



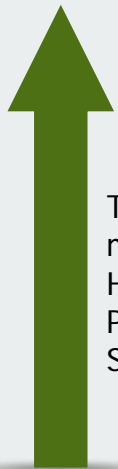
**Democracy under Construction**  
**Findings of a Survey Conducted in 4 Central European**  
**Countries**

Dr. Rudolf Bretschneider - 28 Juin 2011

# Strengthening of Nostalgia vis-a-vis Old Regimes

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Comparison between results of 1995 and 2011



The communist era had more good than bad sides:  
HU: +29% (2011: 36%)  
PL: +9% (2011: 13%)  
SK: +24% (2011: 31%)



The communist era had both good and bad sides:  
HU: -34% (2011: 42%)  
PL: -27% (2011: 52%)  
SK: -38% (2011: 43%)



The communist era had more bad than good sides:  
HU: +6% (2011: 10%)  
PL: +9% (2011: 24%)  
SK: +12% (2011: 20%)

## More and More Disappointed Evaluation of Regime Change

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	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Thinking about what you expected from the change of the political system, would you say that your personal expectations have been...	1995: 10%	1995: 27%	1995: 14%
Answers - exceeded or largely fulfilled.	2011: 5%	2011: 10%	2011: 10%

An absolute majority of voters is seriously disappointed, their expectations have been not fulfilled.

# Moderate Decline of Trust in Institutions...

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Comparison between results of 1995 and 2011 (+ means stronger, - means weaker trust than 16 years ago)

	Hungary		Slovakia
Government	+4%	-4%	-6%
Parliament	+1%	-4%	-3%
Political parties	+2%	+3%	-1%
President	-25% (Göncz vs. Schmitt)	+11% (Walesa / Komorowski)	+14% (Kováč vs. Gasparovic)
Churches	-4%	-2%	+4%
		Poland	

## ...but Strong Trust Deficit compared to „Old“ Democracies (e.g. Austria)

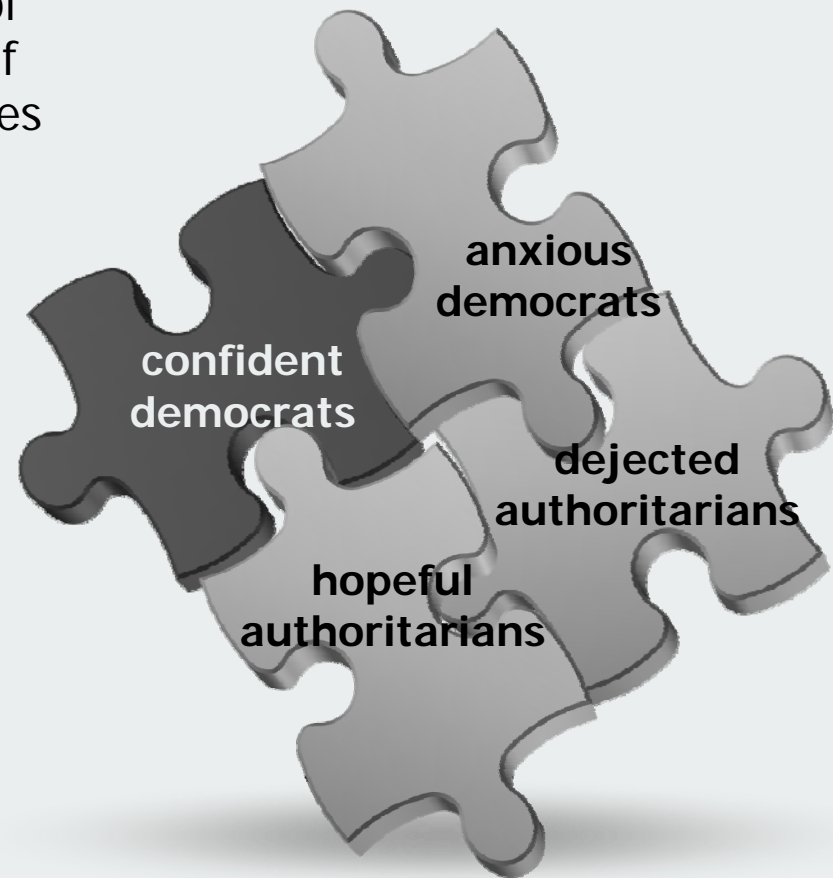
	Austria		Poland	
Government	35%	23%	19%	23%
Parliament	35%	22%	21%	21%
Political parties	20%	12%	11%	14%
Trade unions	40%	21%	27%	27%
Courts of law	61%	38%	40%	28%
		Hungary		Slovakia

