

HOW CITIZENS TRY TO INFLUENCE POLITICS: ON MOVEMENT POLITICS AND PARTY POLITICS

BERT KLANDERMANS

The remainder of this presentation and the paper concerns results from the fourth subproject—the survey, not the vignettes which will be dealt with in a separate presentation. The survey compares participation in a variety of political activities (cf van Deth 2014) in nine different countries. Four countries were ‘mature’ democracies: the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom; four were ‘new’ democracies: Hungary, Romania, Brazil, and Argentina. Finally, Greece was included as a crisis stricken country. This presentation is designed as a comparison of ‘mature’ and ‘new’ democracies and of groups of respondents who share grievances. My presentation concentrates on four prototypical political activities. Two forms of party politics: voting and

contacting a politician to express one's view and two forms of movement politics: signing a petition, and taking part in a public demonstration. Respondents were asked to choose from a list of 15 issues the three they found the most pressing for their country. A follow-up question asked respondents whether they were angry, succeeded by a measure assessing whether respondents were personally affected by problems related to the issues. Next they were asked whether they would engage in politics to do something about these issues. Voting and signing a petition were chosen as two low cost activities, and contacting a politician and taking part in a demonstration as more challenging activities. I will first describe the study—its design, the measures employed, and the analyses conducted. Next, I will present results showing which issues our respondents found the most important, how they imagined doing something to change the situation, and why they chose that strategy. But first, a short theoretical exercise.

The choices people make

What makes people choose to engage in political action and if they choose to take action what makes them choose the one action rather than the other? Figure X displays a model I will test in the pages to come for mature and new democracies and for the six issues that were chosen most. The model draws on the work of social psychologists elaborating on the social psychology of protest (Blackwood and Louis 2012; McGarty et al. 2009; Simon and Klandermans 2001; van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2007, 2017; Simon 2011; Stürmer and Simon 2009; Turner-Zwinkels 2017; van Zomeren et al. 2008). It takes the individual level of

analysis. It accounts for the choices people make faced with the opportunity to do something about the issues they chose as the most pressing. The dependent variables of the model are the four forms of political engagement, voting, contacting, demonstrating and signing. The driving force of the model are people's grievances operationalized in our model as anger about the issue chosen as the most important, and the extent to which someone feels personally affected by an issue. One of the criticisms on much research of political protest is that different activities and different grievances are lumped together. I will keep the grievances and the four political activities apart. I presume that citizens distinguish between grievance and activities and appreciate that some grievances require different activities than other.

However, grievances would not make much difference if they were not accompanied by feelings of efficacy (Klandermans 1987). Indeed, resource mobilization theorists always maintained that resources rather than grievances account for people's propensity to take part in collective political action (McCarthy and Zald 1976). Therefore, we asked our respondents to what extent they feel that their participation in each of the four activities would be effective. My expectations are straightforward—the more aggrieved people are and the more effective they deem any of the four activities the more they are prepared to take action.

Next, I presume that past experience with politics influences peoples political attitudes and behavior. Attitudes in the form of political trust, political cynicism, and internal efficacy; behavior in the form of participation in social movements, political parties and civic organizations. In a paper published in *Political Psychology* van Stekelenburg and Klandermans demonstrate that trust in political

institutions and political cynicism can both encourage and discourage collective action participation (2018). Political cynicism they observed among demonstrators who did not trust political institutions—so called disenchanting citizens. Trusting demonstrators they called resourceful strategists see also (Norris 2005). Finally, I presume that political participation in the past stimulates participation in the future. I expect citizens who participated in the past in movement politics to be more ready to participate in future movement activities; while I expect those who participated in party politics to engage more likely in party politics as well. Civic participation I expect to stimulate political activities, but not to make a difference between movement and party politics.

