Citizen Conceptions of Democracy and Support for Artificial Intelligence in Government and Politics

Questionnaire

English translation of German questions

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Attitudes toward AI in government and politics [PL04]

How do you generally evaluate the use of AI in politics? If you consider that this technology is likely to become more advanced over time, which uses would you support?

...AI performs simple routine tasks in public administration.

...AI performs complex routine tasks in public administration.

...AI assists with the preparation and taking of political decisions (e.g. in ministries).

...AI supports parliamentarians to take better decisions.

...AI or robots take decisions for politicians.

...robots may compete at mayor elections.

1 = “Do not support at all” to 5 = “Support completely”

Conceptions of democracy [DE5]

Please indicate for the following statements how much you agree with them.

- It is important that governments always justify and explain their decisions to voters.
- It is important that social interests can continuously contest and influence political plans and decisions also between election dates.
- The government should develop its positions and politics in ongoing dialogue with political interests and affected groups.
- The quality of politics is measured by the extent to which the government subjects itself to continuing societal critique.
- Openness to the views of others and readiness to compromise are important in politics.
- It is important that elected politicians debate important questions among themselves before they take decisions.
- In politics, it is important to understand why other people have different opinions.
- The political will of a society can only emerge if different perspectives have a voice in ongoing public debates.
- The primary task of politics is to recognize the true will of the people and to translate it into decisions as directly as possible.
- The quality of political decisions is defined by how strong and how directly the true will of the people is expressed in them.
- Ideally, a democracy realizes the uniform will of the people in a society.
- In politics, it should be left solely to professional politicians to negotiate politically feasible decisions.
- Political matters should be left to elected politicians who are motivated by political success to take satisfactory decisions.
- Politics should be the preserve of professional politicians who negotiate the right policies for the country among themselves as well as with social interests.
- The quality of politics is measured by the extent to which it is informed by the knowledge of independent experts regarding the best political decisions.
- To serve the interests of society, political decisions should be based on facts and knowledge as much as possible.
- Ideally, political decisions reflect what experts, not what elected politicians deem the best for society.
- Although there is no true will of the people, a clear majority for a position in the population means that it is the correct decision.
- Politics should follow the current majoritarian mood in the society as closely as possible, regardless of which mood or opinion this is.
- Politics should primarily follow what people think and feel about political matters as directly as possible, rather than party lines or data and facts.

1 = “Do not agree at all” to 7 = “Agree completely”

Satisfaction with democracy [VT06]

How satisfied are you, on the whole, with democracy in Germany?

1 = “Very dissatisfied” to 7 = “Very satisfied”

Political disaffection/external efficacy (& internal efficacy) [PL06]

What is your opinion on the following general statements about politics. Please indicate for each statement to what extent you agree or disagree.

- Politicians talk too much and act too little.
- Most politicians are not interested in citizens’ opinions.
- I often find political matters hard to understand. [self-efficacy, inverted]
- I am confident that I can actively take part in a conversation on political issues. [self-efficacy]
- Most politicians are trustworthy. (inverted)
- Most politicians only care about the interests of the wealthy and powerful.
- Politicians care about what ordinary people think. (inverted)

1 = “Do not agree at all” to 5 = “Agree completely”

Institutional trust [VT04]

Please state for the following institutions how much you personally trust each of them. You can use the scale from 1 to 7.

How much do you trust…

- …the Parliament
- …the justice system
- …the federal government
- …political parties
- …the public administration

1 = “Do not trust at all” to 7 = “Trust completely”

Ambiguity intolerance [PS04]

Please indicate for the following contrasting statements where you position yourself.

1 = “I like it if activities are marked by regularity.” to
5 = “I like activities that frequently change.” (inverted)

1 = “I am good with people who are strangers to me.” to
5 = “I don’t feel comfortable in the presence of strangers.”

1 = “I prefer to know what to expect in life.” to
5 = “I like it if surprises happen in life.” (inverted)

1 = “I am good at dealing with situations that are new to me and that are unpredictable.” to
5 = “I prefer situations that I am familiar with and that I know how to deal with.”

1 = “I virtually look for discussions on controversial and sensitive topics.” to
5 = “I avoid discussions on controversial and sensitive topics.”

1 = “I like tasks with which it is unclear how they are to be done.” to
5 = “I prefer tasks with it is known how they are to be done.”

General AI evaluation [TE04]

Generally speaking, do you have a positive or a negative opinion of Artificial Intelligence?

1 = “Very negative” to 7 = “Very positive”

AI optimism [TE06]

(English original version, items adopted from Schepman and Rodway (2020))

Please indicate for each of the following statements whether it applies to you or does not apply to you.

- I am interested in using artificially intelligent systems in my daily life.
- There are many beneficial applications of Artificial Intelligence.
- Artificial Intelligence is exciting.
- Artificial Intelligence can provide new economic opportunities for this country.
- I would like to use Artificial Intelligence in my own job.
- An artificially intelligent agent would be better than an employee in many routine jobs.
- I am impressed by what Artificial Intelligence can do.

1 = “Does not apply at all” to 5 = “Applies completely”

AI knowledge (self-assessed) [KE03]

How do you evaluate your own knowledge about Artificial Intelligence, i.e. regarding how AI applications work and how they are created?

1 = “No knowledge”

2 = “Very little knowledge”

3 = “Little knowledge”

4 = “Moderate knowledge”

5 = “Good knowledge”

6 = “Very good knowledge”

Left-right position [PL01]

In politics, people often talk about “left” and “right”. If you use the following scale from 1 to 7 where would you place yourself?

1 = “Left” to 7 = “Right”

Economic policy preference [PL02]

What is your position on the question of taxes and social benefits? Please use the following scale.

1 = “Lower taxes even if that means lower social benefits” to 7 = “More social benefits even if that means higher taxes”

Immigration policy preference [PL03]

What is your position on the question of the possibilities of foreigners to enter the country? Please use the following scale.

1 = “Foreigners‘ possibilities to enter and live in Germany should be extended” to 7 = “Foreigners‘ possibilities to enter and live in Germany should be restricted”

Political interest [VT05]

Generally speaking, how interested are you in politics?

1 = “very strongly”, 2 = “strongly”, 3 = “somewhat”, 4 = “hardly”, 5 = “not at all”

Age [DG02]

[Free text field]

Gender [DG15]

What is your gender?

1 = female, 2 = male, 3 = diverse

Education [DG03]

Please select the highest education degree that you have attained so far. [drop down selection]

1 = finished school without degree,

2 = Secondary level lower tier [Hauptschulabschluss, Volksschulabschluss, Abschluss der polytechnischen Oberschule 8. oder 9. Klasse]

3 = Secondary level mid-tier [Realschulabschluss, Mittlere Reife, Fachschulreife oder Abschluss der polytechnischen Oberschule 10. Klasse]

4 = Secondary level upper tier I [Fachhochschulreife (Abschluss einer Fachoberschule etc.)]

5 = Secondary level upper tier II [Abitur bzw. erweiterte Oberschule mit Abschluss 12. Klasse (Hochschulreife)]

6 = Other degree [free text field]

7 = Still in school