

# **PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRACY IN ARMENIA**

**Some findings from the Eurasia Barometer 2021**

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WAPOR-GBS Webinar

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# Outline

- **Democracy Index**
- **EAB survey in Armenia: some findings**
  - ✓ **Methodology brief**
  - ✓ **Description of the interviewees**
  - ✓ **Perception of democracy in Armenia: the most essential characteristics**
  - ✓ **Assessment of democracy in Armenia and selected countries**
  - ✓ **Strong man style: is it demanded?**

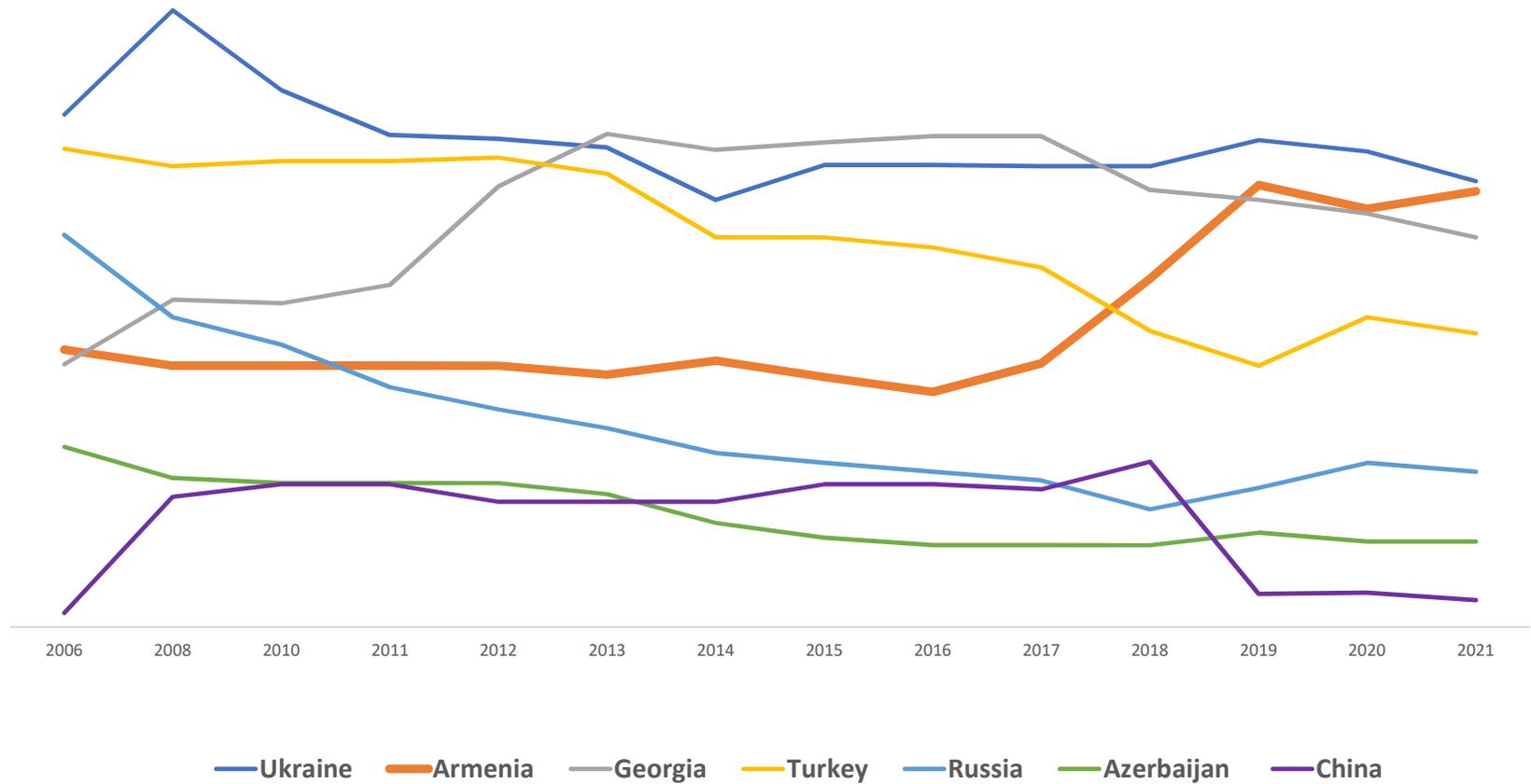
## Democracy Index 2021, EIU (1-10 scale)

Country	Overall score	Rank (167)	Electoral process and pluralism	Functioning of government	Political participation	Political culture	Civil liberties	Type
Ukraine	5.57	86	8.25	2.36	6.67	5	5.63	Hybrid regime
Armenia	5.49	89	7.5	5.71	6.11	3.13	5	
Georgia	5.12	91	7.42	3.57	5.56	3.75	5.35	
Turkey	4.35	103	3.5	5	5.56	5.63	2.12	
Russia	3.24	124	1.75	2.14	4.44	3.75	4.18	Authoritarian
Azerbaijan	2.68	141	0.5	2.5	2.78	5	2.71	
China	2.21	148	0	4.29	2.78	3.13	0.94	

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

<https://www.eiu.com/n/democracy-index-2021-less-than-half-the-world-lives-in-a-democracy/>

# Trends in Democracy Index 2021, EIU, Selected Countries



Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

<https://www.eiu.com/n/democracy-index-2021-less-than-half-the-world-lives-in-a-democracy/>

