

## Participation in context

Citation for published version (APA):

Linssen, R. (2016). *Participation in context: contextual and individual determinants of political participation in Europe and the Netherlands*. [Doctoral Thesis, Maastricht University]. Datawyse / Universitaire Pers Maastricht. <https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20160615rl>

### Document status and date:

Published: 01/01/2016

### DOI:

[10.26481/dis.20160615rl](https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20160615rl)

### Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

### Please check the document version of this publication:

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
- The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
- The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

[Link to publication](#)

### General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal.

If the publication is distributed under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license above, please follow below link for the End User Agreement:

[www.umlib.nl/taverne-license](http://www.umlib.nl/taverne-license)

### Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at:

[repository@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:repository@maastrichtuniversity.nl)

providing details and we will investigate your claim.

# Participation in context: contextual and individual determinants of political participation in Europe and the Netherlands

Rik Linssen

Printing Datawyse | Universitaire Pers Maastricht  
ISBN 978 94 6159 571 3



Participation in context

Contextual and individual determinants of political participation in Europe and the Netherlands

DISSERTATION

To obtain the degree of Doctor at Maastricht University, on the authority of the Rector Magnificus, Prof. dr. L.L.G. Soete, in accordance with the decision of the Board of Deans, to be defended in public on Wednesday 15 June 2016 at 16.00 hours by Rik Linssen.

**Supervisors**

Prof. dr. J.J.G. Schmeets

Prof. dr. P.L.H. Scheepers, Radboud University

**Co-supervisor**

Dr. M. Te Grotenhuis, Radboud University

**Assessment Committee**

Prof. dr. M. P. Vink (Chair)

Prof. dr. C.W.A.M. Aarts, University of Twente

Dr. C. Arnold

Dr. T.W. Van der Meer, University of Amsterdam

# Acknowledgements

Writing a PhD-thesis is a daunting journey. Albeit with some delays, a considerable amount of red eye flights, and some late night stopovers, I have finally reached its destination. Throughout this journey, I have been lucky to have been able to call upon a wide range of people who contributed to the realisation of this thesis in one way or another.

Above all, I am greatly indebted to my thesis supervisors Hans, Peer, and Manfred. Hans, thank you for the opportunity to bring in my own ideas in this project, for believing I could do this, and for being a great mentor. I have learnt so much from you. Peer and Manfred, you have been generous with your time and advice. Thank you for your support, for reading drafts of my chapters over and over again, and for your invaluable theoretical and methodological feedback which always inspired me to push a little further to improve my work.

I thank the assessment committee – Maarten Vink, Kees Aarts, Christine Arnold, and Tom van der Meer-, and the corona members for the time and effort they invested in assessing my dissertation.

I would also like to thank Statistics Netherlands for supporting my PhD-thesis through their collaboration with Maastricht University and Hans Schmeets' special chair in Social Statistics.

I combined my position as a Phd candidate in Maastricht with my work at Statistics Netherlands. A special word of thanks goes to my former colleagues in Heerlen: Karolijne, Rianne, Jacqueline, Saskia, and Moniek. As you had all experienced the ups and downs of writing a thesis before, I have greatly benefitted from your insights, support, and advice. Additionally, I am grateful for the assistance of Koos in navigating me through various datasets and linking surveys to registry data. I look back at a pleasant time where I have learnt a lot, particularly during the collaboration with Marion when collecting the data for the Dutch Parliamentary Election Surveys

The faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Department of Political Science in Maastricht provided a fruitful context for writing a PhD thesis most notably through the wonderful colleagues. Additionally, I greatly benefited from the support offered through the Graduate School. I would also like to thank my former office mates Natasja, Christoph, Ruud, and later on Hortense, Andrea, and Martina for putting up with the total chaos at my desk, and my mumbles and growls when fighting the parameter estimates that appeared on my screen. Special thanks go to Natasja, not only for keeping my eating habits and sleeping pattern on track but also for being a great friend (and neighbour) throughout the course of writing this thesis and especially during the time when Sonja and I were expecting Tomas. I thank my fellow PhD students, especially Karlijn, Koen (and Özge), and Miranda, for making my time in Maastricht memorable and for sharing the struggles of PhD life during all the chats, lunches, coffees, and parties together.

My academic interest was sparked in Nijmegen during the Research Master Social Cultural Sciences where I greatly enjoyed studying and working with an inspiring group of people. Thomas de Hoop deserves special mention here, if only for the fact that his 'mock defence' had a lasting impact on the life of me and my significant other.

I am fortunate to still be accompanied by Kim & Tom and Marieke & Orcun and grateful that our friendship has grown ever closer when we moved together from Nijmegen to Maastricht and later to The Hague. Having shared a life inside academia with you, I feel privileged to continue to share life outside academia surrounded by your beautiful and supportive friendship. Tom and Marieke, thank you for all the unforgettable nights in Tribunal, your intellectual and moral support, for continuing to challenge my views, for your absurd humour, and for being my paranymphs.

Despite the fact that my parents, brother, and sister were often wondering what I was actually doing, they are to thank for always lending an ear and for being there for me. Pap & mam, Bob, Shoera & Marc, dankjewel dat geer d'r altied veur mich zeet.

Lieve Sonja, words cannot do justice in thanking you for everything you have done to make it possible for me to write this thesis. You amaze me with your love for Tomas and me. Thank you for inspiring me and for having confidence in me when I lost it, I couldn't have done this without your support.

Rik Linssen  
The Hague, April 2016

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>15</b>
1.1 Introduction	16
1.1.1 <i>Political participation and social cohesion</i>	16
1.2 Conventional and unconventional political participation	17
1.3 Political participation in context: research questions and four studies	19
1.3.1 <i>Overarching research questions</i>	19
1.3.2 <i>Context: countries over time in Europe</i>	21
1.3.3 <i>Context: cross-national differences in Europe</i>	21
1.3.4 <i>Context: the Netherlands over time</i>	22
1.3.5 <i>Context: micro-level surroundings in the Netherlands</i>	23
1.4 Data and measurements	24
1.4.1 <i>Data</i>	24
1.4.2 <i>Measurements</i>	25
1.5 Outline of this book	25
<b>2. Trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe     between 1981-2008</b>	<b>27</b>
2.1 Introduction and research questions	28
2.2 Defining political participation	30
2.3 Previous research	31
2.4 Equivalence	32
2.5 Data and Measurements	32
2.5.1 <i>Data</i>	32
2.5.2 <i>Measurements</i>	34
2.6 Methods	35
2.6.1 <i>Mokken scale analyses</i>	35
2.6.2 <i>Assessing equivalence</i>	37
2.6.3 <i>Analyses of trends</i>	41
2.7 Results	42
2.8 Conclusion and discussion	47



<b>3. Participation in context: contextual and individual level determinants of conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe in the first decade of the 21st century</b>	<b>51</b>
3.1 Introduction and research question	52
3.2 Theories and hypotheses	53
3.2.1 <i>Individual determinants of political participation</i>	54
3.2.2 <i>Contextual determinants of political participation</i>	54
3.2.2.1 Political opportunity structures	54
3.2.2.2 Modernization theory	55
3.2.2.3 Constrict theory	57
3.3 Data and measurements	57
3.3.1 <i>Data</i>	57
3.3.2 <i>Measurements</i>	58
3.3.2.1 Political participation	58
3.3.2.2 Individual level characteristics	60
3.3.2.3 Contextual level characteristics	62
3.4 Analyses	64
3.4.1 <i>Estimation strategy</i>	64
3.5 Results	66
3.5.1 <i>Individual level</i>	68
3.5.2 <i>Contextual level</i>	68
3.6 Conclusion and discussion	72
<b>4. Conventional and unconventional political participation in times of financial crisis in the Netherlands, 2002-2012</b>	<b>77</b>
4.1 Introduction and research question	78
4.2 Theories and hypotheses	79
4.2.1 <i>Political participation</i>	79
4.2.2 <i>Macro economic conditions</i>	79
4.2.3 <i>Control variables</i>	82
4.3 Data and measurements	82
4.3.1 <i>Dependent variables: conventional and unconventional political participation.</i>	83
4.3.1.1 Scale construction: conventional and unconventional political participation	83
4.3.2 <i>Resources</i>	86
4.3.3 <i>Control variables</i>	87
4.4 Analyses	88
4.5 Results	88
4.6 Conclusion and discussion	91

<b>5. Micro-level context effects on conventional and unconventional political participation in the Netherlands</b>	<b>93</b>
5.1 Introduction	94
5.2 Theories and hypotheses: contextual effects on political participation	96
5.2.1 <i>Contextual determinants of political participation</i>	96
5.2.2 <i>The interplay between individual and contextual determinants of political participation</i>	98
5.3 Data and measurements	99
5.3.1 <i>Contextual-level determinants</i>	102
5.3.2 <i>Individual-level determinants</i>	106
5.4 Analyses	108
5.4.1 <i>Estimation strategy</i>	108
5.4.2 <i>Results</i>	110
5.5 Conclusion and discussion	114
<b>6. Conclusion</b>	<b>117</b>
6.1 Introduction	118
6.2 Research questions	118
6.3 Political participation across contexts: summary of questions, hypotheses and findings	119
6.3.1 <i>Context: countries over time in Europe.</i>	119
6.3.2 <i>Context: countries within Europe</i>	121
6.3.3 <i>Context: the Netherlands over time</i>	125
6.3.4 <i>Context: micro level surroundings within the Netherlands.</i>	127
6.4 Overall findings and conclusion	131
6.5 Caveats and suggestions for further research	132
<b>References</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>7. Appendix</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>8.1 Valorization addendum</b>	<b>179</b>
8.1 Societal relevance	180
8.2 Dissemination of results: activities and products	181
<b>9. Nederlandstalige samenvatting/Summary in Dutch</b>	<b>183</b>
9.1 Hoofdstuk 1: Inleiding	184
9.2 Hoofdstuk 2: Trends in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in Europa tussen 1981-2008	186

9.3 Hoofdstuk 3: Participatie in context: contextuele en individuele determinanten van politieke participatie in Europa in het eerste decennium van de 21ste eeuw	187
9.4 Hoofdstuk 4: Conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in tijden van financiële en economische crisis in Nederland	190
9.5 Hoofdstuk 5: Effecten van de micro-context op conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in Nederland	192
9.6 Hoofdstuk 6: Conclusie	194
About the author	197

# List of figures, schemes, and tables

Table 1.1 Schematic overview of empirical chapters	26
Table 2.1 Participating countries and sample size in EVS and ESS surveys, by year	33
Table 2.2 Question-wording and answer categories for items conventional and unconventional political participation in EVS and ESS	35
Figure 2.1 Change in item order before and after the turn of the millennium	39
Figure 2.2 Difference in item popularity for voting vs. membership of and working for political parties	40
Table 2.3 ANOVA Unconventional political participation: proportions active respondents before and after the turn of the millennium, equivalent and non-equivalent countries	44
Figure 2.3 Trends in unconventional political participation, 1981-2008 for equivalent countries.	46
Table 3.1 Participating countries and sample sizes by year.	59
Table 3.2 Question wording ESS-items for conventional and unconventional political participation	60
Table 3.3 Descriptive statistics	61
Table 3.4 Dependent variables and contextual characteristics by country	63
Table 3.5 Pearson's Rho correlation coefficients between contextual level characteristics	65
Table 3.6 Multilevel regression analysis: unconventional political participation (linear)	67
Table 3.7 Multilevel regression analysis: membership and working for political parties (logit, 2nd order PQL)	69
Table 3.8 Multilevel regression analysis: voting (logit, 2nd order PQL)	71
Table 3.9 Summary of findings	73

Table 4.1 Question wording political participation Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies 2006-2012	83
Table 4.2 Mokken scale analysis: item difficulties (proportion positive responses) and Loevinger's H, by year	85
Table 4.3 Descriptive statistics	87
Table 4.4 Linear regression analysis: conventional political participation (n= 4,599)	89
Table 4.5 Linear regression analysis: unconventional political participation (n= 4,599)	90
Table 5.1 Question wording in DPES	100
Table 5.2 Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients between radii for contextual determinants (n= 3,370)	105
Table 5.3 Descriptive statistics for individual determinants (n= 3,370)	107
Table 5.4 Correlation between contextual characteristics within radii (Pearson's r, n= 3,370)	109
Table 5.5 Bivariate regression analyses unconventional political participation (linear), conventional political participation (linear), and voting (logit), by radius (all contextual determinants entered separately, no individual-level controls, n= 3,370)	111
Table 5.6 Multivariate regression analyses unconventional (linear),conventional political participation (linear), and voting (logit), main effects, at neighbourhood level (n=3,370)	112
Table 5.7 Regression analysis conventional political participation (linear), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370)	113
Scheme 6.1 Summary of findings from chapter 2	120
Scheme 6.2 Summary of findings from chapter 3	122
Scheme 6.3 Summary of findings from chapter 4	126
Scheme 6.4 Summary of findings from chapter 5	128
Table A2.1 Chapter 2: Item difficulties, item ordering, Hi, Scale-H, and Spearman's rank correlation between scales (conventional and unconventional), by country and year.	144
Table A3.1 Chapter 3: Multilevel regression analysis: unconventional political participation	162
Table A3.2 Chapter 3: Multilevel regression analysis: membership and working for political parties	164
Table A3.3 Chapter 3: Multilevel regression analysis: voting (logit, 2nd order PQL)	166
Table A4.1 Chapter 4: Linear regression analysis: Conventional political participation using dummy variables for level of education (n= 4,599)	168
Table A4.2 Chapter 4: Linear regression analysis: Unconventional political participation using dummy variables for level of education (n= 4,599)	169

Table A5.1 Chapter 5: Proportion of people engaging in political actions and Loevinger's H for unconventional and conventional political participation (n=3,370)	170
Table A5.2 Chapter 5: Comparison between two-level and single-level model specification, intra class correlations for dependent variables (n= 1,538) individuals within 668 neighbourhoods	171
Table A5.3 Chapter 5: Regression analysis unconventional political participation (linear), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370)	172
Table A5.4 Chapter 5: Regression analysis conventional political participation (linear), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370).	174
Table A5.5 Chapter 5: Regression analysis voting (logit), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370).	176



# 1.

Introduction



## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

### *1.1.1 Political participation and social cohesion*

Political systems in many western democracies are equalitarian in principle. These systems are based on universal suffrage guaranteeing that each citizen has a voice and can influence the political decision-making process. Citizens can voice their concerns not only by means of the ballot box. Besides voting, citizens have various other means at their disposal to participate in the political domain, such as writing to officials, petitioning, and demonstrating. Citizens are expected to engage in (collective) action to hold their political authorities accountable. Connecting citizens to the state by means of participation in the political decision-making process is regarded as a prerequisite for proper democratic performance. Thus, the health and stability of democracies is heavily dependent on the extent to which individual citizens participate actively in politics (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994).

As democracies' wellbeing depends on actively engaged citizens, disruptions in social cohesion in general, and lower levels of political participation in specific, threaten to drain the lifeblood out of democracy. Moreover, levels of participation are heavily unequal between and within countries in many western democracies (Lijphart, 1997). Rising inequalities in wealth and income in western democracies (Piketty & Zucman, 2014) and more recently a global financial and economic crisis gave rise to idea that social cohesion is in decline and citizens' influence in political decision-making processes is (increasingly) unequally distributed among several societal strata. In turn, this might result in policy preferences being biased towards privileged strata in society, which is contrary to the equalitarian principles of western democracies (Verba, 2003).

Declining social cohesion is also reason for concern among leaders of institutions such as the World Bank (Ritzen, Easterly & Woolcock, 2000) the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Coté & Healy, 2001) and the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2010). High levels of social cohesion in a society are seen as indicative of (and interrelated with) the quality of democracy (e.g. Keele, 2007; Knack, 2002; Putnam, Leonardi & Nanetti, 1993). Vice versa, declining political participation is deemed emblematic for deteriorating social cohesion (Putnam, 2000, 2002).

Despite the notion that the concept of social cohesion is multifaceted (e.g. Bernard, 1999; Chan, To & Chan, 2006; Harell & Stolle, 2008; Rajulton, Ravanera & Beaujot, 2007; Schmeets & Te Riele, 2013) the current body of literature on social cohesion has predominantly focused on indicators of social, institutional and political trust (e.g. Delhey & Newton, 2005; Delhey, Newton & Welzel, 2011; Hooghe, Reeskens, Stolle & Trappers, 2009; Keele, 2007; Newton, 2006; Putnam, 2007) or modes of social and civic participation (Gesthuizen, Van der Meer & Scheepers, 2009; Letki, 2006; Savelkoul, Gesthuizen & Scheepers, 2014). Less attention has been paid to political participation. Moreover, those who do study political participation from the perspective of social

cohesion mostly focus on voter turnout (Putnam, 2000) or, with a few exceptions (e.g. Schmeets & Te Riele, 2013; Van der Meer & Van Ingen, 2009), a relatively small set of political activities (Lancee & Dronkers, 2011; Uslaner & Brown, 2005).

One of the core foundations of democracy is to facilitate diversity, especially by means of equal representation, participation, and universal suffrage. Putnam (2007) claims that ethnic diversity detracts social cohesion leads people to refrain from participation in public life for modes of political participation. Europe has witnessed a continued influx of migrants and increasing ethnic diversity, which is likely to continue in the near future. The claims that ethnic diversity compromises solidarity and detracts aspect of community involvement, including participation in politics, could therefore potentially be a threat to democracies' wellbeing. If Putnam's (2007) claim that diversity leads people to refrain from public life and engaging and participating in politics holds true, this would erode the core of the democratic system. Yet, the attention for the relationship between ethnic diversity and modes of political participation specifically is rather scant (c.f. Van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014).

In this thesis, we use the propositions that stem from the literature on social cohesion, and more specifically on social capital, and apply these to study both conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. We will also focus on the interplay between individual-level attributes (properties of individuals) and the characteristics of the contexts in which conventional and unconventional political participation takes place in European countries (chapter 2 and 3) and more specifically in the Netherlands (chapter 4 and chapter 5).

## 1.2 CONVENTIONAL AND UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation can broadly be defined as acts employed by private citizens to influence government decision-making, either directly or indirectly (Brady, 1999; Van Deth, 2007) that involve a degree of social interaction or social organisation (Parry et al., 1992). Therefore, political participation does not only refer to voting but includes a wider variety of activities, ranging from voting, contacting politicians, signing petitions to demonstrating. In this thesis, we distinguish between conventional and unconventional modes of political participation (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). Conventional political participation refers to legally embedded activities aimed at influencing public officials or directly related to the electoral process such as party membership, working for political parties, voting, and campaigning. Next to conventional participation, citizens can urge political authorities to represent their interests via means of participation that are employed to influence political decision making but are not legally embedded in the political system, such as demonstrating and petitioning. Such unconventional political activities are not legally embedded in the political system and may even be illegal (Barnes & Kaase, 1979).

Several sub-dimensions, classifying the overarching concept of political participation, have been proposed earlier (Van Deth, 2001, 2007). Early studies on political participation solely focused on voting and campaign activities (Almond & Verba, 1963; Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954). Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) broadened the concept of political participation and included activities not directly found within the setting of party politics such as attending neighbourhood meetings. Likewise, Dahl (1973) distinguished between the dimensions of campaign and non-campaign participatory activities. Strictly speaking, these activities are all conventional; traditional activities taking place via institutionalized routes (Burt, 2002). However, in the 1960's the range of political activities was expanded with protesting, petitioning, and even violent actions. These activities were classified as 'unconventional' (Barnes & Kaase, 1979) or 'elite-challenging' (Marsh, Barnes & Kaase, 1990) political participation. The classification in conventional and unconventional modes of political participation as proposed and empirically assessed by Barnes and Kaase (1979) became "the primary focus of attention" (Dekker, Koopmans & Van den Broek, 1997, p. 225).

Yet, labelling political action such demonstrating, signing petitions and boycotting as 'unconventional' remains somewhat controversial. Unconventional political actions, such as petitioning or demonstrating, have increasingly become generally accepted (Dalton, 2008; Norris, Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2005) and consequently have lost their 'unconventional' connotation. As these activities became increasingly normalized, Norris (2004) therefore distinguished between citizen-oriented and cause-oriented modes of participation. Citizen oriented activities are political activities that directly refer to influencing representative democracy such as voting, party membership, and contacting public officials. Cause-oriented actions are political actions that can be employed outside the traditional organs of participation and representative democracy and focus on specific issues, such as demonstrating and boycotting products. However, looking at the specific activities that Norris' (2004) operationalizes as either citizen-oriented activism (voting, party work and contact activity) or cause-oriented activism (petitions, demonstrations and boycotts) they still reflect the distinction proposed by Barnes and Kaase (1979) between legally embedded activities (conventional political participation) and activities aimed at influencing political decision making that are not legally embedded in the political system (unconventional political participation). Similarly, the activities that Grasso (2014) labels more recently as citizen-oriented politics (voting, being a party member, party work, contacting politicians) are conventional activities. The activities labeled as cause-oriented politics (signing a petition, demonstrating, boycotting products for political reasons, and wearing a campaign badge or sticker) constitute activities that are not directly linked to electoral processes and not legally embedded in the political system. Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier (2010) separated conventional and unconventional participation by labelling this distinction as 'institutionalized' and 'non-institutionalized' forms of political participation. In the same vein, Stolle and Hooghe (2011) describe activities such as demonstrating and petitioning as 'emerging' forms of

political participation. The activities that are grouped into ‘cause-oriented’ (Grasso, 2013; Norris, 2004), ‘elite challenging’, ‘non-institutionalized’ (Marien, Hooghe & Quintelier, 2010), or ‘emerging’ (Stolle & Hooghe, 2011) modes of political participation all refer to unconventional political actions.

Although the labels for political activities as demonstrating, petitioning and boycotting differ across studies and over time (c.f. Brady, 1999; Dalton, 2008; Hooghe & Dejaeghere, 2007; Inglehart, 1997; Marien et al., 2010; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011) the political actions being referred to, still put legally embedded activities and activities that are directly linked to the electoral process (conventional) in opposition with activities that are not legally embedded in the political system and not directly linked to the electoral process (unconventional). Hence, although being labelled in a variety of ways, this classification still mirrors the classic distinction as proposed by Barnes and Kaase (1979). Therefore, for conceptual clarity, we distinguish between conventional (legally embedded actions and activities related to the electoral process) and unconventional (actions not directly linked to the electoral process and not legally embedded in the political system) modes of political participation in this thesis.

### 1.3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND FOUR STUDIES

#### 1.3.1 *Overarching research questions*

To influence politics through various modes such as writing to a government official or join a boycott, one needs skills and resources (Brady, Verba & Scholzman, 1995; Dalton, 2008; Desposato & Norrander, 2009; Norris et al., 2005). Next to these skills and resources, citizens also need confidence that the activities employed are effective (Klandermans, Van der Toorn & Van Stekelenburg, 2008; Lassen & Serritzlew, 2011; Morrell, 2003). The decision to voice political concerns by joining for instance a demonstration or casting a ballot is largely determined by properties of individuals.

However, political behaviour is embedded in various higher-level contexts as well. For instance, citizens are embedded within the context of the nation state. The nation state determines the (legal) opportunities and constraints to voice their political concerns for both conventional and unconventional modes (Kitschelt, 1986; Meyer, 2004; Szreter, 2002). There are differences between these contexts in individual’s levels of political participation. For example, voter turnout and the number of people that hold a membership of a political party varies substantially between countries (Geys, 2006; Mair & Van Biezen, 2001; Van Biezen, Mair & Poguntke, 2012). Even within the contexts of a single country, there are large differences between sub-national contexts such as neighbourhoods or districts in their level of political participation (Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2008; Gidengil, Roy & Lawlor, 2009; Oliver, 2001; Solt, 2008; Uslander & Brown, 2005).

Previous research focused either on these individual-level characteristics or solely on contextual determinants in explaining (levels of) political participation (Franklin, 2004; Geys, 2006). Thereby, these studies do not explicitly address the notion that citizens act within certain national or sub-national contexts. This thesis aims to fill this lacuna by explicitly emphasizing the interplay between individual and contextual level characteristics.

Currently, cross nationally comparative studies that do address both individual and contextual determinants tend to focus solely on conventional modes (Dalton & Anderson, 2010) or exclusively on (a limited set of) unconventional modes of participation (Dalton, Van Sickle & Weldon, 2010; Van der Meer, Van Deth & Scheepers, 2009). Hence, a more complete picture that incorporates both conventional as well as unconventional modes simultaneously is currently lacking. This thesis aims to fill this gap by studying both conventional and unconventional political participation simultaneously thereby encompassing a wider array of modes. Moreover, the current body of literature allows us to derive contrasting hypotheses on the effect of similar contextual determinants on different (conventional and unconventional) modes of political participation (Dalton, 2008; Putnam, 2000). We assess such rivalling theoretical propositions empirically for conventional and unconventional modes simultaneously in this thesis.

This thesis aims to contribute to the literature in the following ways. First, by unravelling the interplay between properties of contexts and individuals on political participation. We do so by encompassing a wide array of modes of political participation. Second, we test rivalling theoretical propositions on the effects of the contexts on different modes of political participation. These rivalling theoretical propositions are tested both longitudinally and cross-nationally. Therefore, the overarching research question reads:

*To what extent can differences in conventional and unconventional political participation in European countries and more particularly in the Netherlands, be explained by (the interplay of) contextual and individual-level determinants?*

This research question is split into several sub-questions that study conventional and unconventional political participation across different contexts. These sub-questions are briefly introduced in the next sections. Starting from the macro-level context (describing longitudinal changes in Europe) we set out to explain differences in political participation between countries in Europe. Next, we address the question whether levels of political participation are affected by the recent financial and economic crisis in the Netherlands. We specifically study the interplay between the context of the economic crisis and individual-level resources. Finally, this thesis studies to what extent the micro-level context (neighbourhoods and even smaller localities) in the Netherlands affects conventional and unconventional political participation.

### 1.3.2 *Context: countries over time in Europe*

Several scholars argue that western democracies are suffering from the yoke of citizens' withdrawal from public life in general and political participation in specific (Blais, Gidengil & Neviite, 2004; Geys, 2006; Mair & Van Biezen, 2001; Putnam, 2000, 2007; Van Biezen et al., 2012). Yet, others hold a more optimistic view and argue that people do not refrain from participating in politics, but instead increasingly use 'newer' or unconventional modes of participation (Dalton, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2002, 2011). They argue that declines in conventional participation such as decreasing voter turnout and party membership are indicative of a shifting repertoire of political actions towards unconventional modes of participation. Citizens abandon conventional, old-fashioned modes (such as voting and party membership) and (increasingly) adopt other, unconventional modes of politics to express their political concerns. Most longitudinal research focuses, however, on the United States (Putnam, 2000; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993; Schlozman, Verba & Brady, 1995) or on a limited set of European countries (Jennings et al., 1990; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011). Longitudinal and cross-national studies that do focus on a wide range of European countries incorporate a rather limited set of unconventional modes of political participation (Norris, 2002). Hence, the question whether conventional political participation is becoming old-fashioned and is replaced by unconventional modes of participation over time is not properly nor encompassingly addressed for the European context. Likewise, a comprehensive map of trends in both conventional and unconventional modes of political participation is currently missing. We aim to provide an overview of trends in conventional and unconventional modes of political participation and empirically test the aforementioned contrasting propositions, using a large set of twenty European countries over an extensive period of time: 1981-2008. Additionally, we assess the extent to which the patterns of conventional and unconventional political participation are equal across countries. Therefore, our first sub-question is aimed at describing cross-national and longitudinal differences in conventional and unconventional modes of political participation in the European context reads:

*What have been the main trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe over the past decades?*

### 1.3.3 *Context: cross-national differences in Europe*

Apart from longitudinal changes in levels of conventional and unconventional political participation, there are large cross-national differences in levels of political participation as well. For example in 2008, the proportion of citizens that reported to engage in a protest was more than 4 times higher in France compared to Germany while the proportion that reported to have voted in the most recent parliamentary elections differed

by only one percentage point (see chapter 2). Again, contrasting and complementary theoretical propositions for the effects of the national context on conventional and unconventional modes of participation can be derived. For instance, citizens living in countries that have relatively few opportunities for them to voice their political concerns through conventional channels might instead resort to unconventional modes of political participation (Dalton et al., 2010). Contrastingly, in countries where citizens are free to voice their concerns, both conventional and unconventional modes might be used simultaneously (Dalton et al., 2010; Kitschelt, 1986). Another exemplary theory states that ethnic diversity may reduce conventional political participation, yet, contrastingly, may induce unconventional modes of participation (Putnam, 2007). By combining both modes of political participation, we aim to empirically assess these contradictory theoretical propositions raised in previous research that originate from the US. We test the tenability and moreover, the generalizability of these propositions for European cases for conventional and unconventional political participation. Hence, the second sub-question focuses on explaining cross-national differences in conventional and unconventional modes of political participation in Europe and reads:

*To what extent can individual level conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe (2002-2008) be explained by (the interplay of) contextual and individual-level determinants?*

#### 1.3.4 Context: the Netherlands over time

In recent years, Europe and the Netherlands witnessed a severe economic and financial crisis that coincided with the uprising of various protest movements in Europe and beyond (e.g. the global 'occupy movement', protests against austerity measures in Greece, and the Spanish '15M- movement'). This underlines that over time changes in the macro economic context might affect levels of conventional and unconventional political participation as well. Beyond the quintessential literature on economic voting, that dealt with the question whether economic conditions influence party-choice and turnout (Anderson, 2007; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000), surprisingly little attention has been paid to the link between macro-economic conditions and modes of political involvement other than voting such as demonstrating and petitioning in Europe. This economic voting literature yields contrasting theoretical propositions on the effects of the macro economic context on levels of conventional and unconventional political participation. In a context of economic downturn, levels of political participation are expected to either increase (as hypothesized by Thomassen, 1990) or decrease (as proposed by Radcliff, 1992). Additionally, as one's skills and resources are an important indicator of individual level participation, privileged (those who possess more resources) and underprivileged (those who possess less resources) societal groups might be affected differently in a context of economic downturn. We aim to use these propositions

stemming from the economic voting literature to study (un-) conventional modes of political participation other than voting. We test contrasting hypotheses on the effect of the macro economic context on political participation empirically in the Dutch context and distinguish between privileged and less privileged societal groups. Therefore, the fourth sub-question aims to explore the effects of a context of financial and economic crisis in the Netherlands on political participation and reads:

*To what extent are levels of political participation affected during times of economic downturn in the Netherlands between 2002-2012 in general, and privileged and underprivileged societal groups more specifically?*

### 1.3.5 Context: micro-level surroundings in the Netherlands

Within the same institutional and cultural context, the thesis zooms in on the effects of the micro-level context on conventional and unconventional political participation. The micro-level context refers to peoples' direct social surroundings in their municipality, neighbourhood, and even smaller localities. Focusing on the Netherlands, a country with relatively high levels of civic and political participation (Gesthuizen, Scheepers, Van der Veld & Völker, 2013; Linssen & Schmeets, 2010), we derive competing and complementary hypotheses of the contextual effects of people's direct surroundings on conventional and unconventional political participation.

One of the most actively debated propositions on contextual effects is Putnam's (2007) claim that individuals living in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods withdraw from community life and are thereby less politically active. This proposition has been tested in a myriad of studies for social trust (for an overview see: Portes & Vickstrom, 2011; Van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014) and also for behavioural indicators of social cohesion such as contacts with friends and relatives and volunteering, across Europe and the US (Savelkoul, Gesthuizen & Scheepers, 2011; Savelkoul, Hewstone, Scheepers & Stolle, 2015) and in the Netherlands (Gijsberts, Van der Meer & Dagevos, 2012; Lancee & Dronkers, 2011; Scheepers, Schmeets & Pelzer, 2013; Tolsma, Van der Meer & Gesthuizen, 2009). Yet, this claim is actually left untested for modes of political participation. However, as ethnic diversity is strongly correlated with both income inequality and poverty in the Netherlands (Tolsma et al., 2009) the contextual effect of ethnic diversity on political participation might be spurious due to this strong association between inequality, poverty, and ethnic diversity. Moreover, the mixed findings in the literature might be due to different operationalizations of the micro-level context. We aim to fill these gaps by a) focusing on the relationship between ethnic diversity, inequality, poverty, and political participation and b) varying the context between neighbourhoods and even smaller localities. Hence, the fourth sub-question aims to explain differences in individual level conventional and unconventional political participation within people's direct social surroundings in the Netherlands and reads:



*To what extent can individual-level political participation be explained by (the interplay of) individual and contextual-level determinants in the Netherlands?*

## 1.4 DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

### 1.4.1 Data

Research on political participation has relied on several sources of data. A predominantly qualitatively oriented branch of research investigates the specific social movements and their recruiting mechanism, the effects in on participation in (comparative) case studies (e.g. Giugni, 2004). However, such movement or protest specific datasources are only generalizable and comparable to a limited extent. Others have used aggregate level data such as information on voter turnout (Geys, 2006), or party membership (Van Biezen, Mair & Poguntke, 2012). However, these sources have the disadvantage that there is no information on non-registered forms of political participation such as demonstrations or petitions. A more recent strand of research collects cross-nationally comparative data directly among for instance protesters, once demonstrations are ongoing (Van Stekelenburg, Walgrave, Klandermans, & Verhulst, 2012). Although such data allow for cross-national comparisons and generalization these datasets miss out on non-participants. As one of the objectives of this thesis is to study political participation cross-nationally, which requires information on non-participants as well, we use a combination of several high-quality survey datasets, where appropriate enriched with contextual data from other relevant sources. For longitudinal comparisons of conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe, we used a combination of the European Values Study (EVS) and the European Social Survey (ESS). These cross-nationally comparable datasets allow an assessment of trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in 21 countries in Europe for the period 1981-2008. The EVS aims to monitor changes in values and norms across different countries and covers the time span before the turn of the millennium (1981-1999). The ESS is a cross-nationally comparable survey aimed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the social and political beliefs and behaviour of European citizens. For longitudinal comparisons (chapter 2), we used the ESS waves collected after the turn of the millennium (2002-2008). We used the pooled waves of the ESS for the period 2002-2010, for cross-national comparisons of political participation in European countries (chapter 3).

For the parts of the thesis focusing on the Dutch context (chapter 4 and 5), the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES) were used. The DPES' aim is to collect high-quality data on the backgrounds of voting behaviour of the Dutch electorate and is carried out around each parliamentary election in the Netherlands. To assess the effects of the micro-level context on conventional and unconventional political participation we

used the DPES waves for 2010 and 2012, enriched with data drawn from population registries, to arrive at various detailed measures of contextual determinants. To assess the effects of the macro-economic downturn on political participation we used the election studies collected shortly before the financial crisis in 2006, at the onset of the financial crisis in 2010, and during the recession in 2012. As in those studies respondents are asked to recall their political activities during the past five years, the study covers the time span 2002-2012.

#### 1.4.2 *Measurements*

Implicitly (Verba et al., 1978) or explicitly (Milbrath, 1965; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins & Carpini, 2006), it is assumed that people who engage in more demanding or 'difficult' political activities also engage in easier activities. However, whether there actually exists such a cumulative pattern in the types of activities that people employ to influence politics is unknown and has not explicitly been tested neither at the individual nor at the contextual level. Using probabilistic scaling techniques, i.e. Mokken scaling procedures (Mokken, 1971; Van Schuur, 2003), we specifically address this problem in each chapter. Our measures of conventional and unconventional political participation therefore assess to which extent participation is cumulative. By incorporating the respective 'difficulty' of certain acts of political participation (e.g. being a member of a political party) vis-à-vis other, easier or more mainstream acts of political participation (e.g. voting at national elections), we assess this supposed cumulative nature of political participation.

In order to reach meaningful insights in contextual effects on political participation, we compare similar phenomena across different contexts (countries in Europe) over time. However, it needs to be assured that similar political phenomena are being measured (Przeworski & Tuene, 2008). Although Almond and Verba (1963) as well as more recently Van Deth (1998, 2009) draw attention to the problem of limited equivalence of indicators of political participation, this is taken for granted in the vast majority of comparative studies on political participation (c.f. Dalton & Anderson, 2010; Dalton et al., 2010; Dekker et al., 1997; Inglehart, 1997; Jennings et al., 1990; Norris, 2002, 2011; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011). By using Mokken scale analyses, this thesis includes detailed assessments of equivalence for each measure of political participation used, across countries over time in Europe and within the Netherlands over time.

### 1.5 OUTLINE OF THIS BOOK

The four sub-questions referring to the different contexts are treated subsequently in the following chapters (see also Table 1.1 for a schematic overview). We start with the generic context, that is countries in Europe over time (chapter 2), and zoom in to ex-

## CHAPTER 1

plaining differences in political participation across countries in Europe (chapter 3). For the Netherlands, we deal with the questions whether political participation changes over time in the context of financial and economic crisis in the Netherlands (chapter 4). Finally, we study to what extent sub national contexts in the Netherlands affect political participation (chapter 5). Finally, chapter 6 summarizes the main findings and limitations of this book. Based on this we will discuss the societal implications of our findings and explore areas for future research.

**Table 1.1** Schematic overview of empirical chapters

Chapter	Context	Research questions	Data
2	Countries in Europe, over time	What have been the main trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe over the past decades?	EVS 1981-1999 ESS 2002-2008
3	Countries in Europe	To what extent can individual level conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe be explained by (the interplay of) contextual and individual –level determinants?	ESS 2002-2010
4	The Netherlands, over time	To what extent are levels of political participation affected during times of economic downturn in the Netherlands between 2002-2012 in general, and privileged and underprivileged societal groups more specifically?	DPES 2006-2012
5	Neighbourhoods in the Netherlands	To what extent can individual-level political participation be explained by (the interplay of) individual and contextual-level determinants in the Netherlands?	DPES 2010-2012

# 2.

## Trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe between 1981-2008

A slightly different version of this chapter is published as Linssen, R., Schmeets, H., Scheepers, P. & Te Grotenhuis, M. (2014). Trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe, 1981–2008. In C. Eder, I. Mochmann & M. Quandt (Eds.), *Political trust and disenchantment with politics: Perspectives from around the globe* (pp. 31–58). Leiden: Brill Publishers.

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The current view in both society and academia suggests that western democracies are suffering the yoke of mass citizen withdrawal from channels of political participation. Connecting citizens to the state by means of participation in the political decision-making process is a prerequisite for proper democratic performance (Dahl, 1971). As the political system in western democracies is equalitarian in principle, these systems are based on universal suffrage where each person should have equal influence (Verba, Nie & Kim, 1978). Consequently, democracies heavily depend on citizen pressure on the political decision-making process. Citizens are expected to engage in collective (political) action and hold political authorities accountable for their actions, which require a certain level of political trust. This demonstrates that democracy does not only depend on the form of its basic structure (Rawls, 1971) but also on the qualities and attitudes of citizens (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994).

If democracy's wellbeing depends on actively engaged citizens, a disconnected public threatens to drain the lifeblood out of democracy. Putnam (2000, 2007) argues that democracy's wellbeing is currently threatened by a widespread decline in civic engagement. Civic engagement would be created through day-to-day interactions in for instance voluntary association or sports clubs. Associational involvement fosters interpersonal and political trust, which benefits collective action (such as political participation). The social ties created within these associations are the cement of civil society and democracy. In addition, voluntary organisation may act as schools of democracy and nurture core democratic and participatory values (Van der Meer, 2009). Declines in civic engagement in general and associational involvement in specific would be detrimental for the democratic qualities and attitudes of citizens. Due to civic disengagement, the public is less trustworthy towards politics, which would lead to declining political participation. According to Putnam, "the most visible symptom" (Putnam, 2000, p. 23) of civic decline is citizen's withdrawal from politics, exemplified by the half-empty ballot box during elections.

Although Putnam focuses on the United States (US) the alleged decline in civic engagement is reason for concern for institutions such as the World Bank (Ritzen, Easterly & Woolcock, 2000), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Healy, et al., 2001) and the Council of Europe (2004, 2010).

Yet, others find empirical evidence for countervailing trends in political participation (Dalton, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2002, 2011). Contrasting to Putnam's (2000) observation of declining civic engagement and participation, Norris (2002, 2011) challenges the notion that low (or declining) political trust unambiguously lead to lower levels of political participation. According to Norris (2011), signs of disenchantment with politics such as falling voter turnout, declines in party membership and low political trust may mobilize people to participate in alternative (unconventional) modes of political participation. Political distrust as well as dissatisfaction with politics might encourage

people to protest and challenge political regimes. In the same vein, Dalton (2008) suggests a shift in the repertoire of political activities employed by citizens. Instead of participating in traditional acts such as voting and party membership, citizens are crowding out from conventional towards new, 'alternative' or 'unconventional' channels of political participation such as demonstrating in recent decades.

The bulk of other research on political participation originates from the US (e.g. Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995; Putnam, 2000; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Trusting that similar patterns will emerge in the European context, the patterns found in the US are copied to the European case. However, as the specific culture of the US and the individualistic values rooted in the constitution set a very specific cultural milieu, there may very well be a case of American exceptionalism (Lipset, 1996). Or, as Norris notes: "civic ills do not necessarily creep north over the Canadian border, let alone spread widely like a virus throughout Western political systems" (Norris, 2002, p. XI). However, trends in political participation have rarely been empirically studied cross-nationally in Europe (exceptions are: Jennings & van Deth, 1990; Mars et al., 1990; Norris, 2002; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011). Therefore, our research question reads:

*What have been the main trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe over the past decades?*

We aim to provide a longitudinal and cross-national European perspective, simultaneously including conventional and unconventional means of political participation. The arguments that motivate our research question are fourfold. First, the current body of cross-national research focuses on either conventional or unconventional political participation separately. The alleged decline in political participation as put forward by Putnam (2000) and the alternative explanation of a shifting repertoire towards increasing unconventional political participation (Dalton, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2002) call for simultaneous analyses of trends in both conventional and unconventional political participation. Second, the current literature produces contrasting theoretical expectations with respect to trends in conventional and unconventional means of political participation (e.g. Dalton, 2008; Norris, 2002; Putnam, 2000). That is, a widespread decline in participation versus a shifting repertoire from conventional towards unconventional means of participation. Third, a cross-national, longitudinal perspective on political participation focusing on Europe is currently missing. By combining both the European Values Studies (EVS) and European Social Survey (ESS) datasets we reconstruct a time-trend ranging from 1981 until 2008. Fourth, the extent to which measurements of political participation in Europe are equivalent cannot be taken for granted in cross-national research, but must be assessed empirically. As a first step in accurately describing trends in political participation and building on Reeskens, Quintelier, and Billiet (2009) we therefore focus on the equivalence of measurements of conventional and unconventional political participation before estimating trends in conventional and unconventional political participation.

In the following sections we provide a brief review on the definition of political participation as well as previous research on trends in political participation. Next, the data and methodology used to construct a cross-national equivalent index of political participation are introduced to ultimately arrive at descriptions of trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe.

### 2.2 DEFINING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Political participation can broadly be defined as acts employed by private citizens to influence government decision-making, either directly or indirectly (Brady, 1999; van Deth, 2008). This definition can include a wide variety of activities, ranging from voting and signing petitions to demonstrating and volunteering. Several sub-dimensions classifying the overarching concept of political participation have been proposed over time.

Early studies on political participation solely focused on voting and campaign activities (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954). Almond and Verba (1963) as well as Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978) broadened the concept of political participation, including activities not directly to be found within the setting of party politics but also communal activities such as attending neighbourhood meetings. Likewise, Dahl (1971) distinguished between campaign and non-campaign participatory activities. Strictly speaking, these activities are all conventional, traditional activities taking place via institutionalized routes (Burt, 2002; Reeskens, et al., 2009). In the 1960s, the range of political activities was broadened with protesting, petitioning and even violent actions. These activities were classified as ‘unconventional’ (Barnes & Kaase, 1979) or ‘elite-challenging’ (Marsh, 1990) political participation. The classification between conventional and unconventional political participation as proposed and empirically assessed by Barnes and Kaase (1979) became, “the primary focus of attention” (Dekker, Koopmans & van den Broeck, 1997, p. 225). This distinction between conventional and unconventional political participation still holds empirically, as demonstrated by Reeskens, Quintelier and Billiet (2009) using ESS 2006 data.

Admittedly, the labels conventional and unconventional are controversial and therefore these two dimensions of political participation are often labelled differently. Certain unconventional acts such as petitioning or demonstrating have become generally accepted ways of influencing the political decision-making process, thereby losing their ‘unconventional’ connotation (Dalton, 2008; Norris, Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2005). Therefore, Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier (2010) label these dimensions institutionalized forms of political participation and non-institutionalized forms of political participation. Similarly, Stolle and Hooghe (2011) note that unconventional means of participation are increasingly accepted. Therefore, they label unconventional acts as emerging forms of political participation. Although these two dimensions are labelled differently they still reflect the difference between conventional and unconventional political partici-

pation, both theoretically as well as in terms of the items included in those two dimensions.

Conventional political participation consists of legally embedded activities aimed at influencing public officials. Conventional political participation therefore includes contacting politicians and government officials, party membership and working for political parties, and all activities directly related to the electoral process such as voting and campaigning (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). Next to conventional participation, citizens can urge political authorities to represent their interests via unconventional means of participation. These activities are not structurally embedded in the political system and may be illegal. Unconventional political participation includes boycotting, signing petitions, attending (un)lawful demonstrations, occupying buildings, and political violence (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). The distinction between conventional and unconventional political participation is (although labelled slightly different) reflected in a wide array of studies (Barnes & Kaase, 1979; Brady, 1999; Dalton, 2008; Hooghe & DeJaeghere, 2007; Inglehart, 1997; Marien, et al., 2010; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011).

