ATHENA
RESEARCH PAPER SERIES

MSc Course
"The EU and the Post-Soviet Space"

Understanding Georgian Democracy: Challenging the Universality of Democratic Values

Daemon
ORTEGA FROYSA

Co-funded by the European Union

ATHENA
- Jean Monnet Chair -

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the ATHENA Jean Monnet Chair, the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

This essay was originally written for the ATHENA Jean Monnet Chair MSc Course "The EU and the Post-Soviet Space" taught by Dr. Olga Burlyuk. It is published as part of our mission to showcase peer-leading papers written by students during their studies. This work can be used for background reading and research, but should not be cited as an expert source or used in place of scholarly articles/books.

Introduction

With the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, shockwaves have been sent through European political life, including neighbouring countries like Georgia. There is once again a renewed interest from independent states to pick a side in the brewing international conflict, falling into either a Western or Russian sphere of influence (NATOPA 2022). Countries like Georgia have redoubled their intention to unite with the West, voicing their determination to join the European Union (EU) (Brzozowski 2022). However, this also raises questions about whether Georgia is ready to join, or if they must still do work to align with the EU's high democratic standards. It also begs the question of whether such standards are even practical in the first place considering the dire geopolitical situation.

To this end, it will be valuable to unpack Georgians' opinions of their democracy, granting insight into how satisfied they are with their political system, and thus how satisfied they may be with further changes for the sake of "democratisation" or "Europeanisation". This will be done using the following research question: to what extent is Georgian opinion of their democracy guided by their perception of the EU? The question has a great degree of social relevance due to the current events surrounding the Russian war, as well as the Georgian government's determination to join the EU (Brzozowski 2022). Should Georgians have a low perception of their democracy and desire further democratic improvements, that would give legitimacy to the EU's democratisation efforts in the country. Should the reverse be true, however, it may present challenges for those efforts.

Academic relevance can also be found in that current research on Georgia has not looked into the EU's potential as a leading factor in their democratic perception. Should the EU have such an influence in the country, it could result in a much smoother adoption of democratic/European values, whereas the alternative could potentially mean domestic resistance or a slower adoption of necessary values and institutions.

The paper itself will explore the history of the EU-Georgia relationship, and cover foundational concepts to understanding that relationship, highlighting strategies employed by the Union to promote human rights and democratic values in the country. Several regression analyses will then be performed to test three hypotheses outlined in the methodology, which will finally be followed by a discussion of the results and how differing understandings of "democracy" may be hindering the EU's efforts in promoting European values abroad.

2. The EU-Georgia Relationship

The European Union and Georgia have maintained a friendly relationship since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, and since 2014 they have become the EU's main trading partner abroad (Lomia & Lomia 2020: 2). More direct EU involvement in Georgia began in 1992 with the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) framework, which allowed the Union to economically and politically aid various countries—including Georgia—on a host of matters (idem: 4). Areas relevant for this research include legal, institutional, and administrative reforms, as well as economic development (ibid).

The EU-Georgia relationship has since evolved beyond the TACIS, with democracy and human rights promotion eventually entering centre-stage with the 2009 Eastern Partnership (idem: 5). Despite this support for Georgia, there remains concerns about Georgia's democratisation progress. According to EU reports there is a worrying imbalance in power, with virtually one

party holding power for an extended amount of time, and minimal competition from the opposition (Russell 2021: 6). Electoral dominance in parliament limits the ability for the government to be held accountable due to reluctance of party members to use such mechanisms against their own (ibid). Undue influence of former prime minister Bidzina Ivanishili is also concerning for EU democratisation, with evidence that he maintains influence over successors and even helps with cabinet appointments (ibid). With further evidence of ample political corruption, this paints a dim picture of the Georgian political landscape and sends a clear message that the EU either still has a long way to go, or has failed to meet their high hopes for democracy-promotion (ibid).

