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**2024**

**South Korean**

**Perceptions of Democracy**

**SNU Democracy Cluster**

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**Title**

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**Publisher**

Institute for Future Strategy, Seoul National University

1, Gwanak-ro, Gwanak-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea

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**Publication Date**

June 24, 2025

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**ISBN**

979-11-991352-8-4

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# Preface

As part of our continued commitment to advancing democratic governance in South Korea, the Democracy Cluster at the Institute for Future Strategy, Seoul National University, is pleased to present its inaugural report, *2024 South Korean Perceptions of Democracy*.

This publication is based on a nationwide survey conducted during the summer of 2024, targeting the general electorate. While numerous public opinion surveys have been undertaken since Korea's democratization in 1987, this report represents the first systematic effort to assess how ordinary citizens perceive and evaluate the state of democracy in the country. We regard this as a meaningful and substantial initial step toward a more empirically grounded understanding of Korean democracy.

A significant gap between expert assessments and public perceptions of democratic performance can undermine both the legitimacy and efficacy of reform initiatives. Experts and ordinary citizens may prioritize different facets of democratic governance; in some cases, the perspectives of the general public may offer a more accurate reflection of how democracy operates in practice. Thus, rigorously capturing the attitudes of both expert and general publics is essential to any serious effort to strengthen democratic institutions.

The Democracy Cluster intends to continue this survey project annually. Through ongoing refinement of our instruments and methodology, we aim to document shifts in civic perceptions over time and build a rich longitudinal dataset. We hope this endeavor will contribute to the early identification of democratic vulnerabilities



and serve as an empirical foundation for proposing effective reforms to enhance the quality of democratic governance in South Korea.

We warmly invite your continued engagement with this project and welcome your insights, feedback, and support as part of our ongoing mission to revitalize and strengthen democracy in South Korea.

Kyung Hoon Leem  
Chair, Democracy Cluster  
Institute for Future Strategy  
Seoul National University

# Summary of Key Findings

## 1. Survey Design

- The survey consisted of 173 questions, formulated in accessible language to ensure ease of understanding for the general public. To more accurately capture individual attitudes and everyday beliefs of ordinary voters, the survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews rather than via landline/mobile phone or online methods.
- The survey aimed to identify which elements citizens consider essential to democracy, how they rank these preferences, and how they distinguish between democratic and non-democratic systems. The questionnaire was carefully designed to minimize the influence of political events (such as elections) or attitudes toward the incumbent government, allowing for a more accurate measurement of voters' habitual democratic perceptions.

## 2. General Assessments on South Korean Democracy

- A clear majority of citizens agree that democracy is the best form of government (83.3%) and believe that Korea is governed democratically (73.4%). They also perceive that human rights are respected in the country (77.2%), with an overall satisfaction rate of 70.3% regarding the state of Korean democracy. However, when similar questions were framed differently, a notable portion of respondents offered more critical assessments of how democracy functions in practice.
- Korean voters overwhelmingly identify the free and fair election of leaders as the most essential element of democracy. While generally satisfied with the current democratic system, many voters prioritize economic development over democratic principles (68.1%) and view reducing economic inequality as more important than protecting political freedoms (75.2%). These findings suggest that voters expect democracy to deliver tangible socioeconomic benefits.

## 3. Electoral Competition, Freedoms, Equality, and Fairness

- Korean voters generally perceive elections as free and fair. However, 26.8% agreed with the statement that "voters accept bribes," and 24.2% agreed that

"The rich buy elections with money." Additionally, 8.8% reported having personally witnessed or experienced vote-buying within the past three years, while 13.3% believed that other forms of electoral misconduct had occurred.

- Voters expressed more negative assessments in areas such as press freedom, the rule of law, and social fairness. Roughly half of respondents rated the current state of press freedom in Korea negatively. Nearly half also believed that Korea's rule of law falls short of delivering judicial justice. A significant portion of respondents perceived political power to be unequally distributed among citizens, and more than half believed that people receive differential treatment from the government based on their socioeconomic status or cultural background.

#### **4. Preferences on Political Systems**

- As of the summer of 2024, a majority of Korean voters do not support the need for constitutional revision to alter the current presidential system. Even in the event of future constitutional reform, voters overwhelmingly prefer to retain the presidential system. Contrary to the direction advocated by experts who point to deficiencies in the current electoral system, voters are generally skeptical of expanding proportional representation in the National Assembly.

#### **5. Support for Authoritarian Politics**

- While Korean voters overwhelmingly support democracy, a significant minority express doubts about its problem-solving capacity: 25.2% believe democracy cannot adequately address the country's challenges, and 20.3% agree that dictatorship may be preferable in certain situations. Although 79.8% take pride in Korea's democratic development, many voters favor a strong leader unconstrained by parliament or political parties (54.7%) or believe that policy should be led primarily by experts (46%). When the questions are phrased differently, a pattern of support for stronger, more centralized leadership emerges among a subset of the electorate.
- At the same time, voters expressed strong normative commitment to popular sovereignty: 85.5% agreed that "politicians should prioritize following the will of the people," 82.2% that "The 'will and intent of the people' should be the most important value and standard in our country's politics." and 68.8% that "People,

rather than politicians, should make core political decisions.”

## 6. Future Directions of the Survey

- International indices of democracy—typically derived from expert assessments of institutional design and performance—sometimes produce divergent evaluations of a given country's democratic status depending on the issuing organization. These indices also often differ significantly from the perceptions held by citizens of the country in question, resulting in conceptual and interpretive confusion. Generally, the public tends to assess their own democracy more skeptically than experts do. It is necessary to examine how such gaps between expert and public evaluations manifest in the Korean context.
- While the overall preference for authoritarian rule among South Korean voters remains low, a potential increase in the proportion of citizens open to authoritarian alternatives could indicate rising receptivity to populist strongman leadership. The survey will monitor shifts in this sentiment over time.
- To better objectify and contextualize civic perceptions of democracy, more detailed international comparisons are needed. Such comparative analyses can contribute to the development of more compelling and evidence-based strategies for improving democracy in Korea.
- Future survey waves must make a concerted effort to reach socially marginalized groups that have been excluded from democratic processes and are typically underrepresented in public opinion data.
- The research team also plans to monitor changes in public perceptions of democracy, preferences for constitutional reform, and other major political changes in the aftermath of the December 2024 martial law incident.

# I. Overview

## 1. Research Objectives

■ The Korean Democracy Survey conducted by the Democracy Cluster at the Institute for Future Strategy, Seoul National University, is based on face-to-face interviews and aims to:

- (1) empirically and systematically analyze the perceptions and evaluations of democracy held by the general Korean electorate, with a focus on identifying the core components of democracy as understood by citizens and assessing how they evaluate the current state of Korean democracy;
- (2) compare and analyze these findings not only against existing public opinion surveys on political and social attitudes but also in relation to expert assessments, both domestic and international;
- (3) offer a multidimensional evaluation of how democracy functions and operates in Korea, and provide empirical grounds for policy recommendations aimed at improving democratic governance.

### ■ The Korean Democracy Survey

- Unlike conventional surveys on political and social attitudes, this study is specifically focused on questions related to perceptions and evaluations of democracy. It is distinct from expert-centered research in that it employs face-to-face interviews with a representative sample of the general electorate.
- First implemented in July 2024, the survey is planned as an annual effort to track longitudinal changes in Korean citizens' perceptions and evaluations of democracy.

## 2. Cohorts in South Korean Society

### ■ Cohorts in the 2024 Survey

- The Korean Democracy Survey in 2024 categorized respondents into cohorts based on their birth year. The cohort classification was developed through a review of existing literature and previous studies on generational typologies in Korean society.

<Table I -1> Cohort Classification in Korean Society

Cohorts	Birth Year	Frequency (May 2024)	%
War Gen.	Born before 1950	46	4.6
Industrialization Gen.	1951~1960	170	17.0
386 Gen.	1961~1970	228	22.7
X Gen.	1971~1980	179	17.9
IMF Gen.	1981~1990	171	17.1
Millennial Gen.	1991~2000	165	16.5
Z Gen.	Born after 2001	44	4.4
합계		1,003	100.0

### 3. Survey Overview

<Table I -2> Overview

Category	Description
Target Population	All adults aged 18 and older residing in South Korea
Sampling Frame	Based on the Resident Registration Population Statistics from the Ministry of the Interior and Safety as of May 2024
Sampling Method	Stratified by region, gender, and age based on the May 2024 registration data, followed by random sampling
Sample Size	1,003 respondents
Sampling Error	Assuming random sampling, the maximum margin of error at the 95% confidence level is ±3.1 percentage points
Survey Method	Face-to-face personal interviews (PI: Personal Interview)
Survey Period	July 9 - August 9, 2024
Survey Organization	Korea Research Co., Ltd.

## 4. Summary of Key Findings

### ■ Overview of the 2024 Survey

- The 2024 Korean Democracy Survey was designed around the following three core themes:
  - General perceptions and evaluations of democracy
  - Perceptions and evaluations across five key dimensions of democracy: elections, participation, freedom, equality, and deliberation
  - Preferences regarding current and alternative political systems

### ■ General Attitudes and Evaluations on Democracy

- Procedural and Performance-Based Understandings of Democracy
  - Voters identify the election of leaders through free and fair elections as the most essential element of democracy.
  - Citizens' expectations for democracy go beyond procedural and normative values to include tangible socioeconomic outcomes and redistributive effects.
  - A significantly larger proportion of respondents view economic development as more important than democracy (68.1%), and more value the reduction of economic inequality over the protection of political freedoms (75.2%).
- Overall Positive Evaluations of Democracy in Korea (10-point scale, Mean = M)
  - Respondents strongly value living in a democratic country (M = 8.84).
  - Satisfaction with the current state of democracy in Korea is relatively high (M = 6.43).
  - Citizens rate Korean society as more democratic (M = 6.77) than they rate the government as being governed democratically (M = 6.49).
  - It will be important to monitor shifts in satisfaction and evaluation following the declaration of martial law on December 3, 2024.
- Overwhelming Support for Democracy Coexists with Openness to Non-Democratic Governance
  - Democracy is by far the most preferred form of government (74.4%), while



support for military rule remains very low (11.2%).

- However, support for a strong leader (54.7%) and for technocratic governance led by experts (46.0%) remains notably high.

## ■ Key Dimension of Democracy: Elections

- The empirical and minimalist definition of democracy typically regards free and fair elections as the sine qua non of modern democratic systems.
  - Expert assessments have traditionally evaluated the quality of democracy in different countries based largely on the design and functioning of their electoral systems.
  - Korean voters also overwhelmingly identify free elections as the most essential component of democracy.
- Despite recent controversies over the impartiality of the National Election Commission, at the time of the survey in the summer of 2024, public perceptions remained largely positive:
  - 88% rated vote counting as fair, and
  - 77.4% viewed the Election Commission's impartiality positively.

## ■ Key Dimension of Democracy: Participation

- Deliberative Majority Rule Preferred as a Democratic Decision-Making Method
  - A majority of respondents indicated a preference for a decision-making model in which deliberation precedes majority rule.
  - The most common response was that individuals should accept the outcome of a vote even if it goes against their preference—suggesting high normative support for procedural democracy.
  - However, given the intense polarization in Korean society, this may also reflect a degree of social desirability bias in respondents' answers.
- Limited Perceived Access to Local Governance, Despite High Accessibility of Basic-Level Local Governments
  - While most respondents feel unable to participate meaningfully in the

decision-making processes of local governments, they do recognize the higher accessibility of basic-level (municipal) administrative bodies.

- Generally Negative Perceptions of Civil Society Organizations
  - Respondents expressed predominantly negative views toward civic groups and NGOs.

## ■ Key Dimension of Democracy: Freedom

- Skepticism Regarding the Judiciary's Ability to Check Executive Power
  - Many respondents expressed doubts about the courts' effectiveness in holding the government accountable.
- Younger Generations More Positive About the Protective Role of the Law
  - Younger respondents are more likely to view the law as a source of protection for individual rights and freedoms.
- Concerns About Political Repression Persist
  - 27.5% of all respondents believe that political torture exists in South Korea today.
- Widespread Distrust in the Executive Branch's Commitment to Constitutionalism
  - There is broad skepticism about the executive's respect for the Constitution and concern over the concentration of executive power.
- Doubts About the Independence of the Constitutional Court
  - Respondents expressed concerns about the Constitutional Court's autonomy and impartiality.
- Perceived Erosion of Civil Liberties
  - A significant portion of the public believes that threats to civil liberties are increasing.

## ■ Key Dimension of Democracy: Equality

- Gender Equality in Politics—Perception Gap Between International Indices and

## Domestic Views

- Low levels of women's political participation are a major factor contributing to Korea's lower rankings in international democracy indices.
- However, in contrast to these external evaluations, many Korean citizens do not perceive women as being significantly disadvantaged in terms of access to public office.
- Widespread Discontent with Socioeconomic Inequality in Power Distribution
  - A substantial number of respondents believe that power in Korean society is distributed unequally based on socioeconomic status.
- Low Agreement on Equal Power Distribution Regardless of Identity Factors
  - Very few respondents agree that power is distributed equally in Korean society regardless of language, ethnicity, religion, or cultural background.

## ■ Key Dimension of Democracy: Deliberation

- Frustration with the Lack of Genuine Public Debate Across Ideological Lines
  - Respondents from both progressive and conservative camps expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of public discourse, noting the lack of genuine deliberation across partisan and ideological divides.
- Limited Public Participation in the Public Sphere
  - 58.2% of respondents believe that public engagement in Korea's deliberative spaces is either restricted or insufficient.

## ■ On Political Reform

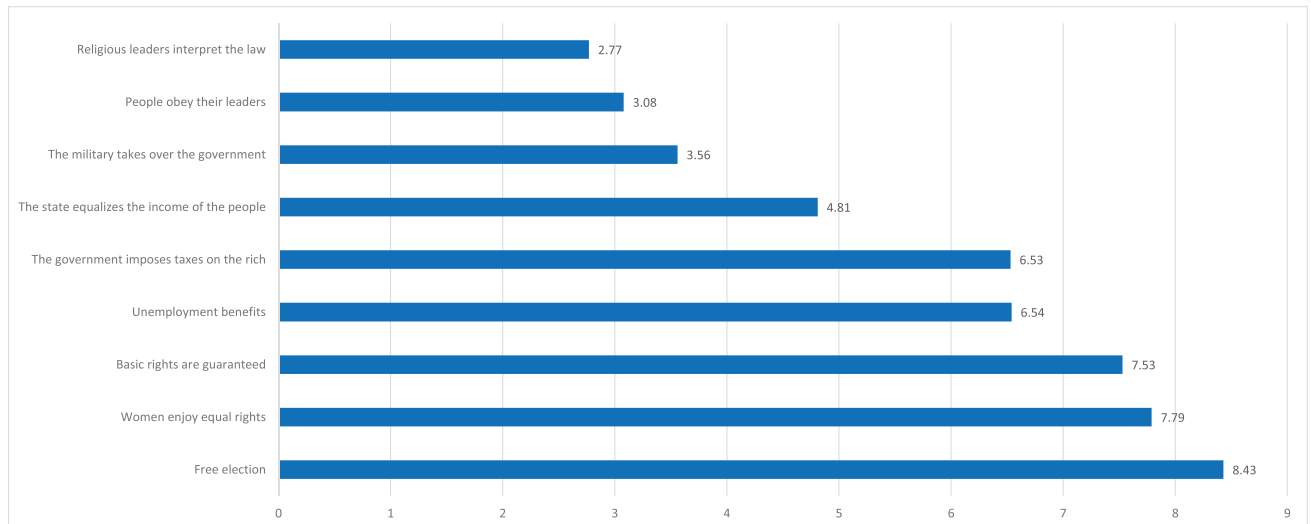
- Mixed Views on the Need for Constitutional Amendment
  - Although a majority opposes the need for constitutional reform, a significant portion of the public still sees it as necessary.
- Strong Support for a U.S.-Style Four-Year Two-Term Presidential System
  - There is notable public preference for a system resembling the American model, with a four-year presidential term and the possibility of re-election.

- Preference for Maintaining the Current Balance Between District Seats and Proportional Representation
  - Among various electoral reform options, voters most strongly favor preserving the current ratio between single-member district and proportional representation seats.

## II. General Attitudes and Evaluations on Democracy

### 1. Essential Elements of Democracy

<Figure II-1> Essential Elements of Democracy



#### ■ Questions

- "Democracy is composed of various elements. To what extent do you consider the following elements to be essential to democracy?"
  - 1) The government imposes taxes on the rich and provides subsidies to the poor. 2) Religious leaders interpret the law. 3) Leaders are elected through free elections. 4) The state provides unemployment benefits. 5) If the government is incompetent, the military takes over the government. 6) Basic rights are guaranteed to protect citizens from state interference. 7) The state equalizes the income of the people. 8) People obey their leaders. 9) Women enjoy equal rights with men.
  - The mean (M) of the above nine statements was calculated and visualized in a graph.
  - This item is adapted from the World Values Survey.

#### ■ "Leaders are elected through free elections" receives overwhelmingly

## high support.

- Among the nine proposed essential elements of democracy, “leaders are elected through free elections” received the highest level of support ( $M = 8.43$ ).
- This was followed by “women enjoy the same rights as men” ( $M = 7.79$ ) and “basic rights are guaranteed to protect citizens from state interference” ( $M = 7.53$ ).
  - There is strong support for core elements of liberal democracy such as elections and protection of fundamental rights.
  - In light of Korea’s consistently low rankings on gender equality among OECD countries, the high level of support for gender equality may reflect a socially desirable response. However, there was no statistically significant difference in responses to this item by gender.
- “The state provides unemployment benefits” ( $M = 6.54$ ) and “the government imposes taxes on the rich and provides subsidies to the poor.” ( $M = 6.53$ ) also received relatively high support.
  - These results indicate a tendency to regard socioeconomic performance as a key element of democracy.
  - This may reflect a relatively high level of support for social democracy, which emphasizes the protection of social rights. However, given the relatively low support for the idea that “The state equalizes the income of the people” ( $M = 4.81$ ), support for social democracy should not be overstated.
- Statements such as “religious leaders interpret the law” ( $M = 2.77$ ), “people obey their leaders” ( $M = 3.08$ ), and “If the government is incompetent, the military takes over the government” ( $M = 3.56$ ) were clearly rejected as essential elements of democracy.
- There appear to be no significant differences in perceptions of the importance of democratic essentials based on party support or ideological orientation.
  - Free elections, gender equality, and the protection of citizens’ basic rights from state interference consistently received the highest support.
  - Support for policies such as state-provided unemployment benefits and redistributive taxation varied slightly in ranking across groups, but the mean differences were not substantial.

- Anti-democratic statements—such as religious leaders interpreting laws, unconditional obedience to leaders, and military intervention—were rejected with similar intensity across political and ideological lines.

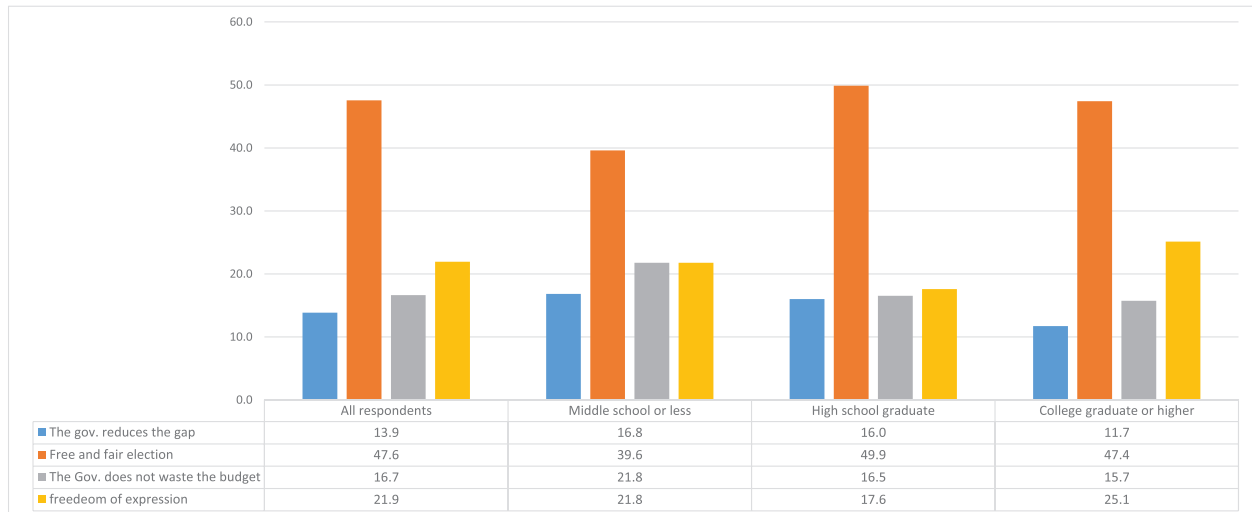
## 2. Essential Elements of Democracy

### ■ Questions

- "If you could choose only one statement from the following, which do you think is the most essential element of democracy?"
  - These were measured using four separate sets, each consisting of four options. Unlike the previous items, which assessed each core element of democracy individually, these sets were designed to capture respondents' relative evaluations of the proposed democratic essentials
  - (1) ① The government reduces the gap between the rich and the poor. ② The people elect government leaders through free and fair elections. ③ The government does not waste the budget. ④ The people can freely express their political views.
  - (2) ① The legislature monitors the executive branch. ② Basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter are provided to everyone. ③ The people can freely organize political groups. ④ The government provides high-quality public services to the people.
  - (3) ① The government ensures law and order. ② The media can freely criticize the government. ③ The government guarantees employment opportunities for everyone. ④ Multiple political parties compete fairly in elections.
  - (4) ① The people have the freedom to participate in protests and demonstrations. ② Politics is clean and free of corruption. ③ The judiciary protects ordinary citizens from the abuse of power by the government. ④ The unemployed receive support from the state.
  - In the following section, relative evaluations of core democratic elements are disaggregated by gender, generation cohort (War, Industrialization, 386, X, Millennial, Z), household income level (high, middle, low), educational attainment (middle school or below, high school graduate, college graduate or higher), party affiliation (no party, People Power Party, Democratic Party), and political ideology (progressive, moderate, conservative).
  - Only results that show statistically significant differences are presented in graphical form.



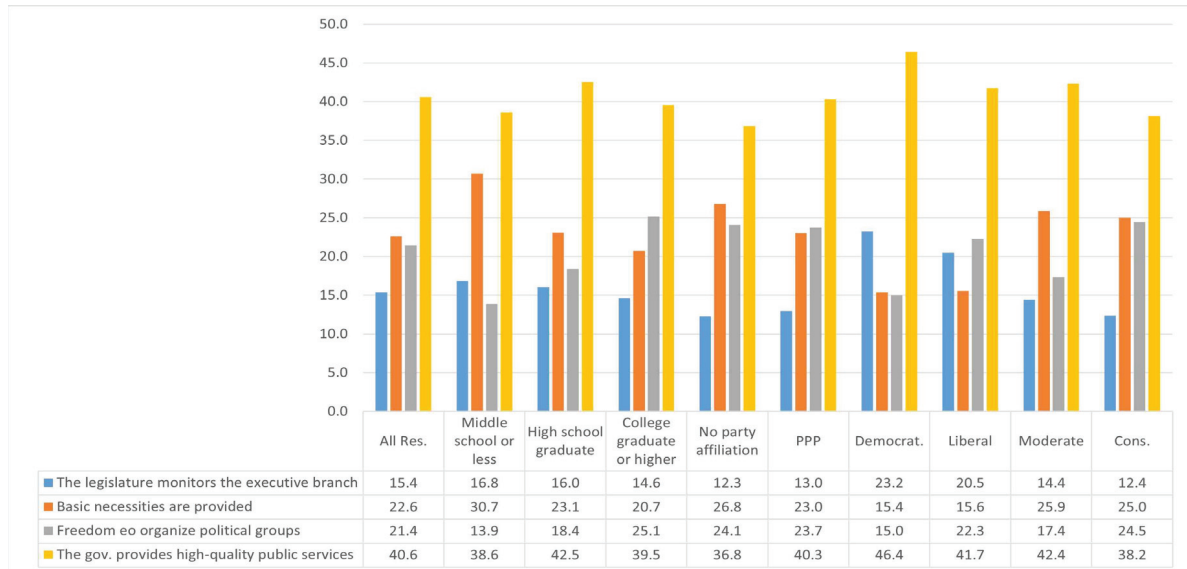
<Figure II -2> Democracy Essentials: Free and Fair Elections and Freedom of Expression



## ■ Free and Fair Elections and Freedom of Political Expression Recognized as Core Elements of Democracy

- Overall, respondents were more likely to view political fundamental rights—such as “free and fair elections” (47.6%) and “freedom of political expression” (21.9%)—as essential to democracy, rather than performance-based outcomes such as “reducing income inequality” (13.9%) or “preventing government waste” (16.7%).
- In particular, nearly half of all respondents identified “free and fair elections” as the most essential element of democracy. This finding aligns with earlier results, where the individual evaluation of “free elections” also received the highest average score.
- The tendency to regard performance outcomes as essential to democracy was somewhat higher among respondents with less than a middle school education, compared to high school or college graduates. This may reflect the fact that formal education tends to emphasize a minimalist, election-centered understanding of democracy. These results suggest the need for future surveys to systematically examine how socially marginalized groups understand democracy.