### 2.3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The existing body of literature provides an abundance of single-country studies on conventional political participation, mostly focusing on the US (Brady, et al., 1995; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993; Schlozman, Verba & Brady, 1995). In many cases, shortly after each election, within-country trends are assessed on the basis of a wide variety of election studies (e.g. Bousetta, 1997; Castenmiller & Kriesi, 1987; Parry & Moyser, 1990).

Longitudinal research on conventional political participation is often limited to separate acts of participation such as voting (Blais, Gidengil, Nevitte & Nadeau, 2004; Franklin, 2004; Geys, 2006) or party membership (Mair & van Biezen, 2001). Most studies take either a cross-national perspective (Marien, et al., 2010) or a longitudinal perspective on unconventional political participation (Inglehart, 1997) and analyse unconventional acts of participation separately, irrespective of relevant developments in conventional participation.

Studies taking a longitudinal perspective and simultaneously analysing conventional as well as unconventional political participation are rather scarce (exceptions are: Jennings & van Deth, 1990; Norris, 2002; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011; Verba, et al., 1978). The scope of these studies is either rather small in the number of countries studied (cf. Jennings & van Deth, 1990; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011; Verba, et al., 1978) or in the number of unconventional political activities analysed (Norris, 2002). Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978) compare merely seven countries and include solely three western democracies (the Netherlands, Austria and the US). Similarly, Jennings and Van Deth (1990) analyse trends in unconventional political participation but restrict their analyses to trends in West Germany, the United States, and the Netherlands. Stolle & Hooghe, (2011) ana-



lyse Germany, the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, and Finland. Despite the extensive scope of countries studied by Norris (2002), the analyses are restricted to two unconventional activities (petition signing and demonstrating) and two conventional activities (voter turnout and party membership). However, none of these studies addressed the issue of equivalent measurements for political participation across countries and over time.

### 2.4 EQUIVALENCE

In order to reach meaningful insights in trends in political participation, the *modus operandi* is to compare different phenomena in similar contexts or to compare similar phenomena across different contexts. It needs to be assured that similar political phenomena are being measured (Przeworski & Teune, 2008) or, put differently, that measurements are equivalent.

Although Almond and Verba (1963) as well as more recently Van Deth (1986, 1998, 2009) drew attention to the problem of limited equivalence, Van Deth concluded: “yet, despite the striking consensus about the problem, the number of proposals to deal with it are rather limited, and attempts to handle equivalent indicators in comparative research are the exceptions, not the rule” (van Deth, 1998, p. 2). These exceptions include Van Deth (1986) and Reeskens, Quintelier, and Billiet (2009). Van Deth (1986) assessed equivalence of a political participation scale consisting of items ranging from discussing politics to painting slogans on walls in the UK, Germany, Austria, US, Italy, Switzerland and Finland. Based on the 2006 ESS, Reeskens, Quintelier, and Billiet (2009) assessed cross-sectional equivalence of items referring to conventional and unconventional political participation at solely one point in time. In all longitudinal studies on political participation, equivalence of measurements is left unaddressed and taken for granted (Jennings & van Deth, 1990; Norris, et al., 2005; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011; Verba, et al., 1978). In this contribution, aimed at charting trends in political participation in Europe, we include assessments of equivalence within countries as well as equivalence of measurements over time focusing on the most recent data available.

### 2.5 DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

#### 2.5.1 *Data*

To assess trends in conventional and unconventional participation in Europe we rely on survey-data from the EVS (EVS, 1981, 1990, 1999) and the ESS (ESS, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008). The EVS is an on-going project to assess socio-cultural change and to monitor changes in values and norms across different cultures, using face-to-face interviews.

## TRENDS IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN EUROPE

The EVS is funded by a wide variety of national level research and academic foundations and other sponsors. We will use the first two EVS-waves (1981-1999). The ESS is a cross-nationally comparable survey aimed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the social and political beliefs and behaviour of European citizens. The European Commission and the European Science Foundation fund the ESS.

**Table 2.1** Participating countries and sample size in EVS and ESS surveys, by year

	EVS		ESS					Total
	1981	1990	1999	2002	2004	2006	2008	
Austria	<sup>a</sup>	1,295	1,454	2,135	2,034	2,185	<sup>a</sup>	9,103
Belgium	927	2,427	1,779	1,709	1,686	1,688	1,669	11,885
Czech Republic	<sup>a</sup>	1,692	1,669	1,279	2,733	<sup>a</sup>	1,894	9,267
Denmark	968	967	955	1,452	1,410	1,453	1,537	8,742
Estonia	<sup>a</sup>	1,638	819	<sup>a</sup>	1,858	1,433	1,576	7,324
Finland	<sup>a</sup>	413	929	1,886	1,919	1,811	2,096	9,054
France	1,091	889	1,466	1,450	1,752	1,920	2,000	10,568
Germany <sup>b</sup>	1,091	2,837	1,803	2,740	2,658	2,763	2,646	16,538
Greece	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	1,031	2,461	2,338	<sup>a</sup>	1,991	7,821
Hungary	<sup>a</sup>	905	937	1,603	1,413	1,453	1,475	7,786
Ireland	1,074	964	953	1,892	2,138	1,585	<sup>a</sup>	8,606
Netherlands	1,074	982	999	2,288	1,823	1,841	1,729	10,736
Norway	962	1,125	<sup>a</sup>	2,004	1,688	1,663	1,479	8,921
Poland	<sup>a</sup>	829	1,079	1,944	1,603	1,615	1,533	8,603
Portugal	<sup>a</sup>	978	936	1,430	1,987	2,153	2,281	9,765
Slovakia	<sup>a</sup>	802	1,083	<sup>a</sup>	1,327	1,616	1,748	6,576
Slovenia	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	909	1,426	1,334	1,382	1,232	6,283
Spain	1,847	1,930	946	1,617	1,569	1,790	2,476	12,175
Sweden	877	967	986	1,882	1,852	1,827	1,722	10,113
Switzerland	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	1,944	2,059	1,749	1,760	7,512
UK	1,091	1,404	940	1,986	1,818	2,307	2,267	11,813
Ukraine	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	989	<sup>a</sup>	1,916	1,919	1,748	6,572
Total	11,002	23,044	22,662	35,128	40,915	36,153	36,859	205,763

<sup>a</sup> No data <sup>b</sup> Only West-Germany in 1981

For conventional political participation, we solely use ESS data since measurement of conventional political participation in the EVS is incomparable over time and incomparable with ESS data. This holds for question- wording concerning voting behaviour, which is inconsistent over time in the EVS. In 1981, the respondents were asked whether they considered themselves as close to a particular political party. In 1990 and 1999, respondents were asked which political party they would vote for if there were general elections tomorrow. In the ESS, respondents were asked to indicate which political party they had voted for in the most recent parliamentary elections in all waves. Using both the EVS and the ESS data enables us to describe trends in unconventional political

participation from 1981 onwards and trends in conventional political participation from 2002 onwards in 22 European countries. An overview of sample sizes and participating countries is provided in Table 2.1.

### 2.5.2 *Measurements*

Concerning political participation, the EVS and the ESS included the items displayed in Table 2.2 in their core modules, which are implemented in every wave. The exact question wording differs over the various datasets, as shown in Table 2. For conventional political we use the items voted in most recent parliamentary elections, membership of political parties and working in a political party or action group. Unconventional political participation refers to demonstrating, boycotting and signing petitions. Note that one can easily imagine other newer forms of political participation, especially in the context of the rise of the Internet. However, due to the longitudinal nature of the chapter we focus on forms of political participation prevalent throughout the whole time-period studied

First, in the EVS respondents were asked to indicate whether they ever engaged in a certain type of political action. In the ESS the respondents were asked to mention political activities in which they engaged within a time-constraint of the past 12 months. Since the ESS poses a time-wise constraint of twelve months it is likely that the latter item will result in lower proportions of people engaging in a certain act. If asked whether people ever engaged in an unconventional act (EVS) it does not unambiguously capture participation at the time of survey but might include political participation in the past. Second, for unconventional participation the EVS inquires about “joining in boycotts” whereas the ESS specifically asks whether people boycotted certain products. Joining in boycotts may be interpreted differently as boycotting certain products. Joining in boycotts may be interpreted as a more activist act referring to blocking buildings and roads whereas “boycotting certain products” refers to refraining from buying certain products driven by political motives. Besides, the EVS includes a “might do” category on items referring to unconventional political participation. Respondents who indicate that they “might engage” in a certain act are combined with respondents who would never do a certain act in order to measure actual participation as is done in the ESS.

**Table 2.2** Question-wording and answer categories for items conventional and unconventional political participation in EVS and ESS

Data	Years		Answer categories
Unconventional political participation (1981-2008)			
EVS	1981-1999	I'm going to read out some different forms of political action that people can take:	
		Signing a petition	Have done/ Might do/ Would never do
		Joining in boycotts	Have done/ Might do/ Would never do
		Attending lawful demonstrations	Have done/ Might do/ Would never do
ESS	2002-2008	During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following?	
		signed a petition?	Yes/No
		taken part in a lawful public demonstration?	Yes/No
		boycotted certain products?	Yes/No
Conventional political participation (2002-2008)			
ESS	2002-2008	Some people don't vote nowadays for one reason or another.	Yes/No
		Did you vote in the last [country] national election in [month/year]?	
		During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following:	Yes/No
		worked in a political party or action group?	
		Are you a member of any political party?	Yes/No

As a result of these differences in question wording, we split our data and analyse two separate parts. Unconventional political participation can be studied before and after the turn of the millennium (from 1981 to 2008) based on combined EVS and ESS data. Conventional political participation can be studied from the turn of the millennium onwards. Hence, the trends displayed from 1981 to 1999 are based on the EVS and trends from the turn of the millennium onwards are based on the ESS.

## 2.6 METHODS

### 2.6.1 Mokken scale analyses

We employ Mokken scaling procedures (Mokken, 1971; van Schuur, 2003) to arrive at a cross-nationally and longitudinally comparable model of political participation. By doing this we aim to compare similar concepts (modes of political participation) across different contexts (various European countries at different points in time).

Mokken scale analyses builds on the classic Guttman-scaling approach. Consider a mathematics test consisting of problems ranging from easy (e.g. subtracting) to more complicated problems (e.g. calculus). The response on the problems can be identified as the simple dichotomy correct vs. incorrect. Those with a correct answer on more difficult problems (calculus) will also have correct answers on easier problems (subtracting). The result of the problems (correct/incorrect) corresponds with a perfect deterministic Guttman scale. In this case, all those who answered more difficult problems correctly also found correct solutions for less difficult problems. The 'difficulty' or 'popularity' of the items is expressed in the proportion of correct responses; the larger the proportion of incorrect response the more difficult the question.

Mokken scale analysis is the probabilistic version of the Guttman scale. Mokken-scale analyses depart from a set of dichotomous indicators (i.e. voting yes/no, boycotting yes/no, etc.). Thus, some items (e.g. voting) may be easier -popular- activities compared to others (e.g. being a member of a political party). The difficulty of the items is expressed in the proportion of respondents who engage in a particular political activity. The decisive notion is that those who engage in less popular or difficult activities (members of political parties) will probably also engage in easier or more popular activities (voting). We will investigate to what extent these response-patterns are similar across countries and over time.

Mokken scale analysis has numerous advantages over more mainstream scaling methods and ways to establish cross-national equivalence, such as factor analyses and structural equation modelling. Since factor analyses (and structural equation models) are based on the decomposition of covariance. These methods assume that frequency distributions of the items can be regarded as 'parallel' and the items have the same mean and standard deviation. Thus, all items need to be equally 'popular' to form a decent scale (van Schuur, 2003). The frequency distributions of the items for political participation clearly demonstrate that this is not the case (e.g. the proportion of people voting is considerably larger compared to the proportion of members of political parties). This cumulative nature of the response on the items for political participation also has important theoretical implications. We are primarily interested in the patterns of participation instead of their covariance. Do those who engage in less popular or difficult activities (members of political parties) also engage in easier or more popular activities (voting)? This notion is neglected when analysing these items using factor analyses or structural equation models. Additionally, implicitly or explicitly it is assumed that people specialize within either conventional or unconventional modes of participation and that participation is cumulative (c.f. Millbrath, 1965; Verba, et al., 1978; Zukin, 2006). Mokken-scaling procedures incorporate the respective 'difficulty' of certain acts of political participation (e.g. being a member of a political party) vis-à-vis other, easier or more mainstream acts of political participation (e.g. voting at national elections). By assessing the respective difficulty of acts of political participation using Mokken-scaling procedures, we acknowledge this cumulative nature of participation. Hence, by analys-

ing the extent to which pattern of participation and difficulty is both cross-nationally and longitudinally similar, we arrive at equivalent measures of political participation.

The procedure provides the following scalability coefficients. The  $H_i$  parameter refers to the association between a particular item and the rest scores of all other items. Dividing the number of ‘incorrect’ answers (Guttman errors) in the observed data by the expected number of ‘incorrect’ under the null hypothesis (non-cumulative independent items) results in Loewinger’s  $H_i$ . Likewise, Scale-H summates over all item pairs in the scale. This indicates the strength of the scale as a whole. Scale-H parameters between 0.3 and 0.4 indicate weak scales. Scale-H parameters higher than 0.4 and lower than 0.5 indicate moderate scales. Finally, Scale-H parameters higher than 0.5 indicate strong scales (Sijtsma & Molenaar, 2002). By using probabilistic scale modelling techniques, one is able to test the assumption of monotone homogeneity. In the vein of Item Response Theory, this means that the probability of a positive response to an item increases in concordance with the value of a subject’s latent trait. Applied to political participation this means we can test whether an individual engaging in a difficult activity (being a member of a political party), thereby having a higher score on the latent trait “political participation”, also engages in an easier activity (voting). Hence, if the same item-order is found over time in each country, measurements are considered as equivalent.

### 2.6.2 *Assessing equivalence*

To assess the extent to which the scales for conventional and unconventional political participation proposed are equivalent we use the following three-step analytical strategy. First, to assess the equivalence of scales we compare the general pattern in item ordering to the item-ordering in each individual country-year combination, as shown in the row totals in the Appendix. Second, to determine whether item ordering is consistent over time, we scrutinize the row total for each country. These parameters represent a test of equivalence across all years studied, for each country. If the country-year combination reflects the general pattern, the measurements are equivalent. Third, we assess the quality of the scales based on scalability parameters  $H_i$ , Scale-H, and Rho. Scales are classified as very weak if Scale-H is below 0.3. On the basis of item-ordering,  $H_i$ -values, Scale-H and the values of Rho it will be indicated for which countries the classification in conventional and unconventional political participation as proposed here does not hold and is therefore non-equivalent. The relevant parameters (i.c. exceptions to the general pattern and/or low scalability parameters) are highlighted in the Appendix Table A.2.1.

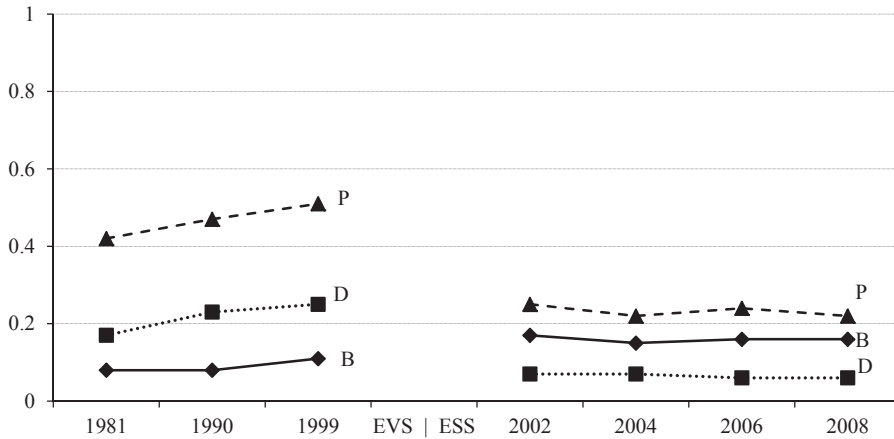
To determine to what extent conventional political participation is associated with unconventional political participation and to assess whether there is a negative or a positive relationship, spearman rank correlation coefficients between the scales for conventional and unconventional political participation are also displayed in the Appendix.

### *2.6.2.1 Equivalence of scales over time and across countries: unconventional political participation*

Let us first look at the general behavioural pattern, as shown in the row total at the bottom of the table in the Appendix Table A2.1. Petitioning is the most popular political activity. On average, 30% of the respondents in the countries studied indicated that they had signed a petition. Boycotting is a more difficult activity since 14% of the respondents indicated they had used boycotting as a means of political participation. The least popular activity is demonstrating. On average, 11% of the respondents attended a demonstration.

However, the ordering of items is different before the turn of the millennium compared to after the turn of the millennium. Before the turn of the millennium the item ordering is petitioning, demonstrating and boycotting, respectively, whereas after the turn of the millennium the item ordering is petitioning, boycotting and demonstrating. Before the turn of the millennium we find that demonstrating is more prevalent compared to boycotting, whereas after the turn of the millennium boycotting is more popular. This pattern is found in the majority of countries and graphically displayed in Figure 2.1. The switch in demonstrating and boycotting before and after the turn of the millennium may be due to the aforementioned difference in question wording between EVS and ESS. In the ESS respondents are asked whether they engaged in a demonstration or a boycott the previous 12 months whereas in the EVS respondents were asked whether they ever engaged in demonstrating or boycotting. Moreover, 'joining in boycotts' may be interpreted differently compared to 'boycotting products'.

Notable exceptions to this behavioural pattern are Portugal, Spain, Greece, and Ukraine. In Portugal, the ordering of items is consistent over time but inconsistent compared to other countries; boycotting and demonstrating do not switch popularity after the turn of the millennium as seen in other countries. This means that for Portugal the scale remains equivalent over time but is incomparable to other countries. A similar interpretation holds for the Ukraine, where the ordering of items is consistent over time but inconsistent compared to other countries; demonstrating is more popular than petitioning and boycotting, whereas in other countries petitioning is the most popular activity. However, this is due to very close inter-item difficulties in Ukraine. In Spain and Greece the item ordering switches continuously after the turn of the millennium.

**Figure 2.1** Change in in item order before and after the turn of the millennium

P: Petition, D: Demonstration, B: Boycott

Since the order of demonstrating and boycotting changes after the turn of the millennium consistently in most countries, we split our dataset and separately calculate scalability parameters before and after the turn of the millennium. All in all, we find that the EVS-waves provide good scales (Scale-H 0.64) whereas the ESS-waves provide moderate scales (Scale-H 0.41), as shown in the bottom rows of the Appendix. Note that the proportion of people demonstrating, petitioning and boycotting are smaller in the ESS compared to the EVS. Likewise, the difference in popularity between demonstrating, petitioning and boycotting is also smaller in the ESS compared to the EVS. As a result, small deviations from the general item-ordering pattern may have a stronger influence on overall scalability parameters for the ESS compared to the EVS. Nonetheless, we find that the overall picture indicates moderate to strong scales for most countries. However, we find very weak scales (Scale-H < 0.3) in Denmark, Estonia, Greece, and Poland, as demonstrated in the Appendix. We will therefore treat these countries separately in further analyses.

Summarizing, concerning unconventional political participation we find that demonstrating is less popular after the turn of the millennium. Instead, boycotting products is a more prevalent unconventional political activity after the turn of the millennium. On the basis of item ordering, Spain, Portugal, the Ukraine, and Greece are non-equivalent since they deviate from the general behavioural pattern. Denmark and Estonia are non-equivalent as scalability coefficients are weak. Greece is non-equivalent due to both distinctive item ordering and low scalability coefficients.



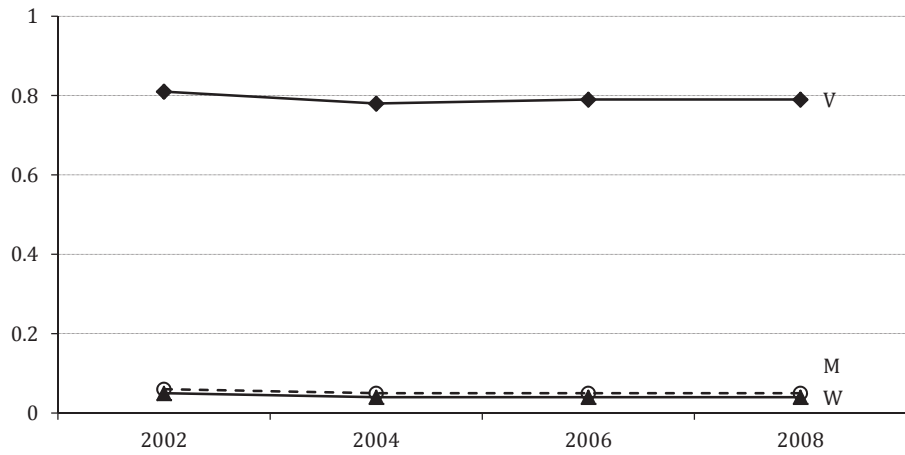
2.6.2.2 *Equivalence of scales over time and across countries: conventional political participation*

For conventional political participation we find that the general ordering of items from most popular to least popular is voting (0.8), membership of a political party (0.5) and working for a political party (0.4).

The pattern voting, membership, and working for political parties, exists in the vast majority of countries. The notable exceptions to this item ordering are Germany, Hungary, Estonia, Spain, Slovakia, and Poland. In Spain, Slovakia and Poland working for political parties is consistently more popular compared to being a member of a political party. Estonia, Hungary and Germany show less frequent anomalies to the general ordering of voting, working for and membership of political parties. As shown in the Appendix, in Estonia, Germany and Hungary the item ordering is inconsistent with the general pattern, in 2004 and 2006 . However, inter-item difficulties for working for a political party and membership are very close in these cases. Overall scalability-parameter scale-H indicates a good scale for conventional political participation (scale-H 0.60). None of scale-H parameters in the country-year combinations studied is below the 0.3 threshold.

Summarizing, concerning conventional political participation we argue that Germany, Hungary, Estonia, Spain, Slovakia, and Poland are non-equivalent as the item ordering deviates from the generally observed pattern.

**Figure 2.2** Difference in item popularity for voting vs. membership of and working for political parties



V: Voting, M: Membership, W: Work

On the basis of assessments of equivalence, we turn to the analyses of trends in political participation in Europe. For unconventional political participation, we separate the analyses before and after the turn of the millennium. Since voting is by far the most popular activity (see Figure 2.2), constructing a scale, which includes the item voting, may distort the results since changes in the scale-score will be disproportionately influenced by changes in the proportion of people who vote. Theoretically, voting can be considered to be a distinct activity compared to membership and working for political parties as this is an activity employed once every few years. Membership and working for political parties usually involves more prolonged commitments. It is therefore, that membership and working for political parties and voting are analysed separately.

The scale for unconventional political participation is constructed using the average score on the items, petitioning, boycotting, and demonstrating so that the scale represents the proportion of people engaging in unconventional political participation. As mentioned, conventional political participation is only analysed after the turn of the millennium. Voting is analysed separately. For membership of political parties and working for political parties a scale using the average score on both items is used. By doing this, the scales represent the proportion of people engaging in conventional political participation.

Summarizing, concerning unconventional political participation we find that demonstrating is less popular after the turn of the millennium. Instead, boycotting products is a more prevalent unconventional political activity from 2000 onwards. Spain, Portugal, Ukraine, and Greece are non-equivalent since the item ordering deviates from the general behavioural pattern. Denmark and Estonia are non-equivalent as scalability coefficients are weak. Greece is non-equivalent due to both distinctive item ordering and low scalability coefficients.

### 2.6.3 *Analyses of trends*

On the basis of assessment of equivalence, we now turn to the analyses of trends in political participation in Europe. For unconventional political participation we analyse the trend before and after the turn of the millennium. The scale for unconventional political participation is constructed using the average score on the items, petitioning, boycotting, and demonstrating so that the country-level aggregates represent the proportion of people engaging in unconventional political participation.

For conventional political participation it is to be noted that voting is by far the most popular activity (see Figure 2). Although the scale for the items voting, membership, and working for political parties is equivalent, we choose to analyse voting separately for the following reasons. First, a scale that includes voting will be disproportionately influenced by (volatility in) the proportion of people who vote compared to the proportion of membership and working for political parties. Second, voting can theoretically be considered as a truly different activity compared to membership and working for politi-

cal parties. Voting is only possible once every few years whereas membership and working for political parties involve more prolonged commitment. Thus, voting is analysed separately. For membership of political parties and working for political parties a scale using the average score on both items is used. Analogous to unconventional political participation, the country-level aggregates of these scales represent the proportion of people engaging in conventional political acts.

## 2.7 RESULTS

Based on the assessment of equivalence in the previous section, a division is made between those countries being classified as equivalent and as non-equivalent. The analyses of longitudinal trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe are presented in Table 2.3 and Table 2.4, which display the average scale values per year. Since we are primarily interested in the trajectory of levels of political participation over time we employ analysis of variance (ANOVA). Levels of political participation may demonstrate clear linear increase or decreases. Alternatively, political participation may simply "fluctuate" over time. Therefore, we do not want to impose a -rather strict- linear trend of political participation but also allow for the possibility of non-linear fluctuation over time. In contrast to other techniques, ANOVA allows us to model this non-linear fluctuation and to test the validity of the linearity assumption, by conducting tests for linearity. If non-linear trends over time occur, we report the non-linear measure of association  $\eta^2$ . If levels of political participation increase or decrease linearly over time, we present the linear measure of association  $R^2$  that is equal to  $\eta^2$  in case of a linear trend. As demonstrated in Table 2.3 and Table 2.4, the data demonstrate linear fluctuation over time for most countries (e.g. all equivalent countries before the turn of the millennium) while some countries show non-linear fluctuation.

In addition to measuring variance over time, we can also measure variance between countries. Therefore  $\eta^2$  is reported in a separate column and in a separate row. The estimate in the column entitled 'Eta' assesses the extent to which political participation varies over time. The estimate of  $\eta^2$  in the row tests the extent to which political participation varies over countries. Since some countries did not participate in some EVS or ESS waves,  $\eta^2$  is only calculated for countries that participated in all EVS or ESS waves. Because of limited data availability in certain countries, some other measures of association cannot be calculated as well, see footnotes in Table 2.3 and Table 2.4.

As demonstrated in Table 2.3, unconventional participation increases before the turn of the millennium. Overall, we find an increase in unconventional political participation (ranging from 0.22 in 1981 to 0.38 in 1999). Unconventional political participation heavily increases in Belgium and Sweden ( $R^2$  and  $\eta^2$  are 0.32 and 0.34 respectively). Sweden is the most active country studied; in 1999 a majority of the Swedish population reported that they engaged in a boycott, demonstration, or petition. The French,

Dutch, Irish, and Britons also demonstrate increased unconventional political activism between 1981 and 1999. This is however a less sharp increase compared to Belgium and Sweden (Eta and R range between 0.15 and 0.26). Germany (Eta = 0.09), Finland (Eta = 0.08), Norway (Eta = 0.08), Slovakia (Eta = 0.05) and Austria (Eta = 0.11) demonstrated very weak, though significant, increased levels of unconventional participation before the turn of the millennium.

Although unconventional political participation increases before the turn of the millennium, after the turn of the millennium levels of unconventional political participation are characterized by stability. Overall, unconventional political participation remains stable from the turn of the millennium onwards (ranging from 0.19 in 2002 to 0.20 in 2008). This is also reflected in the measures of association. Although parameters Eta and R are significant, they do not show a pronounced increase or decrease in participation. Instead conventional political participation remains stable. Eta ranges from 0.02 in France to 0.11 in Slovenia. Looking at unconventional political participation both before and after the turn of the millennium, the most striking finding is that differences between countries are larger than differences over time. For example, in 2008, one in every four French respondents engaged in unconventional acts against one in every twenty Slovenian respondents. After the turn of the millennium this is also shown in the differences between countries as measured by Eta. The variation between countries (Eta ranges between 0.26 and 0.29) is much larger compared to the variation within countries (Eta ranges between 0.02 and 0.11).

Note that the question to respondents in the ESS-dataset (after the turn of the millennium) provides a time-wise constraint. After the turn of the millennium respondents were asked whether they engaged in political activities during the past 12 months, whereas in the EVS-dataset (before the turn of the millennium) respondents were asked whether they ever participated in unconventional political activities. This leads to higher proportions of people engaging in unconventional political participation. This is also shown in Figure 2.3 where the trend for unconventional political participation is plotted for the equivalent countries and measurements. For 2008, we are able to compare the ESS (past 12 months) with the EVS measurement (ever participated) since both surveys are carried out in 2008. As demonstrated in Figure 2.3 the EVS-measurement (ever participated) yields consistently higher values compared to the ESS measurement. This supports our claim that the EVS-measurement is an overestimation of actual participation rates since it might include participation in the past instead of current participation.

**Table 2.3** ANOVA Unconventional political participation: proportions active respondents before and after the turn of the millennium, equivalent and non-equivalent countries (continues on next page).

Year	EVS					ESS					R
	1981	1990	1999	Eta	R	2002	2004	2006	2008	Eta	
Equivalent countries											
Belgium	0.13	0.26	0.41	0.32**	0.32**	0.18	0.13	0.16	0.16	0.08**	-0.02*
France	0.28	0.33	0.40	0.15**	0.15**	0.26	0.24	0.25	0.25	0.02	0.00
Germany	0.27	0.34	0.32	0.09**	0.05**	0.23	0.21	0.20	0.23	0.05**	-0.01
Ireland	0.16	0.22	0.31	0.20**	0.20**	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.02	-0.01
Netherlands	0.18	0.29	0.39	0.26**	0.26**	0.27	0.31	0.27	0.30	0.07**	0.03**
Sweden	0.26	0.37	0.53	0.34**	0.34**	0.24	0.20	0.24	0.22	0.05**	-0.01
UK	0.27	0.34	0.37	0.15**	0.15**	0.18	0.19	0.21	0.22	0.07**	0.06**
Total	0.22	0.31	0.38			0.04	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.03*	0.02*
<i>Eta</i>	0.20**	0.15**	0.20**			0.22	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.03*	0.01
Finland						0.07	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.11**	0.00
Hungary						0.28	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.05**	-0.04**
Norway											
Slovenia											
Switzerland											
Finland	<sup>a</sup>	0.24	0.27	0.06*	<sup>b</sup>						
Hungary	<sup>a</sup>	0.08	0.08	0.00	<sup>b</sup>	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.20		
Norway	0.27	0.31	<sup>a</sup>	0.08**	<sup>b</sup>	0.27**	0.29**	0.26**	0.27**		
Slovenia	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	0.17	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>b</sup>						
Switzerland	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>b</sup>	0.20	0.17	0.15	<sup>a</sup>	0.08**	-0.08**
Austria	<sup>a</sup>	0.21	0.27	0.11**	<sup>b</sup>	0.10	0.08	<sup>a</sup>	0.09	0.05**	0.00
Czech Republic	<sup>a</sup>	0.30	0.31	0.01	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	0.13	0.11	0.09	0.09**	-0.09**
Slovakia	<sup>a</sup>	0.23	0.25	0.05*	<sup>b</sup>	0.16	0.13	0.14	<sup>a</sup>	0.05**	-0.03*

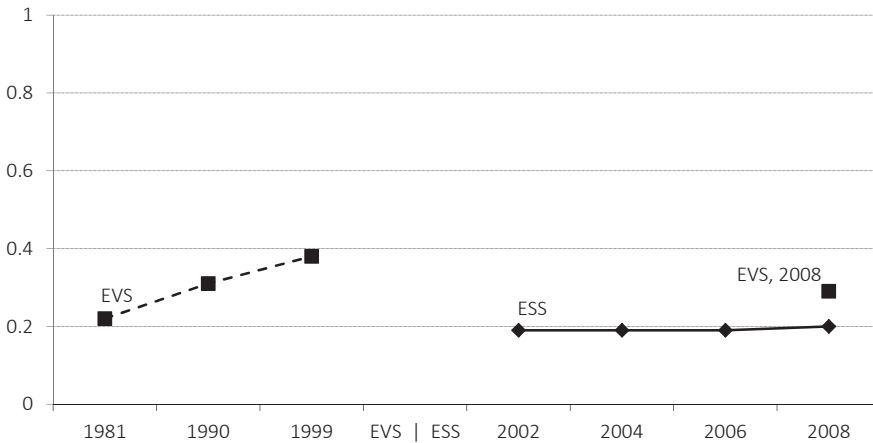
Year	EVS					ESS					R
	1981	1990	1999	Eta	R	2002	2004	2006	2008	Eta	
Non-equivalent countries											
Denmark	0.24	0.30	0.37	c	c	0.20	0.21	0.23	0.22	c	c
Estonia	<sup>a</sup>	0.23	0.11	c	c	<sup>a</sup>	0.03	0.05	0.05	c	c
Greece	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	0.33	c	c	0.06	0.04	<sup>a</sup>	0.09	c	c
Poland	<sup>a</sup>	0.15	0.11	c	c	0.04	0.06	0.04	0.05	c	c
Portugal	<sup>a</sup>	0.18	0.16	c	c	0.05	0.03	0.04	0.04	c	c
Spain	0.20	0.17	0.20	c	c	0.15	0.24	0.17	0.14	c	c
Ukraine	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	0.12	c	c	<sup>a</sup>	0.10	0.05	0.03	c	c

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed).

<sup>a</sup> no data b could not be estimated due to small number of measurements (number of waves < 3).

<sup>c</sup> Eta and R are not calculated since measurements are not equivalent for these countries.

**Figure 2.3** Trends in unconventional political participation, 1981-2008 for equivalent countries.



For conventional political participation, we find that membership and working for political parties is also stable over time. There is some fluctuation, ranging from 0.06 in 2002, via 0.05 in 2004 and 2006 to 0.04 in 2008. The results for separate countries underline the stability in membership and working for political parties. In Finland, France, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden and, the UK we find no significant variation over time. Although the variation over time is significant in Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, Austria, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland and Ukraine, it is very small (Eta ranging from 0.02 to 0.05). Overall, working for political parties and membership is a relatively marginal phenomenon, especially compared to voting, as previously demonstrated by the large differences in item popularities. For conventional political participation the differences between countries are larger than differences over time, which corresponds with our findings regarding unconventional political participation, where variance over time is also limited compared to differences between countries.

Voting is also stable between 2002 and 2008. Overall, we find the proportion of respondents indicated that they voted fluctuates around 0.80 (0.81 in 2002 to 0.80 in 2008, with a very small uptick in 2006 to 0.82). Looking at the individual countries underlines the notion of stability as reflected in very low values of Eta en R. Also concerning voting, the most striking finding is that differences between countries are larger than differences over time. Eta for differences between countries ranges between 0.18 and 0.24, whereas Eta for differences over time ranges between 0.01 and 0.10.

Additionally, the association between conventional and unconventional political participation is positive in all countries (see Appendix Table A2.1). This is not in line with the claim of a crowding-out effect. If there is a crowding out effect from conventional to unconventional modes, we would expect (increasingly) negative associations between

conventional and unconventional political participation. Moreover, aggregate levels of unconventional political participation remain stable, after the turn of the millennium, which also speaks against the notion of a crowding-out effect.

Note that when using ANOVA the dependent variable is assumed to be interval scaled, in case the scale is 0/1 this is unproblematic but our scale for unconventional political participation is, strictly speaking ordinal scaled. To check for robustness of our findings and take into account the ordinal nature of the scale, we also plotted the median instead of the mean over time. Visual inspection of these plots leads us to the same conclusions as drawn from Table 2.3 and 2.4.

## 2.8 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this contribution we started off with the debate between an either alleged decline in political participation in general (Putnam, 2000) or a shift in the repertoire of political activities from conventional to unconventional political participation (Dalton, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2002; Norris, et al., 2005). These contradictory assumptions have not been addressed empirically. This holds especially for the European case; trends in political participation have rarely been studied outside the United States and seldom in a cross-national perspective. On the basis of theoretical (Barnes & Kaase, 1979) and empirical (Reeskens et al., 2009) considerations, we distinguished between conventional and unconventional forms of political participation. The current body of literature focused on conventional or unconventional political participation separately (Dalton, 2008; Norris et al., 2005), while the notion of a shifting repertoire calls for simultaneous analyses of both conventional and unconventional political participation. In short, the aforementioned contrasting theoretical expectations call for a cross-national and longitudinal perspective on both conventional and unconventional political participation incorporating a large set of European countries. However, to accurately describe trends in political participation we first needed to overcome the often-overlooked methodological hurdle of constructing cross-nationally equivalent measurements of participation (van Deth, 1998, 2009). By using Mokken-scale analysis (Mokken, 1971; van Schuur, 2003), which incorporates the respective difficulty and associations between various forms of political participation and compares this across countries we were able to assess cross-national as well as longitudinal equivalence of these scales. With a few exceptions, the measurements for conventional and unconventional political participation are equivalent across countries and over time.

Our results demonstrate an upward trend in unconventional political participation before the turn of the millennium and stable levels of unconventional political participation after the turn of the millennium. Conventional political participation remained stable after the turn of the millennium. Voting is the most common political activity. On average about 80 percent of the respondents voted in the most recent parliamentary



elections. Membership of, and working for political parties is a marginal phenomenon; on average roughly 5 percent either works for, or is a member of, a political party.

Contrary to Putnam's (2000) assumption of a widespread decline in civic engagement in the US where decreasing voter turnout would be the most emblematic phenomenon we find stability in voter turnout specifically, and conventional political participation in general in Europe. The notion that Western democracies suffer the yoke of mass citizen withdrawal from conventional channels of participation in recent decades seems therefore overstated for the European case. An alternative claim, as put forward by Norris (2002) and Dalton (2008), that is a shift in the repertoire from conventional to unconventional political participation, is also not found in Europe.

The increase in unconventional political participation before the turn of the millennium may be due to measuring whether a respondent 'ever' participated in unconventional acts, which leads to estimates of higher aggregate levels of participation and inflates the measurement of unconventional political participation over time. When measuring actual participation (the past 12 months) as is done after the millennium, we find low and stable levels of unconventional political participation. This is at odds with the expectation that disenchantment with politics could mobilize individuals towards unconventional political action (Norris, 2011). Additionally, we find no indicative evidence for notion that people crowd-out from conventional towards unconventional means of participation (Dalton, 2008). If so, one would expect decreasing levels of participation via conventional channels at the aggregate level while we find stable levels of conventional political participation. In Europe, conventional political participation is, with the exception of voting, a marginal phenomena and remains stable after the turn of the millennium.

Yet, there are large cross-national differences. In short, differences between countries are larger than differences within countries over time for both conventional and unconventional political participation. As political participation is embedded in the nation state, which determines legal conditions, political actors and the strength of political institutions (Newton & Giebler, 2008; Van der Meer, 2009) country-specific characteristics seem to be more important in shaping political participation than changes over time. Szreter (2002) notes that the institutional setting has a 'critical facilitating' role in the opportunity to participate. Similarly, Kriesi (2008) claims that political participation research underestimates the impact of institutions. These mixed findings in trends in political participation indicatively support the claim that the institutional setting has a critical facilitating role in channelling participation and that more attention needs to be paid to the effects of the institutional setting and other country-specific factors. Explaining cross-national differences in conventional and unconventional political participation involves formulating and testing hypotheses concerning this institutional setting. Further research needs to address these issues.

Drawbacks of this study lie in the comparability of the different data sources. Dissimilar sampling strategies and differences question wordings may pose a risk when inter-

preting results over time. This is demonstrated in the lower scalability-coefficients for unconventional political participation. Ideally, we would include a longer time trend and incorporate the frequency of participation. However, data availability and especially data comparability, demonstrated by the assessments of equivalence over time, which resulted in excluding countries from further analyses, advise against this approach.

The scope of political activities studied is rather limited and one can imagine that newer methods of political participation are on the rise, especially in the context of increased possibilities for communication through the internet. Still, the trends depicted here are, to our knowledge, among the most extensive in terms of time-span as well as the variety of countries.



# 3.

Participation in context: contextual and individual level determinants of conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe in the first decade of the 21st century

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Democracies depend heavily on the extent to which citizens are engaged in political decision-making processes by means of political participation. However, there are large differences in levels of political participation between countries in Europe and beyond (Dalton & Anderson, 2010; Hooghe & Dejaeghere, 2007; Marien et al., 2010) suggesting that the context of the nation state matters for various modes of political participation.

In this contribution, we focus on explaining levels of conventional (voting, membership of, and working for political parties) and unconventional (petitioning, demonstrating, and boycotting) political participation, i.e. the classic distinction proposed by Barnes and Kaase (1979). Previously elaborated theoretical insights allow us to derive contradictory hypotheses referring to conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. For instance, in open political systems people are free to voice their concerns, inducing both conventional and unconventional modes of participation (Dalton et al., 2010). However, in closed rather than in open political systems unconventional political participation might be higher as citizens might crowd-out from conventional modes and engage in unconventional modes (Dalton, 2008; Kitschelt, 1986). Another exemplary theory states that ethnic diversity may reduce conventional political participation, yet, contrastingly, may induce unconventional modes of participation (Putnam, 2007).

In this chapter, we advance current research on political participation in four ways. First, we propose and test such contrasting hypotheses on contextual and individual characteristics related to political participation in the European context. Second, current research mainly focuses on single acts of participation such as voting (Franklin, 2004) or party membership (Van Biezen, Mair & Poguntke, 2012) or specific forms of unconventional political participation such as protesting (Dalton et al., 2010; Stolle & Hooghe, 2011). By combining both modes of political participation, we aim to empirically assess contradictory theoretical propositions raised in previous research for conventional and unconventional political participation. Third, the fact that political participation is embedded within the context of the nation state that determines the opportunities and constraint for individuals to participate is theoretically acknowledged, but not always empirically and methodologically addressed in cross-national research, which we set out to do. Fourth, by analysing the European Social Survey (ESS), we use recent and high quality data including cross-nationally equivalent measures of political participation (Linssen, Schmeets, Scheepers & Te Grotenhuis, 2014) available in Europe to rigorously test the effects of previously developed theories. Therefore, our research question reads:

*To what extent can individual level conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe be explained by (the interplay of) contextual and individual –level determinants?*

### 3.2 THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

Modes of political participation have traditionally been classified as either conventional or unconventional. Conventional political participation consists of legally embedded activities aimed at influencing public officials. This mode includes contacting politicians and government officials, party membership, and working for political parties and all activities directly related to the electoral process such as voting and campaigning. Next to conventional participation, citizens can urge political authorities to represent their interests via unconventional means of participation. These activities are not structurally embedded in the political system and may (even) be illegal. Unconventional political participation refers to boycotting, signing petitions, attending (un-) lawful demonstrations, occupying buildings, and political violence (Barnes & Kaase, 1979).<sup>1</sup>

To examine differences in levels of participation across European countries, we distinguish between individual level determinants (properties of individuals) and contextual determinants (properties of countries) that shape a citizens' political behaviour. We derive sets of contrasting hypotheses for contextual level determinants, explaining differences between countries in Europe and assess their interplay with individual-level determinants of political participation. First, we address individual-level determinants referring to resources that have been traditionally linked to both conventional and unconventional modes of participation, often disregarding the context in which citizen's act. Second, we draw attention to political opportunity structures (Kitschelt, 1986) and the facilitating role of the state in political participation (Szreter, 2002) and assess the interplay between the context of political opportunity structure and individual level resources. Third, we derive contextual-level hypotheses from modernization theories, which provide contrasting theoretical expectations and interact these with the aforementioned individual-level determinants. Fourth, we also use Putnam's (2007) 'constrict theory' that emphasizes differential and complementary hypotheses on contextual effects of ethnic diversity on different modes of political participation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Unconventional political participation has been labelled differently throughout time. One might argue that unconventional activities are increasingly accepted and regarded as 'normal' modes of participation (Dalton, 2008; Lamprianou, 2013; Norris, Walgrave & van Aelst, 2005). Thus, petitioning, demonstrating, and boycotting lost its unconventional connotation. Admittedly, this renders the term 'unconventional' political participation somewhat old-fashioned. However, other labels used such as 'extra-institutional' participation (e.g. Dalton et al., 2010), 'emerging forms of political participation' (e.g. Stolle & Hooghe, 2009), and 'non-electoral participation' (e.g. Vráblíková, 2013) still refer to the same political actions empirically. Thus, although labelled differently as a concept in the literature, the acts referred to when describing 'unconventional', 'non-institutionalized' or 'protest participation' are identical since they also refer to political actions such as petitioning, demonstrating, and boycotting.

### 3.2.1 *Individual determinants of political participation*

Traditional research on determinants of political participation employed a resource-based perspective. The well-established civic voluntarism model (Brady et al., 1995; Smets & Van Ham, 2013) argues that political participation requires skills and resources such as education. Given this proposition, we expect that those with more resources (i.e. those in higher status positions and the higher educated) to participate more in all political actions (hypothesis 1).

We note that others (e.g. Gurr & Leggewie, 1970; Meyer, 2004) proposed contradictory effects of social-economic resources on political participation. Following grievance theory, they argued that relative deprivation encourages dissatisfaction, which is redressed in the political arena, would spur political action. However, there has been no empirical support for these grievance propositions in cross-nationally comparative studies on the European as several studies report that the resource rich participate more in a wide variety of political actions rather than the relatively deprived thereby lending no empirical support for the grievance proposition (c.f. Dalton et al., 2010; Marien et al., 2010; Vrábliková, 2014).