Furthermore, Europeanisation efforts in Georgia have also been met with a mixed response, particularly with regard to human rights. The EU has made LGBT equality an important part of its human rights promotion, which has fostered mixed responses among Georgians (Luciani 2021: 1). Resistance to Europeanisation in Georgia is spearheaded by religious and political authorities, who frame the Union's human rights promotion as a "conspiracy to destroy Georgian traditions", often resulting in violent resistance to LGBT activists (ibid). In this way Europeanisation efforts also suffer from setbacks in Georgia, putting into question whether they can Europeanise in the first place, or whether democratisation must first come before Europeanisation.

3. Literature Review

For the purposes of this research three concepts are of utmost importance: democracy, democratisation, and Europeanisation. Democracy is vital to understand what is being evaluated by the interviewees of the survey, as well as what the EU is working towards in its democratisation efforts with Georgia. Democratisation builds on the concept of democracy by constructing concrete ways of achieving it, even – and perhaps most especially – in the face of opposition. Such opposition is alive and well in Georgia, and therefore any research that touches upon democratisation must be well-equipped with knowledge of the many strategies used in the past. This may also help with understanding where the EU may or may not be going wrong, or where there could be a disconnect between European and Georgian views of democracy. The final concept, Europeanisation, emerges from discussion of democratisation, highlighting how fragile it is and where it can be subverted.

The most well-known conceptualisation of democracy comes from Robert Dahl, who laid the groundwork for modern conceptualisations of democracy. Dahl (1998: 85-86) lists what he considers the six most important institutions for modern representative democracies: (1) elected officials; (2) free, fair, and frequent elections; (3) freedom of expression; (4) access to alternative sources of information; (5) associational autonomy; and (6) inclusive citizenship. Not all six of these institutions are present in all democracies, but a combination of them are typically present even in hybrid regimes, or arrive in fledgling democracies at varying speeds (idem: 86-87). The latter point seems to be at the core of the EU's democratisation efforts, based on the assumption that even if a nation does not yet have all the institutions of democracy, with a little help they may still be built. This perspective of democracy-building is also in line with Dahl's own views on the emergence of democracy, believing that it can emerge whenever the conditions for it are appropriate—for a power like the EU to build a democracy, it must foster those conditions (idem: 9-10; Axtmann 2013: 119).

However, democracy has been further developed by other scholars, emphasising certain attributes, or identifying new ones altogether which they believe are at the heart of what it

means to be a democracy. One such scholar is John Dryzek (2011: 127, 201), who put forward "deliberative democracy" as a conceptualisation, focusing on the legitimising power of deliberation and discourse:

> […] legitimacy can be sought in the resonance of collective choices with public opinion, characterized as the provisional outcome of the engagement of discourses in the public space as transmitted to public authority. (ibid)

Therefore, discourse grants both a mandate and legitimacy to power-holders, whose actions only carry such legitimacy if they are in line with public opinion (ibid; Axtmann 2013: 121–123).

Together, Dahl and Dryzek offer a more comprehensive understanding of what is meant by "democracy", and what democratisation efforts theoretically build towards. Therefore, an ideal-typical representative democracy should have all six of Dahl's institutions, and should have a healthy democratic discourse/deliberation that informs public decision-making. Countries may lack some of these pillars, or they may vary in strength, but together they constitute the ideal democracy—also representing the expectations levied upon target countries of democratisation efforts.

A popular imagining of democratisation is that transitioning to democracy first requires economic development. This apparent myth was dispelled by Przeworski et al. (1997; 2000), who clarified that democratic transition itself has many causes, but while poorer democracies sometimes slide back to authoritarianism, rich democracies never do (ibid.; Geddes 2011: 596). Over time this leads to most democracies being economically developed, thus promoting the illusion that economic development itself was the cause for their transition in the first place.

Modernisation theorists like Lipset (1959) instead emphasise education, equality, and urbanisation, all of which serve the dual-effect of (1) forging a citizenry who are more eager to participate in democratic culture, as well as (2) economically developing a nation to preserve that democratic culture (Geddes 2011: 597). Thus, modernists like Lipset put the values of the citizenry front and centre – without a well-rounded citizenry willing to be democratically involved (and equipped with the tools needed to do so), there can be no democracy.

