



WZB

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin
für Sozialforschung

Crisis of Democracy: an Invention?

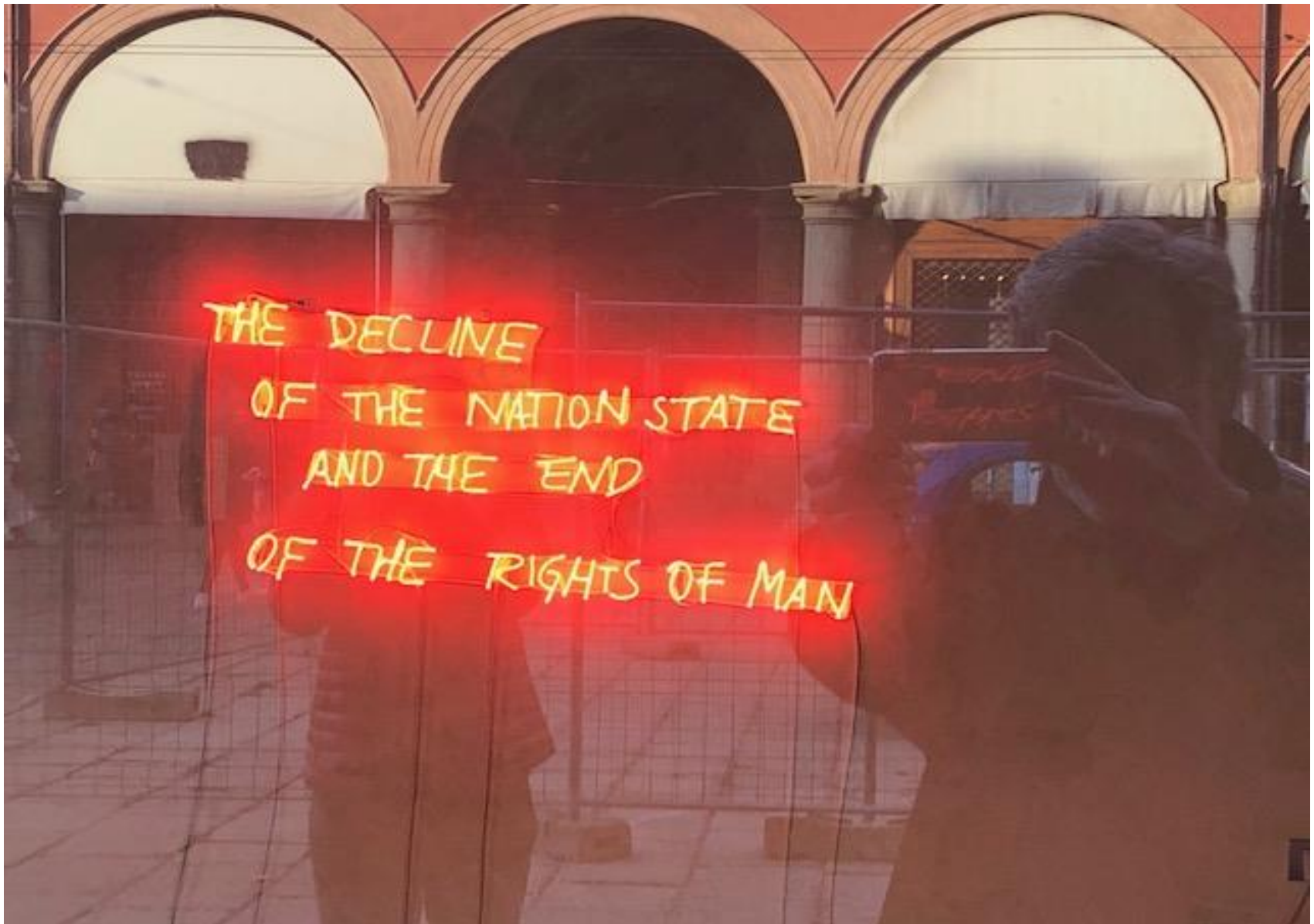
Wolfgang Merkel

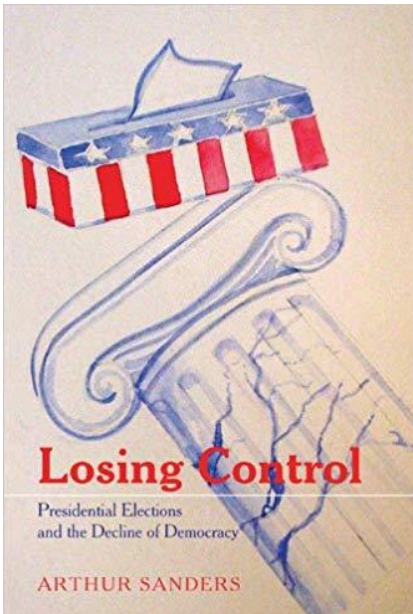
Febr. 10, 2020

JHU Bologna Center

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin







Losing Control

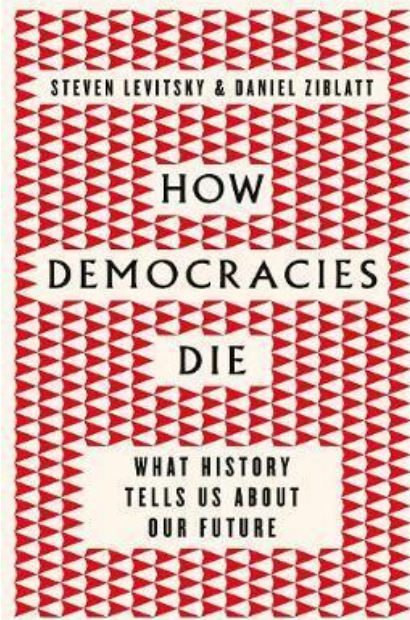
Presidential Elections
and the Decline of Democracy

ARTHUR SANDERS

"This book may well be one of the most important you
have ever read." - Charles A. Coulombe,
Author of *Puritan's Empire*