### 3.2.2 *Contextual determinants of political participation*

#### 3.2.2.1 *Political opportunity structures*

Political participation is embedded in the nation state, which determines legal conditions and the strength of political institutions (Meyer & Minkoff, 2004), which might influence levels of political participation. We focus on the openness of political systems as a characteristic of the political opportunity system. In open political systems, the institutional context of a country might acknowledge or even facilitate certain modes of unconventional political modes whereas closed systems are geared towards impeding the repertoire of political action. In recent years, increased attention has been paid to the effects of political opportunity structures on conventional modes of political participation, such as turnout and party-preference (Anderson & Singer, 2008; Günther, Montero & Puhle, 2007) and moreover the effects of the institutional setting on unconventional modes (Vrábliková, 2014). However, the question whether closed systems might induce unconventional modes has not been systematically tested in a cross-national European comparative perspective. Hence, the question whether openness of a nation's political opportunity structure influences unconventional modes of participation in a different fashion than conventional participation has not been addressed.

In open systems, citizens are free to voice their concerns and criticize politicians, without fear of reprisal, through both conventional as well as unconventional channels. If political systems allow -or even facilitate- political action through either conventional or unconventional channels, the share of active citizens is likely to increase (Dalton et

al., 2010). This leads to hypothesis 2: In countries with open political systems, citizens are more likely to participate in both conventional and unconventional political actions.

Dalton (2008) as well as Kitschelt (1986) posed, however, a contradictory effect of political openness especially on unconventional modes of participation. In systems with relatively few opportunities to influence governance through conventional means, dissatisfaction might push citizens into unconventional modes. Consequently, the less open a political system is, the more citizens will resort to protesting and demonstrating or to other unconventional political acts due to the restricted opportunities to influence governance through conventional channels. Following this contrasting theoretical proposition, we formulate a competing hypothesis referring to the openness of political systems: (3) In countries with a closed political system, citizens are more likely to participate in unconventional political actions.

We argue that the openness of a political system interacts with one's individual-level resources. As stated in hypothesis 1, the higher educated are more likely to participate compared to the lower educated. In more open and complex institutional structures political participation requires increasingly more civic skills or resources. Therefore, we expect that in open political systems those with more civic skills are more likely to participate compared to citizens with less civic skills. Similarly, the resource based model argues that unconventional political participation also requires civic skills and thus that the higher educated are more likely to participate in unconventional modes compared to lower educated. If citizens are dissatisfied in particularly closed systems and crowd out to unconventional modes in closed political systems (hypothesis 3), we expect that the higher educated are more likely to be pushed out to unconventional modes compared to the lower educated, since the lower educated have less resources to participate to begin with. Hence, we formulate the following cross-level interaction hypothesis: The effect of openness on political participation will be stronger for higher educated compared to lower educated citizens (4).

### 3.2.2.2 *Modernization theory*

Next to the political opportunity structure, a nation's socio-economic conditions may determine levels of political participation. Irrespective of the political opportunity structure, modernization brings about structural changes in society. However, the way in which this modernization explains levels of participation has remained underdetermined, as contrasting theoretical expectations can be derived from previous insights. Inglehart (1997), building on Maslow (1970), stated in his version of the modernization theory that where people enjoy existential security, increased prosperity would preempt a society-wide culture shift and under conditions of prosperity, citizens would develop self-expressive values. Prosperity tends to encourage the spread of such self-expressive and post-materialist values, whereas economic downturns would have adverse effects on these self-expressive values. Moreover, the spread of these self-expressive values foster a participatory milieu (Welzel & Deutsch, 2012). These self-



expressive values include a critical stance towards authority and rising demands for participation in economic and political decision-making (Welzel & Deutsch, 2012). In short: “With rising levels of economic development, cultural patterns emerge that are increasingly supportive of democracy, making mass publics more likely to want democracy and more skilful at getting it” (Inglehart, 1997, p. 225). Hence, people living under conditions of (prolonged) prosperity are more likely to participate politically, both conventionally and unconventionally.

However, prosperity as such is not the unrivalled ‘*conditio sine qua non*’ that breeds self-expressive and participatory values. Inglehart and Welzel (2010) as well as Welzel and Deutsch (2012) argued that the reassurance of existential security is reinforced by the advent of national-level social welfare institutions that shield citizens for (impending) doom. Moreover, it is especially the existence of social welfare institutions found in prosperous societies that prompt self-expressive value orientations and induce a shift towards an increasingly participatory milieu. In short, not only prosperity as such, but also more extensive welfare systems are associated with a more critical and participatory political milieu in a country. Thus, our hypothesis reads: In more prosperous countries and/or in countries with more extensive welfare systems, citizens are more likely to participate in conventional and unconventional political actions (5).

Where Inglehart (1997) associated modernization with support for self-expressive values and higher levels of participation, others proposed that modernization could have detrimental effects on civic engagement in general and political participation specifically. Putnam (2000) argued that modernization has brought about civic disengagement in the US. In prosperous contexts, individuals live under increased pressures for time and money, are heavily exposed to contemporary technology, which altogether would decrease associational involvement and ‘civic virtue’ in general (Putnam, 2000). Putnam (2000) further claims that the existence of public associations in previous decades had fostered civic virtues such as cooperation and solidarity. In contemporary, more prosperous societies, however, disintegration of traditional social bonds and declining participation in public associations has spurred increasingly atomized societies where voters retreat in their own private sphere and citizens are “bowling alone”. The most emblematic symptom of widespread disengagement (at least in the United States) would be lower levels of political participation. In this vein, prosperity engenders alienation from society and social isolation (Newton & Giebler, 2008). Again, we derive a contrasting hypothesis derived from the lines of reasoning of Inglehart (1997) versus Putnam (2000): In more prosperous countries, citizens are less likely to participate in conventional and unconventional political actions (6).

Following the resource-based perspective, we propose two more cross-level interaction hypotheses arguing that prosperity strengthens the effect of education on political participation. Concerning hypothesis 5 we argue that modernization, creating a society wide development of a participatory milieu and its effect on political participation will be stronger for those who have the individual-level resources to participate, i.e., the

higher educated. Hence, the effects of prosperity and more extensive social welfare systems on political participation are expected to be stronger for higher educated compared to lower educated citizens (7).

Contrastingly, following the line of reasoning as proposed by Putnam (2000) atomization and voters retreating in their own sphere will most likely occur among those who do not have the resources to participate to begin with, i.e. the lower educated. Atomization would be more likely to occur among lower educated given their lack of skills to participate but political participation among higher educated would be affected to a lesser extent since they can draw from a wider pool of skills to participate. Hence our hypothesis reads: The effect of prosperity and more extensive social welfare systems on political participation is weaker for higher educated compared to lower educated citizens (8).

### 3.2.2.3 *Constrict theory*

Against a background of widespread immigration, Putnam (2007) claimed that ethnic diversity hampers civic engagement in the US due to the withdrawal of people from virtually every aspect of collective life people in ethnically diverse contexts: “Rather, inhabitants of diverse communities tend to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbours ... to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform *more*, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference.” (Putnam, 2007, p. 151, emphasis in original).

One of the most emblematic symptoms of withdrawal from collective life would be lower voter turnout. Putnam’s explanation is that inhabitants of ethnically diverse settings tend to “hunker down” or “pull in like a turtle (Putnam, 2007, p. 149). Surprisingly, Putnam (2007) noted that, although individuals register to vote less in ethnically diverse contexts and that they have less political efficacy, they might agitate for social reform more strongly through channels of unconventional political participation, compared to ethnically homogenous contexts. Accordingly, hunkering down would not apply to unconventional means of political participation. In this vein, we argue that in more ethnically heterogeneous contexts it is less likely to participate conventionally whereas it is more likely to participate unconventionally. Along these lines, we derive two hypotheses: in more ethnically diverse countries, citizens are less likely to participate in conventional political actions (9) and more likely to participate in unconventional political actions (10).

## 3.3 DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

### 3.3.1 *Data*

To assess differences in levels of conventional and unconventional participation in Europe we used survey-data from the European Social Survey (ESS) (ESS, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010). The ESS is a cross-nationally comparable survey aimed to describe and explain the interaction between Europe’s changing institutions and the social and

political beliefs and behaviour of European citizens. The target population of the ESS is people aged 15 and over in each participating country. The data were collected by face-to-face interviews. The ESS implemented extensive efforts to improve survey accuracy. For instance, in all countries, systematic random samples were drawn and agreement was reached among the research teams about the exact composition of the sampling frames. Several measures were taken to increase response rates. For instance providing incentives for participants and specific interviewer training. Response rates exceeded 60 per cent in most cases. Non-response error was closely monitored to ensure representativeness. Additionally, efforts have been made to decrease measurement error by paying close attention to translation of survey-questions. These examples, aimed to improve survey accuracy illustrate that the ESS explicitly aims to comply with the highest methodological standards for cross-nationally comparative survey research (see for instance: Billiet, Vehovar, Beullens & Matsuo, 2009).

### 3.3.2 *Measurements*

The participating countries and sample-size are displayed in Table 3.1. Additionally, the ESS-data were enriched with contextual level indicators as described in the sections below.

#### 3.3.2.1 *Political participation*

Unconventional political participation refers to ‘demonstrating’, ‘boycotting’, and ‘signing petitions’. The exact question wording is displayed in Table 3.2. Linssen et al. (2014) showed, using probabilistic scale modelling techniques (Mokken scale analysis), that people who participate in more ‘difficult’ unconventional actions, such as protesting, on average also participate in less demanding activities such as signing petitions. The item-ordering pattern, from ‘less difficult’ to ‘more difficult’, in unconventional actions is: signing petitions, boycotting products, and attending demonstrations, respectively. Consequently, for unconventional political participation we constructed a scale, which represents the sum-score on the relevant dichotomous indicators as presented in Table 3.2. For conventional political participation, the ESS included the items displayed in Table 3.2 in their core modules, which are implemented in every wave. We used the items ‘voted in most recent parliamentary elections’, ‘membership of political parties’, and ‘working in a political party or action group’ to measure conventional political participation. The item ordering from less difficult to more difficult is voting, membership, and working for political parties. Hence, those who work for political parties or are members of a political party membership also vote. This pattern in item ordering is identical (and therefore equivalent) across countries and over time for the period 2002-2008 (Linssen et al., 2014).<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Additional Mokken scale analyses and assessments of equivalence on the most recent ESS dataset for 2010 are in line with the results of Linssen et al. (2014). Additionally, analyses excluding the non-equivalent measures yielded the same results as presented here.

## PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT IN EUROPE

**Table 3.1** Participating countries and sample sizes by year.

Country	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	Country-year	n
Austria	1,969	1,780	2,047	0	0	3	5,796
Belgium	1,636	1,615	1,551	1,547	1,530	5	7,879
Czech Republic	1,241	2,370	0	1,822	2,153	4	7,586
Germany	2,630	2,448	2,608	2,469	2,697	5	12,852
Denmark	1,399	1,355	1,383	1,491	1,420	5	7,048
Estonia	0	1,691	1,316	1,414	1,558	4	5,979
Spain	1,436	1,459	1,570	2,190	1,562	5	8,217
Finland	1,736	1,851	1,699	1,919	1,665	5	8,870
France <sup>a</sup>	0	0	1,694	1,813	1,516	3	5,023
United Kingdom	1,924	1,747	2,225	2,166	2,271	5	10,333
Greece	2,352	2,263	0	1,913	2,473	4	9,001
Hungary	1,626	1,413	1,419	1,384	1,493	5	7,335
Ireland	1,894	2,043	1,522	1,613	2,369	5	9,441
Netherlands	2,238	1,772	1,759	1,664	1,725	5	9,158
Norway	1,937	1,602	1,590	1,361	1,368	5	7,858
Poland	1,927	1,537	1,582	1,462	1,500	5	8,008
Portugal	1,395	1,846	2,070	2,070	1,932	5	9,313
Sweden	1,852	1,745	1,777	1,620	1,379	5	8,373
Slovenia	1,358	1,321	1,316	1,227	1,250	5	6,472
Slovakia	0	1,311	1,598	1,714	1,780	4	6,403
Total	30,550	33,169	30,726	32,859	33,641	92	160,945

<sup>a</sup> Although France participated in the ESS in in 2002 and 2004, the question on feelings with present income was excluded.

**Table 3.2** Question wording ESS-items for conventional and unconventional political participation

Mode and question wording	Answer categories
Unconventional political participation	
During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following:	Yes/No
signed a petition?	Yes/No
taken part in a lawful public demonstration?	Yes/No
boycotted certain products?	Yes/No
Conventional political participation	
Voting:	
Some people don't vote nowadays for one reason or another.	
Did you vote in the last [country] national election in [month/year]?	Yes/No
Other conventional political participation (membership and working for political parties):	
During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following:	
worked in a political party or action group?	Yes/No
Are you a member of any political party?	Yes/No

However, voting can be considered a truly distinct activity compared to membership and working for political parties, as voting is only done once every few years. Both membership and working for political parties usually involves more prolonged commitments. Moreover, voting is by far the most popular activity and there are considerable differences between the shares of voters and party members. Thus, the total scale-score for conventional political participation will be disproportionally influenced by changes in the proportion of people who vote. Hence, for conventional political participation we used two dichotomous indicators: voting, versus either being a member of a political party or working for a political party.

### 3.3.2.2 Individual level characteristics

For resources, we used measures on employment class and education. Educational achievement was operationalized as the number of years respondents received a full-time education.

To assess employment, we used information on the respondents' main activity during the last 7 days before the interview. We distinguished between doing paid work, being unemployed, being a student, housekeeping, retired, and other activities. For those who have paid work, we transformed the ISCO-classification used in the ESS to a condensed version of the well-known EGP-classification measuring job class (Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero, 1979; Güveli, 2006). The various categories are displayed in Table 3.3.

In addition, to measure subjective evaluation of someone's socio-economic status or feelings of relative deprivation we used the following statement: "Which of these descriptions comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?"

This item included the answer categories “living comfortably on present income”, “coping on present income”, “finding it difficult on present income”, and “finding it very difficult on present income”. The response “finding it very difficult on present income” has the highest score, so higher scores on the subjective socio-economic status scale represent increased deprivation. Descriptive statistics for individual (and contextual) level characteristics (mean centred) are displayed in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3** Descriptive statistics

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	S.D	n
Dependent variables					
Unconventional political participation	0	3	0.44	0.73	160,945
Voting	0	1	0.79	0.41	160,945
Membership & working for political parties	0	1	0.07	0.25	160,945
Contextual level characteristics					
Kaufman voice & accountability (centred)	-0.36	0.32	0	0.24	20
ln (GDP) per capita (centred)	-1.13	0.85	0	0.66	20
Social security expenditure (centred)	-9.19	6.68	0	4.35	20
Migrant stock (centred)	-7.18	6.27	0	4.08	20
Individual level characteristics					
Years of full-time education completed	0	30	12.19	4.16	160,945
Difficulty to cope on present income	1	4	2.01	0.85	160,945
Year of birth	1,906	1,996	1,957.30	17.73	160,945
				%	n
EGP					
Service class				19	30,258
Routine non-manuals				12	18,888
Self-employed				4	6,733
Manual workers				16	25,481
Missing EGP (employed)				1	1,304
Unemployed				4	5,863
Student				5	7,908
Housekeeping				10	15,626
Retired				25	39,820
Other employment status				6	9,064

Additionally, we control for age. Age was found to be associated with political participation. Yet, the direction of the effect of age on political participation is debated. Some authors argue that younger people are less likely to participate in politics (Brady et al., 1995). Contrastingly, others (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Welzel, 2010) argue that younger people are increasingly more likely to participate politically, especially in unconventional modes. Younger people, socialized in more prosperous times, would have more self-expressive values that encourage a critical stance towards authority, which would lead to more political participation. Since we are primarily interested in contextual-level effects on conventional and unconventional political participation, rather than disentangling the aforementioned mechanisms, we will treat age as a control variable in our analyses.

Age was measured by the respondents' year of birth. To control for possible non-linear effects we included a quadratic term as well.

### 3.3.2.3 *Contextual level characteristics*

To measure political openness we used the Kaufmann voice and accountability index developed by the World Bank. This index measures the extent to which citizens are able to participate in selecting their government as well as their freedom of expression, freedom of association, and freedom of the media (Kaufmann, Kraay & Mastruzzi, 2004), which mirrors the openness of a political system. The index ranges from -2.5 (bad governance, no opportunities to voice political concerns) to 2.5 (good governance and ample opportunities to voice concerns). Since there is hardly any longitudinal variance in our dependent variables, we used the average value of the Kaufman voice and accountability index based on the 2002-2010 period.

For modernization, we employ two indicators. First, the average GDP per capita (in constant 2000 US Dollars) was calculated for the 2002-2010 period, based on information from the World Bank. GDP per capita measures the extent to which a country is prosperous. This is often used as a proxy for degree of modernization (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005, 2010; Norris, 2011). The natural logarithm of GDP per capita was incorporated in our models, as this is more true to the relationship with our dependent variables compared to using raw GDP per capita. Second, we used the average of social security expenditure as percentage of GDP in 2002-2010. These statistics were derived from the OECD social expenditure dataset (OECD, 2012) By doing so, we measured the extent to which different countries provide a safety net for their inhabitants.

## PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT IN EUROPE

**Table 3.4** Dependent variables and contextual characteristics by country

Country	Unconventional political participation	Voting	Working & Membership of political parties	Kaufman index	Social security expenditure	Migrant stock	GDP per capita (in thousands USD)	Ln (GDP) per capita
Austria	0.17	0.85	0.17	1.38	27.26	14.04	25.84	10.16
Belgium	0.15	0.90	0.09	1.41	26.36	8.65	24.14	10.09
Czech R.	0.09	0.60	0.05	1.01	19.74	4.38	7.20	8.88
Germany	0.22	0.82	0.05	1.41	26.80	12.72	24.26	10.10
Denmark	0.21	0.93	0.09	1.62	27.01	7.81	31.20	10.35
Estonia	0.05	0.63	0.06	1.07	13.10	15.60	5.95	8.69
Spain	0.18	0.81	0.07	1.17	21.16	9.60	15.65	9.66
Finland	0.20	0.82	0.09	1.58	25.56	3.35	26.66	10.19
France	0.25	0.76	0.05	1.26	28.72	10.28	22.74	10.03
UK	0.21	0.72	0.04	1.36	20.18	9.40	28.10	10.24
Greece	0.07	0.86	0.08	0.98	20.55	8.50	13.73	9.53
Hungary	0.04	0.78	0.02	1.07	22.29	3.30	5.56	8.62
Ireland	0.13	0.77	0.07	1.39	15.77	15.02	29.14	10.28
Netherlands	0.12	0.84	0.07	1.56	20.65	10.38	25.74	10.16
Norway	0.23	0.86	0.13	1.58	22.43	8.20	40.23	10.60
Poland	0.05	0.69	0.03	0.95	21.26	2.16	5.59	8.63
Portugal	0.04	0.74	0.04	1.29	22.25	7.36	11.69	9.37
Sweden	0.28	0.90	0.09	1.56	28.97	12.48	31.29	10.35
Slovenia	0.06	0.74	0.06	1.07	21.92	8.38	12.25	9.41
Slovakia	0.11	0.74	0.04	0.93	16.53	2.31	7.27	8.89
Total	0.14	0.79	0.07	1.28	22.42	8.69	19.71	9.71

Ethnic diversity was operationalized using the ‘migrant stock’ (UN-DESA, 2012) indices. This measure is a commonly used proxy for ethnic diversity (Gesthuizen et al., 2009).<sup>3</sup> For each country in our dataset, this indicator estimates the percentage of citizens born outside the country in a given year. We included the average migrant stock for each country for the available data, which was based on data from 2000, 2005, and 2010. Descriptive statistics for contextual characteristics are shown in Table 3.3 in the previous section. All dependent variables and contextual characteristics by country are displayed in Table 3.4.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> We also considered using ethnic fractionalization measures as provided by Alesina and La Ferrara (2002). However, the most recently available data on ethnic fractionalization for some countries are rather out-dated. For instance, the latest available measure of ethnic fractionalization for the Czech Republic stems from 1991 which is 19 years prior to the latest wave of the ESS we analyse (2010). Savelkoul et al. (2011) used the percentage of non-OECD migrants as a proxy for ethnic diversity. Unfortunately, limited data availability does not allow us to calculate this for all countries studied here.

<sup>4</sup> Note that the contextual characteristics are mean centred in the analyses whereas the actual range is displayed in Table 3.4



### 3.4 ANALYSES

Because individuals participate politically within their country's context, and some of our hypotheses relate to country specific characteristics that determine political participation, we used multilevel analyses (Snijders and Bosker, 1999). Our models consist of three levels, where individuals are nested within country-year combinations (the various ESS-samples) and these country-year combinations are nested within countries.

#### 3.4.1 *Estimation strategy*

First, unconventional political participation was analysed with multilevel linear regression. Second, we ran analyses for voting versus non-voting; and for membership and/or working for political parties versus no membership and/or working for political parties. Since these measures consist of dichotomous responses, we employed multilevel logistic regression.

We started our analyses using 'null models' to determine the extent to which there was individual-level, country-year-level, and country-level variance in terms of intra-class correlation. We controlled for all individual level characteristics in model 1 to take into account possible composition effects. In model 1 all individual and contextual characteristics are entered simultaneously. In models 2 to 4 we include the cross-level interaction terms between the relevant country-level characteristics and years of full time education. Since we have a rather small number of countries ( $n=20$ ) we needed to be parsimonious in modelling the cross-level interaction terms. Hence, the cross-level interaction terms are estimated for each contextual determinant subsequently in model 2 to 4.<sup>5</sup>

When choosing an appropriate estimation strategy, we took several issues into account. First, the correlation coefficients between the country-level indicators in Table 3.5 suggest that there might be multicollinearity between explanatory variables at the country level. Second, since we combined 2002- 2010, there might be longitudinal variance in political participation that could potentially distort our results. Third, as a result of the small number of countries studies our estimates might be sensitive to outliers.

We acknowledge that the correlation between the Kaufman voice and accountability index and GDP is high (Pearson's correlation coefficient: 0.88), see Table 3.5.

---

<sup>5</sup> We excluded the cross-level interaction terms between education and migrant stock for reasons of brevity as they proved to be non-significant for all dependent variables.

To assess whether our models suffer from multicollinearity, we tested the effects of the contextual-level determinants in a number of different combinations. We first entered all (mean centred) country-level determinants separately and added contextual predictors in subsequent models. The results of the models including a parsimonious set of indicators did not substantially differ from the models including the full set of predictors presented below. Moreover, in a single-level analysis using only the contextual level determinants the variance inflation factors did not exceed 5 (O'Brien, 2007). This serves as an extra, albeit circumstantial, indication that our estimates do not suffer from multicollinearity

**Table 3.5** Pearson's Rho correlation coefficients between contextual level characteristics (n= 20 countries).

	Kaufman voice and accountability index	ln(GDP)	Social security expenditure	Migrant stock
Kaufman voice and accountability index	1			
ln(GDP)	0.88***	1		
Social security expenditure	0.53**	0.53**	1	
Migrant stock	0.36	0.46**	0.01	1

\*  $p < 0.10$  \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed).

Previous research showed that political participation is rather stable over time between 2002 and 2008 (Linssen et al., 2014); additional analyses showed that this also held after including data from 2010. To assess the extent to which longitudinal variance in political participation could distort our results we employed several robustness checks. First, to test whether longitudinal differences within countries are relevant, we ran more parsimonious two-level models, where individuals were solely nested in countries instead of the three-level model presented here. Second, we estimated models using time-varying measures of our dependent variables, the Kaufman voice and accountability index, GDP, and social security expenditure for each wave in the ESS. This was unfortunately not possible for the migrant stock measure as this was only available for 2000, 2005, and 2010. We could not construct time-varying measures that correspond with the waves of the ESS (biannually for the period 2002-2010). Therefore resorted to the average migrant stock based on 2000,2005, and 2010 data. By doing so, we still accounted for the possibility of longitudinal variance in our dependent variables for the prolonged period 2002-2010. Therefore, we ran a three-level model where country-years (the various ESS-samples) were nested within countries and individuals were nested within country-year combinations. We compared the results from a two-level model, our three-level model and a model with time-varying predictors and found that our results proved to be robust.

The stability of the estimates across these models (time-varying covariates, a two-level specification and the final model three-level specification) serves as indicative evidence that our model specification does not suffer from multicollinearity.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, the number of level-three units (countries) was rather small (n=21). Consequently, our estimates might be sensitive to outliers. This proved to be the case for Switzerland, which we excluded from the analyses for several reasons. Switzerland is exceptional in migrant stock, GDP per capita, and political participation. Migrant stock is relatively high in Switzerland due to the presence of numerous international organizations, attracting highly educated professionals. Besides, Switzerland has a relatively high GDP per capita. Next, the institutional structure in Switzerland is also unique since it is geared to direct decision-making during the referenda organized in each Canton. In our analyses, the effect of ethnic diversity on unconventional political participation is positive when including Switzerland but disappears when excluding Switzerland. Hence, including Switzerland in the analyses solely drove the positive effect of ethnic diversity on unconventional political participation. We consider our models excluding Switzerland as an even stricter test of the general tenability of our hypotheses. The positive effect of ethnic diversity on unconventional political participation, when including Switzerland, is very likely to be a result of Switzerland's exceptional migrant population (where a large number expats work for numerous international organizations) rather than the theoretical mechanism proposed by Putnam (2007).

Austria can also be considered an outlier at the level of party membership and working for political parties is rather high. However, excluding Austria from our analyses did not change our estimates substantially in terms of significance and direction; only the effect-sizes for GDP and social security expenditure on membership and working for political parties were marginally smaller after excluding Austria, so this country is included.

### 3.5 RESULTS

Results of our multilevel regression for unconventional political participation are displayed in Table 3.6. The results for conventional modes of political participation are presented in Table 3.7 (working for and membership of political parties) and Table 3.8 (voting). The unconventional modes are analysed with a linear regression model, whereas both conventional modes are analysed using logistic regression models.

---

<sup>6</sup> At the country-level for unconventional political participation the value of the intra class correlation is 0.095 and at the country\*year-level 0.01. See appendix Table A.3.1, A.3.2, and A.3.3. For voting and membership and/or working for political parties a similar picture emerges. The intra-class-correlation for voting and membership and/or working equals 0.075 at the country-level and 0.01 at the country-year level. We accounted for the possibility of longitudinal variance in our model by estimating a three level model. The low intra-class correlation at the country-year level, for all dependent variables demonstrates that there is little fluctuation over time in levels of political participation in the countries studied here.

PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT IN EUROPE

**Table 3.6** Multilevel regression analysis: unconventional political participation (linear) n=160,945 level 1 (individuals), n=92 level 2 (country\*year), n=20 level 3 (countries)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Individual-level fixed effects</i>								
Intercept	-.224***	(.048)	-.224***	(.046)	-.224***	(.044)	-.224***	(.045)
Years of full time education	.032***	(.003)	.032***	(.002)	.032***	(.002)	.032***	(.002)
EGP								
Service class	ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Routine non-manuals	-.060***	(.006)	-.060***	(.006)	-.060***	(.006)	-.060***	(.006)
Self-employed	-.107***	(.009)	-.108***	(.009)	-.107***	(.009)	-.107***	(.009)
Manual workers	-.150***	(.006)	-.150***	(.006)	-.150***	(.006)	-.150***	(.006)
Missing EGP (employed)	-.054***	(.019)	-.054***	(.019)	-.054***	(.019)	-.054***	(.019)
Unemployed	-.105***	(.010)	-.105***	(.010)	-.105***	(.010)	-.105***	(.010)
Student	.083***	(.010)	.083***	(.010)	.083***	(.010)	.083***	(.010)
Housekeeping	-.120***	(.007)	-.120***	(.007)	-.120***	(.007)	-.120***	(.007)
Retired	-.122***	(.007)	-.122***	(.007)	-.122***	(.007)	-.122***	(.007)
Other employment status	-.094***	(.008)	-.094***	(.008)	-.094***	(.008)	-.094***	(.008)
Negative feeling household income	.009***	(.002)	.009***	(.002)	.009***	(.002)	.009***	(.002)
Year of birth	.013***	(.002)	.013***	(.002)	.013***	(.002)	.013***	(.002)
Year of birth <sup>2</sup>	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)
<i>Country level fixed effects</i>								
Kaufman voice and accountability index	.116	(.171)	.000	(.186)	.117	(.171)	.116	(.171)
ln(GDP)	.055	(.066)	.055	(.066)	-.005	(.070)	.055	(.066)
Social security expenditure	.006	(.005)	.006	(.005)	.006	(.005)	-.001	(.007)
Migrant stock	-.003	(.005)	-.003	(.005)	-.003	(.005)	-.003	(.005)
<i>Cross-level interaction terms</i>								
Kaufman voice and accountability index* years of full time education			.013	(.008)				
ln(GDP)* years of full time education					.007**	(.003)		
Social security expenditure* years of full time education							.001	(.000)
Country*year level variance	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)
Individual level variance	.448	(.002)	.448	(.002)	.448	(.002)	.448	(.002)
-2*loglikelihood:	327985.465		327983.188		327981.504		327983.280	

\*  $p < 0.10$  \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed) ref. = reference category.

### 3.5.1 *Individual level*

We hypothesized that high resources foster all modes of political participation (hypothesis 1). Table 3.6 shows that the higher educated participate more in unconventional modes. Moreover, those in the service class, which is the highest class (reference category), participate most compared to the other categories, as demonstrated by the negative estimates for all EGP-dummies. A notable exception to this pattern are students who participate even more compared to the highest class. Furthermore, Table 3.6 indicates that respondents who find it difficult to cope on their current household income are more inclined to participate in unconventional modes.

A comparable picture emerges from the results for conventional modes of political participation. For membership and working for political parties (Table 3.7), and voting (Table 3.8) we find that the higher educated and the service class are more likely to participate most in conventional modes of political participation. Again, students are notable exceptions. We find that students are significantly more likely to be a member of or work for political parties (compared to the service class) but they are less likely to vote. Those who find it difficult to cope on their present income participate less in conventional modes. Given that the higher educated and the higher social classes participate more in all modes of political participation, hypothesis 1 is corroborated.

### 3.5.2 *Contextual level*

We derived two competing hypotheses concerning the effect of the openness of political systems on the level of political participation. Either open political systems fuel all modes of participation (hypothesis 2) or closed systems force people to use modes of participation outside the legal-institutional framework, thereby specifically fuelling unconventional modes of participation (hypothesis 3).

In model 1 for conventional modes of political participation in Tables 3.7, and 3.8 all the contextual determinants are entered simultaneously. We find no significant effect for political openness on membership and working for political parties in Table 3.7, but for voting a positive effect is found (see Table 3.8, model 1,  $b = 1.190$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that citizens are more likely to vote in open societies. We find no effect of openness on unconventional political participation (Table 3.6, model 1,  $b = 0.116$ , non-significant).

Hence, our results only partly corroborate hypothesis 2 as we find that in countries with open political systems citizens are more likely to vote. However, the openness of political systems does not affect the other conventional modes studied (membership and working for political parties). Unconventional participation is not affected by the openness of a system. Consequently, hypothesis 3 is rejected.

PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT IN EUROPE

**Table 3.7** Multilevel regression analysis: membership and working for political parties (logit, 2nd order PQL), n=160,945 level 1 (individuals), n=92 level 2 (country\*year), n=20 level 3 (countries)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Individual-level fixed effects</i>								
Intercept	-2.967***	(.278)	-2.976***	(.247)	-2.977***	(.239)	-2.969***	(.255)
Years of full time education	.071***	(.009)	.072***	(.008)	.072***	(.007)	.071***	(.009)
EGP								
Service class	ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Routine non-manuals	-.282***	(.040)	-.282***	(.040)	-.282***	(.040)	-.282***	(.040)
Self-employed	-.017	(.053)	-.017	(.053)	-.017	(.053)	-.017	(.053)
Manual workers	-.022	(.037)	-.022	(.037)	-.022	(.037)	-.023	(.037)
Missing EGP (employed)	.078	(.105)	.077	(.104)	.077	(.104)	.077	(.105)
Unemployed	-.135*	(.071)	-.135*	(.070)	-.135*	(.070)	-.136*	(.071)
Student	.353***	(.061)	.352***	(.061)	.352***	(.061)	.352***	(.061)
Housekeeping	-.553***	(.049)	-.552***	(.049)	-.552***	(.049)	-.552***	(.049)
Retired	-.170***	(.041)	-.170***	(.041)	-.169***	(.041)	-.170***	(.041)
Other employment status	-.081	(.052)	-.081	(.052)	-.081	(.052)	-.081	(.052)
Negative feeling household income	-.130***	(.015)	-.130***	(.015)	-.130***	(.015)	-.130***	(.015)
Year of birth	.013	(.008)	.013	(.008)	.013	(.008)	.013	(.008)
Year of birth2	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)
<i>Country level fixed effects</i>								
Kaufman voice and accountability index	.547	(.573)	2.255	(.880)	.548	(.575)	.546	(.580)
Ln(GDP)	.027	(.224)	.024	(.225)	.777**	(.311)	.023	(.227)
Social security expenditure	-.006	(.018)	-.006	(.018)	-.006	(.018)	.056	(.043)
Migrant stock	.026	(.018)	.025	(.018)	.025	(.018)	.026	(.019)
<i>Cross-level interaction terms</i>								
Kaufman voice and accountability index* years of full time education			-.090**	(.035)				
ln(GDP)* years of full time education					-.040***	(.012)		
Social security expenditure* years of full time education							-.003	(.002)
Country* year level variance	.021	(.005)	.021	(.005)	.021	(.005)	.021	(.005)
Individual level variance	$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$	

\*  $p < 0.10$  \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed) ref. = reference category.

At the individual level we hypothesized that the more resources an individual possesses, the more likely to he or she is to participate in politics. Furthermore, we argued that given the possible interplay between context and individuals, the effect of openness of systems is stronger among higher versus lower educated citizens (hypothesis 4). This is tested in model 2 of Tables 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8. For each mode of political participation we included the cross-level interaction between the Kaufman voice and accountability index and educational level.

Note that we did not find that the openness of a system affects the level of unconventional political participation in general. When we compare the higher and lower educated, we also find that this does not differ for higher and lower educated individuals as demonstrated by the non-significant cross-level interaction term in Table 3.6, model 2. For membership and working for political parties, Table 3.7, model 2, shows, contrary to our expectations, that the effect of open systems is actually weaker for the higher educated ( $b = -0.090$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Finally, as mentioned, open political systems do facilitate voting, yet we do not find that this effect is stronger among higher versus lower educated citizens (see Table 3.8, model 2). These results clearly reject hypothesis 4.

As to the interplay between the prosperity of the context and one's individual level resources, we argued that the effect of prosperity and social security expenditure is stronger for higher educated citizens. In hypothesis 7 we followed Inglehart (1997) and Welzel and Deutsch (2012) line of reasoning that modernization and the associated participatory milieu predominantly led to more participation among the higher educated. Contrastingly, based on Putnam's (2000) notion we argued that mainly the lower educated citizens retreat into their own sphere. Thus, the effect of prosperity and social security expenditure would be weaker for higher educated citizens (hypothesis 8). This is tested in model 3 for GDP and in model 4 for social security expenditure by including the cross-level interaction terms. For unconventional political participation we demonstrate that the effect of GDP is stronger for the higher educated (Table 3.6, model 3,  $b = 0.007$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Thus, higher educated people are even more likely to participate in unconventional modes in more prosperous societies. For membership and working for political parties, we find the exact opposite. The higher educated are actually less likely to work for or be a membership of political parties in prosperous contexts (see Table 3.7, model 3,  $b = -0.040$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

PARTICIPATION IN CONTEXT IN EUROPE

**Table 3.8** Multilevel regression analysis: voting (logit, 2nd order PQL), n=160,945 level 1 (individuals), n=92 level 2 (country\*year), n=20 level 3 (countries)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Individual-level fixed effects</i>								
Intercept	.903***(.117)		.902***(.117)		.903***(.117)		.900***(.113)	
Years of full time education	.091***(.009)		.091***(.009)		.091***(.009)		.091***(.009)	
EGP								
Service class	ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Routine non-manuals	-.241***(.027)		-.241***(.027)		-.242***(.027)		-.241***(.027)	
Self-employed	-.357***(.038)		-.356***(.038)		-.357***(.038)		-.356***(.038)	
Manual workers	-.471***(.026)		-.470***(.026)		-.472***(.026)		-.471***(.026)	
Missing EGP (employed)	-.325***(.075)		-.324***(.075)		-.325***(.075)		-.324***(.075)	
Unemployed	-.662***(.037)		-.662***(.037)		-.663***(.037)		-.662***(.037)	
Student	-.497***(.035)		-.496***(.035)		-.497***(.035)		-.496***(.035)	
Housekeeping	-.340***(.030)		-.339***(.030)		-.340***(.030)		-.339***(.030)	
Retired	-.272***(.032)		-.271***(.032)		-.272***(.032)		-.272***(.032)	
Other employment status	-.656***(.033)		-.655***(.033)		-.656***(.033)		-.655***(.033)	
Negative feeling household income	-.239***(.009)		-.239***(.009)		-.239***(.009)		-.239***(.009)	
Year of birth	.051***(.007)		.051***(.007)		.051***(.007)		.051***(.007)	
Year of birth <sup>2</sup>	-.001***(.000)		-.001***(.000)		-.001***(.000)		-.001***(.000)	
<i>Country level fixed effects</i>								
Kaufman voice and accountability index	1.190** (.453)		.867 (.603)		1.197** (.454)		1.200** (.454)	
ln(GDP)	.312* (.170)		.320* (.170)		.351 (.222)		.308* (.170)	
Social security expenditure	.013 (.014)		.013 (.014)		.013 (.014)		-.022 (.025)	
Migrant stock	-.020 (.014)		-.020 (.014)		-.020 (.014)		-.019 (.014)	
<i>Cross-level interaction terms</i>								
Kaufman voice and accountability index* years of full time education			.020 (.026)					
ln(GDP)* years of full time education					-.003 (.009)			
Social security expenditure* years of full time education							.002 (.001)	
Country* year level variance	.038 (.007)		.038 (.007)		.038 (.007)		.038 (.007)	
Individual level variance	$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$	

\*  $p < 0.10$  \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed) ref. = reference category.



Finally, we do not find that there is a difference in voting between higher and lower educated citizens in prosperous contexts (see Table 3.8, model 3). This corroborates hypothesis 7 for unconventional modes but rejects this hypothesis for membership, working for political parties, and voting. We do find that for higher educated citizens, the effect of GDP is weaker for membership and working for political parties. However, Putnam's (2000) notion was that prosperity induces atomization and a decrease of political participation across the board and moreover mainly for voting. Therefore we do not consider this a corroboration of hypothesis 8. The findings shown in model 4 (Tables 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8) clearly demonstrate there that there is no interaction effect between education and social security expenditure on the various modes of political participation.

Concerning the effects of ethnic diversity on political participation our results unambiguously reject 'constrict theory' (hypothesis 9 and 10). As shown in Table 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8, there is no significant effect whatsoever of migrant stock in all models on all dependent variables. Finally, to summarize and for reasons of surveyability, we displayed the conclusions of all empirical tests in Table 3.9.

### 3.6 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Previous studies produced theoretical and empirical puzzles that allowed us to employ theories leading to contrasting hypotheses explaining cross-national differences in political participation. We focused on three well-established theories, originated from the US, to derive hypotheses explaining political participation in Europe. Where previous studies addressed specific types of participation, such as party membership or protesting separately, in this study we addressed conventional and unconventional modes of participation simultaneously based on the most extensive high quality dataset available for Europe in the first decade of the 21st century. Additionally, we focused on the interplay between individual-level resources and the contextual effects of political openness, modernization and the influx of migrants. Using cross-nationally equivalent measures of political participation, on 160,945 individuals within 20 European countries between 2002 and 2010, we tested these hypotheses by estimating multilevel-regression models, producing robust empirical insights.

**Table 3.9** Summary of findings

	Hypothesis	Variable	Unconventional political participation	Voting	Membership & working for political parties
1	Citizens with more resources participate more in all modes.	Years of full time education	+	+	+
2	In open systems citizens participate more in all modes.	Kaufmann voice and accountability index	-	+	-
3	In closed systems citizens participate more in unconventional modes.	Kaufmann voice and accountability index	-	-	-
4	The effect of openness is stronger for higher versus lower educated (interplay) citizens.	Kaufmann voice and accountability index * years of full time education	-	-	-
5	In more prosperous societies and more extensive welfare systems citizens participate more in all modes.	GDP (prosperity)	-	+	-
6	In more prosperous societies citizens participate less in all modes.	Social security expenditure (extensive welfare systems) GDP	-	-	-
7	The effect of prosperity and extensive welfare systems is stronger for higher versus lower educated citizens.	GDP * years of full time education	+	-	-
8	The effect of prosperity and more extensive social welfare systems is weaker for higher educated versus lower educated citizens.	Social security expenditure *years of full time education * years of full time education	-	-	+
9	In more ethnically diverse countries, citizens are less likely to participate in conventional political actions.	Social security expenditure *years of full time education Migrant stock	-	-	-
10	In more ethnically diverse countries citizens are more likely to participate in unconventional political actions.	Migrant stock	-	-	-

+ = hypothesis corroborated - hypothesis rejected

In line with previous studies (Dalton et al., 2010; Marien et al., 2010; Van der Meer, 2009), we found that individual characteristics account for the major share of variation in political participation. We found support for the resource-based perspective at the individual level. Those with more resources participate more, both conventionally and unconventionally. However, solely these individual characteristics cannot explain the large cross-national differences in political participation. Our results demonstrate that the context of nation states affect conventional and unconventional modes differently. For the countries studied here, we found that open political systems facilitate voting. Yet, we do not find that citizens living in more open contexts are more likely to employ other conventional or unconventional methods of political participation. We further do not find that open political systems facilitate membership and working for political parties in general. We expected a stronger effect of openness on membership and working for political parties specifically for the higher educated citizens. In more open and increasingly complex institutional settings (open systems), citizens with more skills (higher educated) would be better equipped to participate compared to citizens with less skills (lower educated).

However, we found that the effect of open systems is actually weaker for the higher educated compared to lower educated citizens.

Nonetheless, being a member of a political party or carrying out work for political parties is a relatively rare phenomenon. The proportion of people who engage in these political activities is very small, especially when compared to the proportion of people that reported to vote and those that engaged in unconventional activities.

Putnam's (2000) claim that 'civic virtue' in general and political participation in specific are in decline due to modernization and prosperity is refuted. For the European case, the most emblematic mode of political participation, that is voting, is more prevalent in prosperous contexts. Yet, our results suggest that the higher educated participate more in unconventional modes to begin with. Moreover, in prosperous contexts, the higher educated participate even more in unconventional political activities compared to the lower educated. This finding lends support to the findings of Inglehart and Welzel (2005) as well as Welzel and Deutsch (2012) that prosperity creates a participatory milieu. They build on Inglehart's (1997) claim that prosperous contexts breed values that are increasingly supportive of democracy. We demonstrate that it is mainly the higher educated that benefit from this participatory milieu regarding unconventional modes of participation.

This adds to the findings of Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier (2010). They suggest that traditional patterns of stratification on the basis of education in conventional modes are reproduced in relatively newer unconventional modes. Our results reveal that this stratification especially is related to unconventional modes in more prosperous contexts. Our findings therefore confirm the finding by Dalton, Van Sickle and Weldon (2010) who also find a stronger impact of prosperity on unconventional modes of participation for the higher educated. Additionally, we find that for higher educated citi-

zens the effect of prosperity is actually smaller on membership and working for political parties is actually weaker. This contradicts Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier (2010) presumption for the conventional modes membership and working for political parties. For voting this does not hold, which may be due to the fact that voting is a truly distinct activity compared the unconventional modes, but also compared to membership and working for political parties, all requiring more time-intensive and prolonged commitments compared to voting once every few years.

The existence of extensive social welfare institutions does not have any additional effect on modes of political participation. We also found no evidence for Putnam's (2007) claim that ethnic diversity has detrimental effects on conventional political participation and positive effects on unconventional political participation, at least not in Europe. In fact, we do not find any effect for ethnic diversity at the contextual level, at all. Yet, the question remains at which level of aggregation this can be observed. We can imagine more specific and direct surroundings at lower levels of aggregation compared to the country-level, such as neighbourhoods and voting districts, which could possibly affect modes of political participation. However, such data are not available in the ESS. Such questions can (only) be answered with national data identifying respondents at lower levels, and then enriching these data with contextual data.

Finally, although conventional and unconventional political participation are qualitatively different phenomena, Barnes and Kaase (1979) already noted that the same socio-demographic categories of people tend to engage cumulatively in both conventional and unconventional modes, which is corroborated by our results.



# 4.

## Conventional and unconventional political participation in times of financial crisis in the Netherlands, 2002-2012

A slightly different version of this chapter is published as Linssen, R., Scheepers, P., Te Grotenhuis, M., & Schmeets, H. (2014). Conventional and Unconventional Political Participation in Times of Political and Financial Crisis in the Netherlands. In: Bardi, L., Kriesi, H., & Trechsel, A. (Eds), Election in Europe in Times of Crisis: Proceedings of the 2013 EODO Conference. European University Institute: Florence.