While understanding what the "true driver" of democracy is can be valuable, the effects of foreign democratisation efforts should also be understood. Compelled democratisation can have potentially counterproductive effects in the host country, as will be briefly illustrated with the case of EU human rights promotion in Ukraine. In attempting to promote certain pillars of (Western) democracy, it is possible to overstep and unknowingly strike at a spot of cultural sensitivity, fermenting domestic resistance to democratisation efforts.

In 2012, amid the negotiation of an EU-Ukraine association agreement, LGBT rights became a controversial point of national debate (Shevtsova 2020: 500). In promoting one of Dahl's essential democratic pillars—freedom of expression—the EU had stumbled upon a compelling narrative of resistance to European "meddling". Latching on to this narrative, many groups appealed to Ukraine's homophobic electorate to resist the EU's efforts in their country, whether it had to do with LGBT rights or not (idem: 500–501). This also gave the EU's geopolitical rival, Russia, an opportunity to further promote anti-EU sentiment among Ukrainians. Up until that point LGBT rights had not been a particularly salient issue in the country: discrimination still persisted among the largely homophobic electorate, yet incremental progress was being

made towards equality (idem: 503). The controversy over the EU's democratisation efforts in effect rallied the population against LGBT rights, and arguably did more damage than would have been done had the EU not involved itself in the first place.

Democratisation is thus a fickle process that can quickly spiral out of control and backfire if mismanaged. Local cultural sensitivities must be carefully accounted for by foreign powers, otherwise the lack of knowledge about those sensitivities may create unpredicted results. The spectacular blunder of EU foreign policy in Ukraine raises a third concept relevant for this research: Europeanisation. In promoting democratic values of equality and freedom of expression in Ukraine, the EU was simultaneously promoting "European values". This duality of democratisation and Europeanisation is relevant for the case of Georgia and should be interrogated further.

Shevtsova (2020: 501) defines Europeanisation as a process of "(a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of rules (formal and informal), procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ways of doing things, and shared beliefs and norms" from the EU to a target country. The primary method used by the EU for its Europeanisation efforts have been "conditionality" politics, a foreign policy strategy wherein benefits are afforded to the target country to the extent that they meet with certain European/democratic values (ibid). Should they fail to uphold those values, those benefits are rescinded – a "carrot and stick" strategy lacking the heavy-handed stick.

A drawback of this strategy is that if a country is determined enough they will make whatever legal changes necessary to satisfy the EU, yet (wilfully) fail to foster the necessary culture those legal changes are intended to aid (idem: 502). Once again this can be seen in the Ukraine example above, where Yuriy Lutsenko, the leader of the president's parliamentary group, said that it is "better to have a gay parade on Khreshchatyk than Russian tanks in the centre of the capital", revealing the utilitarian underbelly of their negotiations with the EU (idem: 500). Legal changes without the accompanying effort to earnestly shift societal attitudes are hollow changes at best, lacking the long-term impact the EU might hope for (idem: 502).

Europeanisation in particular is vulnerable to such hollow legal changes, with countries eager to become closer with the EU economically and geopolitically, but not necessarily on the level of domestic (social) politics. This is also seen in the case of Poland and Hungary, who both continue to chafe against the Union on that basis (Ortega 2022). While democratisation asks for more concrete legal and institutional reform, Europeanisation asks for shifts in social values catalysed by said legal reform – a much taller order to say the least. This becomes relevant for Georgia as it may explain domestic pushback to the EU's efforts, and illustrate the challenges facing the Union moving forward.

4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design

This research will use data from the Caucasus Research Resource Centre's 2021 dataset on the "knowledge of and attitude toward the EU in Georgia" (CRRCG 2021). This dataset contains variables sufficient to answer the central research question, and even to test for additional relationships to offer greater insight into the EU's democratisation efforts in the country. The datasheet itself has an N value of 2,335, consisting of Georgians over the age of 18, and excluding those living in territories affected by military conflict (ibid). Data was collected via computer-assisted personal interviews in Armenian, Georgian, and Azerbaijani (ibid).

Using this data one primary regression analysis will be performed, later performing the same analysis but with controls, and finally delving deeper into the data by performing a moderation analysis. These are elaborated further in the hypotheses below.

