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# Worries, anxieties and the demand for freedom, security and just public policy in Hungary

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# Structure of presentation

- 1) Background: literature and evidence on prevalent values in Hungarian society
- 2) Research questions, methods
- 3) What social/policy issues do people consider important?
- 4) What are people worried about?
- 5) Attitudes towards democracy
- 6) Value clusters in Hungarian society
- 7) Summary

# 1 Background: literature and evidence on prevalent values in Hungarian society

- Hungarian society is traditionally very security-oriented (Ferge 1994)
- Strong demand for paternalism (Csontos, Kornai & Tóth 1996; 1998; Tóth 2010)
- Importance of material values (Hankiss et al. 1982; Tóka 2022)
- Freedom vs economic growth – 70% choose the latter (EBRD LITS 2016)
  
- Parties aim to address these attitudes and use them in their political communication in order to gain support – e.g. the rise of FIDESZ in HU by presenting these issues in a nationalist, populist instead of a social justice framework

# 2 Research questions, methods

## Research questions

What are the basic dimensions and needs along which the political values of Hungarian society can be mapped out?

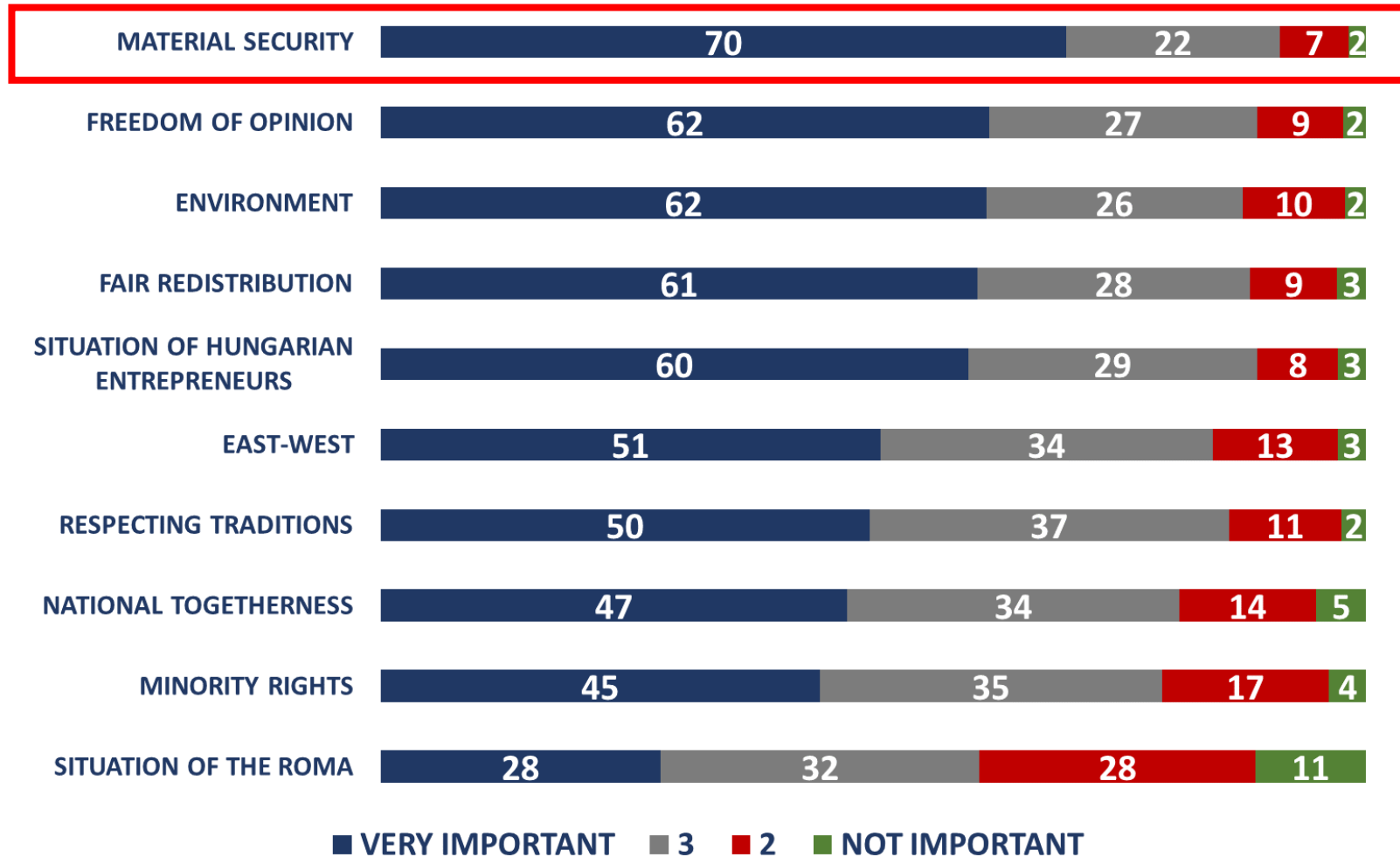
What are the Hungarian population's attitudes and expectations when it comes to democracy?