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTION

After the financial crisis hit Europe in 2008, various protest movements took the stage in the media, and the political and societal realm. Europe (and beyond) witnessed the uprising of a wide variety of protest movements, for instance protests against austerity measures in Greece, the '15M- movement' in Spain and the global 'occupy movement'. These protests are indications that hard economic times might induce people to participate in (protest) politics (Muñoz, Rico & Gallego, 2012; Ponticelli & Voth, 2011).

Beyond the quintessential literature on economic voting, that dealt with the question whether economic conditions influence party-choice and turnout (Anderson, 2007; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000; Radcliff, 1992), surprisingly little attention has been paid to the link between macro-economic conditions and modes of political involvement other than voting such as demonstrating and petitioning. In this contribution, we transpose propositions that stem from the economic voting literature and analyse modes of political participation: political actions conducted within a five years period.

In contexts of economic downturn, austerity policies might spur a reaction in the form of protest, not only among those most affected by the crisis but also among those who feel threatened by a potential deterioration of their own situation. In the Netherlands governments interfere more directly in people's lives through extensive welfare systems making the electorate more likely to blame authorities for a sour economy (Thomassen, 1990). However, without the opportunities present to redress concerns in the political domain it is unlikely that economic downturn spurs political action (Grasso, 2016). The Netherlands is a country with a relatively open political system where participation in political decision making is actively facilitated, especially at the municipal level (Van Eijk, 2013) thereby providing ample opportunities for citizens to voice concerns in the political arena. Moreover, the Netherlands has traditionally high levels of political and community participation (Gesthuizen et al., 2013; Linsen & Schmeets, 2010) and is ranked consistently high in cross-national comparisons of political knowledge or 'civic literacy' (Grönlund & Milner, 2006; Howe, 2006), thereby providing a context where participation in various modes of political participation could thrive.

The once stable and pillarized Dutch political landscape is characterized by increased polarization in the political and electoral realm in recent times (Aarts, Van der Kolk & Rosema, 2007). The Netherlands saw no less than 5 general elections between 2002 and 2012. The three most recent Dutch Parliamentary Elections were held in 2006, 2010, and 2012 and coincided with the rise of the global financial and economic crisis. In 2006, the election came before the global financial crisis. In 2010, the parliamentary elections coincided with the onset of the Eurocrisis and the global economic crisis. Finally, in 2012 after prolonged periods of recession in the Netherlands, the administration lead by Mark Rutte collapsed while negotiating on harsh austerity measures in response to the economic decline. The timing of these elections and thereby the timing of the election studies, provides a unique 'natural experiment' to explore the effect of eco-

conomic downturn on levels of political participation, both for privileged and deprived strata in society.

We attempt to explore the link between macro-economic conditions in recent years in the Netherlands and levels of political participation. Did the recent financial and economic crises induce political participation or did citizens refrain from participating in politics during economic hardship? We set out to assess competing and complementary theoretical propositions concerning the effect of economic conditions on political participation in the Netherlands. Using the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies, we aim to assess to what extent economic conditions affected individual level political participation in the 2002-2012 period among the general population as well as among subpopulations with higher and lower resources.

Therefore, our research question reads: *To what extent are levels of political participation affected in general, and among privileged and underprivileged societal groups during times of economic downturn in the Netherlands between 2002 and 2012?*

## 4.2 THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES

### 4.2.1 *Political participation*

Political participation is broadly defined as those activities aimed at influencing the political decision making process. To take into account a wide range of political actions, we use conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. Conventional political participation refers to all modes of participation directly embedded in legal institutional frameworks, or directly referring to the electoral process and representational system, such as voting, contacting politicians or attending hearings (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). Unconventional political participation includes all modes of political participation not formally linked to the electoral process such as petitioning, demonstrating, and boycotting products (Barnes & Kaase, 1979).

### 4.2.2 *Macro economic conditions*

The Netherlands has witnessed economic decline on several domains in the period 2002-2012. In 2002 4.1 % of the Dutch labour force was unemployed, this rose to 6.4 % of the labour force in 2012 (CBS, 2014a). Prime Minister Balkenende's fourth cabinet that was elected in 2006 was confronted with the global credit crunch. In response to the global financial crisis in 2008, the Dutch government had to support the largest Dutch bank with capital injections and nationalize the second largest bank in the Netherlands. During the last year of Balkenende's fourth cabinet, the global credit crunch started to affect the real economy and economic growth plummeted, especially in the first (-4.0 %) and second quarter of 2009 (-5.0 %) (CBS, 2013a, 2014b) . Moreover, the



situation on the Dutch housing market deteriorated between 2006 and 2012. The number of households whose mortgage exceeded the appraised value of their house doubled between 2006 and 2012 (CBS, 2014c). Against the backdrop of the global financial crisis the national debt rose from 47.4 % of GDP in 2006 to 71.3 % of GDP in 2012 (CBS, 2014c). This was also reflected in the most important national problems mentioned by the electorate. In 2006 only 12 % of the Dutch electorate reported that the economic situation was the most important national problem and this tripled in 2010 (to 38 %) and rose even further to 47 % in 2012 (CBS, 2014d). In line with the figures in 2010 (Hackert, Linssen & Schmeets, 2011), no less than 80 % of the working class and of the lower educated agreed in 2012 with the statement that their own financial situation would deteriorate; when we move up the social ladder, this share gradually declines to 40 % among the higher educated and 30 % among the higher social class (Schmeets & Gielen, 2015). The European sovereign debt crisis and austerity measures in response to the economic downturn were the dominant themes in the election debates preceding the installation of the minority cabinet headed by Prime Minister Rutte in 2010. Finally, the minority cabinet Rutte collapsed when the coalition partners failed to reach agreement over new austerity measures resulting in new general elections in 2012. If there would be an effect of macro-economic conditions on political participation, this would especially be observable within the time frame studied here.

The effect of economic downturn on political participation may take several directions. First, economic adversity might fuel political participation. During economic hardship, governments are forced to resort to retrenchments that cause a gap between what electorates expect and what governments are able to offer (Thomassen, 1990). Governments are blamed for economic duress and this blame spurs political action.<sup>7</sup> This argument is very close to the relative deprivation argument presented above and can be traced back to Marx' concept of 'Verelendung', who argued that in deteriorating economic conditions citizens will resort to protest to voice their political concerns. Also, Davies' (1962) J-curve hypothesis argued that economic conditions mobilize political participation and might even overthrow regimes if a period of economic prosperity is followed by a (short) period of sharp economic decline.

This sharp economic decline would lead to dissatisfaction that in turn induces political action. The competing perspective argues that economic adversity does not provide an incentive to participate but instead depresses political participation. Citizens would be more preoccupied with their personal situation in a sour economy and less able and willing to connect to the remote concerns of politics (Rosenstone, 1982).

---

<sup>7</sup> The prime assumption behind these theories is that electorates actually blame governments for economic hardship. Although these theoretical propositions heavily rely on this assumption, this link is far from clear, as shown by the divergent findings in the literature (Anderson, 2007). However, Radcliffe (1992) as well as Thomassen (1990) suggest that in states such as the Netherlands, it is more likely for electorates to blame their governments, since they interfere more directly in their electorates' lives through their comprehensive welfare systems.

Another line of reasoning is linked to the civic voluntarism model (Verba, et al., 1995). Not only resources such as time, money and civic skills foster political participation, but political participation is also influenced by citizens' involvement in non-political institutions such as work and voluntary organisations. This could particularly be true for the Netherlands, a country in which almost half of the population is volunteering in, e.g., sport clubs, care institutions and churches. Economic decline would diminish the number of volunteers and consequently reduce political participation. In addition, in line with the resource mobilisation theory (Wilson, 1973), applied to the study of social movements (Jenkins, 1983), social classes respond to different kinds of incentives. Purposive incentives work for middle and upper class groups, while lower-class groups respond to selective incentives and collective solidarity (Wilson 1973). As in particular the lower social classes perceive economic threat (Schmeets & Gielen, 2015), however, selective incentives and collective solidarity will simply not work in the shadow of their position being under threat.

Thus, in times of economic hardship, conventional and unconventional modes of political participation will either increase (hypothesis 1) or decrease (hypothesis 2). Since economic hardship is more prolonged and possibly more severe in 2008-2012 compared to 2006-2010 in the Netherlands, we assume that the effects of economic hardship on political participation will be more pronounced in 2008-2012 compared to 2006-2010.

At the individual level, various studies have empirically demonstrated that political participation, both conventional and unconventional modes, is more prevalent among higher educated and higher-class individuals (Desposato & Norrander, 2009; Norris et al., 2005). Higher social classes, those with higher income, and the higher educated people possess more skills needed for participation (Brady et al., 1995). They have greater confidence that they understand politics and that their efforts to participate in the political arena will bear fruit (Klandermans et al., 2008; Lassen & Serritzlew, 2011; Morrell, 2003). Moreover, the higher educated and those in higher social classes are also more likely to be involved in civic associations that act as 'schools of democracy' (Van der Meer, 2009). These 'civic skills' might reinforce the associations between resources and political participation. Hence, we expect that privileged groups in terms of education and social class participate more in conventional and unconventional modes (hypothesis 3).

Following the resource-based theory, we argue that lower class and lower educated citizens have less resources to participate in politics and therefore persist to refrain from participating, whereas the more resourceful people are more likely to voice their economic concerns in the political domain. Hence, we hypothesize that the economic downturn would increase the gap in participation between privileged and underprivileged groups in society since economic adversity is expected to disproportionately affect the underprivileged who do not have the resources to voice their concerns in the political arena. We expect that the underprivileged, who lack resources to participate to

begin with, participate even less in times of economic downturn as their disposable income will decrease and consequently this will have a detrimental impact on their abilities in getting politically involved. Hence, our hypothesis reads: The initial differences between the underprivileged and the more privileged categories of people will increase over time during the economic crisis (hypothesis 4).

### 4.2.3 *Control variables*

We control for the following socio-demographic characteristics in our analyses: income, country of origin, gender, and age. People of non-Dutch origin participate less in modes of conventional and unconventional political participation (Schmeets & Van der Houwen, 2011). Political participation also varies with age. Younger people are more likely to participate in unconventional modes whereas older people are more likely to participate in conventional modes of political participation: therefore we include age as a control variable in our analyses. Men are more likely to participate in various political actions that range from conventional modes such as contacting politicians to unconventional actions as attending demonstrations (Schmeets, 2010)

## 4.3 DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

To test our hypotheses we used the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES, 2006, 2010, 2012) conducted during the parliamentary election time in the Netherlands. The DPES' aim is to collect high-quality data on the backgrounds of voting behaviour of the Dutch electorate. The sampling frame of the DPES covers the Dutch electorate eligible to vote in parliamentary elections (Dutch citizens aged 18 or older). In 2006 and 2010, respondents were interviewed in a pre-election survey within six weeks before, and shortly after Election Day. We will only use the post-election waves of the DPES 2006 and 2010 as these contained the items on political participation. In 2012, only a post-election survey was carried out within a six-week time frame after Election Day. The post-election waves for the DPES were primarily collected by Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). Additionally, in 2006 and 2010 non-contacts and refusals were re-approached with a shortened questionnaire by telephone or mail. This resulted in response rates of 64.3 % and 57.0 % in the post-election wave (compared to the initial sample) in 2006 and 2010, respectively (Schmeets, 2011). In 2012 no refusal conversion techniques were applied and all respondents were interviewed using CAPI. This resulted in a response rate of 61.9 %.

#### 4.3.1 *Dependent variables: conventional and unconventional political participation.*

Our measure for unconventional political participation refers to participation in political discussions on the internet, participating in action groups and participation in demonstrations or protest meetings. We used involving political parties or organisations, attending hearings, and contacting politicians or civil servants as indicators of conventional political participation. See Table 4.1 for the exact question wording in the DPES, expressing that it concerns political activities employed within the previous five years before the date of the interview.

**Table 4.1** Question wording political participation Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies 2006-2012

Mode of participation	Item	Answer categories
	There are several ways to influence politicians, civil servants or the government. Please list which one you used during the previous five years.	
Unconventional political participation	Participated in a political discussion on the internet, via sms or e-mail.	Yes / No
	Participated in an action group.	Yes / No
	Participated in a demonstration or protest meeting.	Yes / No
Conventional political participation	Contacted a politician or government official.	Yes / No
	Participate in a hearing or consultation meeting organized by the government.	Yes / No
	Tried to involve political party or organisation.	Yes / No

##### 4.3.1.1 *Scale construction: conventional and unconventional political participation*

We constructed separate scales for conventional and unconventional political participation that represent the average score on the relevant dichotomous indicators.<sup>8</sup> We assessed the scalability of these items using probabilistic scale analysis techniques (Mokken, 1971; van Schuur, 2003). Mokken scale analysis is the probabilistic version of the deterministic Guttman scale. Mokken scale analysis uses a set of dichotomous indicators, for instance, involving a political party yes or no, and evaluates whether certain items, such as political discussion on the internet, may be easier and thereby more popular activities compared to others, such as attending a demonstration. The decisive notion is that those who engage in more difficult, i.e. less popular, activities will proba-

<sup>8</sup> We left voting out of our analyses since this is a different kind of political activity compared to the conventional and unconventional activities studied here. People vote once every few years while most of the conventional and unconventional political activities studied here, such as attending a demonstration or writing to government officials, requires more prolonged time commitments.

bly (not necessarily) also engage in easier or more popular activities. This means that the probability of a positive response to an item increases in concordance with the value of a subject's latent trait. Hence, we test whether individuals that engage in a more difficult or less popular activity also engage in a less difficult political activity. Applied to unconventional modes of political participation this means we test whether those that engage in a more difficult activity such as attending a demonstration also engage in easier unconventional political activities such as engaging in a political discussion on the internet.

The cumulative nature of the response on the items for political participation also has important theoretical implications that are neglected when analysing these items separately. It is theoretically assumed that people specialize within either conventional or unconventional modes of participation and that participation is cumulative (c.f. Millbrath, 1965; Verba et al., 1978; Zukin et al., 2006). Mokken-scaling incorporates the respective 'difficulty' of certain acts of political participation vis-à-vis other, easier or more mainstream acts of political participation. By assessing the respective difficulty of acts of political participation using Mokken scaling, we acknowledge this cumulative nature of participation.<sup>9</sup>

In terms of comparability of measurements, or equivalence, we analyse the extent to which the ordering in terms of difficulty of the items is similar over time. If the ordering in modes of political participation is similar over time, measurements are considered equivalent and scale-scores can be compared.

The results of the Mokken scale analysis are presented in Table 4.2. For each act of political participation the proportion of people that engaged in these acts the past five years is shown for conventional and unconventional modes. In the context of Mokken scale analyses, these proportions represent the 'item difficulties'. We find that for unconventional modes of political participation the item ordering pattern from most popular to least popular activity is political discussion on the internet, participation in an action group, and demonstrating, respectively. For conventional modes of political participation, Table 4.2 shows that contacting a politician or government official is the most popular activity, followed by attending a hearing. Involving a political party is the least popular conventional political activity.

---

<sup>9</sup> Mokken scale analysis has numerous advantages over more mainstream scaling methods, such as factor analyses and measurement models specified in structural equation modeling. These methods are based on the decomposition of covariances and assume that frequency distributions of the items can be regarded as 'parallel' and the items have more or less the same mean and standard deviation. Thus, all items need to be equally 'popular' to be adequately used for scaling (van Schuur, 2003). Distribution of the items for political participation clearly demonstrate that this is not the case, e.g. the proportion of people who engage in political discussion on the internet, is considerably larger compared to the proportion of people who attended a demonstration.

**Table 4.2** Mokken scale analysis: item difficulties (proportion positive responses) and Loevinger's H, by year

	Unconventional political participation			Conventional political participation			Loevinger's H
	Participated in political discussion on the internet, via sms or e-mail.	Participated in an action group.	Participated in demonstration or protest meeting.	Loevinger's H	Contacted a politician or government official.	Participate in a hearing or consultation meeting organized by the government.	
2006	0.19	0.08	0.04	0.32	0.12	0.12	0.42
2010	0.22	0.05	0.03	0.31	0.13	0.12	0.45
2012	0.24	0.07	0.04	0.33	0.10	0.09	0.45
Total	0.21	0.07	0.04	0.32	0.12	0.11	0.44

Table 4.2 also shows that the item ordering pattern is similar across time and thus longitudinally equivalent. This is represented in the Loevinger's H coefficients. These represent the scalability of the Mokken scale based on the number of violations of the item-ordering pattern. A violation of the item ordering pattern would occur if respondents do engage in more difficult acts (for instance demonstrating), but do not engage in easier more popular acts (for instance joining a political discussion on the internet). The Loevinger's H coefficients are above the cut-off value of 0.3 (Sijtsma and Molenaar 2002). Based on the results of these Mokken-scale analyses, we construct a scale that consists of the average score on the items pertaining to conventional and unconventional political participation that ranges between 0 and 100 so that our coefficients in the analyses represent the percentage of active citizens.

### 4.3.2 Resources

We operationalized resources in two different ways. First, we used education as a proxy for someone's civic skills and resources. Education is measured in 5 categories: elementary education, lower vocational education, secondary education, middle level vocational education or higher level secondary education, and, finally higher level vocational education or university.<sup>10</sup> We include education as a continuous variable in our analyses. Second, we used social class as a proxy for resources and relative deprivation. Respondents were asked which social class they perceived themselves to be a member of: "One sometimes speaks of the existence of various social classes and groups. If you were to assign yourself to a particular social class, which one would that be?" The categories range from upper class, upper middle class, middle class, upper working class, to working class. Social class is included as having a linear relationship with the dependent variables in our analyses.<sup>11</sup>

The DPES data were enriched with registry-based information on income drawn from the Dutch tax office. We used the standardized disposable annual income. The disposable income is composed of wages, profits (for self-employed persons) and other allowances minus social contributions and taxes, standardized for household size and

---

<sup>10</sup> We compared a model using education as a continuous variable to a model including dummy variables for each category of education. Model 2 including dummy variables results in a slightly better model fit compared to a model including education as a continuous variable for both dependent variables (R-square change = 0.012 with  $p = 0.000$  for unconventional political participation and R-square change = 0.011 with  $p = 0.000$  for conventional political participation). However, the results including dummy variables for education, which are presented in the appendix, do not qualitatively differ from the results presented in Table 4.4 and Table 4.5. For reasons of brevity and to gain statistical power, we present the parsimonious models including education as a continuous measurement.

<sup>11</sup> We assessed whether social class can be modelled as a pseudo-interval variable by testing to what extent the association between social class and conventional and unconventional political participation can be modelled with linear terms only. We ran model 2 including social class as a set of dummy variables and compared these to models using social class as a linear effect. No difference was found in fit between the two models (R-square change = .000 with  $p = .943$  and R-square change = .001 with  $p = .115$  for unconventional and conventional political participation, respectively).

composition. To arrive at a longitudinally comparative measure of income the standardized household income was classified in vigintiles according to the Dutch population. For reference, the lowest vigintile in 2006 represents spendable incomes lower than € 9,530 per year whereas the highest category represents spendable incomes of € 41,243 and higher. To take into account possible non-linear associations between income and political participation we included a quadratic term for income.

**Table 4.3** Descriptive statistics

	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
Conventional political participation	0.00	100.00	9.32	21.54
Unconventional political participation	0.00	100.00	10.51	19.37
Income	1.00	20.00	10.92	5.67
Age	18.00	96.00	47.55	17.56
	%		n	
Highest education completed	6.6		249	
Elementary	16.6		727	
Lower vocational	8.3		347	
Secondary	41.8		1,875	
Middle level vocational/Higher level secondary	26.7		1,401	
Higher level vocational/University				
Social class				
Working class	18.7		740	
Upper working class	12.9		578	
Middle class	49.1		2,302	
Upper middle class	17.2		874	
Upper class	2.1		105	
Gender				
Male	50.9		2,307	
Female	49.1		2,292	
Origin				
Dutch origin	85.4		4,127	
Non-Dutch	14.6		472	
Total			4,599	

#### 4.3.3 Control variables

We controlled for age, gender, and country of origin. Age was defined as age at Election Day. In the Netherlands, the age threshold for participating in elections is 18 years. To control for possible non-linear effects of age we included a quadratic term for age as well. For origin we distinguished between Dutch origin and non-Dutch origin. Respond-



ents who were born in the Netherlands and have parents that were born in the Netherlands were classified as Dutch origin. Those who were born outside the Netherlands themselves or their parents were classified as non-Dutch. The descriptive statistics for all relevant variables are presented in Table 4.3.

#### 4.4 ANALYSES

The results for conventional political participation are displayed in Table 4.4. In Table 4.5, we present the results of the analyses for unconventional modes of participation. We use the same estimation strategy for both modes of participation. In the first model, we include dummy variables for the years 2010 and 2012 to assess whether there is significant longitudinal variation as compared to 2006 in political participation in the Netherlands in times of economic crises. Model 2 includes the main independent variables that refer to resources (education and social class) and the control variables. In model 3 and model 4 we assess whether the effects of social class and education on political participation systematically diverge in times of economic crises by including interaction terms. We ran OLS-regression analysis with the Mokken scales for conventional and unconventional political participation presented above as dependent variables.<sup>12,13, 14</sup>

#### 4.5 RESULTS

Let us first look at conventional political participation in Table 4.4. In model 1, we find that there is no significant difference in levels of political participation between 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 whereas a significant (albeit small) decline is observed in 2008-2012 compared to 2002-2006 (and also in comparison with 2006-2010). This suggests that levels of conventional political participation are slightly in decline in times of prolonged economic hardship. Moreover, this effect also holds after including all control variables in model 2. Model 1 in Table 4.5 demonstrates that unconventional political participation remains stable between 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 but is slightly and significantly on the rise when the economy turns sour in the 2008-2012 period. This also

---

<sup>12</sup> Given the ordinal and very skewed nature (most people do not participate politically) one might argue that ordered logit regression analyses is more appropriate. We compared the estimates presented here with the estimates from ordered logit models; the results did not substantially differ from OLS results, which are presented in this chapter for ease of interpretation.

<sup>13</sup> The analyses presented here were performed on the unweighted sample. Analysis with the sample weighted according to age, gender, marital status, urbanization, region, origin, turnout (i.e. voted in most recent parliamentary elections yes/no), and party choice did not differ from the results presented here for both conventional and unconventional political participation.

<sup>14</sup> There is no substantial difference between the models including all missing values on each variable as separate categories and the estimates presented in Table 4.4 and Table 4.5.

PARTICIPATION IN TIMES OF FINANCIAL CRISIS

holds when controlling for relevant characteristics in model 2. These results do not firmly support the first hypothesis as only the unconventional activities increased, but not the conventional activities. Likewise, we do not find a confirmation for the second hypothesis as there is only a small decline for the conventional modes found.

**Table 4.4** Linear regression analysis: conventional political participation (n= 4,599)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
2006	ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
2010	0.527	(0.763)	0.127	(0.739)	-1.599	(2.436)	-2.175	(2.673)
2012	-2.134**	(0.776)	-2.236**	(0.754)	-1.036	(2.451)	0.739	(2.705)
2012 <sup>a</sup>	-2.662*	(0.801)	-2.363*	(0.779)	0.563	(2.580)	2.913	(2.851)
Level of education			2.686**	(0.308)	2.647**	(0.454)	2.545**	(0.487)
Social class			1.903**	(0.360)	1.890**	(0.360)	2.142**	(0.568)
Level of education	2010				0.456	(0.620)	0.297	(0.700)
	2012				-0.316	(0.623)	0.145	(0.697)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>				-0.771	(0.648)	-0.152	(0.725)
Social class	2010						0.411	(0.828)
	2012						-1.268	(0.837)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>						-1.679	(0.872)
Income			-0.419*	(0.236)	-0.443 *	(0.237)	-0.453*	(0.237)
Income <sup>2</sup>			0.024*	(0.011)	0.025**	(0.011)	0.026**	(0.011)
Female			ref.		ref.		ref.	
Male			3.752**	(0.617)	3.734**	(0.617)	3.720**	(0.617)
Dutch origin			ref.		ref.		ref.	
Non-Dutch origin			-0.111	(1.016)	-0.157	(1.017)	-0.168	(1.017)
Age			0.695**	(0.101)	0.690**	(0.101)	0.693**	(0.101)
Age <sup>2</sup>			-0.006**	(0.001)	-0.006**	(0.001)	-0.006**	(0.001)
Intercept	9.809**	(0.521)	-24.668**	(2.867)	-24.285**	(3.151)	-24.642**	(3.193)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.003		0.072		0.072		0.073	

\* $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed) ref.= reference category

<sup>a</sup> Tests for significance with the reference category being 2010

**Table 4.5** Linear regression analysis: unconventional political participation (n= 4,599)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
2006	ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
2010	-0.208	(0.687)	-0.497	(0.667)	2.000	(2.201)	2.214	(2.416)
2012	1.430*	(0.698)	1.355 *	(0.681)	1.090	(2.214)	2.357	(2.445)
2012 <sup>a</sup>	1.638*	(0.720)	1.852 **	(0.704)	-0.910	(2.331)	0.142	(2.577)
Level of education			2.528 **	(0.278)	2.712**	(0.411)	2.579**	(0.440)
Social class			1.201 **	(0.325)	1.212**	(0.325)	1.545**	(0.514)
Level of education	2010				0.456	(0.620)	0.297	(0.700)
	2012				-0.316	(0.623)	0.145	(0.697)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>				-0.771	(0.648)	-0.152	(0.725)
Social class	2010						-0.174	(0.748)
	2012						-0.918	(0.757)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>						-0.744	(0.789)
Income			-0.247	(0.213)	-0.224	(0.214)	-0.231	(0.214)
Income <sup>2</sup>			0.008	(0.010)	0.007	(0.010)	0.007	(0.010)
Female			ref.		ref.		ref.	
Male			0.235	(0.557)	0.256	(0.557)	0.254	(0.557)
Dutch origin			ref.		ref.		ref.	
Non-Dutch origin			-0.143	(0.918)	-0.103	(0.919)	-0.105	(0.919)
Age			0.115	(0.091)	0.121	(0.092)	0.121	(0.092)
Age <sup>2</sup>			-0.002**	(0.001)	-0.002 **	(0.001)	-0.003**	(0.001)
Intercept	10.141**	(0.469)	-0.255	(2.590)	-1.186	(2.847)	-1.606	(2.886)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.001		0.062		0.063		0.063	

\* $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed) ref.= reference category

<sup>a</sup> Tests for significance with the reference category being 2010

Furthermore, our results demonstrate that with higher levels of education, conventional as well as unconventional political participation increases. In addition, those who consider themselves belonging to higher social classes consistently participate more in both modes. This confirms the third hypothesis. The interaction terms in model 3 and model 4 demonstrate that the economic crisis does not influence the strength of the effect of education on conventional political participation. Hence, levels of conventional and unconventional political participation do not diverge between privileged and underprivileged groups in times of economic crisis. These findings clearly reject the fourth hypothesis.

Concerning our control variables we find that income affects conventional political participation in curvilinear fashion. The lowest levels of conventional political participation are found in the 8th and 9th vigintile and increases from the 10th vigintile onwards.

However, income is not significantly related to unconventional modes of participation. Moreover, we demonstrate that men are more likely to participate in conventional modes but there are no gender differences in levels of unconventional political participation (c.f. Table 4.4 and Table 4.5). Origin is not related to both conventional and unconventional modes of participation. The calculation based on the age and age-squared variables reveals that the conventional political participation increases to the top found among people aged 59 after which it decreases. For unconventional political participation the top is 30 years, and evidently lower.

#### 4.6 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this contribution, we attempted to explore the effects of the economic crisis on levels of political participation in the Netherlands between 2002 and 2012, in general and more particularly among privileged and underprivileged groups in society. We used the classic distinction between conventional and unconventional modes of political participation as proposed by Barnes & Kaase (1979). Against the background of the recent economic crises, we argued that economic downturn would either incentivize citizens to voice their concerns in the political domain (Thomassen, 1990; Muñoz et al., 2013; Ponticelli & Voth, 2011) or that economic downturn would induce political apathy (Rosenstone, 1982). We combined this with the expectations following from the resource mobilization theory and proposed that during times of economic crisis privileged and underprivileged groups in society systematically diverge in their levels of participation.

Using probabilistic scale modelling techniques we demonstrated that both conventional and unconventional political participation are cumulative behavioural patterns. Hence, people who engage in more difficult political acts, such as demonstrating, also engage in easier or more mainstream acts of political participation such as joining political discussion on the internet. Moreover, we demonstrated that the pattern in modes of both conventional and unconventional political activities does not change substantially over time.

Our results indicate, first and foremost that most people do not engage in any conventional and unconventional mode of political participation studied here. Only some one in three citizens employed an activity in trying to influence politicians, civil servants or the government within a five years period. However, we find that in recent times of economic downturn in the Netherlands, conventional political participation decreases while unconventional political participation is on the rise. We demonstrate that those with more skills and resources (higher educated) and people in higher social classes participate more in both conventional and unconventional modes of participation which is consistent with the resource based explanation of political participation as proposed by Brady et al. (1995). We hypothesized that underprivileged groups would be disproportionately affected by the economic crisis compared to privileged groups, thereby

increasing the gap between these strata in society. We distinguished between higher and lower social classes and higher and lower educated individuals. However, we do not find that the difference between privileged and underprivileged societal groups is affected by the economic downturn.

One might argue that an increase in unconventional political participation combined with a decrease in conventional modes would be emblematic of a more structural trend of switching political repertoires (Dalton, 2008; Norris, 2011) from conventional to unconventional modes. Citizens would increasingly voice their concerns through unconventional modes of political participation at the expense of conventional modes (Dalton, 2008). However, the decrease in conventional political participation and the increase in unconventional modes only occur in the 2008-2012 period - in a time when the Netherlands suffered from economic adversity. We speculate that this increase in unconventional modes is due to the difference in required skills for conventional and unconventional political participation. It takes more civic skills to involve a political party compared to joining in a political discussion on the internet and during times of economic downturn citizens might increasingly voice their concerns through more accessible means of political participation. The underlying mechanisms governing this effect need to be taken into account in more detail in further research to assess the validity of this assumption.

# 5.

## Micro-level context effects on conventional and unconventional political participation in the Netherlands

A slightly different version of this chapter is submitted as Linssen, R., Scheepers, P., Te Grotenhuis, M. & Schmeets, H. (2016). Micro-level context effects on conventional and unconventional political participation in The Netherlands to an international peer-reviewed journal and currently under review.

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

A politically active citizenry is a prerequisite for democratic performance and legitimacy. Classic works on political participation argued that individual-level resources determine the propensity to participate politically (Brady et al., 1995; Verba et al., 1995). More recently, increased attention was drawn to characteristics of contexts, e.g. neighbourhoods, as associated to various aspects of community involvement, including political participation (Hagendoorn, 2009; Portes & Vickstrom, 2011; Putnam, 2007). The main claim of these studies on contextual effects is that, individual determinants, the attributes of people's direct surroundings, such as the composition and socio-economic features of the neighbourhood, shape attitudes and behaviour. Although there has been a burgeoning literature regarding contextual effects on aspects of community involvement, these studies mainly focus on attitudinal aspects such as social trust (Hagendoorn, 2009; Portes & Vickstrom, 2011). Yet, Uslaner and Brown's (2005), Alesina and La Ferrara's (2000), and Putnam's (2007) propositions on context-effects stretch even further into behavioural aspects of community involvement, such as political participation. In this contribution, we will explicate these theoretical propositions and test these rigorously, concentrating on several modes of political participation as behavioural aspects of community involvement.

Decreasing political participation would be an emblematic symptom of declining community involvement in the US (Putnam 2000). However, previous research studying contextual determinants of political participation mainly focused on voter turnout while there is, of course, a wider range of political activities citizens employ to influence politics besides voting, such as demonstrating and petitioning. Studies assessing contextual effects that incorporate a wider array of modes of political participation are rather scant (exceptions are: Gidengil et al., 2009; Marien et al., 2010; Uslaner & Brown, 2005). Hence, the general tenability of theoretical propositions referring to context effects on political participation for modes other than voting are largely left unaddressed. We set out to derive hypotheses on the attributes of people's direct surroundings on a wider range of modes of political participation.

One of the most actively debated context effects is Putnam's (2007) claim that individuals living in ethnically diverse contexts withdraw from community life, retreat in their own private sphere and 'hunker down'. Putnam (2007) also explicitly noted behavioural in addition to attitudinal implications regarding the extent of ethnic diversity in neighbourhoods on community involvement: 'Note that this pattern encompasses attitudes and behaviour, bridging and bonding social capital, public and private connections' (Putnam, 2007, p. 151). However, Putnam (2007) solely examined attitudinal aspects (trust in neighbours, in-group and out-group trust) but did not provide empirical evidence to substantiate these claims for behavioural aspects of community involvement, such as participation in politics.

Ethnic diversity at any contextual level is heavily associated with both income inequality and poverty, especially in the Netherlands (Tolsma et al., 2009). Thus, the supposed contextual-level effect of ethnic diversity on political participation might be spurious due to income inequality and poverty. Income inequality in one's direct social surroundings would have detrimental effects on behavioural dimensions of community involvement in general (Lancee & Van de Werfhorst, 2012) and voter turnout specifically (Solt, 2008; Uslander & Brown, 2005). Poverty in neighbourhoods might affect political participation as well. This can be linked to the classic resource-based theories on political participation (Brady et al., 1995). In this vein, living in poor socio-economic contexts reduces (political) participation due to a lack of resources. In this contribution, we concentrate on theoretical propositions regarding ethnic diversity, but moreover regarding economic inequality and poverty of contexts to build a more encompassing theoretical framework to assess (non-) spurious contextual determinants of political participation.

For various modes of political participation contexts have been operationalized at different higher-level units, ranging from neighbourhoods, to census tracts, municipalities, states and countries. For instance, Uslander and Brown (2005) found that inequality and poverty at the state level in the US depressed turnout, petitioning, and attending political meetings. While in the same country, Oliver (2001) found that inequality at the municipal level in the US induced political participation. Similarly, Fieldhouse and Cutts (2008) found higher rather than lower voter turnout in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in the UK. In Canada, Gidengil et al. (2009) found no evidence of withdrawal from various modes of political participation measuring ethnic diversity at the level of census tracts. Coffé and Geys (2006) do find detrimental effects of ethnic diversity (and inequality) on behavioural aspects of community involvement, including turnout. However, Coffé and Geys (2006) study this effect using aggregated measures of diversity and turnout at the municipal level in Flanders, hence without individual-level data on people's engagement in politics. The operationalization of contextual determinants at varying higher-level units might induce inconsistencies in previous empirical evidence. Our novel methodological approach to link GIS-data to the Dutch population registry, allows us to vary the contextual unit of analysis from the very specific street level to the broader neighbourhood level. By doing so, we are able to scrutinize at which higher contextual-level these effects do or do not arise. In addition, by varying the contextual unit of analyses, we assess to what extent the proximity of ethnic diversity, inequality, and poverty in one's direct versus wider surrounding affects various modes of political participation.

We aim to advance current insights in the following ways. First, we focus on behavioural aspects of community involvement by studying effects of the micro-context (neighbourhoods and even smaller localities) on political participation. Second, we investigate a wider array of political activities, ranging from voting to attending demonstrations. Third, by simultaneously focusing on effects of ethnic diversity, inequality, and poverty in localities, we empirically assess contradictory and complementary theoretical



propositions as set out in previous literature. Fourth, we use an innovative approach linking population registries to surveys using GIS-data, to arrive at very detailed measures of contextual determinants. Fifth, we use the most recent and high quality survey-data available to measure political participation in the Netherlands, a country with high levels of political participation and moreover high levels of social capital (Gesthuizen et al., 2013; Linssen & Schmeets, 2010). Hence, the question we set out to answer is: *to what extent can individual-level political participation be explained by (the interplay of) individual and contextual-level determinants in the Netherlands?*

## 5.2 THEORIES AND HYPOTHESES: CONTEXTUAL EFFECTS ON POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

We distinguished conventional from unconventional modes of political participation (i.e. the classic distinction made by Barnes & Kaase, 1979) and take a wide range of political actions into account. Conventional political participation refers to all modes of participation directly embedded in legal institutional frameworks or directly referring to the electoral process, such as voting, contacting politicians or attending hearings. Unconventional political participation includes all modes of political participation not directly linked to the electoral process such as petitioning and demonstrating.

### 5.2.1 *Contextual determinants of political participation*

Although theoretical claims on contextual influences on community involvement stretch to behavioural aspects of community involvement, previous research mostly focused on attitudinal characteristics, both in the Netherlands (e.g. Gijsberts et al., 2012; Lancee & Dronkers, 2011; Tolsma et al., 2009) as well as Europe (Hooghe et al., 2009). We exploit theories regarding contextual effects on attitudinal aspects of community involvement and transpose these propositions to conventional and unconventional modes of political participation as behavioural aspects of community involvement.

#### 5.2.1.1 *Contextual ethnic diversity*

In his seminal article ‘E pluribus Unum’ Putnam (2007) claims that increased ethnic diversity has detrimental effects on civic engagement. Based on ‘constrict theory’, Putnam argued that increased ethnic diversity drives down both behavioural as well as attitudinal dimensions of civic engagement. Moreover, inhabitants of ethnically diverse neighbourhoods tend to “hunker down” or “pull their heads in like a turtle” (Putnam, 2007, p. 147) “Rather, inhabitants of diverse communities tend to withdraw from collective life ... to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform *more*, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference.” (Putnam 2007, p. 150-151, emphasis in original).

Gesthuizen et al. (2009) developed a more profound theoretical justification for Putnam's (2007) 'hunkering down' thesis that is rooted in the homophily principle. The homophily principle (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001) argues that people prefer to interact with similar and like-minded people. In ethnically diverse contexts there are less similar and like-minded people to socially connect with and hence fewer opportunities for the proverbial birds of a feather to flock together. This might induce people to opt out from political participation, and may incite 'hunkering down'. The proposition here is that citizens in ethnically diverse contexts participate less in politics because the basic conditions of interaction with like-minded people is distressed.

Putnam (2007) explicitly distinguished between registering to vote and 'agitation for social reform'. This 'agitation for social reform' refers to demonstrating and petitioning. Apparently, he proposes that 'hunkering down' does not apply to unconventional modes of political participation but only to conventional modes. Putnam did not provide a theoretical justification for the effect of ethnic diversity on conventional versus unconventional modes of political participation. Anderson and Paskeviciute (2006) previously proposed a theoretical elaboration for this relationship. In ethnically diverse contexts, 'participation takes places along easily understood group lines' (Anderson and Paskeviciute 2006, p. 786). Hence, in these ethnically diverse contexts, there will be more political competition between (ethnic) groups that might overall induce political action. Contrastingly, in ethnically homogenous contexts, interests are less dispersed and competition between interests is less salient. Thus, in homogenous contexts, citizens will derive comparatively less utility from political participation compared to ethnically heterogeneous contexts. Hence, we derive two hypotheses in line with Putnam (2007): (1) The higher the ethnic diversity in an area, the higher inhabitants' unconventional political participation; and (2) The higher the ethnic diversity in an area, the lower inhabitants' conventional political participation. The first hypothesis is in line with both Putnam (2007) and Anderson and Paskeviciute (2006) elaboration on the impact of ethnic diversity on political participation, however, the second one is in line with Putnam (2007) but contradictory to the elaboration of Anderson and Paskeviciute (2006).

#### 5.2.1.2 *Contextual income inequality*

As ethnic diversity and inequality are closely associated at the contextual-level, Uslander and Brown (2005) as well as Solt (2008) argued that not (solely) ethnic diversity is associated with political participation, but the level of income inequality as well. We propose that the same theoretical line of reasoning as set out for the contextual effects of ethnic diversity on political participation. These effects might also hold for dissimilarity or inequality in socio-economic terms. Similarly to Putnam (2007), we propose that people 'hunker down' in economically unequal contexts and refrain from participating in conventional modes of political participation but that this does not hold for unconventional modes of political participation. Concerning unconventional political participation we propose, in line with Anderson and Paskeviciute (2006), that in economically unequal

settings, competition between socio-economic interests is more salient and people will derive more utility from political participation. Economic inequality will increase political participation, both among less privileged groups, who can suspect or see what they might gain, as well as among privileged groups, who suspect or see what they might lose. Hence, we propose two contrasting hypotheses concerning the effect of inequality on conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. (3) The higher the inequality in an area, the higher inhabitants' unconventional political participation; (4) The higher the inequality in an area, the lower inhabitants' conventional political participation.

### 5.2.1.3 *Contextual poverty*

Poverty of contexts serves as a third competing contextual determinant in explaining levels of conventional and unconventional political participation. Previous studies suggested that poverty at the neighbourhood-level detracts civic involvement since inhabitants of these neighbourhoods lack positive role models (Oxendine, 2009; Wilson, 1987) and self-efficacy (Boardman & Robert, 2000). Thus, economically deprived contexts may bring people to abstain from community involvement in general. This is corroborated by Tolsma et al. (2009), who studied the effects of neighbourhood-level poverty on aspects of civic (dis-)engagement in the Netherlands. In addition, for the UK, the mean income of a neighbourhood, rather than income inequality or ethnic diversity, turned out to be the most important determinant to explain civic (dis-) engagement (Letki, 2008). Scheepers, Schmeets and Pelzer (2013) also demonstrated that poverty induces 'hunkering down' in the Netherlands. Hence, concerning poverty our hypothesis reads: (5) The higher the poverty in an area, the lower inhabitants' conventional and unconventional political participation.

In line with Hagendoorn (2009), we expect that contextual effects are stronger in people's direct social surroundings compared to wider, more broadly defined contexts. His core argument is that proximity increases tangibility and visibility of ethnic diversity. The effect of ethnic diversity would be more pronounced if people are more likely to encounter diversity in their direct social surroundings. Following this line, we propose that this might also be true for contextual inequality and contextual poverty as well. Thus, we expect that the effects hypothesized will be stronger in lower-level contextual units, defined very close to the respondents, compared to wider contexts.

### 5.2.2 *The interplay between individual and contextual determinants of political participation*

The civic voluntarism model argues that the more resources people have, the higher the likelihood to participate politically (Brady et al., 1995). This implies that contextual effects as proposed interact with individual-level resources. Hence, people within ethni-

cally diverse contexts, who lack individual-level resources to begin with, will be less likely to participate in political actions compared to individuals with more resources.

Concerning the effect of inequality on political participation, Uslaner and Brown (2005) explicitly note the interplay between individual-level and contextual-level determinants: 'The direct effect of inequality on participation arises when inequality of resources leads people in lower economic brackets to refrain from participating, either because they have fewer resources or because they believe that 'getting involved will be fruitless because the system is stacked against them' (Uslaner & Brown, 2005, p. 876). It explicitly refers to lower political participation of individuals in lower socio-economic brackets in unequal contexts. Moreover, the notion that people in lower socio-economic brackets feel that their efforts to participate politically will not bear fruit is consistent with the classic civic voluntarism model (Brady et al., 1995). Thus, based on hypotheses 1 and 2 (ethnic diversity) and 3 and 4 (income equality) we formulate the following two interaction hypotheses: (6) The positive contextual effects of ethnic diversity and economic inequality on unconventional political participation will be weaker for inhabitants with fewer resources and (7) The negative contextual effects of ethnic diversity and economic inequality on conventional political participation will be stronger for inhabitants with fewer resources.

Given the contextual effect of poverty, where we did not distinguish between conventional and unconventional modes of participation (hypothesis 5), we expect that the detrimental effect of living in poor areas will be even stronger for those who lack individual-level resources to participate politically. Thus, our hypothesis reads: (8) The negative effect of the poverty rate in an area on political participation will be stronger for inhabitants with fewer resources.

### 5.3 DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

The survey data were drawn from the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES). We used the most recent information available; the DPES conducted in 2010 en 2012 (DPES, 2010, 2012). The DPES' aim is to collect high-quality data on the backgrounds of voting behaviour of the Dutch electorate. The sampling frame of the DPES covers the Dutch electorate eligible to vote in parliamentary elections (Dutch citizens aged 18 or older). In 2010, respondents were interviewed in a pre-election survey within six weeks before, and shortly after Election Day (June 9, 2010). The data for the DPES 2010 were collected by Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), resulting in a response rate of 63.2% (Schmeets 2011). Re-approaching non-contacts and refusals resulted in additional responses of 3.3% by CATI (telephone) or by mail. The items on political participation were included in the post-election wave in 2010. Due to panel attrition, the response dropped to 57.0% (compared to the initial sample) in the second wave (n= 2,247). In 2012, due to budgetary constraints, only a post-election survey was conduct-

CHAPTER 5

ed shortly after Election Day (September 12, 2012). The data-collection mode was CAPI, resulting in a response of 61.9% (n= 1,670). No refusal conversion and additional contact attempts were applied in 2012.

**Table 5.1** Question wording in DPES

Mode	Item	Answer categories
	There are several ways to influence politicians, civil servants or the government. Please list which one you used during the previous five years.	
Unconventional political participation	Participated in a political discussion on the internet, via sms or e-mail.	Yes / No
	Involved radio, TV or newspaper to influence politics	Yes / No
	Participated in an action group	Yes / No
	Participated in a demonstration or protest meeting	Yes / No
Conventional political participation	Contacted a politician or government official	Yes / No
	Participate in a hearing or consultation meeting organized by the government	Yes / No
	Tried to involve political party or organisation	Yes / No
Voting	Did you vote in the most recent national parliamentary elections?	Yes / No

We distinguished between unconventional and conventional political participation (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). Our measure for unconventional political participation referred to involving media to influence politics, participating in action groups, participation in demonstrations or protest meetings, and political discussion on the internet, via SMS, or e-mail. We used voting, involving political parties or organisations, attending hearings, and contacting politicians as indicators of conventional political participation. See Table 5.1 for the exact question wording in the DPES 2010 and 2012.

