Instituto Juan March
Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales (CEACS)
Juan March Institute
Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences (CEACS)

Institutions, mobilisation, and political participation : political membership in Western countries

Author(s): Morales Diez De Ulzurrun, Laura
Year: 2004
Type Thesis (doctoral)
University: Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2004.
City: Madrid
Number of pages: xiii, 492 p.
Abstract: Esta tesis mantiene que no podemos entender completamente el asociacionismo político de los ciudadanos a menos que fijemos nuestra mirada más allá de las características individuales; es decir, a menos que intentemos comprender qué efecto tiene sobre su comportamiento político el contexto político y social en el que los ciudadanos actúan. Los recursos y las características socioeconómicas proporcionan oportunidades para unirse a organizaciones políticas. Las actitudes y las orientaciones proveen (o, por el contrario, reducen) la motivación para unirse a un grupo con objetivos políticos. Sin embargo, estos rasgos individuales no son necesariamente factores de desigualdad en todas las sociedades ni tienen siempre las mismas consecuencias. El contexto social y político en el que los ciudadanos toman decisiones sobre su participación interactúa, de manera importante, con los rasgos individuales para activar o desactivar su impacto político. Además, el contexto social y político que rodea a los ciudadanos tiene también un impacto independiente sobre su comportamiento político. Las instituciones políticas y las pautas de movilización política condicionan de manera crucial el asociacionismo político. Estos dos conjuntos de factores –instituciones y movilización- estructuran las oportunidades de participación que en realidad tienen los ciudadanos. De hecho, algunos sistemas democráticos han desarrollado instituciones políticas que facilitan la pertenencia a grupos políticos. Así, mientras que en algunos países occidentales los ciudadanos son movilizados con mucha frecuencia a través de asociaciones políticas, en otros lo son en mucha menor medida. Esta tesis es, por lo tanto, un intento de incorporar de una manera sistemática la “política” y las “instituciones” en el análisis del comportamiento político. A lo largo de la tesis se demuestra que las enormes diferencias entre los países occidentales en términos de la propensión de sus respectivos ciudadanos a organizarse políticamente, no pueden explicarse sólo por las distintas características socioeconómicas de los individuos. Sin duda, estos aspectos también contribuyen a que sean menos participativos, pero no nos ayudan gran cosa a explicar las variaciones que encontramos entre sociedades occidentales. Los resultados de esta investigación ponen de manifiesto la enorme importancia del contexto sociopolítico para explicar por qué los ciudadanos de algunas democracias occidentales participan en política a través de organizaciones y por qué no lo hacen los de otras

sociedades similares. Determinadas estructuras de oportunidades políticas favorecen la participación de los ciudadanos de manera muy importante. Así, sistemas políticos más abiertos a la influencia de las organizaciones políticas, gracias a la existencia de arreglos corporativistas de intermediación de intereses y al mayor pluralismo y fragmentación de la representación parlamentaria, contribuyen a que los ciudadanos encuentren mayores incentivos para participar en los asuntos públicos. Del mismo modo, el grado en que las propias organizaciones políticas actúan como agentes efectivos de movilización política influye en el comportamiento participativo de los ciudadanos. Allí donde las organizaciones políticas tienen una red organizativa y de infraestructuras más densas, los ciudadanos están más expuestos a los estímulos de reclutamiento político y, por tanto, participan más. Además, el contexto político no sólo estructura las oportunidades de participación de los ciudadanos, sino que además interactúa con las características de los propios ciudadanos, contribuyendo así a aumentar o disminuir las desigualdades participativas de los mismos. Las estructuras políticas más abiertas y accesibles disminuyen las barreras y los costes a la participación, de tal manera que los individuos con menores recursos socioeconómicos –por ejemplo, la educación- no se encuentran tan desfavorecidos en su capacidad de influir en el proceso de toma de decisiones. Por el contrario, las estructuras políticas más cerradas exacerban el efecto de las desigualdades sociales y las transforman en desigualdades políticas. De esta manera, el contexto político tiene un doble efecto sobre el asociacionismo político en las democracias occidentales. Por un lado, condiciona cuánta gente participa en los asuntos públicos a través de organizaciones políticas y, por otro, incide en quiénes son los que participan. Los sistemas políticos más abiertos extienden e igualan la participación organizada de los ciudadanos; los sistemas políticos más cerrados reducen la participación y la hacen más desigual socialmente.

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Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones

LAURA MORALES DIEZ DE ULZURRUN

INSTITUTIONS, MOBILISATION, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP IN WESTERN COUNTRIES

MADRID
2 0 0 4

Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales

Castelló, 77. 28006 Madrid

This work was presented as a Ph.D. Thesis at the Department of Political Science and International Relation of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, May 14th 2004. The Dissertation Committee, composed by Dr. José María Maravall (President of the Committee), Dr. Eva Anduiza, Dr. Joan Font, Dr. Hanspeter Kriesi and Dr. Mariano Torcal, unanimously awarded it a *Sobresaliente "cum laude"*.

Laura Morales Diez de Ulzurrun has a degree in Political Science from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and is a Doctor in Political Science from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. She was part of the tenth year class of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences of the Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, where she obtained an MA in Social Sciences in 1998. In the Center she worked on her Ph.D. Thesis under the supervision of Professor Dr. José Ramón Montero Gibert. Currently she is Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science of the University of Murcia.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Ph.D. Thesis has been possible thanks to the support and help I have received for many years from a great number of persons and institutions. My first thanks go to those who encouraged me to continue studying when I finished my degree in Political Science at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and who supported me in my applications for postgraduate scholarships, especially Rafael Díaz-Salazar, Mª Luz Morán and Rosario Otegui.

The first institution to support my doctoral research was the Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, in whose Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences (CEACS) I undertook postgraduate studies and I have done most of my doctoral research, thanks to the scholarship I was granted between 1996 and 2000. The years I have spent there helped me learn much and allowed me to make good use of the magnificent research resources to which I was given access. As always, there were good and bad times, and I remember with special affection the time I spent with my class mates: María, Paco, Pablo, Irene and Kerman. I also want to thank the always kind support I have received from Jacqueline de la Fuente, Almudena Knecht, Magdalena Nebreda and Martha Peach. Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to José María Maravall, the CEACS' Director, for his confidence in my work and for his intelectually stimulating courses.

It was also at the CEACS that I met my Thesis supervisor, José Ramón Montero, to whom I wholeheartedly thank his constant and insisting support all along these years, as well as his patience and good humour about my stubbornness. His critical comments have contributed to improve much this thesis, but it is only fair to relieve him from the errors that may remain in it.

Other institutions did also contribute to further my qualifications and my doctoral research. The support from La Fundación La Caixa and The British Council, that granted me

with a postgraduate scholarship, allowed me to benefit from a period of study at the London School of Economics and Political Science in the United Kingdom. The Huygens Foundation and the Government of the Netherlands granted me with a Huygens scholarship to advance in my doctoral research at the University of Amsterdam. I do also want to acknowledge the kind reception I was given by the Department of Political Science (DISPO) at the University of Florence and, especially, thank Mario Caciagli, Donatella della Porta and Leonardo Morlino.

A good share of the research discussed in this Thesis has been financed through my participation in several research projects. I want to express my acknowledgement of the support received from the Spanish Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia and Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología through project grants SEC95-1007, SEC 2000-0758-C02, SEC2002-03364; as well as from the Consejería de Educación de la Comunidad de Madrid through project grant 06/0087/2002 of the 2002 call for projects in the Humanities, and Social and Economic Sciences.

It is also fair to acknowledge the support I have received from the departments of the various Spanish public universities where I have pursued my teaching and research career in the last years. The Department of Political Science and International Relations of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid hosted me after my period of studies abroad. I want to thank, especially, the affection from Eduard Bonet, Gema García, Ignacio Molina, Mikel Ochoa, Matilde Pérez, Santiago Pérez-Nievas, Ángel Rivero and Ana Sánchez-Sierra. The Departments of Sociology IV of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid and of Political Science of the Universidad de Murcia have greatly contributed to my finishing of this thesis, by offering me a contract as an Assisstant Lecturer during the academic year 2003-2004. I want to express my gratitude, for their support and their confidence in me, to their respective Directors, Francisco Alvira and Mónica Méndez.

Several chapters of this Thesis have been presented at different conferences and meetings. In particular, I wish to acknowledge the useful comments I have received to chapters and

portions of the Thesis by: Kees Aarts, Eva Anduiza, Miguel Caínzos, Jan van Deth, Mariona Ferrer, Marta Fraile, Henk van der Kolk, Kay Lawson, Ludolfo Paramio, Steven J. Rosenstone, and Mariano Torcal. I do also wish to most sincerely thank the help I received from Svante Ersson, who gave extremely useful suggestions for the construction of several of the comparative indicators presented in Chapter 6 in this Thesis; to Hanspeter Kriesi, who gave me access to the dataset on protest events the results of which are published in Kriesi et al. (1995); and to Ron Francisco for enabling public access to the collection of datasets on protest events and coercion in Europe.

Last in order of appearance, but first in real importance, goes my eternal gratitude to my family and friends. María and Paco made me laugh and have very good times. Olga, Boni, Matilde, Mª Victoria, Rafa, Luis, Natalia and Miguel have simply been a wonderful family. This Thesis is dedicated to Nieves and Luis, to whom I owe everything: thanks for being always with me.

Destiny has made that I finish this Thesis the same day some 191 persons were brutally killed in Madrid, my city. Their memory will, surely, be with me all my life.

INTRODUCTION

"If men who live in democratic countries had neither the right nor the taste to unite in political goals, their independence would run great risks [...]." Alexis de Tocqueville (2000 [1835]: 490) "Political associations are large free schools, where all members of the community go to learn the general theory of association." Alexis de Tocqueville (2000 [1835]: 492)

To study political participation is, undoubtedly, to study one of the defining features of democratic government. No matter what our concept of democracy is, some degree of citizen participation in the decision-making process is required. Furthermore, some would argue that a democratic society is one in which "…ordinary citizens exert a relatively high degree of control over leaders" (Dahl 1956: 3), and control and accountability over leaders and governments can only be exerted through citizen participation.

Citizen participation, of some sort, is also fundamental to make governments responsive.[1] Decision-making processes in democratic societies are extremely complex, and so is demand and preference aggregation. Unless citizens make their preferences and the intensity with which they hold them known to politicians, demand aggregation will very likely fail to be responsive. It thus follows that who eventually participates in the political process will certainly determine what preferences shape decisions, especially if preferences are not homogeneously nor randomly distributed across different social groups (see Verba and Nie 1972, and Verba, Nie and Kim 1978).

Electoral participation, as one of the main mechanisms to hold governments accountable and make politicians responsive to citizen demands, is the form of political participation that has received the most attention from political scientists. However, voting is not precisely the most significant form of political participation from several points of view. In what regards responsiveness, it is important to highlight that not all issues governments decide upon have been the subject of electoral debates. Very frequently, unforeseen circumstances and issues emerge that require the adoption of decisions for which no electoral mandate can be adduced, even in those cases where clear electoral mandates can be identified due to the specificities of the electoral campaign.[2] In any case, the vote provides very little information about citizen preferences: at the most, one can infer broad ideological considerations on how voters want governments to act, but no real input as to what specific directions public policies and decisions should take is manifest in the act of voting for one party or candidate.

Citizens' vote is, although useful, also a limited form of controlling politicians, since a wide array of political decisions and issues are bundled together when election time comes.

All in all, and from the point of view of single individuals, voting is probably not the most effective way to influence the political process. Political activity between elections expresses much clearer messages around participants' preferences, since they are usually directed to influence specific decisions at a given layer of government. Even if representative government is based on the delegation of decision-making on elected representatives to govern in the common or majoritarian interest – according to their best judgement – the explicit expression of

[1] In fact, as Manin, Przeworski and Stokes (1999: 9) note, "the concept of responsiveness is predicated on the prior emission of messages by citizens."

[2] In most cases, not even clear electoral mandates can be identified for most issues, since electoral platforms, promises and campaigns tend to be full of vague proposals and commitments. Yet, in other occassions, the problem is just the opposite: new information and circumstances thrust politicians to act against their mandates and electoral platforms (Stokes 1999). But governments also betray their electoral promises out of less virtuous motives; for example, when pressure and special interest groups are successful in bargaining more favourable conditions.

citizens' preferences through non-electoral political activities serves to provide politicians with useful information. In some instances, non-electoral participation provides public visibility to citizens' reactions to governmental actions (Converse 1973: 226, and Parry, Moyser and Day: chapter 11); in other cases, these forms of political action are proactive rather than reactive, and are aimed at the introduction of new issues into the agenda.[3] In both cases, participation between elections help to bound the set of options among which politicians finally choose (see Rosenau 1973: 10ff.). In addition, non-electoral political action contributes to the public debate of the issues involved and, hence, forces politicians to position themselves over those issues. Very frequently, as well, this public saliency implies that the whole decision-making process will be more transparent to citizens, since information about it will flow both from the media and from the organisations and groups that made the issue salient. And information, in turn, is fundamental if politicians are to be held accountable of their actions and decisions. Thus, citizenship between elections has a crucial impact over democratic governance. Its impact derives from its capacity to shape political decisions through three main mechanisms: the communication of citizens' preferences over specific issues, the setting of the political agenda, and the contribution to clarify politicians' policy positions and to make the decision-making process more transparent.

Even if it may seem so, political action is rarely truly spontaneous. In most cases, citizens are mobilised into action by groups and organisations.[4] As Wilson (1995: 7) put it, "passions can be aroused and for the moment directed; they cannot be sustained. Organisation provides continuity and predictability to social processes that would otherwise be episodic and uncertain." This is the conclusion even in the research field of social and political movements, where organisations are viewed as the instruments that give stability to collective action (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 13).

It is a central claim of this thesis that not all types of associations and organisations play the same role in the democratic process. Political organisations, in contrast to non-political associations, act as crucial intermediary structures between the individual and the political system. This intermediating function is carried out through two main processes: demand aggregation and creation (Knoke 1990c: 189-190). Political associations aggregate demands when they mobilise the public to put pressure on politicians, when they do lobby activities and give governmental actors information on their members' preferences and demands, and when they participate in decision-making and in institutional settings through advisory boards and policy committees. Political associations help create new demands by providing their members and the general public with information on new issues and problems and when they contribute to frame existing issues from a different perspective.

Besides these two intermediating roles, political organisations are also important for their impact on individual political behaviour. Associations with political goals are not only vehicles for political participation in themselves, but do also promote other forms of political action through several mechanisms.[5] Political organisations contribute to lower the costs of obtaining political information for their members –and, though to a lesser extent, also for the public they are able to reach- thus further subsidising collective action. They do also facilitate collective and political action by providing both bases of commitment and solidary incentives (Marwell and Oliver 1993).

Information is, nevertheless, not the only means political organisations use to promote political action from their members. As Knoke (1982: 181) points out, they "facilitate political influence efforts by providing an on-going and legitimated means of communication and activation that can rapidly be implemented when external circumstances present threats or opportunities to their mass membership." Put shortly: political organisations make efforts to explicitly mobilise their members and the public into action by calling them to act. Political organisations also help transform discontent into action through a process of construction and

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[3] See Cobb and Elder (1972), especially chapter 10 on how new issues are introduced into the agenda.

[4] See Rosenau (1973: 409) and Parry, Moyser and Day (1990: 86-88) for some evidence. The mobilisatory role of associations is further analysed in Chapter 3 in this thesis.

[5] Kaase (1989: 26), as many other authors, views organisational membership as one crucial factor that determines citizens' political participation through conventional and non-conventional forms of action.

reconstruction of collective identities and beliefs, through the distribution of resources for political action, and through the moulding of the expectations of success of collective action (Klandermans 1997: 9).

Finally, political associations –as all other associations, but probably more- provide individuals with useful skills and social resources that can be transferred into other forms of political participation. As Alexis de Tocqueville already noted (see quote *supra*), political associations act as privileged schools for democracy, since their members learn in them how to make collective decisions, how to accommodate their will to that of others, and how to coordinate their individual efforts to obtain common goods (2000 [1835]: 492).

All these considerations make us conclude, with Russell Hardin (2000: 41), that "voluntary political organisations […] would seem to be much more useful in helping us achieve political goals than are social organisations such as choral groups and bowling leagues." If this is the case, then understanding who and under what circumstances joins political associations must surely be of substantial and theoretical interest.

Why Study Political Membership?

The research presented in this thesis does not study political associations as such. It rather investigates a specific form of political participation: political membership. As we will see along the whole volume, one of the main goals of the research is to help explain what factors determine why citizens join (or do not join) political organisations in western democracies. And special attention is paid on trying to understand why citizens are more likely to join political groups in some western countries than in others.

Why should we care who joins political organisations and how many they are? The short answer is: because it matters for how democracies work. But let me provide also a longer and more reasoned answer.

A first reason to study political membership is that it is a form of political participation and, as such, it has an impact on political processes. Political members exert power, albeit sometimes limited, on the decisions their organisations make: they frequently choose leaders and they have influence –more or less, depending on the cases- on the courses of action their organisations take. At the least, their membership fees contribute to fund the activities of political associations and, therefore, their contribution will have a substantial impact if the latter are successful in achieving their goals (Conway 1991: 118ff.). Lane (1965 [1959]: 74; underlined in the original) nicely summarised the political implications of this form of participation:

> "[…] In joining them the individual is giving his support, intentionally or otherwise, to the organisations' *political activities*, whatever these may be. […] Joining a political organisation may be a deliberate means of advancing the political goals of the individual. In this case it is a means of *personal political expression*."

Given that political membership is, usually, politically motivated and has political consequences, a second and fundamental reason to study this type of behaviour lies in its implications on the equality of citizens' representation. Once we accept that political organisations do have an independent impact on how and what politicians decide, political equality is no longer granted by the "one person, one vote" principle. This is especially the case when we consider political membership because any given citizen can join several political organisations at a time. Political membership, thus, contributes to the over-representation of the most active citizens (Baumgartner and Leech 1998: 91), which tend, invariably, to be resourceful and wealthier. Thus, the more privileged social groups are able to organise their interests adequately in order to effectively influence political decisions, while the less well-off – who tend to have fewer organisational resources- see themselves limited to resort to sporadic protest (Hardin 1991, Knoke 1990: 189-190). If it is a fact that political membership and political organisations introduce political inequalities, then greater numbers of political members and political associations are probably the only way to reinstore equality.[6] Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) recognised that organisational membership is probably the only chance for the less privileged citizens to level with the resourceful. Participation in political associations and, especially, the political mobilisation the latter exert, allow citizens with few socio-economic resources and little political motivation and involvement to obtain additional resources for political action. Hence, increasing levels of political membership can contribute to equalising political influence.

Besides these considerations around political equality, it is difficult to give an overall judgement of the impact of political organisations on democratic representation. On the one hand, political associations have a positive effect on citizen representation because it allows the legitimate defense of citizens' interests and demands, and several studies have shown that it is indeed an effective channel for representation, since individuals are more likely to form groups when their interests are threatened (Truman 1951, and Hansen 1985). On the other hand, interest representation through political organisations does also have its democratic shortcomings, since special interests face fewer barriers for collective action than public interests do, thus

[6] Rousseau (cited in Pateman 1970: 24) also viewed the multiplication and, therefore, equalisation of power of organisations and associations as the "least bad" solution, if their creation can not be avoided.

considerably biasing the process of interest representation (see Olson 1965 and 1982, Schlozman 1984, and Gray and Lowery 1993). Hence, even if it did not matter how many people join political organisations, it certainly matters who does.

Another reason why we should care about the levels of political membership is related to the quality of democracy. Presumably, greater numbers of political members in a given democratic society will mean greater levels of citizen political activity and involvement, and, thus, greater democratic control.[7] Political organisations fulfil a fundamental role of information provision, and information is essential for citizens' to be able to hold politicians accountable (see Manin, Pzreworski and Stokes 1999). In addition, high levels of political membership imply that more citizens are able to communicate their preferences and demands to the political elites, hence allowing governments to be more responsive.[8]

Therefore, studying political membership contributes to obtaining a deeper understanding of how contemporary democracies work, how is the process of communication between citizens and governments shaped, and what social groups are in a more privileged position to get what they want. Studying which are the factors that foster and hinder political membership helps us locate those social and institutional features that would allow us to promote greater citizen participation and, hence, greater political equality.

An Overview of the Thesis

How can we explain political membership? And, especially, how can we explain the great variations in political membership that we find in otherwise similar western democracies? This thesis contends that we cannot fully understand this type of political behaviour unless we go beyond individual characteristics, and try to grasp what effect does the social and political context in which citizens act have on their political behaviour.

Certainly, individual characteristics matter. Socioeconomic resources and characterics provide the opportunities to join political organisations. Political attitudes and orientations provide (or fail to provide) the motivation to become a member of a politically-oriented group. However, these individual traits are not necessarily discriminant in all societies, nor do they have the same impact. The social and political context in which citizens make participatory decisions interacts with individual features to activate or disactivate their political impact.

Furthermore, the social and political context that surrounds citizens does also have an independent impact on their political behaviour. Political institutions and political mobilisation patterns are vital determinants of political membership. These two sets of factors –institutions and mobilisation- structure the opportunities for participation citizens actually have. Some democratic polities have developed political institutions that facilitate political membership, while others have not. In some western countries citizens are mobilised into political associations very frequently, while in others they are not.

This thesis is, therefore, an attempt to systematically incorporate "politics" and "institutions" into an analysis of political behaviour. The need to do so emerges from the almost exclusive attention political scientists and sociologists have given to the individual factors that motivate or have an impact on citizens' political participation. As we shall see in the next chapter, the classical studies have contributed to further our knowledge on how socio-economic inequalities are transformed into participatory inequalities (see, for example, Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Parry, Moyser and Day 1990, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). But the classical tradition of political participation pays little or no attention to how political institutions and the varying aspects of democratic political organisation shape citizens' participation and the translation of social inequalities into political inequalities. Citizens' political behaviour is the result of the interaction between the political world and the individuals; between the political context and individual citizens. Both types of factors are

[7] The premise, of course, is that the political regime is a democratic one. High levels of political membership in an authoritarian regime do not necessarily, nor probably, have democratic consequences. For one thing, these memberships are usually not voluntary.

[8] Of course, there is always the risk of system overload highlighted by Olson (1982).

interdependent: if we try to understand how citizens behave politically while ignoring politics and institutions we leave a big part of the story unexplained.

This thesis is partly also – though to a much lesser extent – a reaction to the recent attempts from some of the social capital approaches to deny, or better, hide the relevance of politics for explaining how contemporary democracies work. Unlike some of this recent scholarly work, I believe and will try to show that politics does matter, and probably more than some would expect or like to recognise.

The thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 1 provides the main analytical framework of the whole research and gives some important definitions. Chapter 2 describes in great detail the cross-national and longitudinal patterns of political membership in western democracies and, at the same time, offers some important methodological considerations for the study of political membership. As we will see, cross-national variations in levels of political membership in western countries are wide and lasting. Chapter 3 gives empirical evidence of the individual-level consequences that political membership has and compares it with membership of non-political organisations. This chapter shows that membership of political organisations has attitudinal and behavioural effects that are quite distinct to those of non-political voluntary associations. Political associations are much more effective in promoting greater psychological involvement with politics and in mobilising political protest. Chapters 4 to 7 build up, step-by-step, the explanatory model of political membership of this thesis. Chapter 4 focuses on individual characteristics and concludes that, although essential to any understanding of political membership, individual-level factors are insufficient to explain this type of political participation within and across western democracies. Chapter 5 makes detailed theoretical considerations on how to conceptualise the political context and why and how I expect it to affect political behaviour. Chapter 6 empirically explores to what extent political institutions – namely, political opportunity structures- and socio-political mobilisation shape political membership in western democracies. Finally, chapter 7 tests the whole model, by combining individual- and contextual-level factors and, thus, allows to examine the independent and net effect that the political context has on individual political behaviour. The concluding chapter summarises the main findings and discusses the implications for democratic and participation theories.

CHAPTER 1. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP: AN ANALYTICAL MODEL

"Political participation should not be conceived only as the spontaneous result of the psychological and social characteristics of individuals, but also as the result of the incentives, constraints, and opportunities created by the society's legal system and the intervention in political life of its largest economic, social, and governmental institutions, which often play a crucial role as the patrons of political action." (Walker 1991: 49)

1.1. The Study of Political Participation

1.1.1. From the Analysis of Electoral Participation to the Recognition of the Multidimensionality of Political Participation

The study of political participation has occupied a central role in the empirical analysis of politics since the very first writings on political science. This is mainly attributable to the interest awakened by the electoral behaviour of citizens in democratic countries. Since the publication of the first study of electoral participation (Tingsten 1937),[1] research into the different forms of political participation has developed and expanded considerably. Van Deth (2001) reflects on this process of development and perceives it as a result of successive waves of academic interest in political participation which had as a consequence the gradual amplification of the concept of participation itself.

[1] The study most commonly cited as the pioneer amongst electoral research is the one conducted by the French researcher André Siegfried (1913) on electoral results in western France. However, in this study Siegfried focuses on voting choice from an ecological perspective and, although he does refer to it, does not go into much detail concerning electoral participation. The study by Tingsten is, furthermore, one of the first references of contextual analysis to make inferences between different levels of aggregation.

The initial impulse for studies on political participation began with the *behaviour(al)ist* movement in political science (see Dahl 1961a and 1976, Elcock 1976, Kavanagh 1983, Almond 1990, and Farr 1995). The behaviourist "credo" was based on a markedly individualist epistemological stance and methodology. From this perspective the analysis of politics should be based on the study of individual behaviour, given that the reification of institutions and collectives, frequent in previous institutionalist perspectives, leads to erroneous conclusions regarding political phenomena. The behaviourist researchers place their emphasis on the values and motives of the actors, and attach special relevance to the interaction between individuals and institutions. Political analysis should not only consist of the study of legal and institutional formalities, since the actors, considered either individually or collectively, interact decisively with their institutional context. If individuals are important, then so too are their attitudes, opinions, motives, perceptions, and above all their behaviour. In this intellectual context, the study of political behaviour flourishes and so, therefore, does that of political participation.

Precursors to the behaviourist movement in the analysis of political participation were unquestionably the founders of the so-called Chicago school: Harold F. Gosnell and Charles E. Merriam. Gosnell (1927) became interested in the party activists' participation in electoral mobilisation in the United States, and both authors (Merriam and Gosnell 1924) began to study factors related to electoral abstention. Elsewhere, Herbert Tingsten (1937) was a pioneer in the systematic academic analysis of electoral behaviour, a field of research which was to develop rapidly after the contributions of work conducted by researchers from the Columbia school (Berelson and Lazarsfeld 1944, Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee 1954),[2] who contributed significantly to

[2] The analytical focus of the researchers at Columbia, which paid special attention to the influence of primary and secondary reference groups and the closer social networks, was largely ignored after the Michigan school's conquest of academic hegemony due to the latter's emphasis on the importance of the psycho-social factors of political behaviour. However, from the 1970s onwards

our understanding of decision processes in voting and the different forms of mobilisation and electoral participation in evidence during campaign periods.

There can be no doubt that the work which had the greatest impact in these initial phases of research on political participation was *The Civic Culture* by Almond and Verba (1963). This work gave birth to a type of empirical analysis, in many cases also comparative, based on the use of surveys as the main source of information. One of its main contributions was the systematic analysis of the relationship existing between the social, economic and cognitive resources possessed by individuals and their participation and involvement in political life. Through the analysis of survey data in Great Britain, Italy, Mexico, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States, Almond and Verba study the relationship between values, norms, attitudes and political behaviour. More specifically, they demonstrate how citizens' political participation depends on various circumstances: on the one hand, individuals develop norms, attitudes and obligations as regards participation in public life and democratic government; on the other hand, they develop a series of competences and skills which interact with these norms; finally, norms and personal competence are channelled in one way or another depending on the participation opportunities within the citizen's reach. The study by Almond and Verba was decisive in the subsequent development of the literature on political participation for various reasons. Firstly, it was one of the first studies which analysed the factors that influence citizens' political participation in an empirical and detailed way. Until that time, the participation of individuals in collective government had been basically dealt with on a theoretical and normative level. Secondly, it was also the first to pay systematic attention to the differences in participation existing in different countries, and to

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this tradition was brought back in, in particular among sociologists but also among political scientists, and contributed to the development of the "contextual" or structural view of political behaviour (see, amongst others, the various works of Knoke and Huckfeldt cited in the bibliography, and Przeworski 1974).

attempt to provide an explanation for this. Lastly, this research offered an analytical model of political behaviour which awarded a fundamental role to the attitudes and resources of the citizens themselves.

The relevance of individual resources to participation would be, from that time onwards, a recurring theme in the specialised writings. The research conducted by Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie with other colleagues analysed in complete detail the multiple facets and implications of the relationship between resources and participation. Their studies were amongst the first to explicitly highlight the need to take into account the multiplicity of factors which determine why citizens do or do not participate and why they do so in specific ways. Thus, Verba and Nie (1972: 13) state that the explanation for individuals' political participation is to be sought in their different needs and problems, in the varying availability of resources, in the different attitudes they display, in the social circumstances of their environment, and in the different institutional structures[3] which favour or inhibit their participation. The book written by Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) picks up the thread of this argument, and pay special attention to the participatory inequalities associated with socio-economic inequalities. In fact, one of their main aims consists in explaining the variations which occur between countries in the degree of relationship between social inequalities and participatory inequalities. Curiously, the principal explanatory contribution of this work was that of highlighting the fact that the phenomenon of socio-economic inequalities being transformed into political inequalities is conditioned by the organisational structures of each country. Those countries where the most underprivileged social groups are organised are the ones which enjoy the lowest levels of

[3] It is important to point out that by "institutions" Verba and Nie (1972) and, later, Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) refer to political parties, associations and other organisations. In particular, they take into account the degree to which these organisational institutions structure the social cleavages of each country. They do not refer therefore to State institutional structures, rather to the organisational structures of each society.

political inequality. When, by contrast, the "group" politics of the citizens with least resources is not very well developed, political inequalities are greater.

The importance of organisational resources when determining citizens' political participation (see also Nie, Powell and Prewitt 1969a and b) has therefore been recognised since the early days of modern research into political behaviour.[4] However, this line of research, which attached a special relevance to citizens' organisational resources in particular, was largely ignored in the following decades and research into citizens' political participation was subsequently centred on the role of individual resources and attitudes.

The precursory works of Verba, Nie and their colleagues also served to provoke huge developments in the analytical conceptualisation of political participation, its various forms, modes and dimensions (Verba, Nie and Kim 1971, Verba and Nie 1972, Verba et al. 1973, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978: chapter 3 and Appendix A). Reflection upon the multi-dimensionality of political participation as a concept and as an object of research represents very significant progress in this field,[5] as it recognises

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[4] The main problem with the works of Verba, Nie and their colleagues (especially Verba, Nie and Kim 1978) is that they explain the differences in participatory inequality between countries through another participatory inequality - in this case that of organisations and associations. The social composition of the organisations and associations therefore determines citizens' differential in participation according to their social characteristics. If organisations are disproportionately composed of socially privileged citizens, this will produce greater socio-economic inequalities in participation. If, on the other hand, associations are principally fed by people with fewer socio-economic resources, participatory inequalities will be smaller or inversely related to the possession of resources. The fundamental problem with this explanatory approach is that it shifts the starting point of inequality to another parallel form of participation: the organisational. And it fails to explain which factors condition this "originary" inequality; which is to say, the greater or lesser capacity of political organisations to structure the social cleavages of each country.

[5] Especially in contrast with the approaches of Lane (1965 [1959]) and Milbrath (1965 and [with Goel] 1977), which distinguish between the different forms of political participation, ordered according to the level of involvement and activism required. It is important to remember, in this sense, their unidimensional

that the individual and socio-political processes which lead to citizens' participation differ substantially depending on the type of political activity involved. Thus, the importance of individual socio-economic resources when discriminating between participants and non-participants varies enormously between the different modes of political participation. Additionally, not only the causes or the explanatory factors which help us to understand why citizens act politically vary from one activity to another, but the consequences of these actions on the political process are also substantially different.

These distinctions between the varied forms or modes of political action would go on to constitute the core of research in the field of political participation during the 1980s and 1990s.[6] Along these lines, Barnes and Kaase and their collaborators (1979) introduced the now classic distinction between conventional forms of participation[7] and non-conventional participation or protest[8],

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scale of political activities which oscillated between exposure to political stimuli (the least demanding activity of those of the "spectator") to the ostentation of public or party positions (the greatest involvement among the "gladiators").

[6] As already mentioned, research into the diverse forms of political action had already been included in early studies by Verba, Nie and Kim (1971 and 1978). However, the repertoire of forms of political participation which had been taken into consideration by the end of the 1970s was relatively limited (normally between five and seven forms of participation) and referred almost exclusively to conventional types of actions.

[7] This type of action includes, fundamentally, forms of participation related to the electoral process: for example, voting, wearing a political badge or emblem, contributing financially to or working for a party or candidate, joining a political party, etc. But it also includes other activities which are not necessarily related to the electoral process: for example, soliciting money for a political cause, participating in political meetings, joining a citizens' association or group, working to solve local problems, or contacting public authorities. The research conducted by Barnes and Kaase (1979) also included as forms of conventional participation activities which, correctly described, cannot be considered as such (see the multiple works of Verba, Nie and their colleagues): reading the political sections in the newspaper, and discussing politics with friends or family.

[8] This category takes into account non-institutionalised actions, protest actions and those which are found on the margins of the law: for example, signing petitions, participating in demonstrations or strikes, boycotting products or companies, participating in sit-ins or blocking the traffic, occupying buildings

which would become a fundamental classification for future analyses. The relevance of this typology resides, on the one hand, in its comparative dimensional consistency and, on the other, in its stability when distinguishing clusters of different political actions, and finally in its ability to articulate different explanatory factors. In other words, the classification which became popular after the publication of *Political Action* allowed a better appreciation of what Huntington and Nelson (1976: 14) highlighted: the concept of participation is nothing more than an *umbrella concept* which accommodates very different forms of action constituting differentiated phenomena, and for which it is necessary to look for explanations of a multiple nature. Therefore, what we commonly call political participation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon whose component elements (the different forms of action) attract different types of individuals and respond to varied motivations. And this means that they require different explanatory factors for their correct comprehension.

In line with this, the development of research into political participation in recent decades has demonstrated that this multidimensionality is fundamental, both when looking for factors which determine individuals' participation, and in order to establish the consequences deriving from said participation (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995: chapter 9). To give some examples, Kaase (1992) demonstrates how a resource as fundamental as education has a very different significance when explaining various modes of political protest: while it is one of the most relevant factors in understanding the different tendency of European citizens to pursue legal protest activities, its impact is negligible when dealing with illegal protest actions (or forms of civil disobedience). Dalton (1996) also presents results to this effect: educational attainment is one of the most determining

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or factories, painting murals, damaging public or private property, or employing violence for political reasons. However, Kaase (1992) recognises the multi-dimensionality of non-conventional political participation or protest, distinguishing between three sub-dimensions: one legal, another illegal and, a third, of political violence.

factors in conventional political participation (electoral and community participation), but has a much more moderate effect on political protest, whereas age and ideological positions are more decisive. We also find different explanatory factors amongst distinct political activities of a conventional character (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993: chapters 4 and 5). Resources such as income are a source of inequality for some activities and not for others, and socio-demographic characteristics which define the social status of the individual such as gender, race or age operate as discriminatory factors only for some political activities. For their part, Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: chapter 4) demonstrate how the patterns of gratification citizens experience with participation vary according to the type of political activity they have performed and on its content. In addition to the fact that forms of participation which involve the dedication of time are more gratifying, in many senses, than those which represent mere economic contribution, these authors find that activities of particularised political contact and co-operation with associations of a less political character more frequently offer material benefits, while religious activism, in campaigns or in community activities and for apolitical organisations, provide greater social gratification, and that finally citizens who contribute economically to interest groups, participate in protests or establish political contacts on national issues receive ideological or political gratifications.

In the same way, the consequences of political participation are also different depending on the type of action involved. On the one hand, we can distinguish the various consequences that different types of political activity have on citizens' civic attitudes and orientations. Thus, studies exist which have demonstrated that forms of political participation requiring less effort, which are not associated to any specific benefits of the action, and which involve less interaction[9] with other individuals do not contribute to the

[9] More specifically, voting and the forms of expressive action which have as their goal no other consequence than the mere expression of individual political opinion (for example, writing letters to newspaper editors).

improvement of the participants' political sophistication (Bennett 1975, Leighley 1991). On the other hand, different forms of political participation have different consequences for the political process. Thus, some forms of political activity provide us with little information regarding the preferences of the participant, but the aggregation of the set of actions realised individually has important consequences for the political process. This is the case, for example, for electoral activities (voting, participation in campaign activities, etc.). By contrast, other political actions serve to clearly express the preferences of the citizens who perform them but may have no substantive consequences on the political process, depending on the specific circumstances (for example, participation in demonstrations or campaigns to collect signatures). Parry, Moyser and Day (1992: chapter 12) show how the various types of political action have substantially different levels of success. On average, British citizens who had been involved in protest activities considered that their action had been less effective in communicating their messages and obtaining satisfactory results than those, for example, who had had contact with political authorities.

Therefore, if different forms of political activity differ in their causes and their consequences it is neither viable nor advisable that we look for a unique explanatory model for all forms of participation. Consequently, the separate study of some of these forms of participation as a research strategy is very advisable. This Thesis takes up the aforementioned considerations on the need to carry out separate studies in the field of political participation, and is centred on the analysis of one specific form of political participation: political membership.

As we shall see later in this chapter, participation in or membership of associations does not constitute in itself an act of political participation. Associations are not all equal as regards their relationship with politics; and only participation in organisations whose objective is to affect the political process in one way or another can be considered a form of political activity. For this reason, and as I shall now go on to explain more

thoroughly, it is important to distinguish between political membership and non-political membership.

1.1.2. Towards a General Analytical Framework for Political Participation

The following question is the one which has intrigued researchers in the field of political participation time and again: why do some citizens participate in public affairs while others do not?[10] Answering this question requires going beyond the immediate study of individuals' motivations and resources when making decisions about their involvement in the public domain, and analysing the different types of determining factors that influence their participation to a greater or lesser degree. One of the basic limitations of the classic model for explaining political participation initiated by Verba and Nie (1972) is precisely the reduction of that explanation to factors related to the individual themselves, in particular civic resources and orientations. Various researchers have criticised this "atomisation" of the individual when studying participation, as it obviates the fact that many forms of political action within the reach of the citizen require co-operation with other people or depend on social interaction (Przeworski 1974, Knoke 1990c, Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993,

[10] This question can be approached from various perspectives. Like Robert A. Dahl (1961b: 279), we could consider politics to be a "remote, alien and unrewarding activity" and that what really requires explanation is why some citizens do participate; or, together with rational choice theorists, we could think that the incentive system is such that rational behaviour is, as a rule, non-participation. Contrarily, we could start from a normative position and assume that it is within the nature of democracy that citizens will participate in self-government and in the public affairs which affect them, or simply consider that it is analytically simpler to approach the explanations for non-participation than those of participation (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995: 15-16). It is not for me to clarify here (if indeed it can or should be clarified) which of the two behaviours - active or passive - is the one which should be considered "deviant" and, in any case, the symmetry of both means that studying one is to simultaneously study the other.