**THE END
OF
DEMOCRACY**

Christophe Buffin de Chosal
Translated by Ryan P. Plummer



STEVEN LEVITSKY & DANIEL ZIBLATT

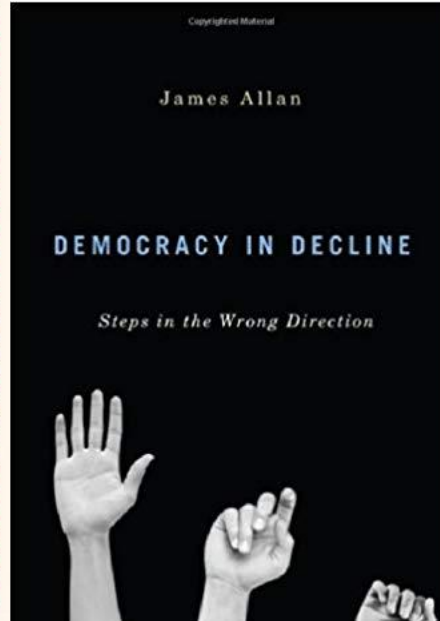
**HOW
DEMOCRACIES
DIE**

WHAT HISTORY
TELLS US ABOUT
OUR FUTURE

**DEMOC-
RACY IN
CRISIS**

WHY,
WHERE,
HOW TO
RESPOND

ROLAND RICH

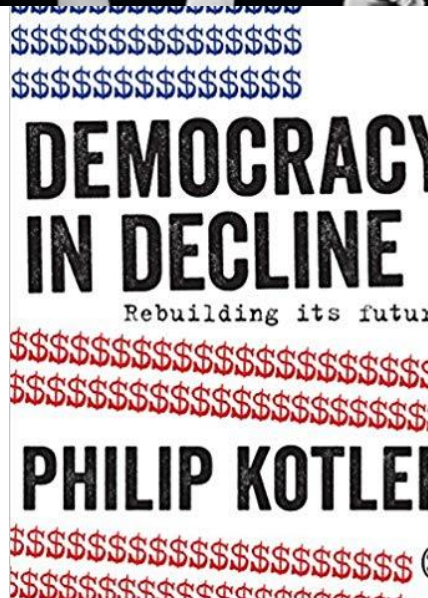


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James Allan

DEMOCRACY IN DECLINE

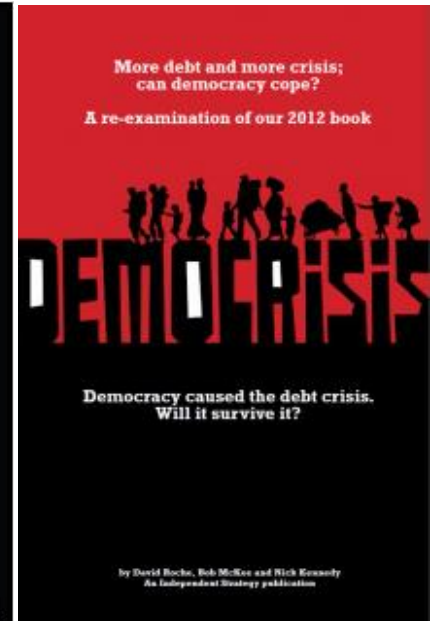
Steps in the Wrong Direction



**DEMOCRACY
IN DECLINE**

Rebuilding its future

PHILIP KOTLER



More debt and more crisis;
can democracy cope?

A re-examination of our 2012 book

**DEMOCRACY
AND CRISIS**

Democracy caused the debt crisis.
Will it survive it?

by David Roche, Bob McKee and Nick Kewney
An Independent Strategy publication

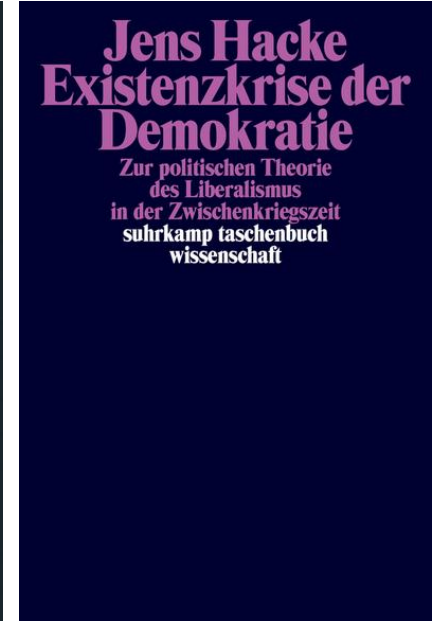
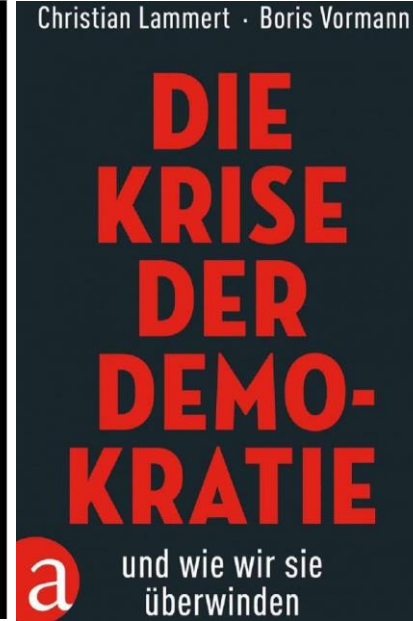
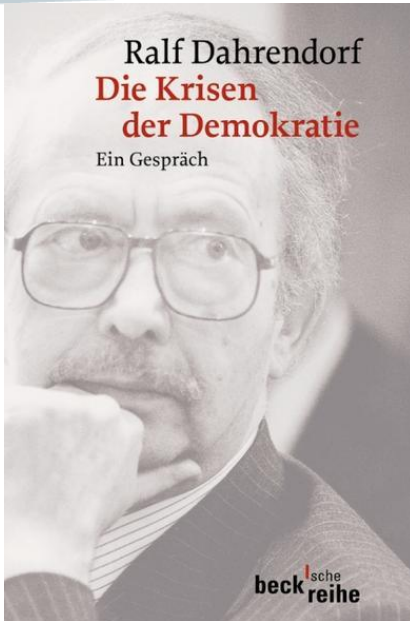


Wolfgang Merkel · Sascha Kneip Editors

**Democracy
and Crisis**

Challenges in Turbulent Times

Springer



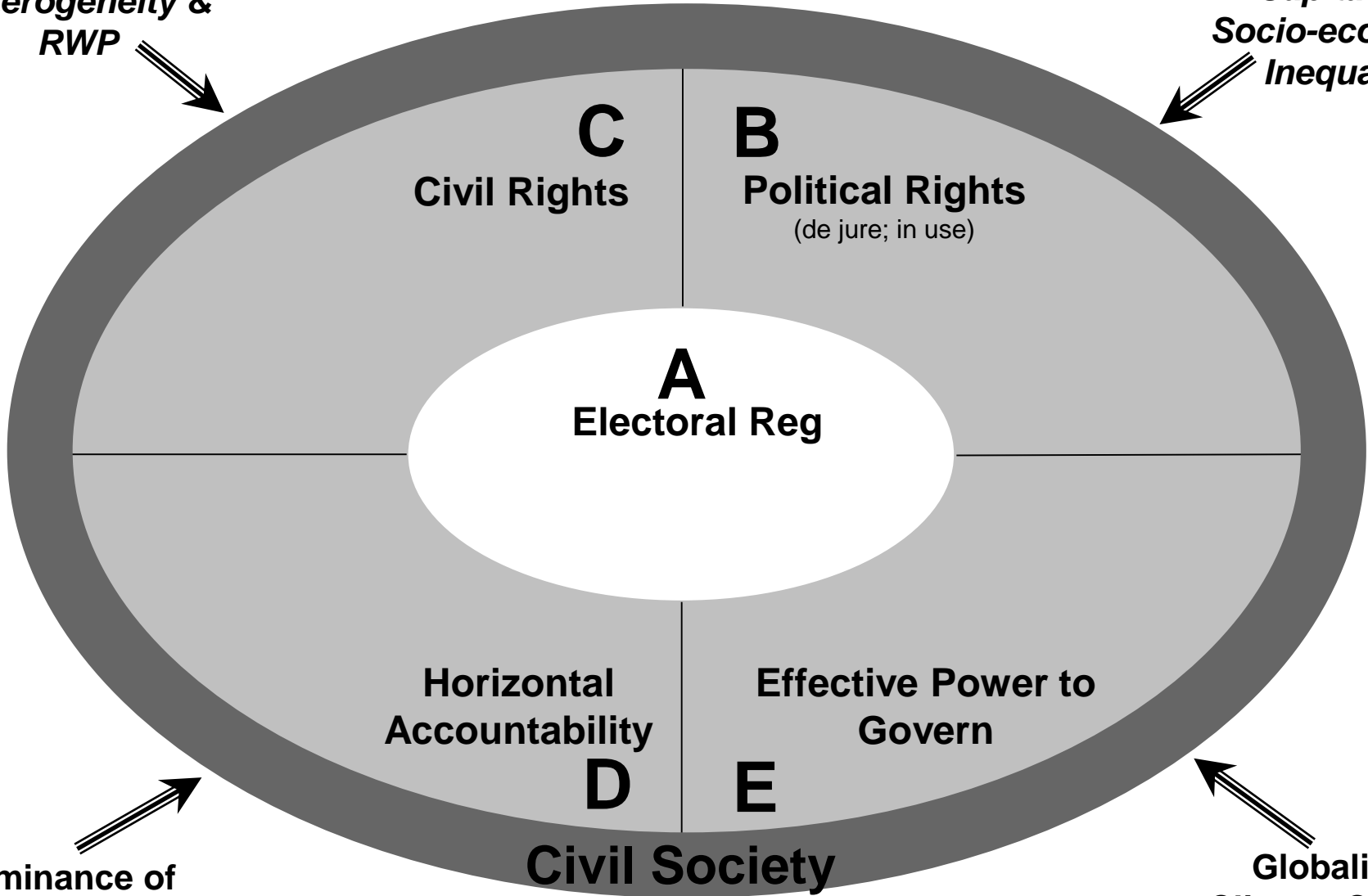
Democracy & Crisis: Three Levels of Analysis