## Freedom House's "Freedom In The World 2022: The Global Expansion of Authoritarian Rule" Report, some excerpts from the report

### What is democracy?

- Fundamental to the restoration of democracy is a correct understanding of what it is. Misappropriation of the word is a testament to democracy's widespread appeal that ... has generated confusion, allowing opponents to simultaneously claim democratic credentials and argue that actual democracies are ineffective or hypocritical.
- Moreover, it (misappropriation) has contributed to a misperception that all democracy requires is the regular occurrence of elections. ... In its ideal form, it is a governing system based on the will and consent of the governed, institutions that are accountable to all citizens, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for human rights. ...
- Democracy is also more than just an ideal. It is a practical engine of self-correction and improvement that empowers people to constantly, peacefully struggle toward that ideal. ... What they desire are the freedoms and the institutions that will allow them to create a better life and a more just society over time.

[https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/FIW\\_2022\\_PDF\\_Booklet\\_Digital\\_Final\\_Web.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/FIW_2022_PDF_Booklet_Digital_Final_Web.pdf)

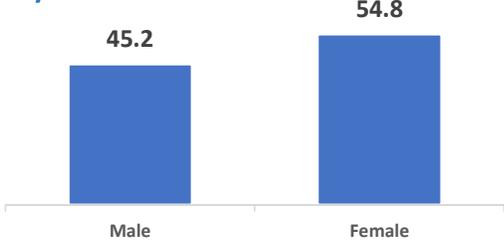
# Methodology Brief

Sample	
Size, coverage	1207 adults in Armenia
Method	Random Digit Dialing (phone codes: +374 041/ 043/ 055/ 077/ 091/ 093/ 094/ 095/ 096/ 098/ 099)
Error	+/- 2.82% for the total sample
Questionnaire (89 questions): Provided by EAB	
Fieldwork	
Timeline	23 October-3 November, 2021
Method	CATI
Implemented	CRRC-Armenia ( <a href="mailto:crrc@crrc.am">crrc@crrc.am</a> ); coordinator: Lilit Yezekyan

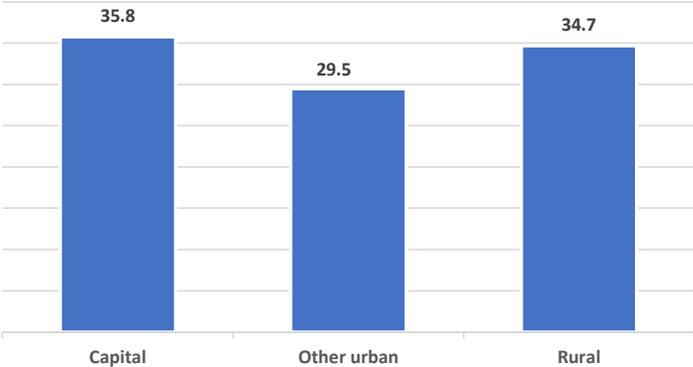
Note: Figures in all following charts are shown as percentage of total (%) if not otherwise stated.

# Description of the interviewees (distribution, share of total, %)

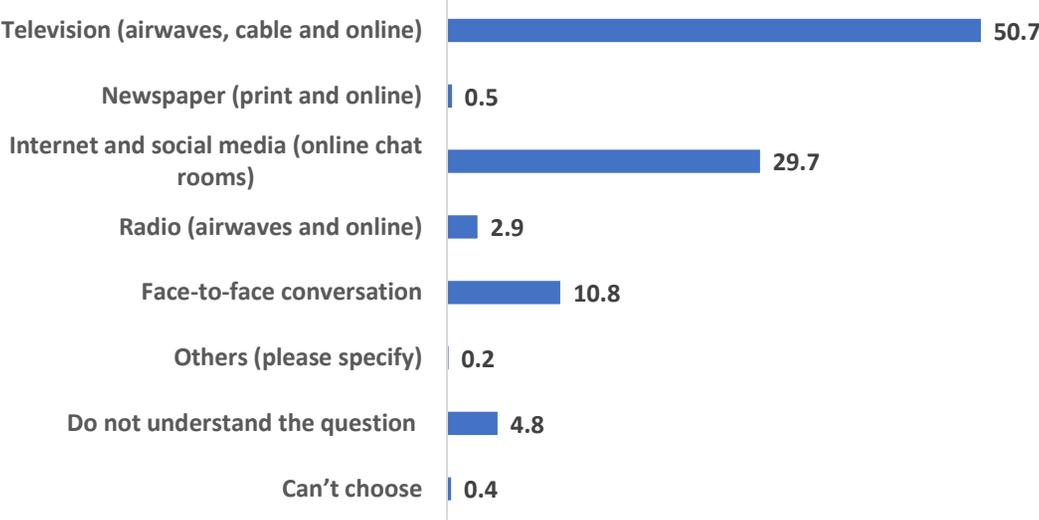
By Gender



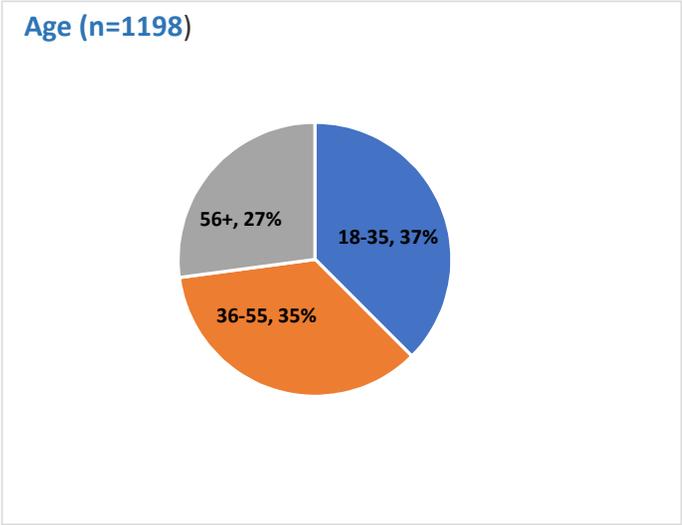
By Settlement Type



Which one is the most important channel for you to find information about politics and government?