> *H1: Georgians who have a higher perception of the EU will have a lessened perception of their democracy*

The first hypothesis is the base relationship being tested, covering the primary assumption detailed above: those who have a high opinion of the EU would have a lower opinion of their own democracy. This statement is made under the assumption that if one supports the EU, one must subscribe to at least some of the EU's perspectives, one of which being that Georgia still has some ways to go in its democratisation efforts before it can be allowed in the Union (Russell 2021). Therefore, those who support the EU would agree with the Union's assessment, and would likely have a lower view of their own democracy under the belief that it must still be improved.

> *H2: Education and age will have a controlling effect on H1, with younger and more educated people having a lower perception of their democracy*

The second hypothesis includes the controls of age and education, assuming that younger, educated Georgians would have a lower perception of their democracy, while older, less educated Georgians would have a higher perception. This is in line with a strain of literature that has shown younger/educated individuals to be more vocally critical of their government, while older/less educated ones are more complacent (Quintelier 2007).

> *H3: Whether Georgians see the EU as a democratic union or not will moderate H1's effect*

The final hypothesis tests for a moderation effect in H1, assuming that whether Georgians view the EU as democratic or not is the reason for how they perceive their own democracy vis-à-vis the EU. The assumption is that if one perceives the EU as democratic they would believe their claims about Georgia's democracy to be valid, and therefore also believe it to be less democratic and in need of improvement. Conversely, if one perceives the EU as undemocratic they would dismiss the EU's claims about Georgia, believing their government to be democratic enough as it is.

4.2 Operationalisation of Variables

The two primary variables *democracy perception* (dependent) and *EU perception* (independent) have been recoded for the purposes of this research. The *democracy perception* variable was recoded to exclude all answers save for those strictly related to the survey respondent's views on Georgian democracy. The *EU perception* variable was turned into a dummy for ease of analysis, with everything ranging from "very negative" to "neutral" classified as 0, and everything ranging from "rather positive than negative" to "very positive" classified as 1. The final values for both variables can be found in Appendix 1.

Other variables include the two control variables *age* and *education*. The former was recoded as a scale ranging from 18 to 96, excluding all values not pertaining directly to age. The latter was recoded into a dummy variable, with all values equating or rivalling a secondary education classified as 1, and all lower educational levels classified as 0. While a bachelor's degree would typically have been a benchmark due to various contemporary factors like "degree inflation", in this case the benchmark was lowered due to Georgia's lower average education rates (BBC 2021; UNICEF 2020: 6–7).

Finally, the variable *EU is democratic* remained as a continuous variable, but with all responses filtered out which did not pertain to whether the respondent thought the EU was democratic. The final composition of the variable ranged from "fully disagree" (1) to "fully agree" (4). This variable was later used to compute a moderation term by multiplying it by the *EU perception* dummy variable. Further details on variable operationalisation can be found in appendix 1.

5. Results

Given the above methodology, three models have been performed to test each of the hypotheses. Model 1 tests for the original relationship between perception of the EU and perception of Georgian democracy (H1), model 2 tests for the controlled relationship (H2), and model 3 tests for a moderation effect (H3). The results of these models can be seen below in Figure 1:

	Dependent variable: Perception of Georgian democracy		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Likes EU	0.101** (0.042)	0.108*** (0.042)	0.74*** (0.13)
Educated		-0.227*** (0.084)	
Age scale		-0.002ns (0.001)	
Democratic EU			0.185*** (0.042)
Likes EU × Democratic EU (moderator)			-0.194*** (0.064)
Constant	3.267*** (0.029)	3.568*** (0.105)	2.635*** (0.13)
R^2	0.003	0.008	0.018
Valid N	1,999	1,984	1,734
Note: * p < 0.1; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01; brackets indicate standard error Year of reference: 2021			

Figure 1

Model 1 displays the EU perception variable *likes EU*, which increases by 0.101. This indicates that those who have a positive perception of the EU have 0.101 points more towards their democratic opinion, while those who have a negative perception of the EU have a lower opinion of their democracy. This variable is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, indicating a relatively high