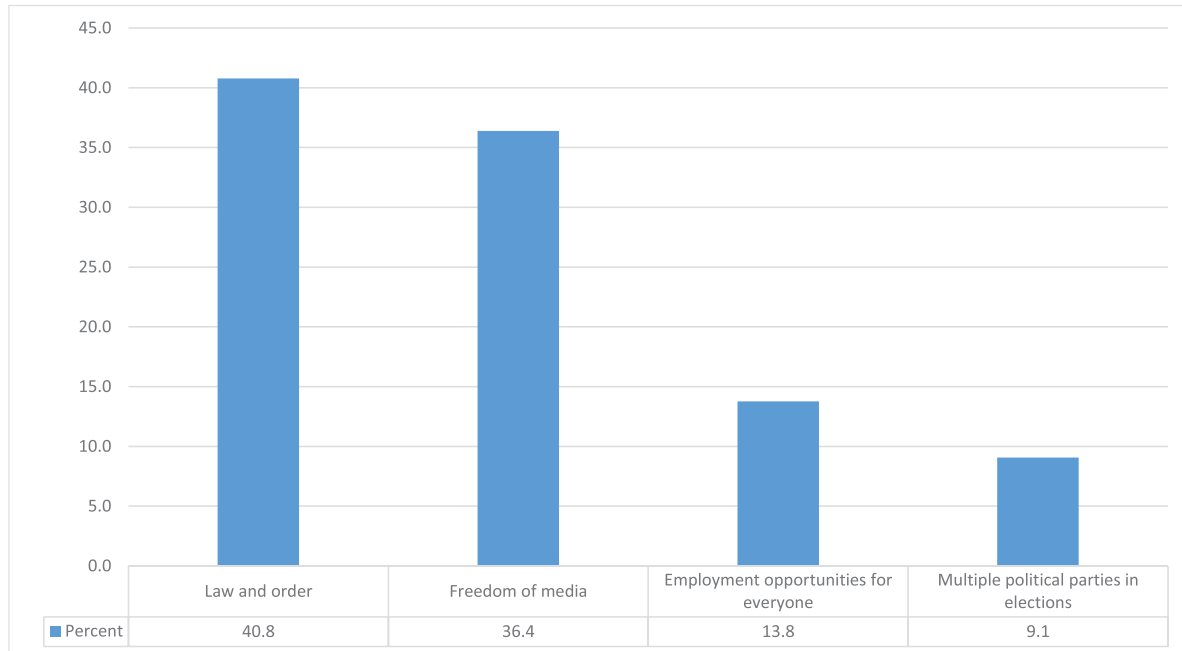
<Figure II -3> Democracy Essentials: high-quality public services by the government



## ■ High-Quality Public Services by the Government as a Core Element of Democracy

- Overall, respondents viewed performance-based outcomes—such as “The government provides high-quality public services to the people” (40.6%) and “Basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter are provided to everyone.” (22.6%)—as more essential to democracy than institutional features of modern democratic systems, such as “the freedom to organize political groups” (21.4%) or “The legislature monitors the executive branch” (15.4%).
- General voters tend to focus on free and fair elections and freedom of political expression when identifying fundamental components of democracy. Other elements central to minimalist and institutional definitions of democracy—such as freedom of association and the separation of powers—receive relatively lower levels of support when compared to performance-based criteria.
- This tendency is particularly pronounced among high school graduates, Democratic Party supporters, and those who identify as moderates or progressives, especially with regard to the importance of government provision of quality public services.

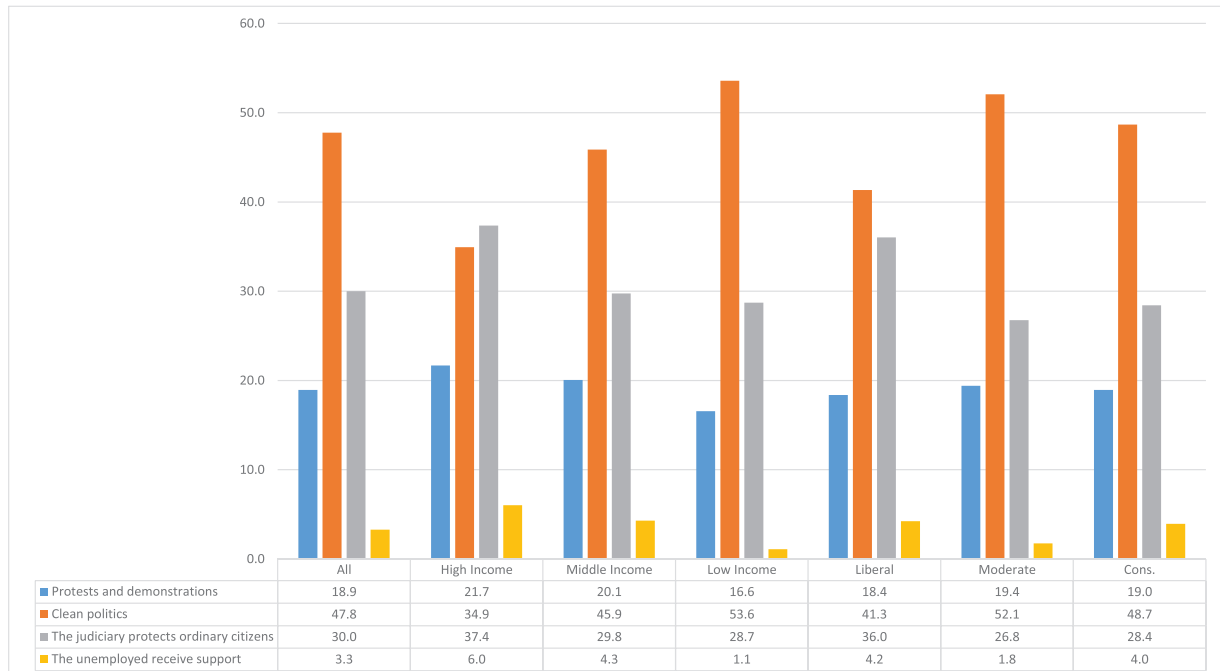
<Figure II -4> Democracy Essentials: Law and Order, and the Freedom of Press



#### ■ Law and Order and Press Freedom Viewed as Essential Elements of Democracy

- Respondents regarded “the government ensures law and order” (40.8%) and “the media can freely criticize the government” (36.4%) as more essential features of democracy than “The government guarantees employment opportunities for everyone” (13.8%) or “multiple political parties competing fairly in elections” (9.1%).
- From the perspective of ordinary voters, the institutional pillars of democracy—such as the rule of law and the press’s role in checking power—are considered more important than party competition in elections. Additionally, consistent with earlier findings, support for the government’s role in guaranteeing social rights appears relatively limited.
- In this set of responses, no significant differences emerged by socioeconomic background or political orientation.

**<Figure II -5> Democracy Essentials: Clean Politics and 와 Judicial Checks on Government**



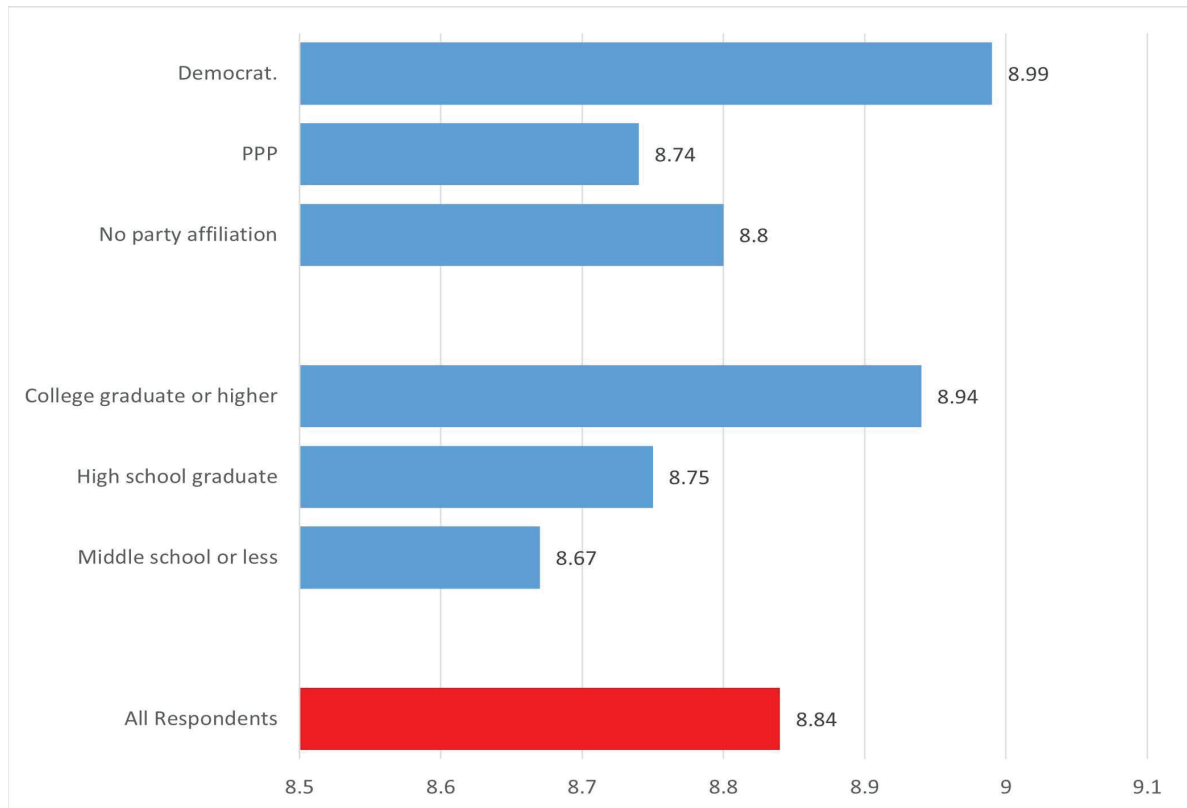
## ■ Clean Politics and Judicial Oversight Are Essential Elements of Democracy

- At the aggregate level, respondents were more likely to identify “politics is clean and free of corruption” (47.8%) and “The judiciary protects ordinary citizens from the abuse of power by the government” (30.0%) as essential to democracy, compared to “The people have the freedom to participate in protests and demonstrations” (18.9%) and “The unemployed receive support from the state” (3.3%).
- The strong support for clean politics may reflect Confucian and moralistic conceptions of political integrity.
- The relatively high support for the judiciary’s role in checking executive power appears consistent with earlier findings—namely, that the rule of law is widely valued and that trust in the judiciary is relatively stronger compared to other branches of government.
- The very low level of support for government assistance to the unemployed likely reflects limited public support for expansive government intervention in the realm of social rights.

- Support for clean politics was relatively higher among lower-income groups, moderates, and conservatives, while support for judicial oversight of power was more prominent among higher-income groups and progressives.

### 3. Preference for Democracy

<Figure II -6> Importance of Living in a Democratic Country



#### ■ Questions

- The question “How important is it to you to live in a democratic country?” was used to assess respondents’ preference for democracy and their evaluation of the state of democracy in Korea. It was measured on an 11-point scale, with 5 as the neutral midpoint.
- The graph above displays the mean scores of this item across different groups. A higher average score indicates that living in a democratic country is considered more important to the respondents in that group.

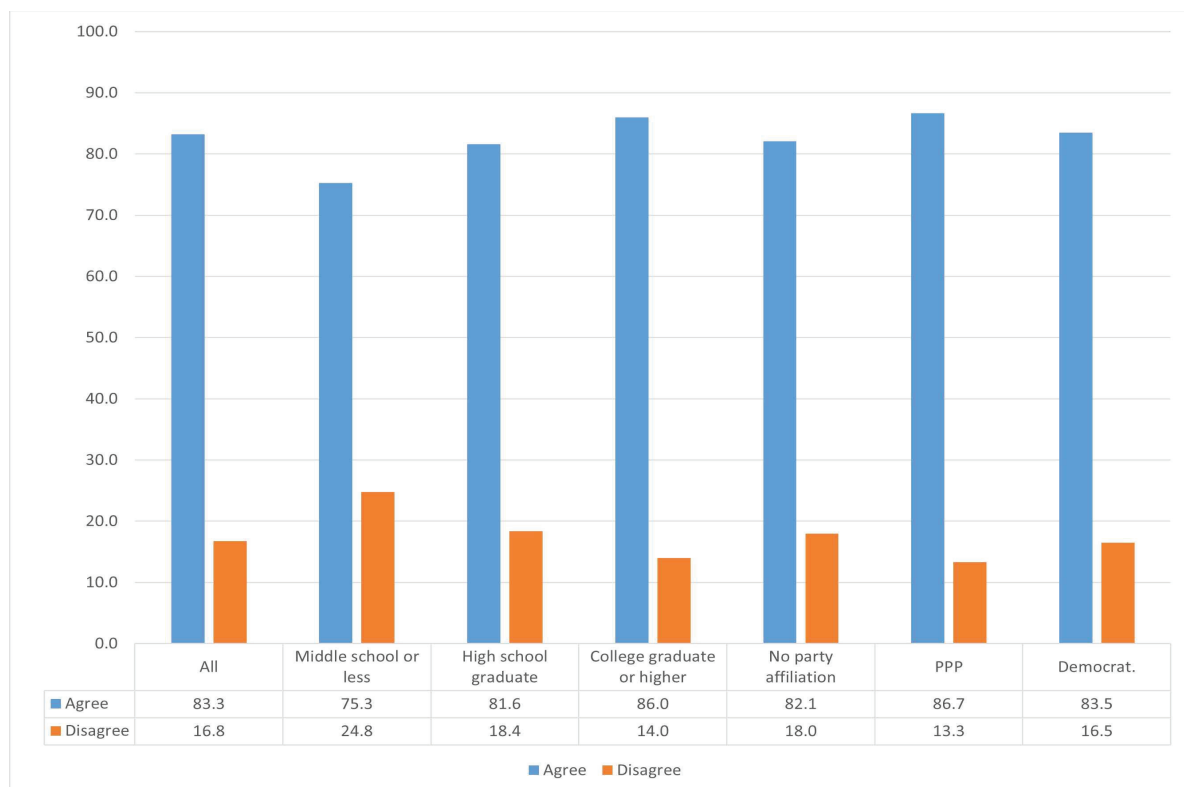
#### ■ Strong Preference for Democracy

- Respondents showed a very high overall preference for democracy, with a mean score of  $M = 8.84$ . Across all categories—gender, generation, education level, party support,

and political ideology—support for democracy as a political system was overwhelmingly strong, indicating a widespread and absolute preference for democracy in the abstract.

- However, because this question measures attitudes at a highly abstract level, it is important to recognize the potential influence of social desirability bias. As such, strong democratic preference scores should be interpreted with caution and in conjunction with perceptions of democracy's essential elements, policy orientations, and comparative assessments with alternative systems.
- Statistically significant differences were found between groups: college graduates (M = 8.94) scored higher than high school graduates (M = 8.75), and Democratic Party supporters (M = 8.99) scored higher than People Power Party supporters (M = 8.74).

**<Figure II-7> Preference for Democracy**



## ■ Questions

- There is a statement that says, "Democracy may have its problems, but it is still the best form of government." How much do you agree with this statement?

- 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Somewhat agree; 4 = Strongly agree.
- In the graph above, responses of "Somewhat agree" and "Strongly agree" were combined and categorized as "Agree," while responses of "Strongly disagree" and "Somewhat disagree" were combined as "Disagree."

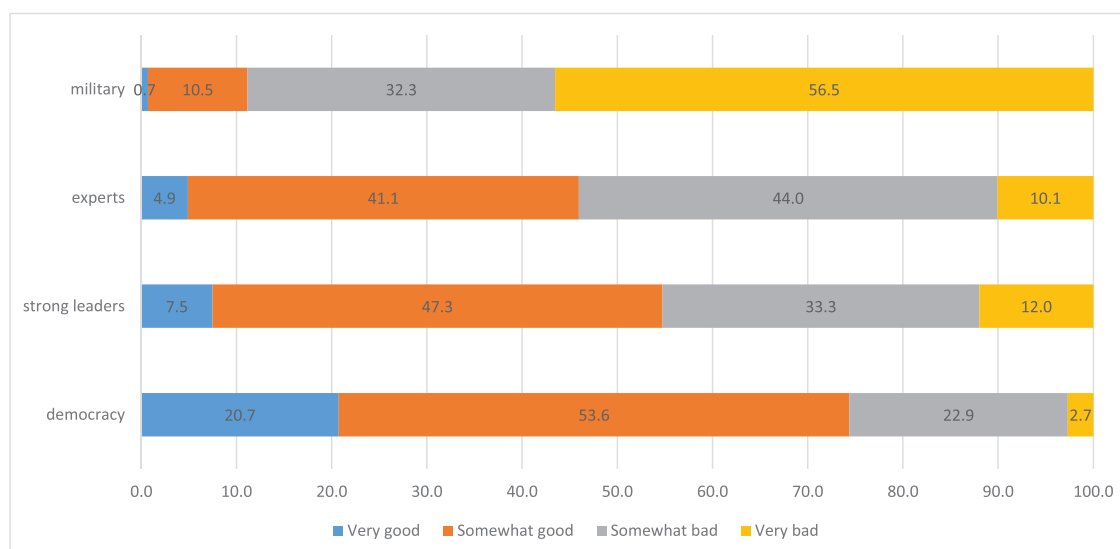
## ■ Overwhelming Preference for Democracy Confirmed Again at the Abstract Level

- Despite the inclusion of a qualifying phrase such as "democracy may have its problems", which allows for a more critical response, the results still indicate a strong and widespread preference for democracy as a form of government—consistent with the earlier item ("importance of living in a democratic country").
- Statistically significant differences emerged: the higher the level of education, the greater the agreement with democratic preference. Notably, supporters of the People Power Party showed the highest level of agreement (86.7%).
- The pattern by educational attainment mirrors the findings from the "importance of living in a democratic country" item. However, the differences by party affiliation diverge from the earlier result, suggesting varying patterns of democratic attachment depending on how the question is framed.



## 4. Relative Preference for Democracy

<Figure II -8> Relative Preferences for Forms of Governance



### ■ Questions

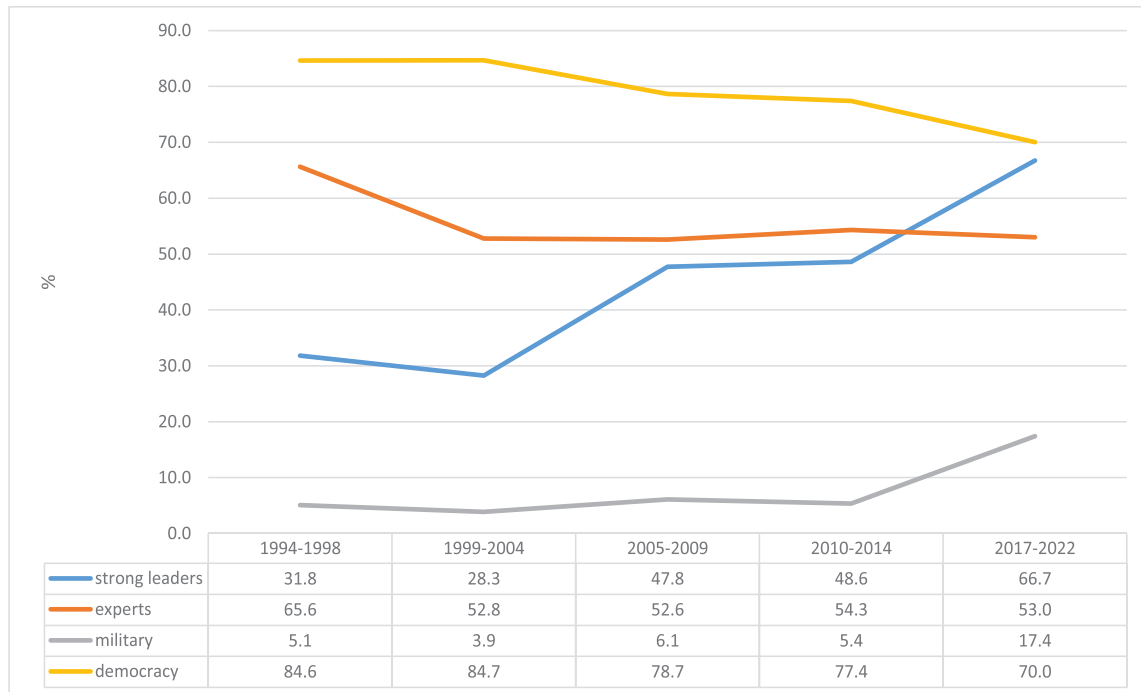
- “What is your opinion on the following as ways of governing our country?”
  - 1) A strong leader who doesn't care about parliament and parties leads the country(strong leaders); 2) Experts, not the government, lead policy(experts); 3) The military controls the government(military); 4) The country is governed by a democracy centered on parliament and political parties(democracy)
  - Four statements were presented within a boxed format to assess preferences for each form of governance individually, while also enabling respondents to make relative evaluations among the options.
  - 1 = Very good; 2 = Somewhat good; 3 = Somewhat bad; 4 = Very bad.
  - Preferences for each form of governance were visualized using stacked horizontal bar graphs.

### ■ Coexistence of Overwhelming Preference for Democracy and Notable Support for Non-Democratic Governance

- Preference for democracy is the highest among the governance options, with 74.4% expressing favorable views, while support for military rule is very low at 11.2%.

- However, there is also considerable support for strongman leadership (54.7%) and technocratic governance by experts (46.0%), indicating that non-democratic alternatives retain notable appeal among segments of the public.

**<Figure II -9> Relative Preferences for Forms of Governance: World Values Survey, Wave 3 (1994-1998) ~ Wave 7(2017-2022)**



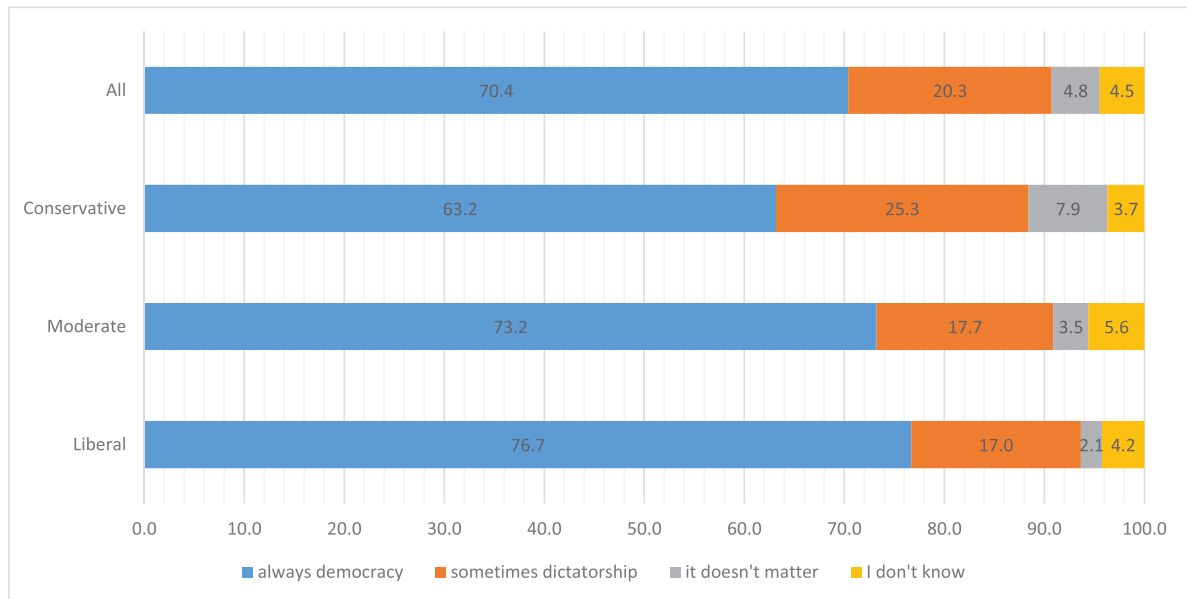
## ■ Comparison with World Values Survey Results

- As this Korean Democracy Survey represents the first wave, it does not allow for analysis of trends over time in preferences for forms of governance. However, comparisons can be made with the World Values Survey (WVS), from which this item was adapted.
  - In the most recent 7th wave of the WVS, preference for strongman leadership in Korea was reported at 66.7%, which is 12.0%P higher than in this survey, while preference for democracy was 70.0%, 4.4%P lower than the current findings.
  - The WVS shows a noticeable decline in democratic preference and a rise in

support for strong leaders, although support for expert rule remains above 50%, despite a slight decline.

