

# Public Faith in Democracy

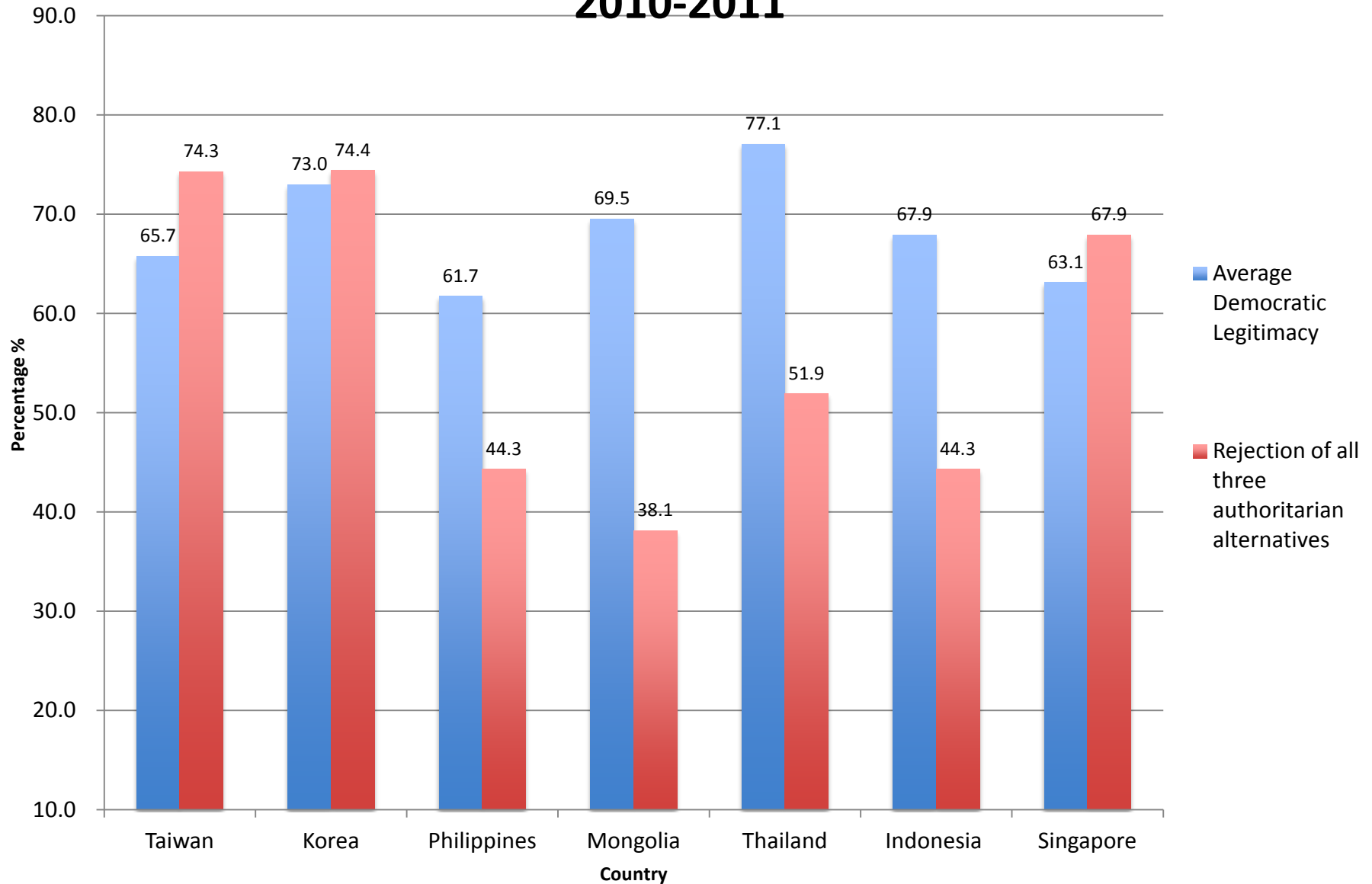
The Maturing of a  
(Skeptical) Democratic  
Culture in Taiwan

**REASONABLY HIGH SUPPORT  
FOR DEMOCRACY**

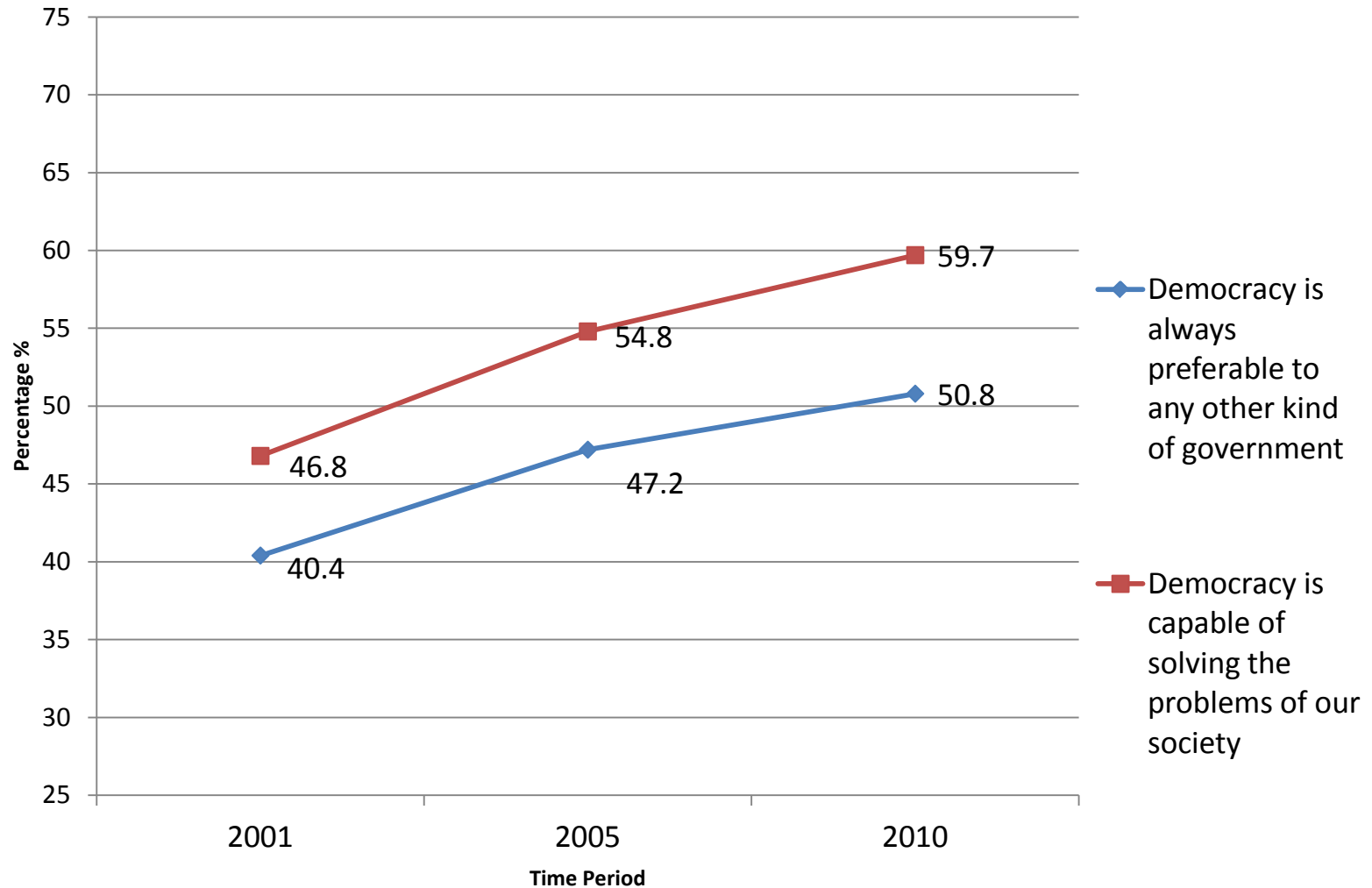
# Measuring Democratic Legitimacy in the Asian Barometer

- Support for Democracy (average of three percentages)
  1. Agree: “Democracy is preferable to any other form of government”
  2. Agree: “Democracy is capable of solving the problems of our society”
  3. Agree: “Democracy may have its problems but it is still the best form of government”
- Rejection of Authoritarianism (percent reject ALL three options for authoritarian rule).
  1. Get rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide
  2. One-party rule
  3. Military rule