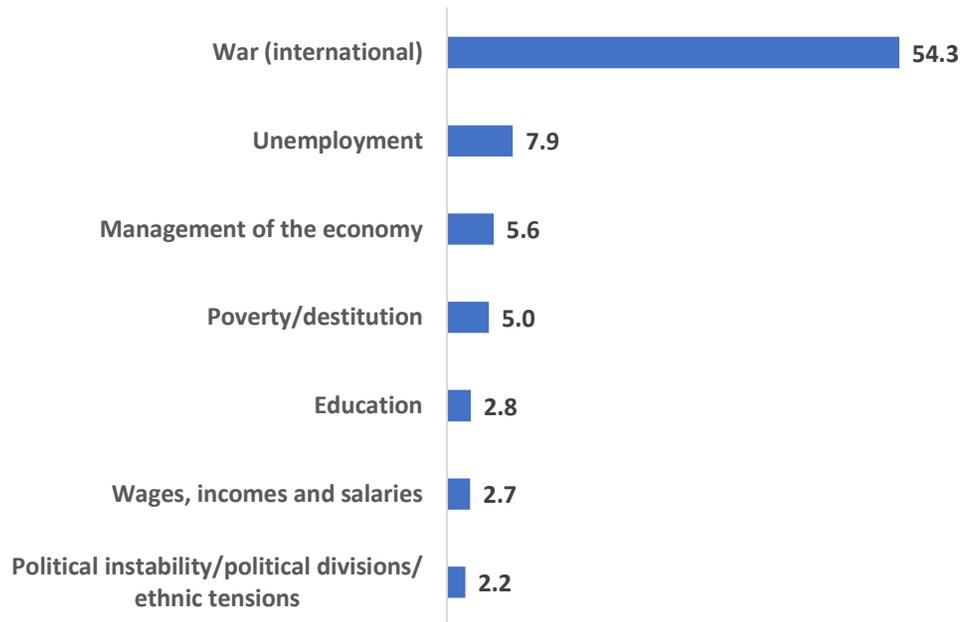


Age (n=1198)

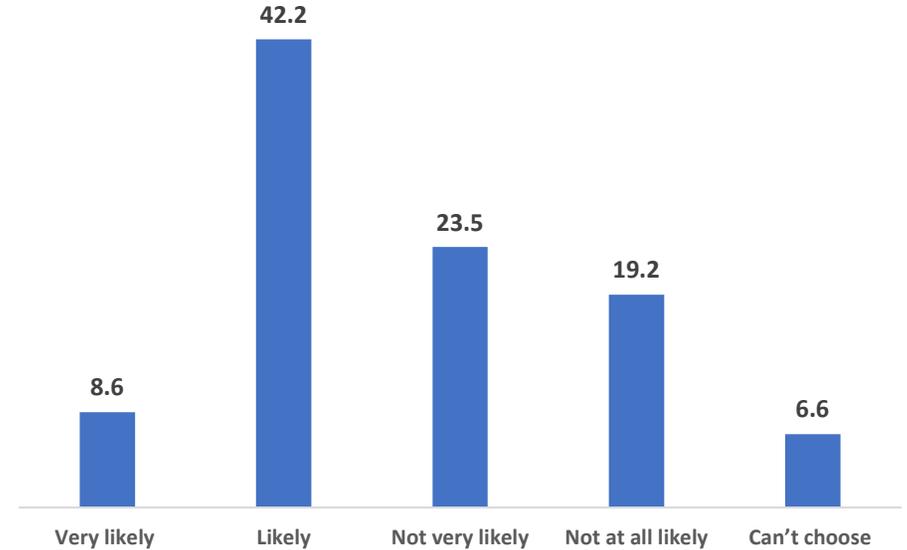


# The most important problems facing this country that government should address?

What is the most important problem facing this country that government should address? (top 7)



How likely is it that the government will solve the most important problem you identified within the next five years?

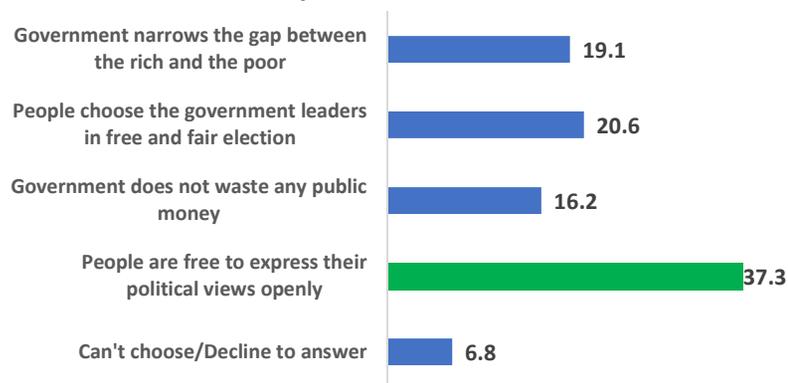


Over half (50.8%) of those who mentioned war as a main issue facing Armenia (n=652) consider that the government will be able to solve the issue.