- Support for military rule, a classic form of authoritarian governance, was below 10% in earlier waves but rose to 17.4% in the most recent WVS—6.2 percentage points higher than in this survey.
- The two surveys produced the same ranking of governance preferences, and the differences in preference levels for each type—aside from strongman rule—are relatively small. This suggests that the survey item used in the Korean Democracy Survey demonstrates a reasonable degree of reliability.

<Figure II -10> Democracy vs. Dictatorship



## ■ Questions

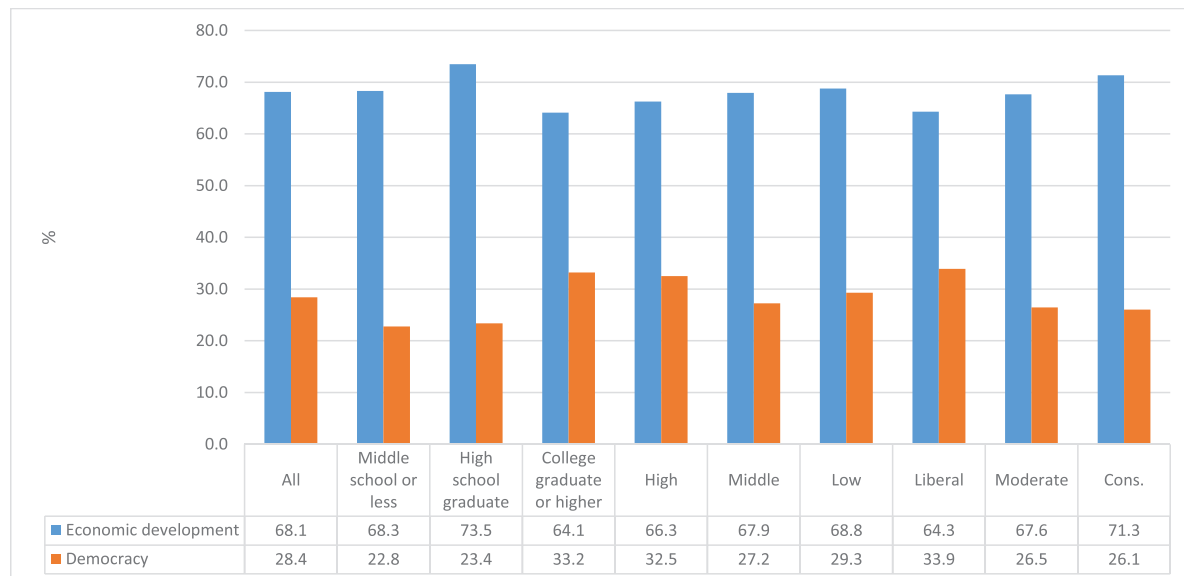
- Which of the following views is closest to your own?
  - 1=Democracy is always better than any other form of government;
  - 2=Sometimes, dictatorship is better than democracy; 3=It doesn't matter whether it's democracy or dictatorship; 4=I don't know.
  - A cumulative horizontal bar graph illustrates the relative preference between democracy and dictatorship.

## ■ Democracy is overwhelmingly preferred over dictatorship, even when conditional scenarios are presented.

- In survey items asking about relative preferences for systems of governance, the preference for dictatorship remains notably low even when conditional phrasing such as “sometimes” is included.
- Differences in preference by ideological orientation are evident. Conservatives are more likely than moderates or progressives to respond with “Sometimes, dictatorship is better than democracy” (25.3%) or “It doesn't matter whether it's democracy or dictatorship” (7.9%). However, even among conservatives, the relative preference for

democracy (63.2%) far exceeds the halfway mark, suggesting that differences in preference by ideology should not be overinterpreted.

**<Figure II-11> Economic Development vs. Democracy**



## ■ Questions

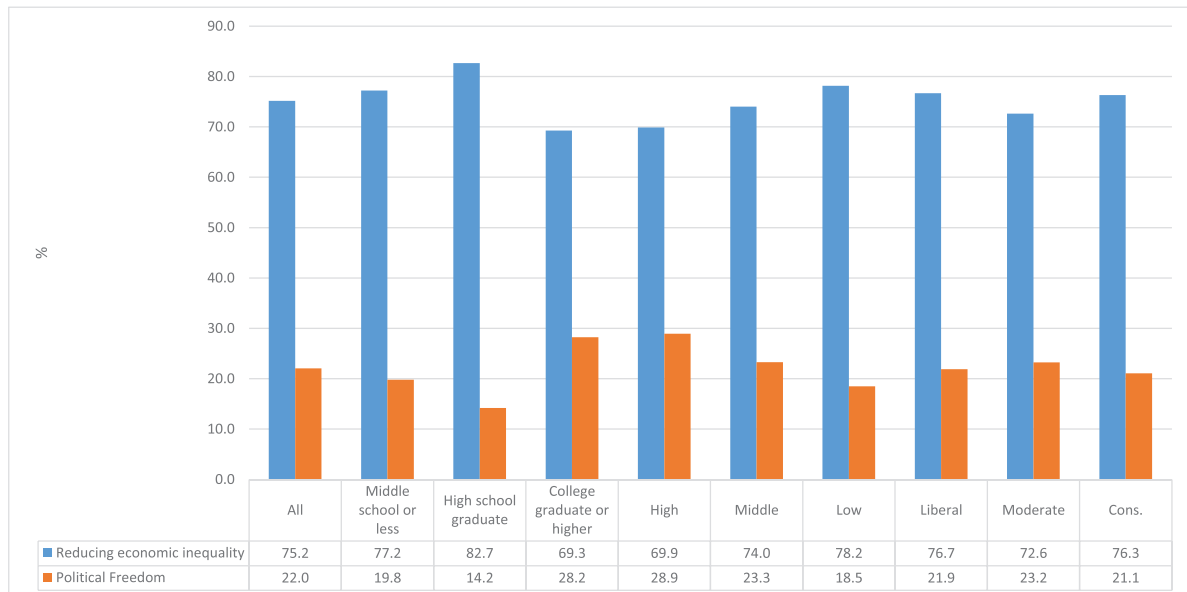
- “If you had to choose between democracy and economic development, which do you think is more important?”
  - 1 = Economic development is much more important; 2 = Economic development is somewhat more important; 3 = Democracy is somewhat more important; 4 = Democracy is much more important; 5 = Don’t know
  - Responses 1 and 2 are combined as “Economic Development,” and 3 and 4 as “Democracy” in the graph above.

## ■ Relative preference for economic development

- Overall, the preference for “Economic Development” (68.1%) is significantly higher than for “Democracy” (28.4%).
- Statistically significant differences in relative preference were observed by income,

education level, and political ideology. The preference for economic development is particularly high among low-income respondents, those with only a high school education, and those with conservative political orientations.

**<Figure II -12> Reducing economic inequality vs. Political Freedom**



## ■ Questions

- “If you had to choose between reducing economic inequality and guaranteeing political freedom, which do you think is more important?”
  - 1 = Reducing economic inequality is much more important; 2 = Reducing economic inequality is somewhat more important; 3 = Guaranteeing political freedom is somewhat more important; 4 = Guaranteeing political freedom is much more important; 5 = Don't know
  - Responses 1 and 2 are combined as “Reducing Economic Inequality,” and 3 and 4 as “Guaranteeing Political Freedom” in the graph above.

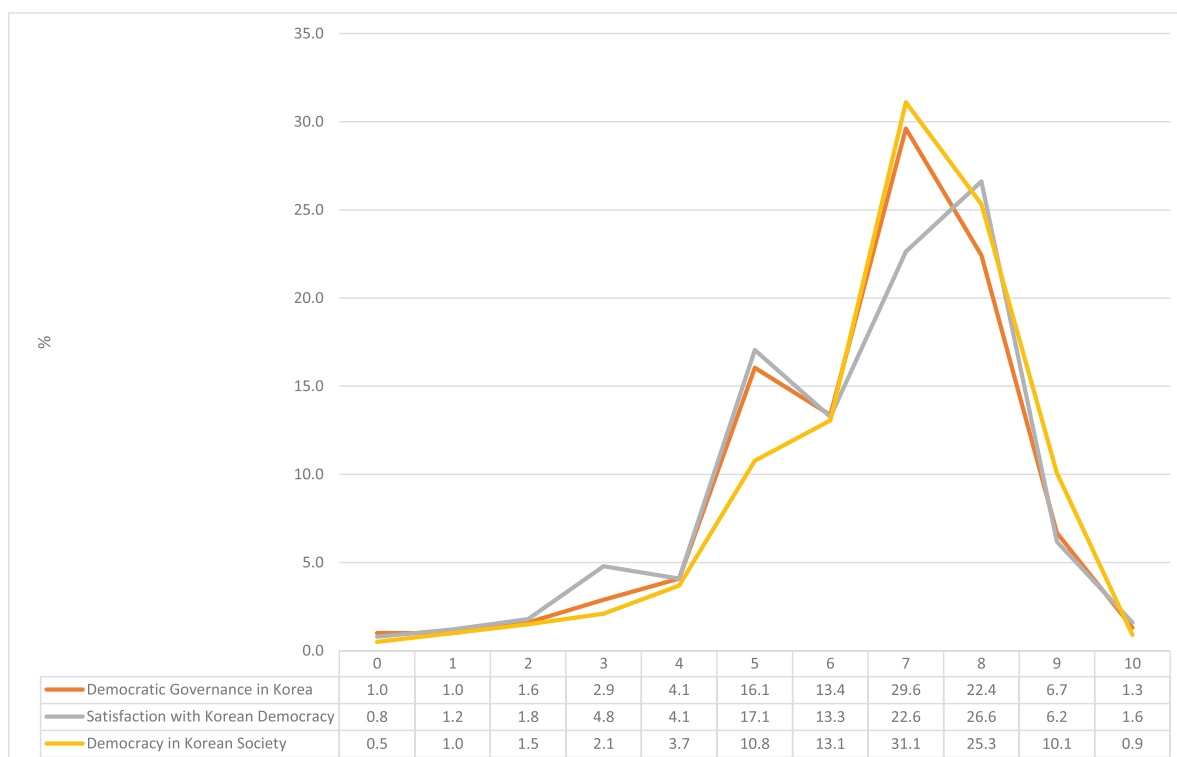
## ■ Relative preference for reducing economic inequality

- Overall, the relative preference for “Reducing Economic Inequality” (75.2%) is far higher than for “Guaranteeing Political Freedom” (22.0%).

- Consistent with the earlier item on the relative preference between economic development and democracy, this suggests that economic outcomes are valued more highly than democracy and one of its core components, political freedom.
- The relative preference for “Reducing Economic Inequality” is higher among lower-income groups and those with only a high school education.
  - This may reflect a preference pattern in which lower social strata are more sensitive to their own economic interests.
  - Future research should explore whether and why these groups support conservative parties, particularly those aligned with neoliberal or economically conservative agendas.

## 5. Evaluation of Korean Democracy

<Figure II -13> Evaluation of Korean Democracy



### ■ Questions

- “To what extent do you think our country is governed democratically?”(Democratic Governance in Korea); “How satisfied are you with the current state of democracy in our country?”(Satisfaction with Korean Democracy); “How democratic do you think South Korean society is today?” (Democracy in Korean Society)
- Respondents were asked to evaluate the state of democracy in Korea using three items, each measured on an 11-point scale.

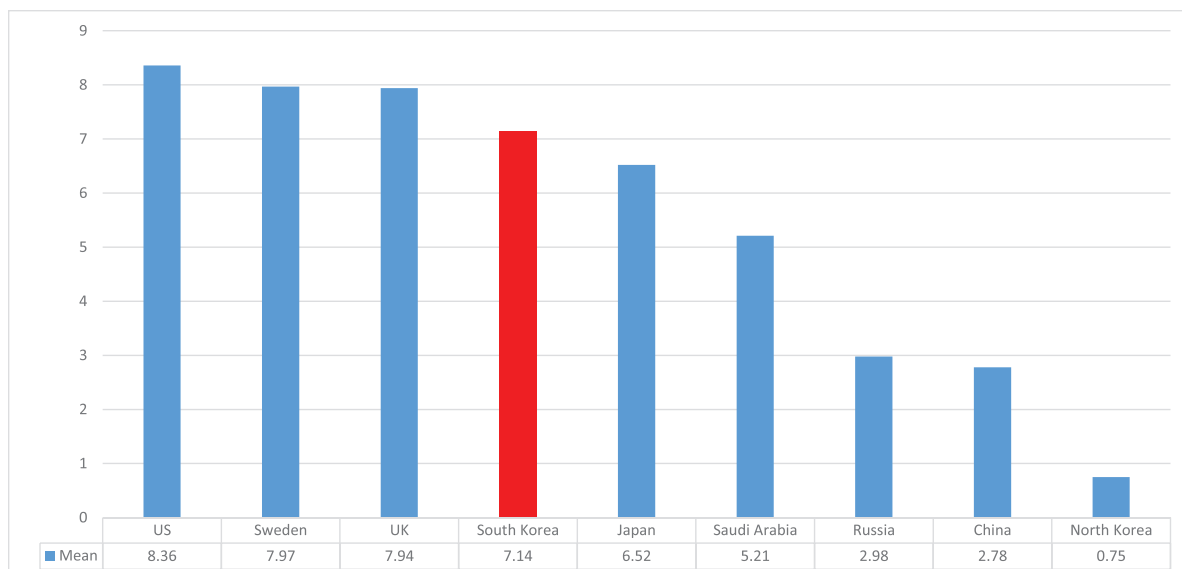
### ■ Positive assessment of current Korean democracy

- Positive evaluations were found across all three survey items: “Assessment of Democratic Governance in Korea,” “Satisfaction with Korean Democracy,” and “Perceived Degree of Democracy in Korean Society.”



- Satisfaction with Korea's current democracy is relatively high ( $M = 6.43$ ), and the assessment that Korean society is democratic ( $M = 6.77$ ) is slightly higher than the evaluation that the country is governed democratically ( $M = 6.49$ ).
- It is necessary to track changes in satisfaction and evaluations following the declaration of martial law on December 3, 2024.

**<Figure II -14> Country Rankings by Democratic Quality**



## ■ Questions

- "If 0 represents a complete dictatorship and 10 represents a complete democracy, where do you think the following country currently stands?"
  - Respondents were asked to evaluate North Korea, Japan, Russia, China, the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and South Korea on an 11-point scale.

## ■ Relatively positive evaluations for democratic countries

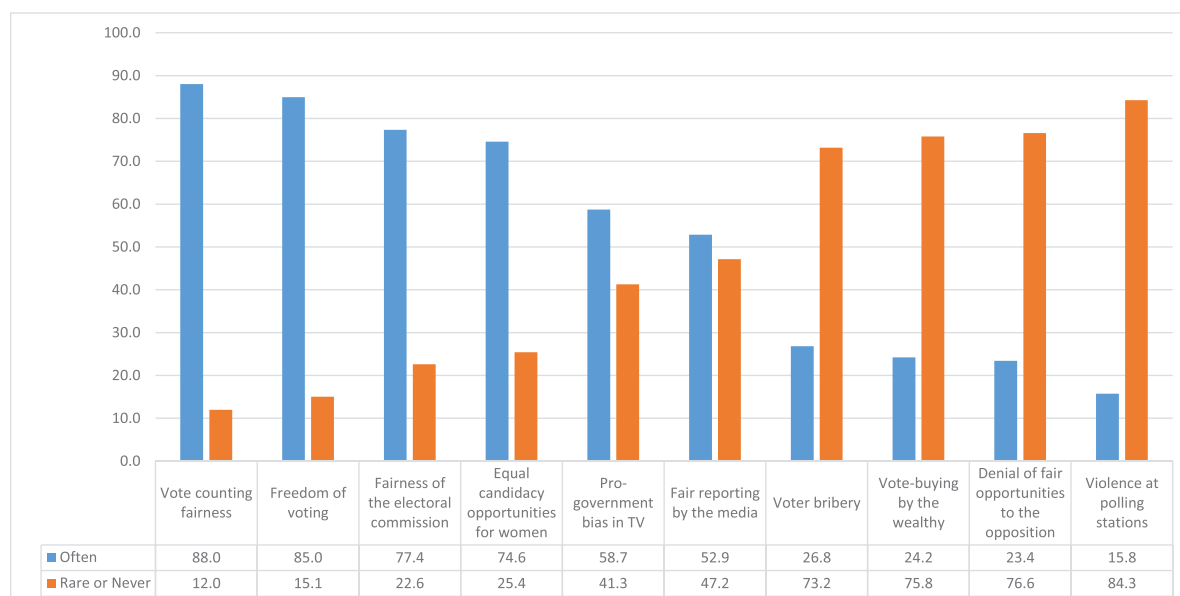
- The results appear largely consistent with expert assessments.
  - According to the 2023 V-Dem report, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, and South Korea are ranked as democracies in that order.
  - The relatively high rating for the United States in this survey likely reflects

respondents' general favorability toward the country.

- The relatively high ranking of Saudi Arabia—despite being rated lowest alongside North Korea in the 2023 V-Dem assessment—suggests that public criteria for evaluating democracy or authoritarianism may differ from those of experts.

### III. Electoral Democracy

<Figure III -1> Evaluation of the Electoral Process and Administration



#### ■ Questions

- “How often do you think the following occur in elections in our country?”
  - 1) The vote counting is fair.(Vote counting fairness).
  - 2) Opposition candidates do not have a fair chance in elections. (Denial of fair opportunities to the opposition).
  - 3) TV news is favorable to the ruling party.(Pro-government bias in TV).
  - 4) Voters accept bribes.(Voter bribery).
  - 5) The media reports fairly. (Fair reporting by the media).
  - 6) The officials managing the elections are fair. (Fairness of the electoral commission).
  - 7) The rich buy elections with money.(Vote-buying by the wealthy).
  - 8) Voters are threatened with violence at polling stations.(Violence at polling stations).
  - 9) Voters can freely vote for the candidate and party they want.(Freedom of

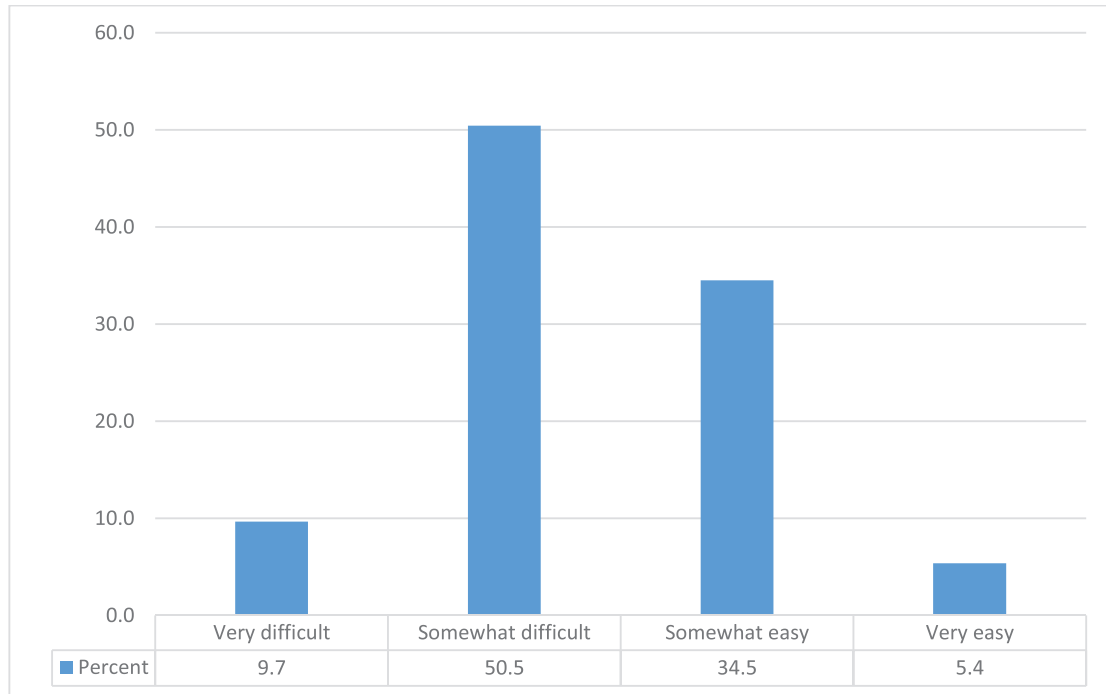
voting).

- 10) Women have equal opportunities to run for public office.(Equal candidacy opportunities for women).
- 1 = Happens very often; 2 = Happens often; 3 = Rarely happens; 4 = Never happens
- Responses 1 and 2 are combined as "Frequent," and 3 and 4 as "Rare," and displayed in the graph above.

### ■ Generally positive evaluation of electoral processes and management

- Despite some recent controversies over the fairness of the electoral commission, as of the time this survey was conducted in the summer of 2024, "Vote Counting Fairness" (88%) and "Fairness of the Electoral Commission" (77.4%) received positive evaluations.
- Incidents such as "Voter Bribery," "Vote-Buying by the Wealthy," and "Violence at Polling Stations" are perceived as relatively infrequent.
- The finding that "Denial of Fair Opportunities to the Opposition" is considered rare (76.6%) should be interpreted as indicating that opposition candidates are generally perceived to have fair opportunities.

<Figure III-2> Likelihood of Government Turnover via Elections



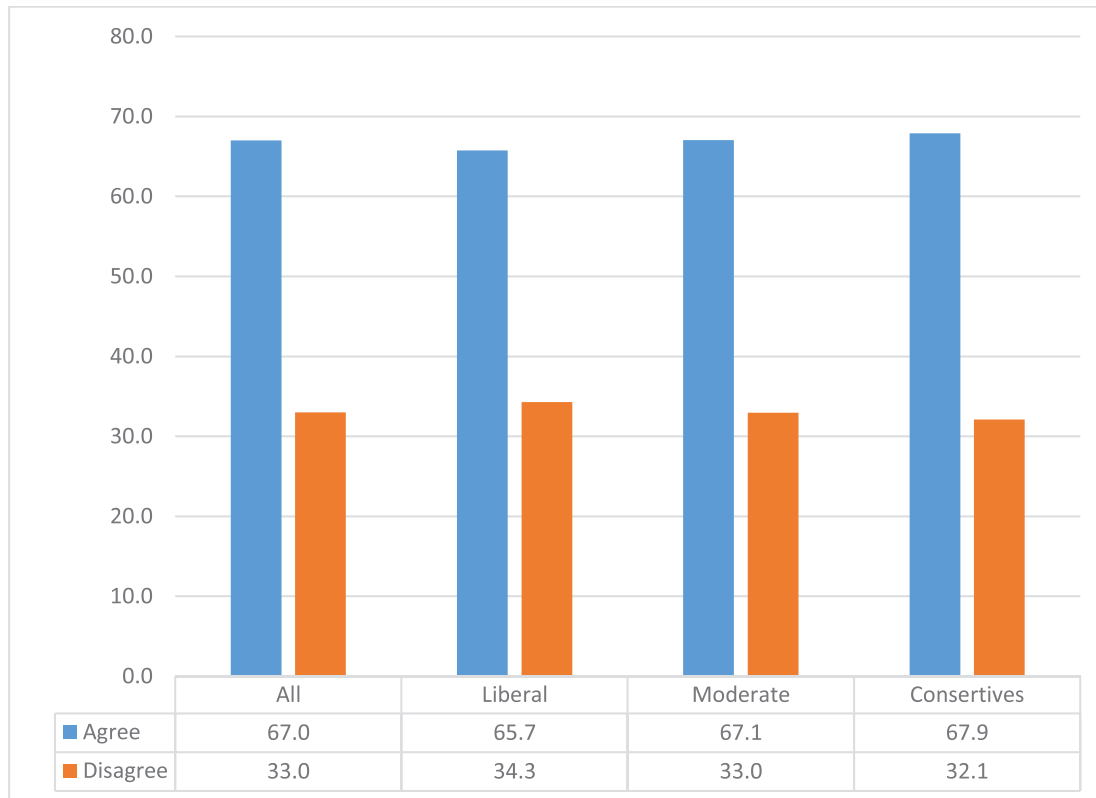
## ■ Questions

- “How difficult do you think it is to change the government through elections in South Korea?”
  - 1 = Very difficult; 2 = Somewhat difficult; 3 = Somewhat easy; 4 = Very easy

## ■ Regime change through elections is somewhat difficult

- A combined 60.2% of respondents answered “Somewhat difficult” (50.5%) or “Very difficult” (9.7%), suggesting a perception that regime change through elections is somewhat difficult.
  - This may reflect evaluations of the imperial presidency or the Yoon Suk-yeol administration.
  - Further research is needed to determine what level of perceived ease of regime change is appropriate for maintaining a high-quality democratic system.
- No significant differences were observed by political orientation or socioeconomic background variables.