# Average Levels of Democratic Legitimacy in East Asia, 2010-2011

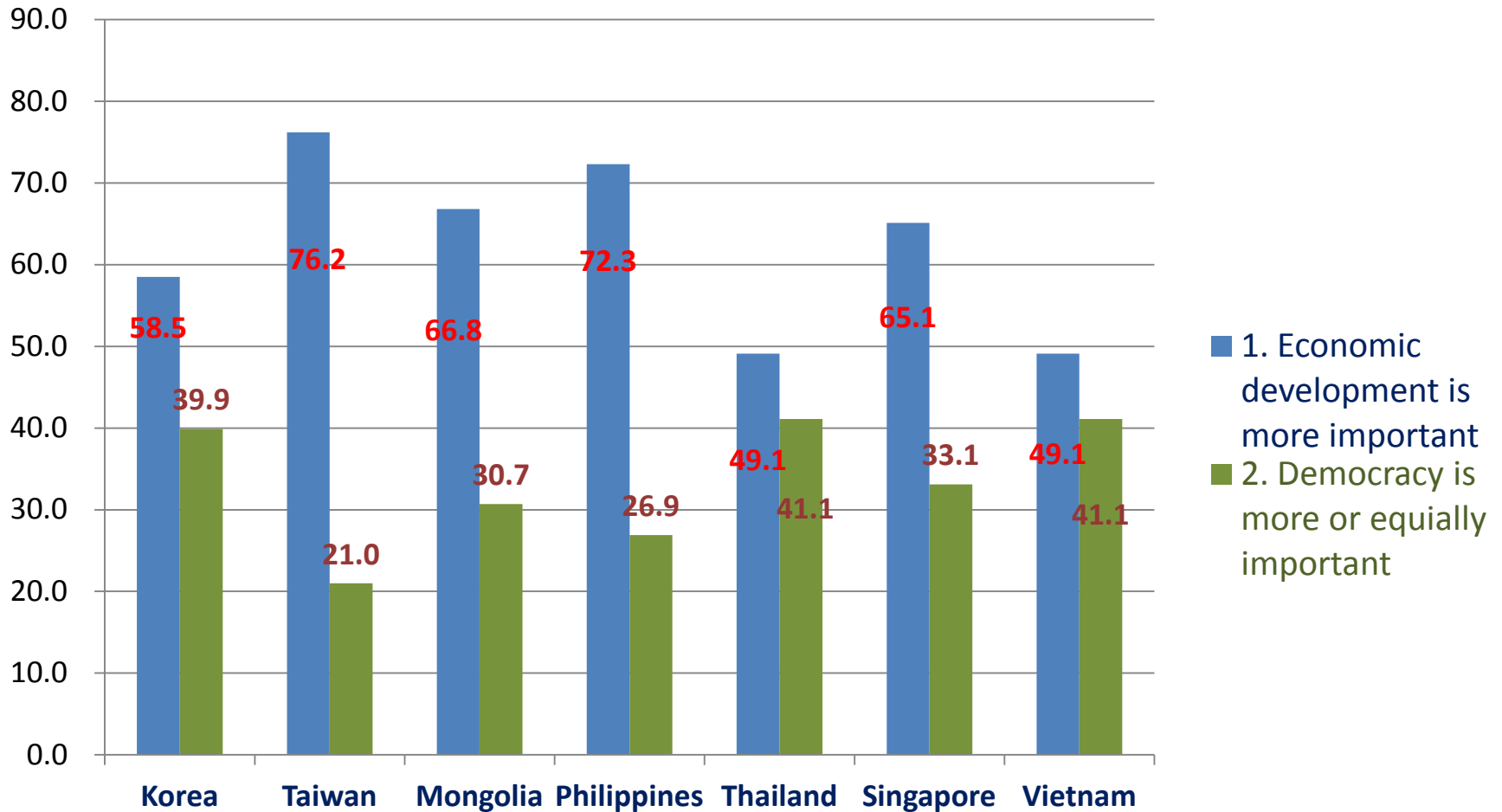


## Trends in Democratic Legitimacy in Taiwan

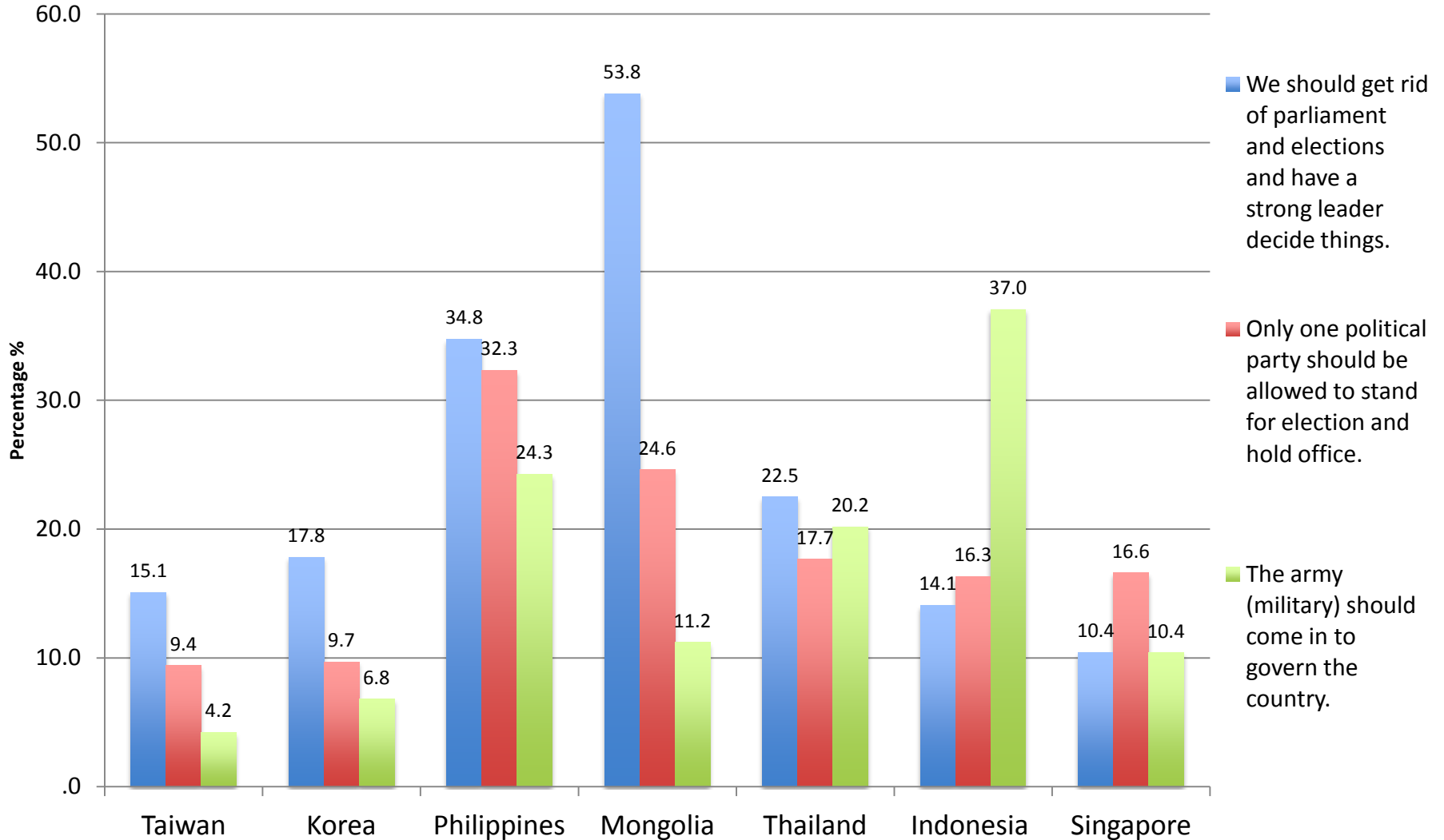


# Democracy vs. Economic Development

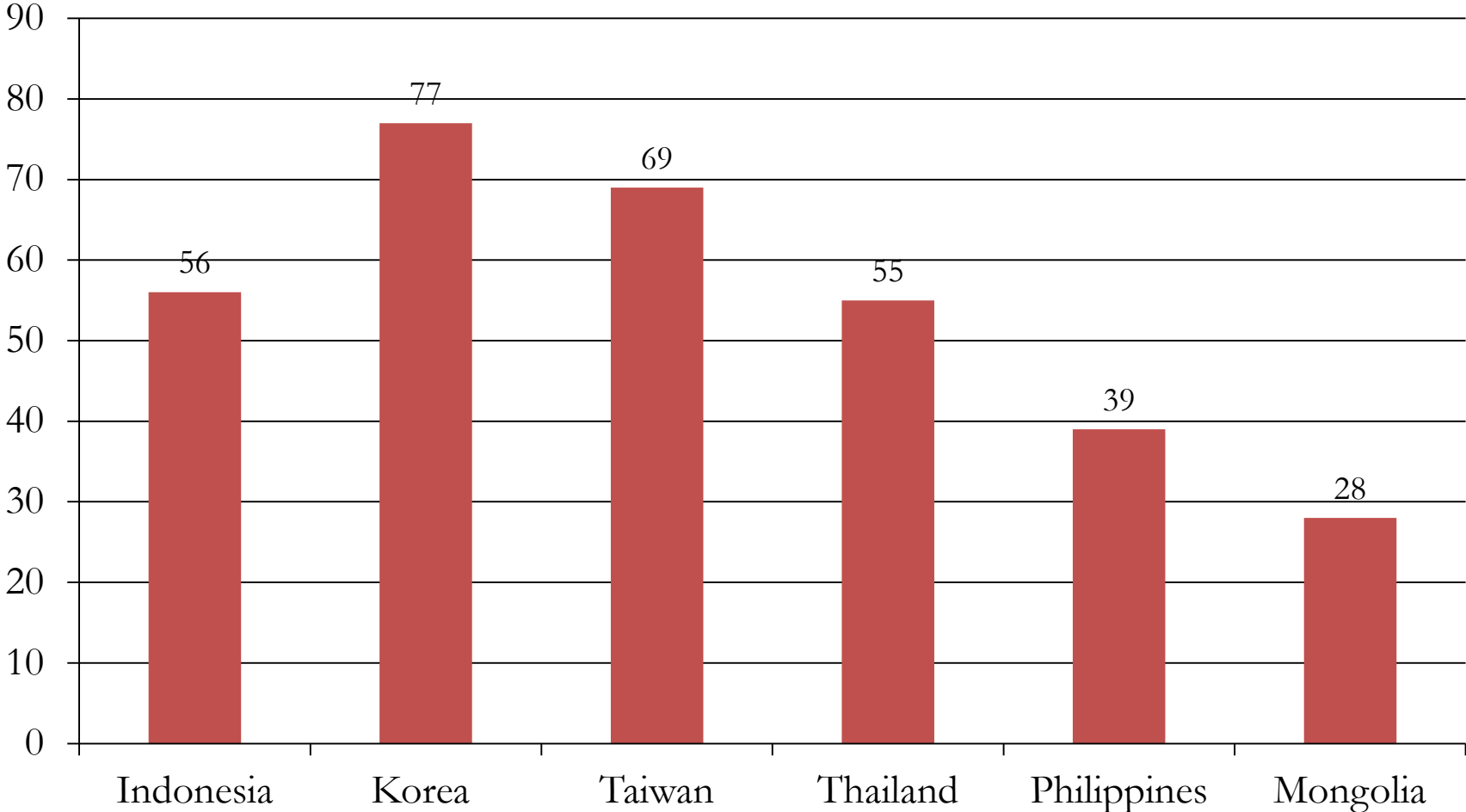
"If you had to choose between democracy and economic development, which would you say is more important?"