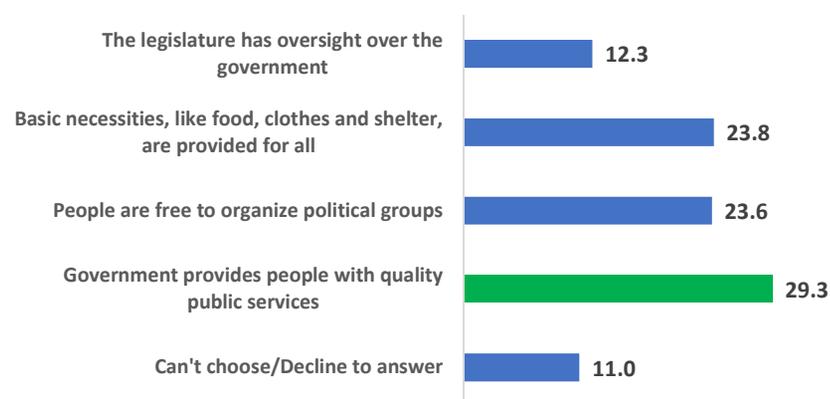
# Perception of democracy in Armenia: most essential characteristics

One answer per bloc was accepted, %

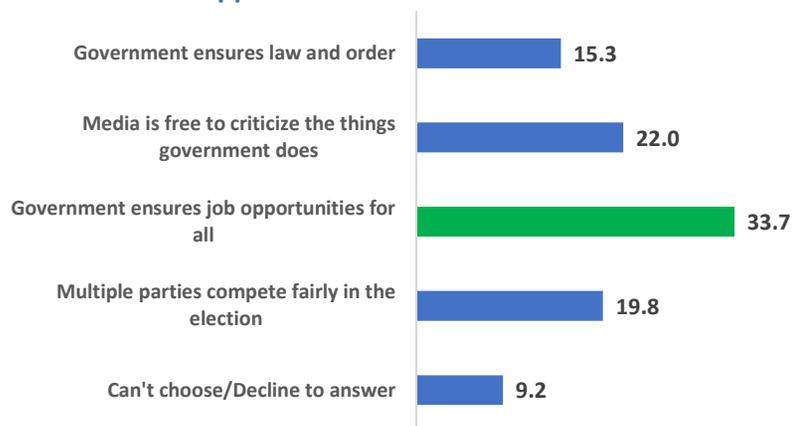
## Bloc 1: Freedom of expression the first



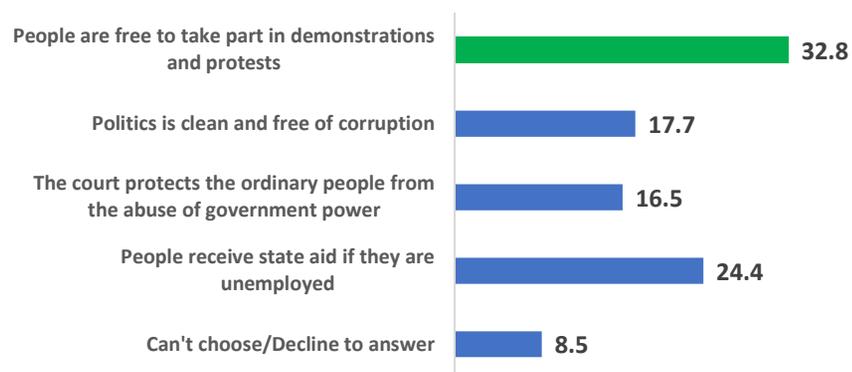
## Bloc 2: Diverse; provision of quality public services relatively large