The study: Design

The data were collected by *Kantar* a professional social research organization, employing Kantar's panels in the nine countries. The Tables 1 and 2 give the sample composition. We accomplished our goal to sample at least 1.000 respondents per country. Furthermore, we aimed for comparable stratified samples in terms of sex, age and education. Sex and age worked out well; education did not¹. It worked out well in the mature democracies and Hungary; but it did not in the remaining new democracies and Greece. Obviously, these are not representative samples. However, our main objective was not so much to air statements about the

¹ We included education as a control variable in our analyses. It made no difference or only marginally.

population of the nine countries, but rather to compare citizen's attempts to influence politics. We will break our samples down into subsamples depending on the issues people care about. *Our focal questions concern people's propensity to take part in political action—be it movement politics, party politics, or both—to redress their grievances.*

Table 1. Country Samples

Nederland	1122	10,5	Romania	1086	10,1
Germany	1110	10,4	Argentina	1109	10,3
UK	1254	11,7	Brazil	1081	10,1
Switzerland	1312	12,2	Greece	1539	14,4
Hungary	1106	10,3			

N=10719

The DVs were questions about the readiness to take part in the aforementioned political activities in an attempt to 'do something about the issues chosen' by the respondent. In what follows, I will get to the IVs.

Table 2. Stratification: Percentages

	Nl	Ge	UK	Sw	Hu	Ro	Ar	Br	Gr	All
Female	51.5	49.2	50.8	47.6	50.3	49.1	48.9	48.9	49.5	49.5
Age										
18-34	33.4	38.8	37.8	39.6	39.8	38.1	39.0	41.0	34.9	37.9
35-49	45.0	44.4	42.3	41.2	45.2	47.1	45.7	43.3	48.3	44.5
50-65	21.6	16.8	19.9	19.2	15.0	14.7	15.3	15.7	16.8	17.3
Education										
Low	12.4	10.6	11.2	10.3	12.8	6.8	4.2	9.1	3.7	8.9
Middle	50.3	51.7	49.4	57.6	46.4	54.5	54.7	48.8	53.7	52.1
High	37.3	37.7	39.1	32.1	40.9	38.7	41.0	42.1	42.6	39.1
N	1122	1110	1254	1312	1106	1086	1109	1081	1539	10791

Measures

But before testing the model I will briefly explain how the DVs and the IVs were measured and present the descriptives.

Issues. We showed our respondents a list of fifteen issues and asked them what they *personally find the three most important issues {their country} is facing at the moment*. In a follow-up question we asked *'To what extent do you feel personally affected by problems related to {issue chosen; not at all-very much}'*. Anger was measured by the following question: *'Thinking about {the issue chosen} makes me feel angry (not at all-very much)*. Engagement in political action was measured in the following manner: *'If you wanted to do something about {issue chosen} how likely is it that you engage in the following political actions: Voting, signing a petition, joining a demonstration, contacting a politician to express your views (not at all likely-very likely)*. Later during the online session, we assessed to what extent our respondents felt that their own *participation in these activities would be an effective way of improving things or preventing things from going wrong (not at all effective –very effective)*. Trust in political institutions we measured as follows: *'Please indicate how much trust you have in each of the following institutions': the government, the parliament, political parties, politicians (no trust at all-completely trust)*. We collapsed the four items into a single scale *Trust in Political Institutions ((no trust at all-completely trust; Cronbach's alpha .91)*. *Political cynicism* we measured with a scale consisting of three items. *'Most politicians make a lot of promises but do not actually do anything'; 'I don't think politicians care much about what people like me think'; 'Most politicians are in politics only for what they can get out of it personally'* (strongly disagree-strongly agree; Cronbach's alpha = .84). *Internal efficacy* was measured by two questions *'I think that I am better*

informed about politics and government than most people' 'I think I am confident in my own ability to participate in politics' (strongly disagree-strongly agree; Cronbach's alpha = .66; Pearson $r = .50$). *Past political participation* we measured by counting the instances of *movement participation* and *party participation* respectively respondents reported to have ever taken part in. To measure *civic participation* we counted the number organizations someone was *actively* involved in. Tables D1, D2, D3 and D4 present the descriptives of the DVs and IVs.

Table D1. How likely is it that you take any of the following actions X Issue chosen; means and standard deviations

	Voting	Contacting	Demonstrating	Signing
Unemployment (2045)*	4.22 (1.12)	2.92 (1.49)	3.13 (1.50)	3.95 (1.26)
Poverty (2260)*	4.35 (1.08)	2.88 (1.50)	3.19 (1.50)	4.14 (1.20)
Immigration (2321)*	4.28 (1.11)	2.34 (1.37)	2.37 (1.39)	3.80 (1.31)
Health care (3949)*	4.41 (1.01)	2.66 (1.45)	2.92 (1.50)	4.14 (1.16)
Corruption (2483)*	4.38 (1.15)	2.91 (1.55)	3.53 (1.50)	4.31 (1.19)
Educational system (2462)*	4.43 (0.99)	2.72 (1.46)	3.00 (1.50)	4.15 (1.17)

n = 9180; on a scale 1 (not at all likely-very likely-5)