Leighley 1995). Thus, if the ultimate participation of the individual also depends on the availability and action of others, we cannot attempt to explain participation without bearing this in mind. Therefore, it is essential that we study the context in which this participation is produced and how it interacts with individuals' resources and orientations.

The *Model of Civic Voluntarism* by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) provides the most complete conceptual and analytical framework to date for tackling the central issue of why citizens participate or, for that matter, why they do not participate. It offers three distinct types of response, which are not mutually exclusive: citizens do not participate because they do not want to, because they can not, or because nobody has asked them to. The apparent simplicity of the response highlights the importance of a set of explanatory factors which have been analysed jointly or separately on numerous occasions in the literature on political participation.

In democratic societies, the voluntary nature of citizens' political participation means that anyone who does not wish to participate will not. Thus, the response from Verba, Schlozman and Brady which points to the fact that some citizens "do not want to" participate brings us back to the study of the *motivations* for participation: the set of attitudes and orientations towards politics and participation in public affairs which condition citizens' behaviour. A lack of motivation to participate in public affairs may be attributable to very different reasons.[11] On the one hand, citizens may display a clear disinterest in anything related to politics and the community and prefer, therefore, to look after their own personal and family affairs. Disinterest can take different forms (Rosenberg 1954), such that apathy may be attributable to a fear of the negative consequences of politics, to its

[11] In the coming paragraphs I shall assume, fictitiously, that the lack of motivation for participating in public affairs is independent of other factors such as socio-economic resources and the experiences of socialisation. Logically, as much accumulated research has shown, this assumption is not realistic. It is only for the argument's sake.

classification as a useless or irrelevant subject, or simply to satisfaction with the status quo. Evidently, this disinterest in public affairs could be the result of a decision which is conscious to a greater or lesser extent; however, very frequently this disinterest for public affairs is associated with a lack of information and limited understanding of what happens in the public domain. As we know, it is well established in empirical research on participation that an interest in politics is strongly related to political activity.

Another aspect which determines citizens' motivation to participate are the perceptions they have regarding the effectiveness of the action they are to perform, both in terms of the capacity of the results of the action to change the course of things or achieve its objective (external efficacy), and in terms of the opinion they may have of their personal capacity to act politically (internal efficacy). Another long list of studies has demonstrated the close link between these citizen perceptions and their political activity (see, for example, Almond and Verba 1989 [1963] and Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: chapter 8). Nevertheless, it would seem that the perception of one's own personal competence has a more decisive effect on political action than evaluations on the level of receptiveness of the political authorities (Madsen 1987, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992).

Finally, another of the reasons which may lead citizens to "not want to" participate in public affairs is related to the problem of collective action: many individuals decide to act as "free-riders". Although the potential benefits to be derived from collective action may be greater than the costs incurred by acting, the logic of collective action and the pursuit of the public good leads to desertion. But not everybody deserts when faced by the same cost and benefit structures. The key resides in the fact that some citizens display altruistic preference structures or, as Margolis (1982) puts it, some individuals combine two utility functions, one of maximising "group interest" and the other of maximising "personal interest". Individuals act altruistically when they incorporate the effects of their actions on "others" (the group) and

their course of action is such that their strictly personal benefit would have been greater had they ignored the effect on "others" (Margolis 1982: 15).[12] Therefore, some of the individuals who do not participate in affairs because "they do not want to" are the ones who only maximise the utility function of their "personal interest".

In short, if the problem of non-participation is reduced to citizens not wanting to participate in politics, any type of action we may want to carry out to increase levels of participation would have to include the modification of these individual attitudes and characteristics which maintain individuals on the margins of the public domain. Nevertheless, as Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) point out, many other citizens do not participate because "they can not" or because "nobody has asked them to".

The response that some individuals "can not" participate in politics refers to very different types of factors. On the one hand, the impossibility of participating is related to the magnitude of the costs of the action and therefore to the *resources* within the individual's reach, whether these are economic, social, cognitive or related to time. As we know, the cost structure of action varies according to the different forms of participation. To give an example, the cost structure of coordination actions (e.g. protests) is very different to that of co-operative actions (e.g. contributing to an organisation): whilst in the former case the costs of action, in particular external actions, decreases with the number of participants, the costs of co-operative action remain constant (Hardin 1991: 366-368). This means not only that the incentive structure of collective action will be substantially different for one or another mode of participation, but also that the resources

[12] In a recent article, Ahn, Ostrom and Walker (2003) consider that a model of the individual with heterogeneous motivations different to the altruistic individual – the "*inequity-averse*" - is more appropriate as an alternative to the model of the individual with *self-interested* preferences. While altruists deal with utility functions which combine their own payoffs with payoffs received by others, the inequity-averse would respond to utility functions that incorporate the aggregated result of (in)equality of income.

necessary for participating will be different in nature. As I have explained previously, various studies have highlighted the variable importance of resources, in their different modalities, when explaining citizens' participation in different political activities (Kaase 1992, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Dalton 1996). Verba, Schlozman and Brady's conclusions (1995: chapter 12) for the American case are very revealing in this sense. Economic resources (e.g. income) are fundamentally relevant for those political activities which require economic contributions, and yet have very little importance when determining participation in activities which require the dedication of time or electoral participation. For their part, education and free time are resources that only have a certain effect on participation in activities which include dedicating free time. Therefore, we see that the availability of resources discriminates between participants only when the cost structure of the activity type in question requires a certain amount of those resources.

But as well as depending on individual resources, the possibility of participating in public affairs is also conditioned to a large extent by the real *opportunities* the citizen has to participate in public decisions. This type of factor – which was not taken into account by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) in their *Model of Civic Voluntarism* – is fundamental, as citizens do not generally act in a vacuum; most political activities are by nature collective and not individual, which means that they require coordination and/or co-operation amongst a number of citizens. For example, it is difficult to participate in a demonstration or other protest act unless a group (of a number of people) coordinate their actions to organise it; participation in electoral campaign activities depends on the parties or other organisations organising them; and in order to be able to join or contribute economically to an organisation with political ends it is necessary that said organisation exists and is known by the public (see Hansen 1985). Therefore, the political activity of any one individual is conditioned by other people's actions.

However, although it is often ignored, citizens' action also depends on the institutional opportunities for participation that citizens are granted. Institutional opportunities for participation affect the anticipated cost and benefit structure of the political action, thereby modifying the incentive structure for co-operation. If political institutions and authorities are receptive to citizens' demands, the probabilities of the political action's success will be, on average, greater. The effectiveness of the action has, in addition, consequences for the political orientations of the individuals themselves (Madsen 1987).

Without any doubt, the "enabling" effect of resources available to individuals has been studied to a much greater extent than the existence or absence of opportunities to participate. Some researchers have highlighted the importance of institutional opportunities for participation, although in many cases this has been limited to examining this set of factors from a merely theoretical or speculative perspective. Almond and Verba (1989 [1963]: chapter 5) raised the hypothesis that the development of norms and obligations for participation might be related to the institutional structures of democratic governments. In particular, Almond and Verba state the possible existence of a relationship between the level of autonomy of local governments, the opportunities citizens have to participate in local government and the normative images of the "good citizen". For her part, Conway (1991, chapter 5) discusses in what ways the different legal and institutional configurations of the political systems affect citizens' opportunities for participation. Among others, Conway highlights the importance of electoral regulations not only when conditioning rates of electoral participation, but also when influencing the type of people who may be presented as candidates, the way electoral campaigns are conducted and the organisation of economic contributions to candidates and parties. Additionally, Conway stresses the special relevance of the State (federal in the case of the United States) in its capacity to multiply the number of citizen access and contact points with the political process; thereby providing multiple opportunities for their participation. This

influences levels of citizen participation in the political process, but it also conditions the way in which this participation takes place. As Hardin (1991: 370) points out, the States which most ably respond to citizens' reformist demands contribute to increase the incentives for collective action to adopt the form of group organisation (*co-operation*) as opposed to forms of protest (*coordination*).

The importance of the opportunities citizens have to participate, whether deriving from the institutional context or political actors' strategies for mobilisation, stems from the fact that there is no reason for these opportunities to act uniformly for all types of individuals (Leighley 1995: 187). In fact, various researchers have demonstrated that organisations' strategies for political mobilisation are clearly selective: the effectiveness of the mobilising action is maximised by aiming it at people who are most likely to respond positively (see, for example, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). This implies that opportunities for participation deriving from the processes of explicit recruitment are extremely unequal amongst people of different economic strata, employment and occupational background, race and age (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995: chapter 5). Given that citizens do not reserve a "fixed quota" of resources (time, money, effort, etc.) to dedicate to participation or any other form of altruism, the amount they eventually invest in order to maximise collective utility will depend on the opportunities for participation they are presented with (Margolis 1982: 24).[13]

Finally, the last of the responses offered by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) as to why some citizens do not participate in public affairs, i.e. "nobody has asked them to", leads us to consider the phenomenon of *recruitment* and *mobilisation* by the different actors, amongst whom we find the political organisations

[13] Another way of conceptualising opportunities for participation is to see them as being more circumstantial in nature. Rosenau (1974) and Beck and Jennings (1979) discuss the varied opportunities granted by the emergence of new issues or new political conflicts and how these may affect different social groups to a greater or lesser extent.

themselves. While resources and opportunities for participation can be classified, as we have discussed, as the "enabling" factors of political action, mobilisation and recruitment by political organisations and actors are "facilitating" factors of participation. A minimum amount of the former is almost indispensable if an individual is to participate, but the latter are not strictly necessary in order for action to take place.

Although factors related to mobilisation have received more attention than those related to opportunities, their systematic incorporation in analytical models of the different phenomena of political participation is certainly limited, and in most cases is restricted to the study of the mobilisation processes in social movements (see, for example, Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson 1980, Kriesi 1988, Knoke 1990c: 69-73, Oegema 1991, McAdam and Paulsen 1993) or by interest groups (for example, McFarland 1984, Rothenberg 1988 and 1992, Jordan and Maloney 1997, Johnson 1998).[14]

In a pioneer and seldom cited study, Rosenau (1973) already warned of the excessive importance that studies on political participation were attributing to individuals' personal initiative when explaining how and why citizens participate in politics. This voluntary bias of the *behaviourist* approaches on use obviated the fundamental fact that citizens' participation in public affairs occurs in interactive situations and that this participation tends to be activated by some actor – individual or organisational (Rosenau 1973: xxix, 96 ff., and chapter 11). Therefore, to ignore the processes of social interaction which underlie recruitment and mobilisation into participation is to ignore a set of factors that condition citizens' political action to a great extent, as many citizens participate fundamentally to satisfy the express request of someone they know (Rothenberg 1988, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

[14] Logically, there are some exceptions within the scope of the more classic research on political or associational participation. See, for example, Booth and Babchuk (1969), Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: chapter 5), Knoke (1990b and 1990c), and Leighley (2001).

A first reflection suggested by a review of the accumulated research on political participation is that to seriously include the latter two types of factors – opportunities and mobilisation – within an analytical framework of citizens' political action means to go beyond the traditional consideration of aspects that can be measured on an individual scale. In other words, it is essential to introduce the context in which citizens take the decision to participate (see Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993). This does not, under any circumstances, imply abandoning methodological individualism. In studies on political participation, perhaps more so than in other areas of political science, to restate that individuals are the ones who ultimately participate is to state the obvious. This notwithstanding, methodological individualism should not make us forget that we individuals, when all is said and done, live in a society and it is quite likely that the social and political environment which surrounds us affects the way in which we take decisions or, at the very least, the content of these decisions. It is, therefore, necessary to conceive of individual decisions as the product of the intersection between the individual (her preferences, motivations, information, etc.) and the opportunities and limitations offered by or imposed by the environment in which they take decisions (Przeworski 1974).

The need to take into account the political and socio-economic context within which citizens act in order to understand the phenomena of political participation, especially when making comparisons between various countries, has been highlighted on various occasions by different authors. However, in most cases this has been limited to an expression of desires rather than a real research programme (see, for example Barnes and Kaase 1979: 43, Asher, Richardson and Weisberg 1984: 15 ff., and Kaase 1989: 25-26). Only in the last decade have we seen an increase in the introduction of contextual factors and of the strategies for mobilisation employed by organisations in analytical models of political participation (Kenny 1992, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993). The incorporation of contextual factors has been more frequent in electoral studies which take into

account, above all, the effect of institutional aspects on models of electoral participation (see, for example, Zipp and Smith 1979, Oppenhuis 1995, Franklin 1996, Franklin, van der Eijk, and Oppenhuis 1996). It is precisely in the field of research on electoral abstention and participation where we find the greatest developments and most systematic analyses of the effect of contextual factors on individual participation (Leighley and Nagler 1992, Burbank 1997, van Egmond, de Graaf and van der Eijk 1998, Anduiza 1999 and 2002, Anderson 2000). Nevertheless, this type of analysis is becoming more frequent in other research areas. In recent times van Deth and Elff (2001) have incorporated the socio-political context into the analysis of politicisation and interest in politics in Europe, while Curtis, Baer and Grabb (2001) and Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas (2001) have employed variables of a contextual character to explain the international variations in membership of voluntary associations.

This research is aimed at articulating these four types of factors in the study of a concrete form of political participation: political membership. Throughout the different parts of this Thesis I shall argue that the phenomenon of participation via political organisations and, in particular, the substantial variations we encounter amongst western countries related to this form of participation can only be understood if we take into consideration these four types of factors: attitudes, resources, opportunities for participation, and political mobilisation.

1.2. Attitudes, Resources, Opportunities and Mobilisation: an Explanatory Model of Political Membership

The general analytical framework for political participation which I have just presented proves useful to develop an explanatory model specifically designed for political membership. Over the following pages I will discuss aspects related to the definition of the object of study: political membership. I will then

give a detailed explanation of the analytical model which guides the whole research. And, lastly, I will refer to the methodology employed throughout this study.

1.2.1. Political Membership: Some Definitions

Political membership, as mentioned previously, is a very relevant form of political participation. What do we understand exactly by political participation and political membership? In this Thesis I have opted to use a somewhat modified version of the classic definition of political participation set out by Verba, Nie and Kim (1971: 9), which they partially develop from Milbrath's (1965). Political participation is thus defined here as the *acts by private citizens*[15] *that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel, the actions that they take, including new issues on the agenda, and/or changing values and preferences directly linked to political decision-making*.

[15] When I refer here to private citizens I am excluding only bureaucrats and other agents of public administration who influence public decisions due to their position within the bureaucratic or governmental apparatus. However, I do not believe to be appropriate the exclusion made by Huntington and Nelson (1976: 5) or Verba, Nie and their colleagues (1971, 1972 and 1978) of the activities of political party leaders, candidates or interest group professionals, thereby distinguishing between professional politicians and participants. To use the same example offered by Huntington and Nelson (1976: 5) in rejecting the pertinence of the distinction between voluntary participation and mobilised participation, - "it would not make sense to say that a soldier who is conscripted does not participate in war while a voluntary soldier does"- I would add that, contrary to what they claim, it does not seem very reasonable to think that the general leading the soldiers is not participating in the war simply because he is a military professional. Therefore, I consider that professionals should be included in the concept of political participation. This clarification has been made for purely conceptual purposes, as the type of information available for this study, which comes mainly from surveys, does not distinguish between political professionals and "common" citizens.

In my use of Verba and his colleagues' definition I explicit exclude the criterion that these acts must be legal (Verba, Nie and Kim 1978: 1), something which would exclude non-conventional forms of participation that have already been incorporated into Western citizens' repertoire of political action. However, I do exclude from the definition and this study the extremely violent acts and the groups involved in them (terrorism, kidnapping, guerrilla groups, etc.). On the contrary, activities aimed at including issues on the political agenda and changing values and preferences are added to the definition of political participation. This makes it possible to consider as participation other activities which do not specifically intend to influence the selection of governmental personnel, and which attempt to redefine that which must be considered of public concern, and therefore to redefine the political.

As we can see, this definition of participation, despite being very broad, imposes restrictions to that which can be considered "political" which are narrower than those proposed by other studies on political participation. Pateman (1970: 35 ff.) states that participation in the workplace, which this author considers a political system in itself, can also be conceived of as political participation, and much the same can be said for participation in all types of associations. For his part Barber (1990 [1984]: xiv) equally proposes a broader concept of political participation and political behaviour, which includes all co-operative activities carried out for the common good. I, on the other hand, do not consider it analytically useful to employ such a broad notion of the political and of political participation. Although it is true that participation in other fields such as voluntary associations and companies may have both political consequences and consequences for citizens' political participation (see Verba, Schlozman and Brady's argument here, 1995), it seems exaggerated to think that a large majority of actions which are performed in these settings have consequences which are clearly political. Therefore, it would seem more useful to employ the

concept of political participation for activities which have a more or less clear political intentionality.

Given that this research deals with political membership as a specific type of political participation, it is necessary to provide a definition of political associations and the criteria which allow us to distinguish them from other associations which are non-political in nature. Firstly, it is necessary to explain what I understand by association. The definition proposed by Knoke (1986: 2) is extremely useful here: "A minimum definition of association is a formally organized named group most of whose members – whether persons or organisations – are not financially recompensed for their participation". Knoke's definition is useful in distinguishing associations from other social and political institutions such as the family, groups of friends, and other organisations[16] which are frequently included in notions regarding the "third sector", such as foundations.[17] On the one hand, associations are distinguished from other organisations such as foundations or government agencies by the fact that very few individuals receive payment for their activities in the association (Knoke and Prensky 1984). On the other hand, associations are distinguished from organisations of an economic nature such as companies in that they are institutions which seek solutions for individual or collective problems which are different to those of the market (Knoke 1990b: 5).

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[16] The concept of organisation is, logically, broader than that of association and covers a larger number of objects. One definition of organisation is, for example, that offered by Stinchcombe (1965: 142): "a set of stable social relations deliberately created, with the explicit intention of continuously accomplishing some specific goals or purposes. These goals or purposes are generally functions performed for some larger structure."

[17] A discussion of the definition of the third sector and its relationship to concepts such as civil society and the non-for-profit sector can be found in Salamon et al.(1999: chapter 1 and Appendix A) and in Herrera (1998). It is important to stress that these terms are not employed here because they refer to a broader object of study. This research is only concerned with associations, and more specifically, political associations.

Within the entire set of organisations which we call associations we can distinguish a subset formed by those aimed mainly at political action: political associations. Having reached this point, the problem resides in defining the political character of an organisation. In what sense is an organisation "political"? Lane (1965 [1959]: 75) states that there are notable differences between a political organisation and a non-political organisation,[18] and links them to their effects on (1) the political process, and (2) the political interests and motivations of their individual members. In the same way, Knoke (1990b), considers the distinction between political associations and non-political associations to be crucial from many different angles. First of all, although associations often have mixed goals, some associations stand out because of the relevance they give to objectives of a political nature; and, at the same time, these differences in goals have important consequences for aspects such as the associations' sources of funding and their budget priorities (pp. 79-81). Secondly, the reasons, motivations and interests which lead citizens to join political groups are fundamentally different to those which lead them to join non-political associations. The provision of services, material benefits and social incentives are much more important in the latter than in the former. For members of political associations, motivations which are related to the collective good pursued by the associations they join are much greater. Additionally, motivations of members of political associations are much more varied (pp. 132-135).

The definition of political associations used throught this Thesis employs the same defining criteria we use for the concept

[18] Curiously, Lane appears to anticipate the debate of social capital over 30 years before it takes place and states: "Clearly, there are marked differences between a bowling club and a political club and these differences will undoubtedly be associated with the effect of the organisation upon (1) the political process and (2) the political interests and motives of the individual members." (p. 75)

of political participation. Therefore, political associations[19] are defined as *those formally organised groups who seek collective goods (whether they be pure public goods or another type of collective goods) and which have as their main goal to influence political decision-making processes, either by trying to influence the selection of governmental personnel or their activities, include issues on the agenda or change the values and preferences which guide the decision-making process.*[20] This definition of political associations is similar to that provided by Knoke (1986: 2) with regard to interest groups: "when associations attempt to influence government decisions, they are acting as an interest group".[21] Nevertheless, the fundamental problem of the concept of *interest group* is that it tends to exclude political parties, as they (or their representatives in the political institutions) are usually – together with the bureaucrats – the object of pressure from these groups. For this reason, I prefer in this Thesis to use a more general concept of political associations.[22] Lastly, and with the aim of

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[19] I use the terms political associations and organisations interchangeably; therefore, in this Thesis the latter does not include the State (although it could also be considered a political organisation) or other governmental bodies.

[20] Van Deth (1997) also distinguishes between political and social organisations by looking at their main objectives and, later, to the results of a factorial analysis (van Deth and Kreuter 1998), but without relating his classification to a definition of political participation. In the following chapter I shall discuss the different alternatives when producing typologies and demonstrate how the strategy used by van Deth and Kreuter leads to problematic classifications.

[21] In another work, Knoke (1982: 173) talks about *social influence associations* (employing Rose's term, 1967) and he equates it with organisations oriented towards political objectives. He defines them as organisations which: "have as a major objective the changing or preserving of societal conditions, for which they must usually influence decision makers in other institutions (legislatures, government agencies and executives, courts) to apply *their* authority and resources to implement the policies and programs preferred by the associations."

[22] However, it is important to repeat that what is commonly included under the label of "interest groups" also comes under the term "political associations" employed throughout this Thesis. The problem is that, as Baumgartner and Leech (1998: chapter 2) point out, the terminology may vary substantially with respect

distinguishing political associations from social movements or citizen protests, the proposed definition explains the need for there to be some level of formal interaction between individuals pertaining to the group in question, even if this interaction is very informal. That is to say, this research is primarily concerned with associations and organised groups, although their level of organisational formalisation may vary from one case to another.

The problem does not reside solely, or fundamentally, in defining what a political association is from a theoretical or analytical perspective. The more problematic question is that of distinguishing one from the other in practical terms when addressing the data available on associations and membership. Finding a satisfactory operative definition of which associations should be classified as political, and which not, is difficult. As Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 58-59) very correctly point out, technical decisions on how to measure the "political" nature of an association have very significant substantive implications. As I shall explain in greater detail in chapter 2 of this Thesis, various alternatives exist for distinguishing between political and non-political associations when we are using survey data coming from representative samples of a population of individuals. A first possibility is to use as a defining criterion the perception of the interviewees themselves on the level of political involvement of the organisations in which they participate or belong to. This is the option chosen by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 59), who included in the questionnaire of the *American Citizen Participation Study* questions on whether the organisations the interviewees co-operated with adopted political positions in public affairs on either a local or national level. A second option would

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to what is included in the category of "interest groups". In fact, one of the problems highlighted by these authors is the terminological confusion in this field research. Some researchers limit the consideration of interest groups to formal associations and organisations which defend public or private interests, while others include all types of "organised interests", thereby including corporations, institutions, cities, etc. Whatever the interpretation, this Thesis is not strictly concerned with interest groups as a whole, rather the subset of organisations which is generally included in this category: political associations.

be to use as a defining criterion the frequency with which, from the interviewees' viewpoint, political or public issues are discussed in the meetings of the organisations in which they participate. This is the criterion adopted by Verba, Nie and Kim (1978: 100) in their now classic study on political participation. Lastly, when we do not have this type of information available on the degree of political involvement of the association, we can classify the different categories of associations according to some theoretical criterion and the judgement of the analyst.[23]

As is explained in more detail in the next chapter, in this Thesis I have no alternative but to opt for the latter type of operative classification between political and non-political associations, given that the survey data employed throughout the research does not include explicit questions regarding the associations' political activity. Therefore, I use the theoretical definition of political associations presented on previous pages to classify organisations included in the surveys consulted.

In addition to the distinction between political and non-political associations, in some parts of this Thesis I study in detail what type of political organisation western citizens participate in. To be specific, I pay special attention to the distinction between traditional political associations and new types of political associations, a distinction which has already been used in other research related to political membership (Dekker, Koopmans and van den Broek 1997, Wessels 1997, van Deth and Kreuter 1998) and, naturally, in a long list of studies on new social movements (NSM).

Much has been written on the nature of the characteristics which distinguish "old" politics from "new" politics, particularly on the comparison between political parties and social movements. Some researchers have highlighted that traditional political organisations differ from new types of political organisations in their ideology and the values they defend; while the former build

[23] Unfortunately, researchers often opt for this alternative of subjective classification without making explicit the theoretical criteria they are using to distinguish between political and non-political associations.

their ideological frameworks around distributive values, the latter are characterised by their defence of libertarian values (Dalton, Küchler and Bürklin 1992). Others highlight the different logics of participation – instrumental in traditional organisations and expressive in those related to the NSMs (Pizzorno 1981); contrasts in their organisational structures – decentralised and participative in the case of the NSMs, centralised and hierarchical in traditional political associations (Rucht 1992, Kitschelt 1992); or the forms of action which characterise one or the other type of political associations –tending more towards protest in the case of NSM organisations as opposed to the more institutionalised forms of traditional political organisations (Offe 1988, Dalton, Küchler and Bürklin 1992).

Nevertheless, these aspects are not particularly useful when establishing a criterion for classifying specific organisations and groups into the categories of "new" or "traditional" political associations. Some of them are even questioned by specialists in the NSMs field. Rucht (1992) rejects the validity of the distinction between new and traditional organisations according to the different logics of action (expressive as opposed to instrumental) because both logics are present in all NSMs, although one may prevail at certain times. In fact, Rucht demonstrates how the majority of NSMs are either ambivalent or power-oriented (instrumental) as regards the logics of action they pursue. A similar problem arises from the distinction between both types of political organisations according to their organisational structure. Although in many cases the organisations of "new" politics adopt lax, decentralised structures, and make much use of participatory democracy, this is not always the case. Some organisations which without doubt should be qualified as related to new politics demonstrate forms of organisation which are extremely hierarchical and with few or no mechanisms of participatory democracy – above all the big multinational organisations, such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International – while, on the contrary, some political parties are adopting more decentralised and participative formats (the Green parties and the Left-wing

Libertarians). This very argument is valid for forms of action: although new politics is very much related to protest and non-conventional forms of participation, this is not exclusive to the new type of organisations, nor is it the only form of action in their repertoire. Therefore, most differentiating characteristics between "old" and "new" politics which are stressed in the literature on NSMs are not so obvious, as many are shared by both types of politics and organisations.

What might be, then, a suitable criterion for differentiating one type of political organisation from another? My suggestion is to employ as a distinctive characteristic between both types of groups what we could call *the nature of the representative link*. "New" political organisations are characterised by their lack of a representative link with specific sectors of the population; that is to say, with a specific constituency. On the one hand, these organisations do not accommodate to the representative mechanisms which allow the establishment of representative links with specific sectors of a given population: they do not stand at elections and they do not have representative mandates for any subset of citizens. On the other hand, the demands themselves, the issues they defend, are generally produced with a universalist intent: when ecological organisations, pacifist organisations and those which defend human rights, to use some examples, defend their causes, they do not do so in representation of a specific constituency, rather in the name of humanity as a whole. By contrast, "traditional" political organisations (political parties, unions, and special interest groups[24]) are the political actors *par excellence* in the representation of the interests and demands of specific sectors of society. On the one hand, "traditional" political

[24] It is important to point out that among English-language scholars it is common for a distinction to be made between private or special interest groups and public interest groups. All organisations which can be labeled under special interest groups would clearly be traditional political associations. The case of public interest groups is more complicated and depends to a great extent on the specific issues each one defends and on the capacity to distinguish one specific constituency with which they establish a representative link.

associations are directly involved in electoral politics in different fields, which allows the creation of representative links to a specific constituency. Political parties represent their voters, the unions the workers who vote for them – and, stretching the possible representative link to its maximum, the set of workers in the economic sector they represent – and interest groups represent the professionals or the industries whose interests they defend. In addition, one of the main objectives of traditional organisations is to acquire representative power in the political system. "New" political organisations, by contrast, do not consider themselves intermediary organisations and do not seek to play this role in political institutions:[25] representation of a constituency is not the goal of these organisations. Therefore, there is no representative link between these groups and specific sectors of the population, either formal or self-proclaimed. Furthermore, the representation of a definable constituency implies negotiation with the representatives of other sectors and the demands of these "new" groups are not negotiable (Offe 1988). But what is important here is not only how they see themselves or what their intentions or platforms are, the important thing is the dynamic by which traditional and new political organisations defend their goals. The reason for these different dynamics is not connected so much with the type of interests or demands defended by one or the other, but with the representative action in which the former are involved and the latter are not. To be an agent of representation for interests or demands automatically puts the political organisation in question in a dynamic of competition with other agents of representation (or with potential agents of representation) in order to obtain that very status. This is not the case with "new" political organisations, which does not mean that they do not compete amongst one another, rather that this competition is carried out on

[25] This does not imply that they cannot participate in institutional bodies, rather that when they do they are not in these posts as representatives of a certain constituency, rather as a kind of advisor or monitors of the policies and decisions made.

other terms. "New" political organisations do compete for social and human resources, for patronage, for economic support, for media coverage, and to a certain extent, for political opportunities. However, they do not compete for representative status and neither does one of their main objectives as an organisational structure consist of obtaining good results in the competition for representation.

The proposal I make here of distinguishing between traditional political organisations and new political organisations has a certain connection with the typology proposed by Kriesi (1996: 152-154), who distinguishes one type of organisations from the other according to the level of direct participation of the *constituency* in its political actions. However, my distinction based on the representative link goes further than Kriesi's proposal by positing the view that these different forms of political action respond to the different nature of the relationships between organisations of the same type, the citizens and the issues they defend. It is not just that NSM organisations tend to mobilise their members directly whilst traditional political organisations do so to a much lesser extent, rather that the type of issues defended and the way in which they are defended requires this type of political action. In the absence of representative links with specific sectors of the population (a constituency) political action must take the form of mobilisation almost as a necessity.

Finally, it only remains to reflect briefly on the behaviour we are about to analyse: participation in associations. Different concepts can be used when defining political participation channelled through organisations: militancy, activism, affiliation, and membership. By simply listing them we detect the existence of a certain degree of agreement with the level of participation or level of activity in the organisation. Nevertheless, the significance attributed to each concept may vary according to the academic tradition in which it is inserted. The concept of *militancy* is used in a slightly different way in Anglo-Saxon and French traditions; while in the former it is employed on occasions to define the activists most dedicated to political parties and unions, the

political science and sociological use of this term in France includes activists in all types of groups and associations oriented towards the field of politics.[26] Whichever the use, there seems to exist a certain common understanding of the fact that the concept of militancy is reserved for those who exercise an active role at the heart of the group, as stated by Duverger (1965: 91-145). On the other hand, common use reserves the concept of militant for party and union activists. Duverger also highlighted the intrinsic difficulty in counting the number of militants in a given organisation, not only due to the impossibility of conducting a census of them, but also due to the complexity of establishing operative criteria for classifying the different types of members. Something similar occurs with the concept of *activists*: even though their application is common to all types of groups who defend a cause, their quantification and operationalisation are also complex. In short, these two concepts - activism and militancy - refer to two specific types of political participation channelled through groups and organisations; and although they may be mentioned in the framework of this research, they are not the central object of research for this Thesis. As I have already said, it is not necessary to display a significant level of activity at the heart of a group or association in order for the act of adhesion to constitute an act of political participation: mere economic contribution or the simple act of joining entail the support of an organisation in order to influence the political process. Therefore, the concept of affiliation and membership would most suitably define what I wish to analyse here. The term *affiliation*, however, implies a formal process of registration with the group, a requisite which constitutes an unnecessary restriction with respect to many political groups whose organisation is not very formalised and which are included in this Thesis. Therefore, the concept which

[26] A good analysis of the concept of militancy in the French literature can be found in Jardin (1994), and a review of the literature on militancy in France in Subileau (1981). A general analysis of the sociological phenomenon of militancy in France can be found in Ion (1997).

adapts best to the object of study of this research is that of *membership*.[27] Although similar, a second term, that of *belonging*, presents us with a problem of distinguishing between the act of belonging and the feeling of belonging, as it does not specify which of the two it refers to – something which does not happen with the former term. As we have seen, cognitive aspects (attitudes, orientations, etc.) are not included in the definition of participation I am dealing with and I shall therefore only be studying behaviours. In this sense, I prefer to use the first concept of *membership* here for greater clarity when defining the type of behaviour being analysed. The phenomenon of political membership will, therefore, be studied in this Thesis from this minimum concept of membership which, logically, will also include the cases of greater implication in the organisations we are studying here.

One problem with operationalisation, in addition to that of its definition, arises with the need to highlight which people are members of a group and which are not. The definitions of membership and the requisites individuals must fulfil to be considered as such vary from one organisation to another, and it is therefore impossible to offer a single operative definition of membership of political associations. This introduces, of course, difficulties when measuring political membership. I have attempted to resolve these difficulties in a pragmatic way and I shall discuss them at greater length in chapter 2. For now we shall content ourselves by saying that the operative definition of membership of associations I use is determined by the subjective definition interviewees give in relation to these associations.

1.2.2. Citizens, Associations and Political Context: Approach and Hypotheses

How should we explain participation in political associations? Which factors contribute to our better understanding of why some

[27] A reflection on the concept of membership can also be found in Baumgartner and Leech (1998: 30-33).

citizens join political associations and others do not, and why the inclination to politically organise oneself varies considerably among citizens of similar countries? To pose these questions means, logically, to assume that individuals do not automatically join a political organisation when the need arises, rather there are factors of a diverse nature which facilitate or hinder citizens joining organisations with political objectives. On previous pages I have formulated a general analytical framework for political participation which revolves around motivations, resources, opportunities and mobilisation to explain citizens' greater or lesser activity. In the following pages I shall detail how this general framework is applied to the specific case of political membership.

When attempting to explain citizens' political membership it is important not to confuse two very different levels of analysis. On the one hand, we could ask ourselves *why* individuals join political associations. In general, this would lead us to look for motives or reasons for this type of political action. On the other hand, however, we can ask ourselves which factors condition the fact that, given the existence of motives to join a political organisation, an individual finally decides to do so. In this Thesis I am only concerned with the latter question, as I assume that there are always sufficient motives to join a political association. Undoubtedly, there are always individual or collective needs which may be alleviated by collective action.[28] The fundamental question is that, as Stinchcombe (1965: 146) highlighted, in addition to feeling the need to organise oneself, it is essential that citizens be aware of the possibility to do so, that they trust in the effectiveness of the organisation, that they expect benefits from collective action, and that they have the resources and capacity to join an organisation. In this way, Stinchcombe already pointed out a multiplicity of conditioning factors related to the individuals

[28] Fundamentally, material, ideological, expressive needs or those regarding sociability, which organisations attempt to fulfil by offering selective incentives of different types to motivate individuals' co-operation with them (see Clark and Wilson 1961, Olson 1992 [1965], Salisbury 1969 and Wilson 1974).

themselves: some individuals and some societies are better equipped than others to develop political organisations.

Although all individuals have or may have *motives* or reasons for joining political associations, the same cannot be said for *motivation*. The former must not be confused with the latter. Motivation is the subjective filter which allows or prevents individuals from finding or detecting motives to act through a political organisation. We can, therefore, say that the existence of some minimal levels of information and interest in public affairs is almost a prerequisite for political action. Political information is necessary for citizens to be able to be aware of the need to join a political organisation and of the different options they are faced with. While the level of interest in public affairs conditions the level of exposure to the various sources of political information, it also conditions the willingness to dedicate resources to participation in a political association. But it is also essential that individuals attribute a certain effectiveness to organised action; that they consider themselves, on the one hand, capable of acting politically and that they believe, on the other hand, that the organisation to which they will contribute their time and/or money is capable of obtaining the desired result.

Innumerable studies have shown that, in effect, motivation or, to put it another way, the level of psychological involvement with politics and feelings of political effectiveness are crucial when explaining membership of political groups. Given that the costs of co-operating in a political organisation are limited, citizens interested in public affairs will perceive greater potential benefits from participation. The degree to which citizens are politically informed is also important, but how much information on political associations is necessary for individuals to decide to join them is more difficult to establish. Rothenberg (1988, 1989 and 1992) offers data which appears to point to the fact that not much information is necessary because citizens generally dedicate few resources – time or money – to their contribution. The information held regarding the organisation seems, however, to be much more decisive when their commitment is to be maintained over a long

period of time. Therefore, individuals use information in a process which Rothenberg labels as "experiential search": given that joining a group comes at a very low cost, individuals join political groups to acquire more information on their objectives and how they operate; if they are convinced, they stay with the group and if not they leave.[29] With regard to political effectiveness, Moe (1980a and b) shows how the collective action dilemma of co-operating with political groups is overcome, mainly, because individuals tend to considerably overestimate the importance of their individual contribution to the achievement of the collective good pursued. In addition, the organisations themselves contribute to this overestimation by emphasising the importance of each individual contribution in their recruitment messages (Baumgartner and Leech 1998: 71).

The role of other political and civic orientations in conditioning citizens' associational behaviour is much less clear. The growing literature on social capital pays a lot of attention to the relationship between trust in other citizens, social co-operation and membership. In some cases trust is even identified with the very concept of social capital and, in others, both trust and membership are indicators of the existence/absence of it.[30] In most cases it is assumed that the relationship between interpersonal trust

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[29] Johnson's data (1998: 45) supports Rothenberg's model on the "experiential" search for membership of political groups, as the abandonment rate in the environmental groups studied by Johnson is very high (around 30%) and everything seems to indicate that it is much higher among new members (around 50%). However, one problem with Rothenberg's proposal is that, in keeping with his rationalist approach, he presents the situation of joining a group as an express intentional act of the individual. The citizen "seeks" an organisation to join and this search process is "experiential". In this Thesis I opt, however, for a somewhat less rationalist, and as Rothenberg himself would say, more "sociological" approach. In many cases, the process which leads the citizen to join an association with political goals is formed by coincidences, social contacts and inertias which, as we shall see over the coming pages, are related to the social environment or *microcontext* in which individuals act or take decisions.