What role do worries/anxieties play in these political attitudes?

## Methods

- National survey, data collection in November 2022
- N=1026, representative sample of 18+ Hungarian population

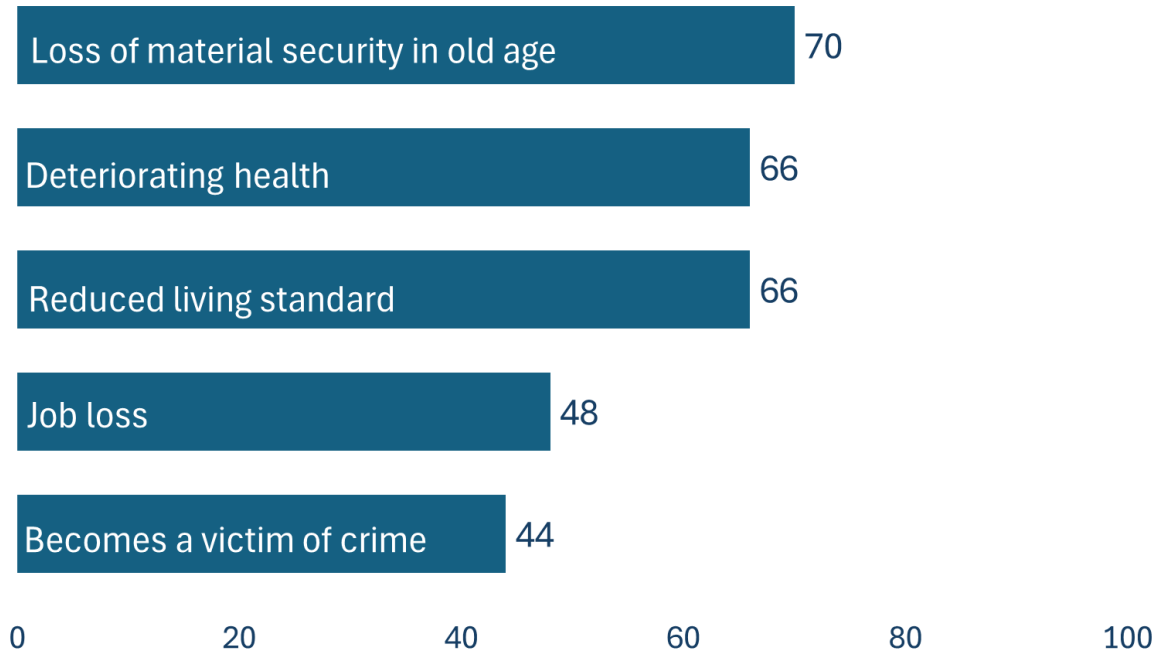
# 3 What social/policy issues do people consider important?