Table D2. Independent variables: Anger and Affected personally X
Issue chosen

	Anger	Affected personally
Unemployment (2045)	3.83 (1.15)	3.70 (1.33)
Poverty (2260)	4.03 (1.06)	3.45 (1.27)
Immigration (2321)	3.55 (1.26)	3.24 (1.26)
Health care (3949)	3.79 (1.15)	3.82 (1.15)
Corruption (2483)	4.49 (0.86)	4.06 (1.21)
Educational system (2462)	3.63 (1.19)	3.73 (1.27)

Table D3. Independent variables: Effectiveness of own political
participation

	Voting	Contacting a politician	Signing a petition	Demonstrating
Effectiveness of *,**,*	3.63 (1.27)	2.44 (1.25)	3.26 (1.23)	2.78 (1.30)

Table D4. Independent variables: Political experience Means and
standard deviations

Trust in political institutions (1-5)	2.19 (.96)
Political cynicism (1-5)	3.89 (.93)
Internal efficacy (1-5)	3.01(.92)
Past participation in movement politics (0-8)	1.54 (1.47)
Past participation in party politics (0-7)	1.83 (1.24)
Past civic participation (0-9)	0.53 (1.08)

In the pages that follow I will first discuss the descriptive results, next I will test the model with multilevel regression analysis for the

mature and new democracies and for respondents sharing a grievance.

The issues people care about

Our project was based on the assumption that in the end of the day each citizen has issues (s)he cares about so much that (s)he would engage in politics about these issues. In this paper we address the focal questions of our study: Which issues? And, if they take political action, what action would they take? Would they engage in party politics, movement politics or both? And, why would they opt for that strategy? In what follows, I will first present which issues our respondents chose as the three most important. We showed them a list adopted from the Eurobarometer of 15 different issues societies are confronted with these days and asked them to choose the three most important issues their country is facing. In a follow-up question we assessed whether these issues affected our respondents personally.

Table 4. Most important issues: Percentages

Health care	41.1	Pensions	16.1
Unemployment	28.3	Political system	16.7
Poverty	26.8	Taxation	16.3
Corruption	26.5	Terrorism	14.2
Educational system	25.9	Environment & Climate change	12.9
Immigration	25.1	Housing	8.9
Inflation	19.7	Inequality between men and women	3.7
Crime	17.9		

N-observations = 27483

Table 4 presents the 15 issues rank-ordered by the frequency with which they were mentioned by our respondents. The highest ranking concern was ‘health care’: 41.1 % of our respondents mentioned health care as one of the three most important issues facing the country at that time. Next, a group of five issues were all mentioned by roughly a quarter of the respondents (Unemployment, Poverty, Corruption, the Educational system, and Immigration). Then—in descending order—two issues were mentioned by one in five (Inflation and Crime), three by one in six (Pensions, Political System, and Taxation) and two by one in eight (Terrorism and Environment and Climate Change). Note, the low ranking of housing (8.9%) and of inequality between men and women (3.7%).

Table 5. Personally affected about the issue: Mean and standard deviation

Health care	3.84 (1.15)	Pensions	3.87 (1.16)
Unemployment	3.74 (1.33)	Taxation	4.14 (1.05)
Poverty	3.54 (1.24)	Political system	4.12 (1.07)
Corruption	4.06 (1.19)	Terrorism	3.05 (1.20)
Educational system	3.75 (1.26)	Environment & Climate change	3.74 (1.10)
Immigration	3.29 (1.27)	Housing	3.44 (1.36)
Inflation	4.27 (0.93)	Inequality between men and women	3.53 (1.24)
Crime	3.64 (1.24)		

Note. On a scale from 1 not at all affected to 5 very much affected

Our next question regarding issues people care about, concerned

the extent to which citizens are personally affected by problems related to the issues they forwarded as the most important. Naturally, one would expect substantial proportions of our respondents to feel personally affected. Except for a few issues revealing relatively small proportions (terrorism, immigration, housing, and inequality between men and women), between 50 and 80 % of our respondents reported feeling personally affected. Table 6 presents the means and standard deviations of our respondents' assessments of the various issues. On a scale ranging from 1 'not at all' to 5 'very much' even the lowest mean was beyond the midpoint of the scale. The means ran from 3.05 (terrorism) to 4.27 (inflation) with high scores for the political system (4.12) and corruption (4.06). Intermediate figures we found for pensions, health care, unemployment, the educational system, the environment, and crime.