[30] One of the main theoretical problems presented by this research agenda is precisely this: the lack of conceptual definition and the confusion between concepts and indicators.

and membership is clear and direct, but it has been empirically demonstrated that this is the case in only very few. The causal mechanism between interpersonal trust and participation in associations is even more opaque, though Herreros (2002: 101-118) argues that social trust may serve to solve the social dilemma which constitutes the creation of or participation in associations which pursue collective goods, when individuals have incomplete information on the type (or types) of the other individuals they are interacting with. In addition, some researchers have argued that, contrary to what Putnam (1993, 1995a and b, 2000) seems to claim, associations which pursue collective goods may contribute more to the creation of social capital than those associations whose goal is to obtain private goods**,** such as leisure or sports associations (Tarrow 1996, Boix and Posner 2000, Herreros 2002). In addition to social trust, research on political behaviour has highlighted on numerous occasions that citizens with post-materialist or libertarian values are much more given to participating in organisations related to the NSMs.[31]

A second group of factors that condition political membership are the *resources* individuals have at their disposal for political action. People with more resources and a more privileged social and economic position are generally more given to joining political organisations, either because they are more aware of their ability to defend their interests (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 64 ff.), because their resources contribute to a political socialisation which favours involvement in public affairs (Almond and Verba 1989 [1963], Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978), because their social position and life experiences condition the cognitive skills they develop and the information they have at their disposal (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, Burns, Schlozman and Verba 2001), or because they are more often the object of mobilisation by the political organisations themselves (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Leighley 1995, Rothenberg 1988, 1989 and 1992, Johnson 1998). In general, the resources individuals have at

[31] See, for example, Flanagan (1987), Inglehart (1991 and 1998), and the articles in Müller-Rommel and Poguntke (1995) and in Clark and Rempel (1997).

their disposal, in addition to their social position, condition the cost structure of their political activity. When a citizen has a high level of income the relative cost of contributing financially to a political association is less than when they have a low income; when one has little free time available the opportunity costs of participating actively in an organisation are greater than for someone who does have that time available; and citizens who have few educational and cognitive resources face greater information costs than those who have them in abundance. Logically, therefore, the most common situation is that citizens with greater resources join political associations more.

The motivation and resources at the disposal of citizens provide us with information regarding a good part of the cost and benefit structures of political membership. Motivation is related to the expected benefits of political activity, while the individual's resources and social position allow us to ascertain the capacity of each person to assume the costs associated with membership of an organisation which pursues collective goods. Nevertheless, it is not only the attributes of the citizens themselves which act as conditioners of associational behaviour. As has already been discussed regarding the general analytical framework for political participation, any model which excludes factors external to the individuals themselves will clearly be incomplete. Having motivation and resources for political action is not, in many cases, sufficient to make citizens join political groups; they must also have the *opportunities* to do so.

Opportunities for participating in political associations are, to a large extent, a function of the political and social context in which citizens act. In reality, we should speak of "contexts", as we can distinguish between the immediate context or *micro-context* surrounding the individual (her personal networks), the organisational context or *meso-context* (the organisational networks around her) and, lastly, the political and institutional context or *macro-context*. The first two levels condition the contacts individuals will have with organisations and, therefore, the extent to which they are the objects of recruitment for these

organisations. As for the macro-context it conditions the structure of opportunities the political associations themselves face, thereby determining their recruitment and mobilisation strategies.

The exposure to personal or organisational networks that facilitate contacts with and recruitment by political organisations is of crucial importance when understanding why some people collaborate with political associations and others do not. The tasks of contact and recruitment contribute to the substantial reduction of information costs implicit in the decision to join an organisation. The accumulated research demonstrates unanimously that citizens who receive a request to join a political organisation are always more likely to become members (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, Leighley 1995). Even to the extent that Johnson (1998: 60) states that: "Collective interests do not explain group membership - recruitment activity does." This is due to the fact that it is often not sufficient for an individual to have the motives, motivation and resources, as most people do not take the initiative to join a political organisation. Organisations need to dedicate resources and effort to recruiting and informing people of their existence and objectives. In a pioneer study, Bowman and Boynton (1966: 673) had already highlighted that the main reason put forward by local activists from political parties for becoming actively involved in politics was that somebody had asked them to, and another of the most important aspects to have conditioned their decision was participation or interest in specific campaigns organised by the parties themselves. Additionally, the large majority of activists were recruited by the party and did not join on their own initiative. For his part, Hansen (1985) demonstrates how most of the changes in levels of interest group membership reflect the changing mobilisation practices of the organisations themselves.

For this reason, micro and meso-contexts are of vital importance in understanding why some citizens participate in political associations and others do not, as this type of social and organisational resource is not distributed uniformly amongst all

individuals. People's social networks differ greatly and often not in a random way. The social environment conditions whether one is in contact with other people who participate in associations or not, in the same way that it conditions whether organisations contact one to request one's support. This has been called the "*mobilisation bias*". People with fewer socio-economic resources tend to live surrounded by other people who rarely participate in public affairs, which means that the possibilities that somebody close to them encourages them to participate in political organisations are far fewer (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). At the same time, organisations carefully select the type of public they aim their recruitment efforts towards, and they contact those who are most likely to be prepared to dedicate resources or time to contribute to their cause. This means that the information costs of joining a political association are non-randomly distributed (Rothenberg 1988, 1989 and 1992, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Baumgartner and Leech 1998: chapter 5, Johnson 1998). Mobilisation by political organisations is, therefore, fundamental in understanding the variations we find in levels of political membership. And, to a great extent, the amount of people who join this type of groups depends on the mobilisation and recruitment efforts organisations make, as well as on how attractive they and the benefits they promise are for the public (Johnson 1998: 38). In short, the mobilisation of groups is significant for understanding individuals' propensity to join them. This is important because citizens participate - to a greater or lesser extent - if they are asked to do so (Pollock 1982, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Kriesi 1988, Klandermans and Oegema 1987), and because mobilisation increases the visibility of the groups and of the utility or need to join them.

But citizens are not only surrounded by other individuals and organisations; they are also inserted within a framework of institutions and rules of the game. *Macro-contexts* condition what political organisations emerge, their recruitment and mobilisation strategies and thus the associational behaviour of individuals. Institutions and socio-political structures mould the incentive

structure of individual action through various mechanisms. On the one hand, the socio-political context has effects related to changes in circumstance. For example, changes in one's economic situation affect the perceptions of how threatening specific socio-economic groups are, which in turn provokes greater mobilisation on the part of the political associations which defend the interests of these groups. Hansen (1985) and King and Walker (1992) point out that the situations that threaten group interests contribute to individuals being more likely to join organisations which pursue collective goods. Amongst other reasons, the greater mobilisation of organisations during periods of conflict increases the amount of information individuals receive regarding the potential benefits of action (and the potential losses of inaction) at the same time that they are prepared to take more risks. But in addition, Hansen states that fluctuations in circumstance affect different political organisations differently depending on the type of selective incentives they offer. Therefore, groups which offer intangible selective benefits (supportive or expressive) are more vulnerable to economic and ideological changes because, as these are "luxury" goods, the demand for them is very elastic to changes in price, revenue and tastes. Lastly, another effect of the varying political situation is related to subsidies or aid offered by various bodies - but above all governments - for the creation of organisations with political goals. These vary with time and according to the political priorities set by public institutions, something which contributes to the crisis of existing organisations and the creation of new ones. This intervention in the range of organisations "in supply" is fundamental because, as Hansen himself says, supply creates its own demand. But, going beyond that highlighted by Hansen, the fundamental question resides in the fact that without a supply of organisations, the demand for participation which could exist is unlikely to be able to develop fully, given the limits on co-operation imposed by the logic of collective action. Individual decisions to participate reflect, in part, the opportunities available. Even if individuals feel politically or

economically threatened, they cannot join groups which do not exist.

In general, many circumstancial aspects of the political context – such as subsidising policies, public services management policies, or the sympathies of governmental authorities towards associations – have a considerable impact on the creation and support of voluntary associations in general and political associations in particular, as they create the incentives and the opportunities for citizen mobilisation. But beyond the impact of changes in circumstance in the *macro-context*, the latter also imposes structural constraints for both the creation of political associations and individuals' decisions to join them.

On the one hand we should mention the different availability of institutions and organisations which are able to and want to act as patrons in the formation and consolidation of organisations with political goals (see Walker 1991). Co-operative political action can be subsidised by multiple authorities – foundations, companies, churches, individuals with large economic resources, or public institutions – and, therefore, the level of support each of them gives to the political associations could be a very relevant factor when encouraging participation in them. Hence, each society's capacity for "patronage" fundamentally alters the opportunities to form political organisations and participate in them.[32] Research in the field of social movements has repeatedly demonstrated the importance of interorganisational networks in understanding the emergence of new groups and political actors (for example, Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson 1980, Morris 1984, Kriesi and van Praag 1987, Klandermans 1989, McAdam and Fernández 1990). "Patrons" and interorganisational networks

[32] Walker (1991: 78 ff.) presents very interesting data on the evolution of patronage in the creation of different interest groups in the United States. Of more relevance to my argument is the evolution of citizen groups shown, since organisations of this type created between 1960 and 1983 have seen contributions from foundations quadruple, and aid from private companies and the government almost double in relation to the support received by organisations created in the period from 1836-1929.

provide material resources (money, infrastructures, etc.) and social resources (experience, contacts, leadership, etc.) which contribute to the creation of new organisations. Logically, the existence of these patrons and organisational networks provides the initial investment necessary for creating a new political association.

On the other hand, the political and social context determines to a great extent the opportunities citizens have to participate through political organisations. [33] As shall be discussed in greater detail in chapters 5 and 6, the institutional configuration of each political system conditions the channels of participation available, with the result that it structures the incentives system for co-operation with political associations. We must, therefore, take into account what has become known in the literature on social movements as political opportunity structure (POS).[34] The POS in each country determines whether the political system is more or less receptive to demands made by citizens through political associations. If political structures are open to the accommodation of interests expressed through organisations, citizens will have greater incentives to join them. If the political system is, on the contrary, closed and hostile to the demands of citizen organisations, the effectiveness of collective action will be limited and citizens will find few reasons to assume the costs deriving from co-operation in organisations, which, in addition, will increase due to the fact that it will be necessary to dedicate greater efforts to achieving the pursued objectives. Therefore, the POS affects both the benefit and cost structures of co-operative action.

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[33] Gray and Lowery (1993) and Lowery and Gray (1993) also analyse the impact of *macro* type variables (the size and complexity of the economy) on the development of interest groups. However, their results are of little relevance to this Thesis because they focus on the analysis of two properties of the interest representation system - density and diversity - and do not pay much attention to their impact on individual behaviour. Additionally, they limit themselves to considering economic factors and do not take into account variables related to the political context.

[34] See, for example, Kitschelt (1986), Kriesi (1989) and Tarrow (1994). The concept of POS and its application in this Thesis is discussed in detail in chapter 6.

In this research I pay particular attention to three elements which to a large degree define the level of openness of a political system: the level of accessibility, the level of fragmentation of the political elites, and the porousness of the bureaucratic decision-making system.[35] Firstly, the level of decentralisation of the government and the availability of institutions of direct democracy determine how accessible the political system is for citizen organisations. Several studies have discussed the relevance of the decentralisation of political structures as an incentive for participation. Hansen (1985: 81), for example, states that decentralisation affects the probability that the collective good will not be addressed if the individual does not co-operate. The greater the decentralisation of the government's political functions, the smaller the size of population affected by this, and the greater the impact of individual action on the final result of collective action. For her part, Nanetti (1980) considers that the introduction of decentralised structures in local politics favours citizen participation because it contributes to make issues more visible and to focus the efforts of local associations on specific actions whilst at the same time increasing the feeling of effectiveness of the political action. Additionally, decentralised, federalist or deconcentrated political systems encourage the creation of political organisations due to the fragmentation of power in different bodies and at different levels of government (see Knoke 1990a: 189, Lane and Ersson 1999: 184-186). The availability of institutions of direct democracy also seems to contribute to the proliferation of political associations and groups by offering additional opportunities to citizen organisations to participate in the political decision-making process, and by providing an alternative means to traditional lobbying activities (Boehmke 2000 and 2002). In addition, this type of institutional mechanisms reduces the cost of co-operation, as these are regulated and conventional processes, and by noticeably increasing the visibility

[35] In chapter 6 I discuss in detail the definition of each of these aspects, as well as their empirical operationalisation. For the moment a summarising reference to some of the most relevant hypotheses will suffice.

of organisations they reduce information costs (Kriesi and Wisler 1996).

Secondly, the fragmentation of the elites favours political membership by increasing political pluralism, contributing to greater political competition between parties, and increasing the political vulnerability of those in power (Kitschelt 1986, Koopmans and Rucht 1995 and Rucht 1996). In this way, the fragmentation of political elites contributes to citizen political organisations being able to achieve their objectives more easily and managing to establish alliances with sectors which are closer to where the decision-making takes place.

Lastly, the degree of porousness of the interest-intermediation system also contributes to structure the incentives for co-operative collective action. Research on social movements confers to pluralist intermediation systems and "weak" administrative systems a greater channelling capacity for the demands of organised citizens, as interest groups have a greater possibility to influence the decision-making processes (Kitschelt 1986, Kriesi et al. 1995: 31ff.). In addition, it is also the pluralist systems which allow the incorporation of a greater number of different demands, as no group enjoys a privileged or monopolist situation. However, another important characteristic of interest-intermediation systems – the level of conflict – is also relevant. Norms for consensual intermediation integrate negotiation systems which allow the incorporation of various demands from citizen organisations, while conflictive systems very often give rise to zero-sum games. Clearly, the expected benefits of organised action will be, on average, greater in the former than in the latter.

In summary, this Thesis approaches the study of political membership with an analytical model which attempts to explain this type of political behaviour by taking into account the impact of four types of factors. On the one hand, factors related to individuals themselves: their political motivation and the resources they have at their disposal. On the other hand, factors related to the context in which citizens decide and act: the opportunities for participation granted them by political structures, and the patterns

and processes of mobilisation of the organisations around them. Thus, I expect individuals with greater political motivation and greater resources to be more likely to join political associations. But these factors are not sufficient if we are to understand why citizens from some countries are much more likely to join political organisations than citizens from the other democracies around them. In order to understand this we need to comprehend to what extent each country's institutional and mobilisation environment favours or restricts their citizens' participation in organisations which pursue political goals.

Both types of factors will have a direct impact on individuals' behaviour, and will determine whether citizens from each country are more or less likely to join political organisations. However, they may also have an interactive effect on certain groups of individuals, in such a way that they promote or discourage in varying degrees the participation of different types of individuals (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993, Anduiza 1999 and 2002). Despite the difficulties entailed in obtaining data on the context of opportunities and mobilisation in various societies and for the same time period, to ignore this level of analysis and information-gathering could lead us to erroneous or, at best, incomplete conclusions. If we wish to gain a complete understanding of the decisions citizens make with regard to political participation, we need to adopt more complete models of analysis. To limit our studies to individuals' characteristics or to the characteristics of contexts is unsatisfactory. It is, therefore, necessary to combine different levels of analysis in order to understand individuals' political behaviour.

CHAPTER 2. POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP IN WESTERN COUNTRIES

2.1. Introduction

This chapter has three main objectives. Firstly, to provide methodological reflection on the different possibilities we face when attempting to measure membership in general and political membership in particular. To this end, in the following section I will present a critical discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the comparative analysis of this type of political behaviour, and give details of the decisions that I have adopted regarding the operationalisation and measurement of political membership, as well as of the data sources employed in this research.

Secondly, this chapter frames this comparative research on political membership within the context of participation in voluntary associations of all types, whilst also discussing the different strategies we can employ when classifying the different types of associations into political and non-political associations.

Lastly, I will describe in detail what constitutes the key variable for the whole research: political membership. I will provide comparative longitudinal data from different perspectives and employ a wide variety of data from various cross-national surveys. As we shall see, this detailed analysis will lead me to the conclusion that the notable differences in levels of political membership in western democracies are relatively stable and that, therefore, the analyses presented in later chapters, which are based

on a specific survey (the 1990-93 World Values Survey), will not be problematic in terms of the general validity of my conclusions.

2.2. The Comparative Analysis of Political Membership: Advantages and Disadvantages

2.2.1. Comparative Analysis in the Social Sciences: One Method or Several?

Throughout this Thesis comparative analysis is used in order to reach conclusions which can be generalised to a certain extent. Although this is a study that employs methods of statistical analysis – which are usually distinguished from traditional comparative methods and experimental methods – I do not think it is inappropriate to state that, in essence, this is to all intents and purposes a comparative study.

Various differences have been established, from different perspectives, between comparative statistical analyses and classic comparative research. Firstly, the underlying notion of causality is of a somewhat different nature. Although the vast majority of social scientists conceive of – or say they conceive of – causal relationships in probabilistic terms, it is also true that the deterministic language and logic of causality is much more evident in classic comparative or qualitative analyses (see, for example, Ragin 1987 and 2000). A second difference, and one where we find more consensus, is the number of observations employed in one comparative analysis or another. In this respect, Lijphart (1971: 684) states that the only substantial difference between comparative statistical analysis and traditional comparative analysis is the number of cases. Although this may be a useful general distinction, a significant number of comparative studies (this one, for example) are to be found at an intermediate point between the three or four cases usually analysed in the classic comparative studies and the 180 countries which could be included in the statistical analyses referred to by Dogan (1994:

40). A third distinction which tends to be put forward between both types of comparative analysis is related to the manner in which the cases are treated (countries or other social or political systems) as complete systems with a historical specificity. Thus, a common blame is that made by Ragin (1989: 60): comparative statistical studies substitute cases for variables and, therefore, make the cases' historical and socio-political particularity disappear from the analysis.

The latter distinction is probably the one that nowadays continues to separate supporters of one and another type of comparative analysis. To begin with, there is no agreement on the desirability of doing such a substitution: substituting the "names", i.e. the specificity, of the cases for values in one or more variables. Przeworski and Teune (1970: 8), for example, state emphatically that the objective of comparative research is to substitute the names of cases for the names of variables that allow us to explain the variations of interest. In other words, the main goal of social research and, therefore, also of comparative research is to unravel general patterns and relationships between variables. Thus, the main objective of comparative research is to find the variables or factors which make the cases we are comparing different. Ragin (1989 and 1991) argues that the problem resides in that the interest in variables in quantitative comparative analysis means that the cases are devoided of all content and meaning as complete entities. In this respect, comparative analysis becomes sterile because it ignores the cases as such and reduces them to mere value bearers across a set of variables. Although Ragin's approach is, in my opinion, excessively radical on this point, we do have to recognise the validity of a large part of his arguments. Even Przeworski and Teune, who we could say adopted the opposite position to Ragin on this point, admit that analyses centred on variables can lead to a fictitious sense that multiple factors are "being controlled", when in fact many socio-political characteristics of systems cluster as syndromes (1970: 38). Put shortly, statistical approaches are organised around the analysis of variables that are considered independent of one another and whose effect is generally additive.

Ragin's argument is very solid in this sense: on a significant number of occasions the systemic characteristics we employ to explain a specific socio-political phenomenon are not independent from one another, but are related to one another to form groups or syndromes of characteristics which are produced simultaneously. In my opinion, the problem consists of reaching a suitable balance between the ability to arrive at more or less general conclusions, provided by statistical analysis, and the possibility of taking into account the peculiarities of a broad number of cases. The consideration of a significant number of cases always requires information to be simplified in some way (Jackman 1985: 166) and, possibly, comparative statistical analyses do not always provide this desirable balance. But it does not seem that the results obtained from alternatives such as the Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) proposed by Ragin (1989 and 2000) respond to a radically different logic or simplify reality to a smaller degree. The fundamental question will always reside in analysing data in a reflective and careful manner.

Another problem related to this is that mentioned by Sartori (1994: note 28) concerning whether we can have sufficiently detailed knowledge of all the cases being studied when we conduct comparative statistical analyses with a relatively high number of cases. This aspect is important because a lack of knowledge or a superficial knowledge of the cases may substantially increase measurement error in the operationalisation of the concepts of interest. The problem highlighted by Sartori is, without doubt, real and there is very little one can say in response. In my opinion, we are faced here by the need to choose between the capacity to reach conclusions of a more general character and the likelihood of introducing greater measurement errors that could invalidate our conclusions.[1]

[1] Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the problem is not so serious if errors are not systematic, as they will only lead to our asserting that no relationship exists between two or more variables.

In summary, although comparative statistical analysis reveals characteristics which distinguish it from traditional or qualitative methods of comparative analysis, I believe that both are basically useful for the same purpose: to establish the existence of general patterns or multiple patterns and to examine the sources of these (Asher, Richardson and Weisberg 1984: 12). Divergences in terms of the specific methodological practices of one form of comparative analysis or another do not mean that they must necessarily be considered alternative or incompatible, rather they are complementary research strategies (Jackman 1985).

2.2.2. Important Aspects of the Research Design

The research design used in this study is conditioned by the main questions posed by the research, as well as the theoretical and analytical approach that will be employed to respond to these questions, and which has been presented in the previous chapter. The goal is, on the one hand, to contribute to a better understanding of why citizens join political associations (or not) but, on the other hand, I also intend to explain why we find such significant differences in the levels of political membership across countries. Therefore, my explanatory approach is on the entire social system (in this case, the countries) and not exclusively on individuals as independent beings (Coleman 1990: 2).

For a study such as this, which focuses on the significance of the political and institutional context in which citizens live in order to explain individuals' political behaviour in more complete terms, the study of a number of countries is essential. Given the questions and objectives addressed by this Thesis, the most appropriate research strategy is without doubt a comparative analysis of quantitative data. The comparative study of quantitative data allows us to perform a systematic analysis of the relationships between different types of variables and formulate in this way more general conclusions. However, in addition, quantitative comparative analysis, in contrast to QCA, allows us to

take into account explanatory factors which operate on different levels of analysis: the individual and the systemic.[2]

If we were to employ an exclusively individualistic or atomised view of political behaviour and restrict ourselves to the study of political membership in one of several countries, we would not be able to explain why there are such significant differences between the citizens of one society or another. Nevertheless, the alternative – the exclusive study of factors related to political membership on an aggregate level – would be equally unsatisfactory. The social phenomenon we are studying is the result of the aggregation of individual behaviours, and an explanation based on individual actions and orientations will always be more satisfactory from a theoretical and analytical perspective than one conducted on a purely systemic level (Coleman 1990: 4).

For this reason, the central analyses presented in Chapters 4 and 7 of this Thesis are multilevel, multivariate logit models that incorporate factors measured on an individual level and factors related to the political context.[3]

One last question related to the research design is the selection of the cases which are to be included in the comparative analyses of political membership conducted in this Thesis. As I have already mentioned, this study is restricted to the western democracies that could be qualified as consolidated from the 1980s onwards. It is therefore a design of *most similar systems*: these are countries which have been economically, politically and culturally interdependent throughout the 20th century, and which therefore have been exposed to similar economic, political and social processes. They are societies that have a similar form of political organisation, fundamentally in terms of enduring

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[2] Przeworski and Teune (1970: 36) only consider comparative research to be that which allows more than one level of analysis. In my opinion they are being excessive by limiting the scope of comparative analysis to such an extent, but this research does actually fulfil such demanding requirements.

[3] In Chapter 4 and, especially, in Chapter 7, a detailed introduction is offered to the logic of multilevel analysis techniques.

democratic conditions and the degree of citizens' effective political rights. As Scheuch (1968: 201) argues: "whenever the demonstration of differences is the focus of cross-cultural comparison, it is preferable to select cultures (or nation-states) that are not too dissimilar in too many aspects at the same time."

We are therefore dealing with a group of countries which are "most similar" in terms of the basic conditions of possibility which allow individuals to join political associations. In addition, given that the objective of this study is to analyse only one specific set of macro-political factors (institutional openness, and the structures and patterns of political mobilisation), it is important that the differences between countries are limited, to a large extent, to differences related to these factors. It would not make much sense to focus on these aspects if we were to study countries that were extremely different in terms of their levels of social, economic or political development. Undoubtedly, social, economic and cultural differences do exist between western countries but they are relatively small when compared to those existing between these countries and, for example, South American, Asian or African countries.

Limiting the study to western countries is, therefore, intended to ensure the real equivalence of cases and keep some fundamental variables under control. Problems of equivalence in a comparative study of this nature are manifold.[4] On the one hand, it is necessary to ensure the equivalence of meaning of the behaviour being studied: political membership. To include countries from other socio-political areas would hugely complicate our ability to ensure this equivalence, particularly if these are non-democratic and non-industrialised societies, where the very concept of membership in

[4] Here we follow Scheuch's (1968) diagnostic, which is unfortunately still current, on the main problems of equivalence in comparative studies based on survey data. In this section I will only briefly mention this aspect, which will be dealt with in more detail in later sections of this chapter. A very interesting collection of studies on the problem of equivalence in comparative research can be found in van Deth (1998).

associations adopts a very different meaning (in addition to the fact that it is often not a strictly voluntary behaviour).

Secondly, if we were to amplify even more the scope for selecting countries to be included in the study, we would encounter serious problems with the equivalence of the measurement instruments applied. The use of survey data in less developed societies not only gives rise to problems of equivalence in the translation of many concepts included in the items and questions of the questionnaires, but also introduces serious doubts on the equivalent reliability of the data collection process. For example, Dogan (1994: 41) points out that researchers in the field of comparative politics have repeatedly shown that a low level of development is related to a lower reliability in all types of data. This also affects, without any doubt, the reliability of survey data; if only because of the tremendous difficulties in obtaining representative samples in contexts which are socially and geographically adverse.

Lastly, the selection of cases must also guarantee total equivalence in terms of the variables we wish to maintain constant. If the main question of the research is "Why do citizens from some countries join political associations more than those from others?" the answer can not be as obvious as "because in some there is a clearly consolidated democracy which guarantees the effective possibility of joining political associations, and in others there is not". To introduce countries from areas such as Eastern Europe, South America, Asia or Africa would not allow us to completely discard this type of response.

Logically, restricting the design to contemporary western democracies imposes the same restrictions on our conclusions. It is not, therefore, my aim to generalise beyond the group of countries included in this study.

2.2.3. How to Measure Membership? An Operational Definition

Comparative research of associational membership, whether political or non-political, is faced with a series of methodological problems which make it necessary to arrive at solutions which can never be fully satisfactory. A first problem, which has already been addressed in the previous chapter, is presented with the very definition of what we are attempting to study: membership. As discussed in Chapter 1, membership of an association can be determined in two different ways: setting an external objective criterion, or establishing as a criterion individuals' self-definition as members of the group. In this sense, we could consider that an individual belongs to a group or association if they fulfil the requirement set by the researcher as a definition criterion: for example, if the individual is formally registered with the organisation or if he participates regularly in the activities of the group.[5] Another possible option consists of directly asking the individuals if they are members or if they belong to the organisations we want to study.[6] Both ways of adopting a definitional criterion for membership present problems. Requirements imposed by the researcher may have as a consequence the underestimation of levels of membership of groups and associations insofar as many of them do not have formal channels for registration such as fees, membership forms, etc.. On the other hand, were we to attempt to define membership by participation in the activities of the organisation, we would face a double problem with the measurement of such activities and the selection of the groups, given that many of them do not require their members to participate in the activities promoted by the

[5] Thus, Knoke (1990: 6) defines as a member any individual who has, at least formally, the right to choose leaders and to, at least indirectly through these leaders, express their opinion on the decisions facing the association.

[6] A third possibility would be to combine the two aforementioned methods. Thus, Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 58-68) consider "members" of an association to be those who declare themselves members or contribute economically to the association. In this respect, they combine the results of the definition of membership by the interviewees with those of their own definition.

association.[7] Nevertheless, defining membership through subjective reports presents other problems which are no less significant. Subjective definitions are by necessity varied and different, and individuals who have the same relationship with an association may define themselves differently in terms of their relationship with it: for many people the payment of a fee to an association does not establish a membership linkage but only one of economic contribution, while for others this linkage makes them feel they are members of the organisation. In addition, to opt for the subjective definition of the interviewee means to adopt a more flexible criterion as regards the type of behaviour included, and the heterogeneity of modes of membership will therefore be greater as well as unknown. In other words, if the researcher does not decide which behaviour qualifies as membership, and rather the interviewees themselves are the ones who say whether they are or not members, the level and type of activism which goes with this membership will vary more than if we opt for an objective definition. And, unless the interviewer expressly asks which activities this membership imply for each individual, this variation will also be unknown. For this reason, we have to decide between the incorporation of different modes of associational membership and, therefore accept the difficulties which go with this heterogeneity; or, on the contrary, restrict the definition of membership to specific observable behaviours in order to ensure the homogeneity of the action being studied.

Here I have adopted the former definition, and take as a criterion for membership the fact that the individuals define themselves as such when asked. This decision is related to the choice of surveys as the most appropriate source for obtaining

[7] Nowadays, numerous interest groups or pressure groups only request economic contribution to the cause they defend and do not organise activities or provide channels for active participation. On other occasions, even when organisations conduct activities in which members may participate, the main role of the members is to contribute economically to the association. This phenomenon is known as "checkbook participation" (see Jordan and Maloney 1997).

membership data. There are, in fact, few alternative sources. A fairly unrealistic option would be to produce a broad census of people registered with groups and associations, but again we would encounter the problem of the existence of a large number of groups that do not keep formal registers (not to mention time series) of the number of members they have. On top of this, it is impossible to locate all the groups and organisations that exist in such a broad number of countries (twenty) that are analysed in this Thesis. In any case, even if this alternative was viable, it would not necessarily be more reliable than the use of surveys. It is well known that many associations artificially "inflate" the number of members they have. As Knoke states (1990: 6): "Because claimed membership size can be a critical resource, collective action organisations find it advantageous to manipulate these figures."

Throughout this Thesis we shall therefore use as operative measures of political membership dichotomous variables which distinguish between those individuals who do not belong to any political association and those who do. Despite the fact that McPherson (1981) considers it methodologically more appropriate to use the total number of associations in which each individual participates or belongs to as an explanatory variable, I consider there to be good conceptual and methodological reasons not to do so in this Thesis. Firstly, differences between countries are, as shall be demonstrated in the following pages, important regardless of whether we use dichotomic variables or count variables; but there is a greater variation between countries when we use the former type of variable. Secondly, to use the total number of associations would be problematic from a conceptual viewpoint, as surveys do not provide information on the number of associations to which interviewed individuals belong, rather only the number of associational categories they belong to. Hence, the numerical variables we would use would underestimate the real number of associations citizens belong to and, what is worse, may introduce different biases in underestimation across countries. To employ a dichotomous variable in order to operationalise membership, therefore, introduces fewer biases in the analyses.

Lastly, analyses of count variables require techniques suitable for Poisson distributions, which would unnecessarily complicate the analyses and their interpretation. All of the above reasons lead me to opt for the operational definition of the dependent variable proposed here.

2.2.4. *Using Survey Data to Study Membership*

Despite the importance of studying associational membership for recent debates on social capital; despite the fact that it has been over forty years since Almond and Verba (1989 [1963]) studied the impact of organisational memberships on other political behaviours and attitudes; despite the fact that it has been over fifteen years since the interesting methodological debates on this subject between Baumgartner and Walker (1988 and 1990), on the one hand, and Smith (1990), on the other, took place, surveys specifically designed to measure different aspects of citizens' social and political participation have not incorporated reliable indicators of associational membership.[8] In fact, most of the available indicators which are aimed at measuring participation in associations are not very different to those designed by Verba and Nie (1972) over thirty years ago. Table 2.1 displays how associational participation has been operationalised in the main surveys in the United States[9] and the cross-national surveys of the

[8] As we shall see on the following pages, a notable exception to this general rule is the survey included in the project associated to the European Science Foundation network, *Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy* (CID) coordinated by Jan W. van Deth. Further discussions on how to measure associational involvement can be found in Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 59-62, 91-93 and 542-543), in Putnam (2000: 58-62 and Appendix I) and van Deth (2003).

[9] North American surveys are included as a reference because it has been in the United States where the research on associational behaviour and political participation has developed most. A more exhaustive review of the contents of North American surveys can be found in Smith (1990).

last two decades.[10] As we can see, the North American surveys have experimented more with different formulations of membership items, whilst including more varied question sets. The Eurobarometers (EBs) and World Values Surveys (WVS) generally do little more than ask about membership of a list of association types (see Table 2.2). Broad views of associational membership have been infrequent, in part also due to the fact that the complexities introduced by the detailed analysis of these behaviours can not usually be assumed by surveys that do not restrict themselves to the study of citizen participation. Most surveys that include questions related to participation in organisations have as their main purpose the study of electoral behaviour or public opinion in general. Thus, the collection of information on citizens' social and political participation in these surveys is merely instrumental: it is only of interest to the extent to which it can help us understand the phenomena which are the main object of analysis (voting, attitudes, etc.). Two of the few exceptions we find in this respect are the survey designed by Verba and his colleagues (*the American Citizen Participation Study*) and the survey included in the project *Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy* (CID) conducted in Europe. Both, and in particular the latter, study various dimensions of associational involvement, without restricting themselves to the collection of data only on associational membership. But, usually, cross-national surveys provide us with limited information on the multiple dimensions of associational participation.

As well as having to restrict the scope of our interest almost exclusively to membership, the use of surveys in a comparative analysis of associational membership introduces further problems of a diverse nature. Firstly, it is necessary to find international studies which have applied the same questionnaire in a significant

[10] The majority of surveys used in this Thesis have been obtained from the ICPSR database at the University of Michigan. The original data collectors, the ICPSR and other institutions who contributed economically to their compilation and distribution, are not responsible for my interpretation of these data. Complete references to the studies used can be found in Appendix 1.

number of countries – in order to ensure measurement equivalence – and which include questions on membership of different sorts of associations. For western countries this has only happened in the cases of some Eurobarometers (EBs, only in five surveys from 1983, 1987, 1990, 1997 and 1998),[11] of the World Values Surveys (WVS) coordinated by Inglehart (1981-82, 1990-93 and 1995-97), the European Values Survey (EVS) of 1999, the survey included in the CID project conducted between 2001 and 2002,[12] and in the recent European Social Survey (ESS) of 2002-2003.

Secondly, it is important to ensure that we are accurately measuring the phenomenon which interests us: membership. To do this, it is essential that the list of organisations be as complete as possible.[13] Despite the fact that most surveys include a category for "other associations", interviewees are more likely to remember their associational affiliations when presented with a complete list of organisations. As we can see from Table 2.2, various types of groups appear systematically in all available surveys (political parties, unions, environmental, welfare or charity, religious and educational/cultural groups), while some others are only included in a few surveys. The more complete surveys in terms of the list of organisations presented to interviewees are those included in the CID project,[14] the 1990 WVS and the 1999 EVS.

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[11] All EBs up to number 60 in 2003 have been consulted. EB 56.1 from 2001 only asks about membership of sports or leisure associations, charity or voluntary associations, and political parties.

[12] Unfortunately, the survey included in the CID project was under embargo at the time of finishing this Thesis and it will, therefore, not be possible to present data from it.

[13] Numerous studies exist to confirm the fundamental relevance of how we construct the list of organisations included in the questionnaires designed to study association membership (Almond and Verba 1989 [1963]: 246, Baumgartner and Walker 1988, Smith 1990, Baumgartner and Walker 1990, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, Putnam 2000). Nevertheless, problems with measurement go beyond the mere number of associations included (see Morales 2002).

[14] Unfortunately, the 2002-2003 ESS considerably reduced the original list of associations taken from the CID project, whose international research team was selected to design one of the two rotating modules for the first round of the ESS.

Table 2.1. The Measurement of Associational Involvement in American and Cross-National Surveys: Dimensions Included in the Questionnaires

Items included	GSS 1974-94	ANES 1985 Pilot	ANES 1996	ANES 2000	ACPS 1990	WVS 1981	WVS 1990-93	WVS 1995-97	EVS 1999	EB 1983-98	CID 1998-01	ESS 2002-2003
Explicit list of groups (number)	Yes (16)	Yes (10)	Yes (22)	Probes (7)	Yes (20)	Yes (10)	Yes (16)	Yes (9)	Yes (15)	Yes (9/12)	Yes (28)	Yes (12)
Membership/Belonging	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Voluntary time/work for a group	1987 only	Yes	No	No [b]	Only for 3 types	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (only work)	Asked in 1983,	Yes	Yes
Active member (self-assessment)	1987 only	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Money donations/contributions to group	1987 only	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Multiple memberships within group categories (maximum)	No	Yes	Yes (4)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Name of groups (maximum)	No	Yes	Yes (4)	No	Yes (1)	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Groups take stands on public issues/try influence governmental action	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Leadership role	1987 only	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Attend group meetings	1987 only	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Reasons for membership	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Formal political discussions within group	No	No	Yes [a]	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Informal political discussions within group	No	No	[a]	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Group provides services for nonmembers	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Frequency spend time in group	No	No	No	Yes (hours)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Only in 50.1[c]	No	No

GSS = General Social Survey; ANES = American National Election Study; ACPS = American Citizen Participation Study; WVS = World Values Survey; EVS = European Values Survey; EB = Eurobarometer; CID = Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy Project Common Core.

[a] The questionnaire does not specify whether it is formal or informal discussions that they are asking for. [b] There is a general question about involvement in volunteer work, but none related to specific groups and associations. [c] Only asked for charities and human rights groups.

Source: Own elaboration from the corresponding questionnaires.

Table 2.2. List of Groups Available in Each Survey or Series of Surveys

Groups listed for membership	WVS 1981-82	EB 19 1983	EB 28 1987	EB 34 1990	WVS 1990-93	WVS 1995-97	EB 47.2 1997	EB 49 1998	EB 50.1 1998	EVS 1999	CID 2001-2002	ESS 2002-2003
Political parties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Trade Unions	X	X	X	X	X	X	With parties	X	With parties	X	X	X
Professional associations	X	With trade unions	With trade unions	With trade unions	X	X		With trade unions	With parties	X	X	X
Community groups	X	X	X		X					X		
Environmental	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	With other
Women/feminist groups		X			X					X	X	With other
Third World/Human rights	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	With other
Peace movement					X					X	X	With other
Consumer groups		X	X	X			X	X	X		X	With other
Animal rights					X		With environm.	With environm.	With environm.	With environm.	X	With other
Welfare/charity groups	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X[a]	X	X	
Religious or church groups	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X[a]	X	X	X
Education, arts, music, cultural	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Youth organisations/children	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	With other
Sports or leisure groups/hobby		X	X	X	X	X	X[b]	X[b]	X[b]	X	X	X
Health care groups					X					X	X	
Other groups		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

[a] A distinction is made between "Social or religious organisations involved in charitable activities" and "Religious or parish organisations not involved in charitable activities". [b] They appear in two separate associational categories: "Sports clubs and associations" and "Hobby or special interest clubs".
Source: Own elaboration from the corresponding questionnaires.

