Youth, Democracy, and Politics: Hungary

Survey results
NDI Youth Research Project

March 2018
In cooperation with Political Capital
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE DESIGN
The sample is statistically representative of the Hungarian population aged 16-29 in terms of gender, education level, and region.

SAMPLE SIZE
- 500 respondents
- Age: 16-29
- Margin of error: ±4%

FIELDWORK PERIOD
December 15-20, 2017

TYPE OF SURVEY
Telephone interviews (CATI)
Main Findings

- Low level of interest in and high level of dissatisfaction with politics
- Low engagement in public life – except for voting in elections
- Strong commitment to democracy in general
- Strong anti-immigrant sentiment, but less if compared to surveys of older Hungarians
- Alignment with most Western positions on European geopolitical issues
- Strong European identity – almost as strong as national identity
- Lack of interest in and understanding of Russia-related affairs
Nearly 7-in-10 are dissatisfied with the political situation.

Are you satisfied with the current political situation in Hungary?

- Not satisfied at all: 35%
- Rather dissatisfied: 32%
- Rather satisfied: 17%
- Very satisfied: 3%
- DK/NA: 13%
Low political engagement (apart from voting)

Have you been involved in the following ways in which citizens can engage in public life? If not, are you willing to get involved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>No, I haven’t been involved and I do not plan to get involved</th>
<th>No, I haven’t been involved but I plan to get involved</th>
<th>Yes, I have been involved</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting in national elections</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voting in local elections</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing a petition in the street or in other place outside internet</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in online petition, online protest</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing or expressing your ideas on politics or important public issues publicly (blogs, comments to...</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting your local political representative or politician with relation to particular public issue or...</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking part in a demonstration</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striking</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting an online crowd-funding campaign</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in a political party</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE

- Signing a petition offline is the most popular option for non-voting engagement.
Involvement in signing a petition or taking part in a demonstration increases with education.

Have you been involved in the following ways in which citizens can engage in public life? If not, are you willing to get involved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>No, I haven’t been involved and I do not plan to get involved</th>
<th>No, I haven’t been involved but I plan to get involved</th>
<th>Yes, I have been involved</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signing a petition in the street or in other place outside internet</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, with certification</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, vocational school</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking part in a demonstration</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, with certification</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, vocational school</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES
Nearly 9-in-10 prefer a democratic way of governance. One third would be open to undemocratic forms of government.

I am going to describe two types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing Hungary. Would you say each is...?

- **Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and civil society**
- **Having a democratic political system where decisions are made through legislative deliberations and public consultation**

**NOTE**

Lower education and preference of Fidesz correspond to support for the strong leader option.
Two-thirds of the voters think it matters whether the government is democratic or not.

Please consider the following statements about democracy and political regimes in general. For each, do you...?

- **Democracy is the best possible political system**
  - 6% fully disagree
  - 18% rather disagree
  - 40% rather agree
  - 29% fully agree
  - 7% DK/NA

- **It does not matter if the government is democratic or not democratic**
  - 42% fully disagree
  - 28% rather disagree
  - 15% rather agree
  - 6% fully agree
  - 9% DK/NA

- Sometimes human rights and civic liberties should be restricted in order to better protect people from terrorism and other threats
  - 19% fully disagree
  - 14% rather disagree
  - 33% rather agree
  - 30% fully agree
  - 4% DK/NA

- I would be ready to sacrifice some of democratic principles for higher standards of living
  - 15% fully disagree
  - 15% rather disagree
  - 36% rather agree
  - 22% fully agree
  - 12% DK/NA

**NOTE**

- A majority see democracy as the best possible political system.
- 63% would sacrifice some democratic principles for increased security.
- 58% would for a higher standard of living.
Support for democracy increases with education

Please consider the following statements about democracy and political regimes in general: Democracy is the best possible political system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
<th>Rather Disagree</th>
<th>Rather Agree</th>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, vocational school</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, with certification</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The strongest advocates of human rights are supporters of center-left opposition parties, those with a university degree, those and living in large cities.

Please consider the following statements about democracy and political regimes in general: Sometimes human rights and civic liberties should be restricted in order to better protect people from terrorism and other threats?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party preference</th>
<th>Fidesz</th>
<th>Jobbik</th>
<th>Opposition parties other than Jobbik</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>Fidesz</th>
<th>Jobbik</th>
<th>Opposition parties other than Jobbik</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, vocational school</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, with certification</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of settlement</th>
<th>Fidesz</th>
<th>Jobbik</th>
<th>Opposition parties other than Jobbik</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budapest</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other urban areas</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE

Fidesz’s supporters, those with primary or secondary education, and those living in villages are more supportive to restrictions of human rights.
Below are some ways that many Europeans societies have changed over recent decades. In each case, please say whether you think this has changed society for the better, or for the worse?

- Our society becoming more ethnically and religiously diverse
- More women in leadership positions in business and politics
- A greater acceptance of same-sex relationships
- A larger proportion of women and men combine employment with household duties
- Women can decide if and when they have children

**NOTE**

- Decisive support for gender equality issues.
- Same-sex relations and ethnic diversity receive a notable relative majority of support.
Below are some ways that many Europeans societies have changed over recent decades. In each case, please say whether you think this has changed society for the better, or for the worse?
In your opinion, how much of a role should religious values, as expressed by churches, play in politics and public affairs?

Relative majority believes religious values should play a limited role in politics.

Note: Younger respondents with less education tend to opt for a more important role.
IDENTITY
Young Hungarians identify most strongly with their nation, their local community, and Europe.