# Rejection of Specific Authoritarian Options, 2010-2011

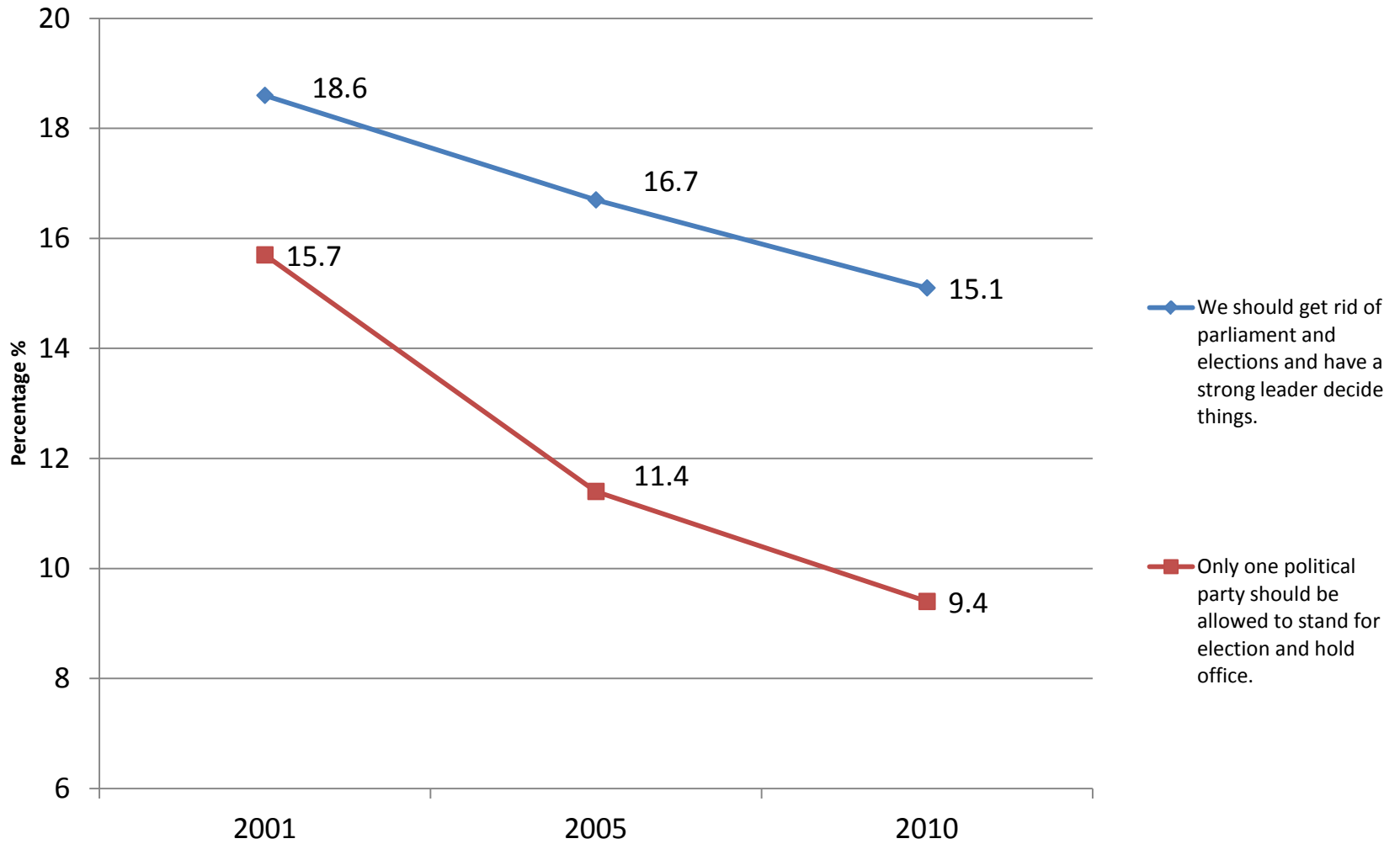


# Percent Rejection of all Authoritarian options, 2005-2006





## Trends in Support for Authoritarian Options in Taiwan



# But what about Diffuse System Support?

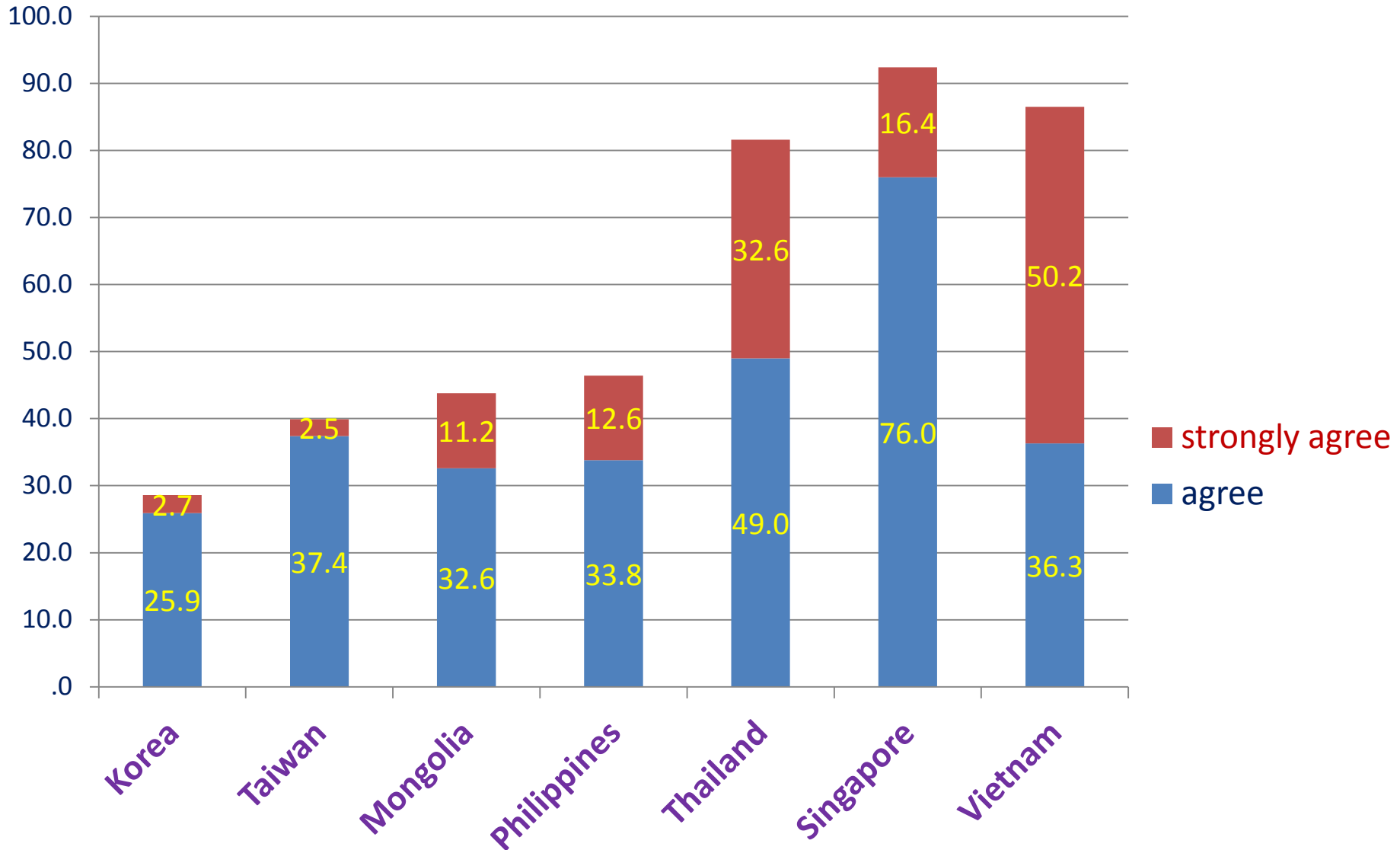
General Pride in the System, not  
specific to democracy

# Yun-han Chu's Puzzle

- The Asian Barometer Survey Wave III applied a five-item battery measuring diffuse regime support.
- Non-democratic regimes and hybrid regimes enjoy much higher level of popular legitimacy than democratic regimes on virtually every indicator
- There is almost a reverse relationship between a country's level of democratic development and regime support.