1. What does democracy mean?
2. What does crisis mean?
3. What do the experts think: Normative standards (indices)
4. What do the people think: Legitimacy beliefs (surveys)
5. Challenges on the micro, meso, and macro levels of the democratic regimes
6. How resilient are Western (liberal) democracies?

„Embedded Democracy“ – internal and external challenges

*Heterogeneity &
RWP*

*Capitalism
Socio-economic
Inequality*



*Dominance of
Executive*

*Globalisation
Climate Change*

Two Meanings of Crisis I

1. *Acute crisis: Death or life?*

- Crossroad
- Existential threat
- Fundamental decisions/medicine are required

Examples:

- Italy 1920-22
- Weimar 1930-33
- Spain 1933-36/9
- Greece 1965-67
- Chile 1970-73
- Turkey and Venezuela at present

Two Meanings of Crisis II

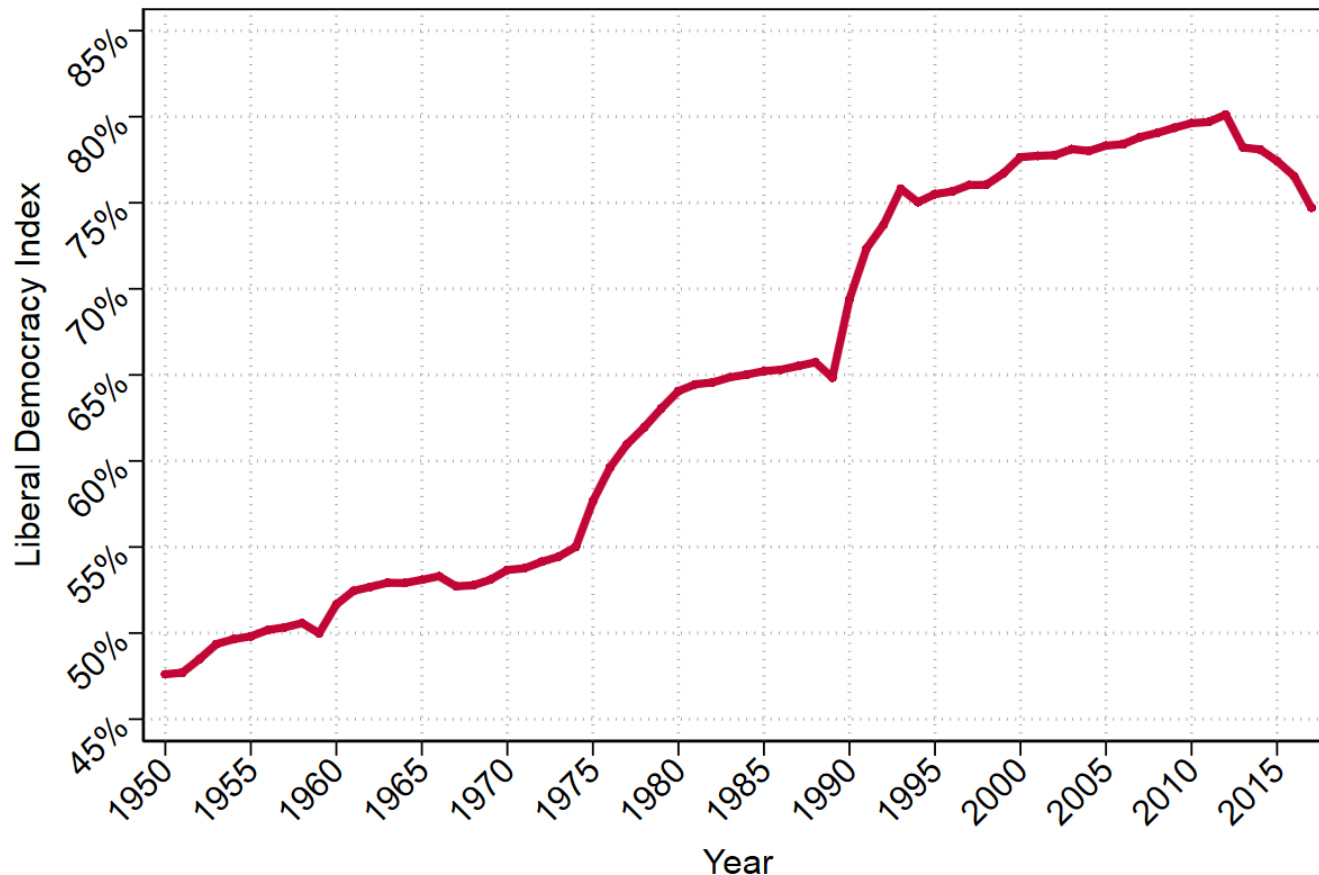
2. *Latent crisis: Slow decline, erosion*

- Unfulfilled normative promises of democracy (min or max)
- Erosion: Worsening of quality, chronic diseases
- Diminished subtype: Defective, illiberal, exclusive democracies, but no collapse/regime transition
- Threshold question not resolved!

