kui valitsemisvormile kujutab endast aga suuremat ohtu režiimi kestmisele (Lispert 1960, Easton 1965, Norris 1999a, Dalton 2004). Seda arvestades lähtub käesolev doktoritöö Pippa Norrise (1999a) viietasemelisest jaotusest ja eristab poliitilise toetuse põhielementidena järgmisi tahke kõige üldisemast kuni kõige konkreetsemani:

- toetus poliitilisele kogukonnale – side rahvusega ja üldine soov kogukonnana poliitiliselt koos toimida;
- toetus režiimi aluspõhimõtetele – uskumus ja arusaam selle kohta, milline on parim valitsemisvorm: demokraatlik, autoritaarne, sõjaväeline vm režiim;
- rahulolu režiimi toimimisega – hinnangud selles osas, kuidas poliitiline süsteem tervikuna toimib, kuidas aluspõhimõtteid praktikas rakendatakse;
- toetus režiimi institutsioonidele – hoiakud ja usaldus peamiste poliitiliste institutsioonide – parlamendi, erakondade, kohtusüsteemi, politsei jne suhtes;
- rahulolu võimukandjatega – hinnangud konkreetsetele poliitikutele ja võimukandjatele.

Käesoleva doktoritöö empiirilise osa moodustavad publikatsioonid uurivad režiimitoetuse kolme põhielementi kasutades statistilise analüüsi meetodeid:

- I *'Explaining trust in political institutions: Some illustrations from the Baltic states'* uurib lineaarse regressioonanalüüsi abil poliitiliste institutsioonide usaldamist seletavaid tegureid, kasutades New Baltic Barometer'i 2001. a. Eesti, Läti ja Leedu andmeid;
- II *'Support for Strongman Rule in Ethnically Divided Societies: Evidence from Estonia and Latvia'* uurib autoritaarsete alternatiivide eelistamist seletavaid tegureid, kasutades New Baltic Barometer'i 2004. a. Eesti ja Läti andmeid ja astmelist binaarset logistilist regressioonanalüüsi;
- III *'Social Protection and Satisfaction with Democracy: a Multilevel Analysis'* analüüsib, kuidas sotsiaalse kaitse ulatus ja tase on seotud kodanike rahuloluga demokraatia toimimisega kasutades European Social Survey 2008–2010.a. andmeid 24 Euroopa riigist ja mitmetasemelist regressioonanalüüsi.

Esimesed kaks artiklit testivad režiimitoetuse kahte peamist teoreetilist seletust – ratsionalistlikku ja kultuurilist lähenemist. Ratsionalistliku lähenemise järgi sõltub kodanike toetus sellest, kuivõrd poliitiline süsteem suudab rahuldada nende erinevaid nõudmisi ja vajadusi, nagu näiteks luua majanduslikku jõukust, kaitsta inimõigusi, tagada võrdset kohtlemist. Kultuurilise lähenemise kohaselt sõltuvad kodanike poliitilised hinnangud ja arusaamad ennekõike nende üldisematest väärtushinnangutest ja uskumustest, mis omakorda kujunevad valdavalt sotsialiseerimise tulemusena.

Institutsionaalset usaldust ja autoritaarsete režiimialternatiivide toetamist uurivate publikatsioonide põhiliseks panuseks on režiimitoetuse uurimine tavapärasest erinevas kontekstis – uutes ja mitmerahvuselistes demokraatiates. See võimaldas leida vastuseid järgmistele küsimustele:

- Kas teoreetilised lähenemised, mis toimivad hästi etniliselt homogeensetes Lääne demokraatiates on asjakohased ka etniliselt lõhestatud uutes demokraatiates?
- Millist rolli mängib rahvus? Kas ja kuidas erinevad autoritaarsete alternatiivide toetamist seletavad tegurid enamus- ja vähemusrahvuste seas?