**Figure 2a: Regime Support (First Item)**

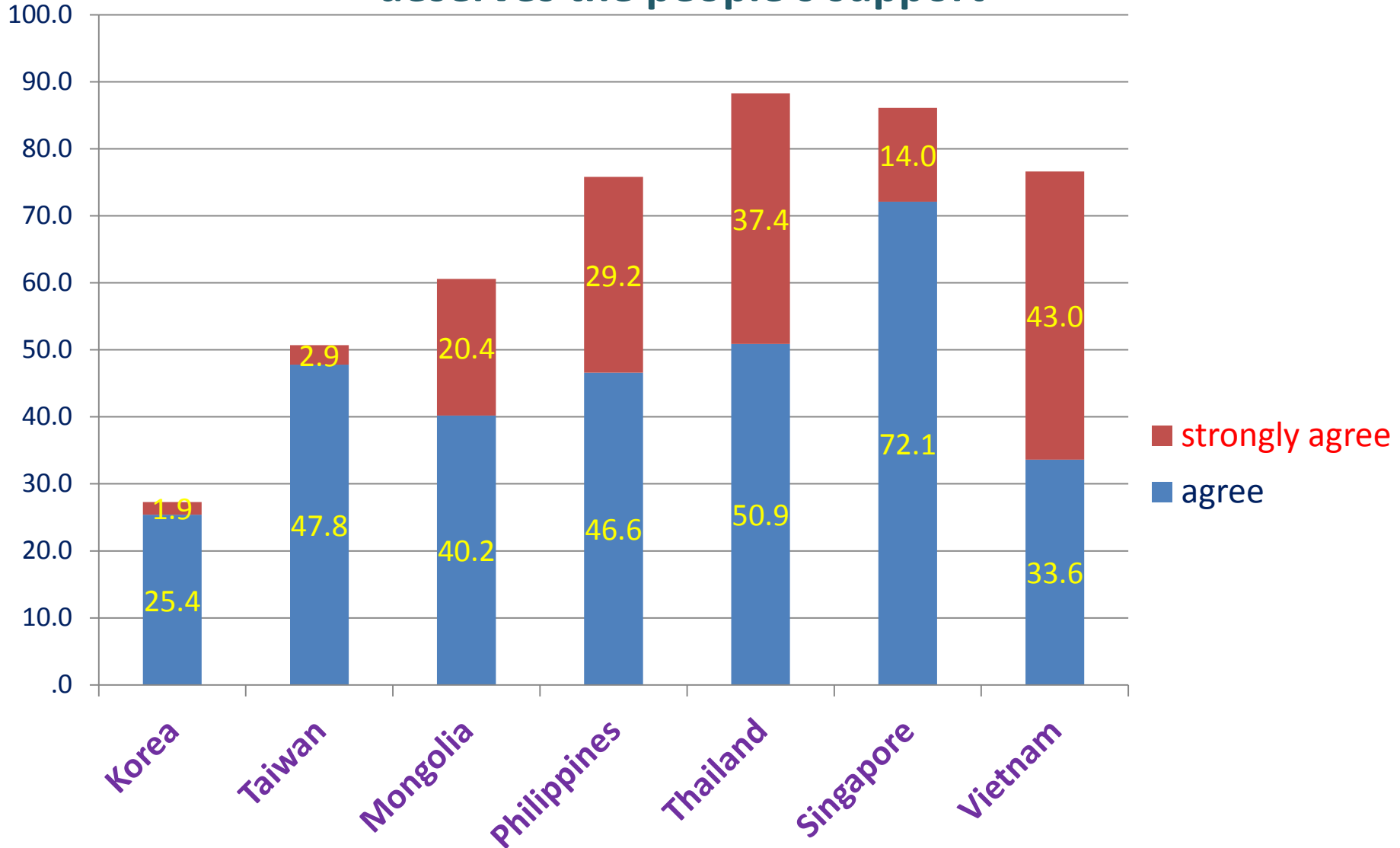
**"Thinking in general, I am proud of our system of government "**



Source: Asian Barometer Survey Wave III (2010~2011)

## Figure 2b: Regime Support (Second Item)

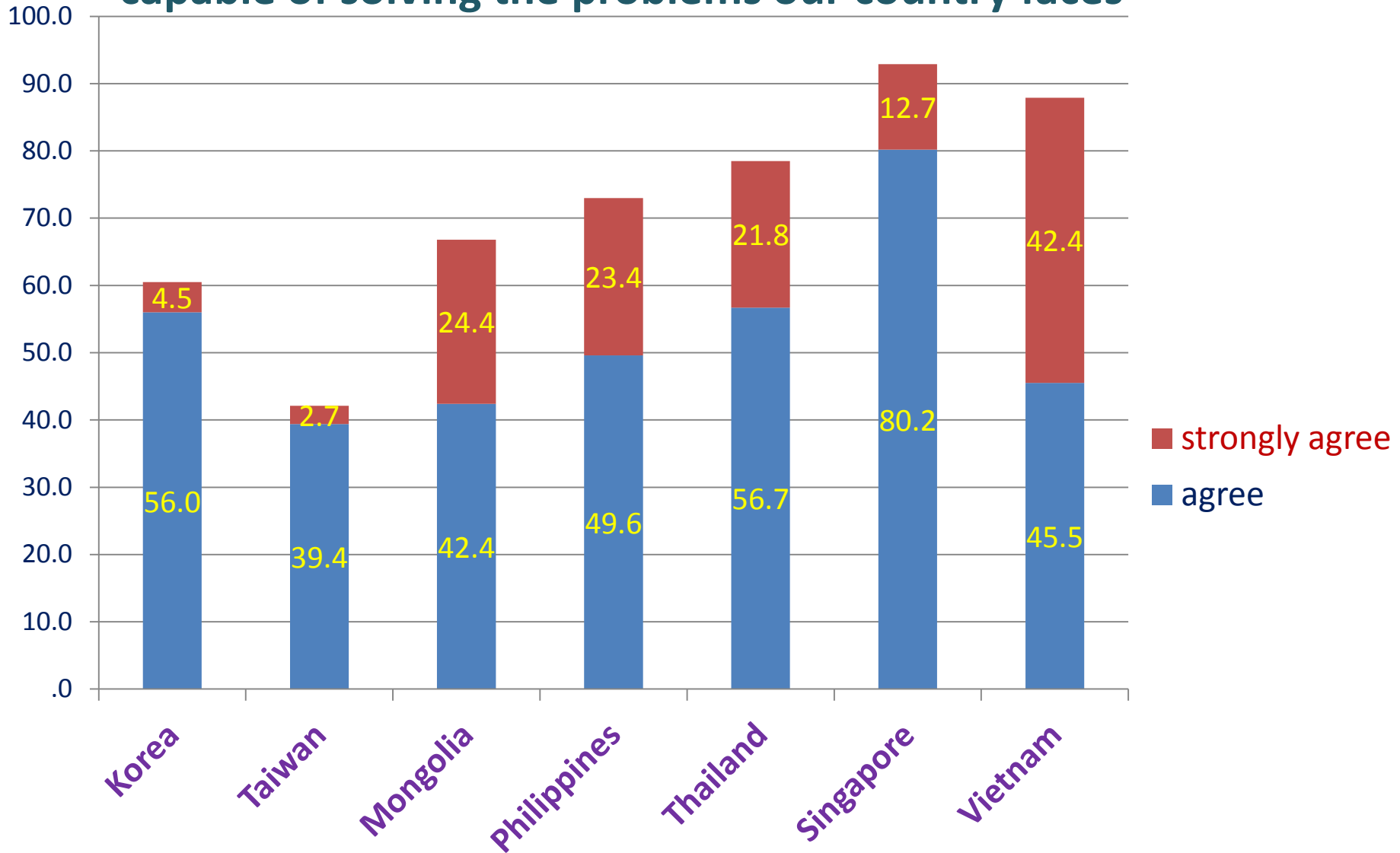
"A system like ours, even if it runs into problems, deserves the people's support"



Source: Asian Barometer Survey Wave III (2010~2011)

