

Emancipative Values and Democratic Backsliding in Central and Eastern Europe: Do Values Matter?

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Abstract

Since the end of the Cold war, there has been a shift in the typical democratic reversal. Prior to 1990, most democracies ended abruptly, either through military coups or swift dictatorial transitions. Today, however, most democracies slowly erode over time as elected officials decrease restraints on executive power (Bermeo 2016). First introduced by Linz and Stepan (1978) and popularized by Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 2008, 2010), it is often believed that citizens' values and attitudes influence a state's chance of developing a stable democracy. After examining the relationship between democratic backsliding and levels of emancipative values in post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe, I find no correlation between citizens' values and levels of democracy. In addition, contrary to past work, emancipative values have no impact on citizens' levels of political action in Central and Eastern Europe.

Introduction

For decades, democracy has been increasing around the world. After the fall of communism, there was wide spread belief among political scientists that every country would eventually become democratic; Fukuyama (1989) declared it “the end of history.” However, recent events have challenged that belief. Throughout the 2000s, many supposedly stable democracies began reverting back to authoritarian systems. Unlike the instantaneous reversals typically seen throughout history, reversals today tend to occur slowly over time. As a result, explaining the demise of these democracies is significantly more difficult.

Differences in civic culture may help explain why some countries backslide while others remain stable. Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 2008, 2010) and Welzel (2013) have intensively studied the relationship between citizens’ values and levels of democracy; ultimately claiming that high ‘emancipative values’ lead to high levels of democracy. Building on modernization theory, Inglehart and Welzel state that citizens’ values change as countries become wealthier. This change in values creates a more suitable climate for democracy by increasing human empowerment. Welzel (2013) explains that there are three main types of human empowerment: action resources, civic entitlements, and motivations; emancipative values are a direct measure of citizens’ motivations. As human empowerment increases, citizens are more likely to engage in social movements that promote democracy. As a result, wealthier countries have a higher probability of developing and maintaining democracies. However, their methods are often criticized and many other political scientists have performed similar studies producing contradictory results (Fails and Pierce 2010, Hadenius and Toerell 2005, Dahlum and Knutsen 2016, Jackman and Miller 1996, Seligson 2002).

In addition, most scholars have examined the relationship between political attitudes and the likelihood of a country developing democracy, while few have examined the effects of political attitudes on democratic stability (Fails and Pierce 2010; Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 2008, 2010; Inglehart 2017; Hadenius and Toerell 2005). Among those that have, most have used a cross country approach and failed to distinguish between the different types of democratic decline (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 2008, 2010; Inglehart 2017; Hadenius and Toerell 2005). In doing so, these scholars assume all reversals are caused by the same underlying phenomena. Ignoring the type of decline is inherently flawed. Unlike traditional coups, slow erosion typically occurs through elected officials who gradually diminish checks on executive power (Bermeo 2016). As a result, citizen’s values may play a more prominent role in gradual backslides than in sudden reversals. By including all countries in a study, scholars assume both events are caused by the same features and are likely diminishing the effects of civic culture on democratic stability. Therefore, this study attempts to examine the relationship between citizens’ values and gradual democratic declines.

As the leading scholars on the issue, this study will begin by reproducing Inglehart and Welzel’s (here after IW) research. However, this paper is interested in the relationship between democratic backsliding and emancipative values. Thus, rather than using all countries in the World Value Survey, it will focus specifically on post-communist states that experienced a democratic decline. IW claim that emancipative values are highly correlated with a state’s level of democracy. Yet, when applied to Central and Eastern Europe, this correlation does not exist. To further examine the relationship between democratic stability and emancipative values, I then test a vital link in the human empowerment sequence. According to Welzel (2013), emancipative values influence civic engagement, with high levels of emancipative values leading to high levels of civic

engagement. I find that emancipative values have a weak impact on citizens' levels of political action in Central and Eastern Europe, demonstrating a flaw in the human empowerment sequence.

Literature Review

Citizens' values are typically believed to influence the type of institutions a society adopts, with some values leading to stable democracies and other values making democratization unlikely (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 2008, 2010; Inglehart 2017; Almond and Verba 1963; Lipset 1963, Alexis de Tocqueville 1945, Putnam 1993). Democratic values are attitudes and beliefs that stress participation in democratic activities and allow people to feel competent and enjoy engaging in them, while political culture refers to the feelings and evaluations of a country's population (Almond and Verba 1963). Although these values differ significantly between nations, in every nation they are crafted by life experiences, education, and social class (Almond and Verba 1963).

Some of the earliest work exploring the relationship between citizens' values and democratization focused on the link between different types of political attitudes and the quality of democratic performance (Lipset 1963, Alexis de Tocqueville 1945, Putnam 1993). While investigating four different English speaking countries- the United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom- Seymour Lipset (1963) found that understanding a country's values can help explain the differences between similar democratic states. Lipset discovered three primary areas that reflect a populations' values: respect for the rule of law, civil liberties, and party systems. This connection exists because a society's government tends to reflect what its citizens' value. For example, citizens in the United Kingdom often believe those born into prestige should remain in power, which is reflected in their class based parliament (Lipset 1963). In contrast, the United States' emphasis on equality is demonstrated by its egalitarian approach to the Houses of Congress (Lipset 1963). In an earlier work, Alexis de Tocqueville (1945) also found that the United States' citizens' unique customs and manners helped American democracy prosper.

Similar to Lipset (1963), Putnam (1993), in a study comparing Italian regions, found a relationship between social capital, quality of government, and economic performance. Regions with high social capital, defined by high levels of trust, participation, and integrity, also had effective governments that achieved economic prosperity. These regions tended have public officials who were more responsive to the public will, more willing to compromise, and put more emphasis on equality (Putnam 1993).