## Bloc 3: Job opportunities for all the first

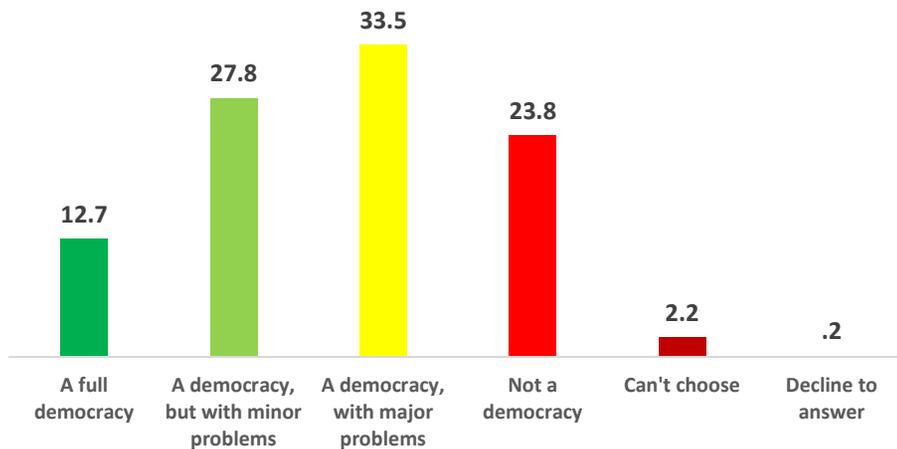


## Bloc 4: Freedom of demonstrations and protests the first

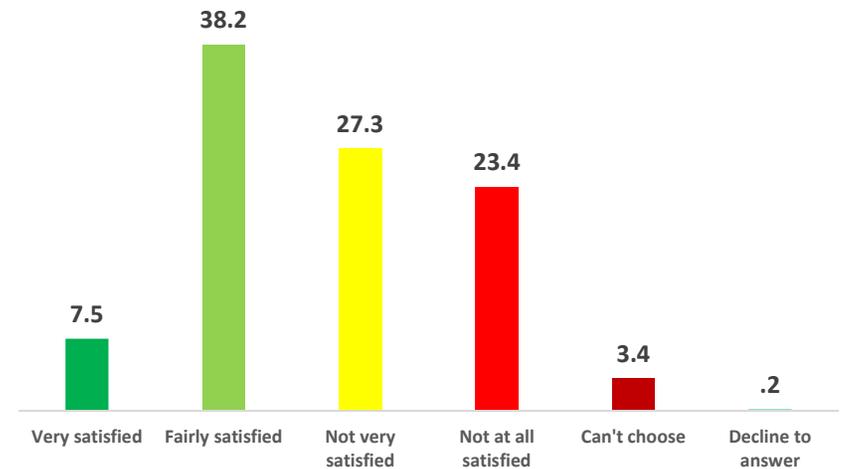


# Assessment and satisfaction of democracy in Armenia

In your opinion, to what extent is your country democratic?



How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way democracy works in your country?

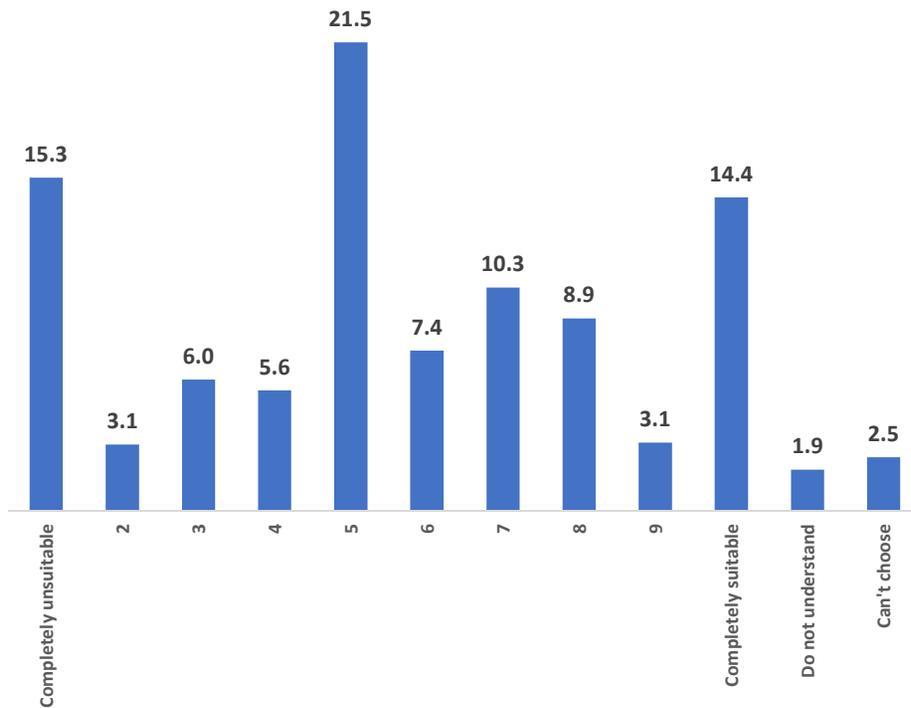


57.5% of those that voted for the party in power (vs. 40.5% - all) believe that on average Armenia is more democratic (average score 2.7 compared with 2.3 for all, out of 4)

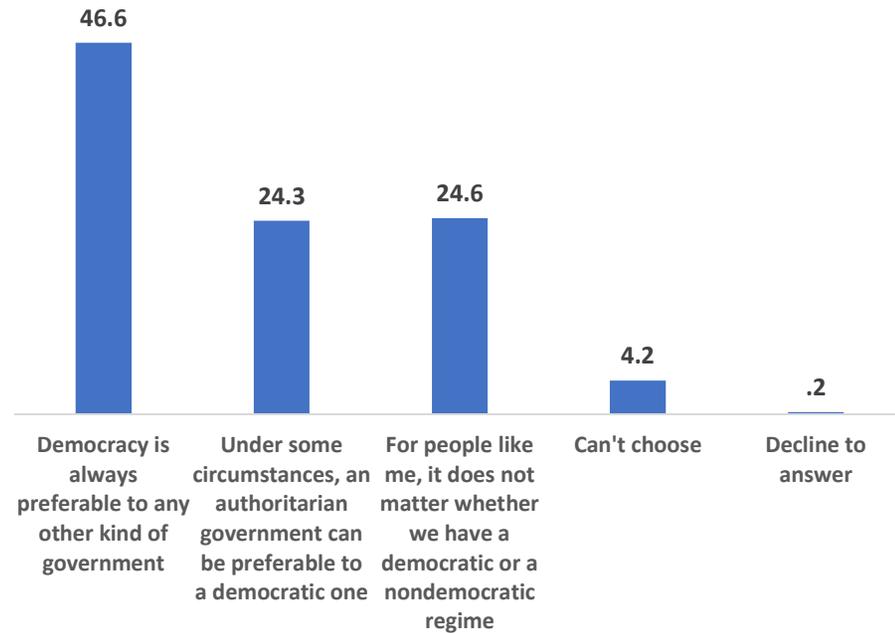
# How suitable is democracy for Armenia? (1-10 scale)

## Mean = 5.53

How suitable is democracy for Armenia?