Hypotheses:

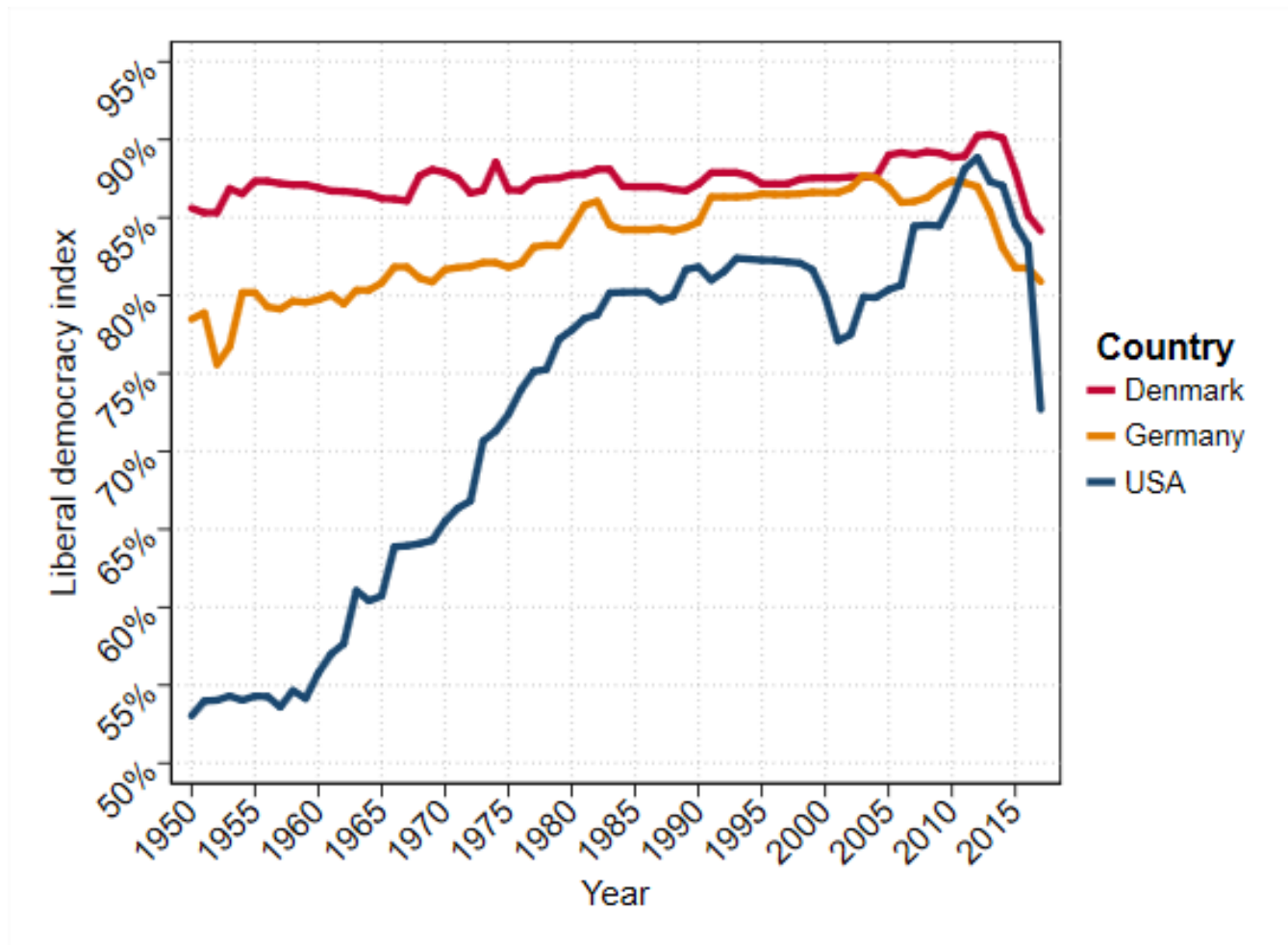
- ⇒ If Type I, the smaller the crisis sample (clearer defined)
- ⇒ If Type II, the bigger the crisis sample (and less defined)

Liberal Democracy Index – EU Countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, USA, and Japan

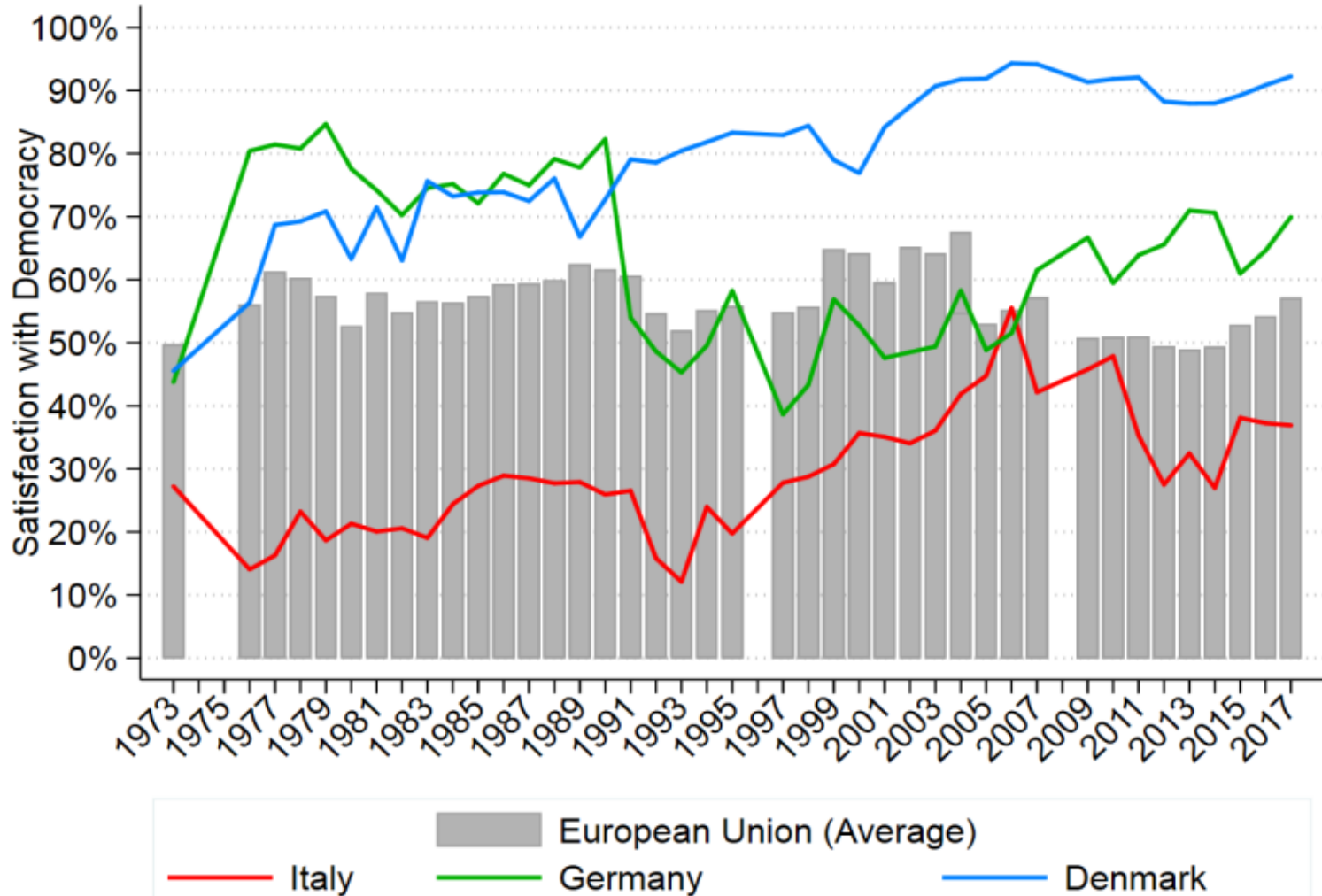


Source: V Dem - Varieties of Democracy: Average of 27 EU countries (excluding Malta), Australia, New-Zealand, Canada, USA and Japan