Several scholars claim a connection between citizens' values and democratic consolidation (Linz and Stepan 1978, 1996; Almond and Verba 1963; Welzel 2002, 2007, 2013; Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 2008, 2010; Inglehart 2017; Griffith et el 1956; Qi and Shin 2011). Linz and Stepan (1978, 1996) popularized the connection between democratic stability and citizens' values by stating that for democracy to consolidate, democracy must be "the only game in town." Although the authors' research did not focus on testing this statement, the phrase quickly caught on and became a prominent belief among political scientists.

In their seminal research, Almond and Verba (1963) intensively study the effects of citizens' attitudes on democracy in the United States, Britain, Mexico, Germany, and Italy. They emphasize the similar values found in stable democracies, specifically in the United States and Britain, and the lack of these values in weaker democracies. Inglehart and Welzel (2005) also found a strong correlation between emancipative values and democracy ($r = 0.90$). Democracy levels shift to match the country's values. As self-expression values increase, states tend to become more democratic; as self-expression values decrease, states generally become less democratic. Similarly, Inglehart (2017) found a strong correlation ($r = 0.83$) between emancipative values and political

institutions; countries with higher emancipative values are more likely to have strong democracies. He also discovered that self-expression scores can explain 69% of the democratic variance between countries.

It is typically argued that values influence democratization by impacting citizens' behavior, making them more politically active (Almond and Verba 1963; Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 2008, 2010; Welzel 2013). As citizens acquire values that make them more likely to engage in politics, states have a higher probability of developing prospering democracies. The increase in political activity helps the democracy stabilize. Almond and Verba (1963) were some of the first scholars to distinguish between different types of political culture. They claim there are three types of political culture- parochial, subject, and participant- with parochial societies expressing very few democratic values and participant societies demonstrating large amounts of democratic values. To develop a strong and stable democracy, countries must develop a participant culture, where citizens are devoted to the system as a whole and the processes involved in the system. This manifests itself as strong engagement in democratic activities, such as voting, protesting, or campaign participation (Almond and Verba 1963).

Building heavily off Almond and Verba (1963) and modernization theory, Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 2008, 2010) developed the human empowerment sequence, or human development. Their theory states that as societies develop, citizens no longer focus on fulfilling their basic needs. This provides them with more time and energy which increases their desire for freedom and individualism. This shift in values, from traditional to secular and survival to self-expression, alters people's behavior and makes them more likely to engage in activities that develop and build support for civic culture. The rise in civic culture increases pressure on elites, which makes democracy more likely to develop and stabilize. Therefore, modernization supports democracy by changing citizens' values, making citizens more likely to engage in democratic activities, which increases the chance of democratization.

IW (2005) describe three main types of human empowerment: action resources, civic entitlements, and motivations. Action resources refer to intellectual, material, and collective resources that allow people to gain freedom, such as information, equipment, and networks. Civic entitlements refer to the environments that allow people the opportunity to gain more freedom. Political activity is more likely to occur in societies where people are legally allowed to exercise and seek freedom. People's desire to gain freedom is classified as motivation. IW argue that without a desire to increase freedom, democratization is unlikely to occur. IW label citizens' motivation to exercise freedom "emancipative values" and much of their research focuses on the link between emancipative values and democratization.

Although many scholars claim citizens' values impact democratization, the values that play a role in the process are heavily debated. Inglehart (2003) stresses the importance of four main values on democratization: trust, tolerance, political participation, and life satisfaction. Trust is believed to increase the effectiveness of democratic regimes by increasing their legitimacy (Norris 1999). Trust allows citizens to believe their government is responsive to their desires, which increases political participation (Norris 1999, Putnam 1993, Mishler and Rose 2005).

Building off this, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) describe five parts of self-expression values, which they define as the extent to which people value individual choice over survival needs (Inglehart and Oyserman 2004). They include a feeling of happiness, trust in other people, signing petitions, acceptance of homosexuality, and a priority of freedom and association. However, many of these items are not values, rather they are actions or heavily dependent on other variables. For

example, life satisfaction is not a value but an opinion about one's current state. Signing petitions is an action and trust is an assessment of other people's trustworthiness, neither is a value.

Including non-values in self-expression values is problematic from both a measurement and theoretical perspective. IW claim that self-expression values lead to democratization; however, they cannot make a valid argument when components of self-expression values are unrelated to citizen's values or attitudes. Compiling such a wide variety of factors into a single index makes it impossible to determine which factors are creating the impact. For example, there is a wide range of literature demonstrating the connection between protest activity and democratization. By including signing petitions as an aspect of self-expression values it is impossible to determine if protest activity is the only part of the index influencing democratization. Additionally, IW's definition of self-expression values, the extent to which people value individual choice over survival needs, fails to match the components that comprise the index.

Attempting to correct for this, Welzel (2013) focuses solely on values, specifically liberating and egalitarian values. He divides these values into four subcategories: voice, choice, autonomy, and equality. Voice focuses on how strongly people believe citizens should have a say in their society, specifically emphasizing freedom of speech. The factor combines questions from the World Value Survey (WVS) asking respondents to prioritize a list of several different items, including "protecting freedom of speech", "giving people more say about important government decisions," and "giving people more say about how things are done in their job and their communities". Autonomy measures the importance people place on controlling their own lives. This factor includes whether respondents identified independence and imagination as desirable childhood qualities but not obedience. Equality focuses on gender equality. The factor uses "education is more important for men than women," "when jobs are scarce, men should have priority over women to get a job," and "men make better political leaders." Choice measures how much citizens value freedom over their reproductive systems. This factor includes how justifiable respondents find "divorce," "abortion," and "homosexuality." Together, voice, choice, equality, and autonomy are referred to as emancipative values.