Next, we will bring a comparative element into the equation by comparing citizens from 'mature' democracies with citizens from 'new' democracies. In this treatment we will leave Greece out as it went during the days that we conducted our research through the most dramatic financial and political crisis one can think of. As a consequence, Greece appears an outlier in almost any respect.

Comparing 'mature' and 'new' democracies

Our study was designed as a comparison of four 'mature' democracies (Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom and four 'new' democracies (Argentina, Brazil, Hungary, and Romania). It was our assumption that the mature democracies would rank higher on democraticness than the new

democracies. The figures in Table 6 confirm that assumption. The column to the left presents the level of democraticness as assessed by *The Economist*. Switzerland appeared to be the most democratic of our eight countries, Romania the least. The Economist's ranking positioned countries based on a whole lot of criteria on a 10-point scale. A score from 8 to 10 means 'full democracy'; a score from 6 to 7.9 'flawed democracy'; 4 to 5.9 means a 'hybrid' political system, and a score lower than 4 means an 'authoritarian' political system. Our four mature democracies all qualify as full democracies, while the four new democracies all ranked at the Economist scale as flawed democracies. This ranking is near to fully replicated by our respondents evaluation of their country's democraticness (the right-hand Polpart column). Brazil is the only deviating case. A finding that reflects the recent political crisis in that country. We expected that these differences between countries in terms of the democraticness of their political system reflect in what citizens find important issues their country is facing—generally and in their personal experience. Similarly, we expected that these differences influence how they imagine to deal with these issues. Will they engage in politics? If so, which political activities will they take part in —be it party politics, movement politics or both? I will get back to these questions once we have completed our discussion of the importance of issues.

Table 6. Democraticness

	The Economist: Democraticness (ranking)	Polpart : Satisfaction with democracy (mean and Sd)
'Mature'		
Switzerland	9.09 (6)	6.85 (2.17)
The Netherlands	8.92 (10)	6.58 (2.46)
Germany	8.64 (13)	6.00 (2.50)
United Kingdom	8.31 (16)	5.99 (2.46)
'New'		
Argentina	7.02 (50)	5.68 (2.69)
Brazil	6.96 (51)	3.54 (2.68)
Hungary	6.84 (54/55)	4.38 (2.73)
Romania	6.68 (59)	4.09 (2.60)

Table 7 compares which issues are mentioned by citizens of mature and new democracies. It shows that breaking down the sample into citizens of mature and new democracies reveals some significant, meaningful, and important differences between the two contexts. Interestingly, health care remains high in both mature and new democracies. Unemployment and poverty, on the other hand, are predominantly experienced in the new democracies. This is even more so regarding corruption. Almost all respondents who forwarded corruption as one the three most important issues their country is facing are living in new democracies. Immigration, on the other hand, reveals the opposite picture. This time almost all respondents who mention immigration as one of the three most important issues are from the mature democracies. Worth mentioning as well are pensions, terrorism, and environment & climate change each predominantly mentioned by citizens from

mature democracies. The political system and crime, however, are mentioned more by citizens from new democracies.

Table 7. Three Most Important Issues: Percentages

	Mature	New		Mature	New
Health care	44.3	41.6	Pensions	22.7	10.9
Unemployment	14.1	31.2	Political system	11.3	21.9
Poverty	18.1	31.7	Taxation	11.6	12.9
Corruption	5.6	50.6	Terrorism	29.1	2.4
Educational system	23.8	30.1	Environment & Climate Change	22.9	5.5
Immigration	40.7	8.4	Housing	13.8	6.0
Inflation	20.0	21.6	Inequality between men and women	6.2	1.8
Crime	15.8	23.2			

N=9180

Do respondents from the two types of democracies feel differentially affected by problems related to the issues they did put forward? Remember, the personally experienced impact of the issues is high (Table 5). Table 7 confirms these results. More important, without any exception, the means in Table 7 for new democracies are substantively higher than those for mature democracies—sometimes even near to a full scale-point. Citizens of new democracies feel far more personally affected by the social and political situation of their country. Indeed, 10 out of fifteen mean assessments appear higher than 4 (on our 5-point scale).