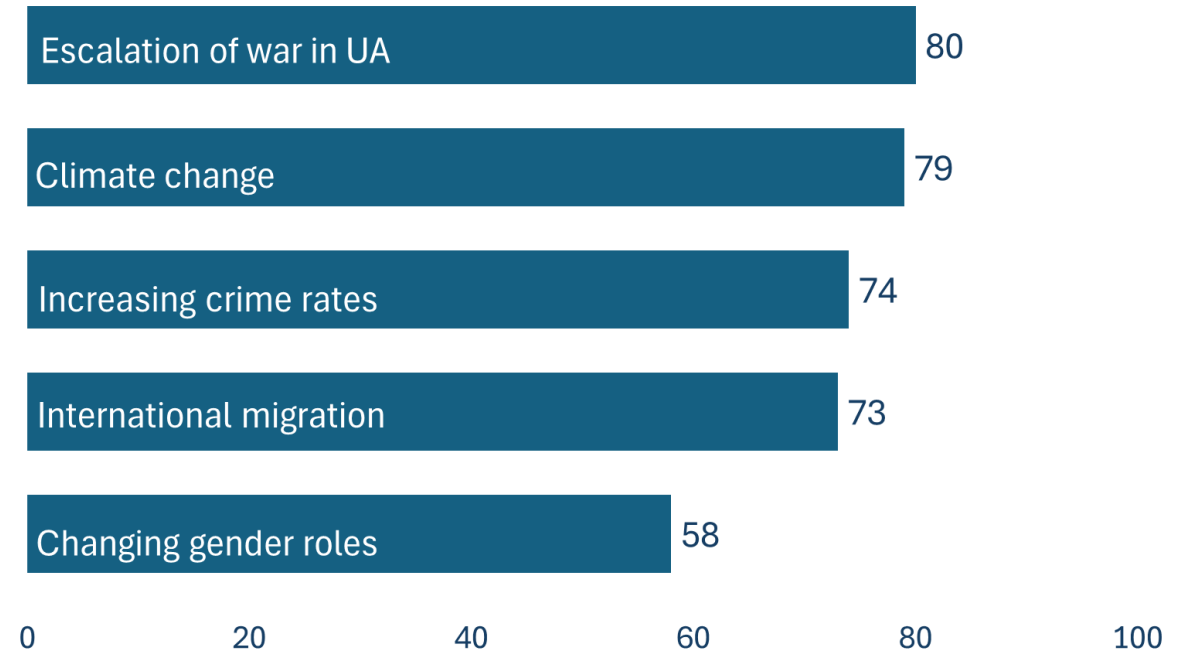
# 4 What are people worried about?

- 10 items: (personal future (micro level), national/global issues (macro level))