Table 2.3. Countries Included in Each Cross-National Survey

Countries	WVS 1981-82	EB 19 1983	EB 28 1987	EB 34 1990	WVS 1990-93	WVS 1995-97	EB 47.2 1997	EB 49 1998	EB 50.1 1998	EVS 1999	CID 2001-2002	ESS 2002-2003
Austria					X		X	X	X	X		X
Belgium	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Canada	X				X							
Denmark	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Finland	X				X	X	X	X	X	X		X
France	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Great Britain	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Greece		X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X
Iceland	X				X					X		
Ireland	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Italy	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Luxembourg		X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Norway	X				X	X						X
Portugal			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Spain	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sweden	X				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Switzerland					X	X					X	X
United States	X				X	X						
West Germany	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Source: Own elaboration from the corresponding questionnaires.

If we also wish to conduct longitudinal studies it is then necessary that the organisations listed and the countries studied in each survey are the same. This last condition is only partially fulfilled, however. Neither the EBs nor the WVS provide the same list of groups in each survey, and nor are all the countries included in the same surveys. In Table 2.3 we see that only a group of eight European countries (West Germany, Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Ireland and Italy) appears in practically all the available surveys. The rest, up to 20 countries, are present in at least two surveys. In this respect the 1990 WVS also stands out as the most complete survey as it includes 18 of the 20 Western countries taken into consideration. These inconsistencies, without doubt, make analyses more difficult and restrict the possibilities for making comparisons. Despite this, however, certain combinations can be made in the use of the data which allow us to make the best use of the available information. For this reason, throughout this Thesis data will be presented from multiple surveys. Sections which are aimed at describing the phenomenon of political membership will include data from several of the available surveys. Nevertheless, chapters which present and develop the analytical model will focus on the most complete survey available to date: the 1990-93 WVS.

Above and beyond the problem of standardising groups and countries, however, we must also mention the existence of inevitable problems of a cognitive type when comparing results between different countries and between surveys. Vagueness in the formulation of questions and in the label given to associations can lead to citizens of different countries not always understanding them. In this respect, for example, the translation into different languages of the English term used to ask about membership of groups and associations – "belong" – can lead to different interpretations of what is being asked. In the case of the EBs, we can consult the documents for these possible problems in translation and linguistic interpretation thanks to the availability of the original questionnaires in the languages of the countries

participating in the surveys.[15] This allows us to contrast that, for example, the term "belong" in English has been translated as *faire partie* in French, *fare parte* in Italy, *pertenecer* in Spanish and *fazer parte* in Portuguese. In addition, problems with the translation of the EBs are aggravated if we take into account that from EB 49 (1998) onwards the expression used was not "belong", but being a "member".[16]

In other cases, the label given to some groups or organisations is incomprehensible even for non-Anglo Saxon researchers, and it is difficult to ascertain which type of associations the survey designers are referring to, and which type of organisations interviewees are replying about. A good example of this are the so-called "community action groups", which may be equivalent to either neighbourhood associations or groups, or social action groups, or any other type of group related to the local community. In fact, the use of this term in the EBs is not very clearly defined – they restrict themselves to calling them "*Community or social action groups*" – and there is more clarity with the WVS and the EVS, which specify further what this category is referring to ("*Local community action on issues like poverty, employment, housing, racial equality*"). Things become even more complicated when we take into account that translation into languages other than English causes huge problems, something which is unavoidable. Thus, in EBs 19 (from 1983) and 28 (from 1987), this category was translated as "*organisation d'action sociale, entraide, bienfaisance*" in French and this led to, for example, an Italian questionnaire being translated as "*attività sociale, aiuto reciproco, beneficenza*"; while, for example, it was translated into Spanish as "*comunidades de acción social o beneficencia*". As we

[15] This information can be found on the following web site: http://gesis.org/en/data%5Fservice/eurobarometer/standard%5Feb%5Fprofiles/indexframe_profiles.htm. This possibility does not exist for the WVS or EVS.

[16] The question itself reads: "From the following list, could you tell me which organisations you are a member of or whose activities you participate in?". This has been translated as "appartennaire" in French, "appartenere" in Italy, "pertenecer" in Portuguese, but as "miembro" in Spanish in EB 49 and as "pertenecer" in EB 50.1, conducted just one month later.

shall see, in Latin countries the concept of charity has been introduced whereas this quasi-religious connotation does not appear in the English version.[17] This imbalance was partially corrected in EB 34 (from 1990) by changing the name of the category in English to "*Charities and social action groups*", but the EBs have not been consistent with this label since then, as in EB 49 (from 1998) they appear as "*Social welfare or charitable organisations*" and in EB 50.1 (also from 1998) they appear as "*Social or community organisations or religious organisations involved in charitable activities*".

Fortunately, it is possible to deduce whether cognitive problems of any type exist when we have access to repeated instances of the same question (or category of association) in a survey. The existence of clear patterns (or absence of considerable fluctuations) constitutes an indication of the absence of a cognitive bias. While erratic fluctuations or with no apparent trend leave one to think that there may be significant problems with the interpretation of the categories. Unfortunately, in the case that we have given as an example, that of "community action groups", we do encounter, as could be expected, serious problems with measurement (see Morales 2002).

A problem of a different kind is that related to technical complications derived from the use of cross-national surveys. These complications are related to three different aspects: the design of the sample, the standardisation of the questionnaire and the process of obtaining responses. Firstly, when dealing with studies of an international nature (such as the WVS or the EBs), the sample design is not uniform for the national surveys included. In some cases, samples are the result of a process of multi-stage

[17] As an anecdote, we should point out that in this survey not even the Belgian and Dutch questionnaires translated into Dutch coincide completely when translating this category: "*Sociale aktie, onderling hulp, liefdadigheid*" in Flemish; "*Organisatie, groepering op het terrein van maatschappelijke hulpverlening, liefdadigheid*" in Dutch. Both translations are in fact equivalent, this is merely an example of the absence of coordination and checking of the translations made of each national questionnaire in the EBs.

cluster sampling, and in other cases the sample has been produced with stratification and quotas. Differences in the design of the samples give rise to problems with estimation, as different adjustments must be applied to the statistical analysis of one sample or another. Nevertheless, the fundamental problem in this respect is the lack of detailed information concerning which national surveys applied which type of sampling.[18] Therefore, in general, it is not possible to make adjustments to the estimation of parameters that incorporate the sample design, as would be desirable, and there is no choice but to use techniques which assume simple random sampling. Neither is any information provided on the final production of the survey: the number of individuals who were not contacted and how they were substituted, or the percentage of total non-response.

Secondly, standardisation of the questionnaire is not complete in many cases of cross-national surveys (for example, the WVS, the EVS and the surveys included in the CID project). Although, in principle, the same questionnaire should have been used in all countries, there are numerous variables which either differ in their coding and format, or are not used for all countries. In some cases, the omissions and the differences are substantial. For example, the Finnish sample for the 1981 WVS did not include the variables for income, gender and education, and the variable for education is available in different formats for Scandinavian countries and Switzerland. These problems affect the type of analyses which can be conducted to a varying degree, and oblige us to be cautious about the conclusions we reach. The problems that affect the variables used in the different analyses presented here are detailed in Appendix 1.

Lastly, another constant problem when analysing international surveys is related to partial non-response and its distribution across countries. Partial non-response is a type of observation error which consists in the absence of data in one or more cells of a data matrix. Very frequently, when a survey is conducted, there

[18] This common defficiency in cross-national surveys has been rectified by the 2002-2003 ESS and, to a lesser extent, by the 1999 EVS.

are individuals who co-operate and accept doing the interview but who do not provide valid responses to one or more of the questions in the questionnaire. Partial non-response can, therefore, arise because interviewees do not want to respond to a question which they consider to be too personal, because they do not know the answer to the question, or because they offer a response which is inconsistent with previous responses. Another possibility is that the interviewer did not ask the question by mistake or that during the process of data punching, a value is entered which may be recognised as invalid. As we already know, any type of non-response error has two effects on the analysis of complete cases: on the one hand, it reduces the size of the sample; on the other, it introduces the possibility of estimation bias. Effects on the size of the sample are obvious: we will only have the observations with valid values for each of the variables of the survey. Possible estimation bias will depend on the proportion of observations with partial non-response and the non-response production mechanism (see Moser and Kalton 1979, Little and Rubin 1987, Schafer 1997, King and others 1998). In general, bias will be smaller the more random the non-response process; that is to say, when non-response is distributed randomly between the various interviewees.[19] Nevertheless, in the majority of cases, this is not the situation and there are dependency relationships between the interviewees' characteristics or opinions and their propensity to

[19] Little and Rubin (1987) offer a typology for the different production mechanisms of incomplete cases which is extremely useful and has been adopted to a great extent in the specialised literature. These authors distinguish between mechanisms for missingness which are completely random (*missing completely at random*, MCAR), those situations in which the absence of information is not associated with any variable present or absent from the data matrix; mechanisms for randomly missing cases (*missing at random*, MAR), when the absence of information is associated with variables which are present in the data matrix, but not associated with absent variables; and missingness mechanisms which cannot be ignored (*non-ignorable missingness*, NI), which suppose an association between the absence of information and variables which are not present in the data matrix.

not respond to certain questions.[20] In addition, non-response affects the various questions or items on the questionnaire in different ways, and does not affect all countries in the same way. For example, for the 1990-93 WVS questions about family income produce high percentages of non-response in all countries, although these oscillate between over 50% in Ireland and less than 5% in Austria and Portugal. Other questions, on the contrary, hardly produce any cases of non-response, such as gender or age. The fundamental problem is, however, that around half of all interviewees do not respond to one of the questions on the questionnaire. This means that the analyses which include a high number of variables must assume the existence of a high proportion of missing cases. Normal practice when analysing the data consists of ignoring these cases, using the well-known methods of listwise and pairwise deletion. This means that those individuals who have not answered one of the questions included in the analysis are ignored in the statistical procedure employed. As numerous authors have pointed out, this practice can have very significant consequences for the results (Moser and Kalton 1979, Little and Rubin 1987, Brick and Kalton 1996, Schafer 1997, King et al. 1998). On the one hand, our estimations may be biased, as the elimination of those who do not respond assumes that non-response is distributed randomly among the different types of interviewees. In many cases this assumption is not substantiated, and our conclusions will, therefore, be erroneous. In the best case scenario, where non-response is distributed randomly, we are loosing an important amount of information by also eliminating the responses these individuals gave to other questions on the questionnaire. In this case, our statistical procedures will loose power by reducing the size of the analysed sample and we may not reject a false null hypothesis. In this Thesis, I have attempted to avoid these problems wherever possible through multiple

[20] An exhaustive analysis of the problem of non-response referred to in this Thesis can be fournd in Morales (2000).

imputation of cases of non-response for specific multivariate analyses.[21]

In summary, the inclusion of a large number of countries in the analysis of political membership for comparative purposes improves the quality of the results and the conclusions which can be derived from them. Nevertheless, the analysis of a large number of societies brings with it a series of unavoidable difficulties, amongst which we encounter the problems mentioned with the survey studies. Further complications of comparative analysis, which will be analysed in more detail in later chapters, are related to the obtention of data on the political systems of each of the countries studied, in order to conduct multilevel analyses which will allow us to determine the influence of the political context on the political behaviour of citizens. However, the advantages of comparative analysis when establishing general conclusions are many, and the difficulties can be overcome by the careful and cautious analysis of the results.

2.3. Membership in Western Democracies: Patterns and Classifications

The study of participation in associations in Europe and other western countries has aroused a growing interest in the various social sciences, particularly encouraged by the diffusion of the concept of social capital, and its supposed versatility when promoting virtuous social dynamics. Nevertheless, the great majority of published documents that analyse the phenomenon of associational membership do so by focusing on specific countries

[21] The consequences of eliminating incomplete cases for the type of analyses performed in this Thesis have been studied in more detail in Morales (2000). More information on the procedures employed to this end and the results obtained are provided in Appendix 2.

(mainly the United States), and there are relatively few cases where a clearly comparative approach has been adopted.[22]

Over the following pages I will offer a general and fundamentally descriptive overview of the phenomenon of associational membership – and in particular of political membership – in the western world. On the one hand, I wish to demonstrate the large variations that exist in the levels of associational membership in different countries, and its evolution since 1980. And on the other hand, I will reflect on the classifications and typologies which can be derived from the analysis of membership of different associations and groups. Finally, these classification criteria will be used to explore the phenomenon of political membership in more detail.

2.3.1. Associational Membership: Levels and Trends

How many citizens co-operate with associations? Which associations do they join? How has associational membership evolved in western democracies? In the following pages I show various analyses of the levels of participation in associations and their evolution in western Europe and North America, using survey data gathered since the early 1980s. The first aspect we can highlight from the Graphs[23] below are the large differences that exist across countries in terms of membership levels. While in some countries a large majority of adult citizens belong to associations, in others this is only true of a minority. In Graph 2.1 we can see the evolution in the general levels of membership in 18

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[22] There are few more than the following: Curtis (1971), Almond and Verba (1989 [1963], chapter 10), Wuthnow (1991), Curtis, Grabb and Baer (1993), Gaskin and Smith (1995), Dekker and van den Broek (1998), Seligson (1999), Morales (2001), Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas (2001), Bowler, Donovan and Haneman (2003). Howard's book (2003) focuses on Eastern Europe alone.

[23] The graphs show the estimated trends so as to facilitate the view of longitudinal patterns. The Tables containing the percentages which have resulted in these Graphs can be consulted in Appendix 3.

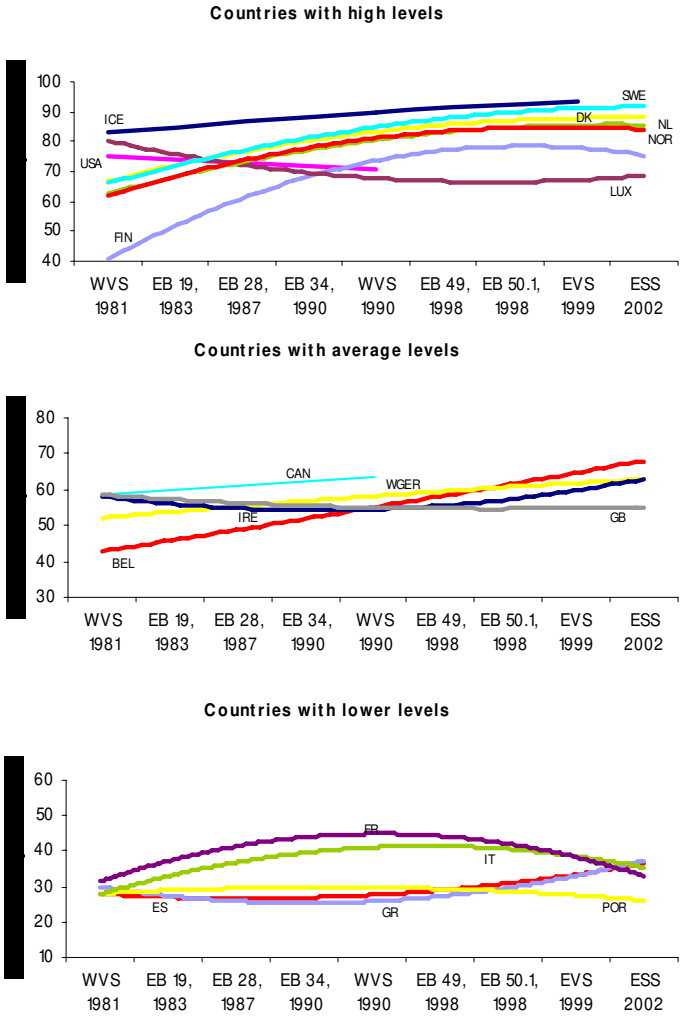
western countries from 1981 to 2002.[24] On the one hand, the huge variations in levels of membership stand out, oscillating between 90% in Iceland in 1990 and 19% in Spain in 1987. Another significant characteristic is the absence of a uniform pattern in the evolution of membership over time. Growth trends stand out in Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and particularly in Finland.[25] The Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands are the countries with consistently higher percentages of associational membership. We find the opposite pattern in southern European countries (Italy, France, Portugal, Greece and Spain). In between we find mainly countries such as Germany, Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland.[26]

[24] In order to facilitate the view of the trends, countries have been divided into three groups according to levels of membership: between 60 and 90%, between 40 and 60% and lastly those with levels below 50%.

[25] Finland is a peculiar case. Growth between the 1981 WVS and the 1990 WVS can not solely be attributed to an increase in membership in this country. Although not mentioned in the document accompanying the 1981 WVS, in Finland interviewees were only allowed to name one group or association they belonged to (or at least, only one was coded). This does not actually affect the Finnish percentage of membership in general, as this is calculated as the proportion of interviewees who claim membership of at least one association. In short, the 1981 Finnish data is not very reliable in this sense and, in all probability, growth was not so spectacular, but the 1990 results have been corroborated by later survey results.

[26] We should mention that in several countries the 1990 EB and the 1990-93 WVS provide quite different results, which are difficult to attribute to reality and are probably associated to serious problems in sampling error or overestimation. This problem shall be appreciated with greater clarity from later graphs and has been studied in more detail in Morales (2002).

Graph 2.1. The Evolution of Associational Membership in Western Countries

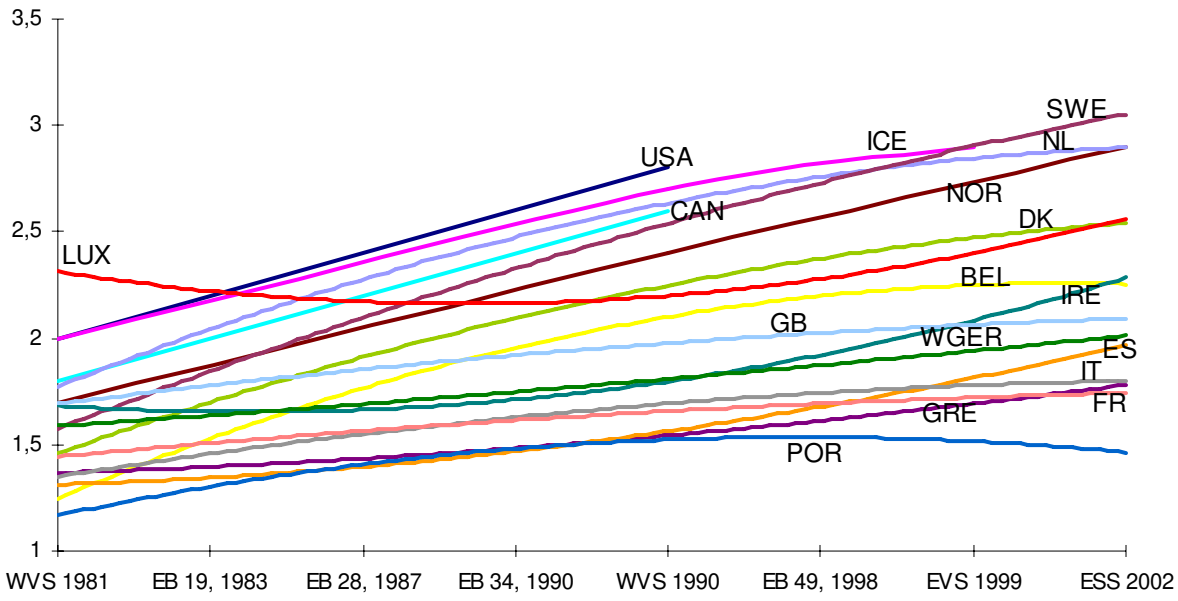


In the Graph below (Graph 2.2) we can also appreciate the evolution of the average number of categories of associations which those individuals who are members of some kind of group or association belong to. This information corroborates the fact that there are significant differences between countries. In some of them, citizens not only have a greater tendency to join groups and associations, but they also join several. The cases of the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands are the most extreme,[27] but there is also a significant level of multi-membership in North American countries. By contrast, in central and southern European countries the vast majority of citizens who are members of associations only belong to one, as the average does not exceed 2 in most cases.

The longitudinal patterns are also interesting. As I have already mentioned, it is not possible to state whether a clear increase or decrease in general levels of membership exists between 1980 and 2002. Nevertheless, it does seem that the phenomenon of multiple membership has increased. This, in addition, is true for all countries to a greater or lesser extent; therefore, even in southern European countries, multiple membership has increased. And this tendency does not seem to be affected by the different number of categories of associations which appear in each survey (see Table A2.2 in Appendix 3). In addition, we see that, far from decreasing, the differences in the breadth of citizens' associational participation in the different western countries has increased. Even though the phenomenon of multiple membership is common to all countries, it is more pronounced in the countries with higher levels of associational involvement.

[27] The Netherlands and Iceland are the only countries in which the mode of the number of associations for the sub-sample of people belonging to an association is 2 in the 1990 WVS.

Graph 2.2. The Evolution of the Number of Associational Categories Citizens Belong to



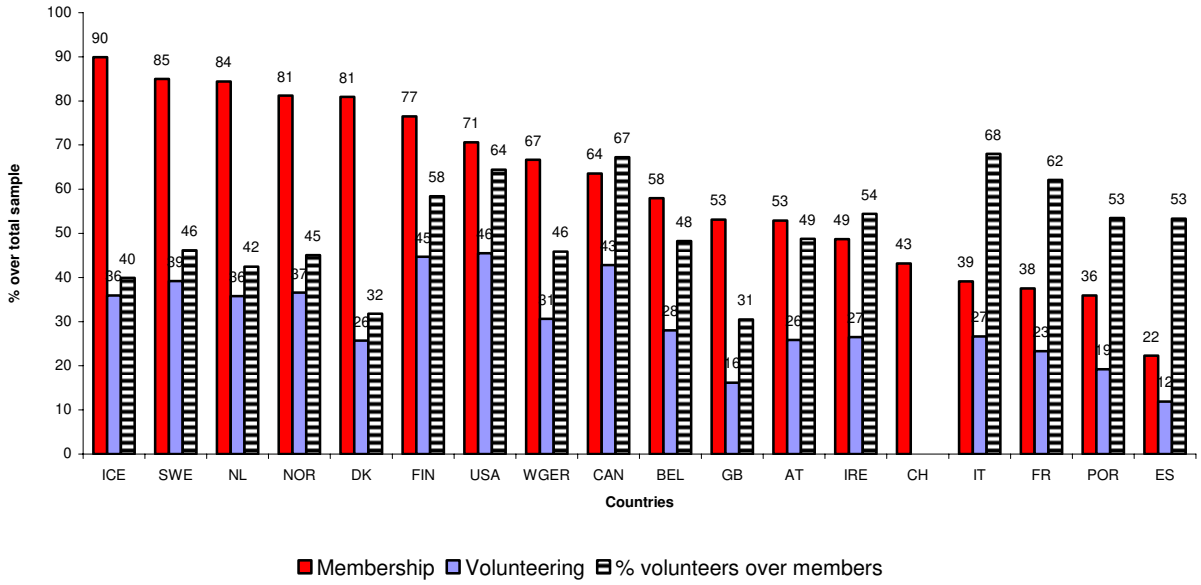
If we now go on to consider the most active form of membership, unpaid voluntary work with the association, we obtain a more complete and complex view of the phenomenon of membership in western democracies (Graph 2.3).[28] In the early 1990s, it was the North American countries, together with Finland, where citizens were more prepared to dedicate time to the associations they were members of. Curiously, the high levels of membership in the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries do not transform into equivalent proportions of activism. Furthermore, although the southern European countries continue to display the lowest percentages, they do not differ excessively from many other countries as far as dedicating work and time to associations is concerned. In addition, if we consider the percentage of activists or volunteers as a proportion of those belonging to some association, we see that in all southern European countries over half of those people who are members of associations participate actively in these associations. This is particularly true in Italy, where the proportion of activists or volunteers is highest of all western countries, as almost 70% of association members dedicate time to its operation and activities.

This lower differentiation between countries when we distinguish between active and passive forms of associational involvement is more patent when we analyse data from the first European Social Survey (ESS), conducted between 2002 and 2003 in 15 west European countries.[29] Graph 2.4 shows the distribution of four forms of associational involvement in each of these countries.

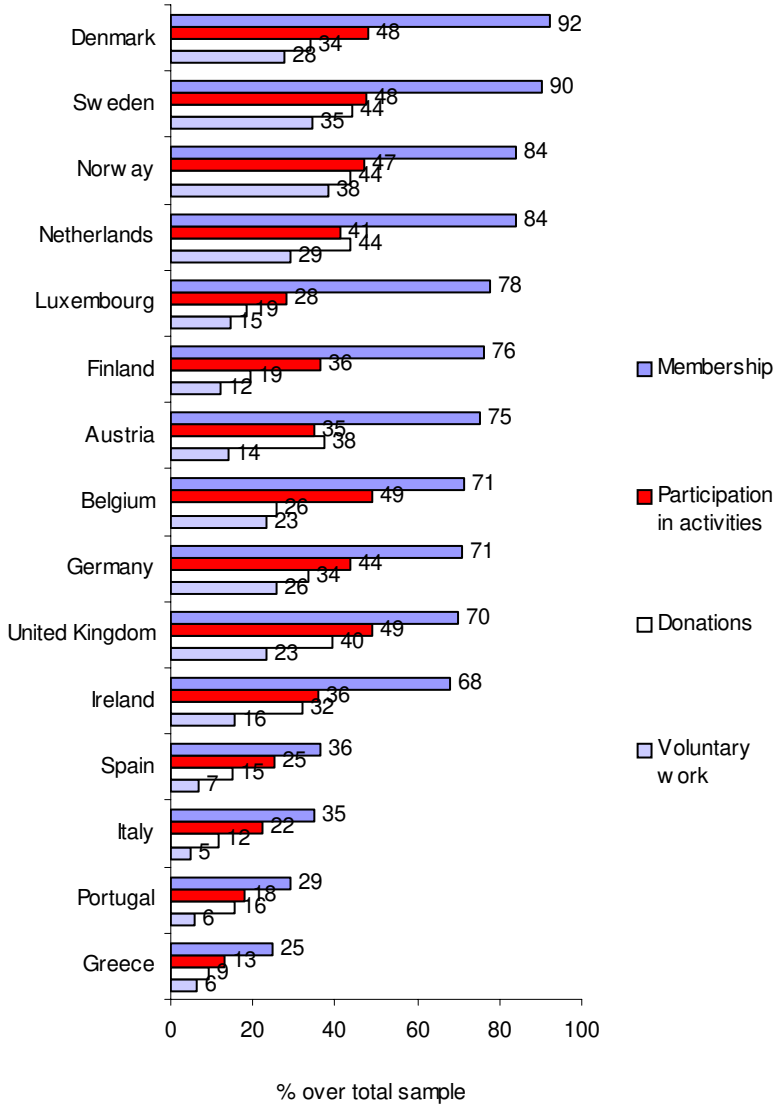
[28] Countries appear in the graph ordered from the highest to the lowest level of association membership.

[29] The 2002-2003 ESS was also conducted in three post-Communist countries and Israel. Although this study also includes a French sample, the data from this sample was not available when this Thesis was finished.

Graph 2.3. Membership and Voluntary Work in Associations, WVS 1990-93



Graph 2.4. Forms of Associational Involvement in Europe, ESS 2002-2003



As can be appreciated from the Graph, the differences in percentages for simple membership are as notable as those we find, for example, for participation in activities. In this respect, associational membership in western European democracies oscillates between 92% for Denmark and 25% for Greece, representing almost four times more citizens who are members of associations in the former country; while participation in activities oscillates between 49% in Belgium and the United Kingdom and 13% in Greece (again almost four times more in the former than in the latter), and doing unpaid voluntary work varies between 38% for Norwegians and 5% for Italians, which means that the former are over 7 times more likely to dedicate their free time to unpaid work in associations than the latter.

Nevertheless, these figures hide to a certain extent the fact that in southern European countries those people who decide to join an association more often do so in an active way. In this respect, if we compare the proportion of active members[30] in the various countries of Western Europe (Graph 2.5), we find that the distribution changes significantly. The Scandinavian countries are no longer at the head of the table, and the southern countries are no longer at the bottom.

Therefore, taking into account the levels of voluntary work or activism gives us a more complex view of the phenomenon of associational membership in western countries. Dekker and van den Broek (1998) distinguished between three worlds of civil society[31] that are very descriptive of the associational reality of western democracies: *parochial* (to call it "marginal activism" would probably be less pejorative), characterised by low levels of membership but a high proportion of activists and typical of southern Europe; *active*, with medium or considerable levels of

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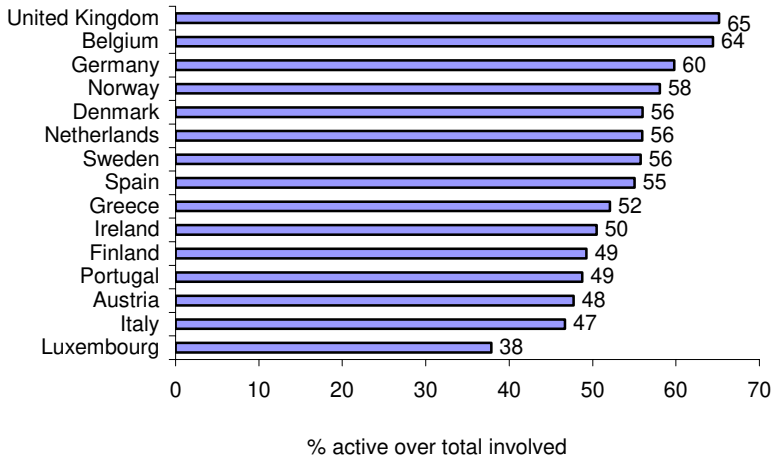
[30] Active members are considered to be those who participate in activities or do voluntary work in any association.

[31] Although I am not convinced by the readoption of the term "civil society" due to problems with its definition, the distinction they make between the three associational worlds seems interesting for subsequent research.

associational membership and very high levels of activism, characteristic of North America; and *broad*, with very high levels of membership but medium levels of volunteering, more typical of Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands. A large number of countries would be found in the middle of these three "ideal" types (Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, Austria, Switzerland, etc.).

Graph 2.5. Percentage of Active Memberships, ESS 2002-2003



In summary, we must point out that, although the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands stand out because of the widespread of membership, while in southern Europe only a minority of citizens participates in associations, it would be a little reductionist to conclude that activism is far greater in the former than in the latter. Associations' ability to mobilise members is also related to the possibility of involving them (and the population in general) in specific activities, and in this respect associations in southern European countries are quite successful within the margins provided by the low levels of membership that exist in these countries.

2.3.2. How To Classify Associations? Typologies versus Taxonomies

Many of the authors who have studied the phenomenon of membership have drawn distinctions between groups of a political nature and groups of a social or non-political nature (see, for example, Almond and Verba 1963, Lane 1965, Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, Wilson 1995 [1974], van Deth 1997, Wessels 1997, van Deth and Kreuter 1998, and Warren 2001). In general terms, these classifications are made with the theoretical or empirical conviction that not all groups are equivalent or, more accurately, that membership and/or participation in different types of groups is related to different explanatory factors and have consequences which are varied in nature. In this respect, for example, some authors consider that participation in groups which are markedly more political is related to other forms of political participation to a greater degree than participation in groups with a social orientation (for example, Jacoby 1965, Babchuk and Edwards 1965, Verba and Nie 1972, Rogers, Barb and Bultena 1975, Pollock 1982, Opp 1989, Knoke 1990c).[32] The consequences of different types of membership have also been debated in the literature on social capital. Putnam (1993, 1995a and b, and 2000), for example, argues that the creation of social capital is more related to membership of social associations (bowling leagues, scouts, bird-watching groups, etc.), while other authors (for example, Boix and Posner 1996, and Hardin 2000) consider that it is the associations which pursue public goods that promote to a greater extent habits of co-operation and, therefore, those which would be more useful for obtaining public goods such as institutional efficiency or the good functioning of democracies. In this respect, for example, Boix and Posner (1996: 19-25) argue

[32] This does not mean that apolitical groups cannot have political socialisation effects. For more on this issue, see Erickson and Nosanchuk (1990). This question of the differential consequences of political and non-political membership is addressed in Chapter 3 of this Thesis.

that two of the four mechanisms[33] which may link levels of social capital to the degree of institutional efficiency are, on the one hand, the existence of informed citizens and voters who hold their governments accountable, and on the other, the creation of good citizens. In both cases, although Boix and Posner do not state this explicitly, we can deduce from their argument that associations which pursue public goods will promote this type of citizenry to a greater extent. Due to all of the above, it is analytically useful to distinguish between different types of associations and groups and in particular between political and non-political associations.

Various strategies can be adopted when classifying associations as political or as pursuing non-political ends. In this respect it is useful to distinguish between the construction of typologies and of taxonomies.[34] A *typology* is a conceptual classification of objects which takes into account common characteristics that are theoretically defined. The researcher selects the characteristics or dimensions that will guide the classification and defines the types by the cross-cutting of these dimensions. The types are, therefore, conceptual constructions more than empirical cases. This does not mean that a typology is not empirically informed, it is simply the result of a theoretical consideration of the structure. Empirical cases are, frequently, later linked with the theoretical types, but the characteristics that serve to form the typology have been theoretically fixed at a previous stage. A *taxonomy*, by contrast, is an empirical classification of a series of objects into a specific number of groups, taking into account their similarity with respect to a set of characteristics. Only the characteristics included in the empirical analysis determine the classification and, often (though not necessarily), taxonomies are hierarchical. Groups are defined in terms of proximity between objects, and the definition of this proximity is crucial when obtaining the classification.

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[33] The two other mechanisms highlighted by Boix and Posner are bureaucratic efficiency and the consensual practices of the elite.

[34] See the discussion of these definitions in Bailey (1994).

Therefore, the classification of different groups and associations can be done by establishing a typology or by empirically constructing a taxonomy. In the literature we find examples of both strategies. Almond and Verba (1989 [1963]: 250) and, at a later date, the different pieces of research directed by Verba, define political organisations – as opposed to associations of a social nature – as those which take stands on public issues, either nationally or locally[35] (Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995); or as those in whose meetings politics and public affairs are usually discussed (Verba, Nie and Kim 1978: 100). Therefore, the distinction these authors make between political and non-political associations is based on an implicit typology which distinguishes between the public and private domains. The opposite strategy, that of constructing taxonomies from empirical analyses without providing a conceptual framework which strictly guides the classification, has been adopted by Wessels (1997), van Deth and Kreuter (1998), Rossteutscher and van Deth (2002), and Maloney and Rossteutscher (2003). In these cases, the researchers have used survey data to construct their classification. Specifically, they have employed factor analysis or other dimensional analyses in their definition of the structure of the types of associations. As I shall go on to argue now, this latter strategy is very questionable from both an empirical and an analytical viewpoint.

Various statistical techniques exist for making empirical or taxonomic classifications from similar and related but, at the same time, different approaches. The classification technique *par excellence* is cluster analysis, and correspondence analysis is increasing in popularity. But we can also employ, with certain

[35] In fact, they can only measure the interviewees' perception of this involvement in political or public affairs. Almond and Verba themselves point out one of the main difficulties with this form of distinguishing between political and non-political groups: many citizens do not consider that their group adopts political or public stances while a different formulation would allow us to contrast that their perceptions are erroneous (see Almond and Verba 1989 [1963]: 251, note 5).

precaution, multi-dimensional scaling and factor or principal component analysis.[36] Each of these techniques provides us with information which is, in a certain respect, similar but which introduces important distinctions. With cluster analysis we attempt to identify groups of objects which are as similar as possible. The objective of multi-dimensional scaling is to provide, through the estimation of a map, a graphical representation of the distances between a series of objects in the lowest number of dimensions and with the greatest precision allowed by the data. In both cases, analyses require the distance or proximity between the objects to be measured. In the case of factor or principal component analyses the dimensionality of a series of variables is analysed through the decomposition of the matrix of variances and covariances, and therefore the distance/proximity measure is preset by the type of analysis performed. What is, then, the problem with using any of these methods to establish a taxonomy of the associations or the types of membership? The problem does not reside in the techniques but in the way they have been used with the available survey data. When employing factor analysis the associations appearing on the questionnaire are treated as variables, whose patterns of variance and covariance are decomposed in a series of factors or principal components. Thus, what we are doing is to analyse the co-occurrence of associational variables amongst interviewees. That is to say, two associations will form part of the same factor or component when interviewees tend to belong to these two associations at the same time.[37] In this respect, the dimensions encountered are difficult to interpret, and at most can be considered as combinations of membership displayed by interviewed citizens.[38] In summary, with this type of analysis,

[36] See Kruskal and Wish (1981) for more on this issue.

[37] See Rossteutscher and van Deth (2002) for a similar reflection.

[38] With van Deth and Kreuter's (1998) analyses the problem is greater still, given that in order to obtain three dimensions they eliminate a significant number of associations and groups from the questionnaire (7 out of 16). And the meaningfulness of the results is therefore at the very least doubtful. Something similar occurs with the analyses conducted by Rossteutscher and van Deth (2002) and Maloney and Rossteutscher (2003), based on a survey of associations instead

what is described then, in quite a confused and non-explicit way, are citizens' associational preferences: which groups they tend to belong to simultaneously. However, this cannot and should not be equated to a classification of the associations. Dimensional or classification analyses obtained in this way group individual behavioural decisions, but there is no reason why they should coincide with the opinions of similarity or proximity these same individuals could have regarding associations.[39] Above and beyond the aforementioned problems with interpretation of the results, this type of classification strategy presents serious problems of equivalence across countries – and probably also across time – as van Deth and Kreuter (1998) and Rossteutscher and van Deth (2002)[40] are concerned to point out.

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of a survey of individuals. The final classifications are obtained, in part, thanks to the elimination of empirical categories which do not mould to these researchers' statistical taxonomical exercises. In addition, in these latter works, many of the final grouping decisions are not sufficiently justified by their empirical results.

[39] To give a trivial example which may clarify the argument, we could say that what Wessels, van Deth and Kreuter do in their respective analyses would be equivalent to peforming a dimensional analysis of the food consumed by citizens of the countries included in the surveys. The results would group together those foods which tend to appear together in the diets of different groups of individuals, but it would not tell us anything about the different types of foods which exist or their characteristics.

[40] When cluster analysis and multi-dimensional analysis is performed with the data from the 1990-93 WVS, either with the whole sample or each one of the 18 national samples of western democracies, we discover that it is impossible to propose one single classification of associations using these statistical techniques. We notice the existence of large variations in the configuration of the associational map of western countries. In some countries we notice the existence of more or less compact clusters (such as in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and the United States, for example), and in others we find such a dispersion of the different groups and associations that it is difficult to call them clusters (as with the majority of Scandinavian countries, for example). And quite certainly, we do not find a neat division between groups of new social movements and other associations in hardly any of the countries. In other words, it is impossible to find three reasonably identifiable clusters which can adopt the labels designed by Wessels (1997) and van Deth and Kreuter (1998). Graph A2.1 in Appendix 3 serves to illustrate these results. The others have been omitted and are available upon request.