### Figure 2c: Regime Support (Third Item)

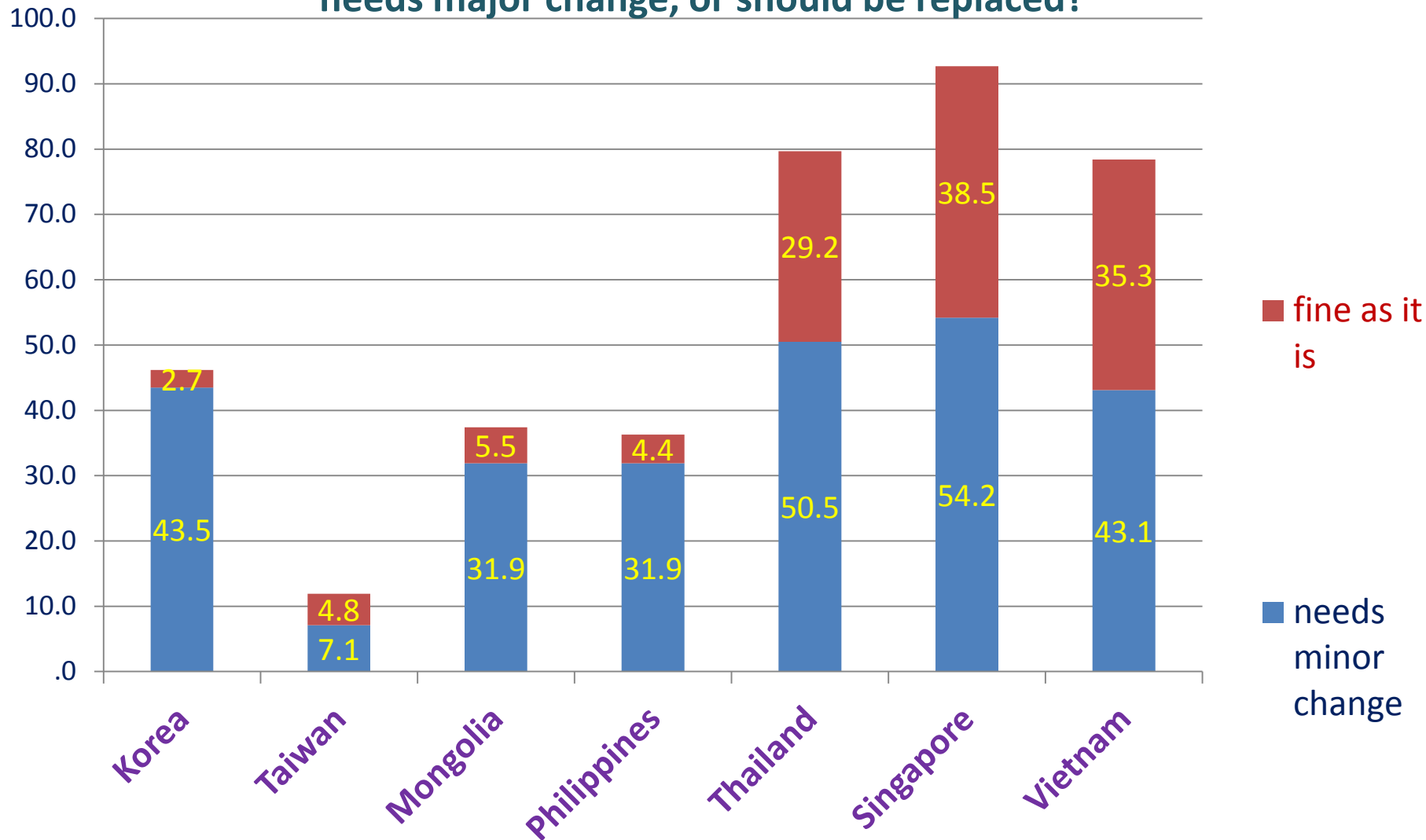
"Over the long run, our system of government is capable of solving the problems our country faces"



Source: Asian Barometer Survey Wave III (2010~2011)

## Figure 2d: Regime Support (Fourth Item)

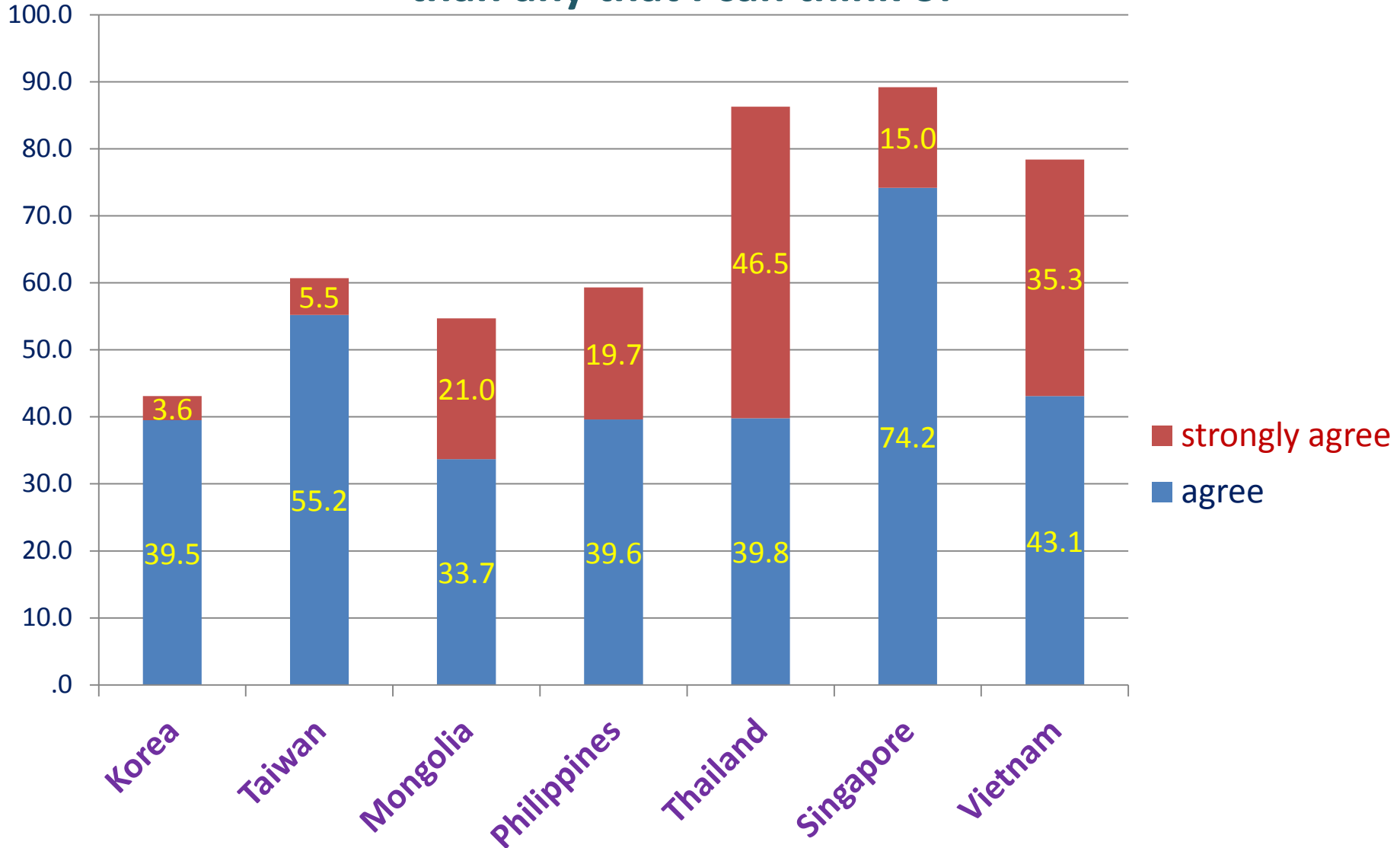
"Compared with other systems in the world, would you say our system of government works fine as it is, needs minor change, needs major change, or should be replaced? "



Source: Asian Barometer Survey Wave III (2010~2011)