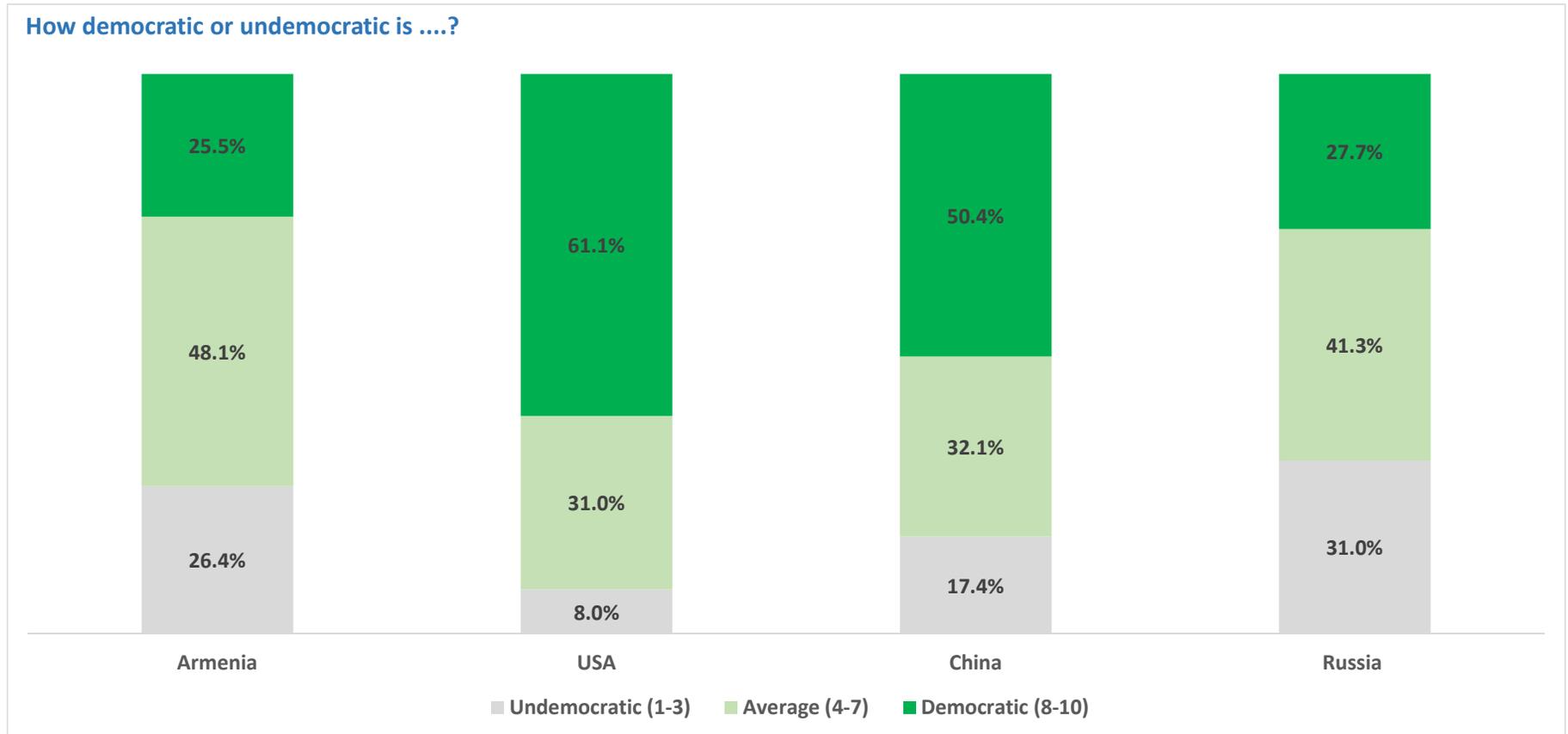


Which of the following statements comes closest to your own opinion?



Those that supported the ruling party in the elections believe the democracy is more suitable for Armenia (mean score 6.5 vs. 5.5 for all, out of 10).

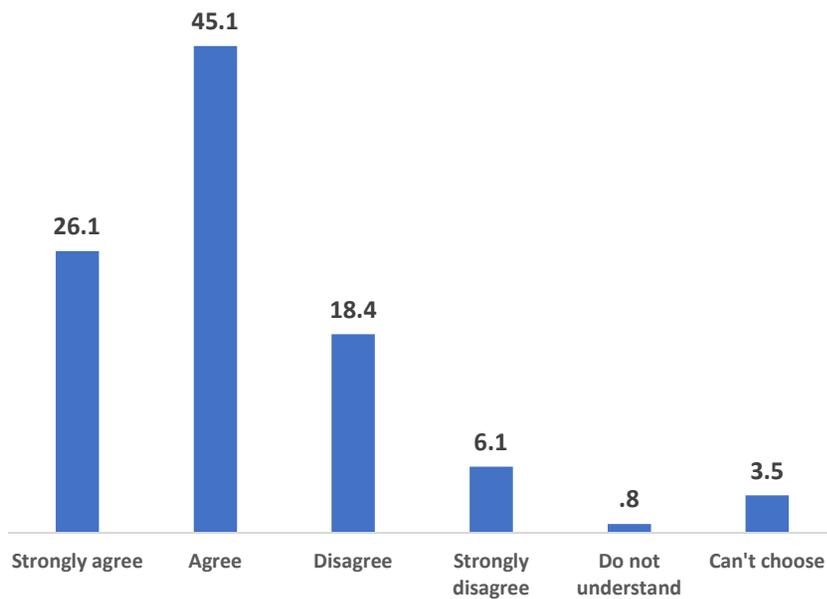
# Democracy in Armenia vs. selected countries (1-10 scale)