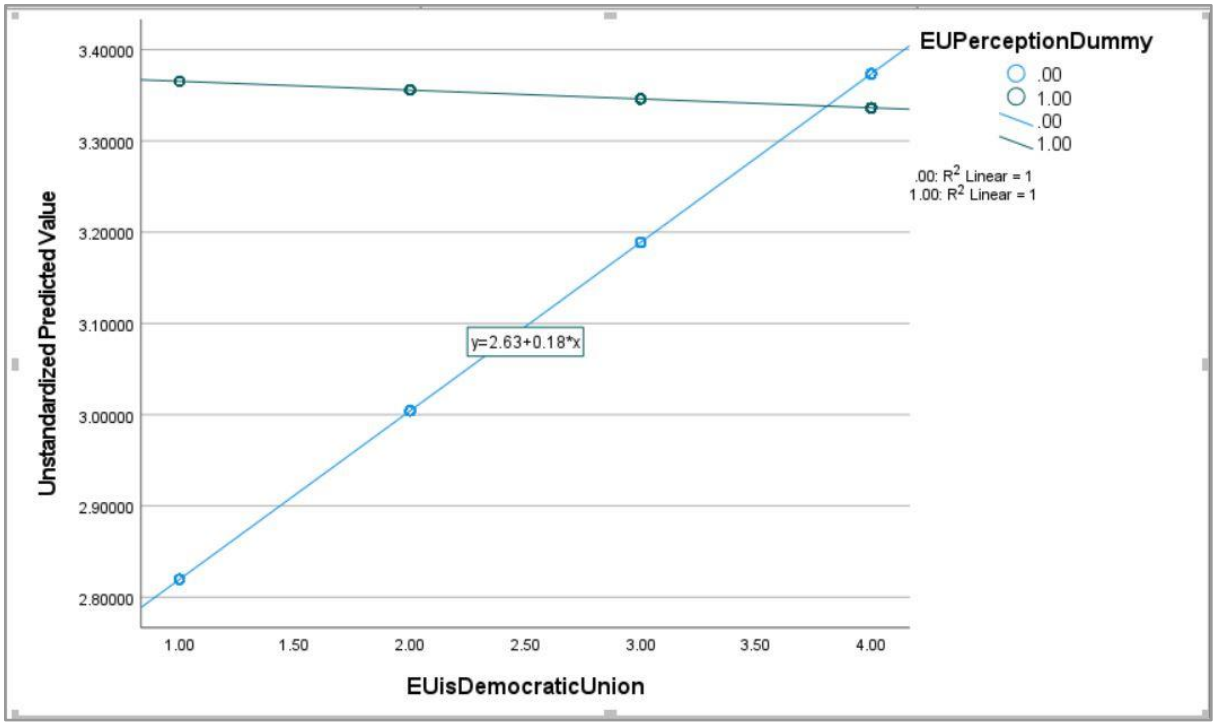
degree of significance. However, the R^2 is only 0.003, meaning that this model only explains 0.3% of the variation in the dependent variable.

Model 2's R^2 value increases very slightly to explain 0.8% of the variation, including both the education and age controls. The independent variable, *likes EU*, also rises slightly to 0.108, and the significance increases to be at the $p < 0.01$ level. This reveals that the presence of controls increases the perception of democracy among those who like the EU, or reduces the perception of democracy among those who dislike the EU. The control variables reveal further information about the Georgian population's relationship with their democracy.

Educated individuals – reflected with the *educated* dummy variable – have a lower perception of their own democracy, with a regression coefficient of -0.227. Conversely, this means that non-educated Georgians have a higher perception of their democracy. The variable is also highly significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. This is in sharp contrast with the other control variable, age, which is non-significant. Age's regression coefficient is also marginal, decreasing the constant by only -0.002 and containing a standard error of half the regression coefficient's entire size. Together these controls also increased the constant, indicating that their presence strengthens the original relationship between the independent and dependent variables, rather than weakening it.

