

Narcissists less likely to support democracy

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New research suggests that people with a narcissistic self-view are more likely to demonstrate lower support for democracy.

They are also more likely to feel that democracies are not good in maintaining order, or that it would be better if countries were run by

strong leaders or the military.

The research, which was co-led by psychologists at the University of Kent, suggests this is probably because narcissists tend to feel entitled and superior to others, which results in lower tolerance of diverse political opinions.

In contrast, people who take a positive, non-defensive self-view and trust others are more likely to show [support](#) for democracy, the research found.

The study, the findings of which are published as My way or the highway: high narcissism and [low self-esteem](#) predict decreased support for democracy, consisted of two parts that analysed the relationship between different types of self-evaluation—narcissism and [self-esteem](#)—and support for democracy in the US and Poland.

The [team](#), led by Dr. Aleksandra Cichocka, of Kent's School of Psychology, and Dr. Marta Marchlewska, of the Polish Academy of Sciences, set out to understand the psychological mechanisms driving support for [democracy](#). They built on previous research which demonstrated that basic personality traits can predict broader opinions about the organisation of the social world.

Dr. Cichocka said: 'The jury is out on whether the new generations are becoming more narcissistic than previous ones, but it is important to monitor how societal changes can affect the self. We need to make sure we are not fostering feelings of entitlement or expectations of special treatment. In the end, these processes may have important implications for our social and political attitudes.'

More information: Marta Marchlewska et al, My way or the highway: High narcissism and low self-esteem predict decreased support for

democracy, *British Journal of Social Psychology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/bjso.12290](https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12290)

Provided by University of Kent

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