Otsides vastust küsimusele, kuidas poliitilise toetuse mustrid enamus- ja vähemusrahvuste seas erinevad, täiendab ja kohandab autoritaarsete alternatiivide uurimus nii kultuurilist kui ratsionalistlikku lähenemist (II). Artikkel selgitab, miks ei pruugi mitmerahvuselistes riikides kehtida tavapärase eeldus, et ühes riigis elavad inimesed kannavad ühtset poliitilist kultuuri ja kuidas tuleb kultuurilise seletuse testimisel arvestada sellega, et enamus- ja vähemusrahvuse sotsialiseerimiseagendid ja kogemused võivad olla üsnagi erinevad. Samuti seob uurimus ratsionalistliku perspektiivi Brubaker'i (1995) kolmekülgse konfiguratsiooni (ingl.k. *triangular configuration*) teooriaga, mille kohaselt uued demokraatlikud riigid, neis elavad vähemusrahvused ja nende „etnokultuurilised kodumaad” jälgivad kolmepoolselt üksteise käekäiku. Seetõttu on alust eeldada,

et vähemusrahvuse seas ei sõltu poliitiline toetus vaid elukoha riigi majanduslikust ja poliitilisest edust, vaid ka päritoluriigi käekäigust: positiivsed hinnangud mitte-demokraatliku kodumaa majanduslikule ja poliitilisele olukorrale võivad vähendada toetust demokraatiale elukohariigis.

Sotsiaalse kaitse ja demokraatiaga rahulolu seoseid analüüsiva uurimuse ulatus on laiem, hõlmates 24 Euroopa riiki (III). Kuna sotsiaalsüsteemi mõju kodanike rahulolule demokraatia toimimisega on varem väga vähe uuritud, toon ma esiteks välja teoreetilised põhjused, miks need võiksid olla omavahel seotud eriti Euroopa demokraatiates. Nõnda panustab antud uurimus poliitilist toetust käsitlevasse teoreetilisse kirjandusse. Artikli eesmärgiks on uurida sotsiaalse kaitse ja demokraatiaga rahulolu seoseid terviklikult ja mitmekülgset ning leida vastused järgmistele küsimustele

- Kas ja kuidas sotsiaalse kaitse tase seletab erinevusi demokraatiaga rahulolus riikide vahel?
- Kas ja kuidas on indiviidi tasandil seotud hinnangud sotsiaalkaitse tõhususele ja demokraatia toimimisele? Kuidas sõltub selle seose tugevus sellest, kas tegemist on jõukamate või vaesemate inimestega või millised on nende ideoloogilised hoiakud?
- Kuidas sõltub indiviiditasandi seoste tugevus kontekstist ehk sellest millises riigis inimene elab?

Nendele küsimustele vastuste leidmiseks kasutan mitmetasemelist regressioonanalüüsi, mis võimaldab korraga uurida riikide vahelisi erinevusi seletavaid tegureid, indiviiditasandi seoseid ning seda, kuidas indiviiditaseme seoste tugevus riigiti varieerub. Nõnda on antud uurimus üheks näiteks sellest, kuidas analüüsida kodanikke kontekstis ning saada terviklikku pilti nii riikide vaheliste kui riikide siseste erinevuste põhjustest.

Dissertatsiooni empiirilise analüüsi tulemused näitavad üheselt, et Euroopa riikide kodanike toetus poliitilisele režiimile sõltub režiimi majanduslikust edukusest (I, II, III). Analüüsi hõlmatud Balti riikides on inimeste hinnangud majanduse toimimisele seotud sellega, kui võrd nad eelistavad demokraatiale mõnda autoritaarset valitsemisvormi (II) ja kui kõrge on nende usaldus poliitiliste institutsioonide suhtes (I). Selles osas ei erine uued ja mitmerahvuselised demokraatiad teistest Euroopa riikidest, kus varasemad uuringud on korduvalt leidnud samasuguse seose (nt Citrin ja Green 1986, Miller ja Borelli 1991, Hetherington 1998, Anderson ja Guillory 1997, Holmberg 1999, Karp jt. 2003).

Küll on uudsem mitmetasemelise analüüsi leid, et majanduslike hinnangute ja demokraatiaga rahulolu vahelise seose tugevus sõltub sellest, kui jõukas riigis inimene elab (III). Mida rikkama riigiga on tegu, seda nõrgemaks seos muutub. See analüüsitulemus toetab väidet, et majanduslikult heal järjel riikides pööravad kodanikud vähem tähelepanu majandusküsimustele ja hindavad kõrgemalt mittemateriaalseid väärtusi (Inglehart 1977, 1990). Siiski ei tähenda see, et jõukusega majanduse käekäigu tähtsus täielikult kaob – ka kõige jõukamates

riikides on kodanike hinnangud majanduse olukorrale selgelt seotud nende rahuloluga demokraatia toimimisega (III). Seega tuleb igal valitsusel, mis soovib edendada kodanike toetust poliitilisele süsteemile, hoolitseda majanduse hea käekäigu eest.