As an indicator of the strength of people's grievances we

employed a measure of emotions, namely, anger. We asked for each of the three issues the respondents has chosen as the most important issue the country is facing to what extent they felt angry (1 ‘not at all’ to 5 ‘very much’). Table 8 provides the results. The first observation that catches the eye is how high the scores are. On a scale from 1 to 5 all means are close to four or beyond four. Indeed, the emotions run high. The second observation concerns the differences between the mature and new democracies. On all six issues emotions run significantly higher in the new democracies than in the mature democracies.

Table 8. Angry

	Mature democracy	New democracy
Health care	3.49 (1.13)	4.14 (1.06)
Unemployment	3.34 (1.16)	4.07 (1.07)
Poverty	3.83 (1.05)	4.15 (1.05)
Corruption	4.21 (0.99)	4.52 (0.84)
Educational system	3.23 (1.15)	3.98 (1.10)
Immigration	3.48 (1.16)	3.90 (1.18)

Next to anger I expect that feeling personally affected by problems related to the issues chosen adds to people’s drive to engage in political activity. Table 9 displays the extent to which people feel personally affected by the issues they forwarded. Again high scores way beyond the midst of our five point scale. And again, significantly stronger in the new democracies than in the mature democracy. Clearly, people are aggrieved. We will see if and how they turn their grievances into action.

Table 9. Personally affected by problems re issues: Means and standard deviations

	Mature	New		Mature	New
Health care	3.52 (1.15)	4.17 (1.05)	Pensions	3.70 (1.12)	4.20 (1.11)
Unemployment	3.22 (1.35)	3.93 (1.26)	Political system	3.65 (1.11)	4.29 (1.01)
Poverty	3.08 (1.33)	3.69 (1.18)	Taxation	3.67 (1.07)	4.34 (1.02)
Corruption	3.36 (1.23)	4.14 (1.18)	Terrorism	3.00 (1.18)	3.66 (1.23)
Educational system	3.22 (1.27)	4.18 (1.09)	Environment & Climate Change	3.59 (1.10)	4.31 (0.91)
Immigration	3.17 (1.24)	3.59 (1.30)	Housing	3.22 (1.33)	4.08 (1.19)
Inflation	3.95 (0.97)	4.52 (0.83)	Inequality between men and women	3.45 (1.25)	3.90 (11.3)
Crime	3.00 (1.14)	4.12 (1.11)			

N=9180

The analyses so far nominate six issues as the ones that substantial proportions of our respondents are particularly concerned about, namely health care, unemployment, poverty, corruption, the educational system, and immigration. Either as one of the three issues they deem the most important issue their country is facing, or as an issue that generate problems by which substantial proportions of the respondents feel personally affected. Ninety-five percent of the respondents chose at least one of these issues; sixty percent two or three.

In what follows, I will address the question of what political actions would people take if they were to influence politics, and

why these actions? As we assume that the social psychological mechanisms that turn grievances into action are the same for all issues we will focus on these six issues rather than all fifteen.

Movement politics and party politics

Our study focusses on the choice between employing party politics or movement politics as strategies to influence politics. To assess people's habits we asked our respondents to what extent they whether they have in the past taken part in two prototypical forms of party politics (vote and contact a politician) and two prototypical forms of movement politics (sign a petition and join a demonstration). Table 10 shows what proportions of our respondents ever engaged in politics one way or the other. Three quarters of our respondents did vote; more than half has signed petitions; one in five joined demonstrations; and one in eight contacted politicians. Next to these proportions the table presents contingency coefficients indicating the correlations between the four forms of participation. All coefficients are positive. That is to say that movement and party politics are not crowding each other out. People who engage in politics the one way, are more likely to participate in politics in other ways. Yet, the coefficients are not very high, meaning that the various forms of participation vary relatively independent (see Van Deth 2018 for similar findings).

Table 10 Party politics and movement politics: Percentages and contingency coefficients

	%	Vote	Contact a politician	Sign a petition	Join a demonstration
Vote	75.3	-	.10	.20	.10
Contact a politician	12.8		-	.17	.17
Sign a petition	57.7			-	.22
Join a demonstration	21.7				-

N= 9180

Issues and activities

Regarding each of the three issues selected from the list of fifteen, we asked our respondents “If you wanted to do something about this issue, how likely is it that you would engage in the following political actions: vote, sign a petition, join a demonstration, contact a politician to express your view.” They could respond on a 5-point scale from 1 “not at all likely” to 5 “very likely”.