In that case, which taxonomic strategies seem more appropriate and with what classificatory aims? In my opinion, the use of factor or principal component analyses applied to the study of associational membership with individual-level survey data confuses more than it clarifies. In ideal terms, the most appropriate way of classifying the groups and associations into types or *taxa* would be the construction of an immense database which would include the characteristics of the groups in a list of variables of interest: for example, organisational structure, the aims of the association, the types of activity they organise, etc. Given the difficulty of creating such a database for multiple countries on a national scale, similar although less detailed information could be gathered through surveys from the individuals who belong to a group or association. Another option would be to ask experts for their judgements on similarities based on a series of variables of interest. In all of these cases, cluster analysis would allow us to study which associations are more similar according to a series of characteristics.

In part, this is the type of data obtained from the project *Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy* (CID) conducted by the *European Science Foundation*. One of their two sub-projects is concerned with studying the associational structure of 27 local communities in Europe.[41] Using this data, Maloney and Rossteutscher (2003) propose a taxonomy of the associations that exist in six municipalities (Aalborg, Aberdeen, Berne, Enschede, Mannheim and Sabadell) according to dimensional analyses of the sectorial areas in which the associations participate. Thus, two or more sectors are grouped in the same type if a more or less significant number of associations conduct activities in these areas simultaneously. The result of their classificatory analysis is translated into nine categories related to three types of domain: the private or individual domain, the public or State arena, and the marketplace. This taxonomical exercise, although interesting, presents two problems which are, in my opinion, significant. On

[41] More information on the project and its results can be found at the following link: http://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/projekte/cid/homepage.htm

the one hand, what could be a useful classification of similar subject areas is restricted by the fact that some areas are excluded because they do not correlate with others. In this respect, for example, activities in the educational domain are not included in the group of subjects related to the family and child-raising simply because there is a division of work in these sectors between different associations. And the same thing happens with activities related to hobbies, which are curiously excluded from the "leisure" category. These exclusions not only restrict the usefulness of the classification, but also discard an important amount of information by excluding from subsequent analyses associations which are mainly dedicated to the excluded subjects. Furthermore, an even greater limitation of the classification is that, as it is not guided by any theoretical expectation, it is not very useful in analysing other data regarding associational behaviour. In this respect, many of the later analyses presented by Maloney and Rossteutscher fail to show clear patterns across the nine subject sectors they have constructed. The absence of a theoretical framework to aid interpretation of, and complete the dimensional analyses limits the analytical usefulness of the classification and naturally means that it cannot be used for all purposes, contrary to what these researchers appear to believe.

All of this leads us to think that it would be more interesting and probably less problematic if we were to establish conceptual classifications or typologies when going deeper into our analysis of membership. In this respect, in this Thesis I have considered it convenient to differentiate, like other authors,[42] between groups with a political orientation and groups with a social orientation. As we have already seen in chapter 1, in this research political organisations or associations are defined as *those formally organised groups who seek collective goods (whether they be pure public goods or another type of collective goods) and which have as their main goal to influence political decision-making processes, either by trying to influence the selection of*

[42] For example, Almond and Verba (1963), Verba and Nie (1972, chapter 11), Pollock (1982), Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) and Leighley (1996).

governmental personnel or their activities, include issues on the agenda or change the values and preferences which guide the decision-making process. Therefore, groups or associations with a social and non-political orientation are considered to be those which either pursue private goods (sports associations, religious associations, many youth associations, etc.), or – while still pursuing public goods – do not primarily aim to influence the political arena (healthcare associations, artistic/cultural associations, etc.).

Nevertheless, to decide which of the associations that are listed in the survey questionnaires are political and which are not is not so simple. As Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 58-59) point out, when conducting this classificatory exercise, "technical" decisions on how to measure what is political have important substantial consequences. The American Citizen Participation Survey (ACPS) designed by these scholars allows us to explore what the implications of our "technical" decisions exactly are when distinguishing between political and non-political associations. This survey asked interviewees if they believed that the groups and associations they were members of took public stands – either nationally or locally – and this was asked for all the associations the interviewee belonged to. When the interviewees participated in or contributed economically to more than one association in a specific category (for example, more than one sports association), their responses were related to the association which they deemed to be more important in terms of their participation or contribution. With this question format it is possible to explore the consequences of alternative definitions of which groups and associations are to be considered political.

Firstly, we can classify as political associations all of the categories which at least 50% of the interviewees said took public stances.[43] That is to say, if 50% of the interviewees who are

[43] Here two slightly different possibilities were available: to use the 50% threshold considering all respondents involved or to use this threshold only among those who gave valid answers to the question on public stands. If the former was chosen, the following groups were considered as political: veterans'

members, for example, of women's organisations consider that their association adopts political stances, then we will consider all members of women's organisations members of "political" associations. A second possibility is to limit our consideration of a political member to only those interviewees who consider that their association adopts political stances. In this way, if an interviewee says that the women's organisation she is a member of adopts political stances then we will consider that this person is a member of a "political association". Finally, the survey allows us to also choose to define which groups are political from a theoretical criterion predefined by the analyst. In this way, we shall consider that all interviewees who are members of an association which conforms to the theoretical definition are members of a political association. Undoubtedly, when interviewees have not been asked any question about the political or public behaviour of their associations, this latter option is the only alternative we have to distinguish between political and non-political organisations.[44] For this reason, it is of great use to analyse the possible implications for our results of employing predefined theoretical definitions.

Graph 2.6 shows the percentage of members of political associations in the United States obtained from the ACPS data when we use each of the three alternative modes for defining the political character of an organisation.[45]

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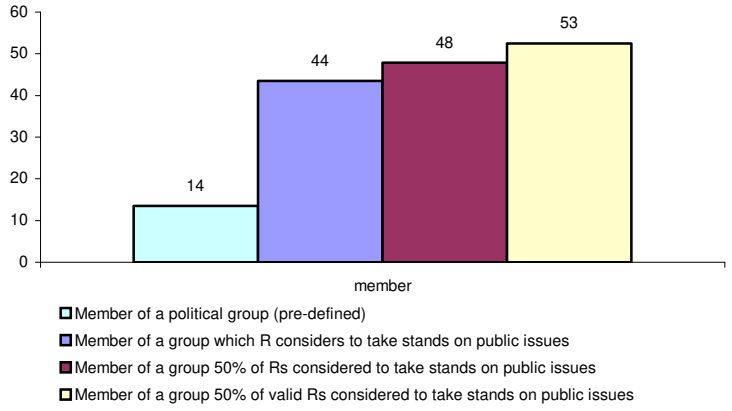
groups, senior people organisations, women's organisations, labor unions, professional organisations, political issue groups, and parties and candidates groups. If the latter was selected, to this list we would add nationality/ethnic groups, civic non-partisan organisations, liberal/conservative groups, and neighborhood organisations. The results with both possibilities are shown.

[44] I have already discussed the inadequacy of using dimensional techniques for making this type of distinction.

[45] The theoretical or predefined classification of political associations includes the following associational categories: organisations active on a particular political issue, nonpartisan or civic organisations interested in the political life of a community or the nation, organisations that support general liberal or conservative causes, and organisations active in supporting candidates in elections. As I am not an expert on North American associational life, I have used the classification Stolle and Rochon (1998) make for political associations,

Graph 2.6. Political Membership: The Effects of Question Wording and of the Definition of Political Associations, ACPS 1990



The Graph allows us to appreciate the significant differences which exist in the estimation of the percentage of citizens who are political members depending on the definition we adopt: from 13% of the adult population if we use the *a priori* (more restrictive) theoretical definition, up to 53% if we use the evaluations of the interviewees themselves as a criterion. As we can see, therefore, to use the theoretical and *a priori* definition of which associations are political and which are not is a conservative option: we underestimate, rather than overestimate, the proportion of people who are exposed to political stimuli in the associations they belong to.

To what extent does one way or another of defining political associations relate to the real political behaviour of its members? We could expect that the more restrictive the definition of that which is political, the more homogenous the behaviour of the individuals characterised in this way, and also that citizens who consider that they are politically involved in some way (because

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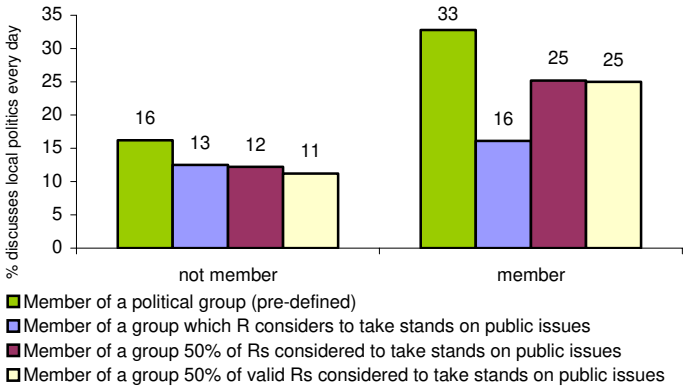
among which the following types of organisations are included: political clubs, political parties, international affairs clubs, peace, environmental, and temperance organisations, third world and human rights groups.

their associations take political stances) are more politically aware. The data from the ACPS allows us to verify the frequency of the interviewees' political discussions. Therefore, we would expect that individuals who belong to a political association predefined as such, and who state that their association adopts political stances would also discuss politics more. The results shown in Graph 2.7 partially contradict these expectations.

Graph 2.7. Political Membership and Political Discussion: The Effects of the Definition



While individuals who belong to associations which are predefined as political demonstrate a noticeably greater tendency to discuss politics on a daily basis, individuals who belong to associations which they themselves consider to adopt political stances do not discuss politics much more than other Americans. Therefore, if we can choose between producing classifications which are determined by a theoretical definition of what is political and those which are informed by the perceptions of the interviewees themselves, it seems to be more appropriate to adopt the definition used by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) and employ the criterion of aggregation of perceptions. Obviously, when the questionnaire does not allow us to take into account the perceptions of the citizens, we will have to be satisfied with

theoretical and *a priori* definitions. In any case our results seem to confirm that this option is not inferior from the point of view of measuring more or less homogeneous behaviours.

Additional evidence of the validity of the operationalisation of political membership used throughout this Thesis is provided by the survey of citizens corresponding to the Spanish study[46] included in the international project *Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy*. This survey also investigated the political nature of associations, including two questions on the existence of political conversations or discussions in meetings or activities of the association and the association's adoption of stances on questions of public or political interest.[47] The results shown below and derived from this study are, if possible, more relevant than those already presented for the ACPS because the list of associations included in the survey was designed by a European team of researchers and is therefore more relevant to European associational reality. In addition, as we shall see later, many of the associations included are similar to the ones we find in the large

[46] This survey was conducted by the Spanish Centre for Sociological Research (CIS) under contract with the project's research team, based at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and led by Professor José Ramón Montero. The author of this Thesis formed part of the research team.

[47] Unfortunately, an error in the administration of the filters in the process of questionnaire editing meant that these two questions were only asked to those individuals who had participated in an association's activities, and were not asked, as had been planned, to all interviewees who were involved in an association - whether members, participating in activities, financial contributors or voluntary workers. Another significant difference - although this time intentional - between the Spanish questionnaire and the one used for the ACPS is that this question was not asked for each of the associational categories in which the interviewee participated. In order to facilitate the administration of the question on associational participation, which was already very long, the question was formulated in such a way that anyone who participated in more than one association responded according to the association they considered most important to them. The only real expected consequence of this formulation is that it reduces the number of cases each evaluation is based on; but there is no reason to think that aggregated distributions would be different had it been formulated in the same way as in the ACPS.

majority of the international surveys we analyse throughout this Thesis.

Table 2.4 shows the list of associational categories included in the Spanish questionnaire for the CID project, and displays in each column which are included under the type "political associations", depending on each of the operative definitions set out in previous paragraphs.[48] As we can see, the most important divergences between the three classifications stem from only three kinds of association. On the one hand, the *a priori* theoretical definition of what constitutes a political association excludes youth associations, while by analysing the responses of interviewees we can deduce that youth associations in Spain display significant political content and play a significant political role, as over half of those who participate in them say that politics is discussed at meetings and activities, and also consider that the association adopts political stances. In the other two cases the complete opposite occurs. Although my theoretical definition of political associations leads me to consider neighbourhood associations and women's organisations as such, the results seem to indicate that these types of association do not include as high a political content in Spain as would be expected.[49]

[48] Logically, definitions based on the response of the individuals themselves regarding their association are not included, as in this case the survey did not ask for the political character of all associational categories the individual is involved in. The results used to construct Table 2.4 can be seen in Tables A2.3 and A2.4 of Appendix 3.

[49] These two cases are actually on the limit of what we would consider political associations, as 30% of those who participate in activities organised by neighbourhood associations say that politics is discussed in them, and for women's associations this figure is 24%. Nevertheless, 40% and 48% respectively consider that their associations do adopt political stances. See Tables A2.3 and A2.4 in Appendix 3.

Table 2.4. Possible Definitions of Political Membership, CID-Spain 2002

Associational categories	Member of a predefined political association	Member of a category 50% of Rs say politics is discussed	Member of a category 50% of Rs say adopts public stances
Sports clubs or outdoor activities clubs			
Youth associations		X	X
Environmental organisations	X	X	X
Associations for animal rights/protection	X		
Peace organisations	X	X	X
Humantarian aid or human rights organisations	X		X
Charity or social-welfare organisations			X
Associations for medical patients, specific illnesses or addictions			
Associations for disabled persons			
Pensioners' or retired persons' organisations			
Political parties	X	X	X
Trade Unions	X	X	X
Farmers' organisations	X		X
Business or employers' organisations	X	X	X
Investment clubs			
Professional organisations	X	X	X
Consumer associations	X		X
Parents' associations			
Cultural, musical, dancing or theatre societies			
Other hobby clubs/societies			
Automobile organisations			
Residents', housing or neighbourhood associations	X		
Immigrants' organisations	X	X	
Religious or church organisations			
Women's organisations	X		
Associations for war, victims, veterans, or ex-servicemen			
Associations for victims of terrorism	X	X	X
Other clubs or associations			

Own elaboration. The crosses signal the categories included under each definition of political associations.

To what extent is each form of operationalisation of political membership interchangeable or not? Table 2.5 presents the results of a bivariate correlation analysis between the five possible indicators. As we see, the indicator for political membership used throughout this thesis, produced by applying a theoretical definition to what a political association is, seems to correspond with reality. Remember that this definition is formulated around (1) the pursuit of collective goods and (2) the intention to affect the processes of political decision-making. In this respect, the fact that our indicator –with all its limitations – demonstrates a high correlation with indicators based on participants' own perception

of the political character of associations (indicators 4 and 5)[50] serves to validate it.

Table 2.5. Comparison of Five Indicators of Political Membership, CID-Spain 2002

	Member of a political association (theoretically predefined) [1]	Member of an association where politics is discussed [2]	Member of an association that takes public stands [3]	Member of an association 50% of Rs say politics is discussed in meetings [4]	Member of an association 50% of Rs say it takes public stands [5]
[2]	0,361				
[3]	0,395	0,567			
[4]	0,683	0,366	0,379		
[5]	0,716	0,372	0,410	0,801	1

Source: Study no. 2450 CIS-UAM. Own elaboration. All correlation coefficients are significant for a level of 0.001 (bilateral).

Given that on the following pages several surveys are used to study the phenomenon of political membership in western democracies, it is necessary to specify the types of associations included in each survey under this label (see Table 2.6). As I have already discussed, some surveys are more complete than others in terms of the range of associations they cover, and they differ, in particular, in the variety of organisations they include which are related to new social movements (NSMs).[51]

[50] Indicator number 5 is the same as the one used by Verba, Schlozman and Brady to distinguish between political and non-political associations.

[51] As far as the 2002-2003 ESS is concerned, neither consumer associations nor women's associations are included because they appear in the same category as groups which are not easily qualified as political: automobile organisations in the former case, and clubs for the young, retired/elderly, and friendly societies in the latter.

Table 2.6. Political Organisations Included in Each Survey

	WVS 1981	EB 19, 1983	EB 28, 1987	EB 34, 1990	WVS 1991	EB 49, 1998	EVS 1999	ESS 2002
Consumers' associations		X	X	X		X		
Human rights organisations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional associations	X	*	*	*	X	*	X	X
Local community action groups	X				X		X	
Women's groups		X			X		X	
Animal rights groups					X		+	+
Peace organisations					X		X	+
Environmental organisations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Political parties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Trade unions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Own elaboration. * With trade unions. + With environmental organisations.

Unions and professional associations are less clear-cut cases and we should therefore take the time to justify this choice. It could be argued that these are associations of a more economic than political nature, and that citizens join them to obtain private goods (services, social benefits, labour protection, etc.). Several authors have argued that the Scandinavian unions, in particular, are organisations with little political content and, fundamentally, welfare services providers (see an example in Lind 1996). From the point of view of the definition used in Chapter 1 of this Thesis (and quoted on previous pages) there can be little doubt in this respect, as these are organisations which pursue, fundamentally, collective goods and which have as one of their principal objectives to influence the processes of political decision-making.[52] In addition to the Spanish data referred to on previous pages, other works corroborate the clear political dimension of these types of organisations in other countries (see, for example, Knoke 1990b: 80-81). Recent data from six European countries collected for the international CID project and analysed by Lelieveldt and Caiani (2003) confirmed that associations of economic interests (unions, professional associations and business owners' associations) generally demonstrate a greater frequency

[52] Skeptics should be reminded that Olson (1965 and 1982) specifically refers to unions, professional associations and business or industrial associations when addressing the problem of collective action - that is, the pursuit of collective goods - and the problem of a demand overload in advanced societies.

than average in their contact with politicians and political authorities. For their part, using the same database, Lelieveldt, Astudillo and Stevenson (2003) show that economic interest groups are fundamentally dedicated to representative activities (representation of interests and lobbying). Walker (1991: 93) adds to this with his conclusion:

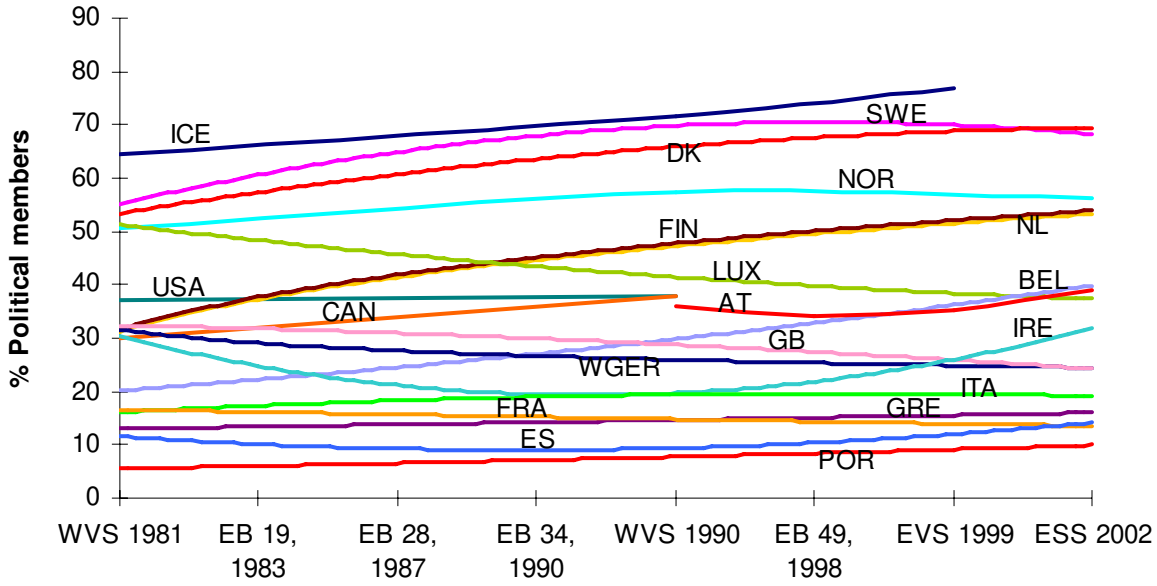
> "If one holds the view that citizen sector groups pursue public goods while profit sector groups pursue private goods, that view is simply wrong. Groups of both types typically advance public policies with consequences that go well beyond their memberships.".

Furthermore, Wilson's classic book (1995 [1974]) also includes unions and business organisations amongst the political organisations object of his study. All of these studies therefore seem to support the decision taken here to consider these organisations political.

2.3.3. Political Membership in Western Democracies

This Thesis is only concerned with political membership and we shall therefore move on to describe in greater detail the evolution of membership of political groups. Graph 2.8 allows us to appreciate the different longitudinal trends of political membership in western societies, as well as the fact that the enormous differences between countries in the levels of general membership we witnessed in previous sections of this chapter also extend to political membership. In some countries it seems to have maintained fundamentally stable levels, especially in southern European countries, but in others the trend is one of decline (Luxembourg, Great Britain, and Germany) or growth (Scandinavian countries, Belgium and the Netherlands). In addition, the Scandinavian countries aside, the level of political membership does not tend to reach 50% of the population.

Graph 2.8. Trends in Political Membership in Western Democracies, 1981-2002



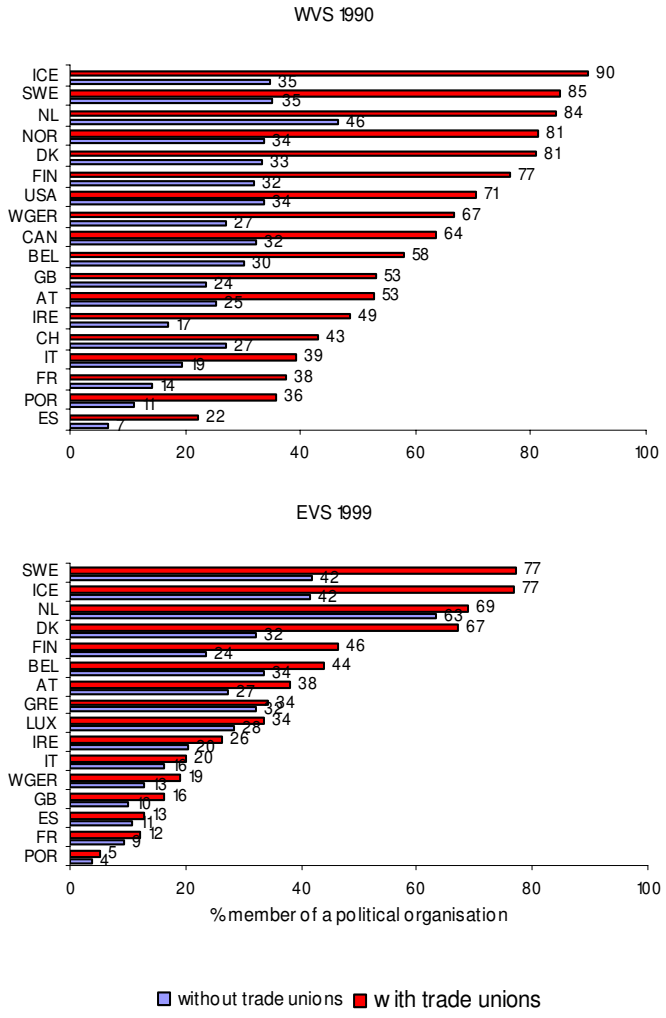
High levels of political membership in Scandinavia are not solely due to the high rates of union membership characteristic of these countries. As we can see from Graph 2.9, even if we exclude unions from the set of political associations, Scandinavian citizens are, together with the Dutch and North Americans, those who most join political associations. Although the variation between countries is noticeably reduced when we exclude union organisations,[53] the same does not occur with differences related to political membership between countries. In this respect, when we include unions, the country with the greatest percentage of members of political associations (Iceland) has proportionally four times more than the country with the lowest percentage (Spain); but when we exclude unions, the country with the highest levels (the Netherlands) has 6.5 times more political members than Spain.

Another significant aspect highlighted by the results from Graph 2.9 is that the differences between countries in levels of political membership, far from decreasing, appear to increase with time. In this respect, the data from the 1999 EVS indicate that the gap between the countries with greater proportions of political members (Iceland and Sweden) and the country with lowest levels (Portugal) is now much greater. Scandinavian citizens are more than 15 times more likely to join a political organisation than the Portuguese, whether we include unions or not.

Therefore, some first conclusions we can draw from these descriptive analyses are that political membership varies significantly across western societies, that the differences in this type of political participation have been maintained over the last decade - and may even have increased -and that this is not primarily due to the different patterns of union membership in Scandinavian countries.

[53] This represents a decrease in variance from a value 406 to a value of 100.

Graph 2.9. Levels of Political Membership with and without Trade Unions, WVS 1990 and EVS 1999

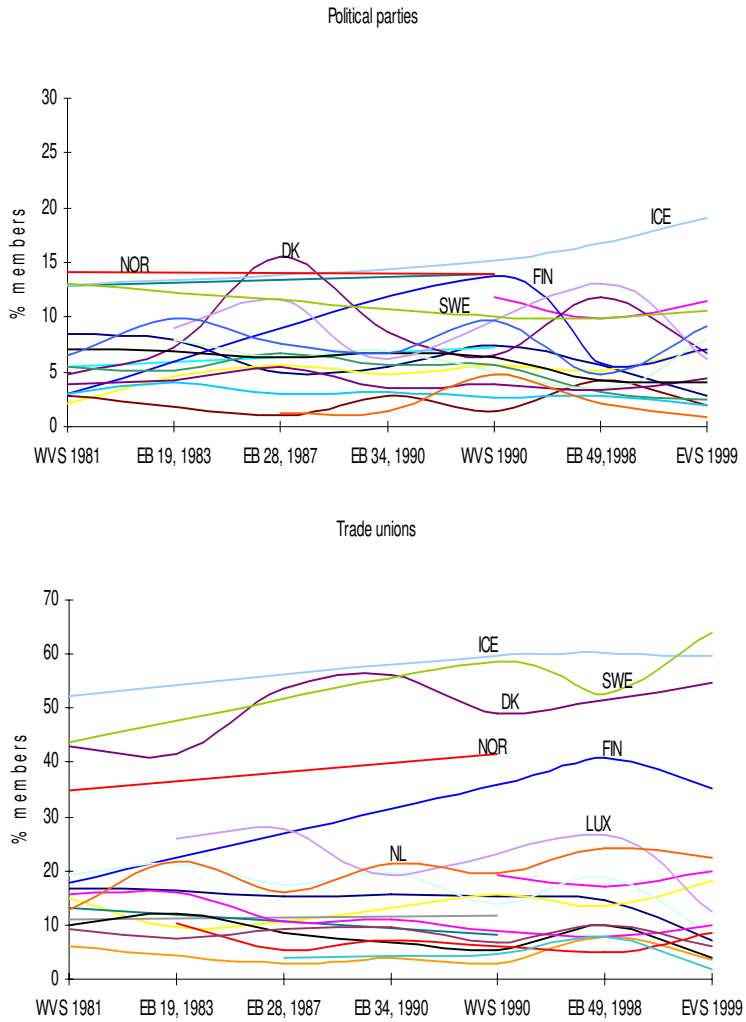


As shown in Table 2.2 above, the list of groups included in each survey varies significantly. One of the most obvious consequences of this fact is the inexistence of continuous and coherent time series. Figures are only available in more than three surveys for the following political organisations: parties, unions, environmental groups, human rights groups and consumer organisations. The evolution in the membership of these specific types of political associations can be seen in Graphs 2.10 and 2.11.[54] The first thing we can highlight is that differences between countries are much more pronounced for some types of organisations (unions and environmental groups, for example) than for others (consumers). The percentages of citizens who say they belong to these groups also differ greatly: they oscillate between 60% for members of unions in some Scandinavian countries to a bare 1-2% of members of consumer groups in most countries.

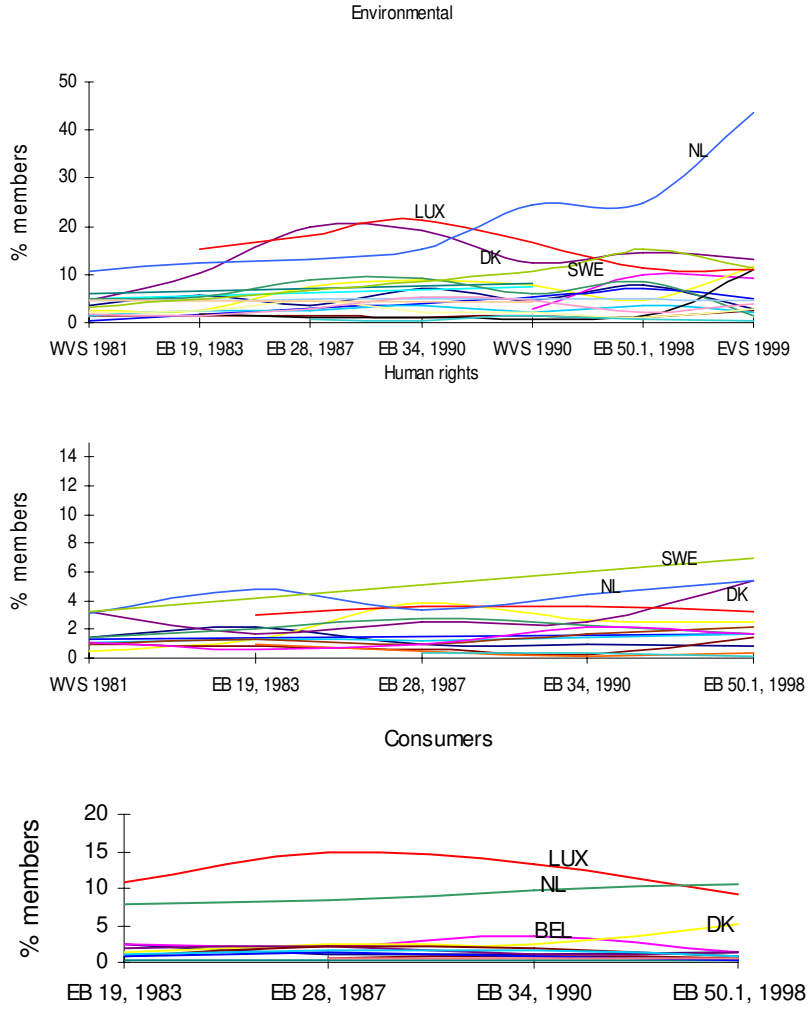
Secondly, the trend has been different depending on the type of group considered. The unions seem to have experienced a certain growth in membership in Scandinavian countries and a slight decrease or stabilisation in other countries. The evolution of political party membership displays very diverse trends depending on the country, as we already know to be the case from other sources (Selle and Svasand 1991, Katz, Mair et al. 1992, Widfeldt 1995, Mair and van Biezen 2001). Human rights groups and environmental organisations appear, by contrast, to have enjoyed growing public support in most countries, and consumer groups have remained at a more or less stable level.

[54] It is in these graphs that we can best appreciate the problem of estimation with both the EBs or the WVS. As we can see, the 1990 EB and the 1990-93 WVS provide different percentages for the same moment in time, and in some cases the difference in estimation is substantial and systematic. A more detailed analysis of these limitations of international surveys can be found in Morales (2002).

Graph 2.10. Evolution of Membership of Political Parties and Trade Unions, 1981-1999



Graph 2.11. Trends in the Membership of Environmental, Human Rights and Consumers' organisations, 1980-1999



In general, when we disaggregate by specific categories of political organisations it is also the countries with higher levels of general political membership that stand out in terms of percentages of members. In this regard, we see that the Scandinavian countries not only have exceptional rates of political membership compared to the other western democracies, but they are also amongst the societies with the highest levels of party membership. In the same respect, Dutch citizens stand out as being among the western citizens who participate most in the "new" types of political associations. The spectacular growth in membership of environmental organisations in the Netherlands stands out particularly; in only two decades this percentage has quadrupled from a little over 10% to over 40%.

If we leave the longitudinal aspect aside and focus on the comparison of levels of membership between different political groups,[55] it will be easier to perceive the differences among countries and among organisations. In this respect, in Table 2.7 we can see that the high percentages of political membership in Scandinavian countries are due, in part, to the extremely high proportion of union members existing in these countries. In this area, Scandinavian countries are markedly different to other western countries, as central European countries have much lower percentages than that of Finland, for example. If we discount union membership, the Netherlands, the United States and Switzerland challenge the Scandinavian countries for the top positions in terms of political membership. Political parties have a greater following in some Scandinavian countries, in Austria and in the United States.[56] Environmental organisations reach very

[55] Only the 1990-93 WVS has been used to this end, as it is the one which has the most complete list of political organisations for the greatest number of countries, in addition to being the survey which is used, for the same reason, in the multivariate analyses of the forthcoming chapters. Although, as I have already mentioned, the survey may suffer from some problems with estimation, these affect all groups in more or less the same way and do not appear to excessively alter the ranking of countries.

[56] It should be pointed out that, given that the questionnaires use the English term "belong" to refer to membership, the Americans must have interpreted this

high proportions in the Netherlands. This is also the country with the greatest levels of political membership when unions are excluded from the calculation. Women's groups have more support in Belgium and the United States. What does appear to be indisputable is that the southern European countries have the lowest levels of political membership, regardless of which groups are taken into consideration.

Table 2.7. Political Membership Disaggregated, WVS 1990-93

	Trade unions	Political parties	Professional associations	Community action groups	Environmental	Human rights / 3rd World	Women's groups	Peace movement	Animal rights groups
Iceland	60	15	15	2	5	3	7	1	2
Sweden	58	10	12	2	11	9	3	3	7
Denmark	49	6	12	5	12	3	2	2	4
Norway	42	14	16	3	4	5	3	1	2
Finland	36	14	15	3	5	6	3	2	1
Netherlands	19	10	13	5	24	13	6	3	12
Austria	19	12	6	2	3	2	4	1	4
Belgium	16	6	6	5	8	6	9	2	8
W. Germany	15	7	9	2	4	2	6	2	5
Great Britain	14	6	11	3	6	2	5	1	2
Canada	12	7	16	5	7	5	7	2	3
Ireland	9	4	5	3	2	2	5	1	1
United States	8	14	14	5	8	2	8	2	5
Italy	7	6	6	2	5	2	0	1	2
Switzerland	6	9	13	3	10	-	-	-	-
France	5	3	5	3	2	3	1	0,5	2
Portugal	5	5	4	2	1	1	0	0,5	1
Spain	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1

The figures are the percentages of members over the total sample. Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of trade union members.

If we consider the levels of voluntary work in political groups, that is, in the percentages of activists, we notice that differences between countries decrease considerably (Table 2.8). The first fact to stand out is that in all countries percentages related to voluntary work are very low. The Scandinavian unions continue to be the groups which receive the most support, in this case from activists,

question from an affective viewpoint as regards political parties, as the concept of European party membership cannot be translated to the American case.

but we should also highlight that the percentages we find in these countries are very low if considered in relation to the levels of membership we have already analysed. Canada and the United States stand out as two of the countries in which a greater proportion of people dedicate their time to voluntary work in these organisations. And south European countries are no longer clearly at the bottom, although Spain does continue to have lower percentages for all types of organisations.

In summary, the political organisations which receive most support are of the traditional type: political parties, unions and professional organisations. Only environmental organisations have percentages of members which begin to approach these figures, whilst other political groups related to the NSMs have a very limited following, with some national exceptions (the Netherlands, Sweden and Belgium, in particular).

Table 2.8. Voluntary Work/Activism in Political Organisations, WVS 1990-93

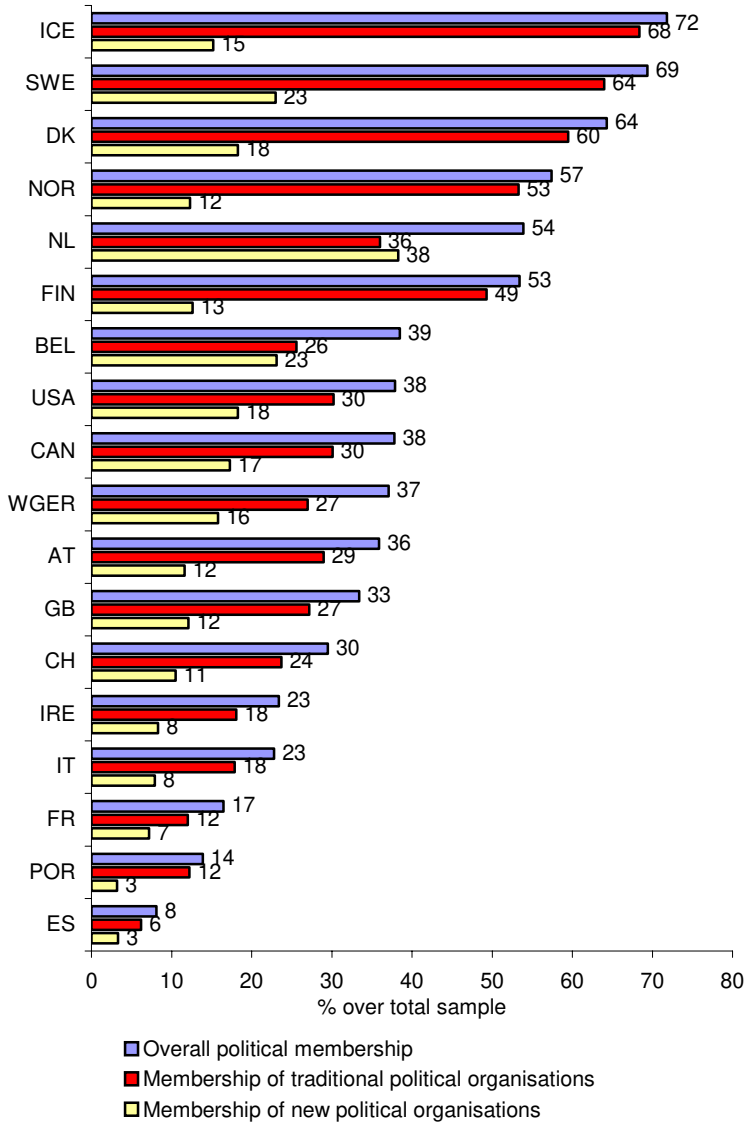
	Trade unions	Political parties	Professional associations	Community action groups	Environmental	Human rights / 3rd World	Women's groups	Peace movement	Animal rights groups
Iceland	3	4	1	0	2	3	3	0	0
Sweden	6	4	1	3	2	3	2	1	1
Denmark	3	2	2	1	1	3	0,5	0	0
Norway	6	4	1	1	1	3	1	0	0
Finland	8	7	3	2	3	7	3	1	1
Netherlands	1	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	1
Austria	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	0	1
Belgium	2	1	3	3	3	2	3	1	2
W. Germany	2	3	1	1	1	2	3	1	2
Great Britain	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	0	0
Canada	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	2	1
Ireland	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	0	0
United States	2	5	3	1	3	5	4	1	2
Italy	2	4	2	1	2	1	0	1	1
Switzerland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	2	2	3	1	1	3	1	0,5	1
Portugal	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Spain	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0,5	1

The figures are the percentages of volunteers/activists over the total sample. Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of trade union activists.