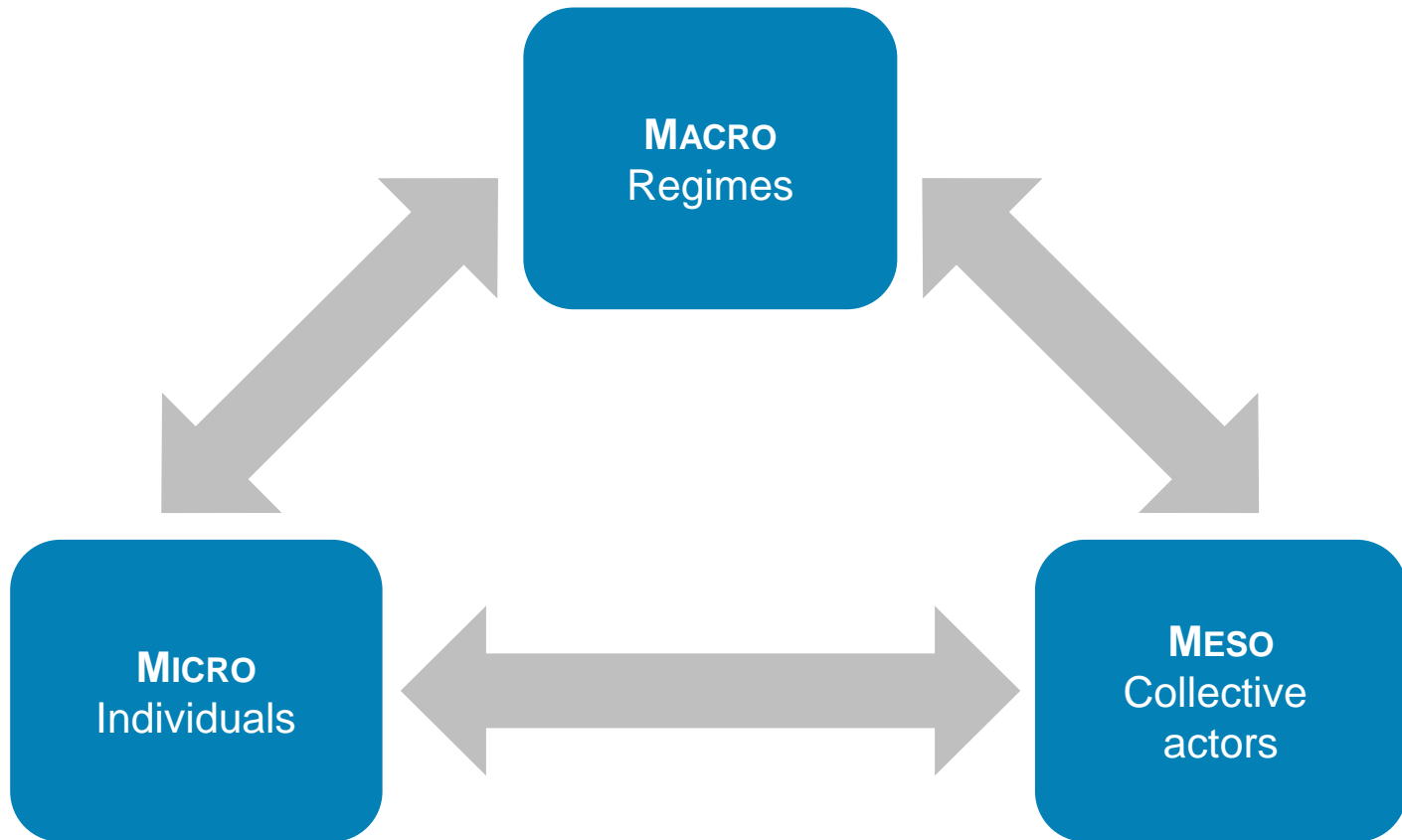
Liberal Democracy Index – Germany, Denmark, and USA



Satisfaction with Democracy (1973-2017)



Linking Three Levels of Analysis

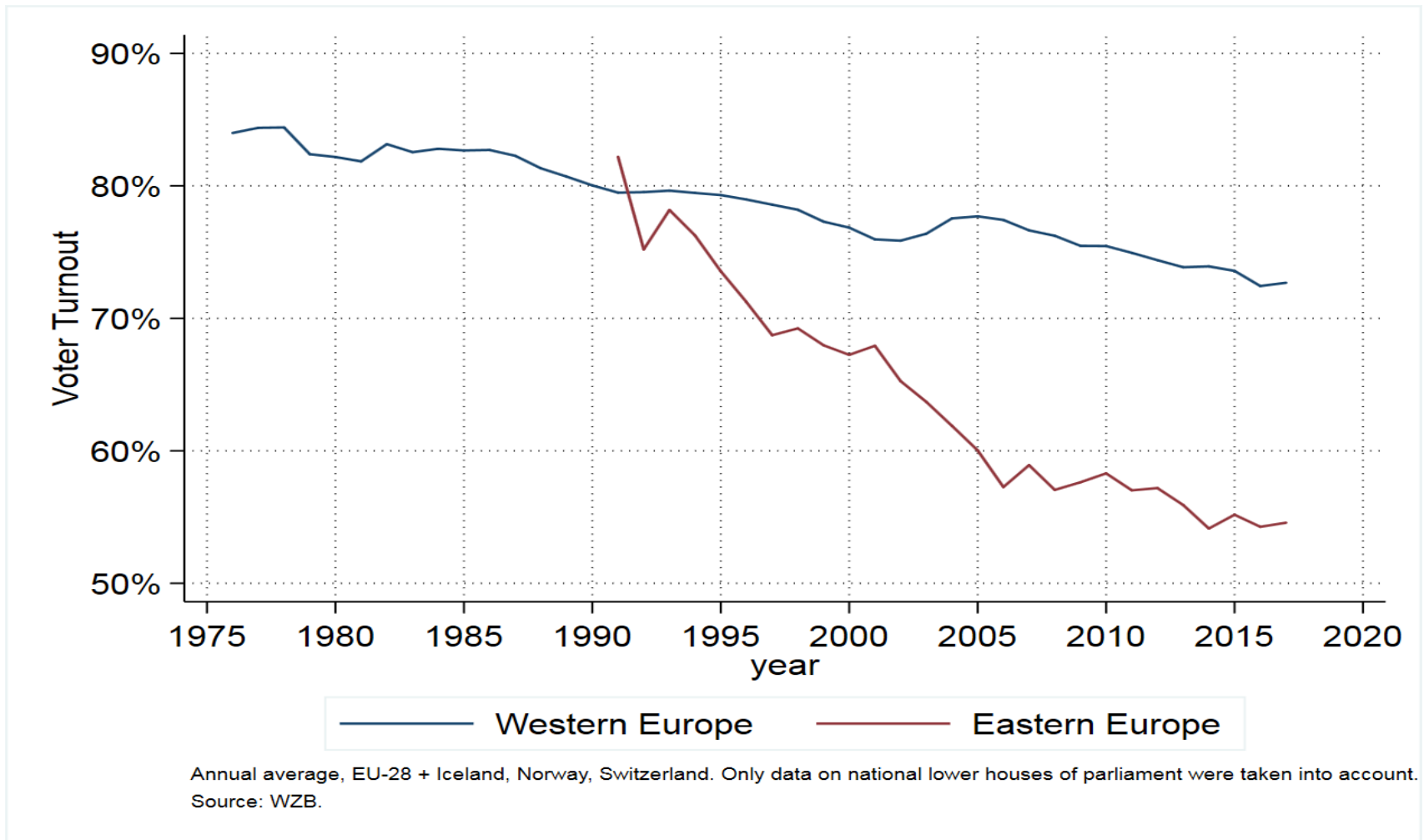


Challenges to Representative Democracy

Micro Level: Elections and Participation

- Volatility
- Decline of voter turnout
- Social selectivity
- Polarization
- Electoral integrity