**<Figure III-3> Elections as the Only Mechanism for Government Accountability**



## ■ Questions

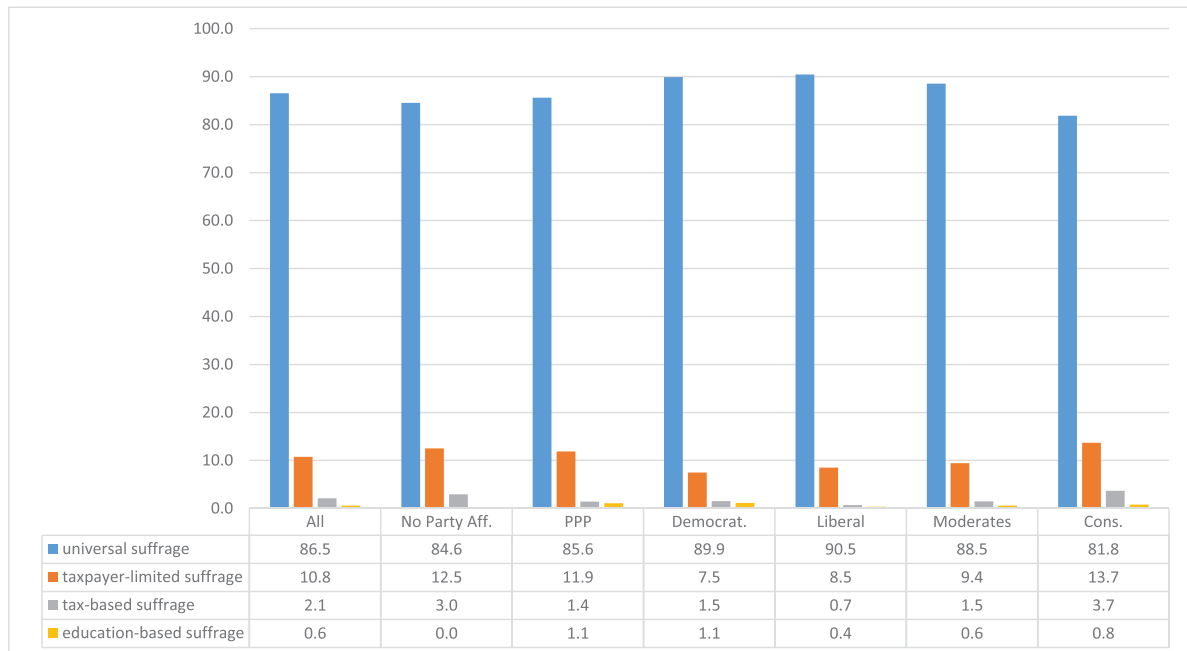
- “There is no way for the people to hold the government accountable except during elections.”
  - 1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Somewhat agree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Strongly disagree
  - Responses of “Strongly agree” and “Somewhat agree” are combined as “Agree,” and “Somewhat disagree” and “Strongly disagree” as “Disagree” in the graph above.

## ■ Elections as the sole means of holding government accountable

- Overall, a large majority (67.0%) view elections as the only means of holding the government accountable.
- Statistically significant differences by political orientation were observed.

- Progressives show a slightly higher rate of disagreement than moderates and conservatives (approximately 1.3 percentage points higher than moderates, and 2.2 points higher than conservatives), suggesting that they are more likely to believe there are alternative means of government accountability beyond elections.

<Figure III-4> Attitudes on Universal Suffrage



## ■ Questions

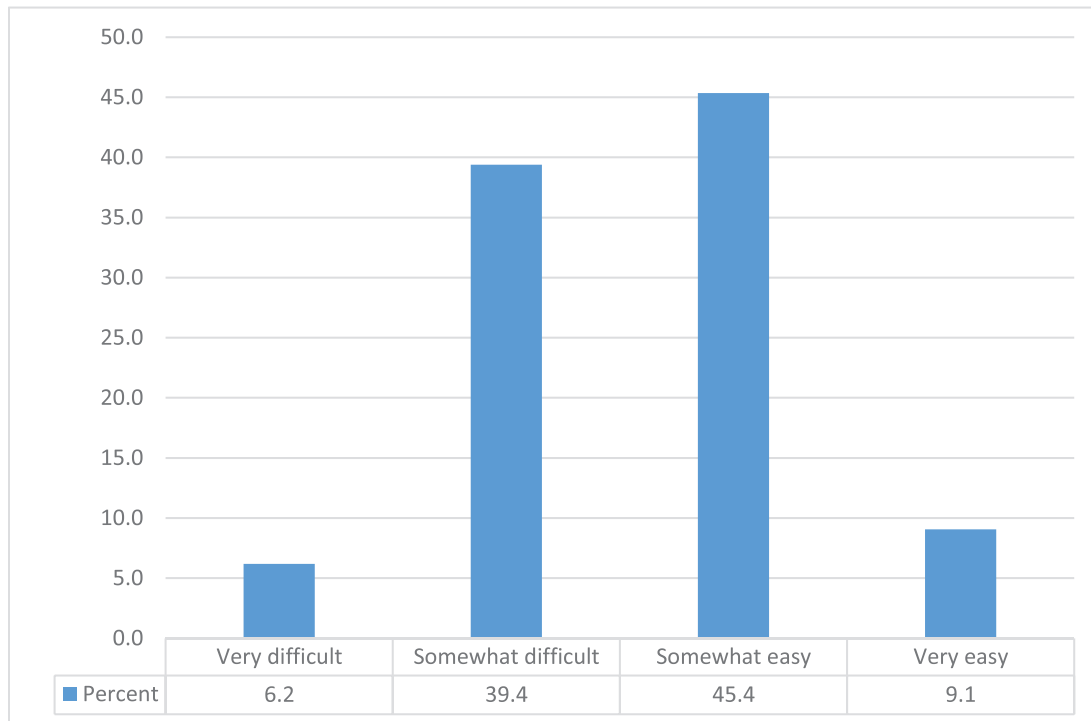
- “Even in a democracy, some people believe that only those with certain qualifications should have the right to vote, while others think that voting rights should vary depending on qualifications. Please choose the statement that is closest to your opinion.”
- 1=Everyone should have equal voting rights without eligibility restrictions (universal suffrage); 2=Only those who pay taxes should have equal voting rights (taxpayer-limited suffrage); 3=The more taxes one pays, the more voting rights one should have (tax-based suffrage); 4=People with higher educational attainment should have more voting rights (education-based suffrage)

## ■ Overwhelming support for universal suffrage

- The vast majority of respondents (86.5%) preferred universal suffrage over suffrage systems with eligibility restrictions.
- Supporters of the People Power Party and those with conservative orientations showed a statistically significant, relatively higher level of support for the idea that only taxpayers should have equal voting rights.



<Figure III-5> Forming a Political Party in South Korea



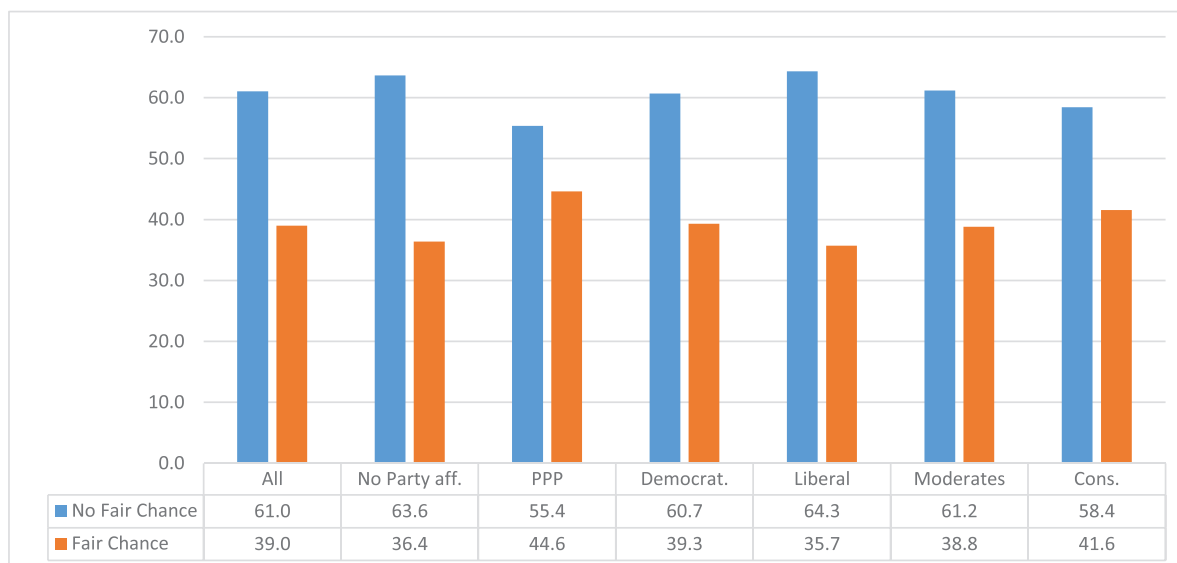
## ■ Questions

- “How difficult do you think it is to form a political party in South Korea?”
  - 1 = Very difficult; 2 = Somewhat difficult; 3 = Somewhat easy; 4 = Very easy

## ■ Divided views on the ease of forming political parties

- A combined 54.5% of respondents answered “Somewhat easy” (45.4%) or “Very easy” (9.1%), indicating that over half perceive party formation as relatively easy.
  - However, the proportion of respondents who perceive it as “Somewhat difficult” or “Very difficult” is also substantial (rounded to 45.6%), suggesting a sharp division in views on how difficult it is to form a political party.
  - Future research should explore whether dissatisfaction with the current party system coexists with the perception that establishing new parties is also not easy.
- No significant differences were observed by political orientation or socioeconomic background variables.

<Figure III-6> Fair Opportunities for Small Parties



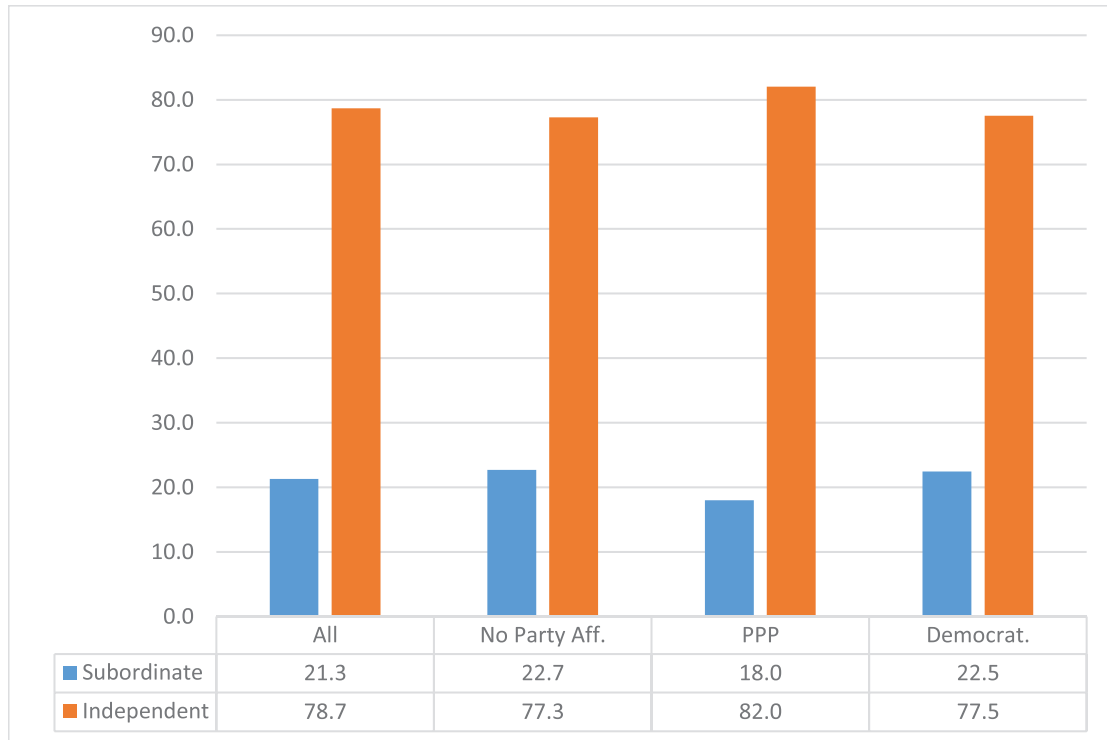
## ■ Questions

- "How fair do you think the opportunities are for small parties to compete in elections in South Korea?"
  - 1 = Small parties have no fair chance to compete at all; 2 = Small parties tend not to have a fair chance to compete; 3 = Small parties tend to have a fair chance to compete; 4 = Small parties are definitely guaranteed a fair chance to compete
  - Responses 1 and 2 are combined as "No Fair Chance," and 3 and 4 as "Fair Chance," and displayed in the graph above.

## ■ Perception that small parties generally lack fair opportunities

- A majority of respondents (61.0%) perceive that small parties do not have a fair chance to compete.
- Respondents who identify as independents, support the Democratic Party of Korea, or hold progressive or moderate ideological orientations tend to report that small parties lack fair opportunities.

<Figure III-7> Independence of the Opposition from the Government



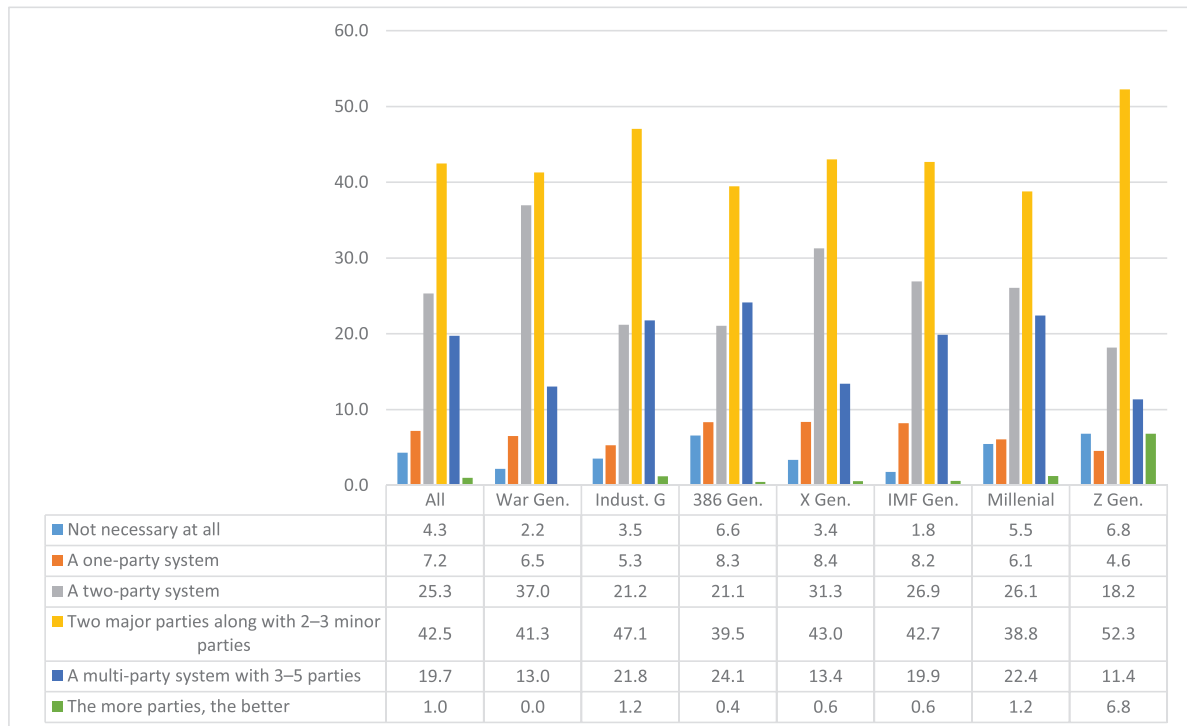
## ■ Questions

- “Do you think opposition parties in South Korea are independent of the government, or do you think they are subordinate to it?”
  - 1 = Very independent from the government; 2 = Somewhat independent from the government; 3 = Somewhat subordinate to the government; 4 = Very subordinate to the government
  - Responses 1 and 2 are combined as “Independent,” and 3 and 4 as “Subordinate,” and displayed in the graph above.

## ■ Overwhelming perception that opposition parties are independent of the government

- A large majority of respondents (78.7%) assess that opposition parties are independent of the government.
- While there are differences in perception by party affiliation, even among supporters of the opposition Democratic Party of Korea, the proportion who view the opposition as at least somewhat independent (77.5%) is overwhelmingly high.

<Figure III-8> Number of Political Parties Needed for Democracy: by cohort



## Questions

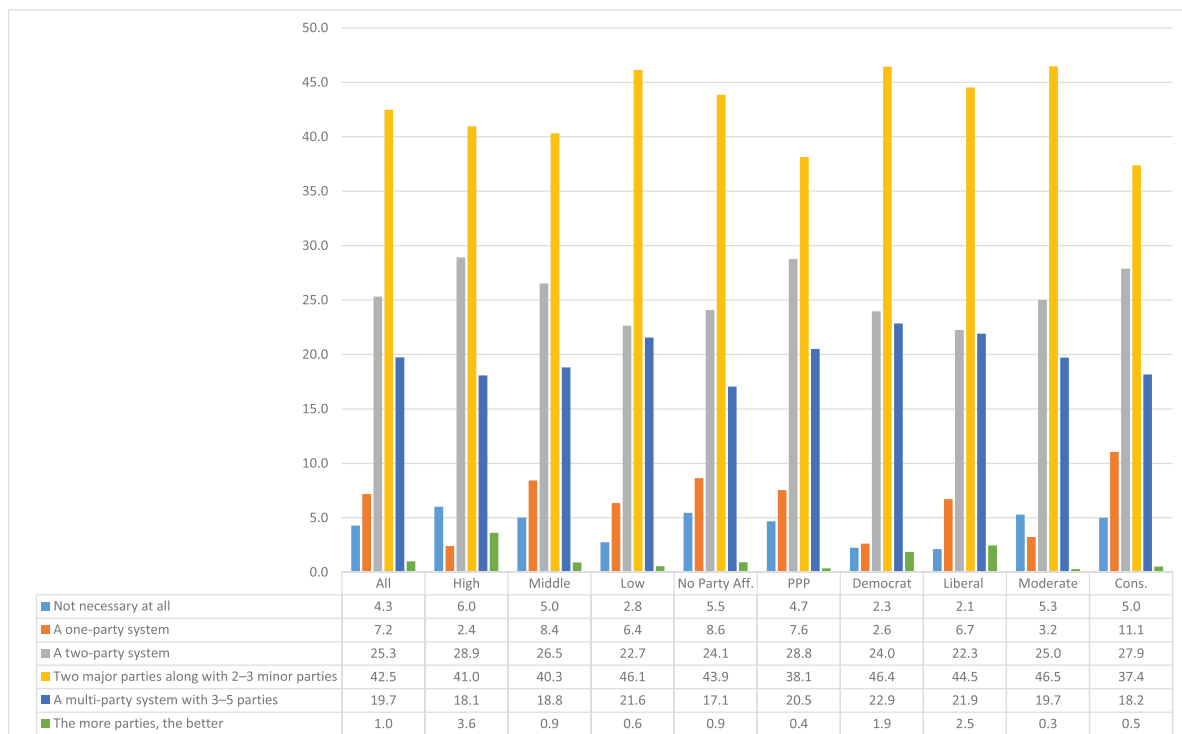
- “Some people think that political parties are necessary for democracy, while others think that parties are not necessary. How many political parties do you think are necessary for democracy?”
  - 1 = Not necessary at all; 2 = A one-party system with only a single party is best; 3 = A two-party system with two major competing parties is best; 4 = Two major parties along with 2-3 minor parties is best; 5 = A multi-party system with 3-5 parties holding similar numbers of seats is best; 6 = The more parties, the better

## Highest preference for a two-party system with 2-3 minor parties

- This may reflect satisfaction with the current party system or the influence of an anchoring effect.
- Among all respondents, those expressing views that may be interpreted as anti-democratic—“Not necessary at all” (4.3%) and “One-party system” (7.2%)—amount to a combined 11.5%, which is not negligible.

- In particular, members of the democratization generation known as the “386 Generation” showed relatively high preference for “a multi-party system with 3–5 parties holding similar numbers of seats” (24.1%) compared to other generations.
- Only among the younger “Generation Z” cohort did the preference for “a two-party system with 2–3 minor parties” exceed the majority threshold (52.3%).

**<Figure III-9> Number of Political Parties Needed for Democracy: by income, Party Identification, and Political Ideology**

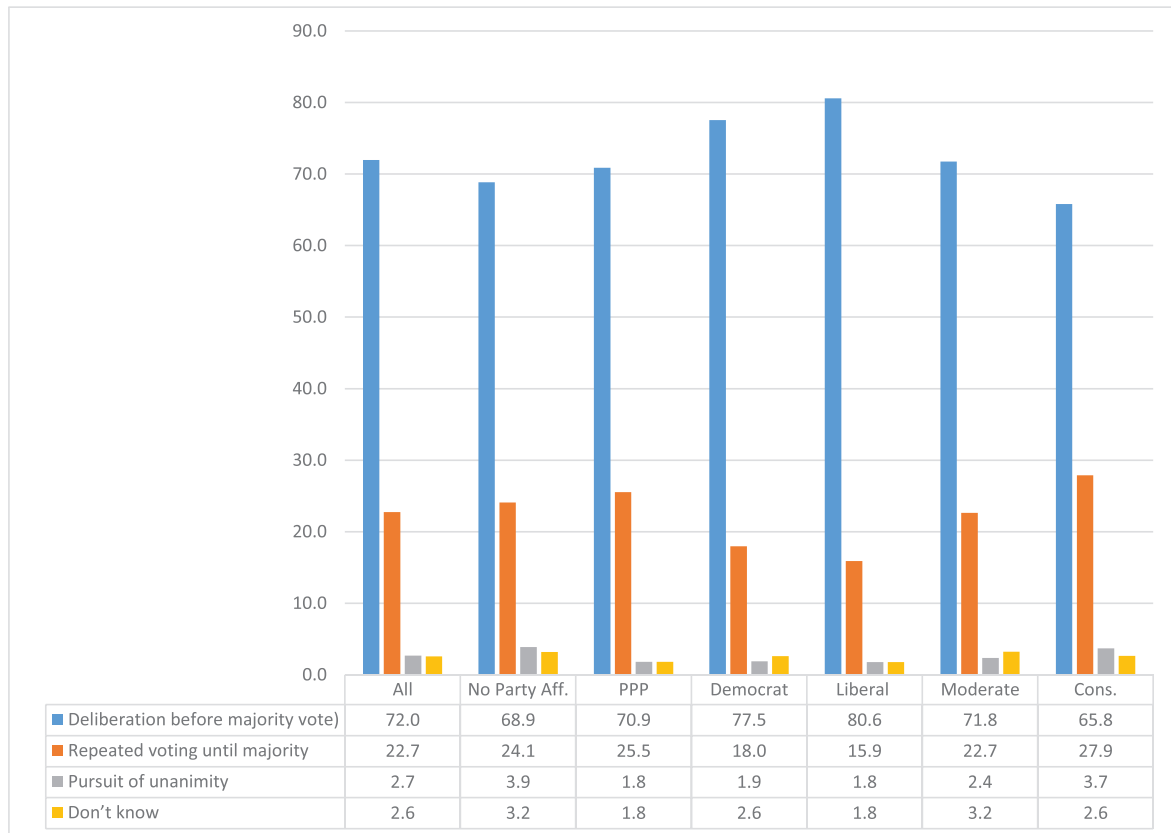


#### ■ Highest preference for a two-party system with 2–3 minor parties

- Supporters of the People Power Party (38.1%) and those with conservative orientations (37.4%) show relatively lower preference for the “two-party system with 2–3 minor parties.”
- Supporters of the Democratic Party of Korea and those with progressive orientations, albeit slightly, are more likely to believe that a greater number of political parties is needed than the current system provides.