As already discussed in Chapter 1, an important distinction between political organisations is that which differentiates between the traditional type and the new type of political organisations. The main reason, as argued in the previous chapter, is that the new type of organisations have developed a type of linkage with their followers which is not of a representative nature, thereby introducing political dynamics which are different to the traditional ones in our representative systems. Therefore, to study the following of this type of political organisations among citizens allows us to discover more about how our democracies work. I shall now go on to compare the levels of membership of both types of political organisations, focusing this time on the 1990 WVS as it is the most complete in terms of the number of political associations and number of western countries included. Graph 2.12 presents the percentages of political membership in general and the percentages of the traditional and new types of political membership.

In practically all countries the percentage of people who belong to a traditional political organisation exceeds the percentage of people who belong to new political organisations by a ratio of 2 to 1. In other words, for every two people who are members of a party, a union or a professional association, there is one person who co-operates with an organisation related to the NSMs. These differences are even greater in Scandinavian countries, but by contrast they disappear in the cases of Belgium and the Netherlands. In the latter country, the number of members of new organisations even exceeds that of traditional political organisations.

Graph 2.12. Traditional and New Political Membership, WVS 1990-93



Another interesting aspect is the extent to which there is an overlap between one type of political membership and another. To what extent do citizens combine their participation in political organisations of different types? Table 2.9 displays the distribution of associational behaviours amongst people who are members of some form of political association.[57] Of particular significance, as we have seen in previous paragraphs, is the case of the Netherlands, where the extension of membership of new political associations is extremely notable, as citizens who only belong to traditional organisations are in the minority. A good proportion combine membership of both types of political groups and, in addition, those who collaborate exclusively with new organisations are in the majority. The case of Belgium is similar but without reaching such a high level as the Netherlands. The Scandinavian countries are just the opposite, as the huge majority of political members are exclusively members of traditional political organisations, and only a very small percentage collaborate exclusively with new organisations. We also find a good number of countries between both poles, where even though exclusive membership of traditional political organisations predominates, a good proportion are involved with new political organisations.

[57] Data from the 1990-93 WVS are given as it is the most complete, but the equivalent table for the 1999 EVS can be found in Table A2.5 in Appendix 3. This distribution across types of political membership has been rather stable over the last decade and the only significant change is the increase in exclusive membership of NSM organisations in the Netherlands, Spain, Finland and Portugal.

Table 2.9. Degree of Overlap of the Two Types of Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

		Only traditional	Only new	Traditional and new	Total
NL	*N*	*158*	*182*	*208*	*548*
	%	29	33	38	100
US	*N*	*394*	*155*	*212*	*761*
	%	52	20	28	100
BEL	*N*	*430*	*361*	*284*	*1075*
	%	40	34	26	100
CAN	*N*	*355*	*133*	*166*	*654*
	%	54	20	25	100
SWE	*N*	*486*	*57*	*184*	*727*
	%	67	8	25	100
DK	*N*	*472*	*49*	*139*	*660*
	%	72	7	21	100
GB	*N*	*315*	*92*	*88*	*495*
	%	64	19	18	100
ES	*N*	*128*	*50*	*36*	*215*
	%	60	23	17	100
FR	*N*	*93*	*45*	*27*	*165*
	%	56	27	16	100
FIN	*N*	*240*	*24*	*50*	*314*
	%	76	8	16	100
ICE	*N*	*397*	*24*	*83*	*504*
	%	79	5	16	100
WGER	*N*	*448*	*212*	*120*	*780*
	%	57	27	15	100
NOR	*N*	*558*	*51*	*102*	*711*
	%	78	7	14	100
IRE	*N*	*151*	*53*	*30*	*234*
	%	65	23	13	100
IT	*N*	*303*	*100*	*58*	*462*
	%	66	22	13	100
AT	*N*	*355*	*100*	*69*	*524*
	%	68	19	13	100
POR	*N*	*126*	*20*	*18*	*164*
	%	77	12	11	100

The figures indicate the percentage of respondents that are members of each type of political organisations for the subsample of respondents who belong to any political organisation.

Lastly, the results displayed in Table 2.10 highlight the greater extension of the phenomenon of multiple political memberships amongst those citizens who collaborate with NSM organisations. Although the average number of organisations does not reach two in any country, it is true that in the large majority of countries the average number of new political organisations citizens belong to is greater than the number of traditional political organisations they

are members of.[58] In part, this reflects that, despite the fact that in some countries not many citizens participate in new political organisations, political commitment to them tends to be very high amongst those who do.

Table 2.10. Average Number of Political Organisations an Individual is a Member of, WVS 1990-93

	Traditional	New
Norway	1.40	1.24
Finland	1.38	1.42
United States	1.37	1.40
Austria	1.35	1.18
France	1.35	1.21
Iceland	1.34	1.22
Canada	1.32	1.35
Netherlands	1.32	1.54
Sweden	1.29	1.42
Belgium	1.28	1.45
Spain	1.27	1.46
Portugal	1.25	1.28
Great Britain	1.24	1.38
Italy	1.23	1.28
West Germany	1.23	1.23
Denmark	1.22	1.27
Ireland	1.15	1.22

Only respondents who belonged to any organisation within each type are included in the analyses. The Swiss data are not included because the questionnaire in this country did not include all NSM organisations included in the international questionnaire.

In summary, using the data presented throughout this chapter we can draw various conclusions on the phenomenon of political membership in western democracies. Firstly, membership of political organisations has been maintained at more or less stable levels throughout recent decades. We can not speak of general growth, but neither of a crisis or of general decline. Secondly, the

[58] Nevertheless, this data should be interpreted with caution, given that the questionnaires do not provide us with information regarding the total number of associations, but the number of associational categories which an individual belongs to. This means that if an interviewee belongs to two professional associations, there is no way of detecting this. A reflection on the level of subestimation of multiple memberships with these question formats can be found in Morales (2002).

Scandinavian countries stand out for their high levels of political membership which, although in part due to the high union membership existing in these societies, also extends to all types of political organisations. Furthermore, differences in the levels of political membership existing between western countries have remained stable or have even increased. When we distinguish between traditional political organisations and new political organisations we see that, far from what some predicted, there is no evidence of the existence of a general crisis in the traditional forms of political organisation, and nor is there spectacular or general growth in political membership of new groups. Still today traditional forms of political organisation continue to predominate and, in this respect, the only really exceptional case is that of the Netherlands, where new political organisations have exceeded the support of the traditional ones.

2.4. Summary

This chapter has been concerned with discussing the most important methodological decisions for later development in this Thesis, and has described the phenomenon I wish to explain here: political membership. Firstly, I have discussed at length the advantages and limitations of comparative quantitative analyses and, in particular, the use of international surveys to study political behaviour in general, and this type of political participation in particular. Undoubtedly, what we gain in generalisation and external validity for our conclusions we loose in the detail and depth of the analysis of specific cases. In addition, research using international surveys introduces problems related to the standardisation of the information for the countries included, the type of associations considered, the formulation of questions on membership, and the methods of survey sampling, design and administration.

Nevertheless, I have also discussed the multiple advantages of conducting comparative studies of this type which, due to a design

of most similar political systems, allow us to take into account explanatory factors stemming from different levels of analysis. In this way, we will be able to approach the phenomenon of political membership taking into account both citizens' individual characteristics and the systemic characteristics of the societies in which they live and act politically.

Secondly, I have situated political membership within the context of participation in associations in general. By doing this, I have pointed to the existence of three types of patterns of participation in associations in western democracies. The first pattern, typical of North American countries and some central European countries, is characterised by high levels of membership and activism; a second pattern, typical of Scandinavian countries, of high levels of membership but fundamentally passive; and a third pattern, characteristic of southern European countries with a marginal number of members but with very intense levels of activity in the associations. As we have seen, these distinctions are equally useful when we focus on the study of political membership.

Finally, this chapter has offered a series of reflections on the different possibilities we face when distinguishing between different types of association. I have discussed the serious limitations of taxonomic exercises and justified the option taken in this research of employing a typology guided by theoretical criteria. But, as we have also seen, to opt for a theoretical/analytical typology does not mean to ignore empirical reality. All the data set out so far corroborates the fact that this is a distinction which is sufficiently validated by empirical data. As always with the social sciences, typologies and instruments for measuring are, simply, not perfect. Their usefulness lies in their capacity to help us understand new things.

CHAPTER 3. THE EFFECTS OF POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP: INVOLVEMENT AND POLITICAL PROTEST

"Where politics is relevant to the general raison d'etre of the group, members are more easily influenced to go along with the group. [...] Groups that facilitate their members' political expression are more effective in inducing such expression than those that do not." (Lane 1965 [1959]: 192)

"The associational life of a group may lead its members into politics or it may distract them from political issues." (Lane 1965 [1959]: 260)

3.1. Introduction

There is very little doubt that participation in associations is, in general terms, positive for democracy. Academic debates are more heated when we try to reach a consensus on what the specific consequences of this participation are.[1] Is it important in which associations citizens choose to participate? Or are all associations just as effective in creating good citizens? What are the

[1] There is a wide literature that discusses the effects of associative participation on different individual and systemic aspects. Some general visions can be found in Opp (1989), van Deth (1997) and Stolle (2001 and 2002). The implications for democracy, from different perspectives, have also been discussed by Schlozman, Verba and Brady (1999) and Putnam (2000).

consequences for the political system, or for the running of democracy, that citizens choose one or another association? And why should we pay special attention to political membership?

As I shall show in this chapter the phenomenon of political membership is not only relevant in as much as it constitutes a form of political participation and, therefore, influences public issues; it also has effects on other political behaviours and orientations which are central to modern democracies: political involvement and protest.[2] For these reasons, the study of participation in political organisations as a specific form of political participation is of enormous interest if we want to reach a better understanding of the way western democracies work. As Boix and Posner (1996) and Hardin (2000) pointed out, not all associations are equal and, certainly, participation in associations that seek collective goods through participation in the public and political arena has much more important consequences for the collectivity than participation in other types of associations of a more recreational nature.

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[2] The concept of psychological involvement in politics has not been always clearly defined. On occasions it is used interchangeably with the concept of interest in politics (see van Deth and Elff 2000: 4 ff.), in others it refers to a wider set of orientations towards the political that includes interest, efficacy, party identification, etc. Later on these discrepancies in the definitions will be discussed; it is enough now to indicate that, following Verba, Nie and Kim (1978: 71), here I refer to psychological involvement in politics as the set of orientations that show that politics matters for the individual and that they are interested in political issues. Neither is there an unequivocal definition of political protest. Different forms of protest are included in the multiple definitions of conventional politics and non-conventional participation: from signing petitions to political violence (see Dalton 1996: 71 ff.). Here political protest is considered to be any action that shows, publicly, the dissatisfaction of the citizen with regard to a certain situation or decision related to the public arena.

3.2. Attitudinal Consequences of Political Membership

Theories of participative democracy have emphasised the importance of citizens' participation, much more than just in terms of instrumental motivation (see Pateman 1970, Thompson 1970, Parry 1972, Barber 1990). The fundamental argument is that political participation, in itself, has positive consequences for the citizen and for the political system.[3] Hence, participation serves to educate about values, procedures and in living together, while also favouring the development of positive attitudes and orientations towards the political system, and contributing to increasing the interest of the individual in public issues and their understanding of the same.

Taking up this argument again, the literature on associative democracy has paid special attention to the development of civic skills and orientations due to participation in associations (Cohen and Rogers 1992, Mansbridge 1992, Rogers and Cohen 1995, Hirst 1992 and 1994).[4] Associations, from this perspective, act as *schools of democracy* and, therefore, participation in them should be promoted by political authorities, given their positive consequences for democracy.[5]

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[3] In part one can find the origin of these arguments in Rousseau and Mill (see Pateman 1970 for a good summary of these), who considered that participation in government by means of the mechanisms of representation contributed to educating and improving the intelligence of the popular classes.

[4] This literature also focuses on the institutional and systemic effects of associations, other than just those on individual participation: they provide information, contribute to equalise representation, and offer an alternative form of governing public issues. Nevertheless, here we are not so much interested in the institutional role of associations, as in the consequences that they have for participation at an individual level. For an institutional view, see several chapters of Skocpol and Fiorina (1999) and, especially, Skocpol (1999).

[5] Fortunately, not all the scholarly literature that has dealt with participation in associations looks like a fairy-tale. Many authors have indicated that associations can, and often do, introduce inequalities in the process of representation when participation and resources are not distributed equally among the citizens. In fact, one of the most important effects of associative participation can be distributive, since the citizens with more resources are the

Also in the last decade there has emerged another group of researchers who attribute unusually beneficial effects to membership: the social capital school. Since Putnam (1993a and b, 1995a and b) claimed that participation in associations was one of the main indicators of the existence of social capital stocks, what has become known as the "attitudinal approach" to social capital has considered participation in associations, along with interpersonal trust, one of the main empirical indicators of the presence of this type of capital (Stolle 2002).[6] Actually, it is this supposed relation between participation in associations and social trust which has most attracted the attention of scholars to social capital (see, as examples, Brehm and Rahn 1997, Stolle 1998, and Herreros 2002). The general argument is that participation in associations has the effect of generating social trust and other reciprocal norms that favour social co-operation.[7] The fundamental explicative mechanism would be the collateral effects of interaction with other persons and the positive experience of co-operation. Hence, interaction in associations would generate co-operation, reciprocity, and trust through the creation of social networks that extend further than the immediate circle of friends and acquaintances. Nevertheless, the fundamental objection that can be made to these arguments is that most of these hypotheses have not been proven empirically. Firstly, there is not enough empirical material to support the conclusion that participation in

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ones most inclined to join associations and, thus, their interests are better represented. See, especially, Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995 and 1999).

[6] The consideration of membership as a privileged indicator of social capital has been criticised by several authors (Portes 1998 and 2000, Foley and Edwards 1997, Edwards and Foley 1998, and Newton 1997 and 1999a). For their part, the drift towards a more attitudinal literature of social capital has been criticised fiercely by Greeley (1997) and Jackman and Miller (1998).

[7] Certainly, most of these authors also postulate a reciprocal causality, in such a way that social trust favours co-operation. Nevertheless, this relation has not been clearly demonstrated empirically either. Almond and Verba (1989 [1963]: 227-228) indicated that social trust did not increase the tendency towards co-operation to solve public or political problems in three of the five countries that they studied.

associations is really linked to higher levels of interpersonal trust[8] and, in the event that it were, that it is participation in associations that generates trust and reciprocity and not the other way round.[9] Secondly, an empirical justification has not been offered to the commonly implicit consideration that all associations are equally effective in generating trust.[10] Lastly, the mechanisms by means of which generalised social trust and political trust are created due to participation in associations are not clear (Levi 1996: 45-55).[11]

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[8] There are various analyses that show the absence of a statistically significant relation between membership and social trust in most countries when controlled by other variables: Newton (1999b: 173ff.), Herreros and Morales (2000).

[9] Although Stolle (1998) has made some, not very consistent methodologically speaking, attempts in this direction.

[10] Eastis (1998) questions, precisely, this assumption and claims that the production of networks, norms and resources for co-operation changes substantially depending on the organisational characteristics of the associations. Stolle and Rochon (1998) also show that the generating capacity of different forms of social capital changes depending on the types of associations, though one of their main problems is their excessive vagueness in the definition of social capital and their inclusion of indicators that are, simply, of political participation. Seligson (1999) indicates that in Central America only those associations aimed at improving the local community seem to produce more democratic behaviour. For his part, Herreros (2001) argues, following Putnam (1993), that associations with an internal horizontal organisation would be more inclined to produce social trust than associations with an internal organisation of a vertical character, though his information does not clarify how these organisational characteristics are to be measured. Other approximations to this differential relation between types of membership and social trust can be found in Diani (2000), Wollebœk and Seals (2000). The general problem of most of these contributions is that they are based on a single case or on information that presents serious deficiencies.

[11] Herreros' thesis (2001) is an attempt to provide this mechanism from an exclusively analytical point of view, with the help of game theory. The fundamental problem, nevertheless, continues to be the empirical proof of such a mechanism, something that unfortunately Herreros does not try to do. On the contrary, Diani (2000) does provide theoretical and empirical mechanisms in the opposite direction: high levels of participation in associations in Italy or a long participation over time generate distrust in political institutions instead of confidence in these. The relation between membership and trust would be, therefore, dependent on the context. In certain political, associative and

In short, these three lines of research consider that participation in associations has positive effects on civic orientations, political attitudes and the individual's political sophistication. These positions contrast, in some way, with the traditional role that the literature on political participation has given to political attitudes and orientations. In the classical models, civic orientations and skills (psychological involvement in politics, political sophistication, party identification, etc.) are factors that link individuals socio-economic characteristics and their political behaviour (Almond and Verba 1963, Verba and Nie 1972, Milbrath and Goel 1977, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

Almond and Verba (1989 [1963]: 249 ff.) examined the different effects that associational membership could have on the most relevant political attitudes and civic orientations. Their results show that membership –as well as the degree of activity in the same- was linked to higher levels of political competence, discussion and sophistication, and that this relation was even stronger when dealing with political associations (see also Lane 1965 [1959]: 188).[12] Also Parry, Moyser and Day (1992: 175 ff.)

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organisational contexts participation in associations is able to generate trust; whereas in others it does not or, on the contrary, it generates distrust.

[12] The studies on the effects of participation on attitudes are not limited to the case of associations, though they are not very abundant either. Bennett (1975) shows that the diverse forms of political participation that citizens can contemplate have different consequences on their cognitive sophistication with regard to politics. The forms that require less effort and that entail no interaction with persons with a different viewpoint have a scant impact on the way in which these citizens conceive of politics. On the contrary, the forms of participation that require more involvement on the part of the individuals and that expose them to contrasting opinions do increase cognitive sophistication. Similar results, though more varied and methodologically updated are those provided by Leighley (1991), which support - in general terms – Bennett's propositions in finding a reciprocal relation between cognitive sophistication and more active forms of political participation, and an absence of any effect of the merely expressive activities on the political conceptualisation of the participants. Nevertheless, Bennett and Leighley's works have serious limitations in terms of the validation of a supposed relation of reciprocal causality: none of them employs panel data, and so the causal arguments are weak. Finkel (1985), on the contrary, does have

pay some attention to the impact of organisational resources – membership – on certain political attitudes. Specifically, individuals who belong to larger numbers of associations show higher levels of political efficacy and lower levels of political cynicism. Besides, the effect of these organisational resources is, after that of education, one of the most effective. Additionally, participation in associations – and mainly participation in groups with a political leaning – was shown to be one of the activities that has most contributed, according to respondents, to their learning about how politics works (p. 288 ff.).

The limitations of these studies on the effects of membership are various, for our purposes. On the one hand, the data from Almond and Verba, although more in accordance to what I am concerned with here – as they did consider explicitly the distinction between political associations and non-political ones – are very old, come from only five countries and only studied bivariate relationships. For their part, Parry, Moyser and Day's results do not examine sufficiently the distinction between political groups and non-political ones and are only applicable to the British case.

Therefore, on the following pages I shall present additional data on the impact of different types of membership on the most important civic attitudes and orientations regarding democratic citizenship: political efficacy, interest in politics, other forms of

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information coming from a panel study which shows the reciprocal relation between political participation in electoral campaigns and external political efficacy. Finkel's results are very interesting because they show that, nevertheless, the same activities do not have significant effects on the internal political efficacy of the participants. The experiences of participation in the electoral processes, at least in the United States in the mid-1970s, had positive consequences on the evaluation of the political system but not on the evaluation of the political competence of the participants themselves. Finally, Jennings and Niemi (1981) and Jennings (1987) show that the young people who took part in the protests of the 1960s hold distinctive political attitudes even twenty years later.

psychological implication with politics and social trust.[13] In this way, we are going to try to answer the following questions:

Do political and non-political associations favour equally the development of these civic attitudes and orientations?

Are there relevant differences across countries?

Do the effects of membership depend on the degree of active participation in the association's activities?

In line with the distinction that was drawn in previous chapters between political associations and associations of a more social character I expect:

that the former will have a higher positive relationship with the main political attitudes and orientations (political involvement and political efficacy),

that both will maintain a similar relationship to social trust,

that this relationship will be more or less the same in most western countries, and

that this differential effect of political and non-political associations will be present irrespective of the degree of associative activism of the individual.

The analyses that are presented below will help us to determine how far our theoretical expectations are supported by the data. Graph 3.1 shows the link between different types of membership and political interest.[14] The line that represents the average for the 18 countries indicates the general trend: citizens who belong to political organisations show a greater interest in politics than those who belong to social organisations. Here, the Spanish case represents this tendency at its maximum, since members of non-political associations show a political interest almost as low as those who are not members of any association.

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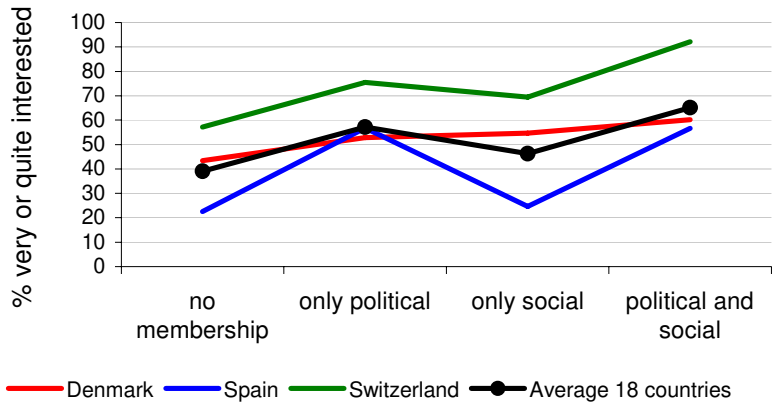
[13] The univariate distribution of these orientations in each country can be found in Table A3.1 in Appendix 3.

[14] The Graph summarises the results of Table A3.2 in Appendix 3. I have selected countries which represent, adequately the different behaviour which is found in the set of western democracies analysed individually. The lines represent the percentage of individuals who say they are very or quite interested in politics.

Political members in Spain are approximately 2.5 times more likely to be interested in politics than the rest of their fellow citizens, and show levels of political interest as high as the average for western citizens who join political groups. In most western countries the pattern is similar to the one we see in the case of Switzerland, with important differences between the members of political and social organisations, but not so acute as in Spain.[15] Nevertheless, in some countries there are important variations with regard to this general pattern. In Iceland, Finland and Denmark political members show the same levels of interest in politics as those who belong to non-political associations or, in any event, slightly lower. What is without doubt is that, in all the countries, members of both political and social organisations, showed the highest levels of interest in politics, and in cases like that of Switzerland practically all of them are interested in public matters.

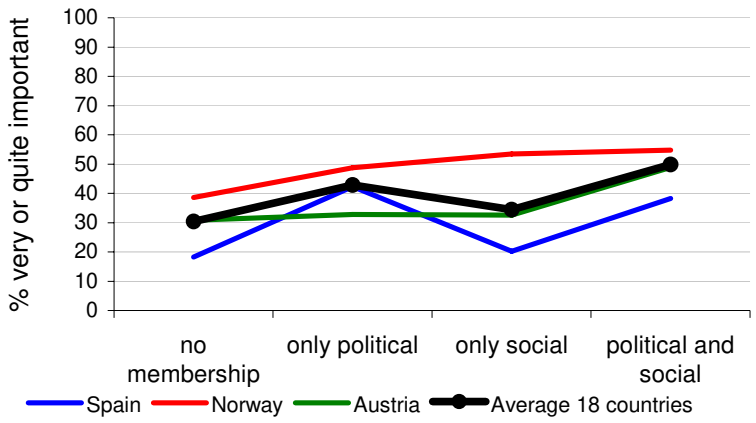
Graph 3.1. Political Interest and Types of Associational Membership



[15] Similar extreme differences can be found in Italy and Portugal.

With respect to the importance given to politics[16] we find a very similar situation (Graph 3.2). The average pattern is the same as in the case of political interest, although the differences between the members of political and social associations are less marked. Once again, the case of Spain stands out as representative of those countries which show more acute differences (such as Portugal, Ireland and Italy, although the latter at a much higher level). But also in this case there are countries in which political membership does not have the expected effects. In Norway, Switzerland and Denmark it seems that members of social associations place even more importance on politics than political members, while in Iceland and Austria only those who belong to both types of associations place more importance on politics than citizens who are not involved in any associations.

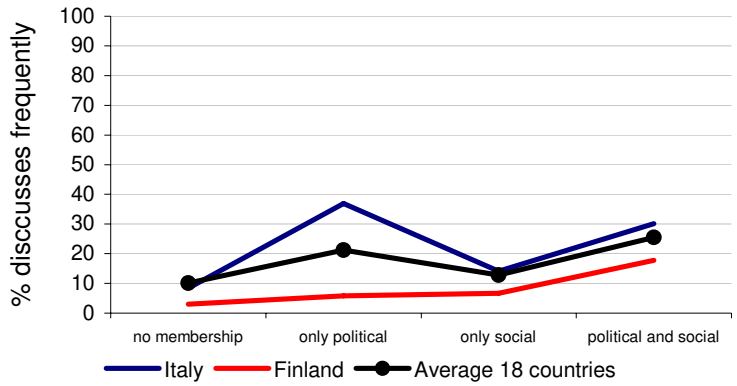
Graph 3.2. Importance Attributed to Politics and Types of Membership



[16] Just as in the case of interest, the percentages represent those who say politics is very important or quite important. The results for all countries appear in Table A3.3 in Appendix 3.

We find similar patterns in relation to the levels of discussion of politics,[17] while in much lower percentage terms than in the cases of political interest and importance (Graph 3.3). The southern European trend of extreme differences is represented by Italy on this occasion,[18] where members of political organisations are up to 4 times more likely to discuss politics than citizens with no relation at all with associations, and even discuss these issues more frequently than those who belong to both political and non-political groups. This time the expected effects of political membership on levels of political discussion are only absent in Finland and Iceland, countries where only those citizens who belong to both social and political groups show a higher propensity to discuss political issues.

Graph 3.3. Political Discussion and Types of Membership



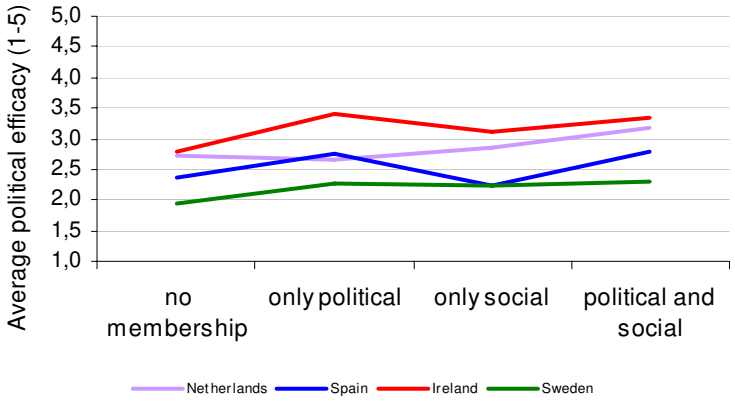
The relationship between types of membership and citizens' political efficacy also shows the special relevance of political

[17] Here we adopt van Deth and Elff's criteria (2000: 4) by which only those who say they discuss politics often show a clear interest in politics.

[18] In this case France and Ireland show substantial differences between types of membership similar to Italy. See data for all countries in Table A3.4 in Appendix 3.

membership (Graph 3.4). In most western countries political members are the ones who consider themselves the most politically efficacious.[19] Nevertheless, this is not the case in all countries. In a large number (Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Canada and the United States) there is no significant difference in the levels of political efficacy depending on the type of membership. Members of any type of association show higher levels of political efficacy than other individuals. In other countries, besides, political membership promotes political efficacy less than non-political memberships,[20] so that in many nations there is hardly any difference between the political efficacy of the former and that of citizens not involved in associations.

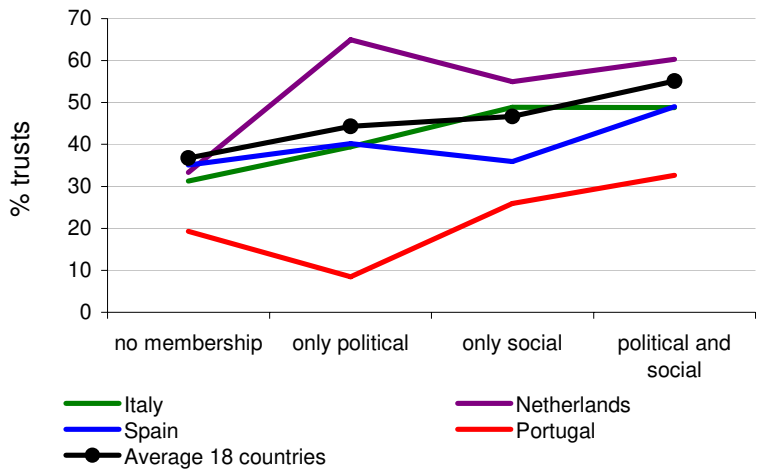
Graph 3.4. Political Efficacy and Types of Membership



[19] Internal political efficacy is measured as an ordinal variable in response to the statement: "If the government passed an unjust law, there would be nothing I could do about it". The answers that show a higher disagreement with this statement are indicative of a higher level of political efficacy. The average values of the answers to this question are shown. See data for all countries in Table A3.6 in Appendix 3.

[20] This is how it is, for example, in Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Iceland.

Graph 3.5. Social Trust and Types of Membership



When we analyse the relation between types of membership and social trust (Graph 3.5), the patterns we have seen so far change. Up to now all political orientations were more positive in the case of members of political associations. In the case of social trust this is not the case. The average pattern in the 18 countries we are considering shows that in many countries, there is little difference between the levels of social trust political members manifest and that of members of social associations. As in previous cases, multiple membership of both political and non-political organisations is what makes the difference. But also on this occasion we find important exceptions to the rule. The case of Portugal stands out, as exclusive membership of political organisations is related to even lower levels of social trust than that shown by those citizens who belong to no associations. A distinct and more common pattern is that represented by the cases of Spain and the Netherlands;[21] the former shows very low levels

[21] Countries with similar behaviour are: Great Britain, the United States, Canada and Sweden. See data for all countries in Table A3.5 in Appendix 3.

of trust among all citizens, and the latter very high levels. Lastly, we find another pattern represented here by Italy, which indicates that multiple membership of both social and political groups does not seem to have a stronger relationship to social trust than that shown by exclusively social membership.[22]

In short, a preliminary and purely descriptive analysis seems to indicate that political membership is linked to more positive orientations to politics, although it is not necessarily linked to interpersonal trust. If we consider this set of orientations[23] as elements of a general syndrome of psychological involvement in politics[24] we can analyse in more detail the relationship between political membership and these orientations. Does this positive relationship still stand up when we take other factors into account?

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[22] This relationship is also present in the cases of West Germany, Iceland and Ireland.

[23] Excluding, of course, social trust.

[24] As has already been mentioned, there are several ways of conceptualising political involvement. On many occasions it is used as a synonym for political participation (Milbrath and Goel 1977); whereas in others it is used interchangeably with the concept of interest (van Deth and Elff 2000). Nevertheless, there have also been different attempts of conceptualising psychological involvement in a more general way. Initially Campbell et al. (1960) proposed measurements of psychological involvement that were excessively centred on the electoral campaign, as well as in party identification. Later, Verba and Nie (1972: 367-369) developed an index of psychological involvement with politics that included general interest, political discussion and the exposure to political information. Sigel and Hoskin (1981, chapter 2) have advanced in this line and considered this concept as three-dimensional, as to include affective, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions. Thus, for these authors, political involvement is the opposite of political isolation, and individuals are involved in politics if the political process is relevant for them (p. 42). Here I adopt the position of Sigel and Hoskin, and limit myself to eliminating from the operationalisation those behavioural elements that constitute forms of political participation. Thus, interest in politics, the importance attributed to politics and political efficacy point to the affective dimension, whereas the frequency of discussion allows us to incorporate the behavioural dimension that does not overlap with participation. Unfortunately, the questionnaire of the WVS 1990-93 did not include questions on political knowledge that could reflect the cognitive dimension.

Does the effect of political membership still prevail over that of social membership?

As is known, in the absence of panel data, statistical analysis on its own does not allow us to make inferences on the direction of the causal relationship. It is possible to argue that probably it is not being a member of a political group that increases political involvement on the part of citizens, but that those individuals most psychologically involved in politics are those who will show a higher tendency to join groups with political ends. This is not only plausible but also quite likely. Nevertheless, it also seems to be very probable that a process of feedback exists between political involvement and political membership. Those individuals more psychologically involved in politics tend to join more often political organisations, and their relationship with these groups will increase their political involvement.[25] Some empirical data that support these claims are provided by Finkel (1985) on the positive effects of voting and participation in electoral campaigns on later feelings of external political efficacy (but not internal) on the part of citizens. Finkel suggests that other forms of participation, such as membership or protest, may have stronger effects than those of less demanding activities such as voting and participation in electoral campaigns.

With the aim of analysing in more detail the relation between different types of membership and psychological involvement in politics, we have carried out an OLS regression analysis which allows us to contrast the possible effects of political membership on political involvement once we have controlled for the effects of non-political membership and the main socio-economic characteristics of the individuals (see Table 3.1).[26] With this

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[25] Dahl (1961a) claimed that political efficacy and participation reinforced each other mutually, in such a way that political efficacy led to participation and participation led to more political efficacy.

[26] The dependent variable is an additive scale (rescaled to the range 0-1) of political involvement from the variables of interest in politics, importance attributed to politics, internal political efficacy and discussion of political issues. A reliability analysis of the scale was carried out before it was included in the model. The results of the reliability analyses show Cronenbach alfas that range

model I try to, therefore, determine how far the two types of membership that have been distinguished so far have different consequences and to what extent this depends on the degree of active participation by citizens in each type of association.

Table 3.1. Membership and Political Involvement, WVS 1990-93

	Member political group	Activist political group	Member social group	Activist social group	Age	Educ.	Income	Works	Gender (Man)	Adjust. R^2	Average	S.d.
France	0.11**	0.10*	0.03	0.02	0.14**	0.19**	0.17**	0.04	0.13**	0.19	0.39	0.20
Great Britain	0.17**	0.15**	-0.01	-0.01	0.12**	0.16**	0.19**	-0.05	0.12**	0.18	0.49	0.21
Germany	0.10**	0.09**	0.11**	0.03	0.08**	0.24**	0.11**	-0.04	0.20**	0.20	0.51	0.21
Italy	0.20**	0.15**	0.06	-0.02	-0.04	0.13**	0.04	0.05	0.17**	0.25	0.45	0.22
Netherlands	0.20**	0.11**	0.12**	-0.06	-0.03	0.15**	0.07	0.03	0.07	0.16	0.53	0.20
Denmark	-0.01	0.20**	0.04	0.05	-0.01	0.31**	0.00	0.06	0.11**	0.19	0.50	0.22
Belgium	0.14**	0.11**	0.06	0.05	0.05*	0.27**	0.09**	0.03	0.10**	0.22	0.36	0.20
Spain	0.12**	0.10**	-0.05	0.05	0.00	0.19**	0.11**	0.08**	0.11**	0.18	0.34	0.20
Ireland	0.13**	0.10**	0.02	0.00	0.15**	0.21**	0.10**	0.01	0.20**	0.16	0.45	0.21
United States	0.17**	0.03	0.06*	0.02	0.13**	0.13**	0.11**	0.04	0.05*	0.13	0.56	0.20
Canada	0.07*	0.07*	0.07*	-0.06	0.23**	0.26**	0.12**	-0.04	0.05	0.15	0.55	0.21
Norway	0.08*	0.15**	0.07*	0.00	-0.10**	0.21**	0.08**	-0.06	0.07*	0.14	0.57	0.19
Sweden	0.09**	0.16**	0.08*	-0.12**	0.07*	0.23**	-0.08*	-0.05	0.03	0.11	0.46	0.20
Finland	0.04	0.26**	0.04	0.05	-0.01	0.15**	0.00	-0.05	0.15**	0.14	0.51	0.19
Portugal	0.15**	0.03	0.03	-0.01	0.07*	0.25**	0.16**	0.01	0.10**	0.17	0.45	0.20
Austria	0.08**	0.14**	0.07*	0.01	0.05	0.02	0.14**	-0.01	0.07**	0.08	0.39	0.15
Iceland +	0.03	0.14**	0.03	-0.02	0.10*	0.24**		-0.06	0.07	0.08	0.37	0.21

Dependent variable: scale of political involvement (minimum= 0, maximum= 1)
* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$. Standardised coefficients (Beta) are shown.
+ The model does not include the variable on income because it was excluded from the questionnaire.
Switzerland not included due to lack of data on important variables.

As can be seen, in 14 of the 17 countries considered, political members show more psychological involvement with politics, irrespective of the degree of their activism in these groups, their membership of and participation in other non-political associations, their age, education, income level, employment

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between 0.509 for Austria and 0.647 for Belgium (see Table A3.7 in Appendix 3). It is necessary to point out that also in all cases the reliability of the scale would have improved substantially if the variable on political efficacy had been eliminated (Cronenbach alfa increased around 0.2 points). Nevertheless, we have preferred to keep the variable of political efficacy in the scale for theoretical consistency with the concept of political involvement presented before.

situation or gender. What is more, in countries such as Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States, membership of political organisations is the most determining factor on the level of citizens' political involvement. Hence, for example, Dutch citizens who belong to political groups show levels of political involvement 14% higher than those who do not belong to this type of organisations.[27] We also see that the degree of active involvement in these groups has an important effect on levels of political involvement. For example, Italian citizens who participate in activities run by political groups by means of voluntary work show levels of political involvement that are 16% higher than those of citizens who have the same characteristics but do not participate in these activities. And if we take into account the fact that activism is almost always accompanied by membership, the effect of political membership is even stronger. In this sense, as an illustration, British citizens who belong to and are active in political organisations show levels of psychological political involvement 39% higher than those who are not involved in these groups. Additionally, non-political membership has a very low impact on the psychological involvement of individuals with regard to politics: only in 7 of the 17 countries considered, does this type of membership have any effect on involvement. And, even in these cases, its relevance tends to be lower compared to that of political membership and socio-economic variables. Besides, the most active form of participation in these type of associations, doing voluntary work, does not contribute significantly to increasing levels of political involvement on the part of citizens, and in Sweden it seems that it even contributes to keeping them low.