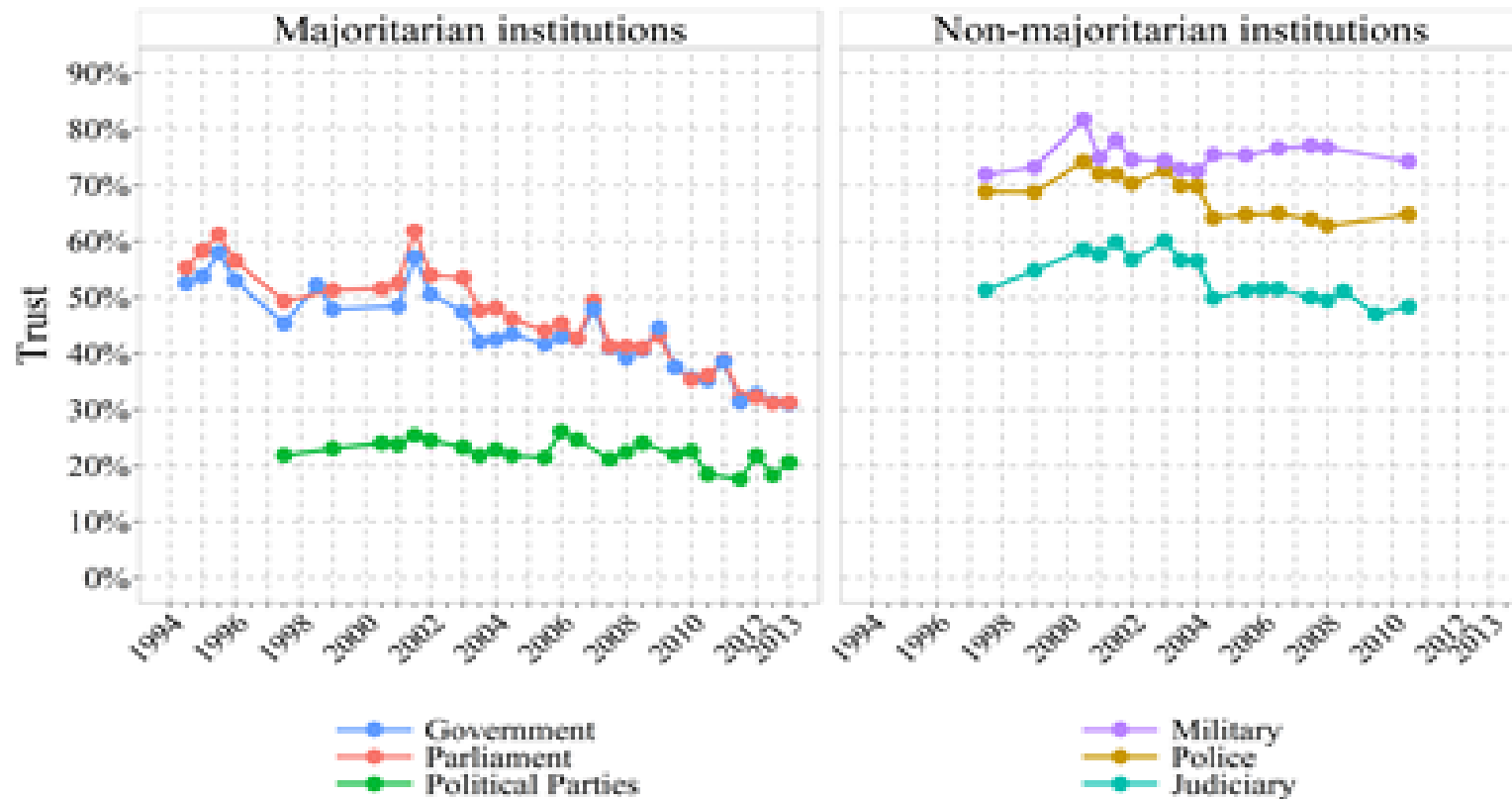
Decline of Voter Turnout



Meso Level: Parties and Party Systems

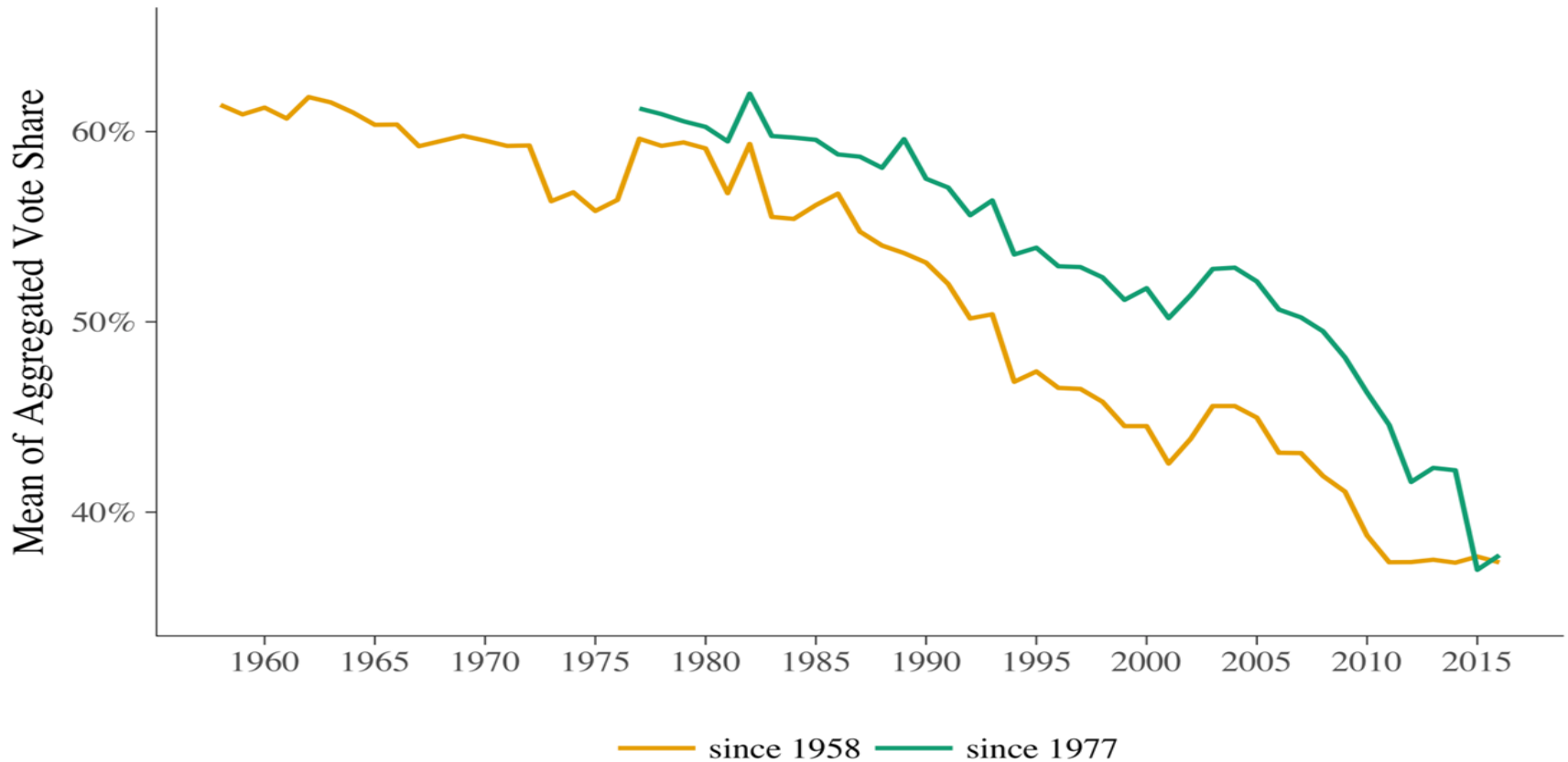
- Loss of acceptance and trust in political parties
- Decline of catch-all parties
- Rise of populist parties, particularly right-wing populist parties
- Cosmopolitans and communitarians: A new cleavage in Europe and beyond