## IV. Participatory Democracy

<Figure IV-1> The Most Preferred Mode of Democratic Decision-Making



### ■ Questions

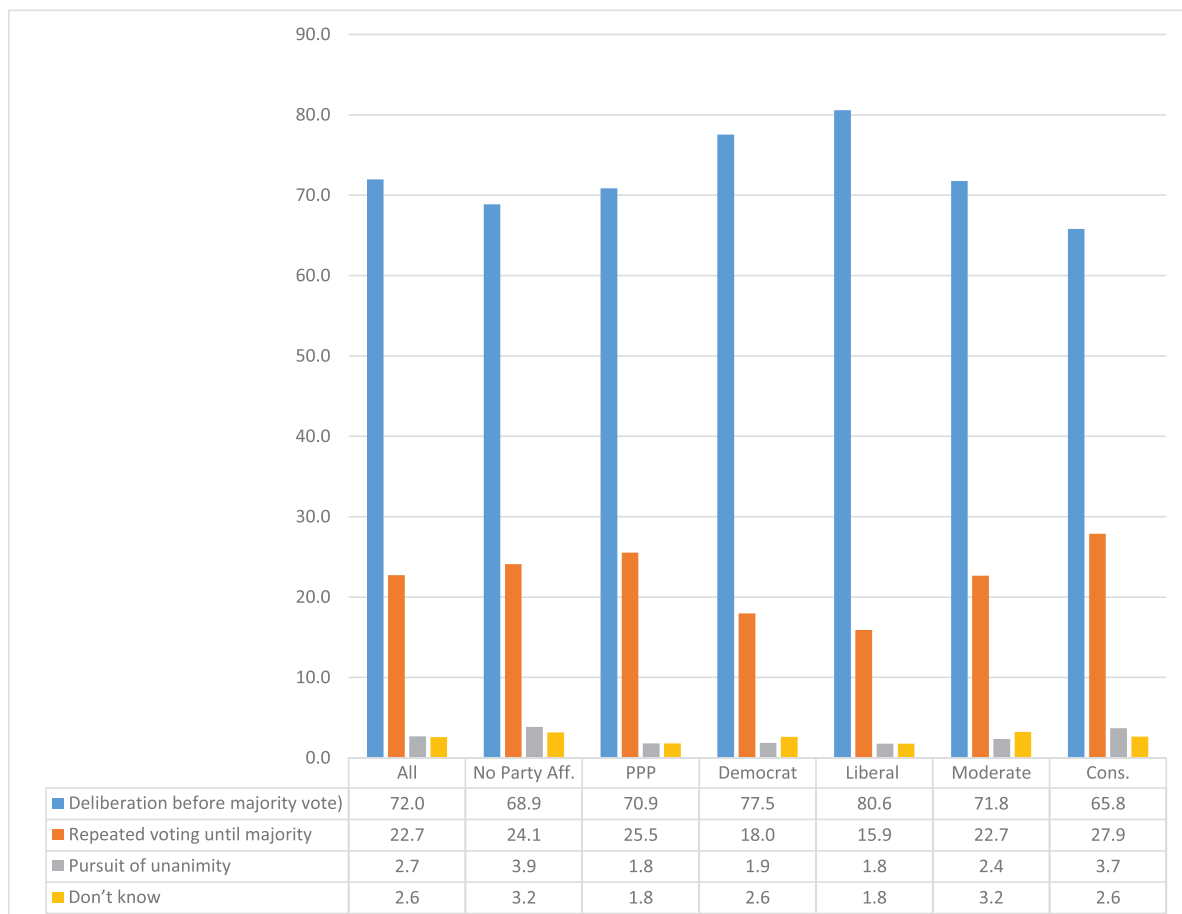
- “In a democracy, various opposing opinions always compete with each other. What do you think is the most desirable decision-making process in a democracy?”
  - = Decide based on the option with even one more supporter after sufficient deliberation to narrow differences as much as possible (Deliberation before majority vote); 2 = Repeat voting until an option gains majority support (Repeated voting until majority); 3 = Seek unanimous agreement no matter how long it takes (Pursuit of unanimity); 4 = Don't know

### ■ Strong preference for “Deliberation before majority vote” as a democratic decision-making method

- Overall, there is overwhelming support (72.0%) for “Deliberation before majority vote.”

- Supporters of the Democratic Party (77.5%) and those with progressive orientations (80.6%) most strongly prefer this method as the ideal decision-making process.
- Given the possibility of social desirability bias, future surveys should consider offering a majority-rule option without deliberation or with reduced emphasis on deliberation as a response choice.

**<Figure IV-2> Approaches to Handling Dissenting Opinions**



## ■ Questions

- “Suppose there is a policy that you believe is very important and most desirable for our society and country. However, many people oppose this policy, and if it is put to a vote, it is unlikely to be adopted according to the majority rule. In this situation, how do you think it is best to act?”
  - 1 = Accept the majority's decision after the vote; 2 = Try to change the majority opinion through the most rational means possible (public hearings,

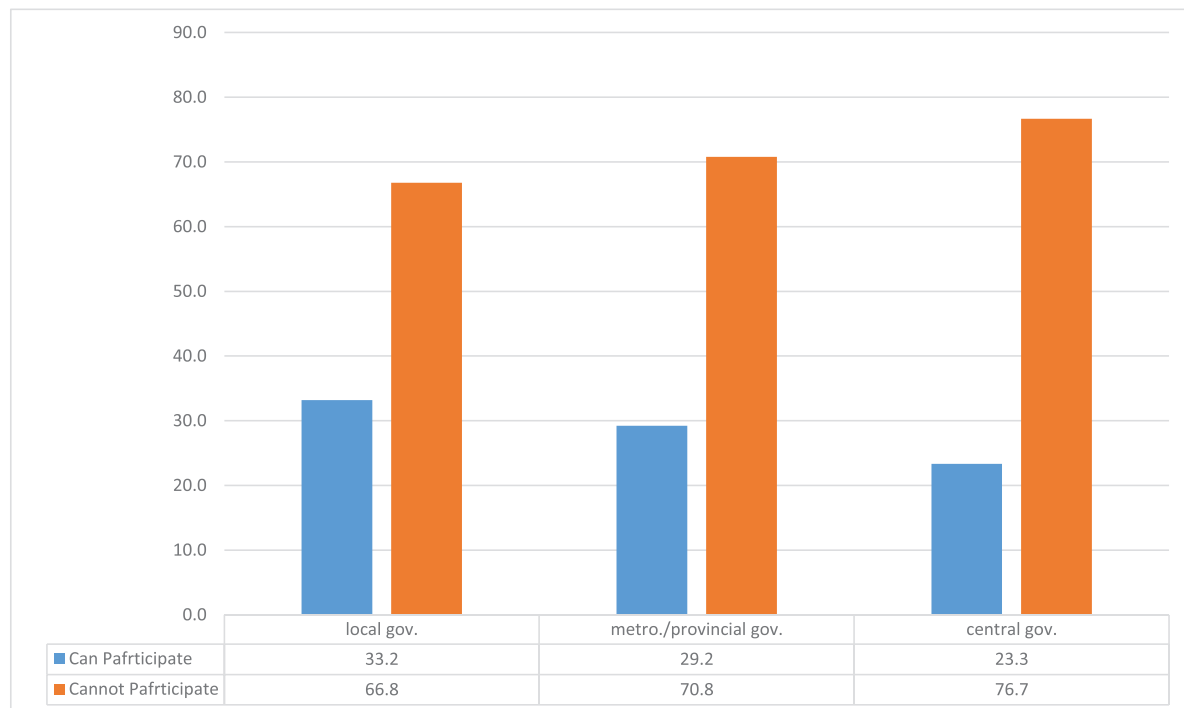
deliberative forums, public discourse, etc.); 3 = Try to change the majority opinion using all legally permitted means such as protests and strikes; 4 = Give up on voting.

#### ■ **“Accept the majority’s decision after voting” is most favored**

- Around 40% of both progressive and conservative respondents, as well as those with at least a high school education, supported trying to change the majority opinion through rational persuasion, such as public hearings, deliberative discussions, or public forums.
- Given the severe polarization in Korean society, this may partially reflect a manifestation of social desirability bias.



**<Figure IV-3> Participation in Decision-Making Processes by Level of Government**



## ■ Questions

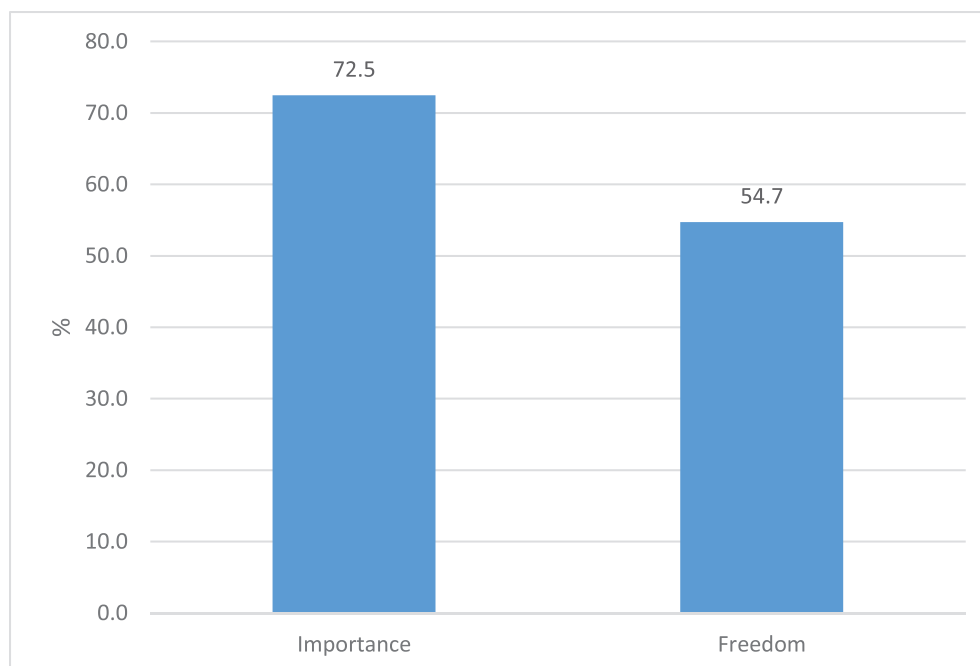
- “How often do you think ordinary citizens can participate in the decision-making process of metropolitan or provincial governments?”
  - Separate items were asked for each level of government.
  - 1 = Not at all; 2 = Rarely; 3 = To some extent; 4 = At any time
  - Responses 1 and 2 are combined as “Cannot Participate,” and 3 and 4 as “Can Participate,” and displayed in the graph above.

## ■ Participation generally perceived as unlikely, though local governments are seen as more accessible

- Overall, there is a negative perception of citizens’ ability to participate in decision-making, regardless of the level of government.
- However, the perceived possibility of participation increases with proximity to everyday life: local governments (33.2%) > metropolitan/provincial governments (29.2%) > central government (23.3%).
- No significant differences were observed based on political orientation or

socioeconomic background variables.

**<Figure IV-4> On Public Hearing**



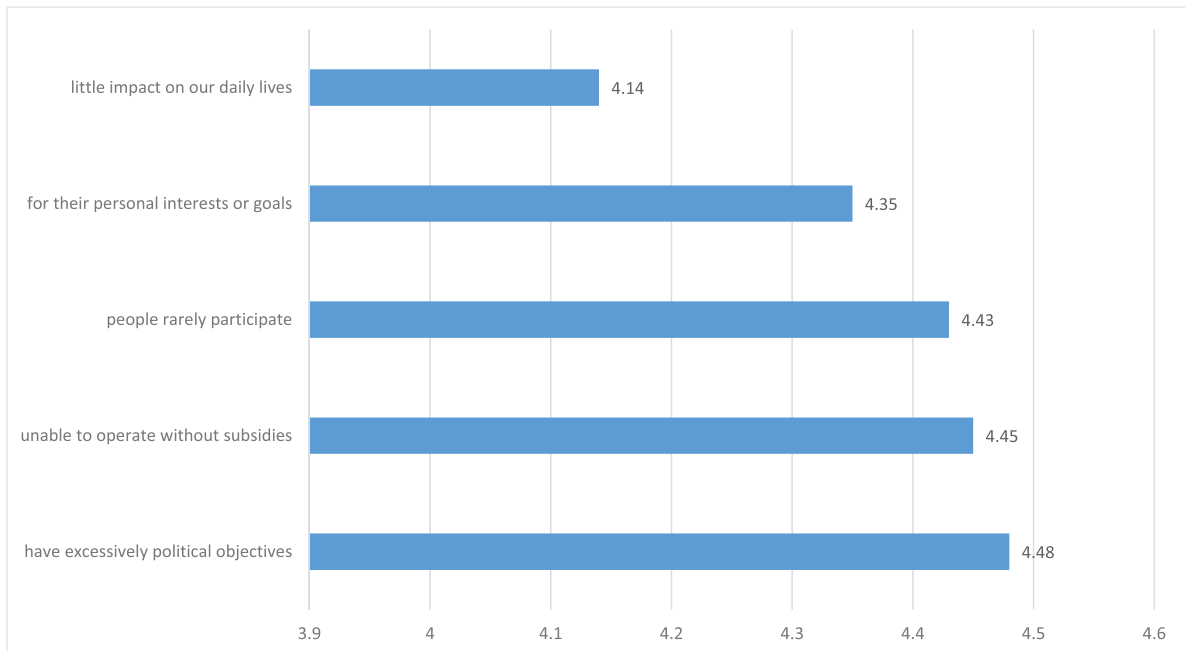
## ■ Questions

- “How important do you think public hearings or briefings held by local governments, the central government, or political parties are?”(Importance)
  - 1 = Not important at all; 2 = Not very important; 3 = Somewhat important; 4 = Very important
  - Responses 3 and 4 are combined and presented as “Importance” on the left side of the graph above.
- “Do you think that people who want to participate in public hearings or briefings held by local governments, the central government, or political parties can do so freely?”(Freedom)
  - 1 = Not free at all; 2 = Not very free; 3 = Somewhat free; 4 = Very free
  - Responses 3 and 4 are combined and presented as “Freedom” on the right side of the graph above.

- **Public hearings and briefings are seen as important, but participation is not perceived as fully free**

- Perceived importance is high, with a combined 72.5% of respondents rating them as “Somewhat important” or “Very important.” However, perceived freedom to participate—whether people who wish to attend can do so freely—reaches only a slim majority at 54.7%.
- This suggests that while participation is regarded as important, the actual conditions for participation are perceived as less accessible or enabling.

<Figure IV-5> On Civic Organizations



## ■ Questions

- “What is your opinion of civic organizations? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).”
  - 1) Most civic organizations have excessively political objectives.
  - 2) I have rarely seen people around me participate in or join civic organizations.
  - 3) The activities of civic organizations have little impact on our daily lives.
  - 4) Most civic organizations are formed by activists for their personal interests or goals.
  - 5) Civic organizations would be unable to operate without government subsidies.
  - The average level of agreement for each of the five statements above, measured on a 7-point scale, is shown in the graph.

## ■ Generally negative perception of civic organizations

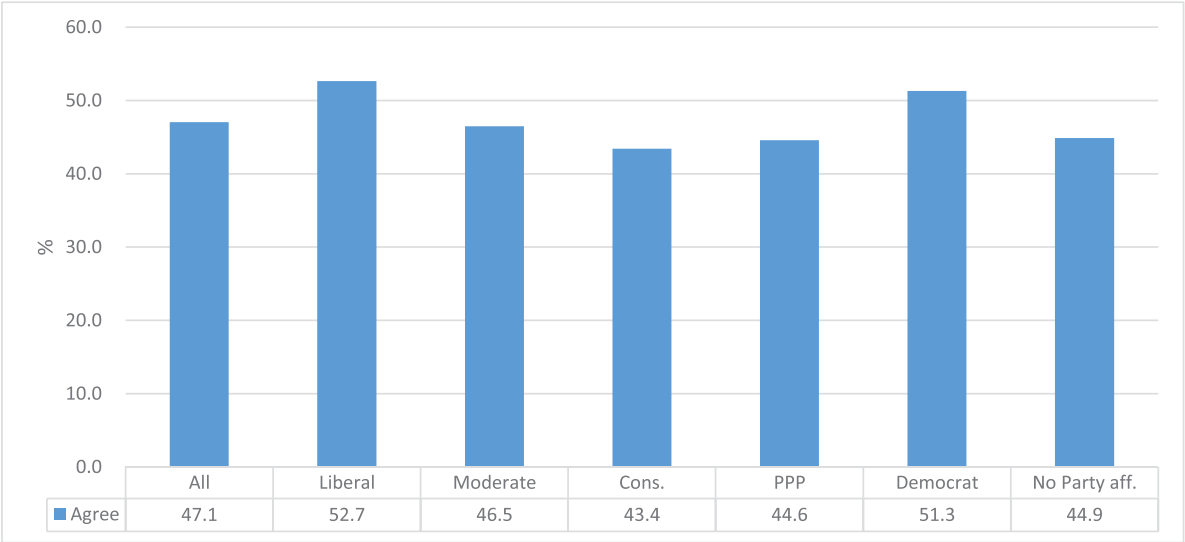
- Overall, the average responses exceed the neutral midpoint of 4, indicating a generally negative perception.

- In particular, the statement “Most civic organizations have excessively political objectives” received the highest average level of agreement ( $M = 4.48$ ).

# V. Liberal Democracy

## 1. The Role of the Judiciary

<Figure V-1> Lack of Judicial Checks on Government Power



### ■ Questions

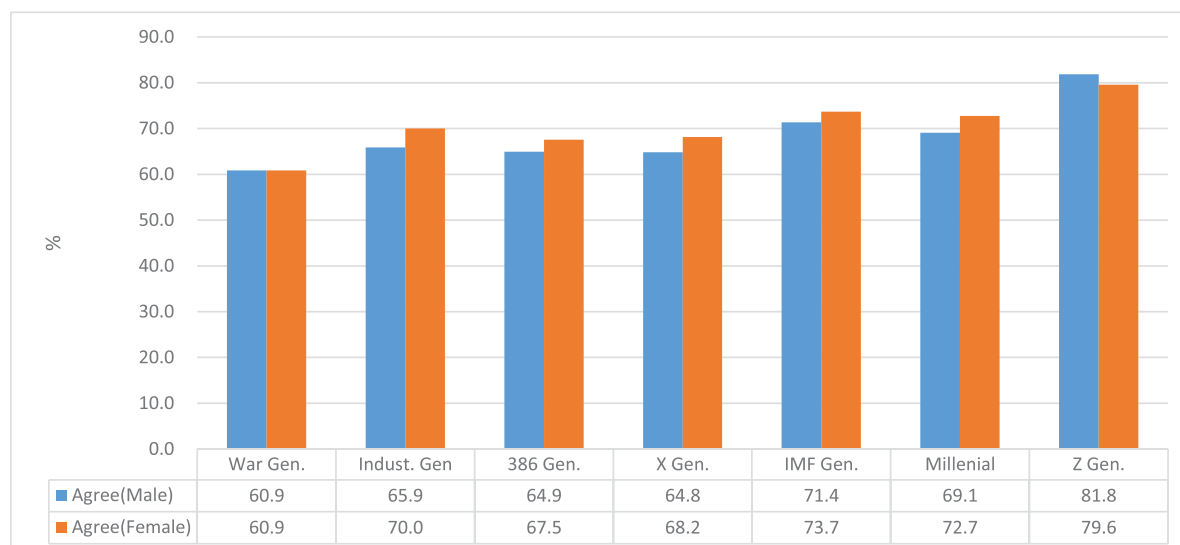
- “When government leaders break the law, there is nothing the courts can do.”
  - 1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Somewhat agree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Strongly disagree
  - Responses of “Strongly agree” and “Somewhat agree” are combined and displayed in the graph above.

### ■ Skepticism about the judiciary’s ability to check the executive branch

- Progressive respondents and supporters of the Democratic Party expressed greater skepticism about the judiciary’s capacity to hold the executive accountable.
- Given that the survey was conducted in July 2024, this likely reflects their dissatisfaction with the Yoon Suk-yeol administration.
- Progressives were more skeptical than conservatives, and Democratic Party supporters more than People Power Party supporters, regarding the judiciary’s ability

to check the executive. These differences were statistically significant.

**<Figure V-2> Protection of Citizens by the Police or Courts**



## ■ Questions

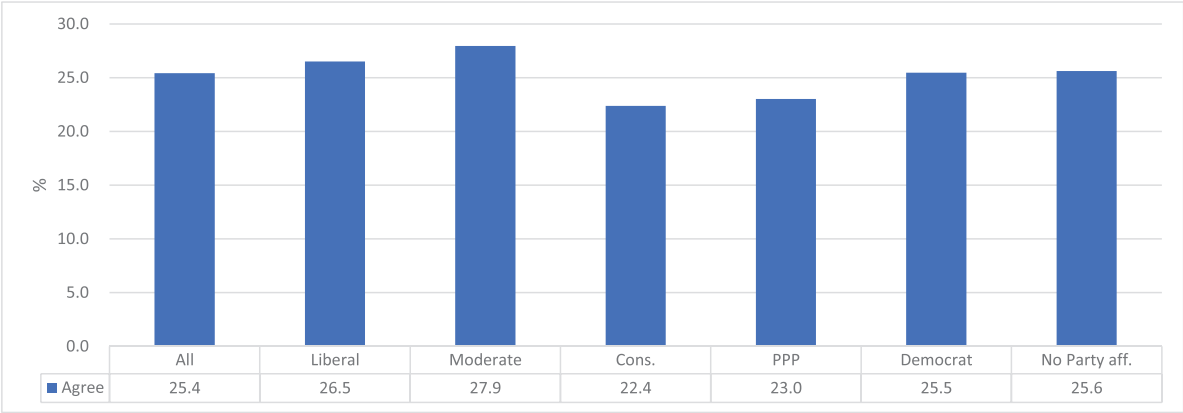
- “Men(or women) can safely and effectively seek help from the police or the courts.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined as “Agree” and displayed in the graph above.

## ■ Younger generations are more positive about the protective role of the law

- Younger respondents tend to be more optimistic about the ability to seek help from the police or the courts.
- The industrialization generation is the most skeptical, while the IMF generation is the most positive.
- Compared to older generations who retain memories of authoritarian rule, younger cohorts display a relatively favorable attitude toward state authority, as symbolized by the police.

## 2. Political Violence in South Korea

<Figure V-3> Political Killing in South Korea



### ■ Questions

- “People are being killed for political reasons.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined as “Agree” and displayed in the graph above.

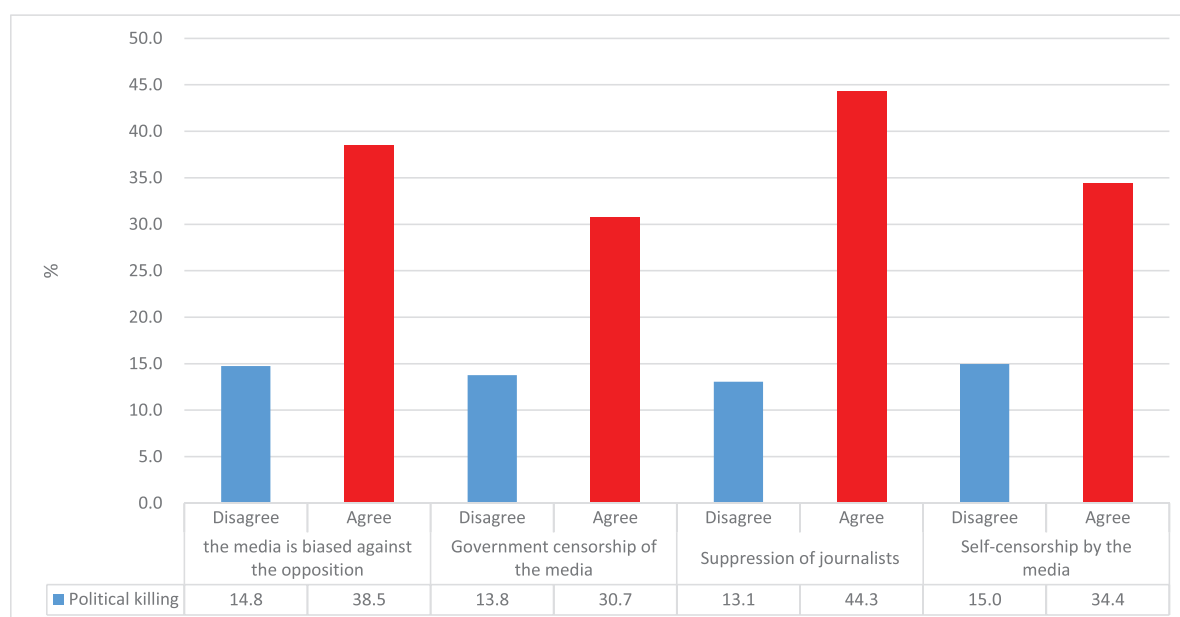
### ■ High agreement with the notion of “political killings”

- One in four respondents believe that politically motivated killings are occurring in South Korea.
- This perception is highly disconnected from the actual political reality in Korea, yet the belief is prevalent across the political spectrum, regardless of party support or ideological orientation.
- There were no significant cohort-based differences in responses to this item.
- This may reflect the lingering impact of the January 2024 stabbing attack on Lee Jae-myung, or it may indicate the influence of widely held conspiracy theories in Korean society.



- In fact, a statistically significant correlation was observed between this item and variables such as perceived media bias, state repression of the press, or censorship.
- This could be interpreted as indirect evidence supporting the hypothesis that people who believe press freedom is restricted are more likely to believe in the existence of politically motivated killings that are hidden from public view.

**<Figure V-4> Cross-Tabulation of Attitudes Toward the Media and Political Killing**



## ■ Questions on news media

- “The media tends to report in ways that are unfavorable to the opposition or opposition politicians.”
  - “The government is directly or indirectly censoring newspapers or broadcasting stations.”
  - “Journalists are likely to face harassment such as defamation threats, arrest, imprisonment, assault, or even murder due to legitimate journalistic activities.”
  - “When reporting on politically sensitive issues, the media engages in self-censorship, considering the government's stance.”
- All four media-related items were measured on a 5-point scale: 1 = Strongly

disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree.