However, Inglehart and Welzel have several critics. A primary complaint is that the authors fail to establish causation (Hadenius and Toerell 2005, Dahlum and Knutsen 2016). Dahlum and Knutsen (2016) and Seligson (2002) claim IW's results are not generalizable due to a strong selection bias created by the limited countries included in the World Value Survey. Perhaps the strongest critique centers around the authors index measuring self-expression values, arguing that the underlying values do not correlate; therefore, invalidating Inglehart's and Welzel's results (Jackman and Miller 1996, Seligson 2002).

Although IW claim citizens' values influence democratization, several scholars argue IW do not have the proper methodology to distinguish correlation from causation (Fails and Pierce 2010, Hadenius and Toerell 2005). Hadenius and Toerell (2005) argue that Inglehart and Welzel (2005) fail to install time lags, while Fails and Pierce (2010) claim the authors failed to control for a reverse casual arrow. Both errors prevent IW from claiming causality. Fails and Pierce (2010) perform a similar study but control for reversal causality and examine citizens' overt support for democracy. Their research finds no connection between citizens' support for democracy and levels of democracy. Support for democracy also had no impact on the development or collapse of the democracy.

However, Fails and Pierce measure citizens' outright support for democracy, which Inglehart and Welzel (2005) criticize. Building off Bratton and Mattes (2001), IW emphasize the importance of testing citizens' intrinsic values rather than their blunt statements supporting

democracy. Testing citizen's outright support for democracy is unlikely to provide meaningful results because democracy is socially desirable in most societies around the world today. The scholars believe this support simply reveals "lip service" to democracy, meaning citizen's claim they support democracy because they believe they should, rather than believing in democracy's intrinsic values (Inglehart and Welzel 2005).

While Inglehart and Welzel (2005) emphasize that self-expression values must be in place prior to the development of democracy, Rustow (1970) claims these values develop only after democracy has taken root. He calls this the "habituation phase" of democracy. During this phase, democracy becomes institutionalized in society and democracy becomes stable. Thus, democracy cannot consolidate without developing democratic values.

Hadenius and Toerell (2005) also criticize IW for their measurement of effective democracy. They emphasize that Transparency International should not be used to measure democratic effectiveness because democracy can be ineffective even if it is not corrupt; conversely, states can have very high levels of corruption but maintain liberal democracies. They also state that using Transparency International, or the World Governance Indicators used in Inglehart and Welzel's (2010) later study, overcorrects for corruption because Freedom House takes corruption into account when creating their country rankings. A better indicator of democratic effectiveness would be a combined Polity and Freedom House score because Freedom House tends to underscore democracy levels while Polity over scores. Hadenius and Toerell (2005) repeat Inglehart and Welzel's study with time lags and the improved democracy scores and find no statistically significant relationship between self-expression values or overt support for democracy and democratization.

Dahlum and Knutsen (2016) criticize Inglehart and Welzel for failing to control for country specific factors or endogeneity. They emulate Inglehart's and Welzel's study, but employ panel data rather than cross-section data, allowing them to control for endogeneity and country fixed effects. Their results reveal no statistically significant relationship between self-expression values and a country's chance of adopting democracy, becoming stable, or becoming more democratic.

Jackman and Miller (1996) and Seilgson (2002) claim Inglehart's (1990) self-expression index's individual components do not correlate at an individual level. They are not strongly correlated with each other; thus, they cannot measure a common underlying theme. When conducting Inglehart's study with each component separately, Jackman and Miller (1996) fail to find any relationship between civic culture, democracy, and economic growth.

Additionally, Welzel's (2013) variables can be improved. IW claim that emancipative values are an accurate predictor of democratization because the combined index captures how much citizens value democracy's core principles, with the principles being voice, choice, equality, and autonomy. Yet, as demonstrated in the past, countries can maintain stable democracies even if they lack some of these values. Equality, measuring how much respondent's value gender equality, was absent in most democracies until the twentieth century. Although these democracies were obviously excluding large portions of the population, the states were still democratic. Therefore, valuing gender equality is not necessary for a stable democracy.

IW's choice variable, which stresses reproductive rights, is also problematic. Similar to equality, democracy can flourish even when reproductive rights are severely limited. Many western countries, including the United States, did not legalize abortion until the 1970s and Ireland still has very strict abortion laws; yet, few would argue that these states do not have strong democracies. Thus, choice should not be included in the list of emancipative values.

Recognizing that micro and macro level events do not necessarily correlate, Seligson (2002) criticizes Inglehart (1990) for failing to address the ecological fallacy. Performing two studies, one utilizing Inglehart's exact countries, and another focusing on six Central American countries, Seligson finds evidence contradicting Inglehart's results. At the country level, he does not find a significant relationship between preference for democracy and interpersonal trust. His research also reveals no connection between trust and political participation at the micro level. At the macro level, after controlling for GNP, he did not find a significant relationship between preference for democracy and interpersonal trust. Seligson provides two theories to explain his results. The first is that the overall cultural theory is incorrect and should be rejected; the second, claims that the cultural theory is valid, but Inglehart's variables are incorrect.

Despite multiple studies, the effects of citizens' values on democratization is still heavily debated. In addition, few scholars have distinguished between the different types of reversals and focused solely on the effects of citizens' values on slowly backsliding states. The lack of research in this specific area makes the topic worth investigating.