# A Theory concerning Support of Democracy

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A fourfold typology concerning support of democracy is based on questions: 1) If Parliament was closed down and parties abolished, would you... and 2) How likely do you think this is to happen in the next few years (Rose / Haerpfer)

- Confident democrats are people not supporting AND considering likely abolition of parliament
- Anxious democrats do not support abolition of parliament BUT think it likely
- Hopeful authoritarians support AND consider likely abolition of parliament
- Dejected authoritarians support BUT think not likely abolition of parliament



# Contradictory Development in Support of Democracy

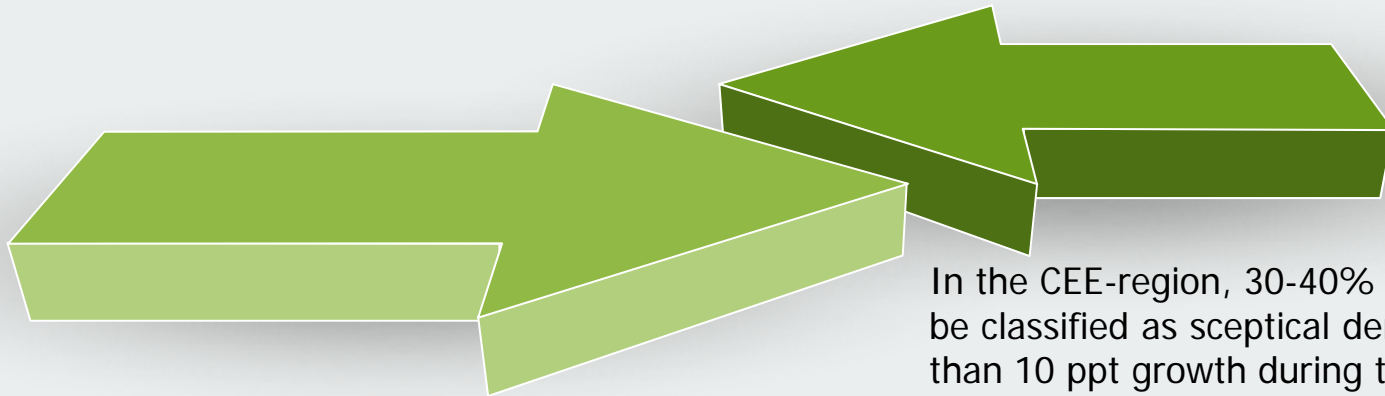
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Between 1995 and 2011, the part of confident democrats grew, that of anxious democrats diminished

- HU: 65 -> 68% and 9 -> 3%
- PL: 33 -> 50% and 34 -> 12%
- SK: 59 -> 52% and 19 -> 4%

Part of people wishing but not expecting authoritarian regime change dramatically grew everywhere

- HU: 7 -> 15%
- PL: 5 -> 17%
- SK: 7 -> 21%



In the CEE-region, 30-40% of society can be classified as sceptical democrats: more than 10 ppt growth during the last 15 years

Confident democrats are in absolute majority, society sees no real threat for democracy

# Politics Involve only Negative Feelings in the Region



## Nowadays, politics have almost only negative connotations in the region

- In Hungary, 13% of population have positive feelings (like sympathy, interest), 26% distant attitude (e.g. indifference, boredom), in turn 59% clear negative feelings (like distrust, anger)
- In Poland: + 14%  
Ø 34%  
- 50%
- In Slovakia: + 9%  
Ø 20%  
- 67%
- In Austria: + 35%  
Ø 12%  
- 52%



# Support of Democracy – A Question of Welfare?

## Prospects of personal welfare: +

- People thinking that their personal financial situation will be better in the next years are committed supporters of democracy

## Negative personal prospects

- Those expecting decline in their financial situation in the future are very dissatisfied with democracy and do not bother with it