- Responses of "Somewhat agree" and "Strongly agree" are combined as "Agree," while "Strongly disagree" and "Somewhat disagree" are combined as "Disagree" and presented in the graph above.

## ■ Perceptions of press freedom and political violence

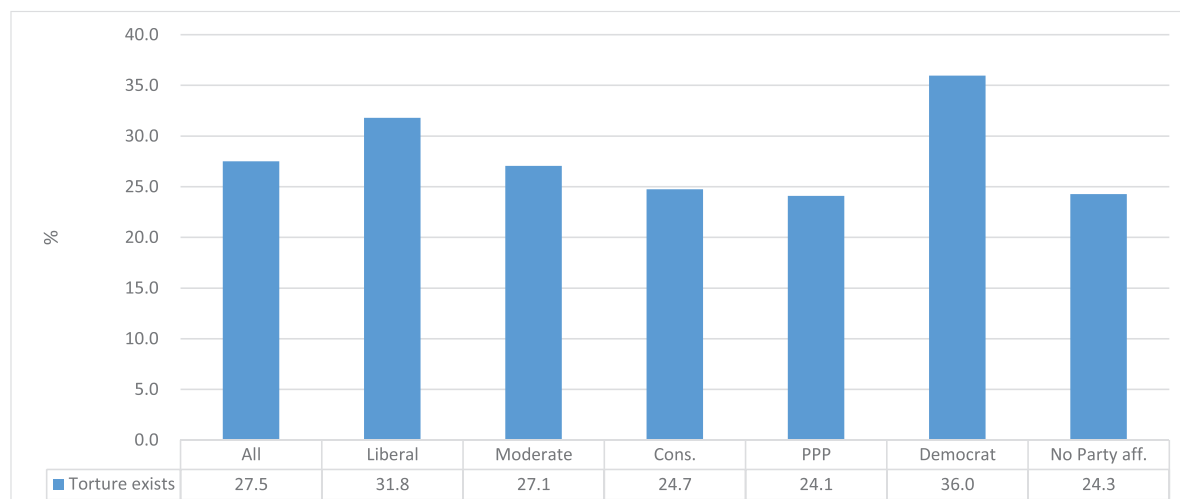
- Respondents who hold negative views of press freedom in South Korea are more likely to believe that politically motivated killings are occurring.
- Among those who believe the media tends to report unfavorably on the opposition, 38.5% also believe political killings occur in Korea. In contrast, only 14.8% of those who disagree with that media perception believe in the existence of political killings.
- All four media-related items show moderate to strong correlations with the variable measuring belief in political killings.
  - All Pearson correlation coefficients<sup>1)</sup> in the table below are statistically significant

**<Table V-1> Pearson correlation coefficients between media-related variables and the political killings variable**

Media variables	The media is biased against the opposition	Government censorship of the media	Suppression of journalists	Self-censorship by the media
Pearson Correlation Coefficients	0.25	0.26	0.37	0.22

1) The Pearson correlation coefficient shows the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables. It is used to determine whether the value of one variable tends to increase or decrease as the value of another variable increases. The Pearson correlation coefficient ranges from +1 to -1, where 0 indicates no correlation, +1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, and -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation.

<Figure V-5> Political Tortures in South Korea



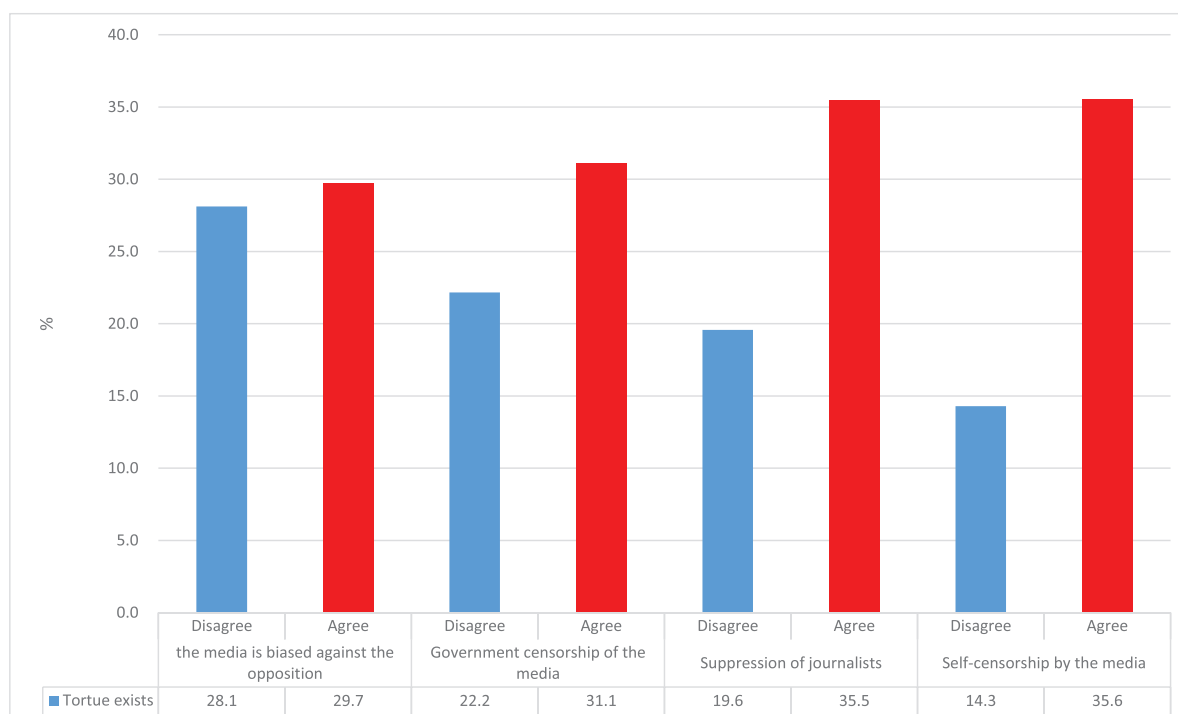
## ■ Questions

- “Torture by state authorities does not exist.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat disagree” and “Strongly disagree” are combined and displayed in the graph above as indicating “Torture exists.”

## ■ 27.5% of respondents believe that political torture exists in South Korea

- 27.5% of all respondents disagreed with the statement that torture by state authorities no longer exists in South Korea (4.4% strongly disagree; 23.1% somewhat disagree).
- Supporters of the Democratic Party were relatively more likely to believe that state-led torture still exists, likely reflecting dissatisfaction with the current government.
- As with political killings, this perception correlates with variables related to press freedom.
- Those who believe that press freedom is restricted are more likely to believe that political torture is taking place.

**<Figure V-6> Cross-Tabulation of Attitudes Toward the Media and Political Torture**



#### ■ Anxiety about press freedom and perceptions of political violence

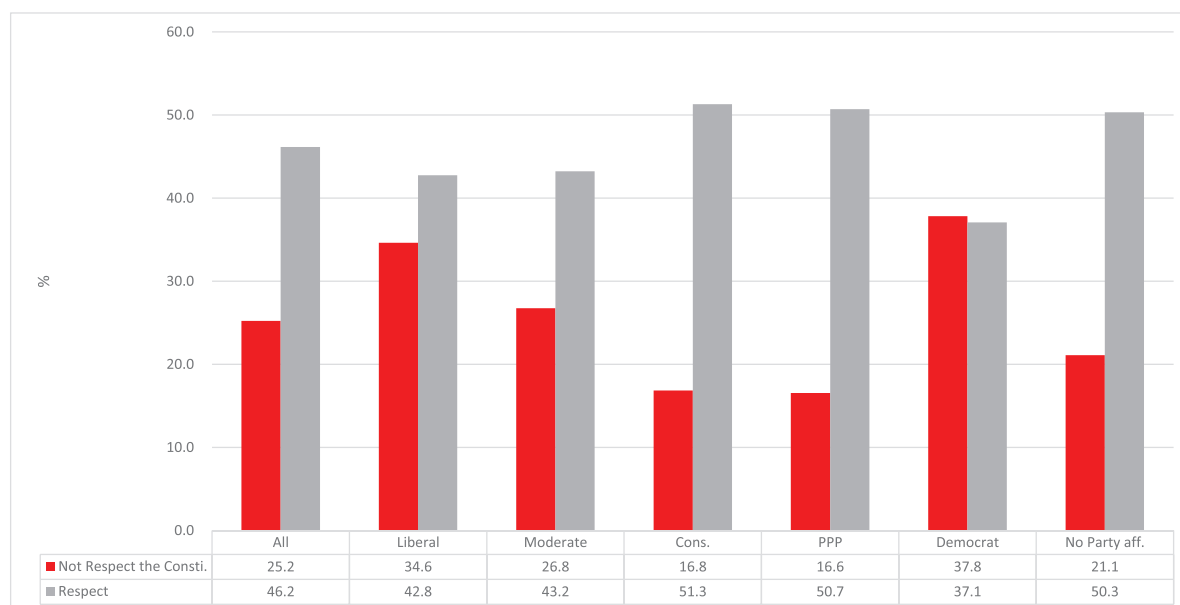
- As with political killings, those who perceive problems with press freedom and fairness are more likely to believe that the state engages in torture.
- All Pearson correlation coefficients in the table below are statistically significant

**<Table V-2> Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Media Variables and the Political Torture Variable**

Media variables	The media is biased against the opposition	Government censorship of the media	Suppression of journalists	Self-censorship by the media
Pearson Correlation Coefficients	-0.13	-0.18	-0.25	-0.25

### 3. Judicial Oversight of the Executive Branch

<Figure V-7> Respect for the Constitution by the Executive Branch



#### ■ Questions

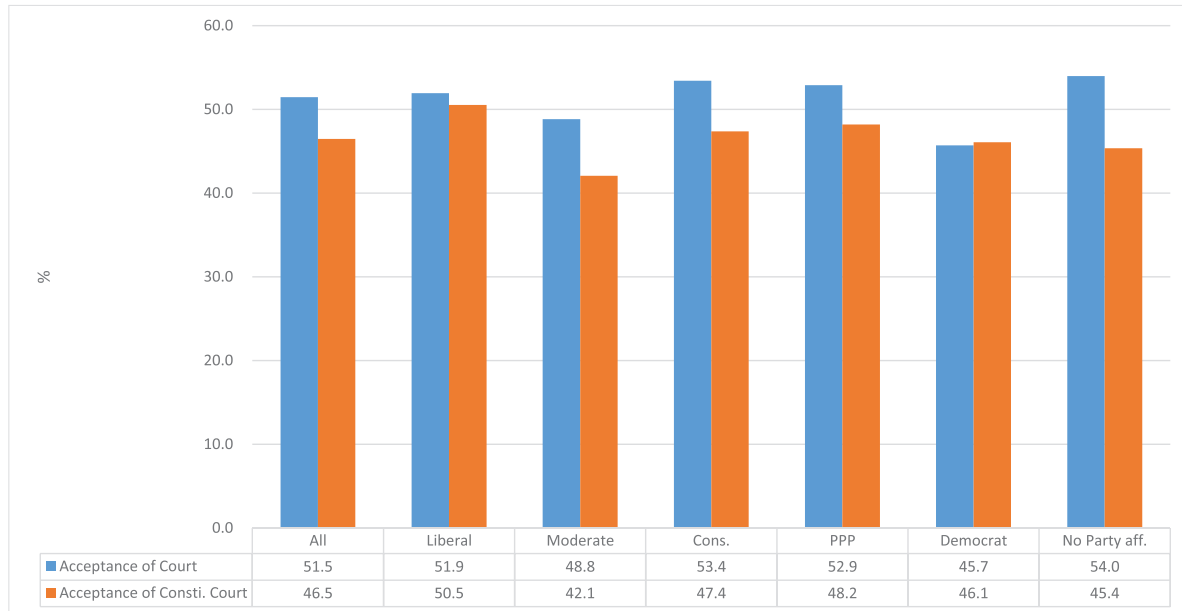
- “The President, Ministers, and other members of the executive branch respect the Constitution..”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined as “Respect,” while “Strongly disagree” and “Somewhat disagree” are combined as “Not Respect,” and displayed in the graph above.

#### ■ General skepticism regarding the executive branch’s respect for the Constitution

- About one-quarter of respondents (25.2%) answered that the executive branch does not respect the Constitution.
- Progressive and moderate respondents were significantly more likely than conservatives to believe that the executive fails to respect the Constitution, indicating a polarized pattern of responses.

- Democratic Party supporters were the most critical of the executive's attitude toward the Constitution. Among independents, the rate of agreement that the Constitution is respected was similar to that of People Power Party supporters.
  - The differences in average responses by ideology and party affiliation were statistically significant.
- Even among People Power Party supporters and those with conservative views, only about 50% agreed that the executive branch respects the Constitution—hardly a high level of endorsement.

**<Figure V-8> Respect for the Judiciary by the Executive Branch**



## ■ Questions

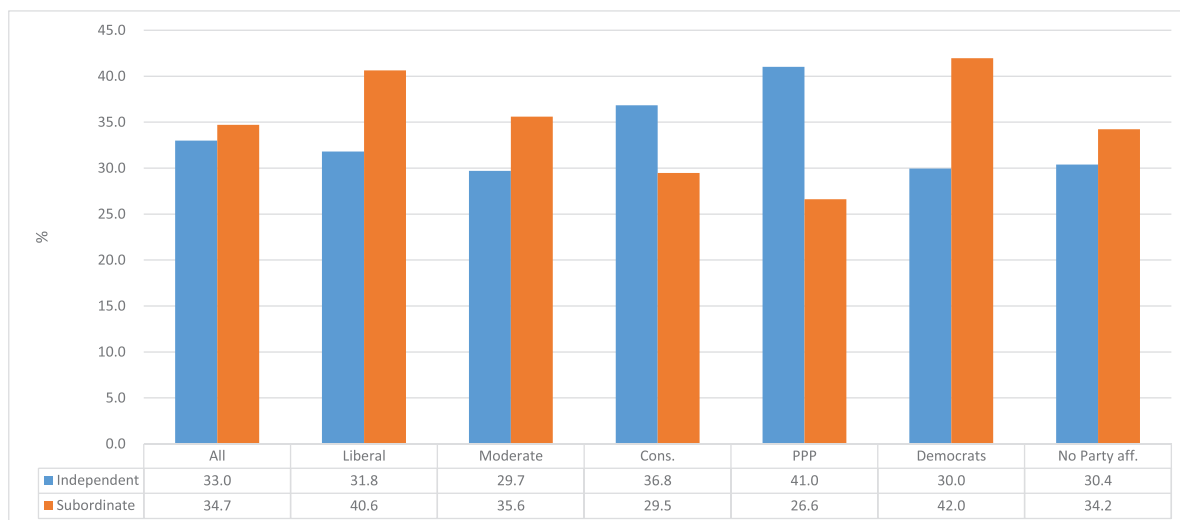
- “The government accepts court rulings, even if it disagrees with them.”
- “The government accepts Constitutional Court decisions, even if it disagrees with them.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined and presented in the graph above as “Acceptance of Court” and “Acceptance of Constitutional Court,” respectively.

## ■ Skepticism about the judiciary’s ability to check the executive branch

- Only about half of all respondents believe that the executive branch accepts decisions by the courts (51.5%) or the Constitutional Court (46.5%).
- This suggests that the public perceives limits to the judiciary’s ability to hold the executive branch accountable.
- The fact that nearly half of the population believes the executive selectively accepts judicial and even Constitutional Court decisions based on its own convenience reflects

deep public concern about the unchecked and oversized nature of executive power in South Korea.

### <V-9> Independence of the Constitutional Court



### ■ Questions

- “When the Constitutional Court reviews government issues, it simply decides according to what the government wants, regardless of the law or regulations.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined as “Constitutional Court Subordinate,” and responses of “Strongly disagree” and “Somewhat disagree” are combined as “Constitutional Court Independent,” and displayed in the graph above.

### ■ Public skepticism regarding the independence of the Constitutional Court

- About one-third of respondents perceive the Constitutional Court’s rulings as political decisions that reflect government preferences rather than legal reasoning.
- Fewer respondents view the Court as making non-political decisions; only conservatives and supporters of the People Power Party tend to see the Court as

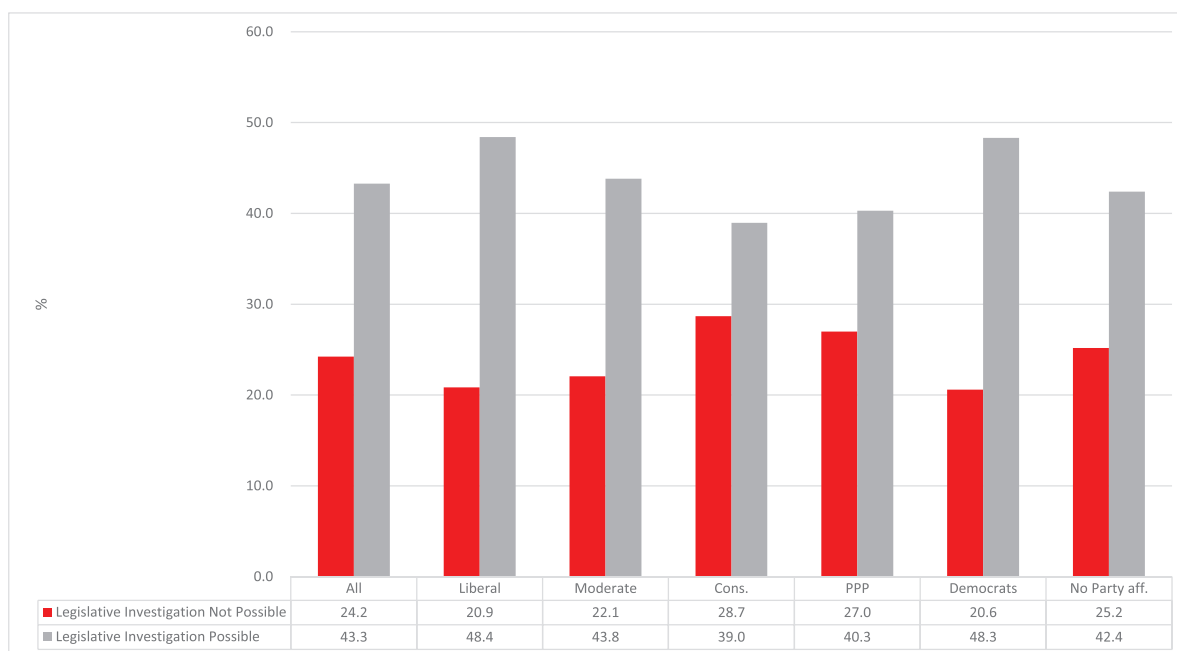


independent.

- Overall, this indicates a significant level of public doubt regarding the independence of the judiciary.

## 4. Legislative Oversight of the Executive Branch

<Figure V-10> Legislative Oversight of the Executive Branch



### ■ Questions

- “The opposition party can conduct a parliamentary audit or investigation, even if the ruling party opposes it.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined as “Legislative Investigation Possible,” while responses of “Strongly disagree” and “Somewhat disagree” are combined as “Legislative Investigation Not Possible,” and displayed in the graph above

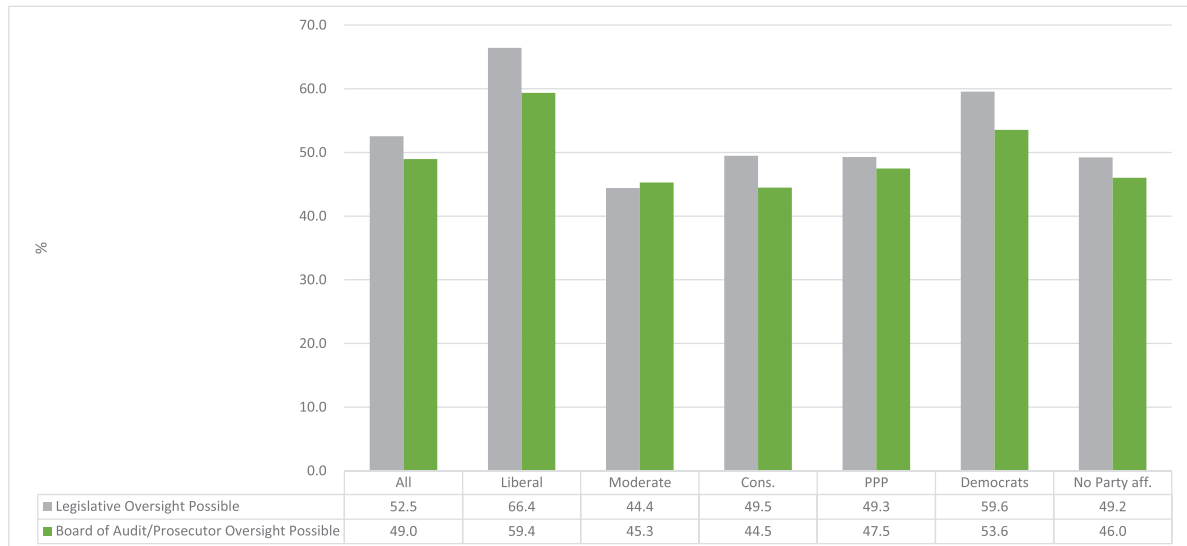
### ■ Assessment of the opposition’s ability to check the government

- 24.2% of respondents answered that the opposition is unable to conduct a legislative investigation if the ruling party opposes it.
- Progressives (48.4%) and Democratic Party supporters (48.3%) showed significantly

higher agreement that the opposition has the ability to check the government compared to conservatives (39.0%) and People Power Party supporters (40.3%). This difference is statistically significant.

- It is possible that progressive and Democratic Party respondents interpreted this item through the lens of their own expectations—specifically, the belief that the opposition, having won a near-constitutional majority in the 22nd National Assembly election of 2024, should conduct investigations or audits of the executive.

**<Figure V-11> The National Assembly, Board of Audit and Inspection, and the Prosecution to Check the Executive Branch**



## ■ Questions

- “If the executive branch violates the Constitution or is involved in illegal or immoral activities, the National Assembly can conduct an investigation that could be disadvantageous to the executive branch.”
- “If a public official in the executive branch violates the Constitution or is involved in illegal or immoral activities, institutions other than the legislature, such as the Board of Audit and Inspection or the Prosecutor General, can conduct investigations or issue reports that could be disadvantageous to those officials.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined and displayed in the graph as “Legislative Oversight Possible” and “Board of Audit/Prosecutor Oversight Possible,” respectively.

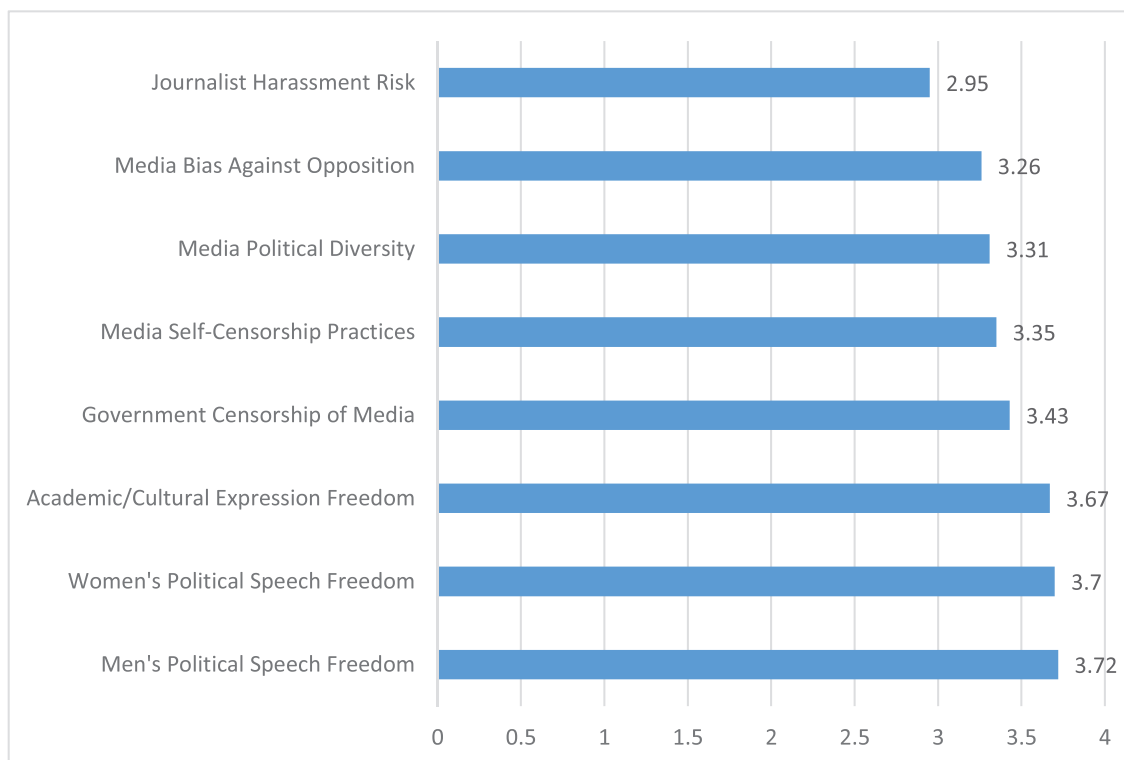
## ■ Concerns over concentration of executive power

- Only 52.5% of respondents agreed that the National Assembly can check the executive branch. Even fewer—49%—believe that institutions such as the Board of Audit and Inspection or the Prosecutor General can effectively investigate the executive.