Majanduse olukord on väga oluline, kuid sugugi mitte ainus tegur, mis mõjutab kodanike toetust poliitilisele režiimile. Analüüsitulemused näitavad selgelt, et kodanike valmidus toetada autoritaarseid alternatiive on seotud sellega, kui hästi nad arvavad poliitilist süsteemi toimivat (I) ning et rahulolu demokraatia toimimisega sõltub sotsiaalse kaitse ulatusest ja tasemest (III). Niisiis tuleb poliitilise režiimi toetust suurendada soovivatel valitsustel arvestada kodanike mitmekesiste nõudmiste ja vajadustega.

Mitmerahvuselist riikide valitsused peavad lisaks pöörama tähelepanu sellele, kuidas toetus jaguneb erinevate rahvusrühmade vahel ning üritama mõista toetuse taseme erinevuste põhjuseid. Eesti ja Läti andmete analüüs viitab sellele, et poliitilist toetust seletavad tegurid võivad rahvusrühmiti erineda ja isegi olla vastassuunalise mõjuga. Seetõttu ei või etniliselt lõhestunud riikides eeldada, et kõik riigi elanikud jagavad ühtset poliitilist kultuuri, vaid poliitilist toetust ja sellega seotud tegureid tuleb uurida rahvusrühmade kaupa. Eesti ja Läti näited viitavad sellele, et vähemusrahvuse puhul võib madal režiimitoetus olla seotud madala integreeritusega ühiskonda. Lisaks võib vähemusrahvuse hinnanguid mõjutada see, kuidas nad tajuvad oma mitte-demokraatliku päritoluriigi poliitilist ja majanduslikku olukorda. Usk mitte-demokraatliku päritoluriigi edusse suurendab valmidust toetada kõvakäelist valitsust ka elukohariigis.

Edasised poliitilise toetuse uuringud peaksid kindlasti suureneva etnilise mitmekesisusega arvestama ning üritama rikastada meie teadmisi selles osas, kuidas uusimmigrandid võtavad üle poliitilisi norme ja sulanduvad kohalikku poliitilisse kultuuri. Samuti on väärt analüüsida see, millised valitsuse tegevused võiksid enim soodustada režiimitoetuse kasvu erinevates ühiskonnarühmades.

Arvestades seda, et käesolev doktoritöö hõlmas vaid Euroopa demokraatide ega saanud andmete piiratud varieeruvuse tõttu analüüsida institutsionaalse raamistiku mõju, võiks tulevikus tehtavad uuringud hõlmata suuremat arvu ja erinevamaid riike. See võimaldaks uurida, kas ja kuidas erinevaid institutsionaalsed reeglid mõjutavad kodanike poliitilist toetust. Näiteks, kas kõike muud arvestades, erineb toetuse tase riigiti sõltuvalt valimissüsteemist või sellest, kas tegemist on presidentaalse või parlamentaarse riigiga.

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Employment:

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Feb 2010 – Nov 2011 Head of Employment Services Department, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund
Oct 2006 – Jan 2009 Head of Analysis Department, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund
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Main fields of research:

Citizens' political attitudes and support for the political regime

Publications:

Lühiste, K. (2006). 'Explaining trust in political institutions: Some illustrations from the Baltic states', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 39 (4), pp. 475–496.
Lühiste, K. (2008). 'Support for Strongman Rule in Ethnically Divided Societies: Evidence from Estonia and Latvia', *Democratization*, 15 (2), pp. 297–320.
Lühiste, K. (2008). 'Evaluations of democratic performance: the influence of institutional and individual factors', *Studies in Public Policy*, University of Aberdeen.

Lühiste, K. (2013). 'Social Protection and Satisfaction with Democracy: a Multilevel Analysis', *Political Studies*, forthcoming.

Teaching experience:

2009 Research Methodology, Tartu University

2011 Political Culture, Tartu University

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Teaduspublikatsioonid:

- Lühiste, K.** (2006). 'Explaining trust in political institutions: Some illustrations from the Baltic states', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 39 (4), pp. 475–496.
- Lühiste, K.** (2008). 'Support for Strongman Rule in Ethnically Divided Societies: Evidence from Estonia and Latvia', *Democratization*, 15 (2), pp. 297–320.
- Lühiste, K.** (2008). 'Evaluations of democratic performance: the influence of institutional and individual factors', *Studies in Public Policy*, University of Aberdeen.
- Lühiste, K.** (2013). 'Social Protection and Satisfaction with Democracy: a Multilevel Analysis', *Political Studies*, forthcoming.

Õpetamiskogemus:

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