

# Do Hong Kong People Embrace Democratic Values? [Discussion]

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# Three survey questions

[from the Rule of Law culture research]

Three set of values

- Preference for competent leadership to good system
- Paternalism
- Utilitarian corporatism

Related to democracy/ democratization?

Favour or Disfavour?

# Findings

## Leadership

preferred to good system

Internal	External
Disagree	Disagree (48.7%)

Paternalism

Internal	External
Disagree	Disagree (69.4%)

## Utilitarian corporatism

Internal	External
Disagree (marginal)	Agree (57.3%)

# Democracy

- Participation in decision-making
- Informed debate and choices
- Respect for alternative views
- Protection for minority interests
- Willingness to work towards understanding and agreement

# John Gastil

“Democracy connotes wide-ranging liberty, including the freedom to decide one’s own course in life and the right to play an equal role in forging a common destiny. Democracy means social and civil equality and a rejection of discrimination and prejudice. Democracy embraces the notion of pluralism and cultural diversity. It welcomes a wide range of perspectives and lifestyles, moving different social groups towards peaceful coexistence or respectful integration. Democracy represents the ideal of a *cohesive community* of people living and working together and finding fair, non-violent ways to reconcile conflicts. In sum, democracy embodies all three elements of the famous French Revolutionary slogan (liberty, equality, fraternity).”

Gastil, *Democracy in Small Groups: Participation, Decision Making and Communication* (1993), p.5

# Amartya Sen

“We must not identify democracy with majority rule. Democracy has complex demands, which certainly include voting and respect for election results, but it also requires the protection of liberties and freedoms, respect for legal entitlements and the guaranteeing of free and uncensored distribution of news and fair comment. Even elections can be deeply defective if they occur without the different sides getting an adequate opportunity to present their respective cases, or without the electorate enjoying the freedom to obtain news and to consider the views of competing protagonists.”

Sen, ‘Democracy as Universal Value’ (1999), pp.9–10

# Underpinning principles

- pluralism/diversity
  - citizenship
  - human rights
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- How far do Hong Kong people embrace these principles?