- Progressive respondents and supporters of the Democratic Party were more likely to view such oversight as possible—likely influenced by the opposition’s landslide victory in the April 2024 general election.
- Despite the opposition winning a near-constitutional majority, only about half of respondents expressed confidence in the National Assembly’s ability to oversee the executive.
- This suggests that the public is keenly aware of the excessive concentration of power within the executive branch in South Korea.

## 5. Freedom of Expression and the Press

<Figure V-12> Freedom of Expression and the Press



### ■ Questions

- “We would like to ask your evaluation of the current situation in our country. Below are eight statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please respond freely and honestly regarding the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.”
  - 1) There is freedom of academic and cultural expression related to political issues.(Academic/Cultural Expression Freedom)
  - 2) Men can freely discuss political issues without fear anywhere. (Men's Political Speech Freedom)
  - 3) Women can freely discuss political issues without fear anywhere. (Women's Political Speech Freedom)
  - 4) The media tends to report in ways that are unfavorable to the opposition or opposition politicians. (Media Bias Against Opposition)
  - 5) The government is directly or indirectly censoring newspapers or broadcasting

stations. (Government Censorship of Media)

- 6) Journalists are likely to face harassment such as defamation threats, arrest, imprisonment, assault, or even murder due to legitimate journalistic activities.(Journalist Harassment Risk)
- 7) Major newspapers and broadcasting media represent a diverse range of political perspectives. (Media Political Diversity)
- 8) When reporting on politically sensitive issues, the media engages in self-censorship, considering the government's stance.(Media Self-Censorship Practices)
- 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
- The average level of agreement for each statement, measured on a 5-point scale, is displayed in the graph above. Since it is a 5-point scale, an average of 2.5 or higher is interpreted as indicating agreement.

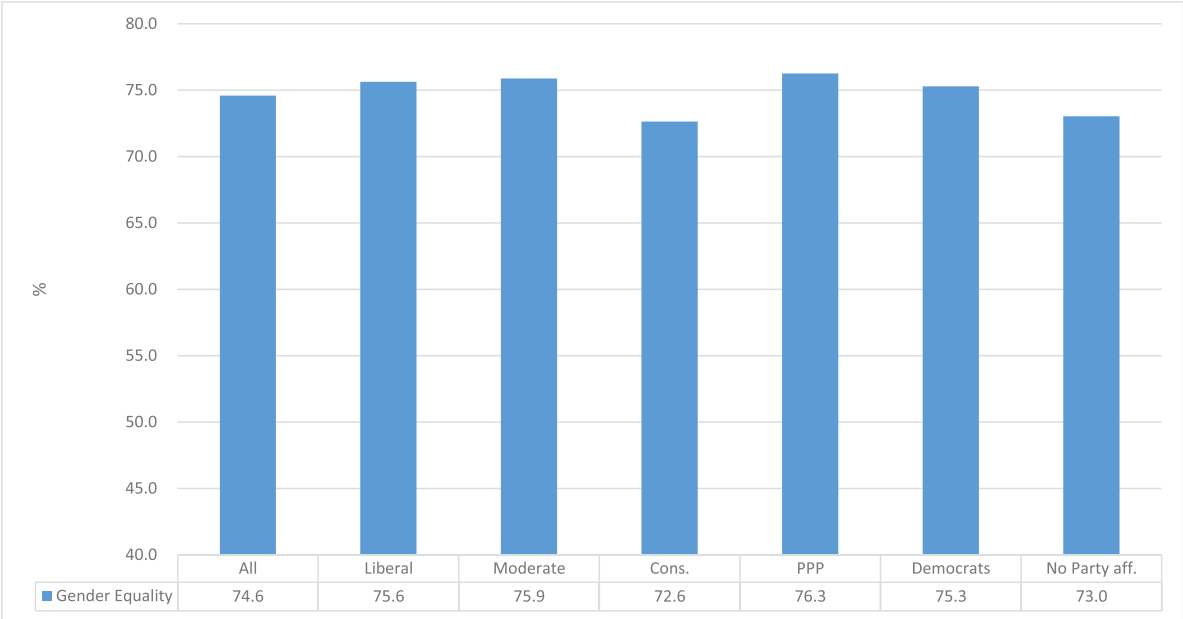
## ■ Perceived Threats to Civil Liberties

- There appear to be no significant gender-based differences in the perceived ability to enjoy freedom of expression.
- Freedom of academic and cultural expression, as well as media diversity in political perspectives, are generally viewed positively.
- However, issues that threaten civil liberties—such as government censorship of the media (M = 3.43), media self-censorship (M = 3.35), biased reporting against the opposition (M = 3.26), and suppression of journalists (M = 2.95)—are also widely perceived to exist.
- These findings are consistent with the results of the IDEA public opinion survey released in April 2024. In that report, both South Korea and the United States received high expert evaluations for freedom of expression, but only about half of the South Korean public expressed confidence in this freedom.

# VI. Egalitarian Democracy

## 1. Gender

<Figure VI-1> Gender Equality in Candidacy for Public Office



### ■ Questions

- “Women have equal opportunities to run for public office.”
  - 1 = Happens very often; 2 = Happens often; 3 = Rarely happens; 4 = Never happens
  - Responses of “Happens very often” and “Happens often” are combined and displayed in the graph above as “Gender Equality.”

### ■ Women’s opportunities to run for office

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (74.6%) believe that women have equal opportunities to run for public office.
- Low female political participation is a major factor that negatively affects international evaluations of democracy in South Korea. In contrast to these negative external assessments, Korean citizens perceive that women’s opportunities for candidacy are



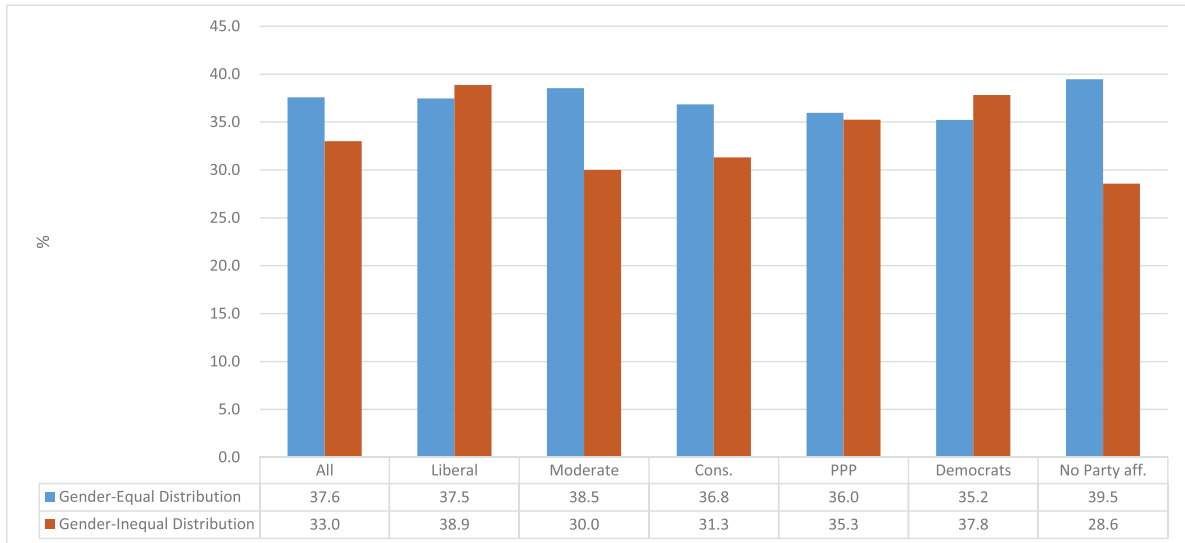
relatively high.

- There is little variation across ideological lines or party support.
- When comparing male and female respondents, women were more likely to say that women have unequal opportunities to run for office, but the gap was not large.

**<Table VI-1> Women's opportunities to run for office: by gender (%)**

	Male	Female
Happens very often	20.7	14.5
Happens often	54.0	60.0
Rarely happens	24.1	24.4
Never happens	1.2	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0

<Figure VI-2> Power distribution and gender



## ■ Questions

- "Power is distributed equally regardless of gender."
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of "Somewhat agree" and "Strongly agree" are combined and displayed in the graph above as "Gender-Equal Distribution," while responses of "Strongly disagree" and "Somewhat disagree" are combined as "Gender-Inequal Distribution."

## ■ Unequal power distribution and gender equality

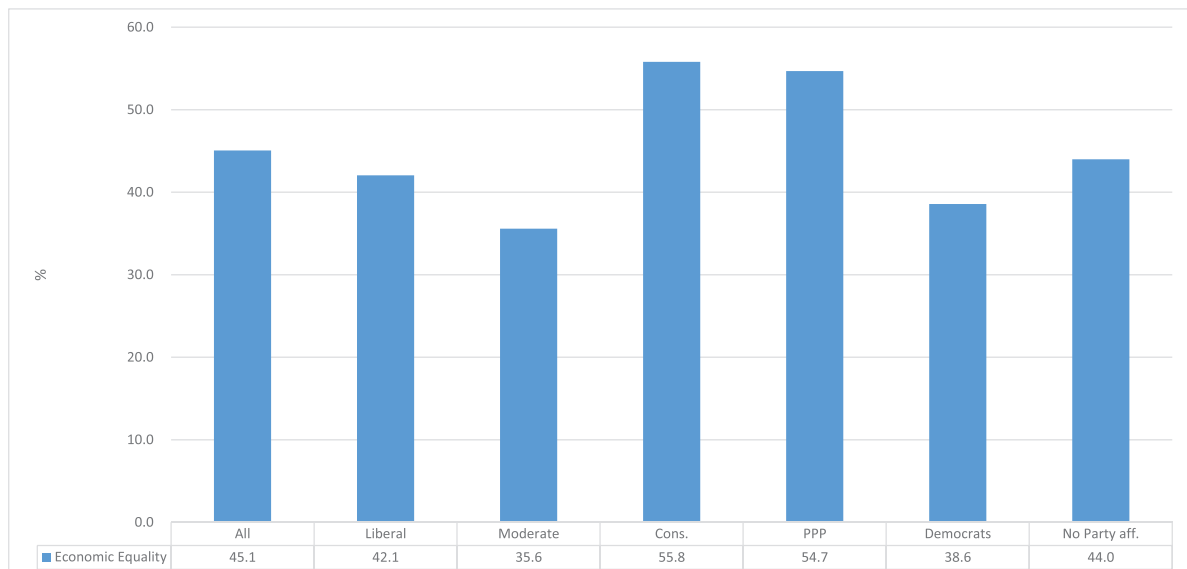
- Unlike the case of opportunities to run for office, attitudes toward power distribution remain skeptical.
- Only 37.6% of respondents believe that power is distributed regardless of gender. This view is evenly distributed across party support and ideological orientation.
- There were no statistically significant differences between male and female respondents on this item.
- Taken together, the increasing presence of women in senior positions within the executive, legislative, and judicial branches appears to have shaped the perception

that women now have equal opportunities to run for office.

- However, the increased visibility of a few elite women in high-ranking positions has not translated into a general perception that power is equitably distributed across gender lines.
- In other words, while Koreans recognize that women's participation in public candidacy has increased, they still do not believe that gender equality in the distribution of power has been achieved in Korean society.

## 2. Economic Class

<Figure VI-3> Economic Class and Equality



### ■ Questions

- "The rich and the poor are treated equally by the government."
  - 1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Somewhat agree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Strongly disagree
  - Responses of "Strongly agree" and "Somewhat agree" are combined and displayed in the graph above as "Economic Equality."

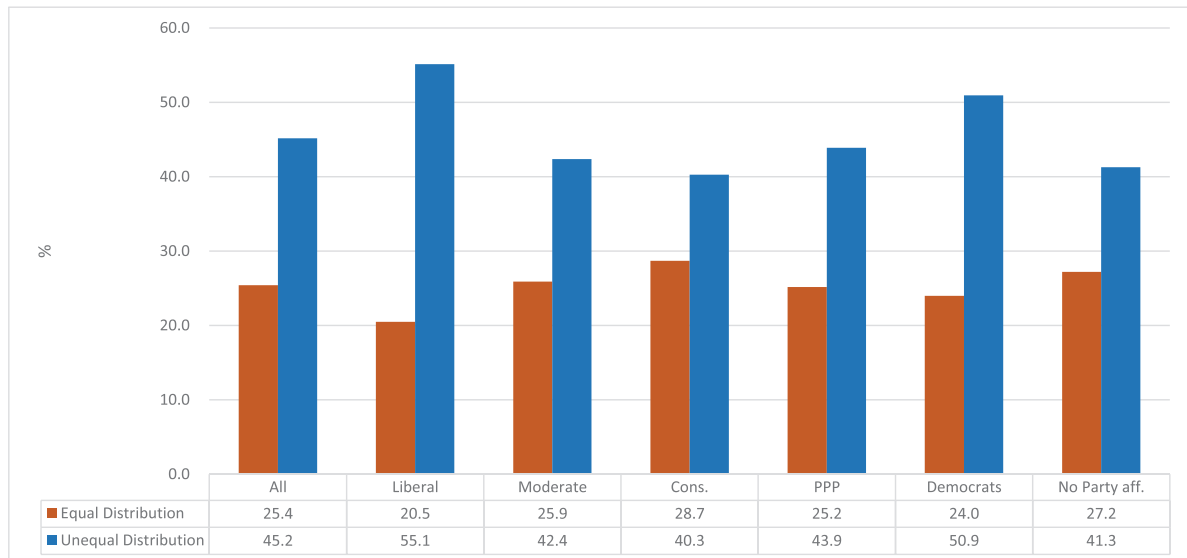
### ■ Polarized perceptions of economic equality

- Perceptions vary by ideology and party affiliation. Respondents were more likely to perceive unequal treatment by the government based on economic class in the following order: moderates (35.6%) < progressives (42.1%) < conservatives (55.8%).
- Supporters of the People Power Party tend to believe that economic class has relatively little influence, while Democratic Party supporters are more likely to associate economic inequality with political inequality.
- Cross-tabulation by income and asset level revealed no significant differences in

perceptions of economic equality among low-, middle-, and high-income groups.

- Overall, a majority of respondents perceive that government treatment varies according to wealth.
- Interestingly, moderate respondents (35.6%) showed a lower agreement rate on the issue of economic equality than progressive respondents (42.1%), a difference that approaches statistical significance ( $p < 0.1$ ).
- This suggests that in South Korea, the ideological spectrum cannot be fully explained by attitudes toward economic policy alone.

<Figure VI-4> Power Distribution and Socio-economic Status



## ■ Questions

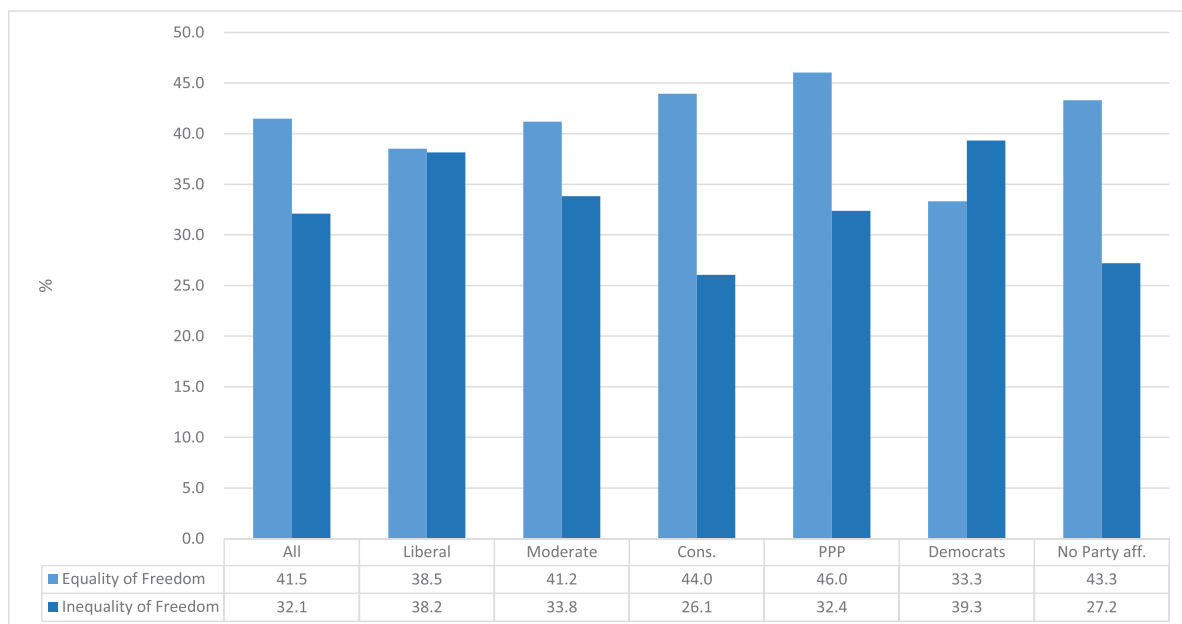
- "Power is distributed equally regardless of socio-economic status."
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of "Somewhat agree" and "Strongly agree" are combined and displayed in the graph above as "Equal Distribution," while responses of "Strongly disagree" and "Somewhat disagree" are combined as "Unequal Distribution."

## ■ Inequality of power by socio-economic class

- As with the case of women's opportunities to run for office, unequal distribution of power based on socio-economic status is a major factor contributing to South Korea's lower rankings in international democracy indices.
- However, in this case, Korean public perception aligns with international assessments: dissatisfaction is high regarding the unequal distribution of power according to socio-economic status.
- 45.2% of respondents believe that political power is unequally distributed based on socio-economic status. This perception is relatively stronger among progressives and Democratic Party supporters.

- While mean comparisons revealed no statistically significant difference by party affiliation, a significant difference was found between progressive and conservative ideological groups.
- There were also significant generational differences: members of the war generation were more likely to believe that power is distributed unequally.

**<Figure VI-5> Economic Class and Freedom**



## ■ Questions

- "Poor people enjoy the same level of civil liberties as wealthy people."
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of "Somewhat agree" and "Strongly agree" are combined and displayed in the graph above as "Equality of Freedom," while responses of "Strongly disagree" and "Somewhat disagree" are combined as "Inequality of Freedom."

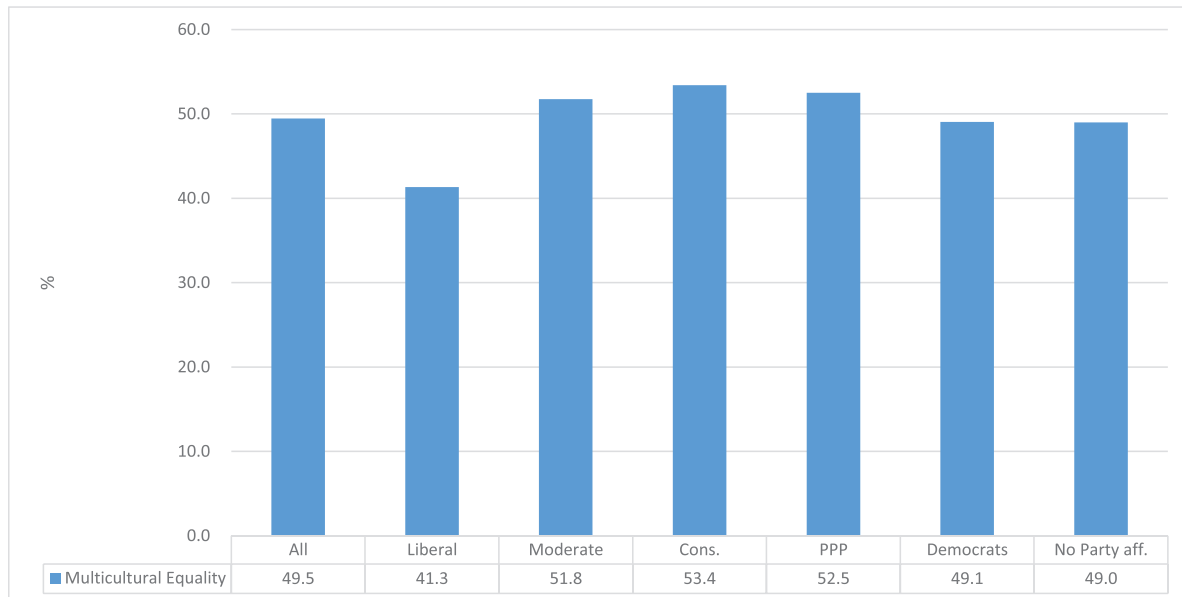
## ■ Economic class and civil liberties

- In addition to power, 32.1% of respondents answered that poor people do not enjoy the same level of freedom as the wealthy.
- As with previous items, differences were observed by ideology and party affiliation. Progressives and Democratic Party supporters were more likely to perceive that the freedoms of the poor are relatively restricted.



### 3. Culture and Social Background

<Figure VI-6> Multiculturalism and Equality



#### ■ Questions

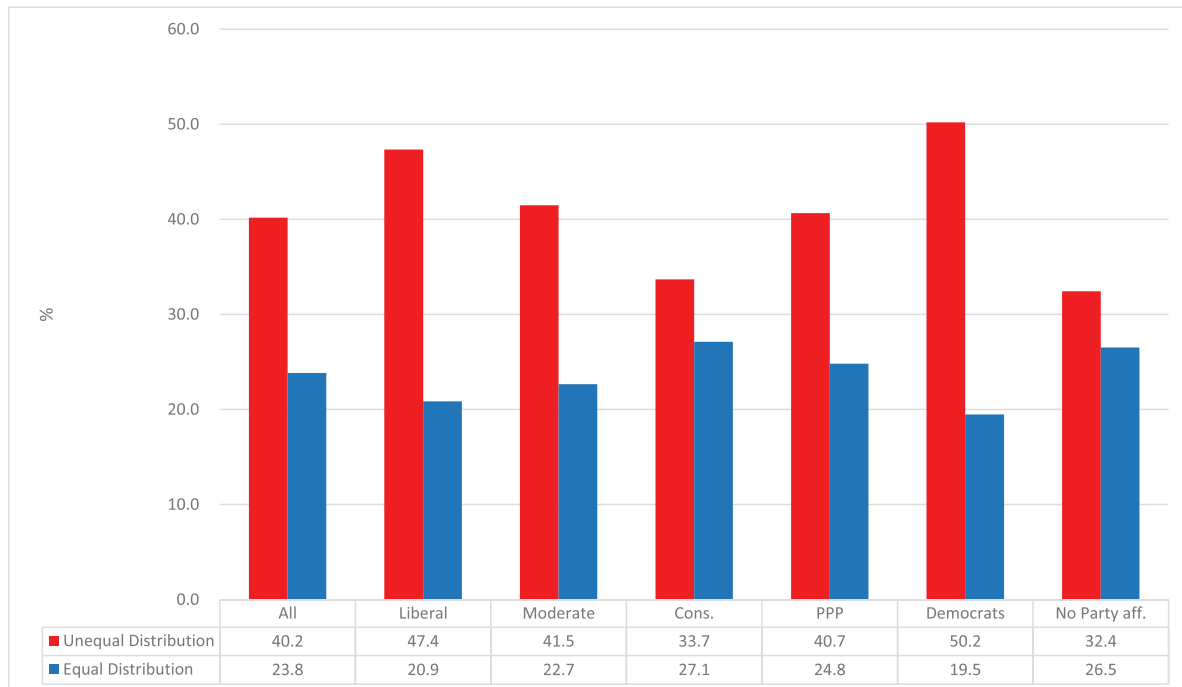
- "Citizens of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds are treated equally by the government."
  - 1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Somewhat agree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Strongly disagree
  - Responses of "Strongly agree" and "Somewhat agree" are combined and displayed in the graph above as "Multicultural Equality."

#### ■ Inadequate egalitarian democracy

- Only about half of respondents (49.5%) believe that individuals of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds are treated equally by the government.
- While no significant differences were found by party affiliation, cross-tabulation by ideology revealed that progressives were somewhat more critical than conservatives on this issue.

- However, this item does not clearly capture respondents' attitudes toward discriminatory treatment of multicultural citizens.
- Given the recent rise in anti-Chinese sentiment, it is plausible that a considerable portion of respondents may favor such discrimination.
- Future surveys should revise the wording of this item accordingly—measuring respondents' own attitudes toward multicultural residents and cross-analyzing those with responses to this item for a more nuanced understanding.