Hypothesis

Inglehart and Welzel lead us to develop the following hypotheses:

H₁: Countries with high emancipative values will have stronger democracies than states with low emancipative values.

H₂: Countries with high emancipative values are less likely to experience a democratic decline.

H₃: Citizens' emancipative values influence their levels of political action.

IW claim that as states modernize citizens' place increasing importance on freedom and individualism. As individuals' priorities change they are more likely to engage in activities that will increase their freedom. Therefore, their motivation for freedom, or emancipative values, increase. Citizen's with higher emancipative values are more likely to engage in political action, which increases government accountability and helps democracy develop and stabilize. As a result, states with higher emancipative values are more democratic and less likely to experience a democratic decline than states with lower levels of emancipative values.

The first part of this study will empirically test the relationship between emancipative values and levels of democracy in post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe. After finding no relationship between levels of democracy and emancipative values, I test the impact of emancipative values on political action to examine the validity of the human empowerment sequence.

Emancipative Values and Democratic Backsliding in Central and Eastern Europe

H₁: Countries with high emancipative values will have stronger democracies than states with low emancipative values.

H₂: Countries with high emancipative values are less likely to experience a democratic decline.

IW claim that emancipative values influence democracy levels. To test this hypothesis, I preform correlations between a state's democracy level and a state's average emancipative values in Central and Eastern European states. If IW are correct, there should at least be a moderate

correlation between a state’s level of democracy and its emancipative values. A t-test is used to check for a significant difference in emancipative values between states that experienced a democratic decline and states that have remained stable. To prove generalizability and robustness of IW’s theory, Central and Eastern European states that experienced a democratic decline should have significantly lower levels of emancipative values than states that remained stable.

To focus explicitly on the effects of emancipative values on democratic backsliding, only states that democratized after the fall of the Soviet Union are included in the sample. Solely including post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe offers several advantages. While the states’ share similar histories, they have experienced varying levels of success with democracy. Some nations experienced democratic success almost immediately following the fall of communism, while others struggled to start their democratic journey. Today, many nations are maintaining strong democracies, while an equal amount are backsliding toward authoritarianism.

Democratic backsliding, the dependent variable, is a binary variable measuring if a state has experienced a decline in its level of democracy in the past ten years. Freedom House’s Nations in Transit scores are used to measure levels of democracy. The original score ranges from one to seven, with one being the most democratic. However, for simplicity sake, the score is recoded so seven is the most democratic and one the least. Countries are considered democratic if their Nations in Transit score was above a four in 2004, the first wave of Nations in Transit. On average, 2005 was the most democratic year for post-communist states. Thus, states change in democracy is based on the difference in their score from 2005 to 2016. Nations in Transit considers any change greater than 0.25 a minor or moderate change and any difference greater than 0.50 a significant change (Freedom House). I label states as backsliding if they experience a negative change greater than 0.25. Below is a table showing the states included in the study, their change in democracy, and if they have backslid.

Nation	Levels of Democracy			Backslid?
	2005	2016	Change	
Estonia	6.04	6.07	0.03	No
Latvia	5.93	5.96	0.03	No
Croatia	4.29	4.29	0	No
Czech Republic	5.75	5.75	0	No
Montenegro	4.11	4.11	0	No
Romania	4.61	4.61	0	No
Lithuania	5.79	5.68	-0.11	No
Slovenia	6.25	5.96	-0.29	Yes
Bulgaria	5.07	4.64	-0.43	Yes
Poland	5.86	5.43	-0.43	Yes
Macedonia	4.18	3.57	-0.61	Yes
Slovakia	6.04	5.39	-0.65	Yes
Hungary	6	4.46	-1.54	Yes

Maintaining consistency with Welzel (2013), the independent variable is emancipative values. As noted by previous scholars, the sub categories- voice, choice, equality, and autonomy- are not correlated with each other, demonstrating that they do not measure a common latent variable (Jackman and Miller 1996, Seligson 2002). Thus, it makes little sense to combine them into an index. To accommodate for this, analysis is performed on each subcategory and on the combined index. The tables below further demonstrate that most of the variables are not correlated at the individual level in post-communist states. When possible, the questions comprising each

index are identical to those used by Welzel (2013). However, several questions are not available in EVS. When necessary, similar substitutes are used, denoted by a *. Values are taken from wave four (2008 to 2010), the most recent wave, of EVS.

Autonomy	independence	imagination	obedience
independence desirable childhood quality	1.00	0.16	-0.08
imagination desirable childhood quality	0.16	1.00	0.12
obedience desirable childhood quality	-0.08	0.12	1.00

Choice	divorce	abortion	homosexuality
How justifiable is divorce	1.00	0.66	0.40
How justifiable is abortion	0.66	1.00	0.42
How justifiable is homosexuality	0.40	0.42	1.00

Voice	Have a say*	Use initiative*
Important in a job: Have a say*	1.00	0.52
Important in a job: use initiative*	0.52	1.00

Equality	When jobs are scarce, men should have priority	Men should take as much responsibility for home and children*
When jobs are scarce, men should have priority	1	0.13
Men should take as much responsibility for home and children as women*	0.13	1

Correlations between subcategories				
	Autonomy	Choice	Voice	Equality
Autonomy	1.00	0.01	0.19	-0.03
Choice	0.01	1.00	0.00	0.11
Voice	0.19	0.00	1.00	0.01
Equality	-0.03	0.11	0.01	1.00

IW (2005) found a moderate correlation between self-expression values at the country level and levels of democracy ($r = 0.53$), after attempting to control for past levels of democracy and country wealth. On the contrary, when focusing explicitly on Central and Eastern European states there is little to no relationship between levels of democracy and emancipative values. The table below shows correlations between a state's democracy score in 2010 and 2016 with the state's average emancipative values. If IW's theory is correct, there should be at least a weak correlation between democracy scores in 2010 and 2016 with emancipative values. Yet, a state's average emancipative values have no correlation with the state's democracy score in 2010 and 2016 ($r = 0.06$). Additionally, backsliding has no correlation ($r = 0.11$) with a state's emancipative values. Overall, emancipative values fail to explain democratic backsliding and levels of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.