## Unchanging economic condotions

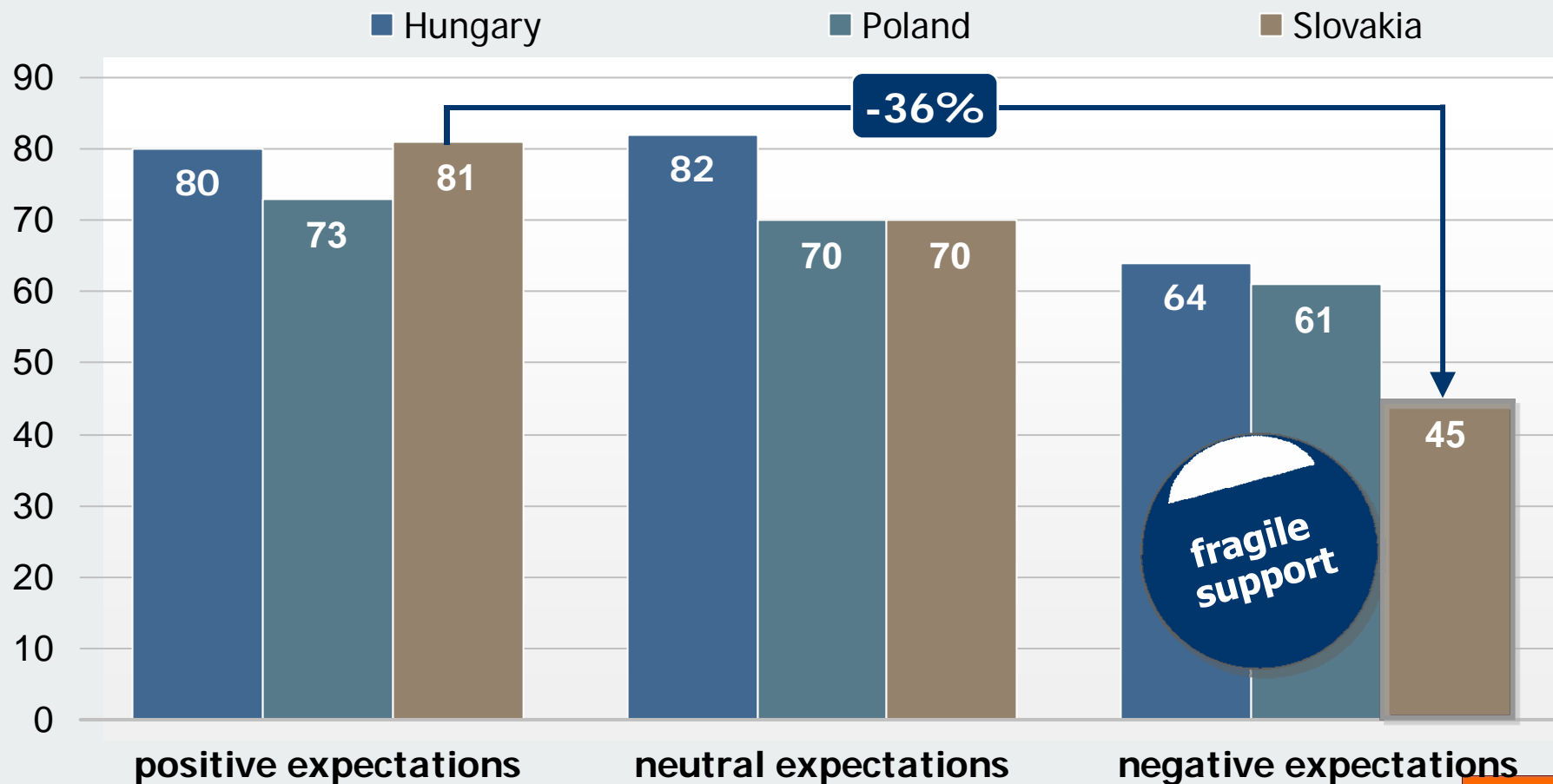
- People expecting neither positive nor negative changes in their welfare are undecided, mostly with pro-democratic attitude