For unconventional and conventional political participation, we constructed separate scales that represent the sum-score on the relevant dichotomous indicators. We assessed the scalability of these items using probabilistic scale analyses techniques (Mokken scale analysis, see Mokken, 1971; van Schuur, 2003). Mokken scale analysis is the probabilistic version of the deterministic Guttman scale.<sup>15</sup> Mokken scale analysis departs from a set of dichotomous indicators (e.g. voting yes/no, contacting government officials yes/no, etc.) and evaluates whether some items (e.g. political discussion via internet) may occur more frequent compared to others (e.g. attending a demonstration). The decisive notion is that those who engage in more difficult, i.e. less frequent, activities (e.g. contacting government officials) will probably (not necessarily, like in the deterministic Guttman scaling) also engage in easier or more frequently occurring activities (e.g. voting).

The Mokken scaling procedure provides various scalability coefficients. The relevant coefficients are presented in Table A5.1 in the Appendix. The most important measure is Loevinger's Homogeneity coefficient (Loevinger's H). Loevinger's H summarizes the extent of violation of the item-ordering pattern for the scale as a whole and the scalability for each individual item separately. The cut-off value for Loevinger's H is  $> 0.30$  and H-values higher than 0.5 indicate very strong scales (Sijtsma & Molenaar, 2002). Loevinger's H is above this cut-off value for both scales (0.34 for unconventional political participation and 0.56 for conventional political participation, see Table A5.1 in the Appendix).

Although the scalability coefficients indicate a strong scale for conventional political participation, we exclude voting in our scale of conventional political participation and analyse voting separately. Voting can be considered a truly different activity compared to other conventional activities as voting is only done once every few years. Other conventional modes of political participation such as attending a hearing or involving a political party or action group usually require more prolonged commitment. Moreover, voting is by far the most popular activity and there are considerable differences between the shares of voters and, for instance, people who contacted a politician or government official. As a consequence, a scale-score including voting would be disproportionately influenced by changes in the proportion of people who vote. Hence, for conventional political participation we used two indicators: a dichotomous indicator for voting and the scale score on other conventional modes of participation (contacting politicians, attending government-organised hearings/meetings, and involving political parties or political organisations). For unconventional political participation, we used one compo-

---

<sup>15</sup> Mokken scale analysis has numerous advantages over more mainstream scaling methods such as factor analyses and measurement models specified in structural equation modelling. These methods are based on decomposition of covariances and assume that the frequency distributions of the items can be regarded as 'parallel' and the items have more or less the same mean and standard deviation. Thus, all items need to be equally 'popular' to be adequately used for scaling (van Schuur, 2003). The distributions of the items for political participation clearly demonstrate that this is not the case (e.g. the proportion of people voting is considerably larger compared to the proportion of people attending a hearing).

site scale that represents the sum score on the relevant dichotomous items displayed in Table 5.1.<sup>16</sup>

### 5.3.1 Contextual-level determinants

The previously mentioned mixed findings for contextual-level effects might be the result of different operationalizations of the contexts. Most propositions in the literature refer to contextual effects without being specific what this ‘context’ exactly entails. The levels of aggregation for contextual characteristics ranged from the macro-level context countries (Gesthuizen et al., 2009) to meso-level municipalities (Scheepers et al., 2013; Tolsma et al., 2009), to micro-level zip codes/neighbourhoods (Gijsberts et al., 2012; Lancee & Dronkers, 2011) in the Netherlands. One of the problems in these studies is the precision and availability of valid measurements for contextual determinants such as diversity, inequality, and poverty. In order to arrive at accurate estimates of contextual effects, one needs to have considerable variation in the independent characteristics at the contextual-level. Even more so, if the determinants like poverty, inequalities, and diversity, are strongly interrelated. Moreover, these characteristics are usually aggregated from individual-level sample data. In order to arrive at unbiased aggregate statistics on, for instance, ethnic diversity, one needs a large number of respondents within a certain contextual unit, for instance a neighbourhood. These conditions are usually not (fully) met, resulting in sub-optimal data qualities for estimating contextual effects.

#### 5.3.1.1 Radii & neighbourhoods

We employed a new approach to measure contextual determinants by enriching survey data with registry-based information. By doing this, we can vary the contextual unit of analyses from more broadly defined localities to citizens’ direct social surroundings. The Social Statistical Database (SSD) at Statistics Netherlands provides a unique opportunity to derive very detailed contextual-level measurements. The respondents in our dataset were linked to registry-based information at Statistics Netherlands through a personal identification number derived from the population registry. These registries were linked with registries that contained GIS-data on the location of houses in the Netherlands. Using these registries allowed us to determine the exact location of respondents relative to all other households in the Netherlands. Next, the SSD combined and linked information from a wide array of different socio-demographic and socio-economic data sources such as the Dutch tax office and the municipal population registries. These included information on, for instance, income and ethnicity and allowed us to derive very detailed contextual-level measurements.

We first constructed a ‘distance matrix’ where each respondent’s distance towards all other people registered in a municipality in the Netherlands (roughly 16.7 million

---

<sup>16</sup> These sum scores were multiplied with 100 for ease of interpretation and readability of estimates.

people) was calculated. Using these distances, we selected the personal identification numbers of all people in the population registries in households within circles with radii of 50 meters, 100 meters, 200 meters, and 500 meters around the respondents in the DPES. Next, we calculated the contextual-level measurements by linking all personal identification numbers within these circles to the social statistical database containing information needed for the operationalization of contextual determinants. We additionally calculated neighbourhood-specific measures of the contextual determinants comparable to previous studies in the Netherlands (Gijsberts et al., 2012; Lancee & Dronkers, 2011).<sup>17</sup> We enriched the DPES survey data with highly specific contextual-level indicators as described in the next sections.<sup>18</sup>

On a methodological note, previous studies heavily relied on aggregated statistics in their operationalization of context and applied multi-level modelling techniques. Our data allowed us to operationalize context for each individual separately. These variables were operationalized as relational characteristics where each respondent is linked to certain radii. This means that we are able to employ conventional (OLS and logit) regression analyses techniques instead of multi-level specifications.

To measure ethnic diversity we focused on non-western minorities. Non-western minorities are inhabitants of the Netherlands who were born in Africa, South America, or Asia (excluding Indonesia and Japan), or one of their parents was born in the aforementioned countries. Ethnic diversity was measured by calculating the percentage of non-western minorities on the total population within each radius and neighbourhood.<sup>19</sup>

Inequality was measured by calculating the GINI coefficient for each radius and neighbourhood based on the standardized household income within these radii and neighbourhoods. The GINI-coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. A GINI-coefficient of 1 corresponds with perfect inequality where one person holds all income. Conversely, a GINI-coefficient of 0 corresponds with perfect equality where all people have the same income. Negative incomes were set to zero in these calculations.<sup>20</sup> In circles with the smallest radius (50 meters), the GINI-coefficient sometimes referred to a very low num-

---

<sup>17</sup> In the Netherlands, municipalities define the borders of neighbourhoods. This is usually a part of a municipality dominated by a given type of land use or buildings.

<sup>18</sup> Especially in very small radii such as 50 meters and 100 meters there might very few households within such a radius in rural areas. In this case, the contextual-measurements could even be based on solely one or two households, which renders calculation of GINI coefficients and median income problematic and very sensitive to outliers. Therefore, we only included those respondents which radius consists of more than 5 households.

<sup>19</sup> We chose not to use the Herfindahl-index as used in various previous studies (e.g. Alesina and La Ferrara 2002a, 2002b; Gesthuizen et al., 2009; Hooghe et al., 2009). The interpretation of the Herfindahl-index is not always clear, as this index is 'colour blind' (Tolsma et al., 2009) and only measures the relative proportion of a certain group. The Herfindahl-index does not take into account the actual composition of the groups. Consequently, a radius with only 10% non-western minorities would have the same value on the Herfindahl-index as a radius with 90% non-western minorities. Moreover, Scheepers et al. (2013) demonstrate that the Pearson correlation coefficient between the Herfindahl-index and the percentage of non-western minorities is 0.92 at the neighbourhood-level in the Netherlands.

<sup>20</sup> Negative incomes sometimes occurred among self-employed whose operating revenues are lower than their operating costs. Note that this only occurred for 14 respondents (0.42%).



ber of households (as low as 5 households in rural areas), which increases sensitivity to outliers. To avoid these extreme and possibly influential cases, we used a GINI-coefficient threshold of 0.5; all GINI-coefficient higher than 0.5 were assigned the value of 0.5.<sup>21</sup>

For contextual-level income, we used the standardized spendable income. The standardization accounts for differences in household size and composition so that incomes can be compared across individuals. To reduce sensitivity to outliers, especially within smaller radii, we used the median income in each radius and neighbourhood. We controlled for population density, which is associated to voter turnout (Cutts & Fieldhouse, 2009; Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2008) and possibly to other modes of political participation. Therefore we included the number of people within radii and neighbourhoods as a control variable.

Descriptive statistics for the contextual determinants are presented in Table 5.2. In the right-hand side of Table 5.2, the correlations between the radii are presented for each contextual determinant. For ethnic diversity, the correlation between the radii is strong and does not seem to differ substantially between smaller and bigger radii. All in all, we see that the correlations between the radii for each contextual characteristic range from large (0.53) to very large (0.95). The association between the closely related radii, such as 50 meters and 100 meters, is very strong for GINI. However, the correlations between the radii for GINI seem to be somewhat less strong when comparing small radii to larger radii (e.g. Pearson's  $r$  equals 0.65 for the correlation between the GINI coefficient in a radius of 200 meters and 50 meters against 0.55 between 50 meters and the neighbourhood). This also holds for contextual income.

---

<sup>21</sup> At the neighbourhood level, for which we present the analyses, there are only 3 cases (0.09%) for which the GINI-coefficient is 0.5 or higher.

PARTICIPATION IN THE MICRO CONTEXT

**Table 5.2** Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients between radii for contextual determinants (n= 3,370)

	Descriptive statistics					Correlations <sup>a</sup>				
	Radius	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.	50 m	100m	200m	500m	Neighb.
Contextual ethnic diversity										
% Non-western ethnic minorities	50 m	0.00	93.30	7.97	12.63	1				
	100m	0.00	88.90	8.58	11.76	0.89	1			
	200m	0.00	84.70	8.92	11.08	0.81	0.93	1		
	500m	0.00	80.60	9.28	10.46	0.72	0.83	0.92	1	
	Neighb.	0.00	89.80	9.09	10.93	0.72	0.82	0.90	0.95	1
Contextual inequality										
GINI Coefficient										
	50 m	0.03	0.50	0.21	0.07	1				
	100m	0.03	0.50	0.22	0.06	0.76	1			
	200m	0.11	0.50	0.24	0.05	0.65	0.83	1		
	500m	0.13	0.50	0.25	0.05	0.59	0.71	0.83	1	
	Neighb.	0.15	0.50	0.25	0.05	0.55	0.67	0.75	0.84	1
Contextual poverty										
Median income (* 1000 €)										
	50 m	0.00	167.19	23.06	7.64	1				
	100m	5.52	102.17	22.43	5.57	0.77	1			
	200m	6.07	57.61	21.92	4.55	0.65	0.84	1		
	500m	7.50	61.43	21.34	3.51	0.55	0.67	0.82	1	
	Neighb.	7.47	51.08	21.61	3.63	0.53	0.64	0.75	0.83	1

<sup>a</sup> all correlation coefficients are significant at  $p < 0.01$  (one tailed).

Neighb.: Neighbourhood level.

### 5.3.2 *Individual-level determinants*

Education and income were used as proxies for individual-level resources. Education was measured in five categories: elementary education, lower vocational, secondary vocational, middle-level vocational and higher-level secondary education. Higher-level vocational and university degrees constitute the highest category.

We derived the standardized spendable household income for all respondents from the SSD. Negative incomes were set to zero (see footnote 7). We use the natural logarithm of the spendable household income in our analyses.

Additionally we controlled for ethnicity, age, gender, marital status, and ethnicity. People of non-Dutch origin participate less in modes of conventional and unconventional political participation (Schmeets & Van der Houwen, 2011) For ethnicity, we distinguished between Dutch origin, western minorities, and non-western minorities. The youngest and oldest age groups are less likely to participate in politics (Schmeets, 2010). Therefore we include age as a control variable in our analyses. Age was defined as age at Election Day. In the Netherlands, the age threshold for participating in elections is 18 years. To control for possible non-linear effects of age we included a quadratic term for age as well. The direction of the effects of gender and marital status on political participation is also still up for debate. Although men are more likely to participate in politics (CBS, 2014) the effect of gender varies with the inclusion of other control characteristics, especially for the Dutch case (Egmond, De Graaf & Van der Eijk, 1998). We distinguished between married, divorced, widowed, and single for marital status. We use these variables as control variables in our analyses without making prior assumptions on the direction of this effect. We used dummy variables in our analysis for gender, marital status, ethnicity, and level of education. Descriptive statistics for individual-level indicators and controls are shown in Table 5.3.

PARTICIPATION IN THE MICRO CONTEXT

**Table 5.3** Descriptive statistics for individual determinants (n= 3,370)

		Mean	S.D	Median
Dependent variables				
Unconventional political participation		47.27	73.05	0
Conventional political participation		24.69	63.55	0
Voting		89.31	30.89	1
		Mean	S.E	
Individual level characteristics				
Age		47.32	17.21	
Income (*1000 €)		26.36	15.68	
		%		
Gender	Male	51		
	Female	49		
Highest level of education completed	Elementary	6		
	Lower vocational	15		
	Secondary	7		
	Middle level vocational/Higher level secondary	41		
	Higher level vocational/University	31		
Marital state	Married	57		
	Divorced	8		
	Widowed	5		
	Single	30		
Country of origin	Dutch	88		
	Western minority	7		
	Non-western minority	5		

## 5.4 ANALYSES

We operationalized our contextual units as circles around respondents' addresses; these highly individualized contextual units can be regarded as relational characteristics of individuals. Additionally, we compared the operationalization in terms of circles with the more typical operationalization where neighbourhoods are the contextual unit of analyses.<sup>22</sup>

We first considered the strength of the associations between the contextual determinants (ethnic diversity, inequality, and poverty) to assess the likelihood of multicollinearity. The Pearson correlation coefficients between the contextual characteristics are displayed in Table 5.4. The correlations between the contextual determinants are displayed for each radius separately (and at the neighbourhood-level). The correlation between the contextual-level indicators ranges between 0.01 and -0.33, which does not provide indications for multicollinearity among the contextual determinants.<sup>23</sup>

### 5.4.1 *Estimation strategy*

Because there is no indication for clustering at the radius or neighbourhood-level (see footnote 10), we employed single-level regression analysis. For unconventional and conventional political participation, we estimated OLS linear regression models. Since voting is a dichotomous variable, we used logistic regression analysis. For each radius (50 meter, 100 meters, 200 meters, 500 meters, and neighbourhood), we present separate analyses in order to assess Hagendoorn's (2009) proximity argument.

We first regressed each contextual indicator on the various dependent variables without any controls. These analyses are referred to as bivariate analyses. Second, we entered the contextual-level determinants simultaneously in one regression model while controlling for individual-level characteristics. Third, we assess the interplay between individual and contextual characteristics modelling the interaction between individual-level resources and the contextual determinants.

---

<sup>22</sup> If there are multiple respondents sampled within a neighbourhood or the radii of different respondents overlap one might argue that our data-structure was nested. This nested data structure would call for multi-level analysis (Snijders & Bosker, 1999). For 1,538 respondents in 668 neighbourhoods there was at least one other respondent sampled within the same neighbourhood. To account for the possibility of clustering at the neighbourhood-level, we compared the specification of an OLS model with a more elaborate two-level model where individuals are nested within neighbourhoods, for the respondents where more than one person was sampled within a radius or neighbourhood. The results presented in Table A.2 demonstrate that the intra-class correlations are non-significant, meaning that one cannot empirically differentiate between the neighbourhood and the individual-level. Therefore, we will treat the neighbourhood-level contextual determinants as a relational characteristic as well.

<sup>23</sup> Additionally, there is no reason to suspect multicollinearity between contextual-level indicators since the variance inflation factors for variables with the strongest correlation coefficients (income and the percentage of non-western minorities) never exceed 1.8 in all models.

**Table 5.4** Correlation between contextual characteristics within radii (Pearson's  $r$ ,  $n = 3,370$ )

Radius	50m			100m			200m			500m			Neighbourhood		
	% non-western minorities	GINI	Median income	% non-western minorities	GINI	Median income	% non-western minorities	GINI	Median income	% non-western minorities	GINI	Median income	% non-western minorities	GINI	Median income
% non-western minorities	1			1			1			1			1		
GINI	0.12 **	1		0.07 **	1		0.07 **	1		0.11 **	1		0.04 *	1	
Median income	-0.31 **	0.01	1	-0.33 ***	0.10 **	1	-0.33 **	0.16 **	1	-0.35 **	0.16 **	1	-0.33 **	0.18 **	1

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed).

### 5.4.2 Results

Hagendoorn (2009) argues that the contextual effects of ethnic diversity, inequality and, poverty are more visible and tangible in one's direct social surroundings. Hence, we expect in smaller localities (i.e. smaller radii) the effects of ethnic diversity, inequality and, poverty to be stronger as compared to more broadly defined localities (i.e. larger radii). The empirical test for the proximity argument is presented in Table 5.5 where the bivariate relationship between the contextual determinants and the modes of political participation are estimated for each radius.

For unconventional participation we find: (1) a positive association with the percentage of non-western minorities and inequality (GINI), and these relationships remain relatively stable across the radii; (2) no significant association with the median income of a radius (except for the 100 meter radius where the relationship is significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$  two-tailed). For conventional political participation we find: (1) no relation with the percentage of non-western minorities; (2) a positive association with GINI, which is slightly stronger in bigger contextual units; (3) a positive relationship with contextual-level income (median income) which does not substantially differ across the radii. And for voting we found: (1) a negative association with the concentration of non-western minorities which does not substantially differ across the radii; (2) a positive association with income which shows no variation between the radii; (3) a positive association with GINI, which is slightly stronger in bigger contextual units compared to respondents' direct social surrounding (radius of 50 meters).

A stronger test of our hypotheses is to include individual and contextual determinants simultaneously in order to reduce risks to find spurious relationships. Since the proximity-argument does not seem to hold and effect sizes are rather stable across the radii, we present the neighbourhood level estimates in the analyses for reasons of brevity. Results of similar models at different radii are available upon request. We first estimated a model containing only individual-level determinants. Next, we entered all contextual indicators separately in subsequent models to check for robustness of parameter estimates and possible spuriousness between contextual determinants (results omitted, these results are also available upon request). The effects of all contextual and individual determinants estimated simultaneously are presented in Table 5.6 for all dependent variables.

**Table 5.5** Bivariate regression analyses unconventional political participation (linear), conventional political participation (linear), and voting (logit), by radius (all contextual determinants entered separately, no individual-level controls, n= 3,370)

Radius	50m			100 m			200 m			500 m			Neighbourhood		
	b	s.e	R <sup>2</sup>	b	s.e	R <sup>2</sup>	b	s.e	R <sup>2</sup>	b	s.e	R <sup>2</sup>	b	s.e	R <sup>2</sup>
Unconventional political participation															
% non-western minorities	0.318**	(0.100)	0.003	0.393**	(0.107)	0.004	0.395 **	(0.113)	0.004	0.499 **	(0.120)	0.005	0.462**	(0.115)	0.005
GINI	118.775**	(18.732)	0.012	130.648**	(20.859)	0.012	156.451 **	(22.946)	0.014	192.638 **	(25.617)	0.017	156.285**	(25.567)	0.011
Median income	0.213	(0.165)	0.001	0.530*	(0.226)	0.002	0.537	(0.277)	0.001	-0.288	(0.359)	0.001	-0.088	(0.347)	0.000
Conventional political participation															
% non-western minorities	-0.041	(0.087)	0.001	-0.031	(0.093)	0.001	-0.030	(0.099)	0.001	0.007	(0.105)	0.001	-0.012	(0.100)	0.001
GINI	60.384**	(16.235)	0.004	75.974**	(18.109)	0.005	106.574 **	(19.989)	0.008	139.838 **	(22.319)	0.012	132.680**	(22.247)	0.010
Median income	0.819**	(0.143)	0.010	1.142**	(0.196)	0.010	1.328 **	(0.240)	0.009	1.272 **	(0.311)	0.005	1.527**	(0.301)	0.008
Voting															
% non-western minorities	-0.017**	(0.004)	0.012	-0.017**	(0.004)	0.010	-0.018 **	(0.004)	0.010	-0.013**	(0.005)	0.004	-0.013**	(0.004)	0.005
GINI	3.241**	(0.933)	0.008	4.583**	(1.094)	0.012	5.038 **	(1.214)	0.012	6.271**	(1.415)	0.014	4.681**	(1.334)	0.008
Median income	0.074**	(0.011)	0.033	0.092**	(0.013)	0.035	0.093 **	(0.015)	0.026	0.088**	(0.018)	0.015	0.081**	(0.017)	0.014

p < 0.05 \*\* p < 0.01 (two-tailed).



In Table 5.6, the contextual determinants are entered simultaneously, controlling for individual-level characteristics. For unconventional and conventional political participation, as well for voting, we find no association with the percentage of ethnic minorities. Hence, in contrast to the ‘hunkering down’ argument ethnic diversity does not fuel unconventional political participation nor does it detriment conventional political participation and voting. These findings reject hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2.

In economically unequal contexts (GINI), people participate more in unconventional political actions. This is in line with hypothesis 3. We also expected that individuals in unequal contexts would participate less in conventional modes and voting. However, we find that people participate more, which is at odds with hypothesis 4. We hypothesized that people in contexts of poverty would participate less in all modes of political participation (hypothesis 5). However, we find that people living in such neighbourhoods do not report lower levels of unconventional activities, conventional modes and also do not vote less often, thereby refuting hypothesis 5.

**Table 5.6** Multivariate regression analyses unconventional (linear), conventional political participation (linear), and voting (logit), main effects, at neighbourhood level (n=3,370)

	Unconventional political participation		Conventional political participation		Voting	
	Model 1		Model 1		Model 1	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<b>Contextual determinants</b>						
% non-western minorities	0.149	(0.138)	0.107	(0.118)	0.001	(0.006)
GINI	86.081 **	(26.478)	60.488 **	(22.763)	2.541 *	(1.416)
Median income	-0.317	(0.390)	0.401	(0.335)	0.023	(0.022)
Number of people within	0.558	(0.390)	-0.177	(0.335)	-0.025	(0.017)
<b>Individual determinants</b>						
Female	ref.		ref.		ref.	
Male	0.469	(2.488)	8.281 **	(2.139)	-0.143	(0.118)
Age	6.887	(4.416)	10.720 **	(3.797)	0.143	(0.191)
Age2	-1.012 **	(0.432)	-0.853 *	(0.371)	-0.010	(0.019)
Elementary	ref.		ref.		ref.	
Lower vocational	2.528	(6.214)	1.313	(5.343)	0.069	(0.226)
Secondary	4.292	(6.982)	8.331	(6.003)	0.313	(0.266)
Middle level vocational/	10.027 *	(5.893)	10.223 **	(5.066)	0.672 **	(0.224)
Higher level vocational/	31.392 **	(6.134)	35.580 **	(5.273)	1.808 **	(0.279)
Married	ref.		ref.		ref.	
Divorced	-3.600	(4.715)	0.737	(4.054)	-0.300	(0.211)
Widowed	0.281	(6.151)	-5.132	(5.288)	-0.193	(0.270)
Single	10.456 **	(3.622)	-2.657	(3.114)	-0.449 **	(0.173)
Income	0.017	(0.091)	0.291 **	(0.078)	0.025 **	(0.007)
Dutch	ref.		ref.		ref.	
Western minority	0.662	(4.847)	5.554	(4.167)	-0.441 *	(0.204)
Non-western minority	15.720 **	(6.575)	1.359	(5.653)	-0.489 *	(0.256)
Intercept	3.443	(15.398)	-55.608 **	(13.238)	-0.253	(0.756)
R <sup>2</sup> /Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.063		0.085		0.117	
-2 loglikelihood					2091.00	

$p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed). ref. = reference category.

Before we assess the interplay between individual and contextual characteristics, let us briefly look at the main effects of individual-level resources in Table 5.6. Regarding resources, we consistently find that the higher educated are more prone to participate politically in all modes compared to the lower educated. We do not find any effect of household income on unconventional political participation. However, individuals in higher income brackets do report higher levels of conventional modes and voting.

Surprisingly, we find that non-western minorities are more likely to participate in unconventional modes compared to the native population, controlling for the aforementioned individual determinants. Contrastingly, non-western minorities are less likely to vote compared to the native Dutch population.

**Table 5.7** Regression analysis conventional political participation (linear), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370)

	Model 7	
	b	s.e
Main effects		
Percentage non-western minorities	0.122	(0.119)
GINI	59.798**	(22.834)
Median income	4.109**	(1.497)
Interaction effects		
Median income		
*elementary education		ref.
*lower vocational education	-4.399**	(1.774)
*secondary vocational education	-3.525*	(1.971)
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education	-3.611*	(1.566)
*higher level vocational/university	-3.952**	(1.544)
Number of people within radius	-0.197	(0.335)
R <sup>2</sup>		0.087

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed). ref. = reference category.

Let us now turn to the interplay between individual and contextual determinants to test whether the contextual effects of ethnic diversity, inequality, and poverty depend on one's individual level resources. We estimated the interaction terms between each contextual determinant (ethnic diversity, inequality, and poverty) and individual resources (household income and level of education) to assess hypothesis 6, 7 and 8. We refer to Table A5.3 to A5.5 in the appendix for the full set of models that incorporate the relevant interaction terms, grouped per dependent variable. The models incorporating the interaction terms are mean centred. For unconventional political participation and voting the hypothesized associations with ethnic diversity, inequality, and contextual poverty do not diverge significantly between people with fewer and comparatively

more individual resources as shown in the appendix in Table A5.3 and Table A5.5. For conventional political participation, as shown in Table A5.4, we also find no interaction with ethnic diversity and income inequality, while the interaction with poverty (median income) reveals to be significant, also displayed in Table 5.7. We hypothesized that the negative effect of the poverty rate in an area on political participation will be stronger for inhabitants with fewer resources. However we only find an effect from education and not from income. People with the lowest education level are most affected by the median income in a neighbourhood. The results clearly reject the interaction hypothesis 6 on ethnic diversity and hypothesis 7 on income inequality. We find only partial support for hypothesis 8 since this only holds for conventional political participation – but not for voting and also not for unconventional modes of participation – and also only holds for the resource education, but not for individual level income.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

There is a large body of research assessing the effects of neighbourhood and other contextual-level determinants on attitudinal aspects of community involvement (Gijssberts et al., 2012; Hooghe et al., 2009; Lancee and Dronkers, 2011; Tolsma et al., 2009; Van der Meer and Tolsma, 2014). We built on this and set out to elaborate hypotheses on behavioural aspects of community involvement, specifically focusing on conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. We assessed the extent to which ethnic diversity, income inequality, and poverty in people's surroundings are associated with individual-level political participation in the Netherlands. Additionally, we scrutinized the extent to which contextual effects differ among people with higher and lower levels of education and income. Using survey data (the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies 2010 and 2012) enriched with population and GIS-data allowed us to vary from very detailed contextual-level units of analyses (a radius of 50 meters around a survey participant) to the broader neighbourhood context. Given Hagendoorn's (2009) proximity-argument, we expected these associations to be stronger in people's direct social surroundings (smaller radii). Yet, we do not find consistent evidence to substantiate this claim. Overall, our results do not reveal stronger associations between political participation and contextual determinants in smaller radii. Instead, the relationships are rather robust across the radii. This does not hold for the association between income inequality and (all modes of) political participation. These relationships seem to be slightly stronger in bigger localities rather than in smaller radii, which actually contradicts the proximity-argument. We assessed Putnam's (2007) rather under-theorized 'hunkering down' thesis. We followed his argument that ethnic diversity would induce unconventional modes of political participation whereas ethnic diversity would reduce conventional modes of participation. Moreover, we proposed to test this argument against the elaboration of Anderson and Paskeviciute (2006), suggesting that ethnic

diversity would induce, more generally, several modes of political participation. We found consistent evidence that ethnic diversity does not fuel unconventional modes of participation nor does it detriment conventional political participation and voting, rejecting both lines of reasoning. Our findings add to previous evidence from very different countries (Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2008; Gidengil et al., 2009) where it was also demonstrated that ethnic diversity is not related to political participation as claimed, however, not shown, by Putnam (2007).

We further expected that, in line with the impact of ethnic diversity, income inequality would induce unconventional political participation and reduce conventional political participation. Our analyses reveal that income inequality spurs all modes of political action: in unequal contexts, people participate more in conventional as well as unconventional modes and are more likely to vote. Our findings are contrary to Uslaner and Brown (2005), who reported negative effects of inequality on an aggregate measure at the state level in the US that consisted of working for political parties, protests and turnout. More recently, Lancee and Van de Werfhorst (2012) found that inequality decreases 'civic participation'. Their measure of civic participation included items on, amongst others, participation in activities of political parties. Our findings contradict the contribution by Coffé and Geys (2006) who study the effects of inequality and diversity at the municipal level in Belgium, report negative effects of inequality on an index that includes municipal aggregates of associational involvement and municipal voter turnout.

Apart from the differences in aggregation of contextual determinants as mentioned before across various studies, our contradictory findings may be interpreted with reference to grievance theory (Gurr & Moore, 1997). Grievance theory argued that inequality breeds grievances that prompt increased political participation. This would mainly spur political action among individuals in unequal contexts who have few resources as they are relatively deprived. Yet, we find that the effects of inequality do not depend on citizens' individual-level income or educational level, we conclude that income inequality spurs political participation evenly among privileged as well as among less privileged groups in society.

The results furthermore indicate that non-western minorities participate more in unconventional modes of political participation but vote to a lesser extent compared to the native Dutch population. Concerning voting, this suggests that Putnam's (2007) claim might be a compositional instead of a context effect. As non-western ethnic minorities vote less this means that the turnout in neighbourhoods where lots of ethnic minorities reside will also be relatively low. Such compositional effects are, however, not the focus of this article. Rather, the mechanism investigated here is that ethnic diversity in neighbourhoods fuels unconventional political participation, and drives down conventional political participation for all societal groups (context effect). Hence, according to the hypotheses specified living in ethnic diverse neighbourhood, would spur unconventional political participation for both minorities and the native Dutch

population. Similarly, ethnic diversity would decrease conventional modes of political participation for both non-western minorities and Dutchmen. We find no support for this context effect. The finding that non-western ethnic minorities participate more in unconventional and less in conventional modes of politics might be interpreted with reference to the work of De Rooij (2012), who investigates the participation of minorities in a European comparative perspective. Voting (and other conventional acts of participation) require a certain level of integration and familiarity with political institutions. One could argue that there is a lesser degree of familiarity with institutions necessary to participate in unconventional political activities because these are extra-institutional means of political participation. This might induce non-western minorities to resort to unconventional instead of conventional means of participation. Additionally, De Rooij (2012) argues that although minorities participate according to the same pattern as majority populations in Europe, their reasons for doing so might differ from the native population. She finds that if minorities participate in one political action, they are relatively much more likely compared to the majority population to participate in other political actions. However, when participation in voluntary organisations, citizenship, and the length of stay in the host country is taken into account, this difference between majority and minority populations diminishes. Our findings add to De Rooij's (2012) suggestions to investigate the notion that political participation of non-western minorities might be more closely related to the channels through which they are recruited rather than their resources to participate.

Our results are partly in line with classic theories on political participation, which argue that more resources induce higher levels of political participation (Brady et al., 1995; Verba et al., 1995). We find that resources at the individual-level, in terms of education, are associated with higher levels of conventional and unconventional political participation. We do not find that household income has an additional effect on political participation, when incorporating a wide range of resource-related individual-level determinants. This suggests that resource-based theories focussing on political participation can only be supported for the level of education in the Netherlands. Additionally, concerning the interplay between contextual and individual determinants, we only find rather limited evidence for the claim that living in poor contexts detracts modes of political participation. The median income of a neighbourhood does not influence the level of unconventional political participation nor does it affect voting. However, we do find that living in poor contexts detracts conventional modes of political participation (contacting politicians, participation in hearings or other meetings organized by the government, and trying to involve a political party or organisation) especially for lower educated individuals. Hence, living in poor contexts detracts conventional modes of political participation among less privileged groups to a stronger extent than for privileged groups in society.

# 6.

Conclusion

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Political participation is a prerequisite for proper democratic performance. Democracies in Europe heavily rely on citizen involvement in the political decision making process. Citizens influence their government not only through casting their vote at the ballot box but have multiple other means at their disposal to influence the political decision making process. In this thesis, we distinguished between conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. Conventional modes are directly entrenched within the legal institutional context whereas unconventional modes, such as demonstrating and petitioning, are extra-institutional means by which citizens influence the political decision making process. An individual's decision to participate in any political process is not solely related to his or her background, or the political issues at stake. It is also embedded in broader societal contexts, historically, nationally (in various political systems), or in even smaller localities where day-to-day interaction takes place (such as one's neighbourhood). This thesis focused on the interplay between these broader societal contexts and individual level attributes in explaining (levels of) conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe.

## 6.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A stocktaking exercise of the literature revealed several important questions. First, the current base of literature does not always explicitly take into account that political participation takes place within various contexts (e.g. Blais, 2006; Franklin, 2004; Van Biezen, Mair & Poguntke, 2012; Mair & Van Biezen, 2001; 2014). Most studies that do acknowledge that people act within various national and sub-national contexts either solely focus on conventional modes of political participation (Dalton & Anderson, 2011) or incomplete sets of unconventional modes of participation (Van der Meer et al., 2009; Dalton, Van Sickle Weldon, 2010). Moreover, the attributes of societal contexts might affect societal groups differently. This interplay between the characteristics of individual citizens and the broader societal and institutional contexts within which these citizens participate in politics is often not explicitly addressed in previous research. In this thesis we set out to empirically assess the effects of the societal context and its interplay with individual level determinants.

Moreover, the literature produces contrasting hypotheses on the effects of the context on conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. For instance, some scholars (e.g. Dalton, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2002, 2011) argue that that people crowd out from conventional, old-fashioned, modes of participation and move into newer, extra-institutional or unconventional modes of participation over time. Empirical tests of these theoretical propositions require the study of conventional and unconventional modes of political participation simultaneously. Yet, the current

base of literature largely treats these modes of political participation separately (e.g. Dalton & Anderson, 2011; Dalton, et al., 2010; Vráblíková, 2014). In this thesis, we focus on these theoretical notions that have implications for both modes of political participation and studied conventional and unconventional modes simultaneously in different societal contexts.

The overarching research question addressed in this thesis is explicitly geared at examining the interplay between contextual and individual determinants for both conventional and unconventional modes of political participation and reads:

*To what extent can differences in conventional and unconventional political participation in European countries and more particularly in the Netherlands, be explained by (the interplay of) contextual and individual-level determinants?*

Throughout this thesis, we derived contrasting and complementary hypotheses on the effects of the context on different modes of political participation. In chapter 2, this thesis started with comparisons of levels of conventional and unconventional political participation, over time (1981-2010) and across countries in Europe. In chapter 3 we explained differences in levels of political participation by focusing on the attributes of national level contexts. Subsequently, in chapter 4 we zoomed in on the Netherlands. Here we explain differences in levels of political participation over time, in the context of the recent financial and economic crisis. Finally, in chapter 5 we investigated to what extent the context of one's direct social surroundings affects levels of conventional and unconventional modes of political participation in the Netherlands.

### 6.3 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ACROSS CONTEXTS: SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESES AND FINDINGS

#### 6.3.1 *Context: countries over time in Europe.*

In chapter 2 we addressed the following research question: *What have been the main trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe over the past decades?*

In order to sketch an accurate and methodologically sound picture of cross-national and longitudinal trends in political participation in Europe we first needed to assess to what extent measurements of political participation are comparable across countries and over time. Therefore, we first tested the cross-national and longitudinal equivalence of measurements of political participation. We studied the extent to which patterns in conventional and unconventional modes of political participation are comparable across countries. Based on a comprehensive assessment combining ESS and EVS datasets for the period 1981-2008, we showed that both conventional and unconven-



tional modes of political participation are exercised cumulatively. People who employ more difficult acts of political participation, for instance unconventional political acts such as demonstrating, also employ easier unconventional acts of political participation, such as signing petitions. This cumulative pattern is also apparent among the conventional acts of political participation studied (voting, being a member of a political party and carrying out work for political parties). Moreover, we find that this cumulative pattern is equivalent across (most) European countries.

To assess the trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in recent decades, we tested two contrasting expectations in the literature. First, Putnam (2000) argues that western societies suffer from the yoke of withdrawal from civic life more broadly and politics more specifically, in recent decades. For the US, Putnam (2000) argued that there is a trend towards *less* political participation that is embedded in a wider trend of decreasing ‘civic virtues’ and declining civic involvement. However, others (Dalton, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2002, 2011) claim that there has been an opposing trend towards *more* unconventional political participation in recent decades. Dalton (2008) as well as Norris (2002, 2011) argued that citizens replace conventional modes of political participation with newer, less traditional, unconventional modes of participation. This resulted in two competing hypotheses. First, following Putnam (2000) we hypothesized that both conventional and unconventional political participation would *decrease* over the past decades in Europe. Second, we tested the proposition of shifting repertoires as put forward by Dalton (2008) and Norris (2002, 2011). Hence, we hypothesized that conventional political participation would *decrease* whereas unconventional political participation would *increase* in recent decades in Europe. These hypothesis and the results of the empirical tests are summarized in scheme 6.1.

**Scheme 6.1** Summary of findings from chapter 2

Context: Countries over time in Europe

Hypothesis	Hypothesized effect		Found effect		Evaluation of hypothesis
	conv.	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	
Political participation is in decline over time	-	-	0	0	Rejected
Shifting repertoires from conventional to unconventional over time	-	+	0	0	Rejected

+ positive effect, - negative effect, 0 no effect  
 conv.= conventional political participation  
 unconv.= unconventional political participation

As shown in scheme 6.1, our results do not lend support to the hypothesis that Europe suffers from citizen withdrawal from all modes of political participation (at least for the types of modes studied here). Similarly, we do not find support for the hypotheses that

citizens have been shifting their repertoire of political action, as this would result in decreased conventional political participation and increased unconventional political participation over time. Instead, chapter 2 revealed that levels of political participation are rather stable over time in the European countries studied.

Although there are no substantial changes over time *within* particular European countries, there are substantial differences *between* the various European countries studied. For instance, the level of unconventional political participation in Norway in 2004 is twice as high as in the Netherlands in 2004. This illustrates that differences between countries are much larger than differences over time.

### 6.3.2 *Context: countries within Europe*

In chapter 2 we concluded that political participation is stable over time in Europe and moreover, that there are large differences in levels of political participation between countries in Europe. This led us to seek clarification for these differences in levels of political participation *between* European countries in chapter 3. Additionally, we specifically addressed the interplay between contextual and individual characteristics and investigated the extent to which privileged (those with more resources) and underprivileged individuals (those with less resources) are affected differently by the context where political participation takes place. Thus, our research question reads: *To what extent can individual level conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe be explained by (the interplay of) contextual and individual-level determinants?*

We used several well-established theories to derive contrasting hypotheses aimed at explained these differences between countries in Europe. At the individual level, we built (a) on resource-based theories and at the contextual level, we employed theories (b) on political opportunity structures (c) modernization theory and (d) constrict theory. The findings of the hypotheses and tests are summarized in scheme 6.2.

First, we hypothesized that privileged individuals (those higher levels of education) participate more in conventional and unconventional modes compared to underprivileged individuals (those with lower levels of education) (Brady et al., 1995; Dalton, 2008; Desposato and Norrander 2009; Norris et al., 2005), which our findings consistently support for all modes of political participation.

**Scheme 6.2** Summary of findings from chapter 3 (continues on next page)

Hypothesis	Hypothesized effect		Found effect		Evaluation of hypothesis	
	unconv.	conv. V M & W	unconv.	conv. V M & W	unconv.	conv. V M & W
<b>Individual determinants</b>						
<i>Resources</i>						
Individuals with more resources (education) participate more in all modes.	+	+	+	+	not rejected	not rejected
<i>Contextual determinants:</i>						
Characteristics of countries in Europe						
<i>Opportunity structures</i>						
In open political systems citizens participate more in all modes	+	+	0	+	rejected	rejected
In closed political systems citizens participate more in unconventional modes	+	+	0	0	rejected	rejected
<i>Modernization theories</i>						
In more prosperous societies with more extensive welfare systems citizens participate more in all modes.	+	+	0	+	rejected	rejected
In more prosperous societies with more extensive welfare systems citizens participate less in all modes.	-	-	0	+	rejected	rejected
<i>Constrict theory</i>						
In more ethnically diverse countries, citizens are less likely to participate in conventional political actions.	-	-	0	0	rejected	rejected
In more ethnically diverse countries citizens are more likely to participate in unconventional political actions.	+	+	0	0	rejected	rejected

Hypothesis	Hypothesized effect		Found effect		Evaluation of hypothesis	
	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.
	V	M & W	V	M & W	V	M & W
Interplay: individual & contextual determinants						
<i>Characteristics of countries in Europe &amp; resources</i>						
Privileged and underprivileged individuals living in contexts with different opportunity structures and degrees of modernization.						
The effect of openness is stronger for higher versus lower educated citizens.						
The effect of prosperity and extensive welfare systems is stronger for higher versus lower educated citizens.						
The effect of prosperity and more extensive social welfare systems is weaker for higher educated versus lower educated citizens.						
+ positive effect, - negative effect, ++ positive interaction, -- negative interaction						
conv.= conventional, unconv.= unconventional						
V.=voting, M & W.=membership and working for political parties						

Second, we argued that differences between European countries in levels of political participation might be explained by variation in political opportunity structures. We then focused on deriving contrasting hypothesis for open and closed political systems. In countries where citizens are free to voice their concerns, both conventional and unconventional modes may be used simultaneously (Kitschelt, 1986; Dalton, Van Sickle and Weldon, 2010). This led to the hypothesis that levels of both conventional and unconventional modes of political participation are higher in open systems. Our findings do not support the contrasting hypothesis that people living in closed systems seek alternative means of influencing politics particularly through unconventional channels. Instead, our estimates revealed that people living in open political systems are more likely to vote but not more likely to participate in other conventional or unconventional activities.

Regarding the interplay between individual level resources and political opportunity systems we argued that privileged citizens (the higher educated) would be better equipped to participate in more open and increasingly complex institutional settings compared to citizens with less skills and resources (lower educated). Our findings consistently reject this hypothesis, across all modes of political participation. On the contrary, we find for membership and working for political parties (conventional modes) that the effect of open systems is actually weaker for the higher educated compared to lower educated citizens. Third, in line with modernization theories we argued that differences in the prosperity and welfare systems of countries might explain the large differences between European countries in their levels of political participation. Again, we derived contrasting hypothesis. Following Inglehart and Welzel (2005), a context of prosperity and more extensive welfare systems (as indicators for modernization) breed participatory values that would in turn induce conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. Contrastingly we hypothesized, in line with Putnam (2000), that prosperity prompts atomization reducing both conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. The prosperity of the context does not affect unconventional modes directly (if we do not take into account the interplay with individual level resources). Hence for unconventional of political participation neither the hypothesis derived from Inglehart and Welzel (2005) nor the hypothesis derived from Putnam (2000) holds empirically. Regarding conventional modes we find that in more prosperous contexts people are more likely to vote. However, this only holds for voting; citizens in in prosperous contexts are not more or less likely to be a member or work for a political party. Putnam's (2000) claim that 'civic virtue' in general and political participation in specific are in decline due to (increased and prolonged) prosperity is therefore refuted.

Looking at the interplay between modernization and privileged and underprivileged individuals we again stated contrasting hypotheses. If modernization is associated with a participatory milieu (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005) this will first and foremost boost the participation of privileged individuals that additionally have the skills and resources to

participate, i.e., the higher educated. For the contrasting line of reasoning, we followed Putnam (2000); if modernization induces atomization, then this is most likely to occur first and foremost among those that lack the skills and resources to participate politically to begin with. Our results reveal that in prosperous contexts, higher educated participate even more in unconventional political activities compared to the lower educated. This finding lends some support to the findings of Inglehart and Welzel (2005) and Welzel and Deutsch (2012) that prosperity breeds a participatory milieu inducing unconventional political action. This is in sharp contrast with our findings for conventional modes. Underprivileged individuals in prosperous context are more likely to participate in conventional modes. However, since the initial notion of atomization from Putnam (2000) does not hold, we do not consider this as a corroboration of this hypothesis. For voting, we do not find different effects for privileged and underprivileged individuals.