The final model analyses the potential of a moderation effect through the *democratic EU* variable, which gauges the extent to whether respondents believe the EU is a democratic union or not. Using the variable as a predictor moderator, a moderation term was computed like so: *EU perception dummy* × *democratic EU*. The result of this calculation was the moderation term seen at the bottom of model 3. In model 3 the R^2 value nearly doubled from 0.008 to 0.018, explaining 1.8% of the variation in the dependent variable. Additionally, the regression coefficient for *likes EU* has greatly increased in size to 0.74, and is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

The *democratic EU* predictor moderator is also highly significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, and with a regression coefficient of 0.185. The moderation term also appears promising for the research. According to model 3 the variable is highly significant, indicating that there is indeed an interaction effect. Whether or not there is a moderation effect can be confirmed by graphing the model, seen below in Figure 2:



Note: this graph calculates the fit lines as sub-groups
Figure 2

Figure 2 shows a scatter graph with fit lines (trend lines) as sub-groups. Due to the interception of the two lines in the graph, a moderation effect is assured. Furthermore, the effect is positive, increasing the constant by 0.185 and indicating that there is a difference between those who see the EU as democratic or non-democratic in how they perceive their democracy. Those who see the EU as a democratic union view their democracy more favourably. Due to the moderation analysis it is also proven that a reason for the original relationship between perception of the EU and perception of democracy is because of this moderation effect.

Conclusion

Given the results of the analysis, many of the hypotheses originally posited can be rejected, with broader conclusions about what was gleaned being discussed later in this section. First of all, H1 can be rejected outright, as increased opinion of the EU did not lead to lessened opinion of Georgian democracy—quite the opposite, it led to increased opinion of it. The second hypothesis can only partially be embraced, as only one of the two controls behaved as expected. Educated people certainly had a lower opinion of their democracy, but age was so marginal that its significance in the model was negligible. Model 3, much like model 1, did not give the expected results outlined in H3, and can likewise be rejected. While there was certainly a moderation effect, it was the opposite of what was predicted: believing the EU to be democratic resulted in a greater perception of Georgian democracy, not a lessened one.

The results of these regression analyses require a closer look at some of the core assumptions made at the beginning of this paper. Firstly, it can be pointed out that none of the main relationships expected in any of the three hypotheses bore out: despite their favourable opinion of the EU, they did not subscribe to the EU's evaluation of their democracy as something that still needed work. In fact, their opinion of their democracy was increased by each model. This could have a variety of explanations, each of which would require further research.

The first explanation for this apparent discrepancy would be that Georgians are highly optimistic about their democracy, partly due to the EU's influence and their opinion toward the EU or trust in its judgement. In this sense their perception of their democracy is based on what it may yet become, rather than what it currently is. However, there remains an alternative explanation which has more grounding in the empirical reality explored in both the literature review and the history sections of this paper: differing definitions of democracy.

If opinion of the EU does not conjure a lessened perception of their own democracy, it could indicate that they simply hold different definitions of what constitutes "democracy" in the first place. This requires de-centring from the Western European understanding of the term, and recognising that the world is a vast and diverse place with differing cultural understandings of such ideas. Based on this understanding, they do not have a lower perception of their democracy because they see no reason for it: it is as democratic as they would want it to be. Their country – their democracy – is ready to join the EU in their eyes.

Such an understanding would account for the resistance to further "democratisation" or "Europeanisation" in countries like Georgia or Ukraine, as the EU pushes for values it sees as intrinsic to a well-functioning democracy, but the host nation does not. This is particularly visible in the Union's LGBT rights promotion, which fosters harsh pushback from countries that reject it as a core value.

Differing definitions of democracy is a challenge that the EU will need to face in the mid- to long-term future, particularly if it wishes to avoid the characterisation of being a neo-imperialist power imposing a single system/ideology onto the world. Are homogeneous value structures something that the EU must put aside for the sake of strengthening the Union itself? Further research is yet needed to understand the extent of this problem in the EU's democratisation/Europeanisation efforts.

As for this research in particular, the internal and external validity are mixed. Internal validity can be assumed when discussing Georgians who have a high perception of the EU, as those are the ones that make up the primary independent variable. According to the CRRCG dataset this makes up a majority of respondents, so may be representative of the broader Georgian population, but for the sake of accuracy this can only strictly be applied to those who have a higher perception of the EU. External validity can be assumed insofar as this research reflects general patterns visible in other nations. As explored in the literature review, Ukraine has witnessed similar pushback to EU democratisation efforts, the same as Georgia, so what was observed in this research may very well be present in other countries more generally.