One aspect that reinforces these conclusions is that these results are fairly stable over time. Similar analyses carried out with data for 2001-2002 from the international study *Citizenship,*

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[27] This is an estimation of the change in the predicted values of the dependent variable (the scale of political involvement) when the value of membership of political groups changes (from 0 to 1) keeping all other variables constant.

Involvement and Democracy[28] for the western countries included in this dataset show very similar results and support the same conclusions: membership of political organisations is, in most countries, more relevant than non-political membership when promoting political involvement on the part of citizens. In fact in the cases of Switzerland, Denmark and the Netherlands non-political membership does not have any effect on psychological involvement with politics, once we control for the impact of political membership and other individual variables. Whereas in the cases of Spain, Norway and Portugal only if participation in non-political associations is active does it have any positive effect on these political orientations.

This not only seriously contradicts the arguments of a large part of *social capital* scholars, but also that of the supporters of associative democracy, who consider that associational membership – and, especially non-political membership – contributes to creating better citizens, more concerned about public matters, as well as to generate the political and social capital which enables co-operation and has beneficial effects on the way democracy works.[29] As Stolle and Rochon say (1998), nobody has argued that all associations have the same effects,[30]

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[28] Unfortunately, although the author has access to the data, as she is a member of the international research team that collected the data, the results cannot be shown due to the embargo that is still in force on the publication of such data.

[29] See for example, Putnam's statements (1993: 90, my underlining): "Participation in civic organisations inculcates skills of co-operation as well as a sense of shared responsibility for collective endeavors. [...] These effects, it is worth noting, do not require that the manifest purpose of the association be political. Taking part in a choral society or a bird-watching club can teach self-discipline and an appreciation for the joys of successful collaboration. […] associations of like-minded equals contribute to effective democratic governance." And later (p.175): "Membership in horizontally ordered groups (like sports clubs, co-operatives, mutual aid societies, cultural associations, and voluntary unions) should be positively associated with good government. […] we should expect party membership as such to be unrelated to good government.".

[30] In fact, Putnam (1993a: 221, note 30) clarifies this point in the following way: "Not all associations of the like-minded are committed to democratic goals

but neither has anybody taken the trouble to specify this part of the theory of social capital to determine how these effects are produced and which associations generate such effects. According to these results, social interaction in associations alone is not enough to promote democratic attitudes and behaviour.[31] The results presented here show that it is associations with political ends that favour attitudes of greater involvement in public affairs, contributing therefore to get better democracies.[32] As several of Putnam's critics have claimed (Boix and Posner 1996, Tarrow 1996, Hardin 2000) it would not be, even *a priori*, very plausible that "the political" would not be more relevant to explain political behaviour and attitudes. And, as we have seen, political membership does indeed contribute to a much greater extent in the development of the civic and political orientations that characterise the type of democratic citizens that we wish to have. However, as we have mentioned before, having a healthy democratic citizenry does not only require that citizens have positive orientations to politics, but also that they behave in such a way that they hold politicians accountable; that is, they should also be actively involved in public affairs.

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nor organized in an egalitarian fashion [...] In weighing the consequences of any particular organisation for democratic governance, one must also consider other civic virtues, such as tolerance and equality."

[31] These results contradict those of Stolle and Rochon (1988: 57 ff.) on the absence of a relation between political membership and political efficacy. Actually, their results presented several problems: on the one hand, they combined trust in political institutions with political efficacy in a single scale without justifying it theoretically, nor did they present dimensional analyses on the empirical relation between both aspects; on the other hand, the number of cases on which their analysis is based is very limited. In fact, Stolle's later analyses (2001: 124 ff.) with the same database show an absence of a significant relation between social trust and membership in several of her cases (Germany, the United States and Sweden). Their conclusions are also refuted, regarding trust in public institutions, by Newton and Norris' results (2000: 64 ff.)

[32] A citizenship interested in politics and concerned about public issues will be more efficient in holding politicians accountable for their acts while in government. As many authors have shown (see for example, the interesting collection of essays in Manin, Przeworski and Stokes 1999), the process of accountability is essential for democracies to peform well.

This leads me to consider the relationship between the different types of membership and citizens' participation in politics. Once again, are all associations equally effective in promoting political participation on the part of citizens? Does it matter what type of association citizens join? Is social interaction within associations enough to make citizens get involved in the public sphere? Or is it necessary that this interaction takes place in the context of associations which are themselves involved in public issues? The following section will attempt to answer these questions.

3.3. The Mobilising Effects of Political Membership

Since the very beginnings of the study of political participation, the importance of membership in the promotion of political participation on the part of citizens has been emphasised. For Almond and Verba, associations were important not only because they constitute forms of co-operation, but also because they constitute resources for political action: "In searching for the roots of political cooperation one has to look, not only at the extent of cooperative social activities in a nation, but also at the extent to which these are translated into political resources." (1989 [1963]: 220).

A review of the relevant literature allows us to extract several arguments in this respect: membership of associations, of any kind, promotes political activity on the part of those individuals by means of several mechanisms, which I shall relate to processes of learning, network expansion, and intentional mobilisation.

1. Learning mechanisms. Participation in voluntary associations provides skills, knowledge and practices that are useful to carry out political activities which, on many occasions, are characterised by a certain cognitive complexity. In so far as associations provide opportunities for participation in their daily activities, members acquire knowledge and competences that they can transfer to the political arena outside the boundaries of the

association (Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Hence associative experiences, especially those acquired in childhood and adolescence, have educational functions, since they provide an opportunity to put into practice skills of social and organisational interaction that will come in useful for participation in public matters later on in adult life (Hanks and Eckland 1978, Hanks 1981). Additionally, participation in associations should also help to increase feelings of personal efficacy on the part of individuals that take part in them, and this increase in self-esteem would have an effect on individuals' political participation (Opp 1989). Associations, therefore, socialise in values and practices, at the same time as they transmit substantive knowledge on how the political system in which the citizens find themselves works. Besides, associations allow individuals to widen the range of issues and subjects that they are interested in, hence making political issues more relevant to them (Olsen 1982: 32). This happens fundamentally by means of more opportunities for political discussion, and due to the fact that individuals who participate in associations receive more political stimuli, even though these associations may not be of a strictly political nature (Lane 1965 [1959]: 76, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Erickson and Nosanchuk 1990). In this sense, the social composition of associations can be relevant. Lane (1965 [1959]: 76) claims that the most socially homogeneous associations are those that favour most the generation of political discussions in their organisations, since political discussion does not produce important divisions. Hence, this might mean that the functions of bridging and politicisation of associations may well be incompatible.

2. Mechanisms related to social networks and the provision of organisational resources. The environment that surrounds individuals who belong to associations exposes them to a multiplicity of personal and organisational networks which gives them access to a flow of multiple types of information. On the one hand, the reduction of information costs favours the political participation of these individuals; and what is more, contact with a

wider group of persons exposes the individual to new topics, interests and concerns, including politics. Finally, the mere connection with a wide network of social contacts allows informal recruitment for many political activities that take place outside the association itself. In short, the extension and the heterogeneity of the social networks that are generated due to participation in associations favours political activity on the part of individuals (Olsen 1982, Knoke 1982 and 1986, Opp 1989, Leighley 1990).[33] But beyond the mere generation of social networks, associations and their members constitute resources which the individuals themselves can mobilise for their own political activity. Membership in associations, in this sense, increases the organisational resources and channels that an individual has available to initiate any type of political action (Olsen 1982: 32). Hence, in so far as individuals interact in associations, these constitute a social context that favours repeated co-operation and facilitates information; thus constituting resources for action (Putnam 1993, Fearon 1997). In short, associations generate social networks that expand the reach of weak connections between citizens that otherwise would not interact, connections that can be used for socially and politically productive ends.[34]

3. Mechanisms of intentional mobilisation. Lastly, membership of associations exposes members to the explicit mobilisation that both the leaders of the associations to which they belong, or those of associations which are close ideologically or

[33] It is interesting to mention here that participation in associations can accentuate pre-existing social differences in ways that are not very intuitive. For example, McPherson and Smith-Lovin (1982) observed important patterns of associative segregation by gender, in such a way that half of the associations were exclusively female and a fifth exclusively male. Besides, membership provided the women an average of 30 contacts (members of their social network), whereas it provided an average of 38 contacts that, what is more, were socially more heterogeneous for the men. In another study, Rogers and Bultena (1975) came to the conclusion that the mobilising effect of associations served to increase class differences in political participation.

[34] Nevertheless as La Due Lake and Huckfeldt (1998) point out membership is not the only –and, possibly not even the main- source of network generation for the production of politically relevant social capital.

geographically, engage in (Olsen 1972, Rosenau 1973, Rogers, Barb and Bultena 1975, Knoke 1982, Pollock 1982, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Roller and Wessels 1996). Hence, membership should have an important impact on the political action of citizens, both in its more conventional form as in the less conventional forms (Verba and Nie 1972: chapter 11, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978: 94-112 and 130, Brody 1978: 323, Kaase 1989: 26). Nevertheless, Lane (1965 [1959]: 191-192) claimed that political mobilisation of the members of an organisation is much more effective when their political aims coincide with the main aims of the association, and when they are in agreement with the specific motives that brought the individuals to join the organisation in the first place. Knoke (1982 and 1990) corroborates these pioneering claims by Lane with his data. The fact that associations pursue political aims is fundamental because the participation of members within associations is contingent on the explicit mobilisation on the part of the organisation. Knoke establishes, hence, an interactive effect between participation in the activities of the association and explicit mobilisation on the part of the organisation: only if the association politically mobilises its members is the degree of involvement in associative life relevant. But, on the contrary, the analyses of Verba, Nie and their colleagues (1972 and 1978) lead them to different conclusions: associations serve to politically activate their members when political stimuli (for example, political discussions) take place in the organisation and when the individuals participate in their activities. Even if associations pursue ends that are manifestly non-political they can favour the political participation of their members if they expose them to political stimuli. And in order to benefit from those stimuli, members have to participate actively in their associations.

Thus, according to several of the studies that I have just reviewed, all associations - even those void of political content -[35]

[35] See Erickson and Nosanchuk's work (1990) on political discussion in card-game leagues. Also Stolle and Rochon (1998) claim that all associations, political or not, promote political action on the part of their members; although

might promote, by means of one or another of these mechanisms, political action on the part of their members. The first two mechanisms constitute indirect or non-intentional forms of political mobilisation on the part of associations. In these cases, the political action of the members of these groups is a non-intended consequence of their participation in the associations (Pollock 1982, Leighley 1996). The last mechanism does explicitly refer to the mobilising activity of the organisations: political action on the part of the members is the explicit aim of these, in order to achieve their desired ends.

The fundamental problem is how to determine when the political action on the part of an individual is the result of one (or several) of these mechanisms. In other words, how can we know if the mobilising effect of associations exists? And, in the event that it does, if it is direct or indirect. The way to analyse this relation between membership and mobilisation has changed substantially depending on the type of information that the various researchers have had available. Rosenau (1973) bases a good part of his argument on the distinction between mobilised and self-initiated participation. The information that he gathered from two samples of American citizens affiliated to the association Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), who were mobilised in mailing campaigns to political representatives, allowed him to study, for the first time, the processes of non-electoral political mobilisation. His results (reproduced in Table 3.2) highlight the enormous importance that organisations have in mobilising citizens to action through this type of initiatives. His findings that the mobilisation capacity of associations and organisations was even stronger among those citizens who participate more often in the political process through letter-writing are especially interesting.

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they recognise that associations with a political leaning do so to a greater extent. Eastis (1998) offers a very interesting reflection on the capacity or lack of it, of non-political voluntary associations to generate resources and skills that can be transferred to the exercise of citizenship and warn us against simplistic generalisations on this question.

Table 3.2. Organisational Mobilisation and Letter-Writing to Political Officials in the United States, 1964

When you write letters to legislative or executive officials (at any level), where does the idea for them usually come from?	**Mobilised individuals**	**Attentive individuals (non-mobilised)**
In discussions with friends	15	12
Urged on me by an orgaisation of which I am a member	48	29
My own thinking and initiative	53	43
I never write such letters	1	8
Other	6	5
No answer	1	15

Source: Adaptation from Table 11-1 in Rosenau (1973: 409).
Note: The figures are column percentages but they do not add up to 100 because multiple answers where possible in some cases. Mobilised individuals are those who responded positively to the specific requests made by ADA to send letters in the aforementioned campaigns. Attentive individuals are those who did not respond positively to such mobilisation attempts but who were members or supporters of ADA.

For their part, Parry, Moyser and Day (1992) also provide individual-level information that allows them to distinguish between mobilised and self-initiated participation, depending on whether the initiative came from the individual himself or from some mobilisation agent. Table 3.3 summarises their results for the British case, which show the fundamental importance of organisational mobilisation for political action to take place.[36] Organisational mobilisation is especially determinant in the case of political protest and, obviously, for group action.

[36] In fact it is quite possible that these figures even underestimate organisational mobilisation, since the other categories of mobilisation (the media, public office-holders and representatives, and family and friends) do not exclude the possibility that the original source of the mobilisation was some form of organisation. A relative or a friend may, in many cases, be only the means by which an organisation mobilises citizens; and the same can be said of the media and public office-holders and representatives. Besides, individuals tend to exaggerate the degree to which their participation was a result of their own initiative, because in many cases they are not totally aware of the process of mobilisation that has led them to act politically (a more detailed reflection on the methodological implications of the study of mobilisation can be found in Rosenau 1973: chapter 3).

Table 3.3. Political Action and Mobilisation in Great Britain, 1984-1985.

	Action on prime issue	Political contacting	Group action	Protest
Self-initiated	49	67	20	19
Mobilised	51	33	80	81
By groups/organisations	21	7	50	55
By friends/relatives	14	14	19	15

Source: Adapted from Table 5.1 in Parry, Moyser and Day (1992: 87).
Note: The firgures are column percentages. The percentages of the lower section of the Table are calculated over the total sample and not over the total number of mobilised citizens. The percentage in the third row refers to individuals that were mobilised by any kind of group (formal, informal o unknown).

Both Rosenau's, and Parry and his colleagues' results highlight the relative importance of organisations and associations as a source for the political mobilisation of citizens. In many cases, this mobilisation capacity is even higher than that shown by other agents that are much closer to the participants themselves, such as the most intimate circle of relatives and friends. Rosenau (1973: 423) argues that this higher receptivity to the initiatives of organisations may be due to the instrumental evaluation that individuals do on the efficacy of their actions depending on who does the request. Thus, a minimally well informed citizen can easily come to the conclusion that actions co-ordinated by associations and organisations have a greater chance of success than those coming from friends and family. Nevertheless, this explanation is not completely convincing, since in many cases relatives and friends act simply as intermediaries in a mobilisation process that may be coordinated by some organisation.

Unfortunately, surveys which allow us to distinguish between mobilised and self-initiated political participation are not very frequent. For this to be possible it is necessary that citizens are asked about their participation experience, their participative activities and the source of the initiative. Thus, it is not possible to study this dimension with the international information available so far, and we have to content ourselves with the scant information that exists for specific countries (such as that presented in Tables 3.2 and 3.3). Similar data can be found for the United States in the American Citizen Participation Study gathered by Verba et al.

(1990) and for Spain in the recent survey on Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy carried out by the CIS in March, 2002 in the framework of the international project CID (Tables 3.4 and 3.5).

In general, something that has to be taken into account – and that Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 137) themselves point out – is that this way of investigating the processes of mobilisation overestimates the amount of participation that is self-initiated. Actually, if the action is not very recent, the interviewees tend to forget how and why they decided to take part in the action in question. In many cases, the mobilisation processes take place through informal mechanisms (conversations between friends, relatives or acquaintances) or happen unnoticed by the mobilised person.

Table 3.4. Political Action and Mobilisation in the United States, 1990

	% was requested [a]	% requested who accepted	Political action[b]	
			Self-initiated[c]	Mobilised[d]
Campaign activities	12	48	52	41
Campaign economic contributions	22	27	38	33
Political contacts	29	57	51	38
Protest	11	28	49	43
Community activity	19	50	60	30

Source: Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), Tables 5.1 and 5.2. N = 2517. Data related to the last activity of each sort that the respondent recalls.
[a] Over total sample. [b] Only includes respondents who participated through the type of action of the row. [c] Was not requested to act or rejected to do so. [d] Was requested at least once and accepted.

Table 3.5. Political Action and Mobilisation in Spain, 2002

	All sorts of political action	Party and campaign activities	Political contacts	Issue-related citizen action	Protest
Self-initiated	78	67	74	77	68
Mobilised	22	33	26	23	32
Requested by a relative or friend	47	49	51	45	50
Requested by another acquaintance	23	16	14	22	23
Requested by an organisation	22	31	26	24	21
Mass media	3	1	2	3	2

Source: Study 2450 (CIS). The figures are column percentages. The lower section of the Table shows the distribution of respondents who were mobilised by any person or institution.

The data for the United States show that in this country mobilising activity is strong, since high percentages of citizens are approached by other individuals or organisations soliciting their participation. Mobilisation is especially intense when related to contacting political officials. Besides, a fairly high proportion of those who receive these requests in the United States respond positively. Additionally, of those American citizens that act politically, one in every three have been mobilised by other citizens or organisations. In the case of campaign activities and protest action, this number increases to two in five.

In Spain the results seem to indicate that levels of mobilisation are lower. This might be due to the fact that organisations in Spain dedicate less effort to mobilisation, or it might be that Spanish citizens are less receptive to the requests for participation. Besides, we see that processes of mobilisation are carried out, fundamentally, through informal channels and, especially, in the most immediate circle of citizens' personal relations: relatives and friends. Nevertheless, even if mobilisation initiatives come from citizens' personal networks this does not exclude alltogether a possible organisational origin of mobilisation. It is quite likely that many of these relatives, friends, neighbours and acquaintances are related in turn with the organisations that have called for political action. We need more detailed data to be able to investigate this point. Additionally, mobilised participation is, as in other countries, more frequent when the type of action is party-related or related to electoral campaigns, and when we are dealing with protest action.

Thus, there is sufficient empirical material to suggest that membership has a relevant influence on other forms of social and political participation. Specifically, participation in associations would contribute to mobilise citizens in many types of political action by means of one or several of the mechanisms mentioned above. In addition, other studies show that not only a large part of citizen political action stems from or is promoted by organisations, but also that the organisational resources that individuals have (membership and participation in associations) turn out to be more

determinant than their socio-economic resources (income and education) when taking part in politics (Nie, Powell and Prewitt 1969a and b, Rogers, Barb and Bultena 1975, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 117, Goldstein 1999: 113-116).

Certainly, the magnitude of this relationship between associative participation and other forms of political participation depends on multiple factors. On the one hand, the mobilisation capacity of associations depends on the characteristics of their own members. In this regard, Knoke (1982 and 1986: 9) indicates that the success of associational mobilisation depends, logically, on their interest in promoting the political action of their members outside the organisation; but that it also depends on the degree of involvement or commitment of those members with the organisation itself. Verba and Nie (1972) also link the mobilising effect of associations to the type and level of activity of the individuals in the same. Thus, associative membership is associated with higher levels of political participation when the level of political discussion is higher within the organisation.

Additionally, the link between membership and political participation outside the association also seems to depend on the type of association we are dealing with. This is what Opp (1989: 349) defines as the hypothesis of differential integration: organisations differ in terms of ideology, the information that they provide, and the stimuli to which their members are exposed. And Jacoby (1965) comes to the conclusion that associations with instrumental ends foster members' political action more than associations with expressive ends. For their part, Rogers, Barb and Bultena (1975) confirm Jacoby's conclusions at the same time as they show that associations with high levels of discussion have more politically active members than associations with scant political discussion. And, finally, Opp himself (1989) concludes that some associations promote or limit political protest through the incentives that they provide their members.

To a great extent, these differential effects of the various types of associations are due to the type of mobilisation that they carry out. In this sense, Pollock (1982), claims that the effects on

political participation of associations are indirect (through attitudes) in the case of social associations, which offer solidary incentives, whereas they are direct for associations with collective aims or purposive incentives.[37] Continuing in this line, Knoke (1990: 198 ff.) finds that associations that pursue political goals (or ones related to political decisions) show a stronger tendency to systematically mobilise their members, and that they do so more often and to a greater extent than non-political organisations, always providing that they have organisational resources for the action in question. Leighley (1996), nevertheless, partially contradicts Knoke's results using the same data. She contrasts the hypotheses that claim that associations promote members' political participation outside the association by way of intentional and non-intentional mechanisms. Intentional mechanisms are basically the express attempts at mobilisation of their members by associations, whereas Leighley measures the non-intentional ones by means of an indicator of the interaction of the existing opportunities of participation in the association and the degree of involvement of the individual in the associative activities – with the aim of measuring adequately the skills and knowledge derived from associative participation. Her results show that non-intentional mechanisms are more frequent than intentional ones in the United States, at the same time as being common to all types of groups. On the contrary, intentional mechanisms (direct mobilisation) are produced almost exclusively in the groups with a political orientation, since they are not very effective in non-political groups. Besides, this latter type of mobilisation is restricted by the individuals' own participatory incentives, given

[37] Although the distinction made by Pollock between types of groups is based on Wilson's typology (1995 [1974]) on the incentives offered by organisations, the data used by Pollock does not allow him to measure directly the incentives at an individual or organisational level. He simply uses the associative categories to infer the types of incentives that are provided. Thus, it is more appropriate to reduce his findings to a wider distinction similar to that of political groups versus social groups that is used here, although Pollock uses an intermediary category of groups with material incentives that corresponds to professional associations, trade unions, etc..

that members who are motivated by lobby incentives are much more likely to respond positively to attempts at mobilisation from their associations.

These different approaches to the effects of organisational membership can be synthesised in the following working hypotheses, that will be contrasted in the regression analyses shown in Table 3.7:[38]

1. Mechanisms of non-intentional mobilisation (learning and social networks): Associations contribute to promote their members' political participation because individuals learn useful things or acquire civic values. If learning processes take place in most associations, and the resulting skills can be extended beyond the association, both political membership and social membership will have significant effects on political participation. If the crucial factor is not just simple membership but the learning opportunities that associations offer when their members participate in activities, then coefficients linked to activism (doing voluntary work) will be significant for both types of associations and those of simple membership will not. We would expect the same type of effects if the non-intentional mechanisms that were at work were the connection with wider social networks and not only learning processes.

2. Mechanisms of intentional mobilisation: Associations favour political participation on the part of their members because they constitute contexts of intentional mobilisation. In view of the general consensus on higher levels of intentional mobilisation on the part of political organisations (Knoke 1982 and 1990b, Pollock 1982, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Leighley 1996, Roller and

[38] Verba and Nie (1972: chapter 11) and Roller and Wessels (1996) present similar analyses to those which will be shown in the following pages. Nevertheless, a crucial difference between those analyses and the ones presented here is that they assume the existence of a differential effect of mobilisation on the part of political organisations and exclude other forms of associations from their analysis. Additionally, they limit their analyses to the establishment of bivariate relationships and do not use multivariate methods which allow us to control for the effect of other variables that might affect the relationship between political membership and political protest.

Wessels 1996), the effect of these mechanisms on political protest will be more evident only if the coefficients for political groups are significant. This, undoubtedly, would only be an indirect empirical proof that mechanisms of intentional mobilisation prevail, but which would be reinforced if both the coefficient of membership as well as that of activism of political organisations turn out to be significant.

Table 3.6. Political Protest in Western Countries, WVS 1990-93

	Sign petition	Legal demonstration	Boycotts	Illegal strike	Occupying buildings	Additive scale (average)
Canada	77	21	22	7	3	0.25
Great Britain	75	14	15	8	2	0.23
Norway	61	19	12	24	1	0.23
Italy	54	39	13	8	10	0.23
Sweden	72	23	16	3	0	0.22
France	54	33	12	10	8	0.22
United States	71	15	18	4	2	0.21
Denmark	51	27	11	17	2	0.21
Iceland	47	24	21	5	1	0.19
Belgium	50	25	10	7	4	0.18
W. Germany	56	20	10	2	1	0.17
Netherlands	51	25	8	2	2	0.17
Ireland	42	16	7	4	2	0.14
Finland	41	14	13	8	2	0.13
Austria	48	10	5	1	1	0.12
Portugal	29	25	5	4	1	0.12
Spain	22	22	5	5	2	0.09

Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of the value of the additive scale.

What happens, then, when we consider the relation between other forms of political participation and types of membership? Unfortunately, the WVS of 1990-93 includes few indicators of political participation. Actually, those included in the questionnaire refer only to forms of political protest:[39] signing petitions, participation in lawful demonstrations, joining in

[39] With the only exception of the inclusion of an item related to electoral political participation: trying to convince others to vote for a particular party or candidate. Given that this form of political action refers to a different dimension of political participation, it has not been included in the analyses that follow so as to maintain a minimum coherence in the scale of political protest that is used.

boycotts, joining unofficial strikes, or occupying buildings or factories. From these five indicators I have ellaborated an additive scale of political protest, standardised to the range 0-1 (Table 3.6).

Table 3.7. Membership and Political Protest, WVS 1990-93

	Member political group	Active political group	Member social group	Active social group	Polit. Involv. scale	Age	Educ.	Income	Works	Gender (man)	Adj. R^2	Average	S.d.
France	0.13**	0.05	0.05	-0.04	0.30**	0.00	0.13**	0.04	0.12**	0.02	0.24	0.22	0.25
Great Britain	0.16**	0.12**	0.02	-0.00	0.20**	-0.17**	0.02	-0.08*	-0.02	0.07*	0.13	0.23	0.19
Germany	0.10**	0.09**	0.03	-0.01	0.21**	-0.20**	0.23**	-0.07**	-0.01	0.01	0.22	0.17	0.19
Italy	0.26**	0.02	0.06	-0.06	0.23**	-0.11**	0.07**	0.02	0.08**	0.00	0.27	0.23	0.25
Netherlands	0.14**	-0.04	-0.04	-0.03	0.22**	0.00	0.22**	-0.06	0.09*	-0.02	0.14	0.17	0.20
Denmark	0.02	0.11**	-0.04	0.04	0.24**	-0.17**	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.17	0.21	0.23
Belgium	0.10**	-0.03	0.03	0.10**	0.30**	-0.08**	0.03	-0.04	0.03	0.15**	0.20	0.18	0.23
Spain	0.15**	0.11**	0.05*	-0.00	0.23**	-0.05*	0.12**	0.01	0.02	0.06**	0.23	0.09	0.19
Ireland	0.13**	-0.00	0.06	-0.03	0.12**	-0.06	0.07	0.12**	-0.03	0.12**	0.12	0.14	0.19
U. States	0.12**	0.10**	0.00	0.05	0.23**	-0.00	0.13**	0.07**	0.04	-0.02	0.19	0.21	0.20
Canada	0.17**	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.21**	-0.08**	0.08**	0.10**	0.05	0.06*	0.18	0.25	0.22
Norway	0.19**	0.05	0.07*	0.05	0.15**	-0.11**	0.07**	-0.02	0.03	0.02	0.14	0.23	0.23
Sweden	0.12**	0.10**	-0.05	0.14**	0.19**	-0.10**	0.05	0.03	0.00	-0.02	0.10	0.22	0.18
Finland	0.03	0.20**	0.12**	0.03	0.21**	-0.08	0.12**	-0.08	0.06	0.02	0.17	0.13	0.19
Portugal	0.03	0.06	0.00	-0.02	0.26**	0.05	0.19**	0.07*	0.04	0.06*	0.18	0.12	0.17
Austria	0.13**	0.05	0.08*	-0.02	0.31**	-0.13**	0.03	0.03	-0.00	-0.09**	0.18	0.12	0.15
Iceland +	0.11**	0.13**	-0.01	0.06	0.23**	-0.12**	0.18**		0.03	-0.09*	0.18	0.19	0.22

Dependent variable: Additive scale of political protest (minimum= 0, maximum= 1)
* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ Standardised (Beta) coefficients are shown.
+ The model does not include the variable on income because it was not included in the questionnaire.
Switzerland excluded for lack of data on important variables.

Table 3.7 shows the relation between the different types of membership and the index of political protest in a multivariate OLS regression with the main socio-economic variables as control factors. The results allow us to come to conclusions similar to those already set out with regard to political involvement. In all the countries, with the exception of Denmark, Finland and Portugal political membership is related to a higher tendency to protest. In most countries membership of non-political groups is not associated with higher levels of political protest and, where it is, this relation is substantially lower than that observed for political membership. In fact, in most countries, political

membership is the factor that most influences political protest after that of the level of political involvement. Besides, in half of the cases the coefficient linked to political activism is not significant, and in almost all neither is it linked to the level of activism in social associations. It seems therefore, that as Olsen claimed (1982) the level of participation within an association is not so relevant for the participative consequences of membership, as opposed to the claims of Verba and Nie (1972).

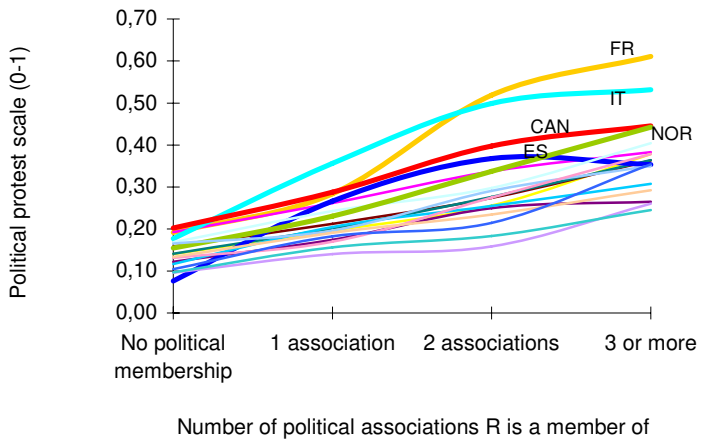
The following Graph (3.6) allows us, additionally, to observe how political membership has a very different impact in the various western countries.[40] As we can see, in some countries the trend lines are much steeper and, therefore, they indicate a stronger tendency to protest when the number of political associations to which an individual belongs increases. Curiously enough, the effect of political membership on protest is higher in southern European countries (mainly in Italy, France and Spain). This result is of great interest, since it is in these countries where levels of political membership[41] - and in general, of all kinds of membership – are lower. The Spanish case stands out especially, since lower political membership and political protest coincide. Nevertheless, Spain is the country in which political membership shows the highest mobilising capacity. According to this information, in Spain few citizens join political groups, but those that do, show a much higher tendency to protest than their western fellow citizens. It may be that this is due to the fact that the few persons who actually belong to political groups in Spain – and in Southern Europe in general – are the most politicised of the whole citizenship; but this could also be due to the higher conflictuality of these associations which, on the whole, have very little impact

[40] The Graph shows the average value of the political protest scale for each value of the variable "number of political associations R is a member of" by country.

[41] See Koopmans' argument (1996) on the inverse relationship between political protest and more conventional forms of participation, among which he includes participation in associations.

due to the low levels of membership. The first hypothesis refers to individual factors and, in tune with the arguments by Leighley (1996) on membership and political mobilisation, we could think that those who join political groups in Spain would do so motivated by expressive or lobby incentives. That is to say, Spaniards may join these organisations when they seek to protest and, therefore, are more "mobilisable" than individuals who belong to political organisations in other western countries, who are probably motivated by more diverse incentives. The second hypothesis would be, on the contrary, related to factors of a systemic nature: the political opportunity structures that political associations face in Spain, which are generally not very open to negotiation or to consociative practices, would contribute to increase the level of political protest of organised citizens (see Koopmans 1996).

Graph 3.6. Number of Political Organisations and Political Protest, WVS 1990-93



In short, it seems clear that membership of political associations contributes in a fundamental way to the political mobilisation of citizens, and that non-political membership

contributes little to citizens holding their governments accountable through "voice", that is, through protest. The results that have been shown provide unequal support to three main theoretical arguments that link participation in associations and political participation. In the case of non-intentional mechanisms of mobilisation (learning and inclusion in wider networks), the information presented would seem to indicate that these effects are only seen in some countries. In many western societies non-political associations do not favour in any significant way the political participation of their members or, at least, not participation in protest actions. Thus, it does not seem that the simple processes of learning or of gaining access to wider social networks is sufficient to promote political action in many countries. Additionally, the scant relevance of active participation in both political and, fundamentally, in non-political associations makes us think that these indirect mechanisms do not have a very big effect either. In other words, whatever the resources and the skills may be that citizens acquire through their participation in associations, it does not seem that these are transferred to political action in a very clear way.

On the contrary, and always taking into account the limitations imposed by the type of data that we are dealing with, the hypotheses that claim that associations favour the political participation of their members fundamentally through direct mechanisms of mobilisation seem to find support in these results. The fact that it is especially membership of groups with political ends that shows a stronger and more consistent relation with political protest seems to indicate that it is these processes of intentional mobilisation that probably carry more weight. These results contradict, hence, the conclusions of Verba and Nie (1972) and Pollock (1982) on the absence of an effect of passive memberships and question, again, the belief that any type of associative participation has a positive influence on the participation of citizens in public affairs. Associations with political ends not only promote to a greater extent the general political participation of citizens, but in addition in many cases

they are the only ones that really have this type of effect on the political behaviour of the citizens.

Taking up again the debate provoked by Putnam (2000), probably the most adequate solution to the alleged crisis of participation and citizenship does not consist in promoting participation in choirs, bowling leagues and other recreational associations. Probably we would be better off directing our efforts to encouraging a higher opinion of the role of political associations. And, probably, after all, the much-reviled so-called checkbook participation is not so negative. It could well be that the simple fact of joining a political organisation and receiving political information through its magazines, documents and mailing lists provides more political stimuli than an infinite number of meetings in a recreational association. After all, it seems that Lane's claim quoted at the beginning of this chapter is still valid: some associations link their members to the world of politics and others distract them from political matters.

3.4. Are all Political Associations Alike?

Once we know that political associations contribute to the involvement and political participation of citizens to a larger extent than non-political ones, it is necessary to ask whether differences exist between different types of political organisations. It may be that not all political associations contribute in the same way to promote psychological involvement with politics and participation in public matters. In this sense, it is pertinent to ask whether the different political styles of traditional political organisations and of new political groups have different consequences on the political behaviour and attitudes of their members. *A priori* we might expect different types of results. On the one hand, it is likely that traditional political associations promote more the political involvement of citizens, since they are the principal actors of what is commonly understood by "

politics".[42] On the contrary, new political groups – generally linked to new social movements – tend to be opposed (at least, in discursive terms) to traditional politics, which can lead to a certain rejection of what is understood by "politics".

Additionally we might, nevertheless, expect the opposite relationship with regard to political protest. The fact that traditional political groups constitute the main political actors of contemporary democracies, and that they almost entirely monopolise access to institutions of collective representation, means that they have less of a need to resort to protest as a means of pressure. New political organisations are, in general, less institutionalised political actors and, therefore, need to resort more frequently to more conflictive forms of pressure. However, the above could be less true in those countries where political institutions have modified their structures and patterns of behaviour to accommodate these new groups. That is to say, in countries with more open political opportunity structures (POS) new political groups do not have to resort so frequently to protest and, therefore, they will not engage so much in mobilising citizens in this way (see Koopmans 1996, and Dekker, Koopmans and van den Broek 1997). In short, it is expected that:

1) Membership of traditional political organisations is associated with higher levels of psychological involvement in politics, and

2) that membership of new political groups is linked to higher levels of protest in countries that are not characterised by consociational or corporatist practices.

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[42] Actually we are faced with a clear problem of definition, very typical of surveys: what do citizens understand by "politics"? This is especially important when dealing with, for example, interest in politics. Are all negative replies really the same? Are they expressing the same feeling when a person says they are not interested in politics, but is also a member of a peace organisation as when a person says the same thing and does not participate in any way in public affairs?

These hypotheses have been tested empirically using the same data coming from the 1990-93 WVS, by means of bivariate OLS regression analyses in which the dependent variables were, in each case, the scale of psychological involvement with politics, and the scale of political protest, both of which were used in previous analyses.[43] Table 3.8 summarises the results of both regressions, taking into account the direction and statistical significance of the coefficient of regression in every country for those individuals that belong only to new political groups (membership of only traditional political groups being the reference category). Hence, it is possible to see clearly the contrast of the effect of the two types of political groups.

Table 3.8. Differential Effects of Traditional and New Political Membership

Coefficient[a]	Political involvement	Political protest
Positive and significant		SWE
Positive and non-significant	DK, SWE, ICE, FIN	NL, DK, NOR, CH, AT
Negative and significant	**WGER, IT, BEL, ES, IRE, USA, CH, POR**	**BEL**, ES, IRE, CAN
Negative and non-significant	**FR, GB, NL, CAN, NOR, AT**	FRA, GB, WGER, IT, USA, **ICE**, **FIN**, POR

[a] Sign and statistical significance of the regression coefficient for the category "member of only new political organisations".
In bold, countries where the main hypotheses are supported by the results.

The results obtained only partially confirm our theoretical expectations. On the one hand, it does seem that different types of political membership have different consequences for political

[43] In both regressions the explanatory variable was categorical and distinguished between individuals who did not belong to any political group, individuals who only belonged to traditional political groups, individuals who only belonged to new political groups, and individuals who belonged to both types of groups.

involvement and protest.[44] Whereas the results are very similar to those expected with regard to political involvement –new political organisations promote it to a lesser extent (negative sign) – this is not the case with regard to protest. Paradoxically the results are, in any case, absolutely contradictory to the hypotheses formulated also by previous research. In the first place, it is in countries with a longer consociational, corporatist or consensual tradition where citizens that belong only to new political groups protest more than those that belong to traditional political organisations. And secondly, in most cases membership of exclusively new political groups is associated with lower levels of political protest than that for citizens who also belong to traditional political groups.[45]

Thus, we can conclude that the type of political associations citizens join does have important consequences on their basic political orientations and on their political behaviour. In general, in most countries membership of unions, political parties and professional associations is associated with higher psychological involvement in politics (interest in the same, importance given to it, frequency of discussions on politics, etc.) than that shown by citizens only associated to new political organisations. Besides, the type of political associations that one joins also affects the tendency to protest: in some countries it is the traditional political associations which encourage protest more, in others it is the new political organisations.

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[44] In most cases, the non-significant coefficients are so due to the very few cases that are found in the category "belongs only to new political groups".