Correlations Between Levels of Democracy and Emancipative Values		
Value	2010	2016
Voice	0.08	0.06
Choice	-0.13	-0.11
Autonomy	0.21	0.26
Equality	0.03	0.06
Emancipative	0.06	0.06

Contrary to the hypothesis, performing a t-test comparing emancipative values for democracies that have backslid to stable democracies reveals that backsliding states have significantly higher values than stable states ($p < 0.000$). Therefore, higher emancipative values are not associated with more stable democracies.

Value Difference: Backsliding vs. Stable

Value	Difference	P-Value
Voice	-0.061	0.000
Choice	-0.369	0.000
Autonomy	-0.084	0.000
Equality	-0.077	0.000
Emancipative	-0.111	0.000

Note: Two tailed ttest at 95% confidence interval.
Difference shows mean difference for backsliders from stable.

Emancipative Values and Levels of Democracy

Stable Democracies

Country	Voice	Choice	Autonomy	Equality	Emancipative	Democracy 2010	Democracy 2016
Estonia	0.30	2.00	0.43	-0.04	-0.13	5.07	5.07
Latvia	0.17	1.80	0.73	0.06	-0.12	4.86	4.96
Lithuania	0.29	1.35	0.81	-0.10	-0.05	4.75	4.68
Romania	0.38	1.52	0.24	-0.38	0.28	3.57	3.61
Croatia	0.36	3.54	0.35	0.23	-0.22	3.36	3.29
Montenegro	0.38	3.70	0.28	0.17	-0.23	3.18	3.11

Backsliding States

Country	Voice	Choice	Autonomy	Equality	Emancipative	Democracy 2010	Democracy 2016
Slovenia	0.55	3.08	0.33	0.08	0.11	5.07	4.96
Czech Republic	0.38	3.76	0.66	-0.20	0.11	4.82	4.75
Poland	0.38	1.85	0.12	-0.05	-0.07	4.79	4.43
Slovakia	0.30	3.11	0.59	-0.06	0.06	4.46	4.39
Bulgaria	0.47	1.77	0.62	-0.06	0.05	3.93	3.64
Hungary	0.37	2.71	0.70	0.36	-0.17	4.39	3.46
Macedonia	0.68	3.81	0.90	-0.05	0.41	3.18	2.57

However, IW's index includes several variables that are unnecessary for states to develop stable democracies. To focus explicitly on the minimum values needed for stable democracies, I make several changes to IW's index. Equality, focusing on gender equality, and choice, emphasizing reproductive rights, are both removed. Past democracies have stabilized even with high levels of inequality and few reproductive freedoms.

While choice and equality are dropped, tolerance is added. Tolerance for other views and people is necessary for a functioning democracy. As Inglehart (2017) argues, not all views need to be supported equally, but all views need to be tolerated. Tolerance allows individuals and groups to reach a consensus and compromise, assuring all people, regardless of race, religion, or sex, are granted their full human rights. Respondents' views on homosexuality and immigration captures tolerance levels by measuring citizen's dislike for some of the most hated groups in almost all societies. The tables below show the new index, tolerance, with the appropriate correlations, and the correlations between subcategories.

Tolerance	Homosexuality	Immigrants	Tolerance
Homosexuality Justifiable	1	0.06	-0.01
Immigrants are a strain on society	0.06	1	0.03
Tolerance for others desirable child quality	-0.01	0.03	1

Correlations between subcategories

	Autonomy	Voice	Tolerance
Autonomy	1.00	0.19	0.01
Voice	0.19	1.00	0.06
Tolerance	0.01	0.06	1.00

Even with an improved index, the results are unpromising. While the correlations are slightly higher, new-emancipative values still have a weak correlation with democracy levels in 2010 ($r=0.16$) and 2016 ($r=0.17$). In addition, the t-test comparing value levels for backsliding states compared to stable democracies demonstrates that backsliding states have significantly higher values than stable democracies ($p<0.000$).

Correlations Between Levels of Democracy and Emancipative Values		
Value	2010	2016
Voice	0.08	0.06
Autonomy	0.21	0.26
Tolerance	0.02	0.03
New-Emancipative	0.16	0.17

Value Difference: Backsliding vs. Stable		
Value	Difference	P-Value
Voice	-0.061	0.000
Autonomy	-0.084	0.000
Tolerance	-0.125	0.000
New-Emancipative	-0.198	0.000

Note: Two tailed ttest at 95% confidence interval.
Difference shows mean difference for backsliding from stable.

Political Action and Emancipative Values

H₂: Citizens' emancipative values influence their levels of political action.

Even with the improved variables, there is no relationship between emancipative values and levels of democracy in Central and Eastern European states. Although there are several possible explanations for these results, one possibility is that the human empowerment sequence does not apply to Central and Eastern Europe. The human empowerment theory states that emancipative values lead to democratization by increasing political action among citizens (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). If citizens with high emancipative values are not more politically active than those with low emancipative values, then the relationship between democracy and emancipative values will vanish.