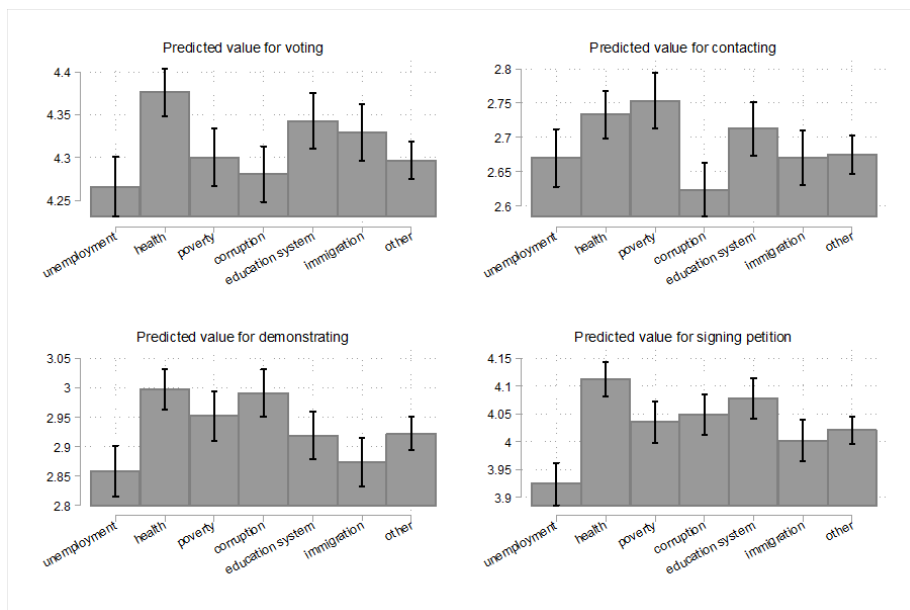


Table 11 presents our respondents’ propensity to engage in these political activities to do something about a specific issue. The table consists of six panels presenting data on political engagement regarding the aforementioned six issues that were chosen as the most important issues the country is facing.

The figures in Table 11 show that both voting and signing petitions are political activities many citizens would engage in if they were to do something about an issue they are upset about. Although voting appeals to more people than signing a petition the two activities draw comparable large proportions of our respondents. Importantly as well, only small numbers decline to vote or sign altogether saying that it is not at all likely that they engage in that activity. In much lower numbers people are

prepared to join a demonstration or contact a politician. This is especially clear in the large number of respondents (sometimes more than half) who decline to take part in these activities altogether. On the whole, our respondents appear to be more inclined to choose party politics in the choice between the two low cost activities (voting and signing) and movement politics in the choice between the two more costly activities (joining a demonstration and contacting a politician)—be it that large proportions of our respondents refrain from these activities altogether.

Table 11. Political engagement and issues: Percentages

	Vote	Sign	Demonstrate	Contact
<i>Health care</i>				
Mature	81.6	70.2	19.8	20.4
New	85.8	80.4	56.9	39.7
<i>Unemployment</i>				
Mature	67.4	51.6	21.7	22.3
New	81.9	74.8	53.6	45.0
<i>Poverty</i>				
Mature	77.9	70.6	26.1	26.5
New	82.5	77.9	56.7	42.1
<i>Corruption</i>				
Mature	65.2	68.2	36.3	31.5
New	85.2	81.9	58.7	38.4
<i>Educational system</i>				
Mature	79.8	68.2	22.2	19.1
New	88.0	82.1	54.6	43.0
<i>Immigration</i>				
Mature	75.8	80.4	56.9	39.7
New	82.0	70.8	37.1	37.9

