1. What is social inequality in Central and Eastern Europe?

Using macro and mass level data, this analysis looks at the relationships among numerous potential dimensions of social inequality, including income, class position, educational attainment, gender, ethnicity, age and employment status. The aim of the paper is to determine whether social inequality has a uni- or multi-dimensional character, to account for cross-national differences in the ways in which social inequality may be packaged, and at differences and similarities in their demographic and cultural correlates.

2. Being unequal and seeing social inequality

Market economies inevitably generate social inequalities, of which the new democracies of Central and East European (CEE) societies have seen dramatic - though widely diverging - levels of growth. But do CEE citizens believe that inequality is excessive and, if so, why? And what is the connection between perceptions of social inequality and citizens’ views of new markets and democracy? These questions are addressed using new data from mass surveys conducted in 2007 in 12 post-Communist CEE states. We find surprisingly weak links between social inequality perceptions and national-level measures of inequality as well economic, social and political conditions. Rather perceptions of social inequality are mainly driven by individual-level assessments of market and democratic performance but not by market or democratic ideals.

3. Social Inequality and Support for Democracy and the Market: Evidence from the New Market Democracies of Central and Eastern Europe

Considerable comparative scholarly attention has been paid to various aspects of mass support for democracy and the market. However, despite strong theoretical priors to suggest a linkage, little is known about the impact of social inequality on this support. Specifically, we investigate whether social inequality generates negative perceptions that democracy and the market will lead to social conflict and that it increases support for anti-democratic forms of governance. Notably, we find little link between citizens’ expectations of social conflict and national-level indices of income inequality. However, we do find a link between perceptions of the extent of social inequality and expectations of market generated - but not democracy generated - conflict. Underscoring these positive and negative findings, perceptions of social inequality are also clearly consequential for support for ‘strong hand’ economic government but not for anti-democratic leadership.