Welzel (2013) empirically demonstrated that citizens' emancipative values cause them to engage in political action. Therefore, I begin by duplicating Welzel's research while focusing explicitly on democratizing states in Central and Eastern Europe. I then attempt to improve upon Welzel's work by addressing several measurement and theoretical flaws.

Welzel bases much of his study on Dalton, van Sickle, and Weldon's (2010) research (hereafter DVW). Like DVW, his dependent variable measures peaceful social movement

activities. The variable is an additive index of whether respondents in WVS reported engaging in any of the following activities: signing petitions, joining boycotts, and attending peaceful demonstrations. First used by Barnes and Kaase (1979), the index has been used by a variety of different scholars examining protest activities (Brady, Verba, Schlozman, 1995; Catterberg 2003; Jennings et al. 1990). Though DVW also included “joining unofficial strikes” and “occupying building and factories,” the most recent round of WVS dropped these questions, forcing Welzel to drop them. For each protest activity, respondents have the ability to choose between “have done,” “might do,” and “would never do.” Welzel chooses to code “have done” as 1, “might do” as 0.33, and “would never do” as 0, arguing that possibly doing an activity is closer to never doing the action than doing it; thus, it should be coded closer to zero.

Welzel’s primary independent variable is an index of emancipative values, containing voice, choice, autonomy, and equality. However, as noted previously, the subcategories are not correlated with each other; therefore, OLS regressions are performed on each subcategory and the complete index.

The other control variables are closely based off the literature. Civic skills and knowledge are typically considered influential in determining whether people engage in political action (Dalton, van Sickle, and Weldon 2010; Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995; Barnes and Kaase 1979; Inglehart and Catterberg 2003; Catterberg 2003). Civic skills refer to the resources that allow people to organize and engage in political activities, such as reading and writing ability (Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995). Citizens with strong civic skills are better equipped to digest political information, develop opinions, and voice concerns. Civic skills are typically captured by years of education and have been demonstrated to strongly impact political activity (Dalton, van Sickle, and Weldon 2010; Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995; Barnes and Kaase 1979; Inglehart and Catterberg 2003). Hence, Welzel (2013) controls for civic skills by including years of education.

Civic knowledge refers to citizen’s knowledge about current political affairs and is typically viewed as essential for political activity because uninformed or uninterested citizens are unlikely to engage in political actions (Catterberg 2003). Welzel measures civic knowledge through the variable ‘political interest’ which includes responses to the question “how interested are you in politics?”

Group membership is also generally believed to influence engagement in political activities (Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995). Strong networks, such as those that develop when citizens belong to organizations and associations provide citizens with more opportunities to engage in political activities (Putnam 2000, Norris 2002). Welzel measures group membership by combining responses on all fourteen of the WVS questions asking respondents “Do you belong to...,” which includes a wide variety of groups, ranging from labor unions to sports teams. Each question is coded 0 for “Not mentioned” and 1 for “Mentioned,” producing a maximum score of fourteen for the combined variable ‘group.’

Welzel’s variable “Government Confidence” attempts to control for grievance theory, which states that citizens are more likely to protest when they are unhappy with government actions or their current situations (Gurr 1995). When groups have the ability to collectively organize and feel unrepresented or politically suppressed they are more likely to engage in protest activity (Gurr 1995). Grievance theory builds off relative deprivation theory, which states that people are more likely to protest when they recognize that they are at a disadvantage (Crosby 1976). Both theories emphasize political and personal dissatisfaction as motivators for protest activities. Welzel replaces DVW’s variable distrust in parliament with the question “how confident are you in the national government,” to gauge citizen’s satisfaction with government actions. To capture

life satisfaction, respondent's reply to the question "How satisfied are you with your life?" is used. Both variables are designed to measure citizen's unhappiness with their current situations.

In addition to individual level variables, Welzel (2013) controls for several country level effects such as technological advancement and country freedom. While DVW use per capita GDP to measure country wealth, Welzel combines several different variables, including average years of schooling, access to internet servers, and per capita GDP, into a single variable- technological advancement. Both measures are designed to control for country wealth and resources which have been shown to influence political activity (McCarthy and Zald 1977). The World Bank no longer records access to internet servers; therefore, when replicating Welzel's regression model, access to internet servers is replaced with electricity consumption per 1,000 people in 2009.

Meyer (2004) demonstrated that the amount of freedom each country grants its citizens has a strong impact on political activity. Unsurprisingly, states with little freedom are unlikely to experience high amounts of political activity. Welzel controls for varying freedom levels by creating a new index, citizen rights, combining scores from Freedom House and CIRI for each country. When replicating Welzel's study, I use country scores from 2009 to match the years in wave four of EVS.

Replicating Welzel (2013) OLS Regression- Dependent Variable: Protest Activity					
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Emancipative	0.071 [0.004]				
Voice		0.039 [0.082]			
Choice			0.039 [0.000]		
Autonomy				0.026 [0.520]	
Equality					0.050 [0.013]
Confidence in Government	-0.048 [0.013]	-0.051 [0.009]	-0.041 [0.029]	-0.048 [0.017]	-0.048 [0.011]
Interest in Politics	0.196 [0.000]	0.195 [0.000]	0.197 [0.000]	0.191 [0.000]	0.197 [0.000]
Highest Level of Education	0.061 [0.000]	0.061 [0.000]	0.052 [0.000]	0.062 [0.000]	0.058 [0.000]
Life Satisfaction	0.001 [0.841]	-0.000 [0.968]	-0.000 [0.888]	0.000 [0.908]	-0.000 [0.915]
Group Membership	0.074 [0.000]	0.075 [0.000]	0.078 [0.000]	0.076 [0.000]	0.075 [0.000]
Country Freedom	0.077 [0.000]	0.083 [0.000]	0.07 [0.000]	0.124 [0.000]	0.083 [0.000]
Technological Advancement	0.082 [0.000]	0.073 [0.000]	0.059 [0.000]	-0.230 [0.000]	0.058 [0.000]
N	18,360	17,897	18,137	17,524	18,307

Notes: Entries are beta coefficients with p-values in brackets. Protest activity ranges from 0 to 3. OLS regression performed with fixed effects and country clusters.