Before I go into the details of the separate issues, a few global observations can be made. First, the figures in the table are high. Obviously, one should not expect similar figures for actual participation. People are expressing intentions and previous studies show that intentions not always translate into actions. (cfr. Klandermans & Oegema 1987). Rather than the absolute level it is the relative level of participation in the four activities in response to the issues in the types of democracies that are telling. Second, taking that comparative approach, voting and signing a petition reveal much higher figures than demonstrating and contacting. Obviously, voting and signing are low cost activities, which explains the high figures. Joining a demonstration, contacting a politician is more of a challenge and effort, which translates into much lower numbers. Third, citizens in new democracies are consistently more likely to become actively involved in politics than citizens in mature democracies. In that respect, the literature has been inconclusive. Our methods differ from previous studies in that we asked about specific activities in response to specific grievances. Our findings suggest that people in new democracies who are upset about an issue are more likely to engage in politics to change the situation than people in mature democracies. Fourth, the opposite pattern we found for people who stated that it would be ‘very unlikely’ that they would take part in the political action in point. That is to say, relatively low levels of outspoken non-participation for voting and signing and relatively high levels of outspoken non-participation for demonstrations, and contacting politicians. Finally, contacting politicians is the least popular activity in both mature and new democracies and in post-communist and post-authoritarian democracies. In what follows,

We will discuss each of the six issues separately and in comparison to each other.

Health care. Health care is the issue that was chosen most as one of the important issues the country and its people were facing. The propensity to engage in politics of any kind in response to issues they care for is much lower among respondents in mature democracies than among respondents in new democracies. Clearly, those who chose health care—be it citizens of mature or new democracies, or of post-communist or post-authoritarian countries—opt for voting as a way to influence politics. A little bit less, but still strongly signing a petition comes out. The real drop down comes with joining a demonstration and contacting a politician especially among citizens of mature democracies. Only one in five of the proponents of better health care is prepared to engage in these political actions. The least popular among proponents of better health care is contacting a politician. As witnessed also by the large number of respondents from whatever type of democracy who are not at all inclined to contact a politician.

Unemployment. Unemployment was chosen as one of the three most important issues by roughly a quarter of our respondents. Fitting into the overall pattern citizens in mature democracies are compared to citizens from new democracies substantively less prepared to engage in political action. Voting and signing a petition are less attractive as political action to redress unemployment.

Poverty. People who mention poverty as the main issue of their country, engage in large numbers in voting and signing petitions. Half of the respondents who chose poverty as one of the

major issues their country is facing intended to take part in demonstrations if they were from new democracies. Respondents from mature democracies who mentioned poverty as one of the main issues are, like the others, not drawn strongly to joining a demonstration or contacting a politician.

Corruption. Again citizens from mature democracies who point to corruption as one of the most important issues are less attracted to all four political activities. On the other hand, they are also more attracted to joining a demonstration than contacting a politician, irrespective of the type of democracy they come from.

Educational system. Very high proportions of respondents who chose the educational system as one of the most important issue intended to vote or sign a petition to influence the situation. Yet, again we observed significantly lower proportions of the respondents from mature democracies. Joining a demonstration and contacting a politician were both opted by one fifth of the respondents who chose education as an issue. Joining a demonstration was intended more often than contacting a politician.

Immigration. Interestingly, immigration is the only issue where respondents from the mature democracies engage more in political action than respondents from the new democracies. Demonstrating how much of an issue immigration was in those days in the mature democracies of Europe.

Past political experience

Current political engagement can be predicted from past political experience. Past political experience reflects in cognitions such as

internal efficacy, attitudes such as trust in political institutions, political cynicism and internal efficacy, and behaviors such as political and civic engagement.

Table 12 Efficacy: Mean and standard deviations

	Voting in national elections	Signing a petition	Joining a demonstration	Contacting a politician
Mature	3.48 (1.21)	3.23 (1.14)	2.72 (1.15)	2.40 (1.16)
New	3.80 (1.32)	3.28 (1.27)	3.25 (1.35)	2.49 (1.34)

Table 12 presents the results regarding efficacy. Voting in national elections is deemed the most effective action; contacting a politician the least effective action.

Finally, political and civic engagement. Political activity builds on a list of 15 political activities¹. People were asked to tick any activity they have taken part in in the past. The activity score is the number of activities people took part in.

Table 13 Movement, Party and Civic engagement: Mean and standard deviation

	Movement participation	Party participation	Civic participation
Mature (4798)	1.34 (1.31)	1.76 (1.22)	0.57 (1.03)
New: (4382)	1.75 (1.60)	1.90 (1.25)	0.49 (1.08)

N=9180

The level of political and civic engagement of our respondents is not very high. The activity level is low, considering the fact that this is over the life-course.