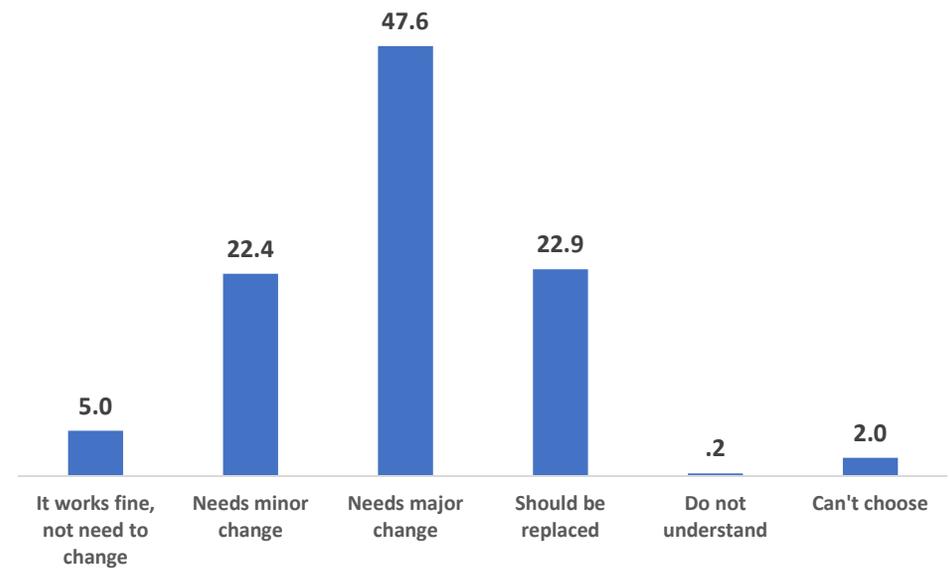
Mean for: Armenia – 5.25, China - 4.47, Russia – 4.74, USA – 6.12 (out of 10)

# Democracy as a value

Democracy may have its problems, but it is still the best form of government



Compared with other systems in the world, would you say our system of government works fine as it is, needs minor change, needs major change, or should be replaced?



# Strongman style

(see more in the [Age of the Strongman by Gideon Rachman](#))

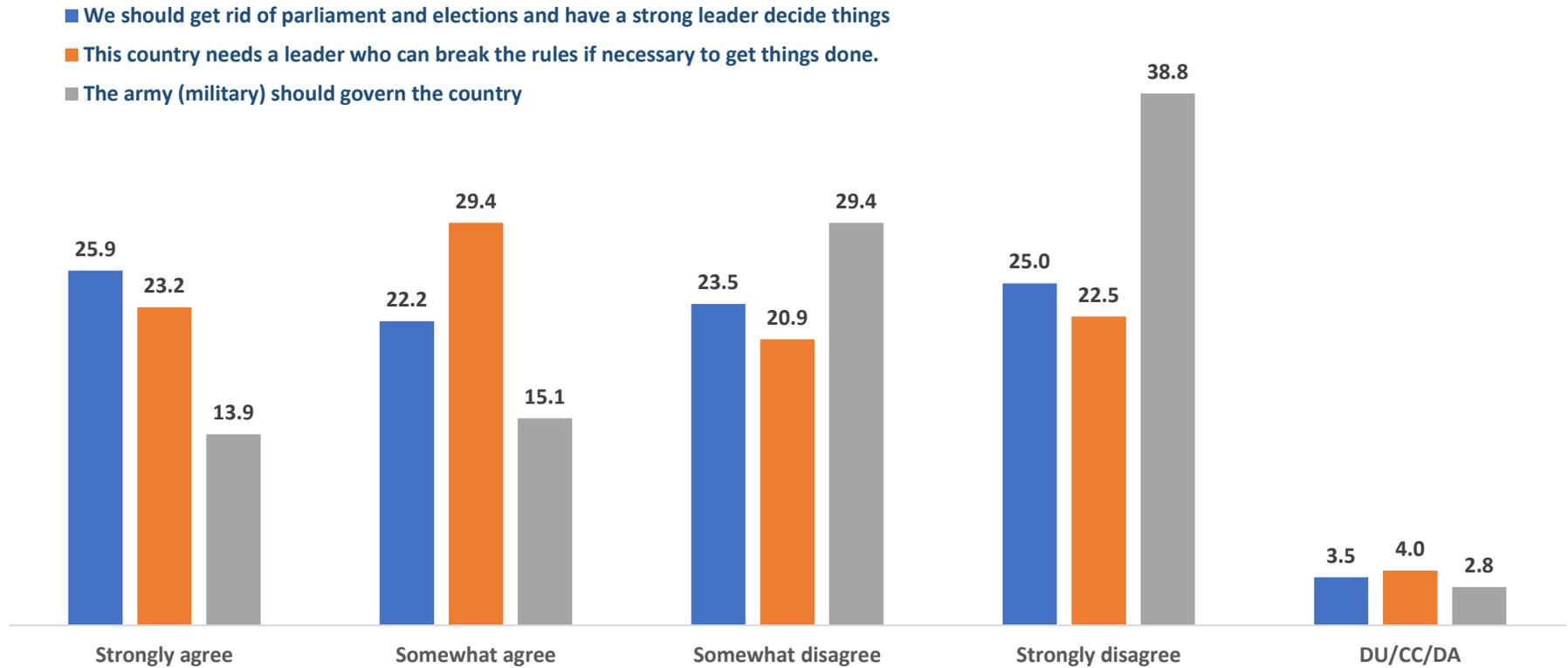
## Some excerpts from the introduction of the book