Personal future: % worried



Global issues: % worried



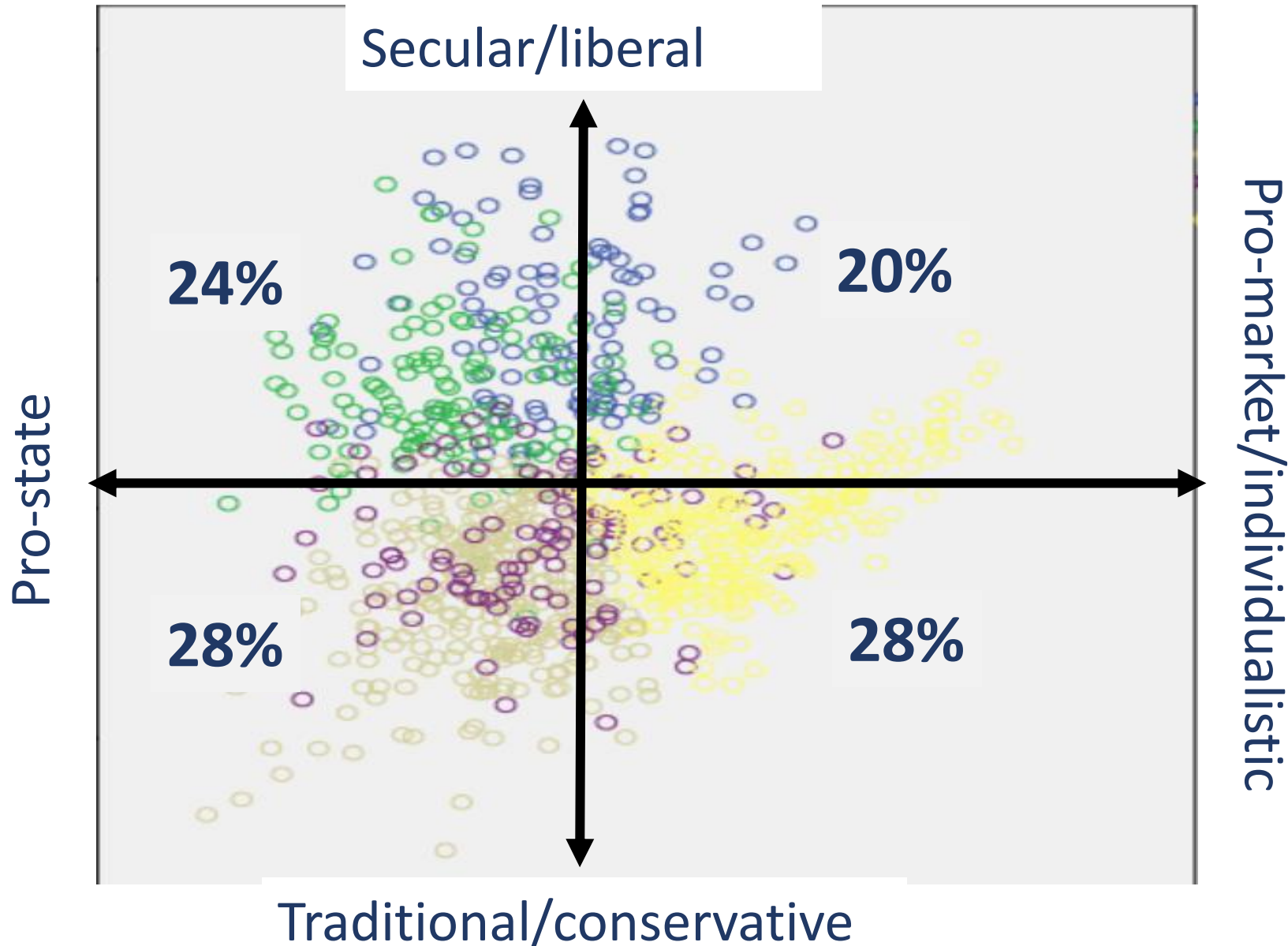
# 5 Attitudes towards democracy

Public opinion about the importance of democracy and the state of democracy in Hungary, % of respondents

		How democratic is Hungary today?			Total
		Not very (Values 1-5)	Very (Values 6-8)	Completely (Values 9-10)	
How important is democracy to you?	Not very (Values 1-5)	8,9	2,7	0,3	11,9
	Very (Values 6-8 )	11,3	15,5	1,5	28,3
	Completely (Values 9-10)	33,6	16,5	9,7	59,8
	Összesen	53,8	34,7	11,5	100,0

Additionally, **62%** of respondents said that if they had to choose between living in a country with restricted freedom but large economic growth, and a country with complete political freedom but little economic growth, they would choose the former.

# 6 Value clusters in Hungarian society according to answers to political dilemma items I



**Conservative majority** on conservative-liberal axis, **pro-state/redistributionist majority** on economic axis.

Those who are **culturally liberals** and **economically pro-market/individualistic** make up the **smallest share** of the population.