**Figure 2e: Regime Support (Fifth Item)**

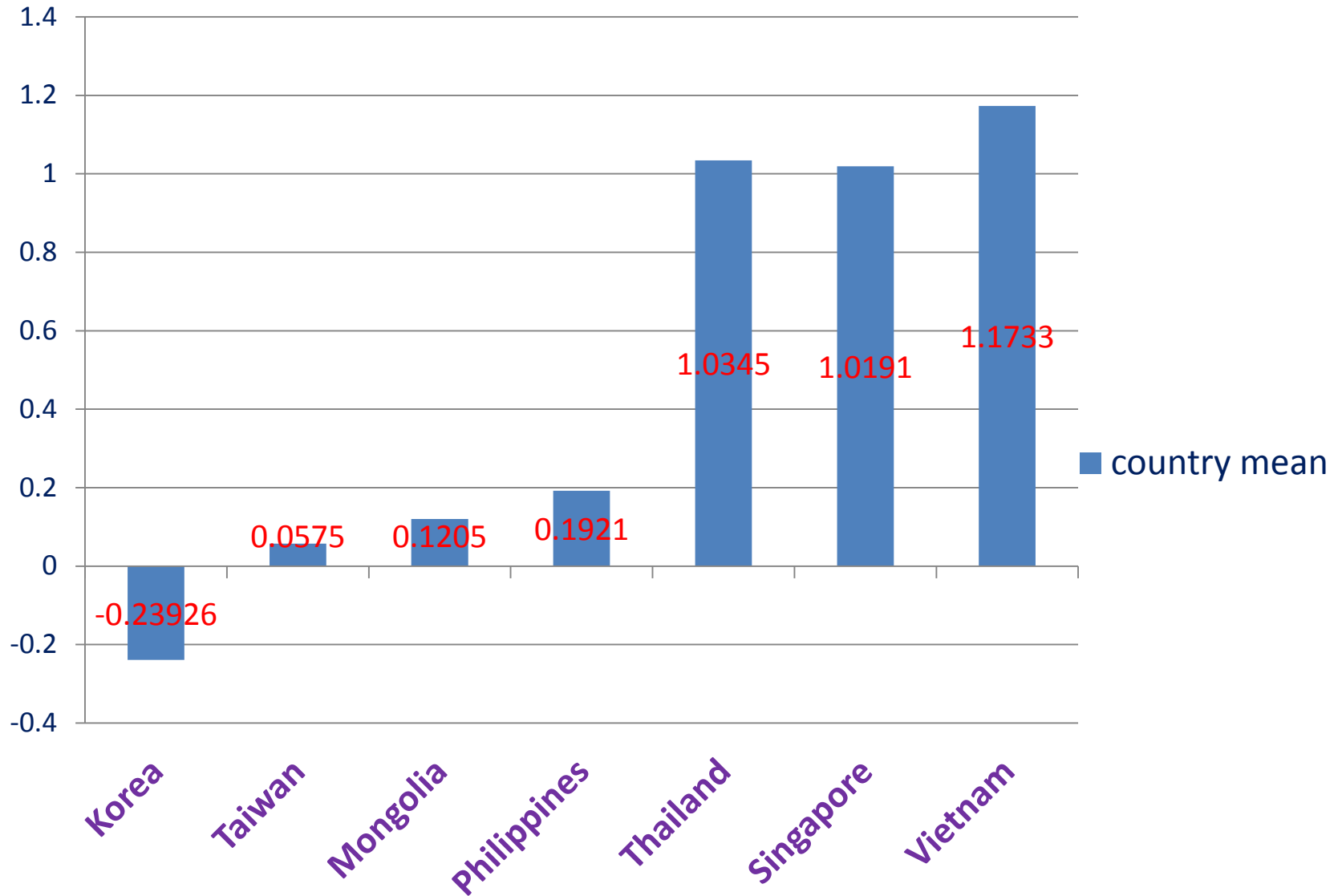
**"I would rather live under our system of government than any that I can think of"**



Source: Asian Barometer Survey Wave III (2010~2011)