## Support of Democracy – A Question of Welfare?

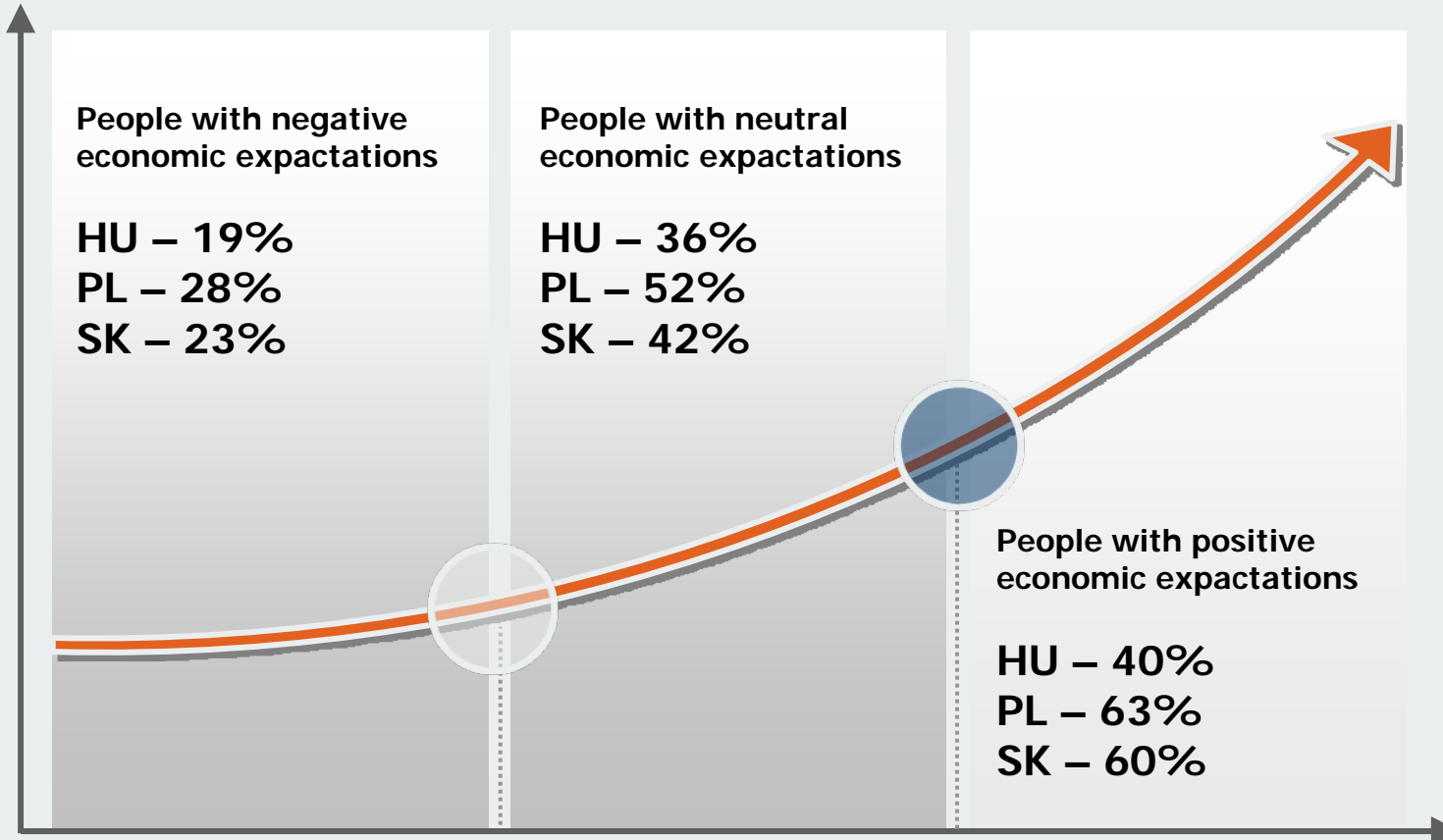
Agreement with statement: „Democracy is preferable to dictatorship under any circumstances“

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fragile support

# Satisfaction with the Functioning of Democracy depends on Welfare



## Need for Efficient (Strong) Decision Making

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	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Agreement with statement – We do not really need a parliament. Rather we need a strong leader who can make decisions quickly and implement them.	1995: 20% 2011: 24%	1995: 32% 2011: 42%	1995: 17% 2011: 35%

Although everywhere a minority is open for authoritarian decision making, the support is growing

## Strong Claim to (Political) Freedom, but with Restrictions...

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**Agreement with statement – Everybody should have the right to express his or her opinion, even if the majority holds a different opinion**

- Hungary – 96%
- Poland – 89%
- Slovakia – 90%
- Even Austria – 98%

**Agreement with statement - Every citizen has the right to take to the streets for his or her convictions, if necessary**