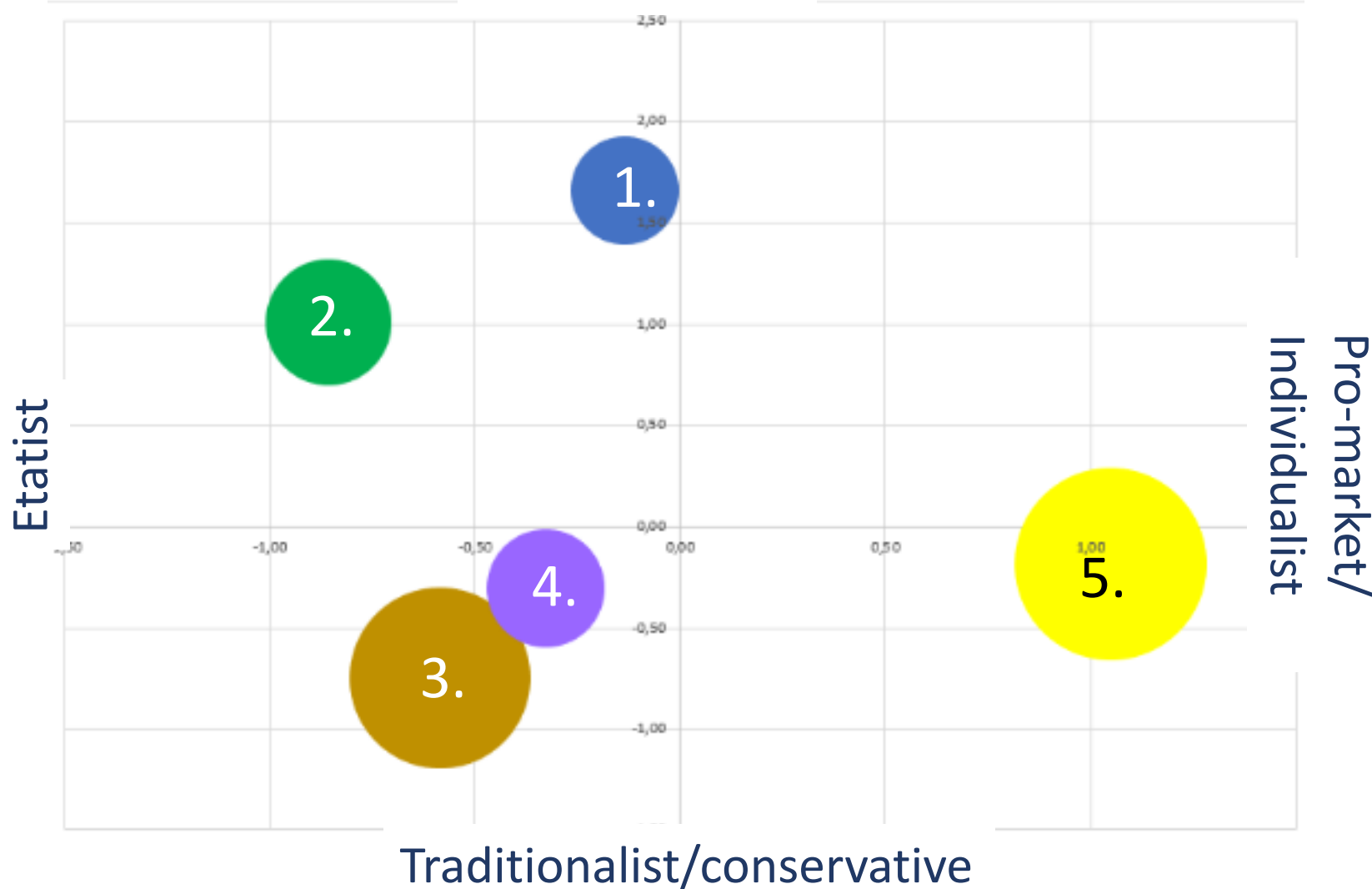
A higher share of **culturally liberals** is **pro-state**.

Roughly **half** of those on **conservative side** are **pro-state**, **half** are **pro-market**.