Fourth, based on Putnam (2007), we hypothesized that ethnic diversity would lead people to ‘hunker down’ and refrain from participating in conventional modes, whereas people would agitate more for social reform in unconventional modes. However, we do not find any effect of ethnic diversity on any mode of political participation in the European context.

### 6.3.3 *Context: the Netherlands over time*

In chapter 4 we zoomed in on the Netherlands, taking a longitudinal perspective within one national level context. Against the backdrop of changing context of rising protest movements around the globe coinciding with economic downturn we extended our timeframe (until 2012). We investigated to what extent the recent financial and economic crisis affects levels of conventional and unconventional political participation in the Netherlands. Our research question reads: *To what extent are levels of political participation affected during times of economic downturn in the Netherlands between 2002-2012 in general, and privileged and underprivileged individuals more specifically?* The timing of the most recent parliamentary elections in the Netherlands, and thereby the timing of the most recent set of Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies, allowed us to make comparisons between 2002 and 2012. This timeframe corresponds with the timeframe before the economic crisis, at the onset of the economic crisis, and during the economic crisis.

We used propositions from the economic voting literature and applied these to modes of conventional political participation (other than voting) and additionally included unconventional modes of political participation. Building on the economic voting literature (Anderson, 2007; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000; Radcliff, 1992) we argued that there is reason to assume that recent economic adversity would affect levels of political participation in the Netherlands. We hypothesized that economic downturn urges people to voice their concerns more strongly through political action. A competing perspective (Rosenstone, 1982; Thomassen, 1990) hypothesizes that in times of

CHAPTER 6

economic downturn people focus on ‘bread and butter concerns’. They connect less to the remote concerns of politics and refrain from participating in politics. Our findings indicate that there is a very slight decline of conventional modes of political participation and a slight increase of unconventional modes of political participation in recent times of economic adversity in the Netherlands (see scheme 6.3).

**Scheme 6.3** Summary of findings from chapter 4

Hypothesis	Hypothesized effect		Found effect		Evaluation of hypothesis	
	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.
<i>Individual determinants</i>						
<i>Resources</i>						
Privileged and underprivileged individuals						
Privileged individuals participate more in all modes	+	+	+	+	not rejected	not rejected
<i>Contextual determinants</i>						
Times of economic hardship in the Netherlands						
In times of economic hardship, all modes of political participation will increase	+	+	+	-	not rejected	rejected
In times of economic hardship, all modes of political participation will decrease	-	-	+	-	rejected	not rejected
<i>Interplay: individual &amp; contextual determinants</i>						
Privileged and underprivileged individuals in times of economic hardship in the Netherlands						
The differences between the underprivileged and privileged will increase during times of economic hardship.	++	++	0	0	rejected	rejected

+ positive effect, - negative effect, ++ positive interaction, -- negative interaction  
 conv.= conventional, unconv.= unconventional

We hypothesized that privileged and underprivileged groups in society would react differently to the economic crisis in their levels of political participation. Concerning this interplay between individual and context, we argued that underprivileged groups would be disproportionately affected by the economic downturn which would either lead to increased agitation (Rosenstone, 1982) and more political action or even more apathy,

following the line of reasoning of Thomassen (1990), since underprivileged groups do not have the skills and resources to participate to begin with.

Yet, our findings do not lend support to these lines of reasoning. We find that, albeit very small effects, there is a slight decline in conventional modes and a slight increase in unconventional modes of political participation during times of economic downturn in the Netherlands. However, there is no difference between privileged and underprivileged groups in the effect of economic downturn on their level of conventional and unconventional political participation.

Additionally, chapter 4 revealed that participation in conventional modes of political participation (other than voting) is relatively rare in the Netherlands. For instance, the share of people who are involved in a political party to raise their concerns ranges between 4 and 6 percent. The same holds for unconventional modes of political participation. The share of the Dutch electorate that reports to have participated in a demonstration ranges between 3 and 4 percent.

#### 6.3.4 *Context: micro level surroundings within the Netherlands.*

Given our finding that changes and differences in changes over time within the Netherlands during the economic crisis are very small, we subsequently focused on the effects of micro-level contexts in the Netherlands. We specifically concentrated on effects of the context of the neighbourhood and even smaller localities in the Netherlands on conventional and unconventional political participation. Again, we drew attention to the interplay between (micro level) contexts and individual characteristics. Our research question read: *To what extent can individual-level political participation be explained by (the interplay of) individual and contextual-level determinants in the Netherlands?*

Again we focused on the effect of ethnic diversity. Although we did not find an effect of ethnic diversity on political participation in chapter 3 we argued that this might be due to the fact that the national level context is a too high level of aggregation. Ethnic diversity in one's direct surroundings such as neighbourhoods and even smaller localities, can possibly affect modes of political participation as the exposure to ethnic diversity is inevitable in ones direct social surroundings, while, this effect might vanish in such a large contextual unit as a country (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015) However, ethnic diversity is strongly correlated with poverty and inequality in Dutch neighbourhoods (see: Lancee & Dronkers, 2011; Tolsma et al., 2009). Hence the supposed effects of ethnic diversity might be spurious due to strong correlations with poverty and inequality. Our data-structure allowed us to derive very detailed contextual measures of inequality, poverty, and diversity in individual's direct social surroundings, mitigating problems of spuriousness. We varied the size of the context and defined this based on the composition of the population very close to the respondent (a radius of 50 meters) towards the broader neighbourhood



**Scheme 6.4** Summary of findings from chapter 5 (continued on next page).

Hypotheses		Hypothesized effect		Found effect		Evaluation of hypotheses	
		unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.
		V.	O.	V.	O.	V.	O.
<i>Individual determinants</i>							
<i>Resources</i>							
Privileged and underprivileged individuals							
Individuals with less resources (education), participate less in all modes.		-	-	-	-	not rejected	not rejected
<i>Contextual determinants</i>							
Characteristics of neighbourhoods and smaller localities in the Netherlands							
<i>Ethnic diversity</i>							
The higher the ethnic diversity in an area, the higher inhabitants' unconventional political participation		+		0		rejected	
The higher the ethnic diversity in an area, the lower inhabitants' conventional political participation		-	-	0	0	rejected	rejected
<i>Inequality</i>							
The higher the inequality in an area, the higher inhabitants' unconventional political participation		+		+		not rejected	
The higher the inequality in an area, the lower inhabitants' conventional political participation		-	-	+	+	rejected	rejected
<i>Poverty</i>							
The higher the poverty in an area, the lower inhabitants' conventional and unconventional political participation.		-	-	0	0	rejected	rejected

Hypotheses	Hypothesized effect		Found effect		Evaluation of hypotheses	
	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.	unconv.	conv.
Interplay	V.	O.	V.	O.	V.	O.,
<i>Privileged and underprivileged individuals living in contexts of ethnic diversity, inequality and poverty.</i>						
The positive contextual effects of ethnic diversity and economic inequality on unconventional political participation will be weaker for inhabitants with fewer resources	++		0		rejected	
The negative contextual effects of ethnic diversity and economic inequality on conventional political participation will be stronger for inhabitants with fewer resources.	--		0	0	rejected	rejected
The negative effect of the poverty rate in an area on political participation will be stronger for inhabitants with fewer resources.	--		0	-- 0	rejected	not rejected
+ positive effect						
- negative effect						
++ positive interaction						
-- negative interaction						
conv.= conventional, unconv.= unconventional						
V.= voting						
O.= other conventional political participation						

Putnam (2007) claims that people in ethnically diverse settings ‘hunker down’, retreat in their own sphere, and do not engage, particularly in conventional modes of political action. This leads to the hypothesis that conventional political participation is lower in ethnically diverse settings. However, Putnam also acknowledges that ‘hunkering down’ does not apply to unconventional modes of political participation but only to conventional modes as he finds that there people agitate more for social reform through demonstrating and petitioning which are unconventional modes of political participation. In ethnically diverse contexts, “participation takes places along easily understood group lines” (Anderson & Paskeviciute, 2006, p. 786). Thus, in ethnically homogenous contexts, interests are less dispersed and competition between interests is less salient and people agitate less for social reform through unconventional channels. Hence we hypothesized that ethnic diversity would particularly increase unconventional political participation.

Our findings, as summarized in scheme 6.4, show that ethnic diversity neither decreases conventional political participation nor does it induce unconventional political participation in the Netherlands.

We used similar lines of reasoning to hypothesize on the effects of diversity in socio-economic terms, that is inequality, in Dutch neighbourhoods on conventional and unconventional political participation. Similarly to Putnam (2007), we hypothesized that people ‘hunker down’ in economically unequal contexts and refrain from participating in conventional modes whereas they would participate more in unconventional political actions (Anderson & Paskeviciute, 2006). Our findings indicate that inequality spurs all modes of political action, both unconventional, conventional modes and voting. Regarding the interplay between ethnic diversity, inequality and political, where we combined the notions above with the resource based perspective, we do not find an indication that there are differences between privileged and underprivileged individuals.

We further hypothesized that living in poor contexts detracts all modes of political participation as living in economically deprived contexts may bring people to abstain from community involvement in general (Letki, 2008; Scheepers, Schmeets & Pelzer, 2013; Tolsma et al., 2009). However, we do not find support that people living in poor contexts participate less in conventional or unconventional modes in general. Additionally, we also hypothesized that living in poor contexts affects those who do not have the resources to participate to begin with (underprivileged individuals) to a stronger extent compared to the relatively well to do. We only find evidence of this effect for conventional modes of political participation (contacting politicians, participation in hearings or other meetings organized by the government, and trying to involve a political party or organisation).

Finally, we do not find substantial differences when defining one’s direct social surroundings based on the social-economic composition of their environment in radii very close to the respondent (50 meters) compared to the wider neighbourhood.

## 6.4 OVERALL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

By studying similar phenomena (conventional and unconventional political participation) across different contexts (longitudinally in Europe 1981-2010, cross-nationally in Europe, and longitudinally and across neighbourhood contexts in the Netherlands) we consistently found that the patterns of political activities are cumulative. People who engage in more difficult and time consuming modes of influencing politics also employ easier, less time consuming and less skill intensive means of political participation. This holds for both legally embedded, conventional modes, as well as for extra-institutional, unconventional modes. Moreover, this cumulative pattern is stable over time in Europe after the turn of the millennium. This highlights the need to acknowledge the cumulative nature of participation in future research rather than focusing on single activities such as protesting, demonstrating or party membership when studying political participation.

We have demonstrated that both conventional and unconventional modes of participation are rather stable over time in Europe. Even more recently in the Netherlands, during a time of widespread economic malaise, there is not much change over time in conventional and unconventional modes of political participation.

This thesis also revealed that individual level determinants have more explanatory power compared to contextual characteristics (see chapter 3). Those who possess more skills and resources are more likely to participate in all kinds of political action. This is consistent with the findings of others (e.g. Brady et al., 1995; Dalton, 2008; Desposato and Norrander, 2009; Norris et al., 2005) and substantiates the body of evidence of well established resource based theories. Concerning the interplay between contextual and individual determinants we showed for unconventional political participation that it is mostly the higher educated (privileged individuals) that benefit from the prosperity of countries in their level of unconventional political participation. This further validates the findings of Dalton, Van Sickle and Weldon (2010) who found similar effects. Additionally, this finding might be interpreted with reference to Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier (2010) who suggest that traditional patterns of stratification on the basis of education in conventional modes are reproduced in relatively newer unconventional modes.

Although voting fits within the equivalent cumulative patterns of conventional political participation, our results indicate that this ritualistic mode of political participation is a truly distinct political activity compared to other conventional and unconventional modes of participation. Voting is the most exemplary, most popular, and probably the easiest mode of influencing the political decision making process. Additionally, in the Netherlands as well as in wider Europe conventional modes of political participation, other than voting, are relatively rare (with the exception of Austria and Switzerland). Moreover, we also find different effects on voting regarding the characteristics of the national level context, more particularly open political systems, prosperity and the ex-

istence of extensive welfare systems induce voting whereas this is not the case for other conventional or unconventional modes of political participation.

Putnam (2007) generalized the claim that ethnic diversity detracts both attitudinal and behavioural aspects of civic involvement, including political participation. We did not find any support for the supposed detrimental effects of ethnic diversity on political participation at any contextual level. We tested these hypotheses at several contextual levels. These levels ranged from the ethnic composition of the country one lives in to the ethnic composition of micro level contexts defined very close to the respondent (e.g. the ethnic composition of everyone living in a radius of 50 meters from the respondents). This raises questions about the general tenability of this claim. Especially since there was also no relationship observed between ethnic diversity and political participation in other countries such as the UK (Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2008) and Canada (Gidengil et al., 2009). Savelkoul, Gesthuizen, and Scheepers (2014) did not find an effect of ethnic diversity on other behavioural characteristics, such as associational involvement and volunteering, both across countries in Europe, as well as in neighbourhoods and municipalities in the Netherlands. Van der Meer, and Tolsma (2014) extended this doubt in their systematic review that also concluded that there is no unambiguously negative relationship between ethnic diversity and aspects of social cohesion. Other determinants, such as inequality in one's direct social surroundings seem to have stronger (positive) effects on all modes of political participation.

## 6.5 CAVEATS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

We investigated the effects of very broad, national level contexts as well as the effects of the micro-level context. For reasons of data availability and comparability across contexts, this thesis did not look at the effects of citizens' social networks. Political opinions are shared within one's social network through day-to-day interactions, political discussion, and debate. It is very likely to assume that for instance the composition and especially the diversity of one's social network affects political participation as well. This thesis solely focused on the context within which people live but did not take into account the context of one's direct social network.

Another limitation is that this thesis did not scrutinize the issues at stake that drive political participation. Unconventional actions such as demonstrations and petitions often centre on single issues. It is very likely that the content of a political concern influences one's preference to employ conventional vis-à-vis unconventional modes of political participation. As this thesis focused on comparing similar phenomena across different contexts and on longitudinal comparisons, we could not distinguish between the contents of the political concern that motivate people to prefer conventional over unconventional modes, or vice versa. Future research should take into account in more

detail that the interest that citizens seek to address in the political arena, affects their preference for a certain mode or repertoire of political action.

Citizens are expected to engage in the political decision making process to engage in (collective) action and to hold their political authorities accountable. Connecting citizens to the state by means of participation in the politics is regarded as a prerequisite for proper democratic performance. Thus, the health and stability of democracies depends heavily on the extent to which individual citizens participate actively in politics (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994).

If democracies' wellbeing depends on actively engaged citizens, disruptions in the public's engagement are deemed to be exemplary for disruptions in social cohesion within a society (Putnam 2000, 2007). Several authors argue that western democracies suffer from declining political trust or 'disenchantment' with politics (Eder, Mochmann & Quandt, 2015; Norris, 2011). Claims of declining, increasing or fluctuating levels of trust in politicians and political institutions are still under debate, not only in wider Europe but also specifically in the context of the Netherlands (Bovens & Wille, 2011; Schmeets & Te Riele, 2013). Although we did not study these (possibly) mediating attitudes, what this thesis demonstrates is that regardless of a supposed decline, fluctuation, or increase in political trust and trust in (political) institutions, or other related attitudinal and behavioural indicators of social cohesion, there is no substantial change in *levels* of political participation in Europe and the Netherlands, over time. Hence, although trust and other related indicators of social cohesion might fluctuate over time (which are not the empirical focus of this thesis), our results indicate that this does not unequivocally leads to changing levels of political participation as this thesis shows that political participation is relatively stable over time.

Additionally, given our results that contexts matter and moreover that characteristics of the context affect various societal strata differently for political participation, there is reason to assume that contextual determinants also influence the aforementioned mediating attitudes (such as political trust and efficacy) that drive political participation. Future research should take this into account.

Finally, despite popular concerns of declining civic involvement this thesis demonstrates that that political participation is in not decline. Levels of political participation are rather stable, still levels of conventional (except voting) and unconventional political participation are relatively low. If we take political participation as a yardstick to measure political involvement, the citizenry is not becoming *increasingly* disengaged from politics.



# References

- Aarts, K., Linssen, R. & Schmeets, H. (2011). De mening van het electoraat over de Europese Unie [The electorates' opinion on the European Union]. In: H. Schmeets (Ed.), *Verkiezingen: Participatie, vertrouwen en integratie* [Elections: Participation, trust, and integration]. The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Aarts, K., Van der Kolk, H. & Rosema, M. (2007). *Een verdeeld electoraat?* Houten: Spectrum.
- Alesina, A. & La Ferrara, E. (2000). Participation in heterogeneous communities. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 115(3), 847–904.
- Alesina, A. & La Ferrara, E. (2002). Who trusts others? *Journal of Public Economics*, 85(2), 207–234.
- Almond, G. A. & Verba, S. (1963). *The civic culture: Political attitudes and democracy in five nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Anderson, C. J. (2007). The end of economic voting? Contingency dilemmas and the limits of democratic accountability. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 10, 271–296.
- Anderson, C. J. & Paskeviciute, A. (2006). How ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity influence the prospects for civil society: a comparative study of citizenship behavior. *Journal of Politics*, 68(4), 783–802.
- Anderson, C. J. & Singer, M. M. (2008). The sensitive left and the impervious right: Multilevel models and the politics of inequality, ideology, and legitimacy in Europe. *Comparative Political Studies*, 41(4), 564–599.
- Barnes, S. H. & Kaase, M. (1979). *Political action: Mass participation in five western democracies*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Berelson, B. R., Lazarsfeld, P. F. & McPhee, W. N. (1954). *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Bernard, P. (1999). Social cohesion: A critique. *CPRN Discussion Paper*. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks.
- Billiet, J., Vehovar, V., Beullens, K. & Matsuo, H. (2009). Non-response bias in cross-national surveys: Designs for detection and adjustment in the ESS. *ASK. Research & Methods*, 18, 3-43.
- Blais, A., Gidengil, E. & Nevitte, N. (2004). Where does turnout decline come from? *European Journal of Political Research*, 43(2), 221–236.
- Boardman, J. D. & Robert, S. A. (2000). Neighbourhood socioeconomic status and perceptions of self-efficacy. *Sociological Perspectives*, 43(1), 117–136.
- Bousetta, H. (1997). Citizenship and political participation in France and the Netherlands: Reflections on two local cases. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 23(2), 215–231.
- Bovens, M. & Wille, A. C. (2011). Falling or fluctuating trust levels? the case of the Netherlands. In M. Hooghe & S. Zmerli (Eds.), *Political trust: Why context matters* (pp. 47–66). Colchester: ECPR Press
- Brady, H. E. (1999). Political participation. In J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver & L. S. Wrightsman (Eds.), *Measures of political attitudes* (pp. 737-800). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Brady, H. E., Verba, S. & Schlozman, K. L. (1995). Beyond SES: A resource model of political participation. *American Political Science Review*, 89(2), 271–294.
- Burt, S. (2002). The concept of political participation. In J. M. Everitt & B. L. O'Neill (Eds.), *Citizen politics: Research and theory in Canadian political behaviour* (pp. 232–246). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Castenmiller, P. & Kriesi, H. (1987). De ontwikkeling van politiek protest in Nederland sinds de jaren zeventig. *Acta Politica*, 22, 61–84.
- CBS. (2013a). Sustained economic contraction. Statistics Netherlands press release, PB13-011, 14 February 2013. The Hague/ Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- CBS. (2013b). National Voters Survey 2012: satisfaction with democracy remains high. Statistics Netherlands press release, PB13-006, 1 February 2013. The Hague/ Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- CBS. (2014a). Labour force; main figures by sex and other personal characteristics. Retrieved 2 April 2014, from <http://statline.cbs.nl/>



## REFERENCES

- CBS. (2014b). Financieel risico hypotheekschuld; eigenwoningbezitters [Financial risk mortgage debt; homeowners]. Retrieved 3 April 2014, from <http://statline.cbs.nl/>
- CBS. (2014c). Government finance statistics; key figures. Retrieved 2 April 2014, from <http://statline.cbs.nl/>
- CBS. (2014d). Nationale problemen volgens stemgerechtigden [National problems according to the electorate]. Retrieved 3 April 2014, from <http://statline.cbs.nl/>
- Chan, J., To, H.P. & Chan, E. (2006). Reconsidering social cohesion: Developing a definition and analytical framework for empirical research. *Social Indicators Research*, 75(2), 273–302.
- Coffé, H., & Geys, B. (2006). Community Heterogeneity: A burden for the creation of social capital?. *Social Science Quarterly*, 87(5), 1053-1072.
- Coté, S. & Healy, T. (2001). *The well-being of nations. The role of human and social capital*. Paris: OECD.
- Council of Europe. (2010). *New strategy and council of Europe action plan for social cohesion*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Cutts, D. & Fieldhouse, E. (2009). What small spatial scales are relevant as electoral contexts for individual voters? The importance of the household on turnout at the 2001 general election. *American Journal of Political Science*, 53(3), 726–739.
- Dahl, R. A. (1973). *Polyarchy: Participation and opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Dalton, R. J. (2008). Citizenship norms and the expansion of political participation. *Political Studies*, 56(1), 76–98.
- Dalton, R. J. & Anderson, C. J. (2010). *Citizens, context, and choice: How context shapes citizens' electoral choices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dalton, R. J., Van Sickle, A. & Weldon, S. (2010). The individual–institutional nexus of protest behaviour. *British Journal of Political Science*, 40(1), 51–73.
- Davies, J. C. (1962). Toward a theory of revolution. *American Sociological Review*, 27(1), 5–19.
- Dekker, P., Koopmans, R. & Van den Broek, A. (1997). Voluntary associations, social movements and individual political behaviour in Western Europe. In J. W. Van Deth (Ed.), *Private groups and public life: Social participation and political involvement in representative democracies* (pp. 224–243). London: Routledge.
- Delhey, J. & Newton, K. (2005). Predicting cross-national levels of social trust: Global pattern or Nordic exceptionalism? *European Sociological Review*, 21(4), 311–327.
- Delhey, J., Newton, K. & Welzel, C. (2011). How general is trust in 'most people'? Solving the radius of trust problem. *American Sociological Review*, 76(5), 786–807.
- Den Ridder, J. & Dekker, P. (2015). *Meer democratie, minder politiek? Een studie van de public opinie in Nederland [More democracy, less politics? Studying public opinion in the Netherlands]*. The Hague: Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau.
- Desposato, S. & Norrander, B. (2009). The gender gap in Latin America: Contextual and individual influences on gender and political participation. *British Journal of Political Science*, 39(1), 141–162.
- De Rooij, E. A. (2012). Patterns of immigrant political participation: explaining differences in types of political participation between immigrants and the majority population in Western Europe. *European sociological review*, 28(4), 455-481.
- Dinesen, P. T. & Sønderskov, K. M. (2015). Ethnic diversity and social trust: Evidence from the micro-context. *American Sociological Review*. 80(3), 550-573.
- DPES. (2006). Dutch parliamentary election surveys 2006. Amsterdam: DANS/KNAW.
- DPES. (2010). Dutch parliamentary election surveys 2010. Amsterdam: DANS/KNAW.
- DPES. (2012). Dutch parliamentary election surveys 2012. Amsterdam: DANS/KNAW.
- Egmond, M., De Graaf, N. D. & Van der Eijk, C. (1998). Electoral participation in the Netherlands: Individual and contextual influences. *European Journal of Political Research*, 34(2), 281–300.
- Elsas, E. (2015). Political trust as a rational attitude: A comparison of the nature of political trust across different levels of education. *Political Studies*, 63(5), 1158-1178.
- Erikson, R., Goldthorpe, J. H. & Portocarero, L. (1979). Intergenerational class mobility in three western European societies: England, France and Sweden. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 30(4), 415–441. <http://doi.org/10.2307/589632>

- ESS. (2002). European Social Survey Round 1 Data. Data file edition 6.2. Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Norway : Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.
- ESS. (2004). European Social Survey Round 2 Data. Data file edition 3.2. Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Norway : Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.
- ESS. (2006). European Social Survey Round 3 Data. Data file edition 3.3. Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Norway : Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.
- ESS. (2008). European Social Survey Round 4 Data. Data file edition 4.0. Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Norway : Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.
- ESS. (2010). European Social Survey Round 5 Data. Data file edition 1.0. Norwegian Social Science Data Services. Norway : Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.
- European Commission (2010). *Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*. Brussels: European Commission.
- Eurostat. (2011). *Sponsorship Group on Measuring Progress, Well-being and Sustainable Development: Final Report adopted by the European Statistical System Committee*. Retrieved from: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/ess/about-us/measuring-progress>
- EVS. (1981). European Values Study 1981 Integrated Dataset. Surveys designed and executed by the European Values Study Group and World Values Survey Association. File Producers: ASEP/JDS, Madrid, Spain and Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands. File Distributors: ASEP/JDS and GESIS, Cologne, Germany.
- EVS. (1990). European Values Study 1990 Integrated Dataset. Surveys designed and executed by the European Values Study Group and World Values Survey Association. File Producers: ASEP/JDS, Madrid, Spain and Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands. File Distributors: ASEP/JDS and GESIS, Cologne, Germany.
- EVS. (1999). European Values Study 1999 Integrated Dataset. Surveys designed and executed by the European Values Study Group and World Values Survey Association. File Producers: ASEP/JDS, Madrid, Spain and Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands. File Distributors: ASEP/JDS and GESIS, Cologne, Germany.
- EVS. (2008). European Values Study 2008 Integrated Dataset. Surveys designed and executed by the European Values Study Group and World Values Survey Association. File Producers: ASEP/JDS, Madrid, Spain and Tilburg University, Tilburg, the Netherlands. File Distributors: ASEP/JDS and GESIS, Cologne, Germany.
- Fieldhouse, E. & Cutts, D. (2008). Diversity, density and turnout: the effect of neighbourhood ethno-religious composition on voter turnout in Britain. *Political Geography*, 27(5), 530–548.
- Franklin, M. N. (2004). *Voter turnout and the dynamics of electoral competition in established democracies since 1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gesthuizen, M., Scheepers, P., Van der Veld, W. & Völker, B. (2013). Structural aspects of social capital: Tests for cross-national equivalence in Europe. *Quality & Quantity*, 47(2), 909–922.
- Gesthuizen, M., Van der Meer, T. & Scheepers, P. (2009). Ethnic diversity and social capital in Europe: Tests of Putnam's thesis in European countries. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 32(2), 121–142.
- Geys, B. (2006). Explaining voter turnout: A review of aggregate-level research. *Electoral Studies*, 25(4), 637–663.
- Gidengil, E. L., Roy, J. J. & Lawlor, A. (2009). The impact of ethno-racial diversity and immigration on political engagement. *APSA 2009 Toronto Meeting Paper*. Toronto: APSA
- Gijsberts, M., Van der Meer, T. & Dagevos, J. (2012). 'Hunkering down' in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods? The effects of ethnic diversity on dimensions of social cohesion. *European Sociological Review*, 28(4), 527–537.
- Giugni, M. (2004). *Social protest and policy change: Ecology, antinuclear, and peace movements in comparative perspective*. Landham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Giugni, M., & Grasso, M. (2016). *Austerity and protest: Popular contention in times of economic crisis*. London: Routledge.
- Grasso, M. T. (2014). Age, period and cohort analysis in a comparative context: Political generations and political participation repertoires in Western Europe. *Electoral Studies*, 33, 63–76.
- Grönlund, K., & Milner, H. (2006). The determinants of political knowledge in comparative perspective. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 29(4), 386–406.

## REFERENCES

- Günther, R., Montero, J. R. & Puhle, H. J. (2007). *Democracy, intermediation and voting on four continents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gurr, T. R. & Leggewie, C. (1970). *Why men rebel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gurr, T. R. & Moore, W. H. (1997). Ethnopolitical rebellion: A cross-sectional analysis of the 1980s with risk assessments for the 1990s. *American Journal of Political Science*, 41(4), 1079–1103.
- Güveli, A. (2006). *New social classes within the service class in the Netherlands and Britain. Adjusting the EGP class schema for the technocrats and the social and cultural specialists*. Nijmegen: ICS/ Radboud University.
- Hackert, M., Linssen, R., & Schmeets, H. (2012). Economische en culturele dreiging: Wie ervaart dreiging en wie niet? [Economic and cultural threat: Who feels threatened and who doesn't?] *Sociaal-economische trends*, 2012(4), 45-52.
- Hagendoorn, L. (2009). Ethnic diversity and the erosion of social capital. *Newsletter of the American Political Science Association*, 20(1), 12–14.
- Harell, A. & Stolle, D. (2008). Reconciling diversity and community? Defining social cohesion in diverse democracies. In M. Hooghe (Ed.), *Social cohesion contemporary theoretical perspectives on the study of social cohesion and social capital* (pp. 8–43). Brussels: Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts.
- Hooghe, M. & Dejaeghere, Y. (2007). Does the 'monitorial citizen' exist? An empirical investigation into the occurrence of postmodern forms of citizenship in the Nordic countries. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 30(2), 249–271.
- Hooghe, M., Reeskens, T., Stolle, D. & Trappers, A. (2009). Ethnic diversity and generalized trust in Europe A cross-national multilevel study. *Comparative Political Studies*, 42(2), 198–223.
- Howe, P. (2006). Political knowledge and electoral participation in the Netherlands: Comparisons with the Canadian case. *International Political Science Review*, 27(2), 137-166.
- Inglehart, R. (1997). *Modernization and postmodernization: Cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Inglehart, R. & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy: The human development sequence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Inglehart, R. & Welzel, C. (2010). Changing mass priorities: The link between modernization and democracy. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8 (2), 551–567.
- Jenkins, J. C. (1983). Resource mobilization theory and the study of social movements . *Annual Review of Sociology*, 9, 527-553.
- Jennings, M. K., Van Deth, J. W., Barnes, S. H., Fuchs, D., Heunks, F. J., Inglehart, R. F., Kaase, M., Klingemann, H. & Thomassen, J. (1990). *Continuities in political action: A longitudinal study of political orientations in three western democracies*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A. & Mastruzzi, M. (2004). Governance matters III: Governance indicators for 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2002. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 18(2), 253–287.
- Keele, L. (2007). Social capital and the dynamics of trust in government. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(2), 241–254.
- Kitschelt, H. P. (1986). Political opportunity structures and political protest: Anti-nuclear movements in four democracies. *British Journal of Political Science*, 16(1), 57–85.
- Klandermans, B., Van der Toorn, J. & Van Stekelenburg, J. (2008). Embeddedness and identity: How immigrants turn grievances into action. *American Sociological Review*, 73(6), 992–1012.
- Kloosterman, R., Linssen, R. & Schmeets, H. (2010, August 24). High proportion of the Dutch population trust their fellow men and institutions [Web log post]. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2010/2010-3185-wm.htm>
- Knack, S. (2002). Social capital, growth and poverty: A survey of cross country evidence. In C. Grootaert & T. Van Bastelaer (Eds.), *The role of social capital in development: An empirical assessment* (pp. 42–84). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kriesi, H. (2008). Political mobilisation, political participation and the power of the vote. *West European Politics*, 31(1-2), 147–168.

- Kymlicka, W. & Norman, W. (1994). Return of the citizen: A survey of recent work on citizenship theory. *Ethics*, 352–381.
- Lamprianou, I. (2013). Contemporary political participation research: A critical assessment. In K. Demetriou (Ed.), *Democracy in transition* (pp. 21–42). Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Lancee, B. & Dronkers, J. (2011). Ethnic, religious and economic diversity in Dutch neighbourhoods: Explaining quality of contact with neighbours, trust in the neighbourhood and inter-ethnic trust. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(4), 597–618.
- Lancee, B. & Van de Werfhorst, H. G. (2012). Income inequality and participation: A comparison of 24 European countries. *Social Science Research*, 41(5), 1166–1178.
- Lassen, D. D. & Serritzlew, S. (2011). Jurisdiction size and local democracy: Evidence on internal political efficacy from large-scale municipal reform. *American Political Science Review*, 105(2), 238–258.
- Letki, N. (2006). Investigating the roots of civic morality: Trust, social capital, and institutional performance. *Political Behavior*, 28(4), 305–325.
- Lewis-Beck, M. S. & Stegmaier, M. (2000). Economic determinants of electoral outcomes. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 3(1), 183–219.
- Lijphart, A. (1997). Unequal participation: Democracy's unresolved dilemma presidential address, American Political Science Association, 1996. *American Political Science Review*, 91(1), 1–14.
- Linssen, R. & Schmeets, H. (2010). Participatie en vertrouwen in Europa [Participation and trust in Europe]. In H. Schmeets (Ed.), *Sociale samenhang: Participatie, vertrouwen en integratie [Social cohesion: Participation, trust, and integration]* (pp. 135–151). The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Linssen, R. & Schmeets, H. (2011). Politieke participatie en vertrouwen in Europees vergelijkend perspectief [Political participation and trust in European comparative perspective]. In: H. Schmeets (Ed.), *Verkiezingen: Participatie, vertrouwen en integratie [Elections: Participation, trust and integration]*. The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Linssen, R., Schmeets, H., Scheepers, P. & Te Grotenhuis, M. (2014). Trends in conventional and unconventional political participation in Europe, 1981–2008. In C. Eder, I. Mochmann & M. Quandt (Eds.), *Political trust and disenchantment with politics: Perspectives from around the globe* (pp. 31–58). Leiden: Brill Publishers.
- Linssen, R. & Van den Brakel, M. (2014). *NKO 2012: Selectiviteit van de respons en vertekening van de doelkenmerken*. The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Lipset, S. M. (1997). *American exceptionalism: A double-edged sword*. New York: WW Norton & Company.
- Mair, P. & Van Biezen, I. (2001). Party membership in twenty European democracies, 1980–2000. *Party Politics*, 7(1), 5–21.
- Marien, S., Hooghe, M. & Quintelier, E. (2010). Inequalities in non-institutionalised forms of political participation: A multi-level analysis of 25 countries. *Political Studies*, 58(1), 187–213.
- Marsh, A., Barnes, S. H. & Kaase, M. (1990). *Political action in Europe and the USA*. London: Macmillan.
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L. & Cook, J. M. (2001). Birds of a feather: Homophily in social networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27(1), 415–444.
- Meyer, D. S. (2004). Protest and political opportunities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 125–145.
- Meyer, D. S. & Minkoff, D. C. (2004). Conceptualizing political opportunity. *Social Forces*, 82(4), 1457–1492.
- Milbrath, L. W. (1965). *Political participation: How and why do people get involved in politics?* Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Mokken, R. J. (1971). *A theory and procedure of scale analysis with applications in political research*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Morrell, M. E. (2003). Survey and experimental evidence for a reliable and valid measure of internal political efficacy. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 67(4), 589–602.
- Muñoz, J., Rico, G. & Gallego, A. (2012). Austerity policies and political involvement. Evidence from a panel survey in Spain (2010–11). Paper presented at the IPSA World Congress of Political Science, Madrid, July 2012.
- Newton, K. (2006). Political support: Social capital, civil society and political and economic performance. *Political Studies*, 54(4), 846–864.

## REFERENCES

- Newton, K. & Giebler, H. (2008). *Patterns of participation: Political and social participation in 22 nations*. Berlin: WZB.
- Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix: Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P. (2011). *Democratic deficit: Critical citizens revisited*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P., Walgrave, S. & Van Aelst, P. (2005). Who demonstrates? Antistate rebels, conventional participants, or everyone? *Comparative Politics*, 37(2), 189–205.
- O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity*, 41(5), 673–690.
- OECD. (2012). *Social Security Expenditure Database (SOCX)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved from [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)
- Oliver, J. E. (2001). *Democracy in suburbia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Oxendine, A. (2009). Inequality and indifference: America's wealthy and cross-cutting civic engagement. Presented at the Midwest Political Science Association 67th Annual National Conference, April 2-9, 2009, Chicago.
- Parry, G. & Moysen, G. (1990). A map of political participation in Britain. *Government and Opposition*, 25(2), 147–169.
- Piketty, T. & Zucman, G. (2014). Capital is back: Wealth-income ratios in rich countries 1700–2010. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 129(3), 1255–1310.
- Ponticelli, J. & Voth, H. J. (2011). Austerity and anarchy: Budget cuts and social unrest in Europe, 1919–2008. *CEPR Discussion Paper*. Zurich: CEPR.
- Portes, A. & Vickstrom, E. (2011). Diversity, social capital, and cohesion. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37(1), 461–479.
- Przeworski, A. & Tuene, H. (2008). Equivalence in cross-national research. In C. Roberts & R. Jowell (Eds.), *Attitude measurement volume 4: Expanding measurement horizons*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Putnam, R. D. (2002). *Democracies in flux: The evolution of social capital in contemporary society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Putnam, R. D. (2007). E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century the 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 30(2), 137–174.
- Putnam, R. D., Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R. Y. (1993). *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton university press.
- Radcliff, B. (1992). The welfare state, turnout, and the economy: A comparative analysis. *American Political Science Review*, 86(2), 444–454.
- Rajulton, F., Ravanera, Z. R. & Beaujot, R. (2007). Measuring social cohesion: An experiment using the Canadian national survey of giving, volunteering, and participating. *Social Indicators Research*, 80(3), 461–492.
- Reeskens, T., Quintelier, E. & Billiet, J. (2002). Assessing the cross-cultural equivalence of political participation in the European Social Survey. Presented at the Cinefogo WP 11 Workshop: Methodological challenges in cross-national participation research, 16-17 January, 2009, The Hague.
- Ritzen, J. M. M., Easterly, W. & Woolcock, M. J. (2000). *On 'good' politicians and 'bad' policies: Social cohesion, institutions, and growth*. Washington, D.C: World Bank.
- Rosenstone, S. & Hansen, J. M. (1993). *Mobilization, participation and democracy in America*. New York: Maxwell Macmillan International.
- Rosenstone, S. J. (1982). Economic adversity and voter turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, 26(1), 25–46.
- Savelkoul, M., Gesthuizen, M. & Scheepers, P. (2011). Explaining relationships between ethnic diversity and informal social capital across European countries and regions: Tests of constrict, conflict and contact theory. *Social Science Research*, 40(4), 1091–1107.
- Savelkoul, M., Gesthuizen, M. & Scheepers, P. (2014). The impact of ethnic diversity on participation in European voluntary organizations: Direct and indirect pathways. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 43(6), 1070–1094.

- Savelkoul, M., Hewstone, M., Scheepers, P. & Stolle, D. (2015). Does relative out-group size in neighborhoods drive down associational life of Whites in the US? Testing constrict, conflict and contact theories. *Social Science Research*, 52, 236–252.
- Scheepers, P., Schmeets, H. & Pelzer, B. (2013). Hunkering down as disruption of community cohesion: Municipal-, neighbourhood-and individual-level effects. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 72, 91–106.
- Schlozman, K. L., Verba, S. & Brady, H. E. (1995). Participatio's not a paradox: The view from American activists. *British Journal of Political Science*, 25(1), 1–36.
- Schmeets, H. (2010). Politieke participatie [Political participation]. In H. Schmeets (Ed.), *Sociale samenhang: Participatie, vertrouwen en integratie [Social cohesion: Participation, trust, and integration]* (pp. 71–82). The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Schmeets, H. (ed.) (2015). *Het Nationaal Kiesonderzoek 2006-2012*. The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Schmeets, H. & Gielen, W. (2015) Economische en culturele dreiging in Nederland [Economic and cultural threat in the Netherlands]. In H. Schmeets (Ed.), *Nationaal Kiesonderzoek 2006-2012 [Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies 2006-2012]* (pp. 63-76). The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Schmeets, H. & Linssen, R. (2012, January 12). Growing confidence in fellow men. [Web log post]. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2012/2012-3551-wm.htm>
- Schmeets, H. & Linssen, R. (eds.) (2013). *European framework for measuring progress: Proceedings of the expert meeting on social capital*. Procedia: Social and Behavioural Sciences, 72(5), 1-148.
- Schmeets, H. & Te Riele, S. (2013). Declining social cohesion in the Netherlands? *Social Indicators Research*, 115(2), 791–812.
- Schmeets, H. & Van der Houwen, K. (2011). Politieke betrokkenheid van alloctonen [Political engagement of minorities]. In H. Schmeets (Ed.), *Verkiezingen: Participatie, vertrouwen en integratie [Elections: Participation, trust, and integration]* (pp. 186–196). The Hague/Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands.
- Sijtsma, K. & Molenaar, I. W. (2002). *Introduction to nonparametric item response theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Smets, K. & Van Ham, C. (2013). The embarrassment of riches? A meta-analysis of individual-level research on voter turnout. *Electoral Studies*, 32(2), 344–359.
- Snijders, T. & Bosker, R. J. (1999). *Multilevel analysis: An introduction to basic and advanced multilevel modeling*. London: Sage.
- Solt, F. (2008). Economic inequality and democratic political engagement. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(1), 48–60.
- Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. P. (2008). *Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress*. Retrieved from: [http://www.stiglitz-senfitoussi.fr/documents/rapport\\_anglais.pdf](http://www.stiglitz-senfitoussi.fr/documents/rapport_anglais.pdf)
- Stolle, D. & Hooghe, M. (2011). Shifting inequalities: Patterns of exclusion and inclusion in emerging forms of political participation. *European Societies*, 13(1), 119–142.
- Szreter, S. (2002). The state of social capital: Bringing back in power, politics, and history. *Theory and Society*, 31(5), 573–621.
- Thomassen, J. J. (1990). Economic crisis, dissatisfaction, and protest. In M. K. Jennings, J. W. Van Deth, S. H. Barnes, D. Fuchs, F. J. Heunks, R. F. Inglehart, H.D. Klingemann, & J. J. Thomassen (Eds.), *Continuities in political action: A longitudinal study of political orientations in three western democracies* (pp. 103–134). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Thomassen, J., Van Ham, C., & Andeweg, R. (2014). *De wankende democratie: heeft de democratie haar beste tijd gehad?* Amsterdam: Prometheus Bert Bakker
- Tolsma, J., Van der Meer, T. & Gesthuizen, M. (2009). The impact of neighbourhood and municipality characteristics on social cohesion in the Netherlands. *Acta Politica*, 44(3), 286–313.
- UN-DESA. (2012). *Trends in international migrant Stock: The 2008 revision*. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Retrieved from [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)

## REFERENCES

- Uslaner, E. M. & Brown, M. (2005). Inequality, trust, and civic engagement. *American Politics Research*, 33(6), 868–894.
- Van Beuningen, J., & Schmeets, H. (2013). Developing a social capital index for the Netherlands. *Social indicators research*, 113(3), 859–886.
- ISO 690 Van Biezen, I., Mair, P. & Poguntke, T. (2012). Going, going,... gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 51(1), 24–56.
- Van den Brakel, M. & Linssen, R. (2013, June 6). Highest incomes most often in favour of mortgage interest deduction. [Web log post]. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2010/2010-3185-wm.htm>
- Van der Meer, T. (2009). *States of freely associating citizens*. Nijmegen: ICS/ Radboud University.
- Van der Meer, T. & Tolsma, J. (2014). Ethnic diversity and its effects on social cohesion. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 459–478.
- Van der Meer, T. & Van Ingen, E. (2009). Schools of democracy? Disentangling the relationship between civic participation and political action in 17 European countries. *European Journal of Political Research*, 48(2), 281–308.
- Van der Meer, T., Van Deth, J. W. & Scheepers, P. L. (2009). The politicized participant: Ideology and political action in 20 democracies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 42(11), 1426–1457.
- Van Deth, J. W. (1986). A note on measuring political participation in comparative research. *Quality & Quantity*, 20(2), 261–272.
- Van Deth, J. W. (1998). *Comparative politics: The problem of equivalence*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Van Deth, J. W. (2001). Studying political participation: Towards a theory of everything. Paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions, Grenoble.
- Van Deth, J. W. (2007). Political participation. In L. L. Kaid & C. Holtz-Bacha (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of political communication*. London: Sage.
- Van Deth, J. W. (2009). Establishing equivalence. In T. Landman & N. Robinson (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of comparative politics* (pp. 84–100). London: Sage Publications.
- Van Eijk, C. (2014). Growing access to local decision-making? Explaining variation among Dutch municipalities in the institutional measures to promote citizen participation. *Journal of urban affairs*, 36(2), 256–275.
- Van Dijk, L. (2015). Feiten & cijfers. *De 'kloof' tussen politiek en burgers [Facts and statistics. The gap between politics and citizens]*. Idee 2015(4). The Hague: Mr. Hans van Mierlostichting.
- Van Schuur, W. H. (2003). Mokken scale analysis: Between the Guttman scale and parametric item response theory. *Political Analysis*, 11(2), 139–163.
- Van Stekelenburg, J., Walgrave, S., Klandermans, B., & Verhulst, J. (2012). Contextualizing contestation: Framework, design, and data. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 17(3), 249–262.
- Verba, S. (2003). Would the dream of political equality turn out to be a nightmare? *Perspectives on Politics*, 1(4), 663–679.
- Verba, S., Nie, N. H. & Kim, J. (1978). *Participation and political equality: A seven-nation comparison*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Vráblíková, K. (2014). How context matters? Mobilization, political opportunity structures, and nonelectoral political participation in old and new democracies. *Comparative Political Studies*, 47(2), 203–229.
- Welzel, C. & Deutsch, F. (2012). Emancipative values and non-violent protest: The importance of 'ecological' effects. *British Journal of Political Science*, 42(2), 465–479.
- Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Zukin, C., Keeter, S., Andolina, M., Jenkins, K. & Carpini, M. X. (2006). *A new engagement? Political participation, civic life, and the changing American citizen*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

# 7.

## Appendix



**Table A2.1** Chapter 2: Item difficulties, item ordering, Hi, Scale-H, and Spearman's rank correlation between scales (conventional and unconventional), by country and year (table continues on next pages).