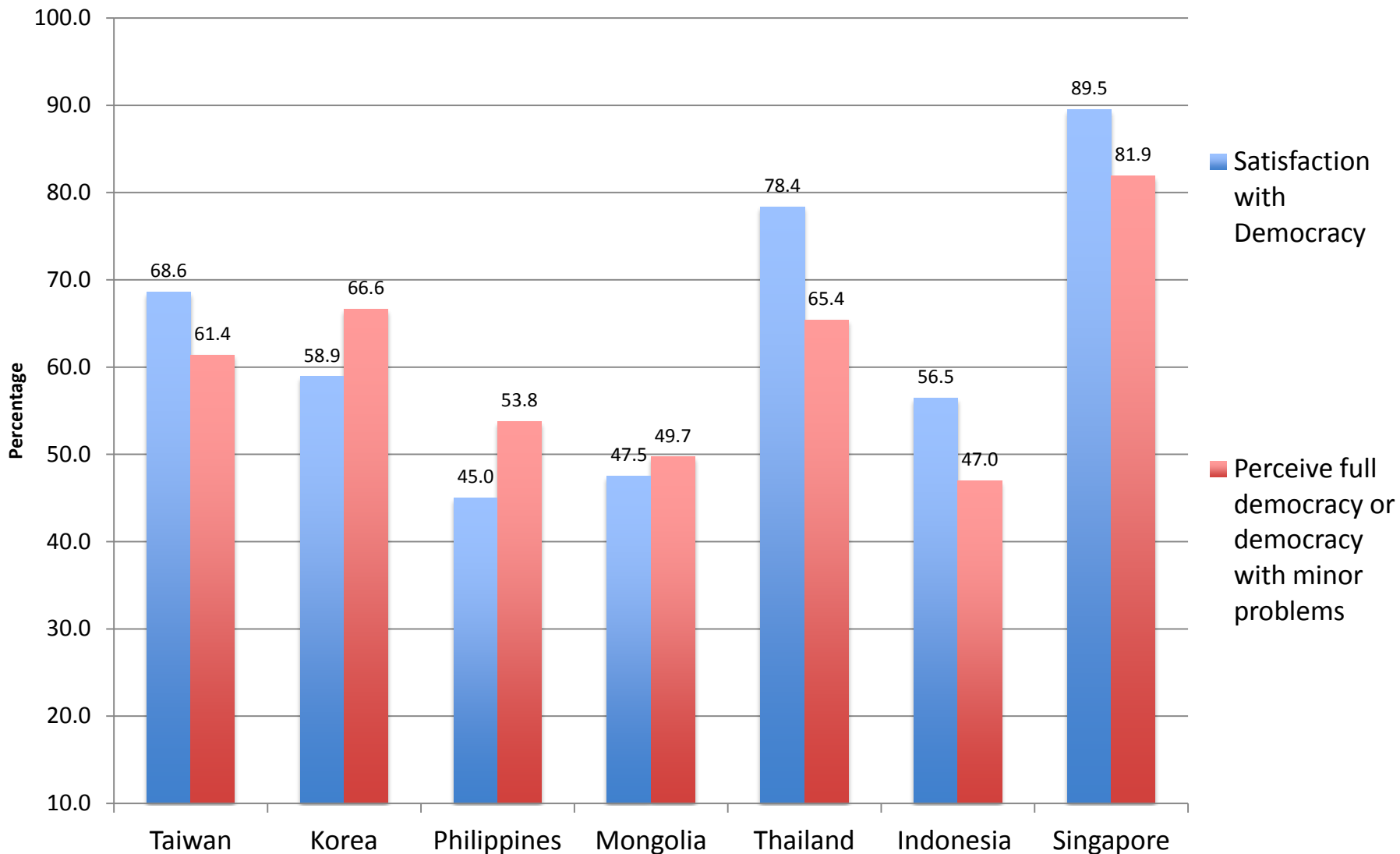


**Figure 3: Overall Level of Regime Legitimacy**  
**Average Score of the Five-Item Battery (-2 ~ +2)**

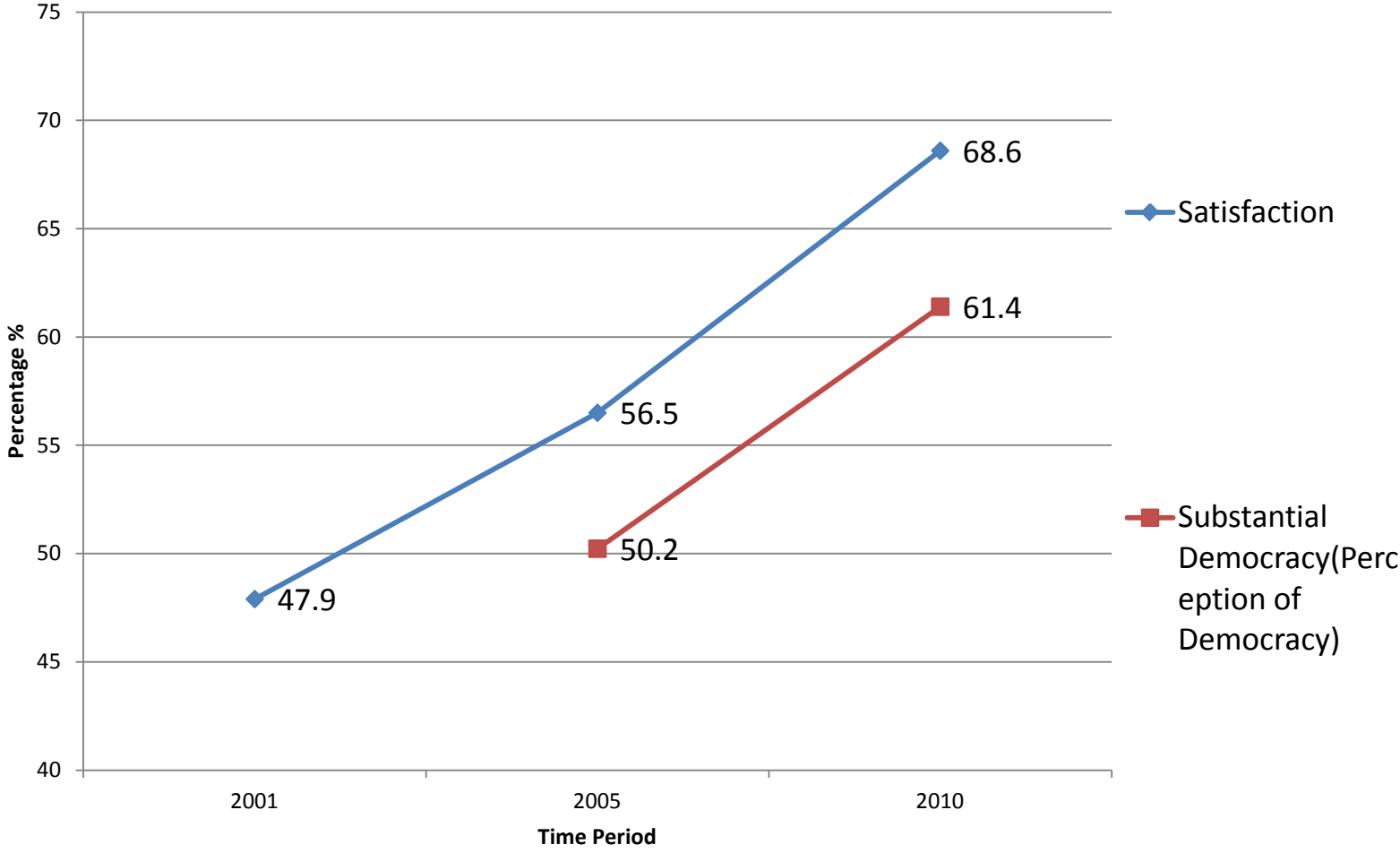


Source: Asian Barometer Survey Wave III (2010~2011)

# Satisfaction and Perception of Democracy, 2010-11



# Change in Satisfaction and Perception of Democracy in Taiwan 2001-2010 (Three waves of Asian Barometer)



# Liberal Democratic vs. Traditional Authoritarian Values (Disagree = Democratic)

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139. Women should not be involved in politics as much as men.

141. Government leaders are like the head of a family; we should all follow their decisions.

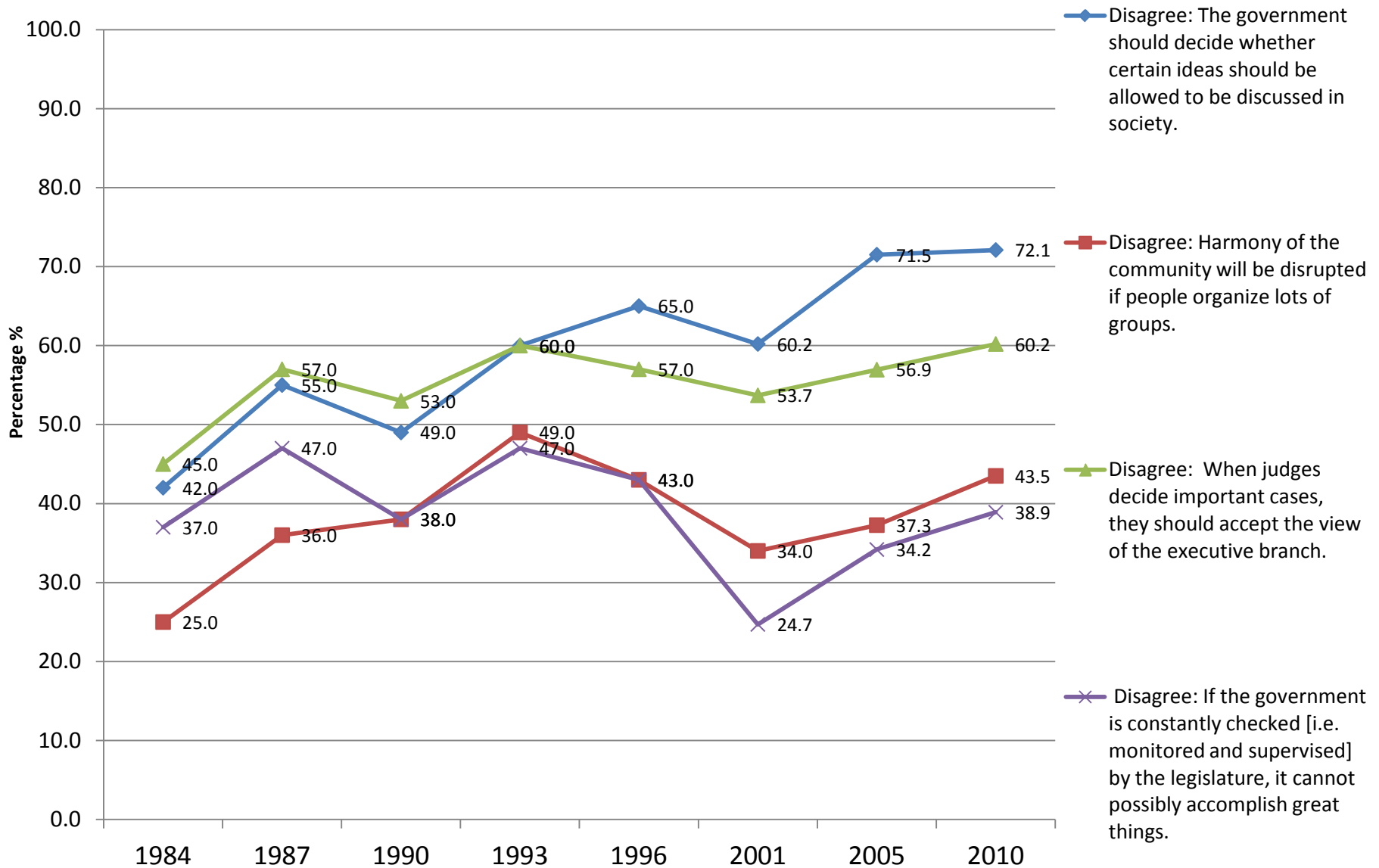
142. The government should decide whether certain ideas should be allowed to be discussed in society.

143. Harmony of the community will be disrupted if people organize lots of groups.

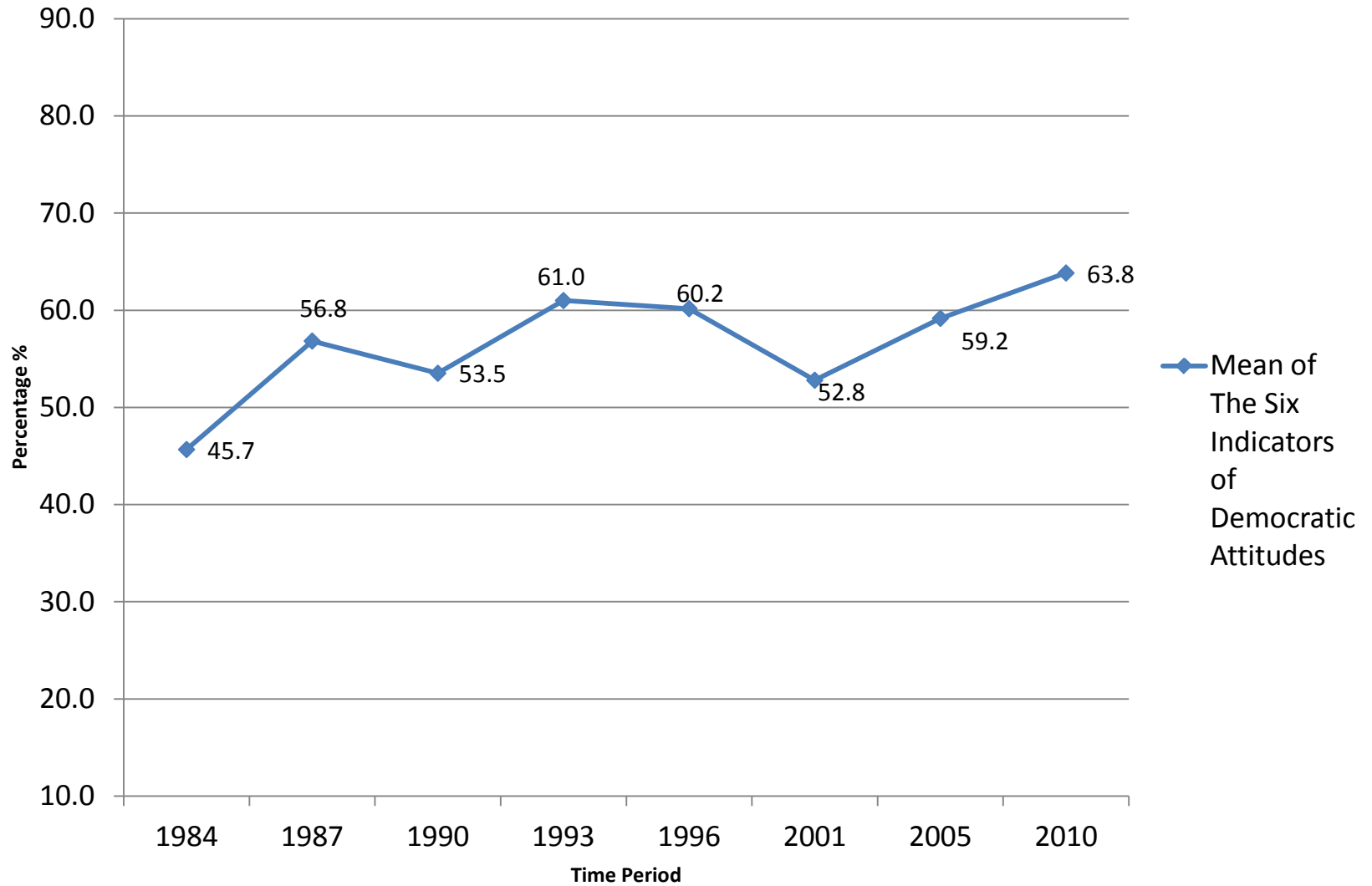
144. When judges decide important cases, they should accept the view of the executive branch.