# 6 Value clusters in Hungarian society II

Secular/Liberal



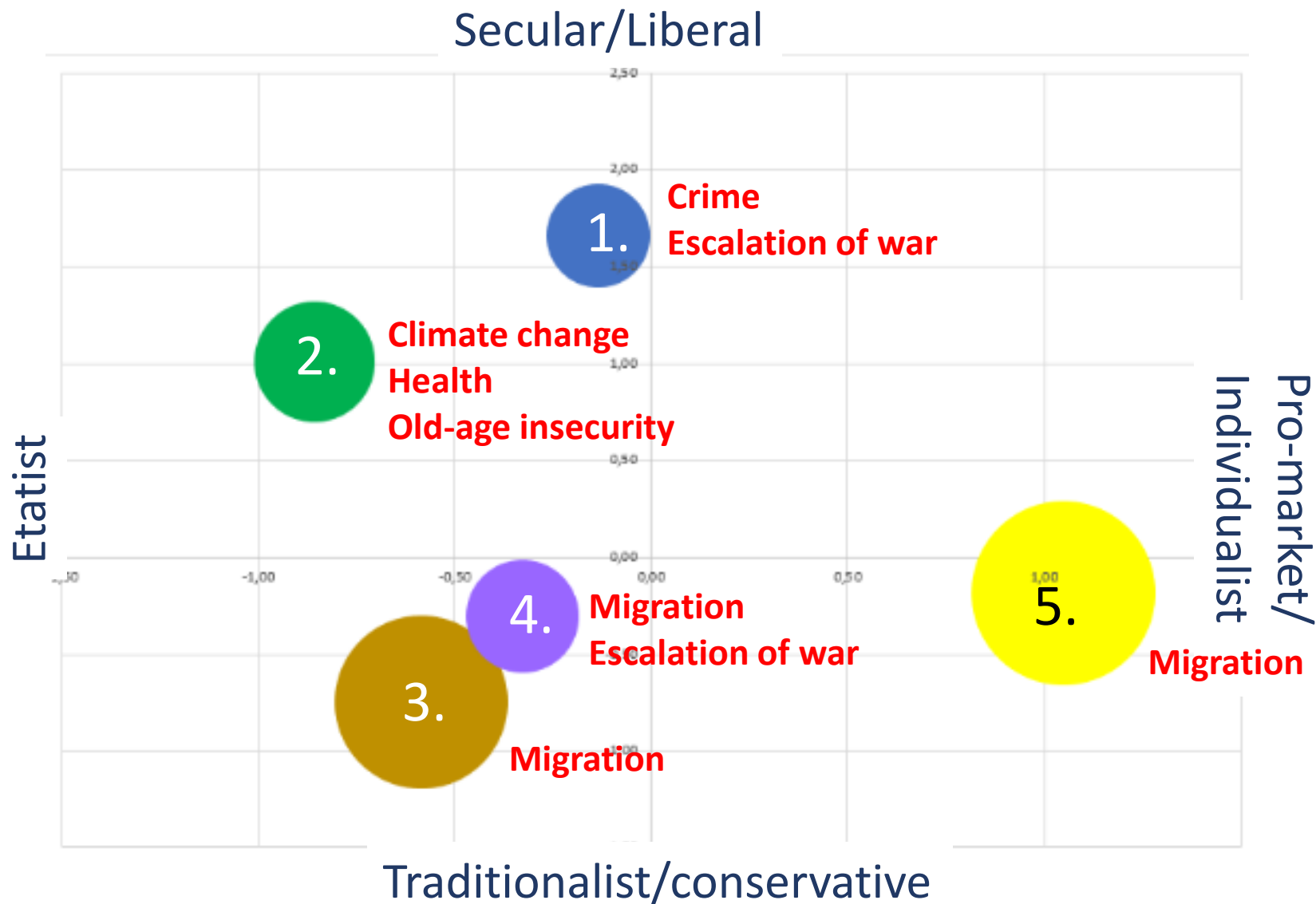
We distinguished these 5 clusters:

1. „secular technocrats” (11%),
2. „redistributionist liberals” (14%),
3. „conservative etatists” (30%),
4. „authoritarian conservatives” (12%),
5. „moderate, pro-market conservatives” (33%).

# % of those worried about various issues, by cluster

	Secular technocrats	Redistributionist liberals	Conservative etatists	Authoritarian conservatives	Moderate pro-market conservatives	Total
International migration	76	72	66	85	73	72
Climate change	86	95	73	81	70	78
Crime	91	84	70	82	67	75
Changing gender roles	56	53	53	65	65	59
Escalation of war in UA	91	81	73	89	78	80
	Secular technocrats	Redistributionist liberals	Conservative etatists	Authoritarian conservatives	Moderate pro-market conservatives	Total
Job loss	64	60	41	35	49	48
Reduced living standard	79	86	74	81	79	79
Deteriorating health	75	73	64	66	58	65
Loss of security in old age	78	83	72	68	60	69
Becoming victim of crime	51	54	44	37	43	45

# Value clusters and worries



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# 7 Summary

**Material security** is the most important issue among Hungarian population → this shapes attitudes towards democracy, as well (democracy is preferred by majority, but when faced with tradeoff between political rights, freedom and economic growth, people choose the latter).

**Worries** regarding both personal future and national/global issues are widespread, with the latter being even more prevalent. When it comes to relation with values, **conservatives** are less worried about their personal future, more about global issues such as **migration** and **war**. **Redistributionist liberals** have the most worries (climate change, health, old-age insecurity).

Thank you for your attention

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