**To what extent do you identify yourself with the following entities?**

- **Hungary**: 11% not at all, 19% rather no, 48% rather yes, 17% very much, 4% DK/NA
- **My local community**: 13% not at all, 21% rather no, 42% rather yes, 19% very much, 5% DK/NA
- **Europe**: 12% not at all, 24% rather no, 42% rather yes, 16% very much, 7% DK/NA
- **My favorite music band**: 25% not at all, 11% rather no, 31% rather yes, 21% very much, 11% DK/NA
- **The political party I vote for**: 24% not at all, 21% rather no, 34% rather yes, 5% very much, 16% DK/NA
- **My favorite sports club**: 34% not at all, 13% rather no, 24% rather yes, 14% very much, 16% DK/NA
- **My religion / the faith group that I am a member**: 39% not at all, 21% rather no, 21% rather yes, 8% very much, 11% DK/NA

**NOTE**

- Two-thirds identifies with Hungary. Those who do not are more likely to be supporters of opposition parties other than Jobbik and live in rural areas.
- Women and those with more education are more likely to identify with Europe.
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

We Hungarians may feel proud of our history because we have acted more nobly than other nations

A true Hungarian should be a Christian
INTEREST IN POLITICS, SOURCES OF INFORMATION & POLITICAL ISSUES
A majority has no or only minimal interest in politics.

How interested would you say you are in politics and public affairs?

- Not at all interested: 27%
- Not very interested: 28%
- Somewhat interested: 37%
- Very interested: 8%
- DK/NA: 1%
Facebook and online news outlets are the most popular sources of information.

Which of the following sources of information about society and politics do you use (and how often)?

**NOTE**
- 64% use Facebook regularly, leading the runner-up by 16 points.
- Other than private TV channels, YouTube, and private radio, nearly no other media source is used.
Healthcare, unemployment, rising prices, and corruption are the most pressing problems.

To what extent is each of the following issues a serious problem in Hungary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>70%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>90%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation of the healthcare</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising prices, costs of living</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensions</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic decline and rising authoritarianism</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian military buildup and Russian aggression against its...</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats for national culture</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender inequality</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**: Perceived seriousness of unemployment and rising prices does not follow actual macroeconomic trends. Unemployment rate dropped to 3.8% by the end of 2017. Prices increased by 2.4% in 2017. (According to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office)
Fidesz and Jobbik supporters, along with those with less education, are more likely to see immigration as a serious problem in Hungary.

### To what extent is immigration a serious problem in Hungary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>4 – very serious problem</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1 – not a serious problem</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, vocational school</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education, with certification</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidesz</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobbik</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition parties other than Jobbik</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**

- A majority of those who report undecided party support also perceive immigration as a serious problem.
- Those having university degree and supporting a centre-left opposition party are the least likely to see immigration as a serious problem.
Young Hungarians generally align with Western positions on European geopolitical issues, except as concerns immigration.

Do you agree or disagree with following statements?

- The economic sanctions imposed on Russia after Crimea’s annexation are justified and should be maintained:
  - Fully disagree: 18%
  - Rather disagree: 17%
  - DK/NA: 35%
  - Rather agree: 18%
  - Fully agree: 11%

- Membership in the European Union is a threat to Hungary's sovereignty:
  - Fully disagree: 32%
  - Rather disagree: 16%
  - DK/NA: 11%
  - Rather agree: 23%
  - Fully agree: 18%

- Russia is spreading disinformation to weaken public commitment to democracy and to western institutions:
  - Fully disagree: 25%
  - Rather disagree: 23%
  - DK/NA: 29%
  - Rather agree: 12%
  - Fully agree: 10%

- Immigrants make a positive contribution to Hungarian society:
  - Fully disagree: 65%
  - Rather disagree: 19%
  - DK/NA: 6%
  - Rather agree: 6%
  - Fully agree: 6%

**NOTE**

- Anti-immigrant sentiment is dominant.
- 41 percent believe that EU membership is a threat to Hungarian sovereignty.
- Around one-third are uncertain about Russian disinformation and sanctions against Russia.
HUNGARY, POLAND, AND SLOVAKIA: COMPARISON
Young Poles are by far the most interested in politics.

How interested would you say you are in politics and public affairs?

- **HU**
  - Not at all interested: 27%
  - Not very interested: 28%
  - Somewhat interested: 37%
  - Very interested: 8%

- **PL**
  - Not at all interested: 6%
  - Not very interested: 14%
  - Somewhat interested: 55%
  - Very interested: 25%

- **SK**
  - Not at all interested: 18%
  - Not very interested: 39%
  - Somewhat interested: 36%
  - Very interested: 7%

**NOTE**

The relative majority of Slovak and Hungarian respondents are not very or not at all interested in politics.
All believe democracy is the best possible political system. This belief is weakest in Hungary.

Please consider the following statements about democracy and political regimes in general: Democracy is the best possible political system.
A significant group would sacrifice some democratic principles for a higher standard of living.

Please consider the following statements about democracy and political regimes in general: Sometimes human rights and civic liberties should be restricted for a higher standard of living.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>fully disagree</th>
<th>rather disagree</th>
<th>rather agree</th>
<th>fully agree</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE

- The proportion is highest in Hungary and lowest in Poland.
Do you agree or disagree with following statement? Immigrants make a positive contribution to our society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>fully disagree</th>
<th>rather disagree</th>
<th>rather agree</th>
<th>fully agree</th>
<th>DK/NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HU</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**

In all three countries at least 70 percent do not believe that immigrants make a positive contribution to their society.
To what extent do you identify yourself with Europe?

Poles and Slovaks most strongly identify with Europe.

**NOTE**

Though the relative majority thinks similarly in Hungary, the opinions are more balanced.
This presentation is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Award No. AID-OAA-LA-13-00011. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.