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Austria	1990	Item dif.	P	D	B					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.48	0.10	0.05					
	1999	Item dif.	P	D	B					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.56	0.16	0.10					
	2002	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.28	0.22	0.10	0.42	0.88	0.14	0.10	.119 **
	2004	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.41	0.47	0.37	0.42	0.75	0.65	0.64	0.66
	2006	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.24	0.20	0.07	0.40	0.80	0.12	0.10	.174 **
	Total	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.35	0.52	0.33	0.40	0.74	0.60	0.57	0.61
	Total	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.21	0.20	0.04	0.48	0.86	0.16	0.09	.176 **
	Total	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.61	0.40	0.48	0.79	0.72	0.70	0.72
	Total	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.17	0.09	0.46	0.85	0.14	0.09	.157 **
Total	Item dif.	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.49	0.43	0.46	0.63	0.66	0.77	0.66	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Belgium	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.23	0.14	0.03					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.58	0.56	0.61	0.57				
	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.46	0.23	0.09					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.75	0.71	0.77	0.74				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.72	0.40	0.12					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.70	0.69	0.74	0.71				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.34	0.12	0.08		0.87	0.08	0.06	.136 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.56	0.29	0.33	0.38	0.58	0.43	0.37	0.42
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.22	0.10	0.06		0.93	0.07	0.04	.135 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.46	0.23	0.28	0.31	0.49	0.48	0.69	0.50
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.30	0.11	0.08		0.93	0.08	0.06	.111 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.33	0.30	0.36	0.74	0.53	0.52	0.54
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.28	0.11	0.07		0.92	0.05	0.04	.195 **
	Loevinger's Hi	0.52	0.32	0.30	0.37	0.83	0.55	0.55	0.57	
Total	Item	P	D	B		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.38	0.16	0.10		0.91	0.07	0.05	.102 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.65	0.53	0.44	0.54	0.67	0.50	0.47	0.50	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Czech Republic	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.48	0.35	0.10					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.63	0.64	0.83	0.67				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.58	0.28	0.09					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.70	0.62	0.67	0.66				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.15	0.11	0.04		0.64	0.04	0.04	.127 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.35	0.47	0.29	0.35	0.83	0.63	0.59	0.66
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.13	0.07	0.03		0.56	0.04	0.04	.148 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.20	0.15	0.21	0.87	0.72	0.64	0.73
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.15	0.08	0.04		0.58	0.05	0.03	.171 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.50	0.37	0.28	0.37	0.84	0.64	0.58	0.67
	Total	Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.28	0.13	0.09		0.58	0.04	0.03	.134 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.60	0.53	0.38	0.51	0.85	0.67	0.61	0.70

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Denmark	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.42	0.19	0.10					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.58	0.43	0.43	0.46				
	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.50	0.27	0.11					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.67	0.38	0.31	0.52				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.57	0.30	0.25					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.48	0.39	0.37	0.41				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.28	0.23	0.08		0.94	0.06	0.04	.077 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.31	0.45	0.27	0.32	0.31	0.48	0.47	0.46
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.29	0.29	0.05		0.92	0.07	0.04	.077 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.27	0.48	0.24	0.28	0.71	0.58	0.58	0.59
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.36	0.25	0.07		0.93	0.07	0.04	.106 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.31	0.39	0.20	0.28	0.81	0.50	0.49	0.52
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.34	0.22	0.09		0.95	0.09	0.05	.110 **
	Loevinger's Hi	0.30	0.33	0.19	0.26	0.62	0.64	0.62	0.64	
Total	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.38	0.22	0.13		0.94	0.07	0.04	.094 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.40	0.41	0.26	0.35	0.69	0.55	0.54	0.56	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Estonia	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.38	0.26	0.03					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.38	0.51	0.40				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1999	dif.	0.20	0.10	0.03					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.41	0.36	0.39	0.38				
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.04	0.04	0.02		0.61	0.03	0.02	.167 **
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.16	0.10	0.03	0.10	0.79	0.58	0.58	0.51
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2006	dif.	0.07	0.05	0.02		0.59	0.03	0.03	.182 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.11	0.22	0.21	0.62	0.39	0.47	0.47
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.08	0.06	0.02		0.67	0.06	0.03	.180 **
	2008	Loevinger's Hi	0.36	0.19	0.19	0.24	0.43	0.44	0.53	0.47
Item		P	D	B		V	M	W		
Total	dif.	0.15	0.08	0.04		0.62	0.04	0.03	.178 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.42	0.35	0.20	0.33	0.60	0.47	0.53	0.53	
Finland	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.41	0.14	0.13					
	Loevinger's Hi	0.56	0.43	0.44	0.47					
	Item	P	D	B						
1999	dif.	0.51	0.15	0.15						
	Loevinger's Hi	0.79	0.54	0.55	0.61					
	Item	B	P	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.27	0.24	0.02		0.82	0.08	0.04	.018	
2002	Loevinger's Hi	0.65	0.29	0.27	0.30	0.97	0.75	0.72	0.78	
	Item	B	P	D		V	M	W		
2004	dif.	0.29	0.26	0.02		0.79	0.08	0.04	.080 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.42	0.25	0.24	0.25	0.79	0.65	0.64	0.67	
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.32	0.28	0.02		0.84	0.08	0.05	.065 **	
2006	Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.52	0.31	0.33	0.71	0.61	0.56	0.61	
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
2008	dif.	0.33	0.30	0.02		0.83	0.07	0.04	.072 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.31	0.67	0.31	0.33	0.90	0.72	0.71	0.71	
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.32	0.27	0.04		0.82	0.08	0.05	.056 **	
Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.34	0.55	0.30	0.34	0.84	0.68	0.66	0.70	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
France	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.45	0.27	0.12					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.66	0.37	0.36	0.44				
	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.53	0.33	0.13					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.79	0.41	0.33	0.46				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.67	0.39	0.13					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.72	0.31	0.26	0.36				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.34	0.26	0.17		0.75	0.05	0.03	.211 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.48	0.36	0.43	0.53	0.47	0.61	0.53
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.31	0.30	0.12		0.77	0.04	0.02	.205 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.51	0.35	0.42	0.40	0.57	0.79	0.61
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.33	0.27	0.14		0.78	0.04	0.02	.161 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.42	0.31	0.39	0.61	0.64	0.67	0.65
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.33	0.28	0.14		0.78	0.04	0.02	.202 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.44	0.46	0.34	0.41	0.82	0.78	0.77	0.78
	Total	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.41	0.23	0.20		0.77	0.04	0.02	.159 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.52	0.42	0.29	0.41	0.60	0.63	0.71	0.65

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Germany	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.63	0.10	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.83	0.47	0.43	0.53				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1990	dif.	0.62	0.33	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.71	0.27	0.16	0.31				
		Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.54	0.34	0.08					
	1999	Loevinger's Hi	0.75	0.32	0.19	0.35				
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2002	dif.	0.32	0.25	0.11		0.86	0.04	0.04	.172 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.38	0.28	0.41	0.35	0.98	0.66	0.66	0.69
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.33	0.22	0.09		0.81	0.04	0.03	.223 **
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.40	0.31	0.39	0.36	0.85	0.65	0.66	0.68
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2006	dif.	0.29	0.23	0.07		0.79	0.04	0.04	.208 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.30	0.48	0.37	0.93	0.69	0.67	0.72
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.31	0.29	0.08		0.83	0.04	0.03	.199 **
2008	Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.29	0.45	0.33	0.90	0.65	0.67	0.70	
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
Total	dif.	0.41	0.19	0.16		0.82	0.04	0.04	.200 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.47	0.20	0.36	0.34	0.90	0.67	0.66	0.70	
Greece	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.48	0.46	0.04					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.37	0.34	0.33				
		Item	B	P	D		V	M	W	
	2002	dif.	0.09	0.05	0.04		0.91	0.05	0.05	.134 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.17	0.23	0.21	0.20	0.67	0.40	0.41	0.43
		Item	D	B	P		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.05	0.05	0.03		0.91	0.08	0.06	.185 **
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.35	0.24	0.34	0.30	0.75	0.57	0.57	0.59
		Item	B	P	D		V	M	W	
	2008	dif.	0.15	0.05	0.05		0.88	0.08	0.04	.146 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.16	0.23	0.21	0.19	0.82	0.66	0.64	0.67
		Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.10	0.10	0.09		0.90	0.07	0.05	.147 **
	Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.35	0.35	0.16	0.29	0.76	0.53	0.53	0.55

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Hungary		Item	P	D	B					
	1990	dif.	0.18	0.04	0.02					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.76	0.45	0.39	0.52				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1999	dif.	0.16	0.05	0.03					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.82	0.57	0.54	0.63				
		Item	B	P	D		V	W	M	
	2002	dif.	0.05	0.04	0.04		0.83	0.03	0.02	.194 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.38	0.38	0.51	0.42	0.61	0.64	0.70	0.66
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2004	dif.	0.06	0.05	0.01		0.80	0.01	0.01	.134 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.35	0.32	0.52	0.37	0.59	0.62	0.63	0.62
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
	2006	dif.	0.05	0.05	0.03		0.77	0.02	0.01	.204 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.35	0.29	0.43	0.35	0.68	0.65	0.52	0.61
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2008	dif.	0.07	0.07	0.02		0.80	0.01	0.01	.143 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.37	0.38	0.54	0.41	1.00	0.47	0.48	0.55
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
	Total	dif.	0.08	0.05	0.03		0.80	0.02	0.01	.143 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.37	0.50	0.43	0.69	0.62	0.60	0.62



Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Ireland	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.29	0.13	0.07					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.82	0.56	0.55	0.62				
	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.42	0.17	0.07					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.78	0.43	0.40	0.50				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.61	0.22	0.09					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.78	0.36	0.32	0.42				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.27	0.14	0.07		0.81	0.05	0.05	.137 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.53	0.42	0.48	0.48	0.73	0.54	0.50	0.55
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.22	0.11	0.05		0.82	0.06	0.05	.111 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.63	0.48	0.53	0.55	0.71	0.58	0.56	0.59
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.24	0.13	0.05		0.77	0.05	0.04	.102 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.54	0.42	0.45	0.48	0.85	0.55	0.52	0.59
	Total	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.31	0.11	0.10		0.80	0.05	0.05	.103 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.66	0.43	0.48	0.52	0.75	0.56	0.53	0.58

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Netherlands	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.35	0.13	0.07					
	1990	Loevinger's Hi	0.69	0.46	0.46	0.52				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1999	dif.	0.51	0.26	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.83	0.42	0.32	0.47				
	2002	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.61	0.32	0.22					
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.68	0.42	0.39	0.47				
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2006	dif.	0.23	0.11	0.03		0.87	0.05	0.03	.159 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.44	0.48	0.47	0.80	0.60	0.56	0.61
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.23	0.09	0.04		0.81	0.06	0.04	.214 **
	Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.46	0.33	0.34	0.38	0.84	0.65	0.63	0.67
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	Total	dif.	0.21	0.10	0.03		0.84	0.05	0.04	.193 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.47	0.38	0.44	0.43	0.73	0.53	0.49	0.54
	Total	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.23	0.10	0.03		0.86	0.05	0.03	.145 **
Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.44	0.37	0.41	0.40	0.90	0.53	0.49	0.56	
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
Total	dif.	0.30	0.10	0.09		0.84	0.05	0.03	.148 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.62	0.40	0.49	0.50	0.81	0.58	0.54	0.60	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Norway	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.54	0.19	0.07					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.81	0.41	0.31	0.45				
	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.62	0.20	0.12					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.75	0.41	0.40	0.47				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.37	0.20	0.09		0.85	0.09	0.09	.170 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.32	0.41	0.38	0.60	0.44	0.38	0.43
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.38	0.24	0.11		0.86	0.09	0.09	.132 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.44	0.32	0.45	0.40	0.75	0.47	0.44	0.49
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.37	0.26	0.08		0.86	0.10	0.06	.156 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.37	0.32	0.50	0.38	0.89	0.58	0.56	0.62
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.38	0.23	0.07		0.86	0.08	0.06	.108 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.35	0.51	0.42	0.70	0.56	0.56	0.58
Total		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.42	0.20	0.11		0.85	0.09	0.08	.131 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.47	0.31	0.44	0.40	0.72	0.50	0.46	0.51

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Poland	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.20	0.18	0.06					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.30	0.28	0.33				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.21	0.09	0.04					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.63	0.40	0.36	0.45				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.07	0.04	0.01		0.68	0.03	0.02	.109 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.30	0.25	0.25	0.27	0.80	0.62	0.65	0.67
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.10	0.06	0.02		0.66	0.03	0.01	.085 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.36	0.57	0.43	0.45	0.45	0.64	0.51
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.60	0.04	0.01		0.67	0.02	0.01	.126 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.27	0.26	0.37	0.29	0.43	0.25	0.42	0.35
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.08	0.05	0.02		0.73	0.03	0.01	.229 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.42	0.33	0.42	0.38	0.94	0.79	0.76	0.82
	Total	Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.11	0.05	0.04		0.68	0.03	0.01	.132 **
	Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.32	0.37	0.38	0.68	0.55	0.62	0.60	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Portugal										
		Item	P	D	B					
	1990	dif.	0.28	0.21	0.04					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.53	0.38	0.41				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1999	dif.	0.27	0.17	0.06					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.66	0.69	0.61	0.65				
		Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
	2002	dif.	0.07	0.04	0.03		0.75	0.04	0.04	.245 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.39	0.39	0.42	0.82	0.56	0.61	0.63
		Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
	2004	dif.	0.04	0.03	0.02		0.71	0.03	0.02	.119 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.32	0.29	0.34	0.58	0.44	0.55	0.51
		Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
	2006	dif.	0.05	0.03	0.03		0.76	0.04	0.02	.150 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.38	0.32	0.38	0.42	0.44	0.37	0.41
		Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
	2008	dif.	0.05	0.03	0.03		0.73	0.03	0.01	.117 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.39	0.30	0.40	0.78	0.54	0.47	0.57
		Item	P	D	B		V	M	W	
	Total	dif.	0.10	0.07	0.03		0.74	0.03	0.02	.152 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.52	0.46	0.41	0.47	0.65	0.50	0.52	0.54
Slovakia										
		Item	P	D	B					
	1990	dif.	0.40	0.23	0.05					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.67	0.32	0.19	0.35				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1999	dif.	0.58	0.14	0.04					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.70	0.35	0.27	0.38				
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
	2004	dif.	0.26	0.11	0.04		0.76	0.05	0.03	.171 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.44	0.34	0.50	0.41	0.69	0.45	0.47	0.51
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
	2006	dif.	0.19	0.10	0.03		0.69	0.04	0.03	.178 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.37	0.47	0.41	0.44	0.39	0.39	0.40
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
	2008	dif.	0.18	0.07	0.02		0.77	0.03	0.02	.122 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.27	0.51	0.36	0.43	0.26	0.36	0.33
		Item	P	B	D		V	W	M	
	Total	dif.	0.29	0.08	0.07		0.74	0.04	0.03	.142 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.54	0.26	0.42	0.40	0.82	0.38	0.41	0.42

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Slovenia	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.32	0.10	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.65	0.50	0.46	0.53				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.12	0.05	0.03		0.81	0.05	0.04	.112 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.34	0.39	0.37	0.83	0.72	0.73	0.74
	2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.06	0.02	0.02		0.69	0.04	0.03	.070 *
		Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.29	0.34	0.32	0.41	0.63	0.65	0.59
	2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.14	0.05	0.04		0.78	0.06	0.04	.051
		Loevinger's Hi	0.46	0.32	0.39	0.39	0.54	0.64	0.66	0.63
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.059	0.05	0.02		0.73	0.05	0.03	.164 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.32	0.28	0.41	0.32	0.49	0.52	0.61	0.55
	Total	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.13	0.05	0.04		0.75	0.05	0.03	.093 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.48	0.38	0.44	0.43	0.57	0.63	0.67	0.63

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Spain	1981	Item	D	P	B					
		dif.	0.25	0.24	0.10					
	1990	Loevinger's Hi	0.75	0.53	0.54	0.58				
		Item	D	P	B					
	1999	dif.	0.24	0.23	0.05					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.84	0.51	0.50	0.56				
	2002	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.27	0.26	0.06					
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.56	0.78	0.58	0.60				
		Item	P	D	B		V	W	M	
	2006	dif.	0.22	0.15	0.07		0.79	0.06	0.03	.145 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.65	0.59	0.56	0.60	0.68	0.52	0.54	0.56
	2008	Item	D	P	B		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.34	0.25	0.14		0.83	0.08	0.04	.250 **
	Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.47	0.35	0.36	0.38	0.81	0.56	0.59	0.62
		Item	P	D	B		V	W	M	
	Total	dif.	0.23	0.18	0.10		0.80	0.06	0.03	.222 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.48	0.48	0.39	0.46	0.74	0.56	0.53	0.59
	Total	Item	P	D	B		V	W	M	
		dif.	0.18	0.16	0.08		0.81	0.03	0.01	.211 **
Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.48	0.47	0.41	0.46	0.54	0.35	0.46	0.42	
	Item	P	D	B		V	W	M		
Total	dif.	0.22	0.22	0.09		0.81	0.05	0.03	.215 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.56	0.49	0.51	0.71	0.52	0.54	0.56	

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale	Item	Item	Item	Scale	
		H				H				
Sweden	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.54	0.16	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.70	0.36	0.35	0.43				
		Item	P	D	B					
	1990	dif.	0.72	0.23	0.17					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.78	0.39	0.39	0.46				
		Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.87	0.36	0.34					
	1999	Loevinger's Hi	0.84	0.45	0.43	0.50				
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2002	dif.	0.41	0.33	0.06		0.87	0.08	0.05	.179 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.36	0.31	0.48	0.35	0.78	0.66	0.62	0.66
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.49	0.35	0.07		0.89	0.07	0.03	.125 **
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.37	0.32	0.47	0.37	0.74	0.63	0.67	0.66
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2006	dif.	0.45	0.31	0.05		0.89	0.06	0.05	.143 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.33	0.31	0.39	0.33	0.53	0.54	0.54	0.54
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.47	0.38	0.06		0.91	0.07	0.04	.168 **	
2008	Loevinger's Hi	0.39	0.34	0.57	0.39	0.82	0.65	0.59	0.64	
	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
Total	dif.	0.53	0.30	0.11		0.89	0.07	0.04	.137 **	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.46	0.33	0.48	0.41	0.72	0.62	0.60	0.62	
Switzerland	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.41	0.34	0.08		0.69	0.10	0.09	.214 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.41	0.35	0.49	0.40	0.82	0.67	0.67	0.70
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2004	dif.	0.38	0.26	0.08		0.66	0.08	0.08	.188 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.46	0.41	0.60	0.47	0.76	0.64	0.60	0.65
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.37	0.29	0.07		0.66	0.09	0.07	.221 **
	2006	Loevinger's Hi	0.40	0.34	0.51	0.39	0.82	0.75	0.72	0.75
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
	2008	dif.	0.39	0.26	0.07		0.64	0.07	0.06	.207 **
		Loevinger's Hi	0.47	0.43	0.51	0.46	0.83	0.67	0.58	0.68
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.39	0.29	0.08		0.66	0.09	0.07	.218 **
	Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.44	0.38	0.53	0.43	0.81	0.68	0.64	0.69



Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation	
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H		
UK	1981	Item	P	D	B						
		dif.	0.63	0.10	0.08						
	1990	Loevinger's Hi	0.83	0.47	0.43	0.53					
		Item	P	D	B						
	1999	dif.	0.75	0.14	0.14						
		Loevinger's Hi	0.82	0.51	0.50	0.56					
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
		dif.	0.81	0.16	0.13		0.73	0.03	0.03	.257 **	
	2004	Loevinger's Hi	0.91	0.58	0.61	0.65	0.64	0.42	0.34	0.42	
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	2006	dif.	0.35	0.21	0.04		0.69	0.03	0.02	.202 **	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.47	0.41	0.60	0.47	0.59	0.36	0.33	0.40	
	2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
		dif.	0.41	0.25	0.04		0.73	0.03	0.03	.249 **	
	Total	Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.44	0.59	0.48	0.79	0.48	0.45	0.53	
		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	Ukraine	1999	dif.	0.38	0.25	0.04		0.71	0.03	0.02	.211 **
			Loevinger's Hi	0.49	0.42	0.57	0.47	0.80	0.47	0.43	0.52
2004		Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
		dif.	0.49	0.21	0.07		0.72	0.03	0.03	.219 **	
2006		Loevinger's Hi	0.52	0.41	0.56	0.48	0.71	0.44	0.39	0.47	
		Item	D	P	B						
2008		dif.	0.17	0.13	0.05						
		Loevinger's Hi	0.73	0.51	0.54	0.57		V	M	W	
Total		Item	D	P	B		V	M	W		
		dif.	0.19	0.09	0.02		0.85	0.04	0.04	.189 **	
2004		Loevinger's Hi	0.56	0.52	0.55	0.55	0.42	0.37	0.38	0.38	
		Item	D	P	B		V	M	W		
2006		dif.	0.07	0.05	0.01		0.88	0.04	0.04	.215 **	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.42	0.46	0.46	0.44	0.45	
2008		Item	D	P	B		V	M	W		
		dif.	0.04	0.04	0.01		0.83	0.04	0.03	.145 **	
Total		Loevinger's Hi	0.33	0.28	0.30	0.30	0.71	0.56	0.57	0.58	
		Item	D	P	B		V	M	W		
Total	dif.	0.12	0.07	0.02		0.85	0.04	0.04	.174 **		
	Loevinger's Hi	0.58	0.48	0.50	0.48	0.54	0.45	0.45	0.46		

Country	Year	Unconventional political participation				Conventional political participation				Spearman's rank correlation
		Item	Item	Item	Scale H	Item	Item	Item	Scale H	
Total (all countries by year)	1981	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.42	0.17	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.65	0.70	0.60	0.64				
	1990	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.47	0.23	0.08					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.65	0.69	0.60	0.64				
	1999	Item	P	D	B					
		dif.	0.51	0.25	0.11					
		Loevinger's Hi	0.69	0.66	0.61	0.65				
	2002	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.25	0.17	0.07		0.81	0.06	0.05	
		Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.38	0.46	0.42	0.76	0.55	0.51	0.60
2004	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.22	0.15	0.07		0.78	0.05	0.04		
	Loevinger's Hi	0.43	0.35	0.37	0.38	0.75	0.56	0.53	0.58	
2006	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.24	0.16	0.06		0.79	0.05	0.04		
	Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.37	0.42	0.42	0.75	0.57	0.54	0.59	
2008	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W		
	dif.	0.22	0.16	0.06		0.79	0.05	0.04		
	Loevinger's Hi	0.45	0.37	0.44	0.42	0.79	0.56	0.54	0.59	
Total (all countries)	Total	Item	P	B	D		V	M	W	
		dif.	0.30	0.14	0.11		0.80	0.05	0.04	
	Loevinger's Hi	0.52	0.33	0.40	0.42	0.77	0.59	0.56	0.60	
Total	1981-1999				0.64					
	2002-2008				0.41			0.60		

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed).

P = Signing petitions,

D = Demonstrating

B = Boycotting

V = Voting

M = Membership

W = Working for political parties

**Table A3.1** Chapter 3: Multilevel regression analysis: unconventional political participation (linear) n=160,945 level 1 (individuals), n=92 level 2 (country\*year), n=20 level 3 (countries) (continues on next page)

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.
<i>Individual-level fixed effects</i>										
Intercept	.432 ***	(.048)	ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Years of full time education			-.224 ***	(.048)	-.224 ***	(.046)	-.224 ***	(.044)	-.224 ***	(.045)
EGP			.032 ***	(.003)	.032 ***	(.002)	.032 ***	(.002)	.032 ***	(.002)
Service class			ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Routine non-manuals			-.060 ***	(.006)	-.060 ***	(.006)	-.060 ***	(.006)	-.060 ***	(.006)
Self-employed			-.107 ***	(.009)	-.108 ***	(.009)	-.107 ***	(.009)	-.107 ***	(.009)
Manual workers			-.150 ***	(.006)	-.150 ***	(.006)	-.150 ***	(.006)	-.150 ***	(.006)
Missing EGP (employed)			-.054 ***	(.019)	-.054 ***	(.019)	-.054 ***	(.019)	-.054 ***	(.019)
Unemployed			-.105 ***	(.010)	-.105 ***	(.010)	-.105 ***	(.010)	-.105 ***	(.010)
Student			.083 ***	(.010)	.083 ***	(.010)	.083 ***	(.010)	.083 ***	(.010)
Housekeeping			-.120 ***	(.007)	-.120 ***	(.007)	-.120 ***	(.007)	-.120 ***	(.007)
Retired			-.122 ***	(.007)	-.122 ***	(.007)	-.122 ***	(.007)	-.122 ***	(.007)
Other employment status			-.094 ***	(.008)	-.094 ***	(.008)	-.094 ***	(.008)	-.094 ***	(.008)
Negative feeling household income			.009 ***	(.002)	.009 ***	(.002)	.009 ***	(.002)	.009 ***	(.002)
Year of birth			.013 ***	(.002)	.013 ***	(.002)	.013 ***	(.002)	.013 ***	(.002)
Year of birth <sup>2</sup>			-.001 ***	(.000)	-.000 ***	(.000)	.000 ***	(.000)	-.001 ***	(.000)
<i>Country level fixed effects</i>										
Kaufman voice and accountability			.116	(.171)	.000	(.186)	.117	(.171)	.116	(.171)
ln(GDP)			.055	(.066)	.055	(.066)	-.005	(.070)	.055	(.066)
Social security expenditure			.006	(.005)	.006	(.005)	.006	(.005)	-.001	(.007)
Migrant stock			-.003	(.005)	-.003	(.005)	-.003	(.005)	-.003	(.005)

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Cross-level interaction terms</i>										
Kaufman voice and accountability index* years of full time education					.013	(.008)				
ln(GDP)*years of full time education							.007	** (.003)	.001	(.000)
Social security expenditure*years of full time education										
<i>Covariance matrix</i>										
Country level variance (intercept)	.051	(.016)	.038	(.013)	.035	(.012)	.031	(.011)	.033	(.012)
Years of full time education			-.002	(.001)	-.002	(.001)	-.001	(.001)	-.002	(.001)
Years of full time education			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Year of birth *intercept			-.001	(.001)	-.001	(.000)	-.001	(.000)	-.001	(.000)
Age*years of full time education			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Age			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Age <sup>2</sup> *intercept										
Age <sup>2</sup> *years of full time education										
Age <sup>2</sup> *age										
Age <sup>2</sup>										
Intraclass correlation country level	.095		.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Country*year level variance	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)	.003	(.001)
Intraclass correlation country *year level	.006									
Individual level variance	.483	(.002)	.448	(.002)	.448	(.002)	.448	(.002)	.448	(.002)
-2*loglikelihood:			327985.465		327983.188		327981.504		327983.280	

\*  $p < 0.10$  \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed), ref. = reference category

**Table A3.2** Chapter 3: Multilevel regression analysis: membership and working for political parties (logit, 2nd order PQL), n=160,945 level 1 (individuals), n=92 level 2 (country\*year), n=20 level 3 (countries) (continues on next page)

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<b>Individual-level fixed effects</b>										
Intercept	-2.583 ***	(.117)	-2.967 ***	(.278)	-2.976 ***	(.247)	-2.977 ***	(.239)	-2.969 ***	(.255)
Years of full time education			.071 ***	(.009)	.072 ***	(.008)	.072 ***	(.007)	.071 ***	(.009)
EGP			ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Service class										
Routine non-manuals			-.282 ***	(.040)	-.282 ***	(.040)	-.282 ***	(.040)	-.282 ***	(.040)
Self-employed			-.017	(.053)	-.017	(.053)	-.017	(.053)	-.017	(.053)
Manual workers			-.022	(.037)	-.022	(.037)	-.022	(.037)	-.023	(.037)
Missing EGP (employed)			.078	(.105)	.077	(.104)	.077	(.104)	.077	(.105)
Unemployed			-.135 *	(.071)	-.135 *	(.070)	-.135 *	(.070)	-.136 *	(.071)
Student			.353 ***	(.061)	.352 ***	(.061)	.352 ***	(.061)	.352 ***	(.061)
Housekeeping			-.553 ***	(.049)	-.552 ***	(.049)	-.552 ***	(.049)	-.552 ***	(.049)
Retired			-.170 ***	(.041)	-.170 ***	(.041)	-.169 ***	(.041)	-.170 ***	(.041)
Other employment status			-.081	(.052)	-.081	(.052)	-.081	(.052)	-.081	(.052)
Negative feeling household income			-.130 ***	(.015)	-.130 ***	(.015)	-.130 ***	(.015)	-.130 ***	(.015)
Year of birth			.013	(.008)	.013	(.008)	.013	(.008)	.013	(.008)
Year of birth <sup>2</sup>			-.001 ***	(.000)	-.001 ***	(.000)	-.001 ***	(.000)	-.001 ***	(.000)
<b>Country level fixed effects</b>										
Kaufman voice and accountability index			.547	(.573)	2.255	(.880)	.548	(.575)	.546	(.580)
ln(GDP)			.027	(.224)	.024	(.225)	.777 **	(.311)	.023	(.227)
Social security expenditure			-.006	(.018)	-.006	(.018)	-.006	(.018)	-.056	(.043)
Migrant stock			.026	(.018)	.025	(.018)	.025	(.018)	.026	(.019)

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
Cross-level interaction terms										
Kaufman voice and accountability index* years of full time education					-.090 **	(.035)				
ln(GDP)*years of full time education							-.040 ***	(.012)	-.003	(.002)
Social security expenditure*years of full time education										
Covariance matrix										
Country level variance (intercept)	.267	.087	1.259	(.444)	.930	(.264)	.856	(.249)	1.012	(.281)
Years of full time education*intercept			-.033	(.013)	-.021	(.008)	-.018	(.007)	-.026	(.009)
Years of full time education			.001	(.001)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.001)
Year of birth*intercept			-.023	(.011)	-.020	(.009)	-.020	(.009)	-.020	(.009)
Year of birth*years of full time education			.000	(.000)						
Year of birth			.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)
Year of birth*intercept			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Year of birth*years of full time education			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Year of birth*Year of birth			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Year of birth <sup>2</sup>			.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Intraclass correlation country level	.075									
Country*year level variance	.021	.005	.021	(.005)	.021	(.005)	.021	(.005)	.021	(.005)
Intraclass correlation country*year level	.001									
Individual level variance	$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$	

\*  $p < 0.10$  \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed), ref. = reference category.

**Table A3.3** Chapter 3: Multilevel regression analysis: voting (logit, 2nd order PQL), n=160,945 level 1 (individuals), n=92 level 2 (country\*year), n=20 level 3 (countries) (continues on next page)

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.
<b>Individual-level fixed effects</b>										
Intercept	.913***	(.118)	.903***	(.117)	.902***	(.117)	.903***	(.117)	.900***	(.113)
Years of full time education			.091***	(.009)	.091***	(.009)	.091***	(.009)	.091***	(.009)
EGP										
Service class			ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Routine non-manuals			-.241***	(.027)	-.241***	(.027)	-.242***	(.027)	-.241***	(.027)
Self-employed			-.357***	(.038)	-.356***	(.038)	-.357***	(.038)	-.356***	(.038)
Manual workers			-.471***	(.026)	-.470***	(.026)	-.472***	(.026)	-.471***	(.026)
Missing EGP (employed)			-.325***	(.075)	-.324***	(.075)	-.325***	(.075)	-.324***	(.075)
Unemployed			-.662***	(.037)	-.662***	(.037)	-.663***	(.037)	-.662***	(.037)
Student			-.497***	(.035)	-.496***	(.035)	-.497***	(.035)	-.496***	(.035)
Housekeeping			-.340***	(.030)	-.339***	(.030)	-.340***	(.030)	-.339***	(.030)
Retired			-.272***	(.032)	-.271***	(.032)	-.272***	(.032)	-.272***	(.032)
Other employment status			-.656***	(.033)	-.655***	(.033)	-.656***	(.033)	-.655***	(.033)
Negative feeling household income			-.239***	(.009)	-.239***	(.009)	-.239***	(.009)	-.239***	(.009)
Year of birth			.051***	(.007)	.051***	(.007)	.051***	(.007)	.051***	(.007)
Year of birth <sup>2</sup>			-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)	-.001***	(.000)
<b>Country level fixed effects</b>										
Kaufman voice and accountability index			1.190**	(.453)	.867	(.603)	1.197**	(.454)	1.200 **	(.454)
ln(GDP)			.312 *	(.170)	.320 *	(.170)	.351	(.222)	.308 *	(.170)
Social security expenditure			.013	(.014)	.013	(.014)	.013	(.014)	-.022	(.025)
Migrant stock			-.020	(.014)	-.020	(.014)	-.020	(.014)	-.019	(.014)

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
Cross-level interaction terms										
Kaufman voice and accountability index* years of full time education			.020	(.026)						
ln(GDP)*years of full time education										
Social security expenditure*years of full time education										
Covariance matrix										
Country level variance (intercept)	.253	(.083)	.154	(.067)	.151	(.067)	.154	(.067)	.134	(.061)
Years of full time education*intercept			-.010	(.005)	-.009	(.005)	-.010	(.005)	-.009	(.004)
Years of full time education			.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)
Year of birth*intercept			.001	(.003)	.001	(.003)	.002	(.003)	.001	(.003)
Year of birth*years of full time education			-.001	(.000)	-.001	(.000)	-.001	(.000)	-.001	(.000)
Year of birth			.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)	.001	(.000)
Age <sup>2</sup> *intercept										
Age <sup>2</sup> *years of full time education										
Age <sup>2</sup> *year of birth										
Age <sup>2</sup>										
Intraclass correlation country level	.071		.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)	.000	(.000)
Country*year level variance	.034	(.006)	.038	(.007)	.038	(.007)	.038	(.007)	.038	(.007)
Intraclass correlation country*year level	.001									
Individual level variance	$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$		$\pi^2/3$	

\* $p < 0.10$  \*\* $p < 0.05$  \*\*\* $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed). ref. = reference category.



**Table A4.1** Chapter 4: Linear regression analysis: Conventional political participation using dummy variables for level of education (n= 4,599)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	
2006		ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
2010	-0.208	(0.687)	-0.581	(0.664)	1.210	(2.911)	1.746	(3.228)	
2012	1.430 *	(0.698)	1.209 *	(0.678)	1.053	(2.851)	3.023	(3.195)	
2012 <sup>a</sup>	1.638 *	(0.720)	1.790 **	(0.701)	-0.157	(2.996)	1.277	(3.366)	
Elementary		ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
Lower vocational			-0.653	(1.415)	0.082	(2.271)	-0.050	(2.274)	
Secondary			0.510	(1.614)	-1.535	(2.535)	-1.934	(2.564)	
Middle level									
vocation/higher									
level secondary			2.165	(1.374)	2.711	(2.156)	2.333	(2.187)	
Higher level									
vocational/									
university			8.774 **	(1.468)	9.738 **	(2.259)	9.054 **	(2.354)	
Social class			0.928 **	(0.327)	0.949 **	(0.328)	1.363 **	(0.519)	
Lower vocational	2010				-2.259	(3.704)	-2.275	(3.712)	
	2012				-3.574	(3.666)	-3.216	(3.672)	
	2012 <sup>a</sup>				-1.315	(3.857)	-0.941	(3.863)	
Secondary	2010				0.796	(4.141)	0.721	(4.208)	
	2012				-0.289	(4.201)	0.736	(4.251)	
	2012 <sup>a</sup>				-1.084	(4.429)	0.015	(4.475)	
Middle level	2010				-2.600	(3.419)	-2.705	(3.498)	
vocation/higher									
level secondary									
	2012				-3.287	(3.361)	-2.186	(3.428)	
	2012 <sup>a</sup>				2.600	(3.419)	2.705	(3.498)	
Higher level	2010				0.283	(3.491)	0.095	(3.738)	
vocational/									
university									
	2012				-3.237	(3.438)	-1.128	(3.667)	
	2012 <sup>a</sup>				-3.521	(3.586)	-1.223	(3.814)	
Social class	2010						0.148	(0.836)	
	2012						-1.437	(0.846)	
	2012 <sup>a</sup>						-1.586	(0.881)	
Income			-0.327	(0.235)	-0.354	(0.236)	0.364	(0.236)	
Income <sup>2</sup>			0.019 *	(0.011)	0.021 *	(0.011)	0.021 *	(0.011)	
Female				ref.					
Male			3.691 **	(0.616)	0.021 *	(0.011)	3.617 **	(0.617)	
Dutch origin				ref.		ref.			
Non Dutch origin			-0.107	(1.013)	3.625 **	(0.617)	-0.161	(1.014)	
Age			0.665 **	(0.101)	0.666 **	(0.101)	0.667 **	(0.102)	
Age <sup>2</sup>			-0.006 **	(0.001)	-0.156	(1.014)	-0.006 **	(0.001)	
Intercept		9.809 **	(0.521)	-17.472 **	(3.000)	0.665 **	(0.102)	-19.442 **	(3.530)
R <sup>2</sup>		0.003		0.082		0.083		0.084	

\* $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two tailed). ref. = reference category.

<sup>a</sup> Tests for significance if the reference category is changed to 2010.

**Table A4.2** Chapter 4: Linear regression analysis: Unconventional political participation using dummy variables for level of education (n= 4,599)

		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
		b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
2006		ref.		ref.		ref.		ref.	
2010		-0.208	(0.687)	-0.581	(0.664)	1.210	(2.911)	1.746	(3.228)
2012		1.430 *	(0.698)	1.209 *	(0.678)	1.053	(2.851)	3.023	(3.195)
2012 <sup>a</sup>		1.638 *	(0.720)	1.790 **	(0.701)	-0.157	(2.996)	1.277	(3.366)
Elementary									
Lower vocational				-0.653	(1.415)	0.082	(2.271)	-0.050	(2.274)
Secondary				0.510	(1.614)	-1.535	(2.535)	-1.934	(2.564)
Middle level				2.165	(1.374)	2.711	(2.156)	2.333	(2.187)
Higher level vocational/ Social class				8.774 **	(1.468)	9.738 **	(2.259)	9.054 **	(2.354)
				0.928 **	(0.327)	0.949 **	(0.328)	1.363 **	(0.519)
Lower vocational	2010					-1.581	(3.348)	-1.475	(3.356)
	2012					-1.025	(3.313)	-0.754	(3.320)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>					0.556	(3.487)	0.721	(3.492)
Secondary	2010					3.475	(3.743)	3.786	(3.805)
	2012					3.372	(3.797)	4.159	(3.843)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>					-0.102	(4.003)	0.372	(4.046)
Middle level vocation/higher level secondary	2010								
	2012					-2.207	(3.090)	-1.918	(3.163)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>					0.232	(3.038)	1.055	(3.099)
Higher level vocational/ university	2010					2.439	(3.185)	2.973	(3.246)
	2012					-3.009	(3.156)	-2.488	(3.379)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>					-0.222	(3.107)	1.339	(3.316)
Social class	2010					2.787	(3.241)	3.827	(3.448)
	2012							-0.307	(0.756)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>							-1.042	(0.765)
	2012 <sup>a</sup>							-0.734	(0.796)
Income				-0.160	(0.213)	-0.140	(0.214)	-0.146	(0.214)
Income <sup>2</sup>				0.004	(0.010)	0.003	(0.010)	0.003	(0.010)
Female				ref.		ref.		ref.	
Male				0.154	(0.557)	0.172	(0.558)	0.171	(0.558)
Dutch origin								ref.	
Non Dutch origin				-0.173	(0.916)	-0.089	(0.917)	-0.087	(0.917)
Age				0.102	(0.092)	0.110	(0.092)	0.111	(0.092)
Age <sup>2</sup>				-0.002 **	(0.001)	-0.003 **	(0.001)	-0.003 **	(0.001)
Intercept		10.141 **	(0.469)	7.147 **	(2.712)	6.399 *	(3.117)	5.677 *	(3.192)
R <sup>2</sup>		0.001		0.072		0.073		0.074	

\* $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two tailed). ref. = reference category

<sup>a</sup> Tests for significance if the reference category is changed to 2010.

**Table A5.1** Chapter 5: Proportion of people engaging in political actions and Loewinger's H for unconventional and conventional political participation (n=3,370)

Item	Proportion	Loewinger's H
Unconventional political participation		
Participated in a political discussion on the internet, via sms or e-mail.	0.23	0.36
Involved radio, TV or newspaper to influence politics	0.11	0.35
Participated in an action group	0.06	0.34
Participated in a demonstration or protest meeting	0.03	0.33
Scale-H		0.34
Conventional political participation		
Did you vote in the most recent parliamentary elections?	0.89	0.76
Contacted a politician or government official.	0.10	0.59
Participation in a hearing or consultation meeting organized by the government.	0.10	0.56
Tried to involve political party or organisation.	0.04	0.46
Scale-H		0.56

**Table A5.2** Chapter 5: Comparison between two-level and single-level model specification, intra class correlations for dependent variables (n= 1,538) individuals within 668 neighbourhoods

Dependent variables		b	s.e	e	$\mu_{0j}$	-2 loglikelihood	Deviance	Intra-class correlation
Unconventional political participation	Single level model	0.494 (0.019)		0.553		3515.427		
	2-level model	0.494 (0.019)		0.544	0.008	3515.144	0.283	0.014
Conventional political participation	Single level model	0.235 (0.015)		0.373		2898.165		
	2-level model	0.235 (0.015)		0.373	0.000	2898.165	0.000	0.000
Voting	Single level model	2.035 (0.079)		$\pi^2/3$				
	2-level model	2.035 (0.00)		$\pi^2/3$	0.000			0.000

\* $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (one-tailed based on  $\chi^2$ -test for difference in -2loglikelihood between single and two-level model).

e: individual level variance.

$\mu_{0j}$ : neighbourhood level variance.

**Table A5.3** Chapter 5: Regression analysis unconventional political participation (linear), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370) (continues on next page).

	Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Main effects</i>												
Percentage non-western minorities	0.007	(0.020)	-0.002	(0.004)	0.002	(0.001)	0.002	(0.001)	0.002	(0.001)	0.002	(0.001)
GINI	0.830**	(0.267)	0.819**	(0.266)	0.391	(2.107)	-0.425	(1.325)	0.839**	(0.269)	0.808**	(0.268)
Median income	-0.002	(0.004)	-0.002	(0.004)	-0.003	(0.004)	-0.002	(0.004)	0.003	(0.036)	0.020	(0.017)
<i>Interaction effects</i>												
Percentage non-western minorities												
*household income	-0.001	(0.002)										
*elementary education												
*lower vocational education			0.008	(0.005)								
*secondary vocational education			-0.004	(0.005)								
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education			0.000	(0.004)								
*higher level vocational/university			0.008	(0.004)								
GINI												
*household income					0.045	(0.211)						
*elementary education									ref.			
*lower vocational education									0.571	(1.619)		
*secondary vocational education									0.636	(1.714)		
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education									1.762	(1.388)		
*higher level vocational/university									1.133	(1.376)		

	Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
Median income												
*household income									-0.001	(0.004)		
*elementary education											ref.	
*lower vocational education											-0.023	(0.021)
*secondary vocational education											0.000	(0.023)
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education											-0.026	(0.018)
*higher level vocational/university											-0.025	(0.018)
Number of people within radius	0.006	(0.004)	0.006	(0.004)	0.004	(0.006)	0.004	(0.006)	0.004	(0.005)	0.004	(0.005)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.064		0.068		0.064		0.065		0.064		0.065	

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed), ref. = reference category.

**Table A5.4** Chapter 5: Regression analysis conventional political participation (linear), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370).

	Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Main effects</i>												
Percentage non-western minorities	-0.034*	(0.017)	0.001	(0.003)	0.002	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)	0.001	(0.001)
GINI	0.675**	(0.230)	0.644**	(0.230)	0.391	(2.107)	1.882**	(1.141)	0.631**	(0.232)	0.643**	(0.230)
Median income	0.006*	(0.003)	0.007*	(0.003)	-0.003	(0.004)	0.007*	(0.003)	-0.016	(0.031)	0.042**	(0.015)
<i>Interaction effects</i>												
Percentage non-western minorities	0.003*	(0.002)										
*household income												
*elementary education			ref.									
*lower vocational education			0.001	(0.004)								
*secondary vocational education			-0.003	(0.005)								
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education			0.001	(0.004)								
*higher level vocational/university			0.003	(0.004)								
GINI												
*household income					0.045	(0.211)						
*elementary education							ref.					
*lower vocational education							-2.440	(1.394)				
*secondary vocational education							-1.526	(1.477)				
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education							-0.892	(1.196)				
*higher level vocational/university							-1.378	(1.185)				

	Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
Median income												
*household income												
*elementary education									0.002	(0.003)		
*lower vocational education											ref.	
*secondary vocational education											-0.040**	(0.018)
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education											-0.035**	(0.020)
*higher level vocational/university											-0.035**	(0.016)
Number of people within radius	-0.002	(0.003)	-0.002	(0.003)	0.006	(0.004)	-0.002	(0.003)	-0.002	(0.003)	-0.002	(0.003)
R <sup>2</sup>			0.083		0.083		0.082		0.083		0.082	

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed). ref. = reference category.



**Table A5.5** Chapter 5: Regression analysis voting (logit), interaction effects at neighbourhood level, controlled for individual level determinants (n=3,370).

	Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
<i>Main effects</i>												
Percentage non-western minorities	-0.009	(0.081)	-0.002	(0.012)	0.001	(0.006)	0.001	(0.006)	0.001	(0.006)	0.001	(0.006)
GINI	2.377	*(1.430)	2.392	*(1.428)	1.029	(9.399)	-4.992	(4.354)	2.232	(1.432)	2.374	** (1.440)
Median income	0.040	*(0.021)	0.039	*(0.021)	0.039	*(0.021)	0.038	(0.022)	-0.097	(0.165)	0.046	(0.069)
<i>Interaction effects</i>												
Percentage non-western minorities												
*household income	0.001	(0.008)										
*elementary education			ref.									
*lower vocational education			-0.005	(0.019)								
*secondary vocational education			0.002	(0.014)								
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education			-0.007	(0.016)								
*higher level vocational/university			-0.005	(0.019)								
GINI												
*household income					0.138	(0.962)						
*elementary education					ref.							
*lower vocational education					10.899	(5.887)						
*secondary vocational education					5.738	(6.281)						
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education					9.642	(4.812)						
*higher level vocational/university					4.034	(5.216)						

	Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6		Model 7	
	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e	b	s.e
Median income									0.014	(0.017)		
*household income												
*elementary education											ref.	
*lower vocational education											-0.003	(0.081)
*secondary vocational education											0.022	(0.093)
*middle level vocational/higher level secondary education											-0.025	(0.073)
*higher level vocational/university											0.029	(0.082)
Number of people within radius	-0.024	(0.017)	-0.024	(0.017)	-0.024	(0.017)	-0.025	(0.017)	-0.023	(0.017)	-0.024	(0.017)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.109		0.110		0.109		0.112		0.109		0.109	
-2loglikelihood	2104,603		2101,860		2104,596		2098,388		2103,876		2103,345	

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed), ref. = reference category..



# 8.

## Valorization addendum

## 8.1 VALORIZATION ADDENDUM

This project was partly financed by Statistics Netherlands, the Dutch National Statistical Institute. For the duration of this project, I have held a joint position as PhD-candidate at Maastricht University and as statistical researcher at Statistics Netherlands. During the course of this PhD-project, various efforts have been made to disseminate results and knowledge related to the thesis to a diverse range of actors within and beyond academia. These efforts have been instigated under the auspices of Maastricht University as well as Statistics Netherlands. In the following sections I will first outline the societal relevance of this thesis and second highlight some of the activities and products delivered throughout this collaborative effort between Maastricht University and Statistics Netherlands.

### *8.1.1 Societal relevance*

The PhD-thesis 'Participation in context: contextual and individual determinants of political participation in Europe and the Netherlands' investigates the interplay between individual-level attributes (properties of individuals) and the characteristics of the contexts in which conventional and unconventional political participation takes place in Europe and the Netherlands. European democracies rely heavily on actively participating citizens that voice their political concerns and hold their political authorities accountable through various means. Studying to what extent people participate in politics and to what extent this changes over time and across different contexts is of major concern in assessing the quality and stability of democracy.

Several authors argue that electorates lose faith in political institutions and that Western democracies suffer from 'disenchantment' with politics (Eder, Mochmann & Quandt, 2015; Norris, 2011). Such declines in citizen engagement in political decision making processes are seen as disruptions of the social cohesion of societies. High levels of social cohesion in a society are seen as indicative of (and interrelated with) the quality of democracy (e.g. Keele, 2007; Knack, 2002; Putnam, Leonardi & Nanetti, 1993). Vice versa, declining political participation is deemed emblematic for deteriorating social cohesion (Putnam, 2000, 2002). Assumed declines in social cohesion are also reason for concern for institution such as the World Bank (Ritzen, Easterly & Woolcock, 2000) the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Coté & Healy, 2001) and the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2010). The European Commission explicitly mentions fostering social cohesion as one of its key policy priorities in the period 2010-2020 (European Commission, 2010).

The assumed decline in political engagement in specific and social cohesion in general would threaten the health and stability of European democracies. If the citizenry abstains from participating in politics this would drain the lifeblood out of democracy. Moreover, if only specific subgroups in societies participate actively and others abstain,

the influence on political decision-making processes could be unequally distributed among different subgroups. This might result in policy preferences being predisposed towards privileged strata in societies, which is contrary to the equalitarian principles of European democracies (Verba, 2003).

Despite growing concerns of declining civic involvement, this thesis demonstrates that political participation is not in decline. Levels of political participation are rather stable in Europe in recent decades. If political participation is taken as a yardstick to measure engagement, this thesis demonstrates that, although certain modes of participation are rare, the citizenry is not becoming increasingly disengaged from politics.

Although there is no widespread decline in political participation, the results reveal that participation in politics is unequally distributed between subgroups in Europe and the Netherlands. Those in higher socio-economic strata (especially the higher educated) are more likely to vote and more likely to participate in other conventional actions. This also holds for unconventional modes of politics where these traditional patterns of unequal participation between higher and lower educated are reproduced. The analyses reveal that in more prosperous countries these inequalities in unconventional political participation are amplified. These results indicate that there are inequalities in the extent to which different subgroups have influence on the political decision making process, which is at odds with the egalitarian principles of democracy. This thesis is thus relevant because it analyses the extent to which people connect to the state through various modes of political participation and to what extent this differs across contexts and over time, which is indicative for the health and stability of European democracies.

## 8.2 DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS: ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

I have disseminated the results of the thesis to an academic audience by presenting at various international conferences and by publishing parts of this thesis in academic publications. The results of this thesis and other interlinked products have also been made available to non-academic audiences mainly through activities at Statistics Netherlands. The target audience for these publications range from policy makers and experts in the field of measuring social cohesion to the general (Dutch) public.

Data used in this thesis, the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies 2010 and 2012, were collected throughout the course of this project at Statistics Netherlands. I have been closely involved in the collection of the survey data and the dissemination of the datasets for the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies in 2010 and 2012. The micro data from these surveys (DPES 2010; 2012) as well as technical documentation on survey response and weighting procedures have been made publicly available (Linszen & Van den Brakel, 2014). These datasets have been used by academic (e.g. Van Elsas, 2014) as well as non-academic audiences to study democratic legitimacy (Thomassen, Van Ham, & Andeweg, 2014) trends in public opinion, attitudes towards democracy, political insti-

tutions, political issues, and politics in the Netherlands (e.g. Den Ridder & Dekker, 2015; Schmeets, 2015; Schmeets, 2010; Van Dijk, 2015). Additionally, the results of the DPES have been made freely available in Statistics Netherlands' 'Statline' database.

Next to these datasets and statistics several publications aimed at policymakers were realised throughout the course of writing this thesis. Several book chapters focusing on comparative analyses of political participation and political trust in Europe (Linszen & Schmeets, 2010; 2011) and public opinion towards the European Union (Aarts, Linszen & Schmeets, 2011) have been published. In addition to these book chapters, aimed at policymakers and specialists, several contributions to the Statistics Netherlands' weblog as well as press reports aimed at the general public were released. These include contributions on social and political trust in the Netherlands and Europe (Kloosterman, Linszen & Schmeets, 2010; Schmeets & Linszen, 2012), the Dutch electorates' opinion on salient political issues (Van den Brakel & Linszen, 2013), as well as press releases focusing on satisfaction with democracy among the Dutch electorate (CBS, 2013b).

Besides these products and activities directly linked to data collection and dissemination of the results of (predominantly) the Dutch Parliamentary Election Surveys, I have also contributed to debates on the measurement of social cohesion, particularly within the setting of the European Framework for Measuring Progress (Eframe). The Eframe-project aims to build a framework for the debate over the measurement of well-being and the progress of societies among a wide range of stakeholders (national statistical institutes, European and international institutions, policy makers, researchers, and civil society). Within the Eframe-project, I have been closely involved in the organisation of an expert meeting on social capital. The objective of the expert meeting was to activate debate and promote closer interaction between researchers in the field of social capital, particularly in national statistical institutes, academia and NGO's. The proceedings of this expert meeting were disseminated within the wider Eframe network and published as an edited issue (see: Schmeets & Linszen, 2013).

In sum, by collaborating with Statistics Netherlands I was able to be closely involved in the collection of the data used in this thesis, to disseminate the results to a variety of academic and non-academic audiences, and to contribute to ongoing debates on policy-relevant measurements of quality of life in general and social cohesion in particular.

# 9.

Nederlandstalige samenvatting  
Summary in Dutch



## 9. NEDERLANDSTALIGE SAMENVATTING/SUMMARY IN DUTCH

### 9.1 Hoofdstuk 1: Inleiding

Politieke participatie is een voorwaarde voor een gezonde democratie. De verbinding tussen burger en staat komt tot stand doordat de burger op verschillende manieren meedoet aan politieke besluitvormingsprocessen, zoals door het uitbrengen van een stem tijdens verkiezingen of door lid te worden van een politieke partij. Daarnaast hebben burgers ook andere manieren ter beschikking om de politiek te beïnvloeden, zoals het tekenen van petitie's of het meedoen aan demonstraties.

Vaak wordt in de media en in de wetenschappelijke literatuur gesuggereerd dat de verbindingen tussen burger en politiek afbrokkelen. Zo wordt bijvoorbeeld gesteld dat het vertrouwen van burgers in de politiek afneemt. Daarnaast bestaat de zorg dat de invloed van burgers op politieke besluitvorming (in toenemende mate) afneemt of dat deze invloed ongelijk(er) verdeeld is over verschillende bevolkingsgroepen. Tegen de achtergrond van een toenemende (vermogens)ongelijkheid en, meer recent, de financiële en economische crisis zou deze zorg alleen maar zijn toegenomen.

In algemene zin bestaat er bezorgdheid over de staat van de sociale samenhang, zowel in Nederland als in Europa. De sociale samenhang zou in verschillende westerse democratieën onder druk staan. De mate waarin mensen hun stem laten horen om daarmee de politiek te beïnvloeden is indicatief voor de mate van sociale samenhang in een land. Wanneer burgers in toenemende mate afzien van participatie in politieke besluitvorming komt daarmee zowel de sociale samenhang als de legitimiteit van de democratie zwaar onder druk te staan. Daarnaast staat toenemende ongelijkheid in de mate waarin burgers invloed kunnen uitoefenen op de politieke besluitvorming op gespannen voet met het gelijkheidsbeginsel van westerse democratieën waarbij ieders stem in gelijke mate telt.

Tussen individuen, tussen landen, en ook binnen landen zijn er grote verschillen in de mate waarin burgers invloed uitoefenen op de politiek. Hoger opgeleiden laten over het algemeen meer hun stem (op verschillende manieren) horen dan lager opgeleiden. Zij gaan bijvoorbeeld vaker stemmen en tekenen vaker een petitie dan lager opgeleiden. Echter, louter individuele kenmerken bieden geen voldoende verklaring voor de verschillen in politieke participatie over de tijd, de verschillen in politieke participatie binnen landen, en de verschillen in politieke participatie tussen landen in Europa. De individuele beslissing om invloed uit te oefenen is ingebed in, bijvoorbeeld, het politiek-institutionele kader van het land dat bepaalt welke mogelijkheden en beperkingen er (wettelijk) gelden voor de manier waarop, en de mate waarin men als burger mee kan doen aan het politieke besluitvormingsproces. Daarnaast is ook de kleinschaligere context van, bijvoorbeeld, de buurt van belang waar de dagelijkse interactie tussen burgers plaatsvindt.

In dit proefschrift onderzoeken we het samenspel tussen effecten van individuele kenmerken en de effecten van de context op politieke participatie in Europa. In eerder onderzoek is niet altijd expliciet rekening mee gehouden dat participatie binnen een nationale en sub-nationale context plaatsvindt. Dergelijk onderzoek concentreerde zich louter op determinanten op contextueel niveau, bijvoorbeeld de welvaart van een land of kenmerken van het politiek-institutionele systeem (contextuele kenmerken), ofwel kenmerken op individueel niveau, zoals het opleidingsniveau en attitudes van burgers. Studies die juist wel de combinatie van individuele en contextuele determinanten in ogenschouw namen, bestudeerden vooral conventionele of (enkele) onconventionele acties apart. In deze studie bestuderen we individuele als contextuele effecten op verschillende vormen van politieke participatie tegelijkertijd. Daarnaast kijken we in hoeverre de effecten van contextuele kenmerken verschillen voor subgroepen in de samenleving. In de onderhavige dissertatie ligt de focus daarom expliciet op het samenspel tussen individuele en contextuele determinanten en de effecten hiervan op verschillende vormen van politieke participatie.

Op basis van eerdere literatuur maken we een onderscheid tussen conventionele en onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie. Conventionele vormen zijn activiteiten die ingebed zijn in het wettelijke en institutionele politieke kader en activiteiten die direct gelieerd zijn aan het verkiezingsproces, zoals stemmen en lid worden van een politieke partij. Onconventionele politieke participatie bestaat uit activiteiten die burgers kunnen inzetten om politieke besluitvorming te beïnvloeden maar die niet ingebed zijn in het wettelijke en institutionele politieke kader (of in sommige gevallen zelfs illegaal zijn). Voorbeelden daarvan zijn demonstraties en het tekenen van petitieën. In dit proefschrift onderzoeken we in hoeverre kenmerken op contextueel en individueel niveau invloed hebben op vergelijkbare vormen van conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie. Hiermee bouwen we voort op bestaand onderzoek.

Bovendien leiden we uit verschillende theorieën elkaar tegensprekende hypothesen af voor conventionele en onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie. Zo wordt in eerder onderzoek bijvoorbeeld gesteld dat politieke participatie in het algemeen afneemt. Andere auteurs claimen dat politieke participatie niet zozeer afneemt, maar dat burgers in toenemende mate nieuwe, onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie aanspreken, in plaats van oude, conventionele vormen van politieke participatie. Wij dragen bij aan de bestaande literatuur door zulke tegengestelde en complementaire hypothesen empirisch te toetsen in cross-nationale en longitudinale vergelijkingen in Europa en Nederland.

De centrale onderzoeksvraag in dit proefschrift is in hoeverre de verschillen in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in Europa, en meer specifiek in Nederland, kunnen worden verklaard door het samenspel van individuele en contextuele determinanten. Deze onderzoeksvraag is verder opgesplitst door deze effecten op conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie op macro-, meso-, en micro-niveau te onderzoeken. We beginnen bij het macro-niveau, te weten: longitudinale

veranderingen in politieke participatie in Europa tussen 1981-2010 (hoofdstuk 2) en we gaan na in hoeverre verklaringen voor de cross-nationale verschillen in politieke participatie in Europa hout snijden (hoofdstuk 3). Daarna focussen we op het meso-niveau, namelijk: longitudinale veranderingen in politieke participatie in Nederland tijdens de financiële en economische crisis (hoofdstuk 4). Vervolgens stellen we de effecten vast van de directe leefomgeving van mensen (buurten en lagere niveaus, de micro-context) op politieke participatie in Nederland (hoofdstuk 5). Daarvoor hebben we gebruik gemaakt van hoogwaardige, cross-nationale en longitudinale survey data, aangevuld met gegevens over de desbetreffende context van individuele burgers, waaronder informatie over de leefomgeving en politiek-institutionele en sociaaleconomische kenmerken van landen.

## *9.2 Hoofdstuk 2: Trends in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in Europa tussen 1981-2008*

In hoofdstuk 2 geven we inzicht in de belangrijkste trends in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in Europa tussen 1981 en 2008. We hebben gekeken naar politieke participatie in verschillende landen over de tijd in Europa.

In eerdere studies, voornamelijk uit de Verenigde Staten, stelden onderzoekers contrasterende hypothesen op over trends in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie. Zo werd er geclaimd dat de sociale cohesie is afgenomen in recente decennia. Volgens deze studies zou er een individualisering plaatsvinden waarin burgers zich massaal en in toenemende mate onttrekken aan de samenleving. Dit zou blijken uit afnemend vertrouwen, in zowel de medemens als (politieke) instituties, alsook in een daling van sociale contacten en vrijwilligerswerk en een afname van alle vormen van politieke participatie. De vermindering van de mate waarin mensen politiek participeren, zou typerend zijn voor een algemene daling in de sociale cohesie. Andere onderzoekers, eveneens vooral uit de Verenigde Staten, stelden echter dat politieke participatie niet zozeer afneemt, maar dat burgers het repertoire van middelen om hun belangen kenbaar te maken veranderen. Burgers wisselen conventionele politieke acties in voor onconventionele politieke acties. Dit zou leiden tot een toename van onconventionele politieke participatie die de conventionele politieke participatie verdringt. In hoofdstuk 2 toetsen we deze twee contrasterende hypothesen, die vanuit de Verenigde Staten naar voren gekomen zijn, voor diverse Europese landen.

Om een accurate beschrijving van trends in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie te geven, gaan we in hoofdstuk 2 allereerst in op de vergelijkbaarheid van de meetinstrumenten die gebruikt worden op basis van de survey data. We bestuderen in hoeverre de patronen in verschillende conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in 22 Europese landen vergelijkbaar zijn. In hoofdstuk 2 tonen we aan dat er voor zowel conventionele als onconventionele acties cumulatieve patronen bestaan. Burgers die aan moeilijke, vaak meer tijdrovende, onconventionele acties mee-

doen, zoals demonstraties, participeren ook in gemakkelijkere, minder tijdrovende acties, zoals het tekenen van petitieën en het meedoen aan boycots. Dit cumulatieve patroon geldt ook voor conventionele politieke acties. Bovendien zijn deze cumulatieve patronen voor zowel conventionele als onconventionele acties vergelijkbaar binnen landen over de tijd en, afgezien van enkele uitzonderingen, in Europa ook vergelijkbaar tussen landen over de tijd.

De trends in conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie hebben we onderzocht op basis van cross-nationaal en longitudinaal vergelijkbare survey data. Deze data bevatten informatie van 205.763 individuen in 22 landen binnen 3 decennia. We tonen aan dat er geen sprake is van een massale afname van politieke participatie in Europa. Er is evenmin sprake van een vervanging van conventionele politieke acties voor onconventionele politieke acties. In tegenstelling tot de verwachte dalende politieke participatie of een verandering van repertoire van conventioneel naar onconventioneel, is zowel de conventionele als de onconventionele politieke participatie in Europa in de periode 1981-2008 stabiel. De fluctuaties in politieke participatie in deze periode binnen de desbetreffende landen zijn verder zeer gering. De verschillen in het niveau van beide vormen van politieke participatie tussen landen zijn echter groot.

*9.3 Hoofdstuk 3: Participatie in context: contextuele en individuele determinanten van politieke participatie in Europa in het eerste decennium van de 21ste eeuw*

In hoofdstuk 2 hebben we aangetoond dat de verschillen in het niveau van politieke participatie tussen landen vele malen groter zijn dan de verschillen in politieke participatie binnen landen over de tijd. Zo is, bijvoorbeeld, het niveau van onconventionele participatie in Noorwegen ruim twee keer zo hoog als in Nederland. In het derde hoofdstuk zoeken we naar verklaringen voor deze grote verschillen tussen landen door verschillende theorieën te toetsen. Bovendien ligt het zwaartepunt nu op het samenspel tussen kenmerken van het land en van het individu. Daarom onderzoeken we in hoeverre de effecten van landkenmerken op politieke participatie verschillen tussen lagere en hogere sociaaleconomische bevolkingsgroepen. De onderzoeksvraag luidt: in hoeverre kan conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie (op individueel niveau) worden verklaard door (het samenspel van) contextuele (landelijke) en individuele determinanten?

Om dit te onderzoeken kijken we naar landen in Europa in de periode 2000-2010 op basis van cross-nationaal vergelijkbare survey data, aangevuld met data over de kenmerken van het land (contextuele determinanten). In hoofdstuk 3 leiden we hypothesen af uit verschillende theorieën. Op het individueel niveau maken we gebruik van de hulpbronnentheorie, die voorspelt dat hoe meer hulpbronnen (hoger opleidingsniveau) burgers tot hun beschikking hebben, des te meer zij doen aan conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie.

Vervolgens leiden we vanuit drie onderscheiden theorieën diverse hypothesen af waarmee verschillen tussen landen in het niveau van politieke participatie worden verklaard. Hierbij hebben we onderzocht in hoeverre politieke participatie wordt beïnvloed door (a) het politiek institutionele systeem van een land, (b) de mate van welvaart en (c) de mate van etnische diversiteit. Voor elk van deze contextuele kenmerken zijn we het samenspel met de individuele kenmerken, op basis van de hulpbronnentheorie, nagegaan.

Ten eerste hebben we onderzocht in hoeverre het politiek-institutionele systeem bepalend is voor conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie. Het politiek-institutionele systeem kan vele mogelijkheden bieden om de politiek te beïnvloeden ('open' systemen) of juist heel weinig en 'gesloten' van aard zijn. In een open systeem wordt burgers de mogelijkheid geboden om op vele verschillende manieren invloed uit te oefenen op het politieke debat. In open systemen mag daarom verwacht worden dat zowel de conventionele als de onconventionele politieke participatie hoog is. De alternatieve hypothese is dat mensen in gesloten systemen, door een gebrek aan geïnstitutionaliseerde mogelijkheden om hun stem te laten horen (conventionele politieke participatie), hun heil zoeken in niet-geïnstitutionaliseerde, onconventionele manieren van politieke acties. Hierdoor zou in gesloten systemen de onconventionele politieke participatie juist hoog zijn. Over de interacties tussen de openheid van het politieke systeem en individuele kenmerken (hulpbronnen) hebben we de hypothese opgesteld dat hoger opgeleiden beter toegerust zijn om te participeren in open systemen dan lager opgeleiden. Open systemen kenmerken zich door een grotere mate van complexiteit. Hierdoor zou het effect van openheid op politieke participatie sterker zijn voor hoog opgeleiden dan voor laag opgeleiden.

Ten tweede hebben we verschillende, deels contrasterende, hypothesen afgeleid en empirisch getoetst die hun grondslag vinden in moderniseringstheorieën. Zo is de verwachting opgesteld dat een hogere mate van welvaart en, meer specifiek, omvangrijkere sociale zekerheidsstelsels de politieke betrokkenheid aanwakkeren waardoor politieke participatie (conventioneel en onconventioneel) toeneemt. Voor deze redenering hebben we eveneens een hypothese geponeerd over het samenspel tussen contextuele en individuele kenmerken. Als de welvaart in een land de politieke betrokkenheid aanwakkert, zal dit in grotere mate het geval zijn voor mensen die meer menselijk kapitaal hebben om in de politiek te participeren (hoger opgeleiden) in vergelijking tot mensen die minder menselijk kapitaal hebben om te participeren (lager opgeleiden). Daarom verwachten we dat het effect van de welvaart van een land sterker is voor hoger opgeleiden dan lager opgeleiden.

Ten derde hadden we de verwachting dat toenemende welvaart een drijvende kracht is achter de verbrokkeling van de sociale cohesie binnen samenlevingen. Met een toenemende welvaart eroderen de contacten tussen burgers onderling en de contacten tussen burger en staat. Vanuit dit perspectief zou in landen met een hogere welvaart de mate van politieke participatie juist afnemen. Bovendien zou dit proces in sterkere mate

optreden bij lager opgeleiden, omdat lager opgeleiden überhaupt minder hulpbronnen tot hun beschikking hebben om politiek te participeren. Vanuit dit perspectief zou het effect van welvaart in een land op politieke participatie juist sterker zijn voor lager opgeleiden.

Ten vierde hebben we hypothesen afgeleid op basis van de 'constrict' theorie die de verschillen in politieke participatie relateert aan de mate van etnische diversiteit binnen landen. Ten gevolge van verschillende migratiestromen, zoals arbeidsmigratie en gezinshereniging, is de etnische diversiteit in Europa de afgelopen decennia toegenomen. Volgens een vaak aangehaalde studie van Putnam, die is uitgevoerd in de Verenigde Staten, kruipen mensen die wonen in een etnisch diverse omgeving in hun schulp en trekken zich terug uit het sociale leven. Mensen die wonen in een etnisch diverse omgeving zouden niet alleen minder vertrouwen in de 'out-group' hebben maar ook minder vertrouwen in de 'in-group' en zodoende zou dit leiden tot minder onderlinge contacten tussen burgers. In eerder onderzoek is vooral de invloed van etnische diversiteit op het vertrouwen en andere attitudes van de bevolking onderzocht. Putnam stelt echter dat etnische diversiteit ook gevolgen heeft voor gedragsaspecten van sociale samenhang, waaronder politieke participatie. De relatie tussen etnische diversiteit en deze gedragsaspecten van sociale samenhang, en daarbij in het bijzonder conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie, is in eerder onderzoek in veel geringere mate aan bod gekomen. Putnam claimt dat in een omgeving met meer etnische diversiteit de conventionele politieke participatie lager is, terwijl de onconventionele politieke participatie juist hoger is. In dit onderzoek hebben we deze hypothese getoetst voor landen in Europa.

De hypothese die we uit de hulpbronnentheorie hebben afgeleid, wordt bevestigd door de resultaten. In lijn met voorafgaand onderzoek dat in diverse landen is uitgevoerd, tonen we aan dat hoger opgeleiden vaker meedoen aan zowel conventionele als onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie. We laten ook zien dat burgers in open systemen vaker stemmen, maar dat er geen verschil is tussen open en gesloten systemen in de mate van onconventionele participatie (petities, demonstraties en boycots) en andere vormen van conventionele politieke participatie (partijlidmaatschap en werkzaamheden uitvoeren voor politieke partijen).

Wanneer in de analyses de hulpbronnentheorieën (op individueel niveau) gecombineerd worden met de mate waarin politieke systemen van landen open of gesloten zijn, doemt een genuanceerder beeld op. Over de interacties tussen openheid en individuele kenmerken (hulpbronnen) hadden we de hypothese opgesteld dat hoger opgeleiden beter toegerust zijn om te participeren in open en daardoor complexere institutionele structuren dan lager opgeleiden. Het effect van openheid op politieke participatie zou daarom sterker zijn onder hoger opgeleiden. We verwerpen echter deze hypothese. In tegenstelling tot de verwachtingen vinden we zelfs dat het effect van openheid op conventionele politieke participatie (partijlidmaatschap en werkzaamheden uitvoeren voor politieke partijen) sterker is onder lager opgeleiden.

Voor de verwachtingen die we hadden opgesteld vanuit de moderniseringstheorie, betreffende de mate van welvaart en de omvang van sociale zekerheidstelsels, verschillen de bevindingen voor conventionele en onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie. Leven in een welvarend land heeft geen directe (dat wil zeggen: onafhankelijk van het opleidingsniveau van het individu) weerslag op het niveau van onconventionele politieke participatie. We laten evenwel zien dat mensen die leven in landen met een grotere welvaart ook vaker stemmen. Echter, de mate van welvaart van het land heeft geen directe invloed op andere manieren van conventionele politieke participatie.

Voor deze hypothesen is eveneens het samenspel met individuele hulpbronnen onderzocht. Als de welvaart van een land de politieke betrokkenheid aanwakkert, zal dit in grotere mate het geval zijn voor hoger opgeleiden dan voor lager opgeleiden. We tonen aan dat dit inderdaad het geval is voor onconventionele politieke acties. Het effect van de welvaart op onconventionele politieke participatie is sterker voor hoger opgeleiden. Voor conventionele politieke participatie is dit juist andersom. Het effect van welvaart op conventionele politieke participatie is sterker voor lager opgeleiden. Tot slot verwerpen we de hypothese dat er een relatie bestaat tussen de etnische diversiteit in een land en de mate van politieke participatie.

In hoofdstuk 3 laten we zien dat de individuele kenmerken afgeleid uit hulpbronnen-theorieën de belangrijkste rol spelen in het verklaren van conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie. Mensen met meer menselijk kapitaal participeren in grotere mate in zowel conventionele als onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie. De context van landen beïnvloedt conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie op verschillende manieren.

Tenslotte tonen we in hoofdstuk 3 aan dat partijlidmaatschap en werkzaamheden uitvoeren voor politieke partijen in Europese landen een zeldzaam fenomeen is, zeker in vergelijking met stemmen (dat de meest populaire vorm van politieke participatie is) en onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie waarbij veel meer mensen zijn betrokken.

#### *9.4 Hoofdstuk 4: Conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in tijden van financiële en economische crisis in Nederland*

In hoofdstuk 4 richten we ons op Nederland in de periode 2006-2012. In 2008 luidde het ineenstorten van een aantal financiële instituties in de Verenigde Staten het begin van een financiële crisis in. Dit mondde later uit in een financiële en economische crisis die ook Europa trof. Dit ging gepaard met protestacties zoals de 'Movimiento 15-M' in Spanje, grootschalige protestacties in Griekenland en de 'occupy' beweging in de Verenigde Staten en verschillende Europese steden. Deze protesten gaven ons aanleiding om te denken dat macro-economische veranderingen over de tijd hun weerslag zouden kunnen hebben op het niveau van politieke participatie.

De wetenschappelijke literatuur heeft zich voornamelijk bezig gehouden met de relaties tussen de macro-economische context en partijkeuze, en in mindere mate met de relatie tussen economische neergang en vormen van (onconventionele) politieke actie anders dan stemmen, zoals bijvoorbeeld demonstreren. Met aan de bestaande literatuur ontleende, elkaar tegensprekende hypothesen, hebben we de relatie tussen de macro-economische context over de tijd en (on)conventionele politieke participatie voor Nederland in hoofdstuk 4 onderzocht. Nederland scoort in Europees vergelijkend perspectief hoog op indicatoren van sociale samenhang, waaronder politieke participatie. Tussen 2002 en 2012 werden in Nederland vijf keer Tweede Kamerverkiezingen gehouden. Deze verkiezingen – en dan met name de verkiezingen in 2006, 2010 en 2012 – vielen grofweg samen met deze financiële en economische crisis. De verkiezingen in 2006 vonden plaats net voor de crisis. In 2010 viel de verkiezing samen met het begin van de crisis. In 2012, tijdens een periode van recessie in Nederland, viel de regering Rutte 1 tijdens onderhandelingen over bezuinigingsmaatregelen als reactie op de economische crisis. De timing van deze verkiezingen (en daarmee ook de Nationale Kiezersonderzoeken), en het feit dat Nederland hoog scoort op indicatoren van sociale samenhang, biedt ons de mogelijkheid van het uitvoeren van een ‘natuurlijk experiment’ om de relatie tussen de financiële en economische crisis enerzijds en de politieke participatie anderzijds nader te onderzoeken en om elkaar tegensprekende hypothesen empirisch te toetsen.

In hoofdstuk 4 hebben we wederom gekeken naar de effecten van de context waarin politieke participatie plaatsvindt (i.e. Nederland, binnen één politiek systeem in tijden van economische neergang over de tijd). Daarnaast hebben we het samenspel met determinanten van politieke participatie op individueel niveau onderzocht. Hierbij zijn we nagegaan of de effecten van de economische crisis op politieke participatie verschillen tussen hogere en lagere sociaaleconomische bevolkingsgroepen en hebben we de volgende vraag gesteld: in hoeverre wordt politieke participatie beïnvloed door economische neergang in het algemeen, en meer specifiek voor individuen in hogere en lagere sociaaleconomische bevolkingsgroepen, in Nederland tussen 2002 en 2012?

Economische neergang kan resulteren in zowel een toename als in een afname van politieke participatie. In tijden van economische teruggang zijn regeringen gedwongen bezuinigingen door te voeren. Dit resulteert in een discrepantie tussen wat burgers van regeringen verwachten enerzijds, en anderzijds wat regeringen kunnen bieden. Politieke actoren worden verantwoordelijk gehouden voor de economische crisis en dit zou politieke acties kunnen aanwakkeren. De tegengestelde hypothese luidt dat mensen in tijden van een economische inzinking zich voornamelijk over hun eigen (financieel-economische) situatie bekommeren en politieke grieven daardoor naar de achtergrond worden gedreven. Hierdoor zou de politieke participatie (zowel conventioneel als onconventioneel) juist afnemen.

Ook hebben we in hoofdstuk 4 hypothesen opgesteld over het samenspel tussen individuele kenmerken en de macro-economische neergang. Vanuit de hulpbronnentheorie



wordt gesteld dat mensen in hogere sociaaleconomische lagen van de bevolking over het algemeen meer deelnemen aan politieke acties. In tijden van economische malaise mag verwacht worden dat deze relatie versterkt wordt. Individuen met een lagere sociaaleconomische achtergrond zijn in het algemeen minder geneigd te participeren en bovendien is het effect van de economische crisis vaak groter op mensen in lagere sociaaleconomische posities. Vanuit deze redenering hebben we de verwachting uitgesproken dat hierdoor de verschillen tussen hogere en lagere sociaaleconomische strata toenemen in tijden van een economische crisis.

De analyses zijn uitgevoerd op basis van het Nationaal Kiezersonderzoek (NKO) dat rondom elke Tweede Kamerverkiezing gehouden wordt. Hierbij hebben we eerst gekeken in hoeverre de metingen over de tijd vergelijkbaar zijn, waarbij is aangetoond dat politieke participatie een cumulatief patroon volgt. Mensen die participeren in 'moeilijkere' politieke acties, zoals demonstraties, participeren ook in 'makkelijkere' acties, zoals het deelnemen aan politieke discussies op het internet. Het cumulatieve patroon van deze acties blijft stabiel over de tijd.

Op grond van de resultaten verwerpen we de opgestelde hypothesen. De invloed van de economische crisis op politieke participatie is zeer gering. Er vindt een kleine daling van conventionele politieke participatie plaats en een zeer bescheiden stijging van de onconventionele politieke participatie. Verder vinden we geen noemenswaardige verschillen voor hogere en lagere sociaaleconomische strata.

### *9.5 Hoofdstuk 5: Effecten van de micro-context op conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie in Nederland*

In hoofdstuk 4 hebben we laten zien dat er in tijden van economische neergang, tussen 2002 en 2012, in Nederland slechts zeer geringe veranderingen zijn in het niveau van politieke participatie. In het vijfde hoofdstuk hebben we de effecten van de micro-context binnen Nederland nader onder de loep genomen. Ook is de interactie tussen individuele kenmerken en deze microcontext theoretisch en empirisch geanalyseerd.

In hoofdstuk 5 is de 'constrict' theorie van Putnam nogmaals getoetst: een hoger niveau van etnische diversiteit zou leiden tot een lager niveau van conventionele politieke participatie en minder onconventionele politieke participatie. Een land kan een te hoog aggregatieniveau zijn om de effecten van etnische diversiteit op politieke participatie te signaleren. Op lagere contextuele niveaus, in de directe leefomgeving van burgers, is de etnische diversiteit nabij en de blootstelling aan etnische diversiteit onontkoombaar. De verwachting is dan ook dat als de etnische diversiteit nabij is, het effect van etnische diversiteit op politieke participatie groter is.

In Nederland hangt de etnische diversiteit van buurten echter zeer sterk samen met armoede en inkomensongelijkheid in buurten. Vandaar dat we de unieke effecten van zowel etnische diversiteit als inkomensongelijkheid en armoede in buurten op politieke participatie hebben onderzocht. Hierbij is wederom gebruik gemaakt van het Nationaal

Kiezersonderzoek (NKO) (2010-2012). Voor elke respondent in het survey onderzoek zijn de individuele gegevens gekoppeld aan registerdata, bijvoorbeeld het bevolkingsregister, dat informatie verschaft over de micro context. Hierdoor is het mogelijk de individuele data aan te vullen met kenmerken van direct omwonenden van de respondent. Door om elke respondent in het Nationaal Kiezersonderzoek een radius heen te leggen en vervolgens de kenmerken van de mensen die in deze radius wonen (zoals herkomst uit het bevolkingsregister en armoede en inkomensongelijkheid uit inkomensregisters) aan de data van het NKO te koppelen, ontstaat er een fijnmazig beeld van de omgeving waarin een respondent woont. Door vervolgens de grootte van deze radius te variëren is het mogelijk vast te stellen op welk contextueel nabijheidsniveau deze effecten (vooral) een rol spelen.

Net zoals in hoofdstuk 3, hebben we in hoofdstuk 5 de hypothese afgeleid dat een sterkere etnische diversiteit resulteert in een daling van de conventionele politieke participatie omdat mensen in hun schulp kruipen. Mensen zijn eerder geneigd samenwerking te zoeken met gelijkgestemden. In etnisch diverse contexten zijn er minder gelijkgestemden om mee samen te werken, waardoor de conventionele politieke participatie afneemt. Onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie vinden daarentegen plaats indien de groepsbelangen duidelijker gedefinieerd en afgebakend zijn. Dergelijke tegengestelde belangen zullen vaker aangetroffen worden in etnisch diverse dan in etnisch homogene contexten. Vandaar dat verwacht wordt dat in etnisch diverse contexten de onconventionele politieke participatie groter zal zijn dan in etnisch homogene contexten.

Tevens hebben we hypothesen afgeleid voor het effect van ongelijkheid op politieke participatie. Dezelfde redenering is gebruikt voor de effecten van sociaaleconomische diversiteit (in plaats van etnische diversiteit). Wat betreft armoede van buurten is de hypothese dat het leven in armere buurten het niveau van zowel conventionele als onconventionele politieke participatie vermindert. Doordat mensen in een armere context leven, worden de verwachtingen van doeltreffendheid van politieke participatie ondermijnd waardoor men minder participeert. Bovendien is de verwachting dat de effecten van etnische diversiteit, ongelijkheid en armoede in de nabije omgeving van mensen sterker zijn dan op grotere afstand (bijvoorbeeld een radius van 50 meter om een respondent heen in vergelijking met de buurt of gemeente). Deze nabijheidshypothese is gebaseerd op de aanname dat de kans groter is dat mensen sterker beïnvloed worden door factoren in hun directe omgeving omdat ze zich daar minder aan kunnen onttrekken. We laten evenwel zien dat er geen relatie is tussen etnische diversiteit en politieke participatie. Dit geldt voor zowel conventionele als onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie. In tegenstelling tot de verwachting, hebben we verder aangetoond dat de inkomensongelijkheid van een buurt conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie vergroot. Het leven in een armere omgeving heeft geen invloed op conventionele en onconventionele politieke participatie. Wat betreft het samenspel met individuele kenmerken geldt wederom dat mensen in hogere sociaaleconomische

status vaker participeren in conventionele en onconventionele participatie. De contextuele determinanten beïnvloeden deze relatie niet. Ten slotte vinden we geen substantiële verschillen in de afstand van etnische diversiteit, inkomensongelijkheid en armoede op politieke participatie. De sterkte van deze contextuele effecten verschillen niet naarmate de radii waarin zij gespecificeerd worden kleiner wordt. Daarmee is de nabijheidshypothese verworpen.

### *9.6 Hoofdstuk 6: Conclusie*

Door vergelijkbare vormen van politieke participatie (conventioneel en onconventioneel) over verschillende contexten te bestuderen, longitudinaal in Europa, crossnationaal vergelijkend in Europa, longitudinaal in Nederland in tijden van de economische crisis, en op het niveau van de micro-context in Nederland, laten we telkens zien dat er een cumulatief patroon is in het deelnemen aan politieke activiteiten. Mensen die participeren in moeilijkere, meer tijdrovende, politieke acties doen ook mee aan makkelijkere, minder tijdrovende politieke acties. Bovendien is dit patroon vergelijkbaar binnen landen over de tijd in Europa en, op enkele uitzonderingen na, vergelijkbaar tussen landen in Europa. Dit pleit voor een erkenning van dit cumulatieve patroon in vervolgonderzoek in plaats van het bestuderen van geïsoleerde politieke activiteiten zoals het meedoen aan demonstraties of het lid worden van politieke partijen.

De longitudinale vergelijkingen in Europa en Nederland laten zien dat er over de tijd weinig veranderingen plaatsvinden in het niveau van politieke participatie. In tegenstelling tot de verwachtingen die uitgesproken werden in eerder onderzoek, is er geen substantiële daling in onconventionele politieke participatie te zien in Europa in de periode 1981-2008. Er is evenmin een toename in onconventionele activiteiten te zien doordat burgers hun repertoire van politieke acties zouden veranderen. Ook heeft meer recent de economische crisis nagenoeg geen invloed op het niveau van politieke participatie in Nederland. Het niveau van conventionele en onconventionele politiek participatie is behoorlijk stabiel gebleken in de onderzochte periode.

Verder laten we zien dat individuele kenmerken een groter effect hebben op politieke participatie dan contextuele kenmerken. De hulpbronnentheorie met haar aandacht voor individuele kenmerken, blijkt telkens een grotere verklarende kracht te hebben dan theorieën waarin aandacht voor contextuele kenmerken centraal staat. Deze bevinding sluit aan bij eerder onderzoek waarin zowel individuele als contextuele determinanten van politieke participatie onderzocht werden.

De verschillen in politieke participatie over de tijd in Europa zijn zeer gering. De verschillen tussen landen in het niveau van politieke participatie zijn echter substantieel. Met de analyse van het samenspel tussen kenmerken van landen en kenmerken van individuen tonen we aan dat vooral onder hoog opgeleiden een grotere welvaart van een land de onconventionele politieke participatie stimuleert. Dit bouwt voort op bevindingen in eerder onderzoek waarbij gesteld wordt dat de traditionele patronen

van stratificatie in conventionele politieke participatie versterkt worden in nieuwere onconventionele vormen van politieke participatie.

Wat betreft de openheid van het politieke systeem geldt dat hoewel hoger opgeleiden vaker participeren in conventionele vormen van politieke acties, de invloed van het opleidingsniveau op politieke participatie in open politieke systemen afneemt. Dit is een indicatie dat open politieke systemen een dempend effect hebben op de verschillen tussen hoger en lager opgeleiden in hun niveau van conventionele politieke participatie.

Hoewel stemmen past binnen het cumulatieve patroon van conventionele politieke participatie laten we met dit onderzoek zien dat contextuele determinanten op een andere manier invloed uitoefenen op stemmen dan op overige vormen van conventionele politieke participatie. Zo wordt in open politieke systemen, in meer welvarende landen, alsook in landen met omvangrijkere sociale zekerheidsstelsels vaker gestemd, maar is er geen directe relatie tussen deze contextuele determinanten en andere vormen van conventionele politieke participatie. Stemmen tijdens nationale verkiezingen is de meest voor de hand liggende, de meest populaire, ritualistische, en mogelijksterwijs de eenvoudigste vorm van politieke actie. Bovendien zijn andere vormen van conventionele acties relatief zeldzaam, zowel in Europa (met uitzondering van Zwitserland en Oostenrijk) als in Nederland.

In dit proefschrift toetsen we de claim van Putnam dat etnische diversiteit negatieve gevolgen heeft voor op politieke participatie op verschillende contextuele niveau's. We vinden evenwel geen empirische ondersteuning voor deze claims. Dit geldt als we kijken naar de etnische diversiteit op het niveau van landen in Europa, maar evenzeer als we kijken op buurtniveau: etnische diversiteit heeft geen effect op politieke participatie. Bovendien werd er in studies naar de relatie tussen etnische diversiteit in buurten en politieke participatie in Canada en het Verenigd Koninkrijk evenmin ondersteuning voor deze stelling gevonden. Natuurlijk heeft dit onderzoek ook een aantal beperkingen. Zo is in deze studie aandacht besteed aan determinanten van de omgeving waarin burgers wonen en politiek participeren. Door de focus te leggen op vergelijkbaarheid van contextuele determinanten, konden we geen aandacht besteden aan de effecten van de directe sociale context waarin dagelijkse activiteiten en politieke discussies tussen burgers plaatsvinden. Meninge worden gedeeld en gevormd in relatie tot het directe sociale netwerk van burgers. Het is denkbaar dat de mate van diversiteit (etnisch en sociaaleconomisch) van deze sociale netwerken eveneens invloed heeft op de politieke participatie van burgers.

Een andere beperking van dit onderzoek is dat, eveneens door de focus op longitudinale en cross-nationale vergelijkbaarheid, we niet hebben gekeken naar specifieke, actuele, politieke kwesties. Het is mogelijk dat actuele politieke kwesties een rol spelen in de beslissing van burgers om mee te doen aan conventionele ofwel aan onconventionele politieke acties (bijvoorbeeld recentelijk in Nederland de beslissing om mee te doen met een demonstratie of (in plaats daarvan) contact opnemen met lokale politici bij zorgen over de plaatsing van asielzoekerscentra). Dit geldt in grotere mate voor

vormen van onconventionele politieke participatie die zich vaak beperken tot één of enkele kwestie(s). Toekomstige onderzoekers zouden in ogenschouw kunnen nemen dat de inhoud van de belangen die mensen te berde brengen in de politieke arena ook de keuze voor het repertoire (conventioneel of onconventioneel) van politieke acties zouden kunnen beïnvloeden.

We laten in dit proefschrift zien dat, ondanks zorgen over een afname in politiek engagement van de burger de politieke participatie niet afneemt, niet in Europese landen en evenmin in Nederland. Als we politieke participatie een maatstaf is voor de betrokkenheid van de burger bij de samenleving (sociale cohesie), dan bieden de resultaten van deze studie geen steun voor een vermeende verbrokkeling daarvan.

## About the author

Rik Linssen (Geleen, 1985) completed his Bachelor degree in Sociology and subsequently obtained a Research Master degree in Social and Cultural Sciences at the Radboud University Nijmegen. He conducted the present research as a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University. During this time he held a joint position as PhD candidate at Maastricht University and as Statistical Researcher at Statistics Netherlands. Rik currently works as a researcher at the Dutch NGO Oxfam Novib in The Hague. Here, his research focuses on quantitative impact evaluations of development and humanitarian projects in several countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.