References

Axtmann, R. (2013). "Conceptualising Democracy", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 48(1): 118–128.

(BBC) British Broadcasting Corporation (2021). "'Degree inflation': How the four-year degree became required". *BBC*. 2021. https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20210126-degree-inflation-how-the-four-year-degree-became-required . Consulted on 6 January 2023.

Brzozowski, A. (2022). "Georgia follows Ukraine in applying for fast-track EU membership". *EURACTIV*. 2022. https://www.euractiv.com/section/eastern-europe/news/georgia-follows-ukraine-in-applying-for-fast-track-eu-membership/. Consulted on 8 January 2023.

(CRRCG) Caucasus Research Resource Centre Georgia (2021). *Knowledge of and attitudes toward the EU in Georgia, 2021*. Tbilisi: Caucasus Research Resource Centre.

Dahl, R. (1998). *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dryzek, J. (2011). *Foundations and Frontiers of Deliberative Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Geddes, B. (2011). "What Causes Democratization". In: Goodin, R. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, 593–615. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lipset, S. (1959). "Some social requisites of democracy: economic development and political legitimacy", *American Political Science Review*, 53(1): 69–105.

Lomia, T., and Lomia, E. (2020). "Economic and Political Support of the European Union to Georgia: Retrospective Analysis of the EU-Georgia Relations", *International Journal Vallis Aurea*, 6(1): 35–43.

Luciani, L. (2021). "Where the Personal is (Geo)Political: Performing Queer Visibility in Georgia in the Context of EU Association", *Problems of Post-Communism*, 1–12.

(NATOPA) North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Parliamentary Assembly. (2022). "Finland & Sweden Accession", *NATOPA*. 2022. https://www.nato-pa.int/content/finland-sweden-accession. Consulted on 4 January 2023.

Ortega, D. (2022). "Poland & Hungary contest EU regulation: A new future for their relationship with the Union?". *European Student Think Tank*. 2022. https://esthinktank.com/2022/02/10/poland-hungary-contest-eu-regulation-a-new-future-for-their-relationship-with-the-union/. Consulted on 6 January 2023.

Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M., Cheibub, J., and Limongi, F. (2000). *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Przeworski, A., and Limongi, F. (1997). "Modernization: theories and facts". World Politics, 49(2): 155–83.

Quintelier, E. (2007). “Differences in political participation between young and old people”, *Contemporary Politics,* 13(2).

Russel, M. (2021). *Georgia’s bumpy road to democracy: on track for a European future?*. Brussels/Luxembourg/Strasbourg: European Parliament Research Service.

Shevtsova, M. (2020). “Fighting ‘Gayropa’: Europeanization and Instrumentalization of LGBTI Rights in Ukrainian Public Debate”, *Problems of Post-Communism*, 67(6): 500–510.

(UNICEF) United Nations Children’s Fund. (2020). *Georgia Education Fact Sheets 2020*. New York: United Nations Children’s Fund.

Appendix

A. 1: Summary statistics

Variable	Operationalisation	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent variables				
Perception of democracy	1 = Georgia is not a democratic country and never will be; 2 = Georgia might become a democracy in the future, but it is not developing in that direction now; 3 = Georgia is not a democracy yet, but it is developing in that direction; 4 = Georgia is a democratic country, but there is still room for improvement; 5 = Georgia is already a democratic country and needs no further improvement	3.3375	1	5
Independent variables				
Perception of EU	0 = Very negative; 0 = Rather negative than positive; 0 = Neutral; 1 = Rather positive than negative; 1 = Very positive	0.4763	0	1
Sees EU as a democratic union	1 = Fully disagree; 2 = Rather disagree than agree; 3 = Rather agree than disagree; 4 = Fully agree	3.2038	1	4
Control variables				
Education	0 = Primary education (either complete or incomplete); 0 = Incomplete secondary education; 1 = Completed secondary education; 1 = Incomplete higher education; 1 = Bachelor's degree; 1 = Master's degree; 1 = Doctoral degree	0.8983	0	1
Age	Value = respondent's age	51.2407	18	96