<Figure VI-7> Social Diversity and Power Distribution



## ■ Questions

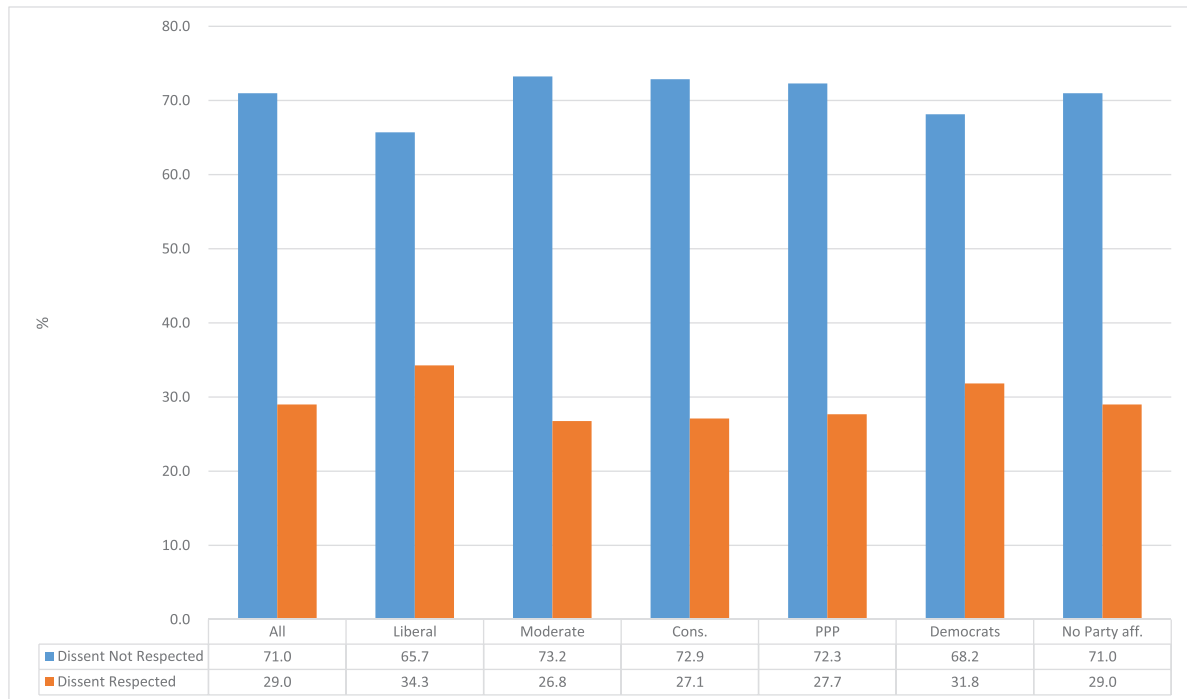
- “Power is distributed equally regardless of social groups such as language, ethnicity, religion, race, or region.”
  - 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Somewhat disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Somewhat agree; 5 = Strongly agree
  - Responses of “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree” are combined and displayed in the graph above as “Equal Distribution,” while responses of “Strongly disagree” and “Somewhat disagree” are combined as “Unequal Distribution.”

## ■ Unequal power structure in Korean society

- The proportion of respondents who agree that power is distributed equally regardless of language, ethnicity, religion, or culture is relatively low.
- Only 23.8% expressed agreement, while 40.2% disagreed.
- Progressives were more likely than conservatives, and Democratic Party supporters more likely than People Power Party supporters, to view these inequalities as serious problems.

## VII. Deliberative Democracy

<Figure VII-1> Respect for Dissent in Deliberative Processes



### ■ Questions

- “When considering significant policy changes, how much do you think politicians acknowledge and respect dissenting opinions?”
  - 1=Dissent is not allowed or those who raise dissenting opinions face legal penalties.
  - 2=Dissent is allowed for at least some parties but is almost always ignored.
  - 3=Dissent is acknowledged but there is a tendency to openly disparage dissenting opinions and those who propose them through negative remarks.
  - 4=There is a tendency to acknowledge dissent without making explicit positive or negative statements about it.
  - 5=Dissent is almost always acknowledged, and although it is ultimately mostly rejected, it is explicitly valued.
  - 6=Dissent is almost always acknowledged and often accepted, with the position

changing accordingly.

- Responses 1, 2, and 3 are combined and displayed in the graph above as “Dissent Not Respected,” while responses 4, 5, and 6 are combined as “Dissent Respected.”

#### ■ Deliberative processes that fail to recognize dissent

- 71% of respondents answered that politicians do not acknowledge dissenting opinions during policy deliberation.
- Dissatisfaction with the lack of recognition of dissent in Korean deliberative processes shows no significant differences by ideology or party support. In other words, frustration with the lack of genuine debate and open discussion was found across both progressives and conservatives, and among supporters of both ruling and opposition parties.

**<Table VII-1> Recognition of Dissent in the Deliberative Process**

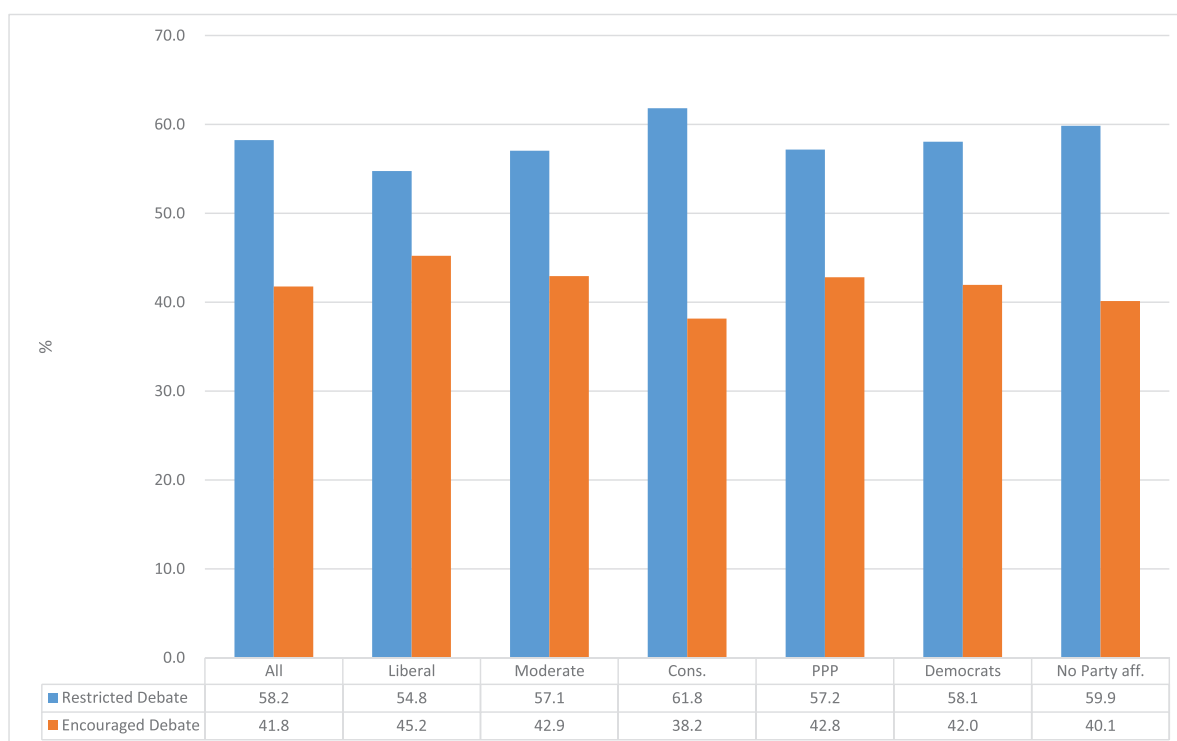
Recognition of Dissent in the Deliberative Process	Percent
Dissent is not allowed or those who raise dissenting opinions face legal penalties.	4.9
Dissent is allowed for at least some parties but is almost always ignored.	24.5
Dissent is acknowledged but there is a tendency to openly disparage dissenting opinions and those who propose them through negative remarks.	41.6
There is a tendency to acknowledge dissent without making explicit positive or negative statements about it.	16.6
Dissent is almost always acknowledged, and although it is ultimately mostly rejected, it is explicitly valued.	10.6
Dissent is almost always acknowledged and often accepted, with the position changing accordingly.	1.9
Total	100.0

- A more detailed breakdown of overall responses in the table shows that the most frequently selected response was: “Dissent is acknowledged, but there is a tendency

to openly disparage dissenting opinions and those who propose them through negative remarks.”

- This reflects a perception that, although dissent is not explicitly prohibited, it remains implicitly stigmatized, and those who voice dissent may face social disadvantages.

**<Figure VII-2> Participation in Public Debates**



## ■ Questions

- “When significant policy changes are being considered, how broad and independent do you think public debates are?”
  - 1=Public debate is either completely or almost completely disallowed.
  - 2=Some limited public debate is allowed, but the general public below the elite level is largely unaware of or unable to participate in major policy debates.
  - 3=Public debate is not suppressed but is rare, and elites generally control or constrain non-elite actors.
  - 4=Public discourse is actively encouraged, and some autonomous non-elite

groups participate, but it is limited to the same small group of experts regardless of the issue area.

- 5=Public debate is actively encouraged, with relatively broad non-elite group participation and varying according to the issue area.
- 6=Grassroots discussions involving many non-elite groups and the general public in media, associations, or community settings are common, with no restrictions on public debate.
- Responses of 1, 2, and 3 are combined as "Restricted Debate," and 4, 5, and 6 as "Encouraged Debate," and displayed in the graph above.

#### ■ Limited participation in public debates

- 58.2% of respondents answered that public participation in Korea's deliberative spaces is restricted or insufficient.
- No statistically significant differences were found in cross-tabulations by ideology or party affiliation.
- Only 41.8% of all respondents considered public debate on policy to be at a satisfactory level.
- Even among supporters of the ruling People Power Party, 57.2% stated that public participation through deliberation is restricted.
- In a democracy, political parties are a crucial channel for the public's participation in deliberative spaces. However, the perception that public participation is restricted did not differ between unaffiliated respondents and those who support either the Democratic Party or the People Power Party.
- This serves as indirect evidence that political parties in South Korea are not effectively fulfilling their role as arenas of public deliberation.

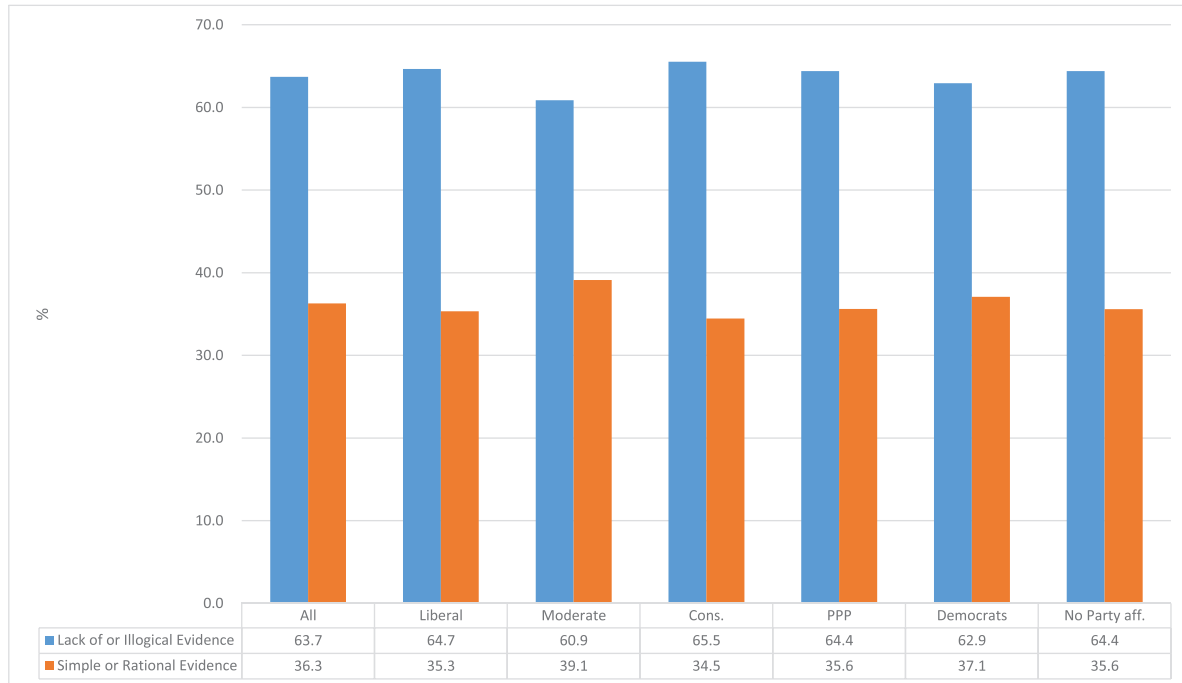
**<Table VII-2> Participation in Public Debates**

Participation in Public Debates	Percent
Public debate is either completely or almost completely disallowed.	4.4
Some limited public debate is allowed, but the general public below the elite level is largely unaware of or unable to participate in major policy debates.	24.7
Public debate is not suppressed but is rare, and elites generally control or constrain non-elite actors.	29.1
Public discourse is actively encouraged, and some autonomous non-elite groups participate, but it is limited to the same small group of experts regardless of the issue area.	25.3
Public debate is actively encouraged, with relatively broad non-elite group participation and varying according to the issue area.	13.4
Grassroots discussions involving many non-elite groups and the general public in media, associations, or community settings are common, with no restrictions on public debate.	3.1
Total	100.0

- 29.1% of respondents answered that public participation in the public debates is controlled or constrained by elites.
- This suggests that the communication gap between the elite intellectuals who lead public discourse and the general public may be a critical issue.



<Figure VII-3> Presenting Evidences in Deliberative Processes



## ■ Questions

- “When discussing opinions on important policies, how do you think politicians in our country present their positions?”
  - 1=Generally does not provide evidence for claims.
  - 2=Claims are made with illogical or false evidence.
  - 3=Provides simple evidence for claims.
  - 4=Provides rational and verified evidence for claims.
  - Responses of 1 and 2 are combined and displayed in the graph above as “Lack of or Illogical Evidence,” while responses of 3 and 4 are combined as “Simple or Rational Evidence.”

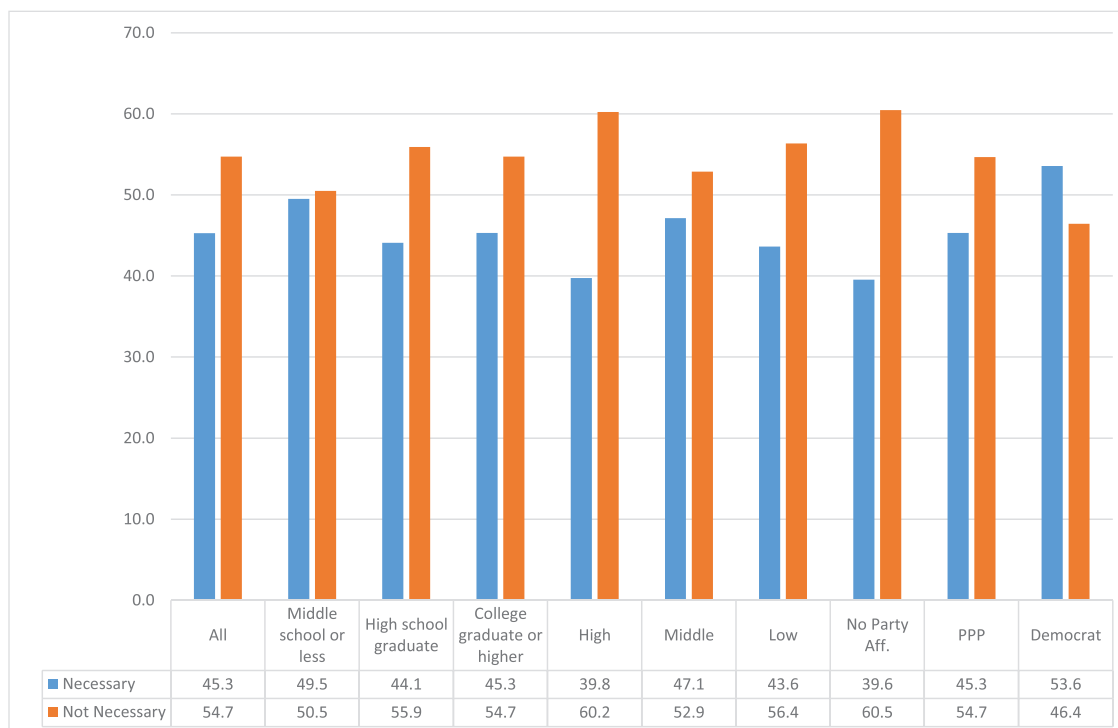
## ■ Qualitative issues in the deliberative process

- In public discourse, not only the range of participation but also the quality of reasoning in the debate—i.e., its rationality—is a critical component of deliberation.
- 63.7% of respondents evaluated that either no proper evidence is presented in political discussions or that the level of evidence provided is low.

- No statistically significant differences were found by party affiliation, but moderate respondents were more likely than conservatives to believe that politicians present evidence-based arguments.
- This may be because respondents with clearly defined progressive or conservative orientations are more inclined to view opposing arguments and their supporting evidence as irrational.

## VIII. Constitutional Reform

<Figure VIII-1> Preference for Constitutional Amendment for Presidential Term



### ■ Questions

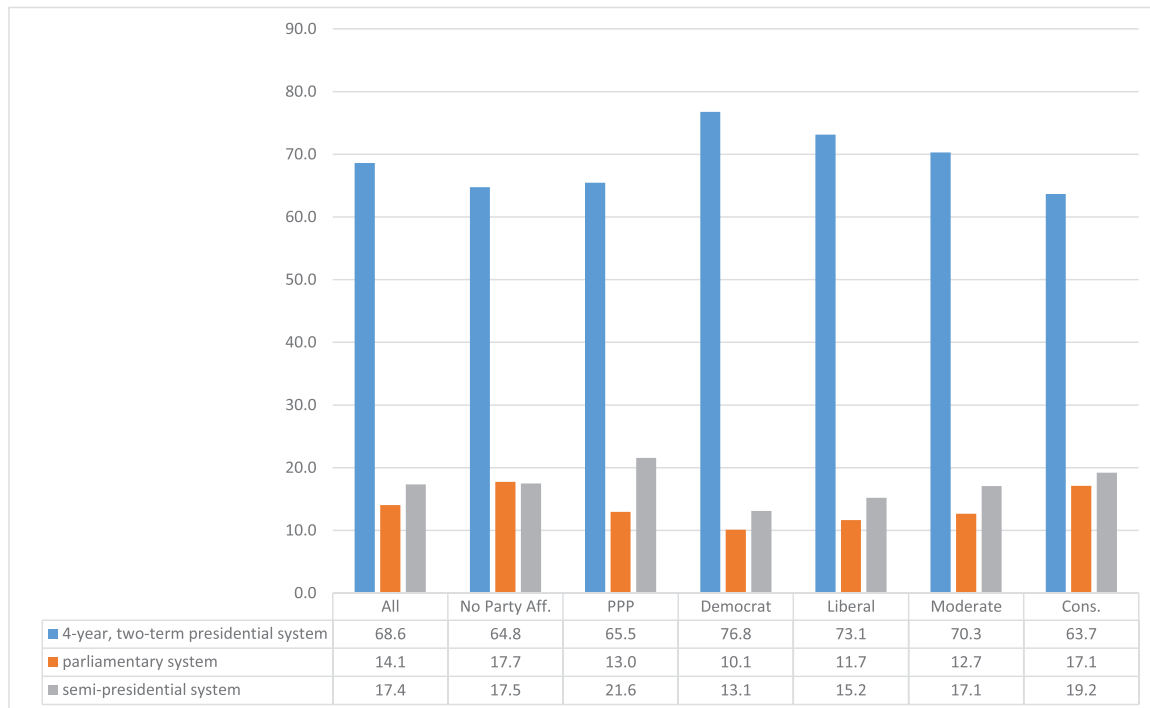
- “Do you think a constitutional amendment is needed to change the current 5-year single-term presidential system?”
  - 1 = Not necessary at all; 2 = Not very necessary; 3 = Mostly necessary; 4 = Very necessary
  - Responses of 1 and 2 are combined and displayed in the graph above as “Not Necessary,” while responses of 3 and 4 are combined as “Necessary.”

### ■ While a majority opposes constitutional amendment, a substantial minority sees it as necessary

- Overall, a majority (54.7%) responded that a constitutional amendment is not necessary, but a considerable proportion (45.3%) still viewed it as necessary.

- Differences were observed by income, education level, and party affiliation.
- In contrast to other groups, a majority of Democratic Party supporters believe a constitutional amendment is necessary.

<Figure VIII-2> Preferred Political System



## ■ Questions

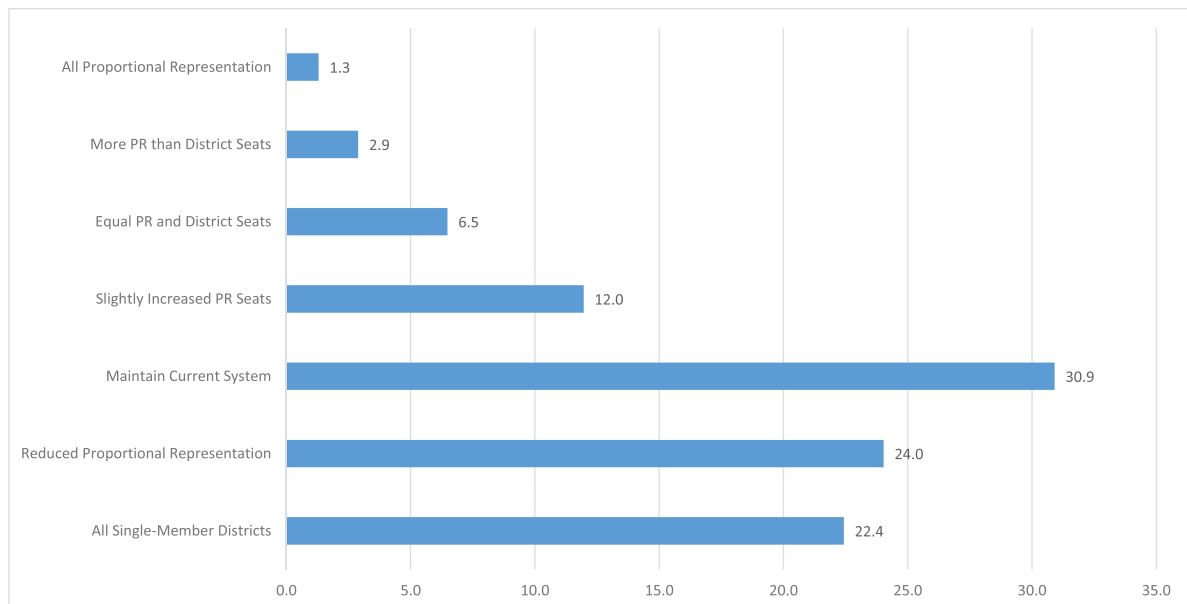
- “If a constitutional amendment were to occur, what form of government do you think would be most appropriate for South Korea?”
  - 1=The U.S. style 4-year, two-term presidential system
  - 2=The British or German parliamentary system
  - 3=The French semi-presidential system

## ■ Strong preference for the U.S.-style 4-year, two-term presidential system

- If constitutional revision were to take place, a clear majority (68.6%) would support a shift to a U.S.-style 4-year, two-term presidential system.
- Support for this system is especially high among Democratic Party supporters (76.8%) and progressives (73.1%).
- Among those who favor a presidential system (whether U.S. or French-style), support for the current first-past-the-post electoral system (82.5%) significantly outweighs support for a runoff system (17.5%).

- Support for a parliamentary or semi-presidential system is relatively higher among conservative respondents.

**<Figure VIII-3> Preferred Method of Electing National Assembly Members**



## ■ Questions

- “The following concerns the method of electing members of the National Assembly in South Korea. Do you think it is better to maintain the current method or to change to a different method?”
  - 1=Abolishing the proportional representation system and electing all members through single-member districts. (All Single-Member Districts)
  - 2=Reducing the number of proportional representation seats compared to the current system (proportional representation seats below 15%). (Reduced Proportional Representation)
  - 3=Maintaining the current system (proportional representation seats at 15%). (Maintain Current System)
  - 4=Increasing the number of proportional representation seats slightly compared to the current system (proportional representation seats between 15% and 50%). (Slightly Increased PR Seats)
  - 5=Electing members so that proportional representation and single-member district seats are approximately equal (50% proportional representation). (Equal

PR and District Seats)

- 6=Electing more proportional representation seats than single-member district seats (more than 50% proportional representation). (More PR than District Seats)
- 7=Abolishing single-member districts and electing all members through proportional representation. (All Proportional Representation)

#### ■ Highest preference for maintaining the current ratio between district and proportional representation seats

- The most preferred option was maintaining the current proportion of proportional representation seats (30.9%).
- Preferences for reducing or abolishing proportional representation far exceeded preferences for expanding proportional representation or abolishing single-member districts.
- This stands in sharp contrast to expert survey results, which show greater support for increasing proportional representation.