Emulating Welzel’s work with Central and Eastern European states yields results similar to Welzel’s original study. Citizens’ emancipative values significantly impact protest activity. A standard deviation increase in emancipative values leads to 0.07 increase in protest activity ($p=0.004$), which ranges from zero to four, implying that a citizen with the highest emancipative value score is 0.28 higher on protest activity than a citizen with the lowest level of emancipative values. However, after analyzing each subcategory, only choice and equality significantly affect the likelihood of a citizen protesting, while voice and autonomy have no significant impact. Contrary to Welzel’s argument, emancipative values as a whole do not influence protest activity, rather choice and equality influence protesting while voice and autonomy have no effect.

However, exactly replicating Welzel’s work on a small country sample produces several problems and many variables are omitted or can be improved. Welzel’s dependent variable, protest activity, excludes “joining unofficial strikes.” Although he argues this change strengthens the variable because the remaining questions are more popular and generally more peaceful, in Central

and Eastern Europe about 3% of respondents' report attending unofficial strikes, close to the percent that report engaging in boycotts. Attending strikes is also included in the most recent round of EVS, making it a valuable addition to the dependent variable. Therefore, protest activity in my model is an additive index, ranging from zero to four, of whether EVS respondents reported engaging in any of the following activities: signing petitions, joining boycotts, joining unofficial strikes, and attending peaceful demonstrations.

While Welzel choose to code "have done" as 1, "might do" as 0.33, and "would never do" as 0, I recode "might do" as 0.5. It is impossible to know each respondent's intention when choosing "might do" and it is entirely possible that citizens who report "might do" will engage in the action given the right situation. Therefore, "might do" should be coded as 0.5 rather than 0.33.

Differing from past work, this study focuses solely on democratizing post-communist states. Unlike Welzel's sample, all of these states have free and fair elections, making voting a primarily tool for political action. Democracies rely on engaged citizens' voting for their ideal leaders. Without informed and involved voters, democratic leaders will not accurately represent the public will, making voting a vital competent of political action. Similarly, political parties play a necessary role in states' developing stable democracies (Lipset 1959, Mainwaring 1988, Diamond et al. 1989, Huntington 1968). If citizens with high emancipative values do not also have high levels of political involvement there is likely a break in the human empowerment sequence, which could explain the lacking correlation between backsliding and values.

However, as noted by Brady, Verba, and Schlozman (1995), voting takes significantly less time and energy than protest activity and likely results from different underlying factors. Therefore, voting, party engagement, and protest activities are included in separate models. Voting is measured by respondent's reply to the question "Would you vote in a general election tomorrow?" Preferably, a question would ask respondents if they voted in the last election but such a question is not asked in EVS. Party involvement is an index combining "Do you volunteer with a political party?" and "How much confidence do you have in political parties?"

Rather than using Welzel's emancipative value index, my primary independent variable utilizes my updated index, including voice, tolerance, and autonomy. However, a separate regression is also performed using Welzel's original index.

Like Welzel, I control for civic skills through years of education. However, controlling for civic knowledge through political interest is problematic. Citizens can be interested in politics but lack the time or resources to pursue political knowledge. On the contrary, people can be entirely uninterested in politics but still choose to closely follow political events due to social pressure or a sense of civic duty. To account for this, a variable directly measuring knowledge on current events should be included in the model. In EVS, the best variable capturing this asks respondents "How often do you follow political events in the news?" Interest in politics and following political events are weakly correlated ($r = 0.29$), demonstrating that the variables measure different aspects of civic knowledge. Group membership, confidence in government, and life satisfaction are all controlled for by duplicating Welzel's variables.

Although Welzel (2013) and DVW include several individual level variables in their model, both scholars fail to control for socio-economic status. While social class is closely correlated with education, the two concepts are not identical and should be measured separately ($r=0.36$). In addition, even after controlling for education, social class has been demonstrated to impact political activity (Inglehart 1990, Catterberg 2003). I use EVS's variable measuring income, coded as low, medium, and high, to control for social class.

Religion has also been found to influence political engagement (White et al 2000, Harris 1994, McVeigh and Smith 1999). White et al (2000) discovered that church goers in post-communist states were more likely to support joining NATO, free market policies, and pro-free market political parties than the general population, demonstrating that church attendance may help build democratic political culture. McVeigh and Smith (1999) also found that regular church attendance increased the likelihood of individuals engaging in political protests. “How important is religion in your life?” is used to help control for religiosity.

Welzel and DVW also fail to control for free time. As demonstrated by Brady, Verba, and Schlozman (1995), free time is unrelated to socio-economic status and educational attainment but has a strong effect on political activity. People with less leisure time, such as those with full time jobs or young children, are less likely to engage in political activities. Free time is captured by the number of children living in the household and current employment status.