- “strongman style” in politics – a style that, until recently, was thought to be alien to the mature democracies of the West;
- strongman template, encouraging a cult of personality and contempt for state institutions;
- The rise of strongman leaders across the world has fundamentally changed world politics;
- the technologies of the twenty-first century are also handing strongman leaders new ways of communicating directly with the masses, as well as dangerous new tools of social control;
- *Age of the Strongman* describes the rise of a new generation and type of nationalist and populist leader, linked by their contempt for liberalism and their embrace of new methods of authoritarian rule.

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/705318/the-age-of-the-strongman-by-gideon-rachman/>

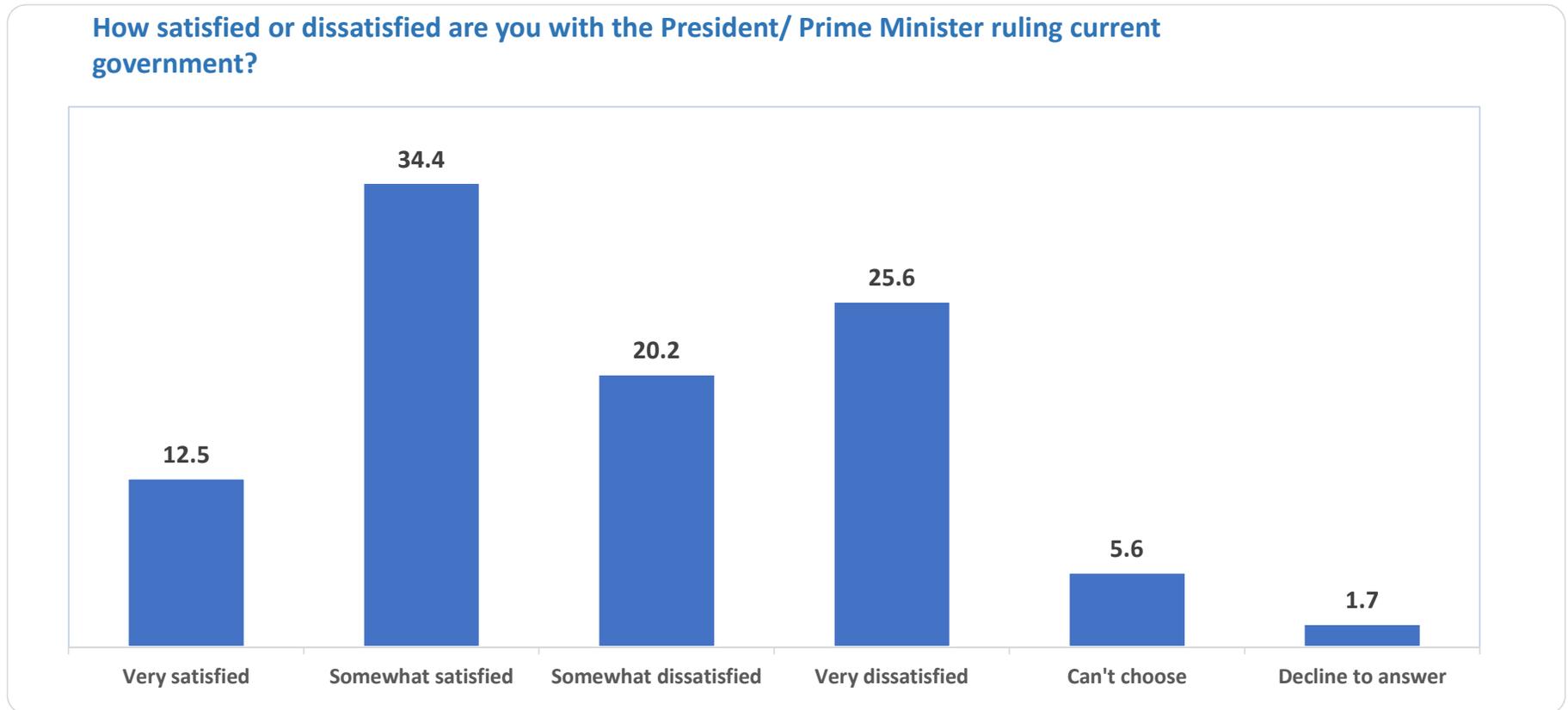
# There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?

Three statements to check how demanded the strongman style is



48% are in favor (strongly and somewhat agree) of getting rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide things.  
52.6 % found that the country needs a leader who can break the rules if necessary to get things done.  
29% accepted the alternative "The army (military) to govern the country".

# Satisfaction of the current government



A higher share (~52%) of those with high economic status (n=147) are very and somewhat satisfied of the current government (vs. 46.9% for all).