Trust in National State Institutions in the European Union

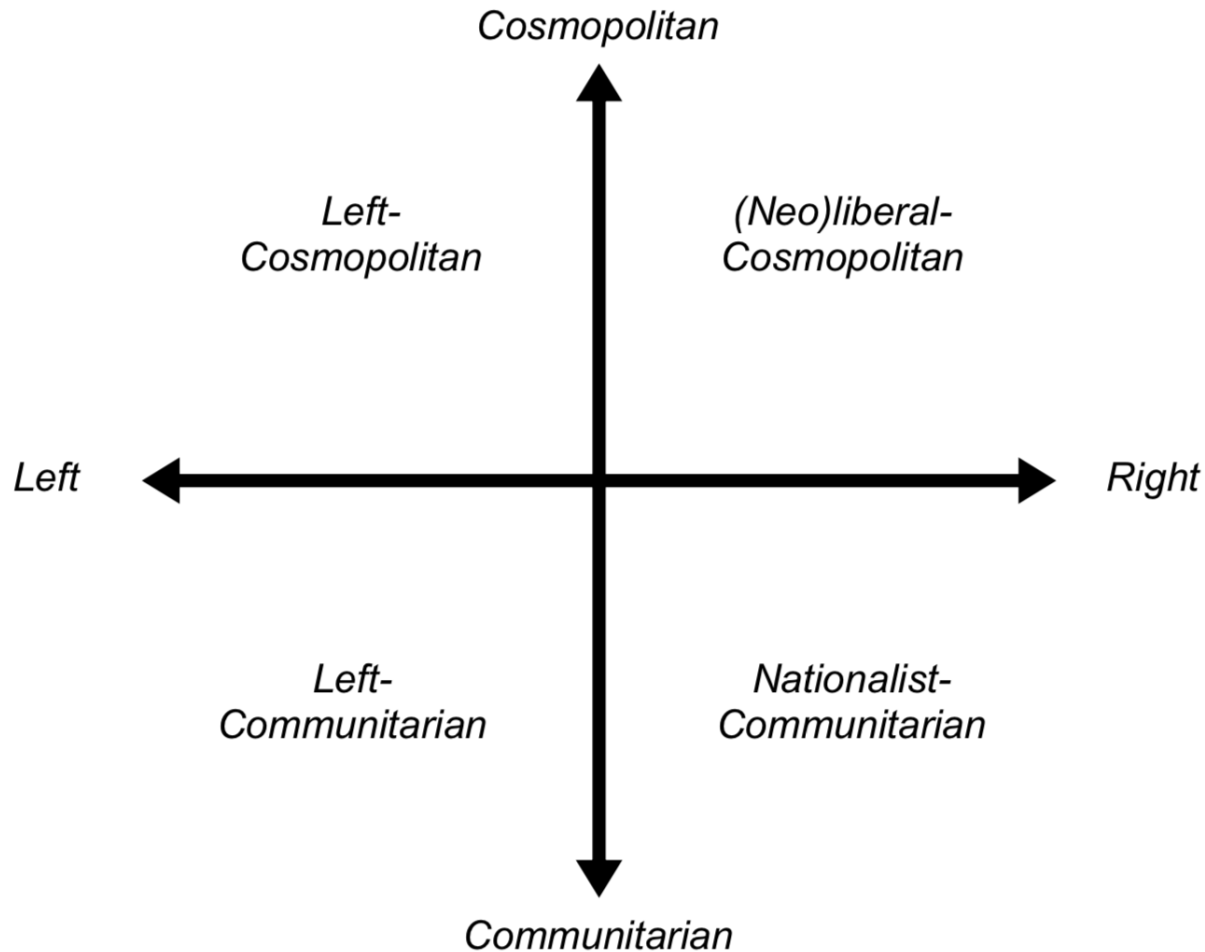


Semi-annual averages for member states of the EC/EU in accordance with their historical composition.
 Indicator: "For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it."
 Source: Eurobarometer 1994-2013.