Rather than controlling for individual country level effects, fixed effects and clustering are employed. The limited number of countries included in this study leads to a degrees of freedom problem when several country level variables are specified.

Regression- Political Action and Emancipative Values			
	Protest Activity	Party Involvement	Voting
New Emancipative	0.085 [0.058]	0.008 [0.583]	0.143 [0.001]
Confidence in Government	-0.059 [0.011]	0.377 [0.000]	0.381 [0.000]
Life Satisfaction	-0.005 [0.370]	-0.002 [0.647]	0.071 [0.000]
Political Interest	0.219 [0.000]	0.123 [0.000]	0.501 [0.000]
Follow the News	0.033 [0.006]	0.004 [0.487]	0.231 [0.000]
Education	0.05 [0.000]	-0.005 [0.091]	0.034 [0.244]
Income	0.076 [0.001]	0.001 [0.929]	-0.026 [0.560]
Group Membership	0.088 [0.000]	0.16 [0.000]	0.102 [0.050]
Employment Status	0.067 [0.000]	0.005 [0.464]	-0.008 [0.881]
Children	0.002 [0.827]	-0.005 [0.705]	0.018 [0.787]
Religion	0.038 [0.040]	-0.009 [0.208]	-0.098 [0.001]
Female	-0.124 [0.003]	-0.030 [0.038]	0.094 [0.022]
N	14,242	14,238	12,953

Notes: Entries are beta coefficients with p-values in brackets. Protest activity and party involvement are OLS regressions. Voting is a logit. Protest activity ranges from 0 to 2, party involvement is standardized z-scores, voting is binary.

The updated emancipative value index does not have a significant impact on protest activity or party involvement for citizens in Central and Eastern Europe. However, emancipative values do significantly increase the likelihood of someone voting ($p=0.001$). Yet, after breaking the index into subcategories, only voice has a significant impact on voting behavior ($p=0.019$), demonstrating that it is not emancipative values as a whole that influence voting activity, rather it is the importance citizens place on freedom of speech. Contrary to Inglehart and Welzel's claim, high overall emancipative values do not increase political action, demonstrating a flaw in the human empowerment sequence. If emancipative values do not increase political action, then it is unsurprising there is no relationship between values and democratic backsliding.

Regression- Political Action and Original Emancipative Values			
	Protest Activity	Party Involvement	Voting
Emancipative	0.091 [0.022]	0.011 [0.552]	0.030 [0.547]
Confidence in Government	-0.060 [0.011]	0.377 [0.000]	0.380 [0.000]
Life Satisfaction	-0.003 [0.553]	-0.001 [0.669]	0.073 [0.000]
Political Interest	0.219 [0.000]	0.123 [0.000]	0.501 [0.000]
Follow the News	0.033 [0.006]	0.004 [0.485]	0.230 [0.000]
Education	0.052 [0.000]	-0.005 [0.099]	0.039 [0.176]
Income	0.076 [0.001]	0.001 [0.932]	-0.023 [0.606]
Group Membership	0.089 [0.000]	0.16 [0.000]	0.106 [0.042]
Employment Status	0.067 [0.000]	0.005 [0.485]	-0.005 [0.923]
Children	0.002 [0.851]	-0.005 [0.703]	0.016 [0.806]
Religion	0.036 [0.053]	-0.010 [0.172]	-0.095 [0.002]
Female	-0.116 [0.007]	-0.029 [0.044]	0.098 [0.020]
N	14,242	14,238	12,953

Notes: Entries are beta coefficients with p-values in brackets. Protest activity and party involvement are OLS regressions. Voting is a logit. Protest activity ranges from 0 to 2, party involvement is standardized z-scores, voting is binary.

There is also no statistically significant relationship between Welzel's original emancipative values and party engagement or voting activity. However, emancipative values significantly increase protest activity, with a standard deviation increase in emancipative values leading to a 0.10 increase in protest activity ($p=0.009$). After breaking the index into subcategories, only choice and equality have a significant effect on protest activity, with a standard deviation increase in equality leading to a 0.05 increase in protest activity ($p=0.007$) and a one-unit increase in choice, which ranges from zero to ten, leading to a 0.05 increase in protest activity ($p<0.001$). Although the relationships are significant, their impact is limited. Those who completely support reproductive rights are about 0.5 higher on protest activities than those who are completely against reproductive rights and those who completely support gender equality are only 0.23 higher on protest activities than those who completely oppose gender equality.

Inglehart and Welzel claim that an increase in emancipative values leads to an increase in protest activity. However, voice and autonomy have no impact on protest activity; rather, only choice and equality are statistically significant and their substantial impact is questionable. Additionally, emancipative values have no impact on voting and party engagement, which are both necessary for a stable democracy. If emancipative values cause citizens to engage in more freedom seeking activities, the effects should be witnessed in several different spheres, not just protest activities. Therefore, Inglehart and Welzel's human empowerment sequence does not apply to citizens in Central and Eastern Europe.

Conclusion

Today, democratic declines typically occur slowly overtime as elected officials decrease restraints on executive power. Citizens' values are often argued to influence democratic stability. As emancipative values increase, citizens become more political engaged and government accountability increases (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). However, this study finds no relationship between levels of democracy, democratic stability, and citizens' values in post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe. In addition, emancipative values as whole have a weak impact on political action. While emancipative values increase protest activity, after dividing the index into subcategories, only support for reproductive rights and gender equality significantly impact protest activity. Emancipative values have no effect on voting or party involvement. To develop stable democracies, states need politically active and engaged citizens. Due to emancipative values' weak impact on political action, it is unsurprising that there is no relationship between emancipative values and democratic stability.

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