Table 14 Trust, Cynicism, and Internal Efficacy: Mean and standard deviation

	Trust in political institutions	Political cynicism	Internal efficacy
Mature (4798)	2.55 (0.91)	3.62 (0.89)	2.99 (0.89)
New: (4382)	1.79 (0.85)	4.17 (0.90)	3.03 (0.95)

Explaining their choices: Conclusions

Let us return to the focal questions of our project. What are the issues people care for and to what extent are they prepared to engage in political action to do something about these issues, be it movement politics or party politics? The answer to these questions varies depending on the social and political context citizens are embedded in.

We asked our respondents which three issue from a list of 15 are the most pressing for their country and for them personally. Ninety-five percent of our respondents mentioned at least one of the following issues: health care, the educational system, immigration, unemployment, poverty, and corruption. We asked also to what extent our respondents were personally affected by problems related to the issue they mentioned. We noted on average high levels of personal affectedness. (On our 5-points scale often 4 or more). That is to say, people feel seriously affected by problems related to the issues they forwarded. Indeed, these were issues people really cared about.

Separating mature and new democracies unveiled some significant and meaningful differences in terms of the issues

people care about between the two socio-political contexts. Citizens from mature democracies are concerned about health care, immigration, and terrorism; while citizens from new democracies are concerned about health care as well, and in addition to that about the educational system, unemployment, poverty and corruption. Moreover, citizens in new democracies felt way more affected by problems related to the issues they mentioned than citizens from mature democracies.

Comparison of post-communist democracies with post authoritarian democracies reveals some further interesting differences. Corruption is an equally important issue in both contexts. Health care appears to be more a problem in post-communist countries than in post authoritarian countries. Unemployment seems to be more a problem of post-authoritarian countries; while poverty is more a problem of post-communist countries. Crime and inflation are problems of post-authoritarian countries. Although the differences between the two contexts are moderate we can still conclude that respondents in post-authoritarian democracies feel more affected by problems related to the issues they mentioned than respondents in post-communist democracies.

As a follow up of the questions about the importance of the various issues we asked people whether they were prepared to take part in one of four political activities to redress their grievances: voting, contacting a politician, signing a petition, and joining a demonstration. The proportion of citizens engaging in these actions differed substantially. The largest proportion wanted to engage in voting and the smallest in contacting a politician. Large proportions intended to engage in the two low cost activities,

much larger than in the two high cost actions. Consistently, it were the citizens from the new democracies who showed the highest readiness to take part in political activities. In terms of taking part in movement politics or rather party politics we observed an interesting pattern. Regarding the low cost activities people clearly preferred party politics that is to say voting rather than signing a petition; but regarding the high cost activities people preferred movement politics rather than party politics. That is to say joining a demonstration rather than contacting a politician.

We found no indication that movement and party politics are crowding each other out. In fact, the four forms of participation are positively correlated, be it that the correlations are not very high.

The three antecedents of action preparedness—grievances, internal efficacy and politicization—worked well. A substantial proportion of the variance in action preparedness of all four political actions, could be explained by grievances, efficacy and politicization. We presumed that strong emotions about an issue indicate high levels of grievances. Indeed, emotions regarding issues ran high. Interestingly, it concerned more levels of worrying than anger. Yet, another relevant observation was that citizens of new democracies consistently scored higher on emotions than citizens from an mature democracy. Internal efficacy appeared to have the most impact on political action. In regression analyses it achieved systematically the highest beta. The ideological element of politicization, did not fare well. In fact, it was not relevant at all. Some ones activist career did influence our respondents action preparedness.

In this paper we focused on the demand side of political

participation. We explored what issues people care for; the emotions these issues evoked and the efficacy of the various activities citizens could participate in to do something about the issues they found to be the most important. On the supply side, we offered a choice of four activities people could opt to take part in to find out how likely it was for them to take part in these political activities. Politicization was included in the equation as a control variable.

¹Voted in national elections; Signed a petition; Occupied buildings; Joined a strike; Worked for a political party; Worked for a protest organization or action group; Voted in a referendum; Taken part in a public demonstration; Boycotted certain products for political, ethical, or environmental reasons; Contacting a politician to express your view; Donated money to or raised funds for a political party; Donated money to or raised funds for a protest organization or action group; Participated in a town hall meeting or neighborhood committee to solve a community problem; Participated in a forum or discussion group on the internet or on social media (e.g. Facebook) related to a political party; Participated in a forum or discussion group on the internet or on social media (e.g. Facebook) related to a protest organization or action group.