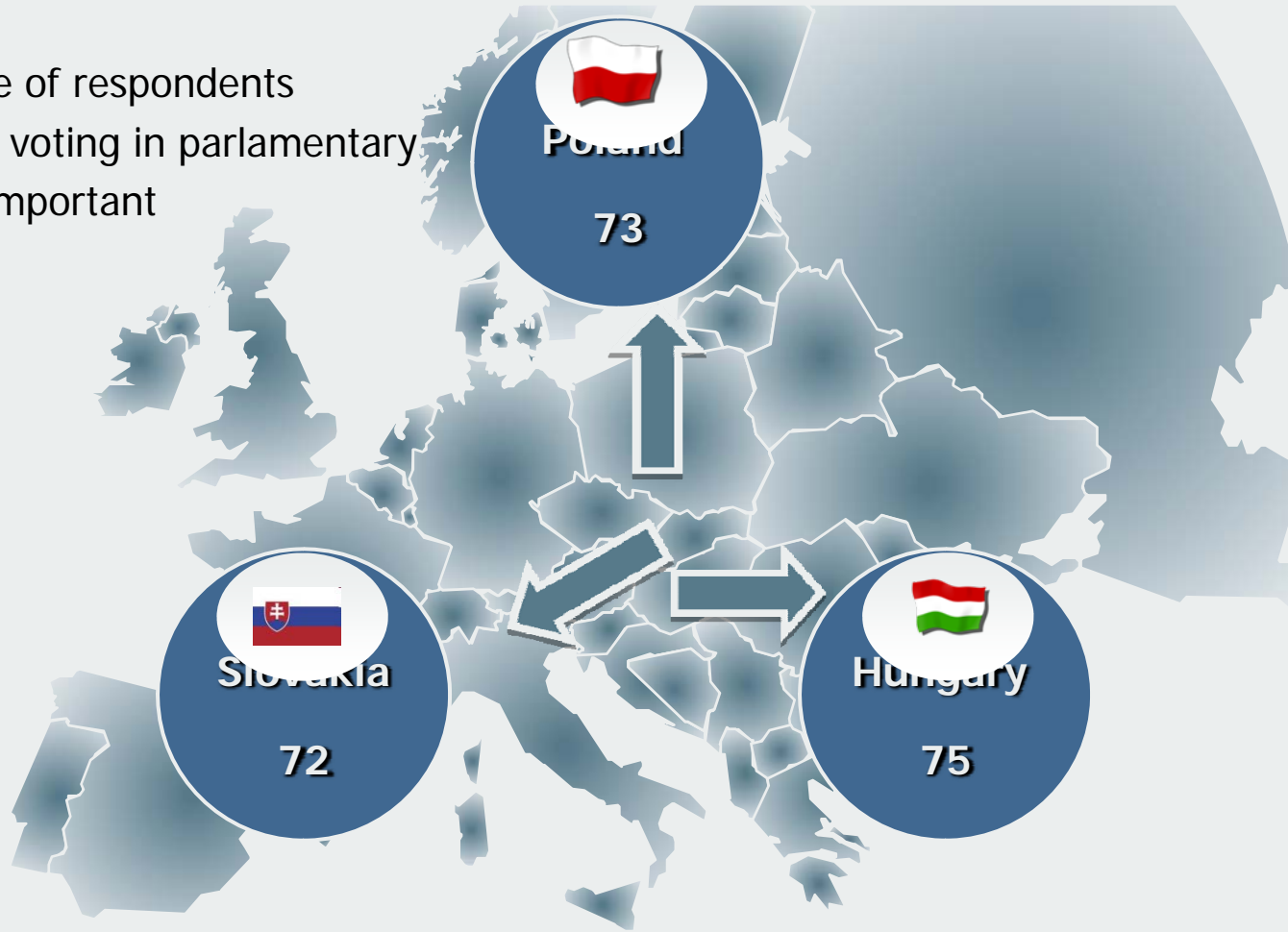
- Hungary – 89%
- Poland – 87%
- Slovakia – 85%
- Austria – 82%

**Agreement versus disagreement with statement – Security and welfare are more important than freedom.**

- Hungary – 36 versus 24%
- Poland – 38 versus 28%
- Slovakia – 43 versus 16%

## Strong Procedural Legitimacy

Percentage of respondents evaluating voting in parliamentary elections important



# Further Development is Uncertain

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## Conflicting effects:

- society disappointed in regime change
- not satisfied with functioning of democracy
- people have almost only negative feelings of politics
- no much trust in political institutions

## BUT

- no support for one party system
- no support for dictatorship
- strong claim to freedom of speech (to freedom, generally)