145. If the government is constantly checked [i.e. monitored and supervised] by the legislature, it cannot possibly accomplish great things.

# Trends in Democratic Attitudes in Taiwan



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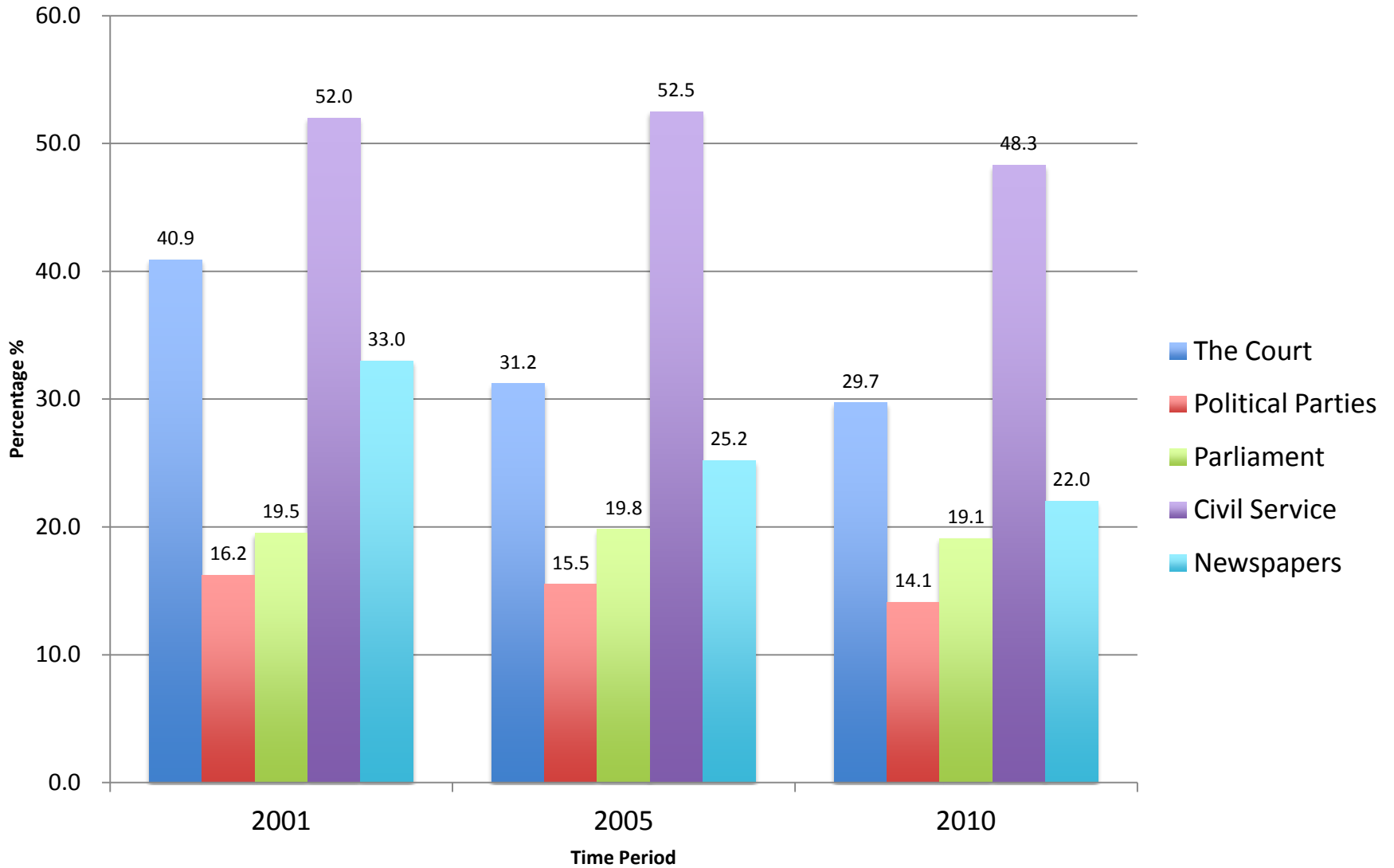


# Trust in Democratic Institutions

2010-2011

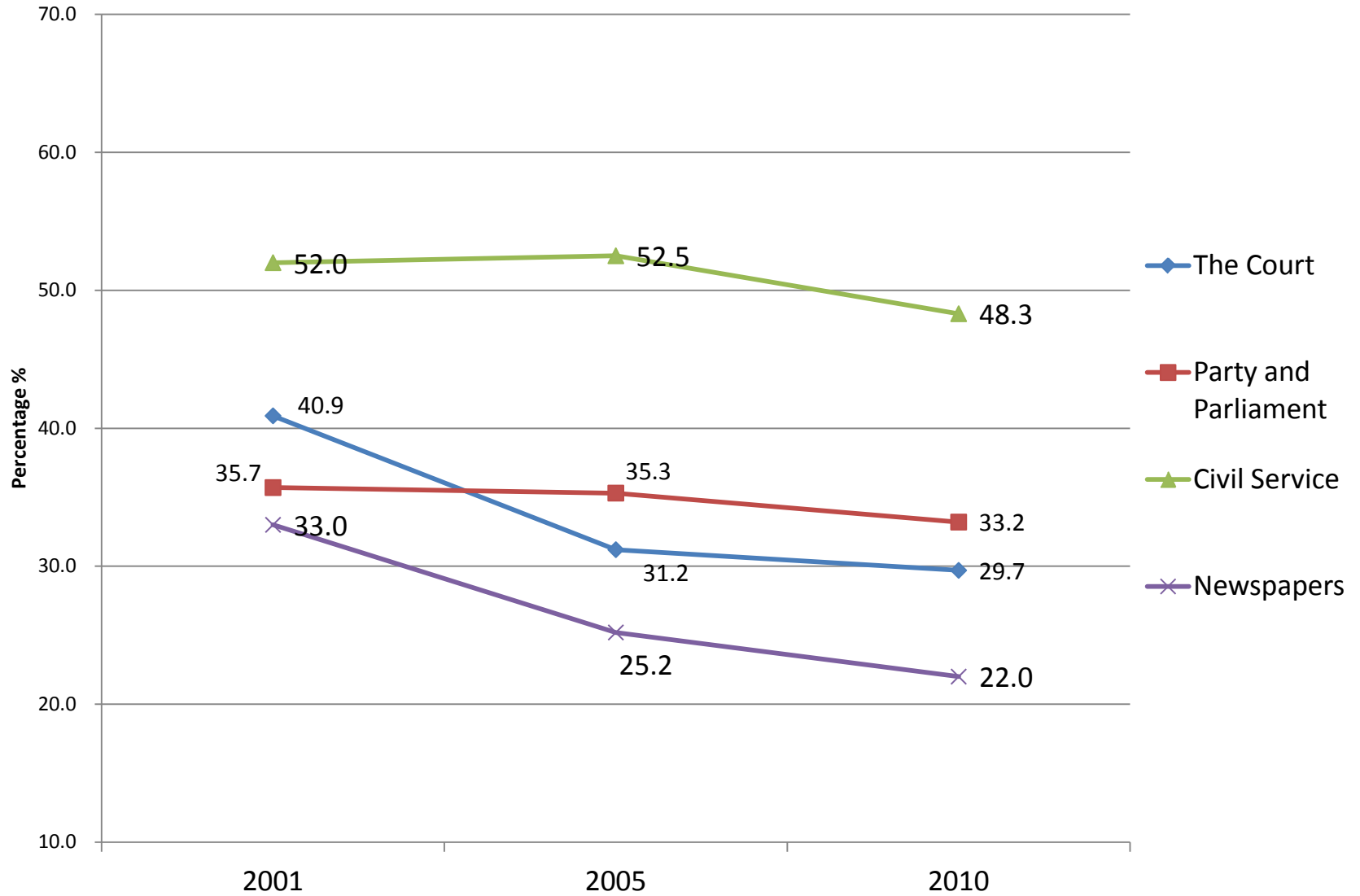
Asian Barometer III

# Change in Institutional Trust in Taiwan, 2001-2010





# Trends in Institutional Trust



# Conclusion: Does Taiwan Have a Democratic Culture?

- No desire for any authoritarian option—  
emphatic rejection of authoritarianism
- Substantial but uneven support for democracy
- Weak “diffuse system support” —people in Taiwan are not universally and effusively “proud” of their system
- Growth of liberal values
- Relatively low trust in political institutions:  
People in Taiwan are “skeptical democrats”