Decline of Catch-all Parties



Two Cleavages: The New Competition



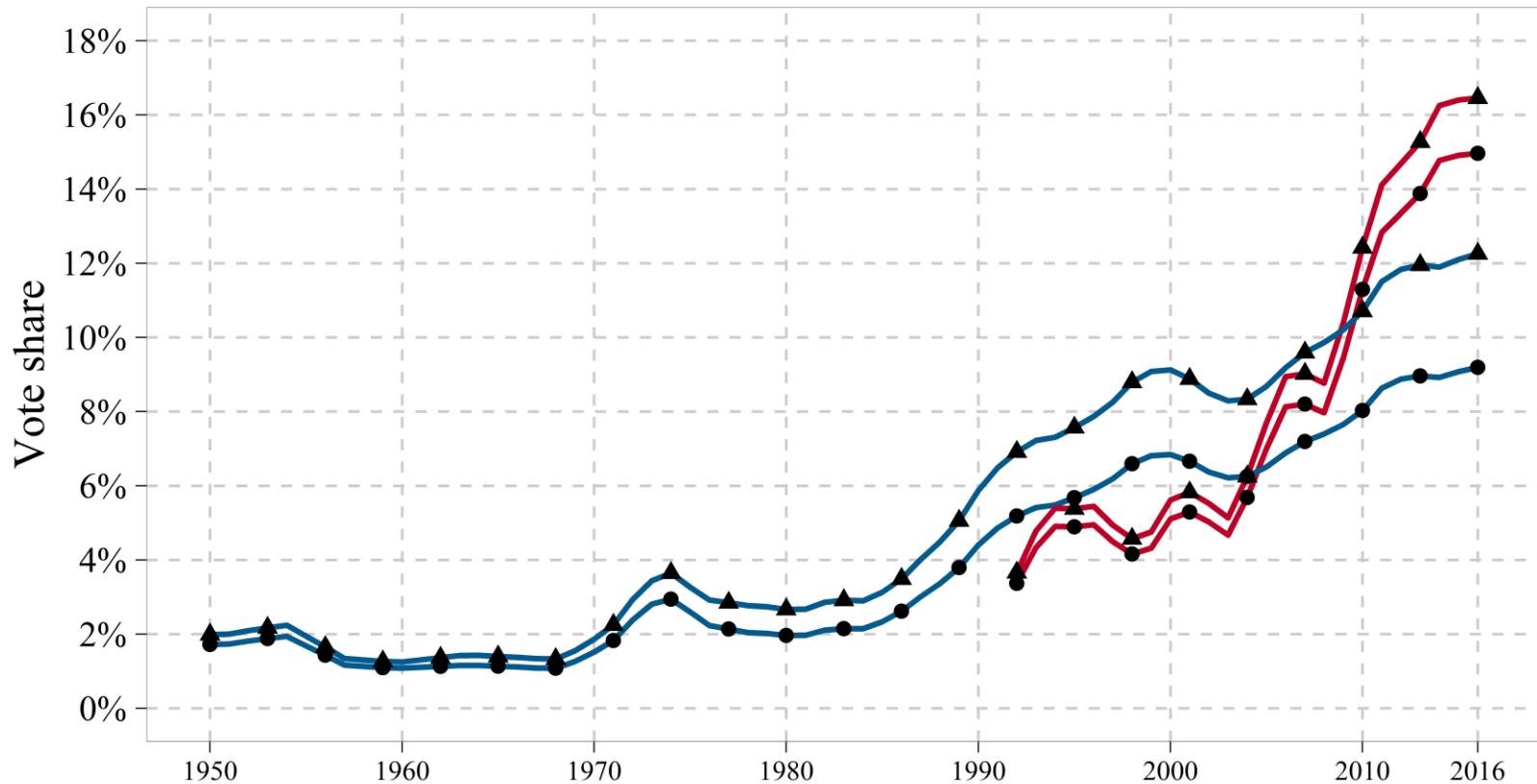
Cosmopolitans

- Winners of globalization
- Cultural, political, economic elites
- Urban middle classes
- For open borders: Goods, services, capital, workers, refugees
- Transferring sovereignty
- Deepening EU
- (Human) rights are universal; global citizens
- Multiculturalism
- Calhoun: „*Frequent Flyers*“

Communitarians

- Losers of globalization
- Lower educated people
- Pro-nation state
- Critical against EU
- Controlling borders
- “Leitkultur”
- Homogeneous communities
- Variety: *Folkhemmet* vs. Right-wing populism

Right-wing populist parties' vote share (1950-2016)



● All countries

▲ Countries with right-wing populist parties

— Western Europe

— Eastern Europe

Annual averages, EU member states and Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland.
Source: WZB Database "Elections, Parties, Governments".

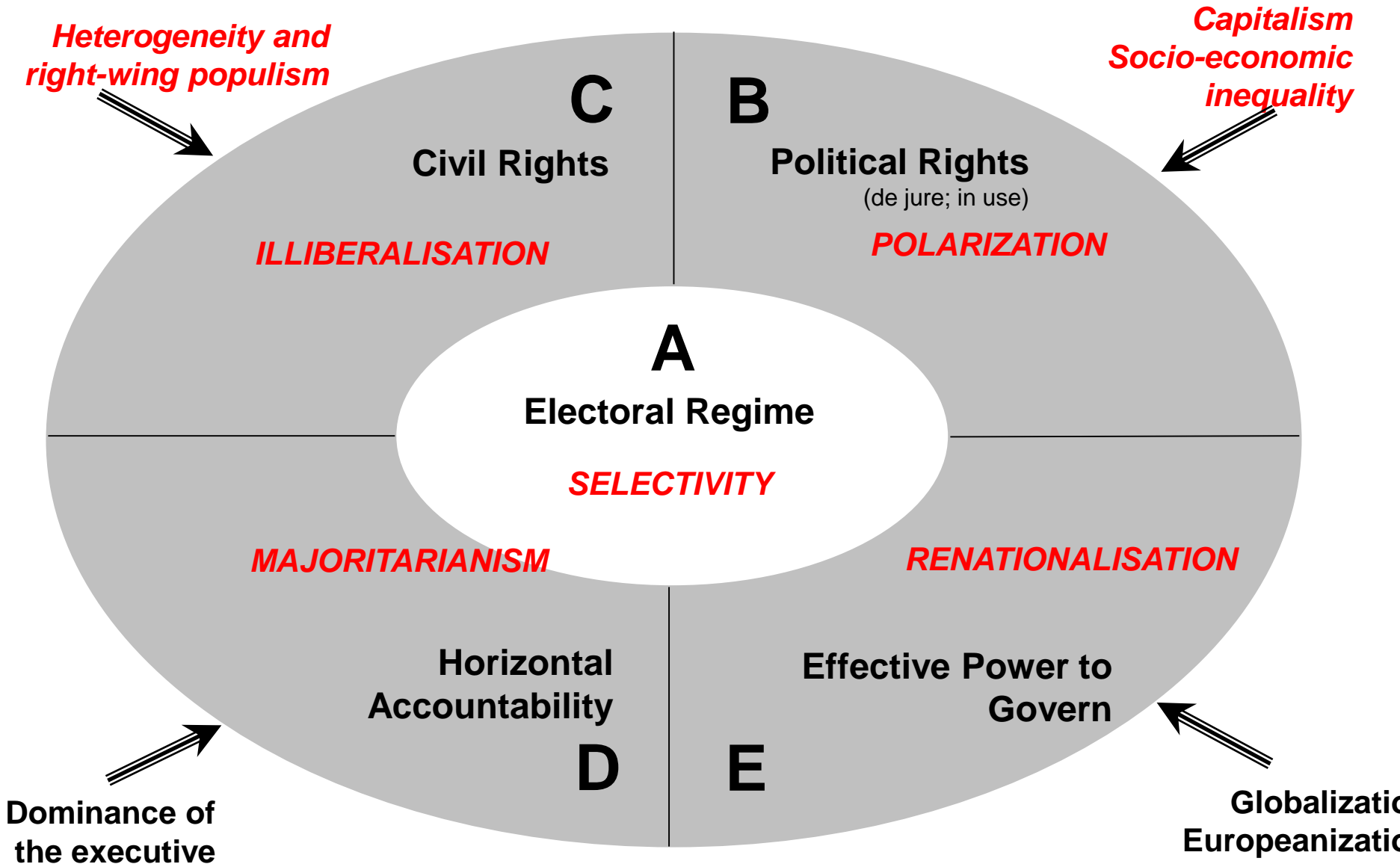
The typical RWP voter in Europe

- Male, rural/ small towns and lower/ medium income, medium lower education
- Anti-RWP voter: female, higher income, well educated, from metropolitan areas
- Rational strategic choice of RWP programmatique: switch from neoliberal economic policies towards social protectionism

Macro Level: Shifts of democratic legitimacy?

- From input to output
- From parliament to government
- From nation state to supranational regimes
- From liberal democracy to illiberal democracy
- From consensus to majoritarian democracy
- From state to markets

“Embedded Democracy” – internal and external challenges



Crisis?

Quality & Resilience of liberal democracies

- Quality higher than ever in history, but vulnerable
- Stronger civil and political rights (gender, gays, minorities, monitory democracy)
- Critical citizens are more numerous (Norris; Inglehart; Welzel)
- Illiberalisation and de-consolidation in Eastern Europe
- Low resilience despite economic boom (Poland)

Crisis & Resilience II

- Ambiguous effects of the EU
- Balance of responsiveness and responsibility
- No (old) OECD democracy has ever collapsed since 1967
- Greece (2008 ff) as an example of democratic resilience
- Climate change and eco-authoritarianism
- No transition to autocratic regimes, but to illiberal, defective, and majoritarian democracies

Churchill

“Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time....”

Nov. 11, 1947 (House of Commons)