[45] The simultaneous membership of traditional and new political groups is clearly related to higher levels of psychological involvement with politics, and to a stronger tendency towards political protest in all the countries considered.

3.5. Conclusions

In summary, this chapter has tried to show that political associations politically mobilise citizens in a way that non-political associations do not. It is not the same to join a parish choir, as it is to join a political party: their objectives and activities differ radically. Political organisations, without doubt, contribute much more to bringing citizens closer to politics, and hence to making them participate, in one way or another, in public matters. Therefore, citizen participation in political associations is something that has real consequences on how contemporary democracies work: it affects the relationship of citizens with "the political", and it contributes to define how they express their preferences on political issues.

If we are concerned about how to generate "good democrats", that is, citizens involved in the public life of their communities, then the recommendations of Putnam and other "social-capitalists" may well be off track. To focus on encouraging participation in associations with no political content may, simply, not have any consequence whatsoever on the attitudes and orientations towards politics on the part of citizens. It may not be a bad idea to suggest that, maybe, we political scientists should contribute to this effort of encouraging citizen involvement in public affairs by working to counteract the negative vision that there is of "the political" in our societies. In my opinion, proprosals like those of Putnam contribute to construct an even more negative vision of "the political" and to mystify everything that is not political as such.

Hence, maybe we would do well to remember the following words of Alexis de Tocqueville (1980b: 104), in whom social capital scholars are so inspired:

> "[Citizens] learn in [political associations] to submit their own will to that of the others, and to subordinate their private efforts to that of common action; all of which, is essential, both in civil associations and in political associations. Political associations may be considered, then, as great free schools, where all citizens go to learn the general theory of associations."

All these implications make the core question of this research even more interesting. Why are levels of political membership in some western countries so low (mainly in south European nations)? Why are the citizens of northern Europe and North America more likely to join political groups? Which aspects could be modified effectively so that citizens participate more in political organisations? The following chapters will try to answer these questions.

CHAPTER 4. INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP: RESOURCES, ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

"The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with an upper-class accent." Schattschneider (1960: 35)

4.1. Introduction

The preceding chapters have shown the importance of political membership, both as a form of political participation and for its special relationship with other types of political behaviour and civic attitudes. On the one hand, we have seen that political membership greatly varies in terms of the different levels of involvement in each type of organisation, and in terms of the levels of membership across countries.

Given that the greater or lesser likelihood to join political organisations has implications that go beyond the mere organisational capacity of these, it seems important to find out why some citizens join political associations and others do not – as well as the type of organisation they join – and which are the factors that help explain why we find such big variations in political membership across countries that are otherwise similar.

This chapter will try to find answers for these questions focusing, for the moment, on the individual charactistics of

citizens. Which are the main individual features that are related to political membership? Are they equally important in all western countries? Or, on the contrary, are certain traits a source of inequality only in certain societies? And finally, does it suffice to point to the individual characteristics related to political membership to explain the huge variations across countries?

These questions are confronted in several steps. Firstly, I will briefly present the theoretical framework that guides all of the subsequent analyses by distinguishing between three main types of individual determinants of political participation that will also be useful to study political membership. Secondly, I will analyse in detail the various theoretical hypotheses put forward in the scholarly literature with regard to each of the variables that will be included in further analyses, at the same time that the bivariate relationships between these and political membership will be explored. Finally, I will show the results of multivariate analyses that take into consideration all individual-level determinants simultaneously, with the aim of reaching conclusions over its usefulness for the study of political membership in western countries.

4.2. Resources, Social Status, and Orientations

Classical studies of political participation have solidly established the existence of an important linkage between certain individual characteristics and participatory inequalities (Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Barnes and Kaase 1979, Jennings and van Deth 1989, Kaase 1989, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Some socio-economic resources such as education, income, or age are systematically related to different forms of political participation, even if the relevance of these may vary depending on the case. The same applies to certain attitudes and orientations such as having an interest in politics, or political efficacy, while the effect of other orientations like social trust remains unclear. In the next pages I

will discuss in detail the various hypotheses that relate resources, orientations and certain aspects of individuals' social integration with their participation in public affairs, and more specifically with their political membership.

4.2.1. Socio-Economic Resources and Social Status

Social inequalities are very frequently transformed into political inequalities. Some characteristics which structure individuals' status in society are valuable resources for political action and facilitate access to decision-making centres. If social inequalities are translated into unequal access to the public sphere it is quite likely that the former will perpetuate to a certain extent. Previous research has shown that who intevenes in decision-making processes determines to a great extent the type of decisions that are made, as in most cases those who participate and those who do not will not share the same preferences (Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995).

However, it is not quite clear how and under what circumstances do socio-economic characteristics such as education, age, gender, and income translate into factors of participatory inequality. We can identify four major mechanisms that link socio-economic resources with differences in participation.

Firstly, some researchers have argued that people who are better-off will use their social and economic power to promote their own personal or group interests (Pizzorno 1966, Milbrath and Goel 1977: 86 ff., Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 64 ff.). Thus, socio-economic resources would determine political participation levels because the former determine the social and economic interests of citizens. This was one of the first arguments to link socio-economic status (SES) with political participation: citizens who are better-off participate more because they have more interests to defend. A complementary vision, but from the other

side of the cost-benefit equation, relates resources with the cost structure of colective action (O'Brien 1974 and 1975). In this case, the explanation of the relationship between socio-economic resources and participation stems from the greater costs that this imposes on the less well-off, who have to assure their own survival and can not dedicate time and efforts to leisure-related activities. Both hypotheses are problematic. On the one hand, it has been proven that the relationship between resources and participation is not always unidirectional. Sometimes, individuals with the most resources happen to abstain from participating in public affairs as a proof of their greater status, and leave "politics" to the middle classes.[1] In other occassions, the less well-off organise in political parties and trade unions to reduce the social inequalities that harm them. On the other hand, people with less resources would have as many reasons to engage in political action as the most privileged groups. If we conceive of the situation as a zero-sum game, so much have the latter to loose as the former to win. It is, thefore, not surprising that this sort of explanations around participatory inequalities are not very popular anymore.

A second mechanism that can link SES and political participation is the intermediation of civic attitudes and orientations (Almond and Verba 1989 [1963], Verba and Nie 1972, Huntington and Nelson 1976, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978). Resources are related to specific social norms that determine how individuals are politically socialised. People with a more privileged SES develop positive civic attitudes and orientations, while individuals socialised in less well-off environments are not exposed to this kind of stimuli. Thus, socio-economic resources are transformed into political inequalities insofar as they determine the generation of certain attitudes and orientations. In this sense, the non-univocal relationship between SES and

[1] See the interesting description that Huntington and Nelson (1976: 82) do of the Indian case and its deviation with respect to the common pattern of more educated individuals participating more in electoral politics (vote, electoral rallies, and campaign contributions).

participation is due to the fact that political attitudes play an intervening role.

A third hypothesis relates individual socio-economic characteristics with participation through the intermediation of the life experiences linked to SES (Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1993 and 1995, Verba, Burns and Schlozman 1997, Schlozman, Burns and Verba 1999). In this case, social traits define the location of individuals in the network of social relationships and resources that determine their ability to obtain the relevant information and skills to participate in public affairs. Thus, education, gender, age and income influence to a great extent the type of life experiences individuals face: whether one has a job or does not participate in the labour market, participation in voluntary associations, etc. In turn, these life experiences are related to the development of certain cognitive skills that foster or hinder participation in politics. In short, socio-economic resources act as such to the extent that they determine the development of skills that can be transferred into the public sphere.

Lastly, other scholars have claimed that socio-economic resources have an impact on participation through the intermediation of mobilisation processes (Booth and Babchuk 1969, Klandermans and Oegema 1987, Knoke 1990, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Leighley 1995). The SES of individuals affects their opportunities for participation, as not all social groups are equally exposed to political mobilisation. On the one hand, people with higher educational attainment and income are more frequently the target of intentional mobilisation on the part of groups and organisations. The latter expect a higher rate of success among those citizens with more resources and, in addition, these citizens usually possess more of the resources and qualifications that increase the organisations' chances of success (Booth and Babchuk 1969: 179).[2] On the other hand, informal contacts and

[2] McPherson's (1981) analyses, using data from Booth and Babchuk, on the dynamic of voluntary associations turnover points to the possibility that social inequalities in membership are due to the lower rates of association joining of the

the greater extension of the social networks of the better-off multiply their participatory chances (Verba and Nie 1972: 133). In this sense, several studies have shown that people with greater resources not only participate more, but also that a social environment (especially the neighbourhood) with greater socio-economic resources multiplies even more their participation (Huckfeldt 1979, Giles and Dantico 1982, Leighley 1990). Individual social inequalities are, thus, reinforced by the social context where people live. Resourceful individuals are even more integrated into the public sphere when they live in richer neighbourhoods.[3] The mechanism behind this situation would be social pressure to conformity: when an individual is surrounded by (other) persons of a high SES, participation is seen as a social obligation imposed by informal social norms to which one must conform (Huckfeldt 1986: 149-150).

According to all four sets of hypotheses, education will foster citizens' participation because it lowers the cognitive costs of participation, and it provides with information useful for political action. Although formal education does not necessarily provide individuals with information on the institutional workings of contemporary democracy, it affects the way individuals process political information and the way they make political decisions (Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991, Popkin 1991). Additionally, people with higher educational attainment tend to interact more with other people of high education, such that social interaction contributes to them receiving greater political stimuli and

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less well-off and, to a lesser extent, to the higher rates of leaving them. Hence, people with more resources will get involved in a greater number of organisations during their whole life. McPherson points to the more than likely differential recruitment by organisations as the possible cause, and to the nature of the social networks into which different individuals are integrated.

[3] However, the study by Oliver (1999) shows that the relationship between the more proximate context and participation is more complicated than it may at first seem. His results show that, altough the more privileged tend to participate more, it is the more socially heterogeneous local communities that promote higher relative levels of participation.

information (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee 1954, Almond and Verba 1989 [1963]).

Which is the empirical relationship between education and political membership? Is it the same across western countries? Table 4.1 shows data on political membership for three groups of individuals depending on their level of education: primary, secondary and university studies.[4] The results indicate that in most western countries education is positively and linearly related to political membership. Thus, in some countries people with higher education are up to five or seven times more likely to join political organisations than individuals with little or no formal education.

Educational inequalities in political membership tend to be smaller in Scandinavian countries and larger in Southern Europe and Anglo-Saxon countries. Although the comparison between the two surveys is somewhat problematic due to the different list of political organisations included in each, it seems that the participatory inequalities introduced by educational resources are stable in most countries. However, it may also be the case that they have increased in countries such as Belgium, Portugal and Spain. In the latter cases we should note that great differences where already present in 1990.[5]

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[4] Unfortunately, the question formulation for education in the WVS and the EBs is more than problematic. Instead of asking for the highest degree attained by the respondent, interviewees where asked at what age they finished full-time education. In addition, for the WVS several countries employed a completely different item to gather information about education (see Appendix 1 for more details on this variable).

[5] Educational differences have also been analysed for each type of political organisation (traditional and new) but the results are not shown because they conform to the same pattern (see Table A4.1 in Appendix 3). The only relevant exceptions are to be found in Belgium, where no differences are apparent across educational levels with regard to exclusive membership of new political groups, and in Sweden and Austria, where the effect of education is the reverse for members of exclusively traditional political organisations (greater percentages among those with lower educational levels), probably due to the impact of union membership.

Table 4.1. Educational Level and Political Membership, 1990-93 and 1998

	WVS 1990-93				EB 49 1998			
Country	Primary or less	Some secondary education	Higher or university degree	Ratio higher/ lower	Primary or less	Some secondary education	Higher or university degree	Ratio higher/ lower
Switzerland*	8	30	42	5.1				
United States	13	31	56	4.2				
Spain	5	8	19	3.8	7	18	37	5.3
Italy	15	34	50	3.2	12	17	27	2.3
Ireland	14	26	44	3.1	9	16	29	3.4
France	10	15	30	2.9	18	16	19	1.0
G. Britain	24	34	59	2.4	18	30	54	2.9
Canada	24	32	52	2.2				
Portugal	12	17	24	2.0	4	22	26	7.0
Belgium	28	40	50	1.8	11	21	37	3.4
Denmark	42	67	72	1.7	50	62	69	1.4
Germany	32	39	53	1.7	17	23	48	2.8
Norway	46	54	65	1.4				
Netherlands	44	52	64	1.4	34	50	59	1.7
Iceland	66	71	76	1.2				
Finland	49	44	61	1.2	35	46	62	1.8
Sweden	66	69	72	1.1	54	66	74	1.4
Austria	43	34	40	0.9	28	30	51	1.8
Greece					8	8	13	1.6
Luxembourg					46	38	56	1.2

Note: The figures indicate the percentage of respondents in each category that are members of any political organisation. Countries are ranked in descending order of educational inequalities (ratio) for 1990-93. * The data for Switzerland are not exactly equivalent to the rest because some political organisations were not included in the questionnaire.

Besides education, other resources that are basic for political participation are the strictly material ones. Economic resources are relevant for political participation for various reasons. On the one hand, citizens with a higher income are more apt to confront the time and monetary costs generated by their participation in public affairs. In some extreme cases the free-time available to people with higher earnings might be less than that of citizens with average or lower earnings. However, even in these cases economic resources allow the former to "buy time" by hiring other people to take on their duties. In addition, in the specific case of political

membership, economic resources foster involvement in several forms. Firstly, individuals with greater earnings can economically contribute to a greater number of organisations to defend their interests and preferences. Some scholars have highlighted the multiplication in the last decade of political organisations that devote a substantial part of their efforts to find economic contributors and patrons (see, for example, Jordan and Maloney 1997). Secondly, people with greater economic resources can more easily form new associations to defend their interests or the collective interests they share.

Usually, the simplest – though problematic – form of getting information on the "wealth" of individuals is to ask them about their family income. There are many other alternative or complementary ways of measuring economic resources. In many European countries there is a long-standing tradition of including items on household property, car ownership and other commodities in surveys on political behaviour (see Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 67 ff.). Unfortunately, the cross-national surveys available thus far do not allow to measure economic resources other than family income.

Which is the empirical relationship that we find between income and political membership in western countries? In general, we would expect a positive and linear relationship, but some studies indicate that the transformation of income inequalities into participatory inequalities may substantially vary across countries, as the less well-off groups are sometimes mobilised by Left-wing parties and class-based trade unions (Rokkan and Campbell 1960, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978).

Graph 4.1 portrays the relationship between income and political membership in each of the western countries included in the analyses.[6] As we see, in most of them the relationship between

[6] All Graphs have been produced with data from the 1990-93 WVS. The item on income was not included in the Icelandic survey. The Graphs show the trend lines estimated from the real lines that link the percentages of political membership for each income decile. Trend lines are presented instead of the original ones to obtain a more clear vision of the relationships between both

income and political membership is, in fact, positive and linear. Its strength varies across cases. While in countries like Italy and Ireland participatory inequalities are clearly linked to income levels (correlations of 0.27 and 0.30 respectively), in other nations –Austria, Finland, or Spain – income does not discriminate so strongly (correlations of 0.11 for the former and 0.15 for the two latter). Nevertheless, in some other countries the relationship between income and political membership is curvilinear, such that membership increases with income up to a certain point –generally around the central deciles- and then it decreases without reaching the levels of membership of the lower income individuals. In West Germany this relationship is almost non-significant, and in the case of Sweden the relationship is precisely the opposite, with extreme income people being more likely to join political organisations than citizens with middle income levels, such that individuals with higher income join political groups to a greater extent. The results for the Scandinavian countries are quite surprising, since economic inequalities seem to have more of an impact than we would expect given the strength of worker's parties and unions in these countries. In addition, these results seem to be stable, as equivalent analyses performed with EB 49 from 1998 produce similar relations.[7] Therefore, in most western countries economic resources seem to determine political membership.

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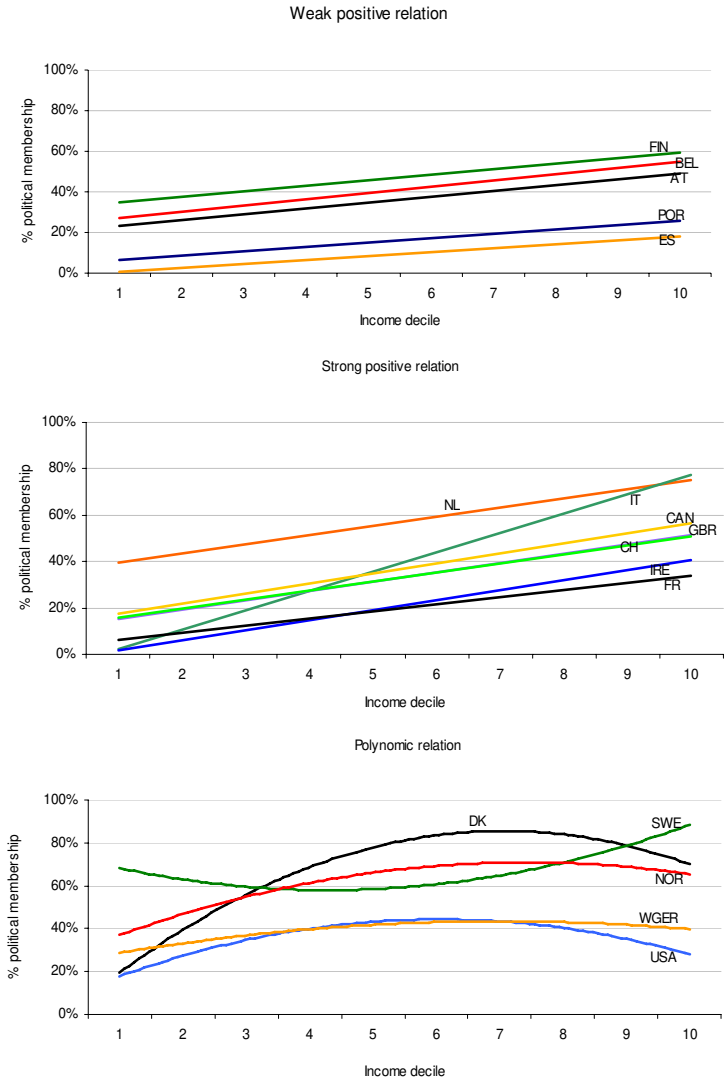
variables, which would generally be obscured by the inevitable fluctuations of the percentages in each category when survey data are used. The original data are shown in Table A4.2 in Appendix 3.

[7] In Denmark the relationship is still curvilinear and continues to indicate the existence of huge income inequalities, and in Sweden citizens' with middle incomes are the ones to join political organisations the most. The results are not shown as to not overload excessively the chapter with graphs and tables. The only difficulty in comparing the results coming from the 1990-93 WVS and the 1998 EB 49 stems from the reduction of the income scale in the latter survey to only 4 values, which results in some relationships being altered in their shape (see Appendix 1 for more information).

Graph 4.1. Income and Political Membership, WVS 1990



This notwithstanding, resources are surely not the only individual aspects that relate to unequal individual opportunities for participation. Social status and position, as determined by social class, age, gender, and family situation (mainly, marital status and child-rearing) condition individuals' political participation.

Social class can impinge on political participation and political membership in several ways. On the one hand, certain social classes are more likely to organise to defend their interests. For example, manual workers have a long-standing tradition of union membership, while the traditional middle classes and business-owners have promoted professional associations and business organisations. On the other extreme, the social and professional context of non-manual routine workers and of labour market outsiders has not contributed to their political organising. Lastly, we know that the new middle classes have a greater tendency to participate in politics due to their privileged professional situation and their higher presence in the public sector.[8]

Table 4.2 shows the relation between social class and political membership in fifteen European countries in 1998.[9] From the results we can tell that, indeed, the new middle classes have a greater tendency to organise themselves politically, while the non-working population is much more reluctant to join political groups. These patterns are common to almost all west European

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[8] Following Parry, Moyser and Day (1992) I have distinguished five groups to measure social class: manual and technical workers, traditional middle classes and owners, non-manual routine workers, new middle classes, and inactive/non-working individuals.

[9] It has not been possible to use an equivalent variable with the 1990-93 WVS because the item that measures occupation in this survey does not fulfil the necessary requirements to do an adequate classification. For example, there is no distinction between management and owners, and two ambiguous categories of "middle level non-manual" and "junior level non manual" related to office work are of little use, since they do not allow to distinguish between non-manual routine workers and new middle classes. Besides, the variable on occupation was different for three of the countries included in the analyses (Sweden, Iceland and Switzerland) and no information on the specificities of these country-specific variables was available in the documentation.

countries, with the exceptions of France and the Netherlands, where traditional middle classes and small business owners are the groups with higher levels of political membership. In addition, in Austria and Italy the latter social class shares with the new middle classes the first rank, whereas in France and West Germany non-manual routine workers manifest, together with the inactive population, the lower levels of political membership. In all countries manual workers and supervisors show intermediate levels of political membership that, in many cases, are close to the national average or, as is the case in Denmark and Sweden, even over the average. Another conclusion we can extract from these analyses is that social class has a varying relevance for political membership. In some countries, the social class seems to introduce rather significant participatory inequalities – especially in south European and Anglo-Saxon countries – while yet in others class gaps, although still noticeable, are much more limited.[10]

However, these results might be influenced by the type of political organisations listed in the EB 49 questionnaire. As I have already mentioned, the list of organisations included in this survey is sensibly shorter than that used in the 1990-93 WVS. More specifically, only five categories can be classified as political: parties, trade unions and professional associations, human rights organisations, environmental groups, and consumers' organisations. In this sense, the presence of trade unions and professional associations may be having a strong leverage over the

[10] I have also explored the relationship between social class and type of political membership by distinguishing between those who are not members of a political organisation, those who join only traditional political groups (parties, trade unions, and professional associations), those who are members only of new political organisations (human rights groups, environmental organisations, and consumer associations), and those who are members of both types of political organisations (Table A4.3 in Appendix 3). The results show similar patterns to the more general ones presented in Table 4.2. The only variation that deserves mentioning is that inactive groups are not always the less participatory when it is membership of new political organisations that we are dealing with, since non-manual workers are the less inclined to join this type of organisations. This happens in half of the fifteen EU countries included (Denmark, Italy , France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Great Britain, Finland and Sweden).

results, as the working environment of many of the class groups promotes to a greater extent unionisation. For this reason, a separate analysis of the relation between social class and political membership has been performed in which trade unions and professional associations are excluded. The results are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.2. Political Membership and Social Class, EB 49 (1998)

	Inactive	Manual workers and supervisors	Non-manual routine	New middle classes	Traditional middle classes and small bussiness owners	Total	Ratio higher/ lower class
Portugal	3	6	24	39	18	11	13.8
Spain	7	12	26	52	19	16	7.3
Ireland	8	13	15	41	26	15	5.1
Belgium	13	24	29	49	26	23	3.7
Great Britain	16	21	38	55	27	30	3.5
Greece	5	10	8	16	11	9	3.3
Italy	10	19	23	28	28	17	2.7
Finland	28	50	67	67	54	50	2.3
Austria	21	33	32	46	45	32	2.2
France	13	19	13	25	10	17	2.2
W. Germany	20	28	20	41	32	26	2
Sweden	45	75	76	86	69	67	1.9
Netherlands	37	49	53	59	71	49	1.9
Denmark	43	74	73	78	62	65	1.8
Luxembourg	38	43	50	58	42	44	1.5

Note: In darker shade are highlighted the class groups with the minimum percentages of political membership, and in clearer shade those with maximum percentages. Countries are ranked in descending order of class inequalities (ratio).

When trade unions and professional associations are excluded class patterns change substantially. In five of the fifteen European countries the social class with the lowest levels of political membership is now that of manual workers and supervisors, and in another two countries it is non-manual routine workers. Only in five countries inactive (i.e. non-working) groups show a smallest likelihood of joining political organisations, and in another two countries they share this rank with manual workers. On the other

hand, although new middle classes continue to show a much greater tendency to join political groups, traditional middle classes share this high ranking in several countries. But in general, it does not seem that the exclusion of trade unions and professional associations has any significant effect on the degree of inequality that social class introduces on political membership, given that the relative differences between the least and most participative classes remain practically inaltered.

Table 4.3. Social Class and Political Membership (without Trade Unions and Professional Associations), EB 49

	Inactive	Manual workers and supervisors	Non-manual routine	New middle classes	Traditional middle classes and small bussiness owners	Total	Ratio higher/ lower class
Portugal	2	1	9	13	8	4	14.7
Spain	6	8	19	34	11	11	5.3
Ireland	7	5	6	19	20	9	4.1
Great Britain	14	7	16	29	24	15	4.0
Belgium	9	9	17	33	20	14	3.7
Greece	4	5	5	12	7	5	3.3
Italy	8	7	14	14	17	11	2.4
Finland	16	10	16	21	23	16	2.4
Netherlands	29	34	39	49	63	38	2.2
France	11	13	7	14	13	11	2.0
Austria	18	24	21	29	32	23	1.8
W. Germany	15	14	13	22	21	15	1.7
Denmark	27	26	35	41	37	32	1.6
Luxembourg	28	34	33	42	40	33	1.5
Sweden	36	36	38	53	39	39	1.5

Note: In darker shade are highlighted the class groups with the minimum percentages of political membership, and in clearer shade those with maximum percentages. Countries are ranked in descending order of class inequalities (ratio).

We, thus, see that inequalities that are based on economic aspects have a substantial impact on political membership. But, what about other social inequalities that are not rooted on the economic sphere?

One such factor is age. The relation between age and political participation varies importantly depending on the type of

participation and the country we consider (Dalton 1996: 55 ff.). In many ocassions, this relationship is curvilinear, in such a way that middle-aged persons are the most participative, and the youngest or the oldest are the least. This pattern was considered, for a long time, the most common and, usually, the explanation given to it was related to life-cycle aspects (Verba and Nie 1972: cap. 9, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978). However, when we are dealing with less conventional or more violent forms of political action, this relationship turns out to be linear and negative (Dalton 1996: 78 ff.). Scholars argue that, in general terms, older people participate more in politics because age impinges on the skills and knowledge relevant for participation. On the other hand, middle-aged people take over social and family burdens that contribute to find more reasons to be concerned about public affairs. Nevertheless it is not quite clear that the lower levels of participation of the oldest citizens are exclusively due to the physical consequences of age, given that in part they seem to be related to their also lower levels of formal education (Milbrath and Goel 1977: 115).

Another important issue is that, in many cases, it might be difficult to establish if the effect attributed to age is strictly related to the life cycle or if it is masking some kind of generational effect (Barnes and Kaase 1979: 524, Jennings 1987, Dalton 1996: 81). In fact, some scholars argue that age as such has no effects on political participation, and that any effects are to be attributed to cohorts (or generations) or to the period (Brady and Elms 1999). As we know, the only way to determine which of both alternatives is more correct is having good longitudinal data (Mason and Fienberg 1985).

With regard to organisational membership, Dalton (1996: 60 ff.) finds different results depending on the country analysed, when using data from 1989. Thus, in Great Britain and France age seems to have little impact on organisational participation and, if any, in different directions in each country. However, in the case of Germany, age has more of an impact, and it is the younger citizens that are more likely to join non-partisan organisations. In turn, Putnam (2000) claims that the most important effect is a

generational one and that the younger generations do not join associations to a degree similar to that of post-war generations.

With the available data we can explore the relation between political membership and age, although we cannot evaluate the hypotheses on generational effects. Graph 4.2 shows the association between age and political membership for the 18 western countries included in the 1990-93 WVS.[11] As we see, in almost all countries the relation is a curvilinear one, such that the highest levels are to be found among adults with ages between 40 and 60, with the exception of Spain and Portugal, where age seems to bear little relation with political membership. In some countries it is the youngest that join political organisations the least, as in the Netherlands, the United States and Switzerland; whereas in other, political membership sharply decreases with elderliness, as is the case in several Scandinavian countries (Iceland, Sweden and Denmark) and in Italy and Ireland. Table 4.4 illustrates these patterns in greater detail.

[11] In Graph 4.4 age has been grouped in 5 years to avoid excessive oscillations due to the small number of cases for each single age. All lines are estimated polynomic trend-lines that adjust the average values for each 5-year range (original results can be found in Table A4.4 in Apendix 3). In any case, the results are basically the same when age is not aggregated in 5-year groups.

Graph 4.2. Age and Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

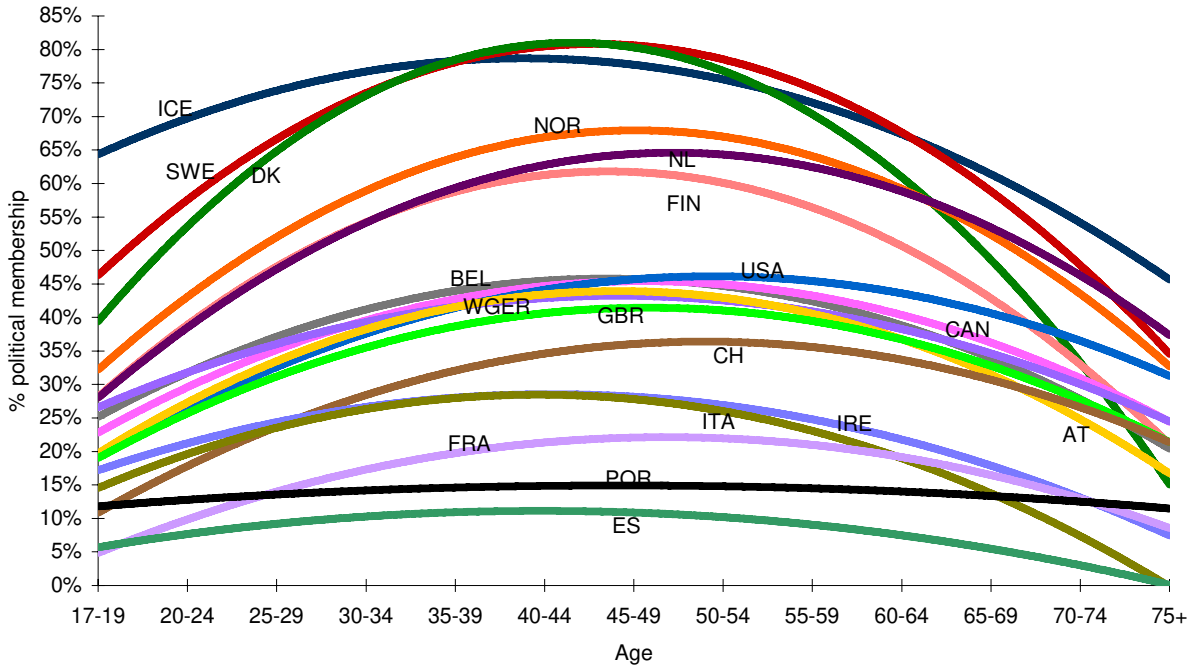

Table 4.4 Age and Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

Country	18-25 years	26-35 years	36-50 years	51-65 years	+65 years	Ratio +/-
Italy	14	33	29	18	9	2.43
Spain	6	12	12	6	3	1.90
Austria	26	41	42	38	25	1.60
Denmark	56	79	74	70	29	1.42
Sweden	56	78	75	76	50	1.41
W. Germany	31	39	43	39	30	1.40
Ireland	22	22	30	23	14	1.38
Belgium	33	40	45	40	28	1.37
Iceland	68	74	79	70	55	1.17
Finland	32	51	65	51	37	2.04
United States	23	39	45	41	38	1.99
Switzerland*	18	29	33	34	27	1.88
France	12	13	20	21	13	1.79
Great Britain	24	36	38	40	26	1.71
Netherlands	36	60	60	59	45	1.69
Norway	42	58	68	60	44	1.65
Canada	28	38	46	41	30	1.63
Portugal	12	16	15	14	14	1.32

Note: In darker shade are highlighted the class groups with the minimum percentages of political membership, and in clearer shade those with maximum percentages. * The data for Switzerland are not exactly equivalent to the rest because some political organisations were not included in the questionnaire. Countries are ranked in descending order of age inequalities (ratio) in two blocks: countries where the eldest show the smallest percentages of membership, and countries where it is the youngest to join the least.

As we see, Table 4.4 gives the same information as Graph 4.2 but it does also allow to discern with greater care and clarity the different patterns that we find in the association between age and political membership. Thus, we see that even if it is true that the youngest and the elderly are those to participate the least, it is also true that in many countries the highest levels of political membership are to be found among adults we should still consider young (between 26 and 35 years old). Even though, in most countries the age group with a highest propensity to join these organisations are middle-aged adults, between 36 and 50 years old.

Things change when we distinguish between types of political membership. Table 4.5 indicates that the relation between age and political membership varies depending on the type of political organisation we consider. Thus, while traditional political membership shows the common curvilinear pattern, this is not the case for membership of new political organisations. In some countries (Spain and France, for example) it is the youngest citizens who join the most organisations linked to NSMs; while in others the highest participation is to be found among the adults between 26 and 35 years-old (Italy, the United States, Norway, Switzerland and Austria); and, finally, still in others the elderly are the most likely to join new political organisations. In summary, when dealing with new political organisations, there is no common curvilinear or linear relationship between age and membership for all western countries.

Therefore, the life-cycle hypothesis put forward by Verba and Nie (1972) for political participation does not seem to hold for political membership. It is difficult to be able to maintain this hypothesis for all the different patterns of age-effects on the various types of political membership. It is, thus, more likely that some sort of generational effects are in place or, at least, we would have to relate age-effects with the development of different issue interests more than with different participatory abilities or strictly life-cycle aspects.

Table 4.5. Age and Political Membership by Type of Organisation, WVS 1990-93

Country	Only traditional political organisations					Only new political organisations					Both traditional and new political organisations				
Age	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	+65	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	+65	18-25	26-35	36-50	51-65	+65
Austria	16	28	29	27	16	6	8	8	6	5	4	5	5	5	4
Belgium	15	17	18	15	9	10	11	14	17	13	8	12	13	8	7
Canada	17	22	27	23	6	7	6	7	8	12	5	9	13	10	11
Denmark	44	59	52	50	16	6	5	3	6	6	6	16	20	14	71
Finland	29	41	50	37	14	0	2	4	7	10	3	8	10	7	12
France	4	8	13	13	7	8	4	4	4	2	0.5	2	3	4	4
Great Britain	17	26	26	27	8	5	5	5	6	10	2	4	8	7	8
Iceland	60	60	60	47	42	1	2	2	6	9	6	11	17	16	4
Ireland	15	14	21	13	7	5	5	6	6	3	2	3	3	4	3
Italy	6	16	24	14	7	6	8	4	3	0	1	8	1	1	1
Netherlands	8	19	13	21	15	17	23	24	11	12	10	18	23	27	18
Norway	33	41	56	47	37	3	8	3	2	5	5	9	10	11	2
Portugal	7	12	12	10	14	2	1	1	3	0	2	2	2	0	0
Spain	3	7	8	4	2	3	2	2	2	0.5	1	2	2	1	0.5
Sweden	38	53	50	54	25	8	7	4	4	10	10	19	21	19	15
Switzerland*	8	16	24	22	18	7	8	4	6	6	2	5	5	6	2
United States	11	18	25	25	17	6	10	6	7	9	6	11	14	10	12
W. Germany	18	25	27	22	12	10	7	10	11	12	3	7	7	6	5

Note: In darker shade are highlighted the class groups with the minimum percentages of political membership, and in clearer shade those with maximum percentages. * The data for Switzerland are not exactly equivalent to the rest because some political organisations were not included in the questionnaire.

Another individual trait that is usually related to important participatory inequalities is gender. Being a woman can, in many cases, become a social barrier to participate in public affairs, which traditionally have been regarded as a "men's thing".[12] The existence of a notable gender gap in political participation was first studied with regard to electoral participation (Duverger 1955). Later on, Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) pointed to the outstanding and constant gender gap in political participation in seven countries (Austria, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the United States and Yugoslavia), the magintude of which varied from country to country and depending on the political activities. The gender gap was, for example, smaller in the United States and the Netherlands, and especially smaller when considering electoral participation. These authors attributed such differences to a certain phenomenon of inhibition, '[women] care [about politics] but are held back by rules or norms or lack of opportunity' (p. 254). The existence of this phenomenon was confirmed by evidence for a different interaction relationship between educational levels, organisational affiliation and psychological political involvement with political activity. Several studies have confirmed the existence of important gender gaps in non-electoral political participation, although these seem to have decreased noticeably in the last decades (Parry, Moyser and Day: 143 ff., Gundelach 1995, Topf 1995b, Verba, Burns and Schlozman 1997, Morales 1999, Burns, Schlozman and Verba 2001: 69 ff.).

If we focus on the relation between gender and associational membership, we should highlight the importance Almond and Verba (1989 [1963]: 248) attributed to the link between women's participation in associations and membership differences among the five countries they analysed. Their diagnostic at that moment was that, partly, the lower levels of organisational membership found in Germany, Italy and Mexico (as opposed to the United

[12] Another social trait that is also a barrier to participation similar to gender in many countries is the race. However, given the limited extension of important racial differences in most European countries, I have opted not to include this variable in the empirical analyses to follow.

States and Great Britain) were due to the scarce participation of women in the former. In the British case, the gender gap in associational membership was still persistent in 1989, and the gap between men and women was of around 8 percent, although it was almost inexistent in the case of party membership, and of around 21 percent in the case of unionisation (Parry, Moyser and Day 1992: 150). Burns, Schlozman and Verba (2001: 79 ff.) analyse with great detail the gender gap in political membership in the United States with a survey from 1990. While 53 percent of American men are involved (are members or contribute with money) with some sort of political organisation[13], only 44 percent of women do so. Even among those who are involved in associations, women show less of an inclination to be members of or contribute with money to those organisations that take political stands (57% versus 64% of men). Additionally, men join a greater number of political organisations than women do.[14]

Table 4.6 illustrates the relation between gender and political membership in the 18 western countries included in the 1990-93 WVS. This table shows both the gender gap with respect to general political membership and with regard to specific types of political organisations.

As we see, in most countries the gap in political membership is small. It is, especially, in central and south European countries that we find greater gender differences, that reach up to men being two times more likely to join a political organisation than women

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[13] The survey used by these scholars was designed in such a way that it is possible to know whether the organisation the respondent is involved in takes stands in public issues. Thus, the definition of political membership is more closely linked to the specific group the inteviewee cooperates with than the one I am forced to adopt, since this formulation of the questions on membership is not available in any cross-national survey.

[14] These scholars suggest that the gender gap in political membership are due to the different preferences of men an women when joining organisations, and not so much due to a different perception of what is political and what is not. On the other hand, gender differences in participation are fundamentally related to the political arena, as women are equally active than men in the non-political domain.

in Spain, Italy and Portugal. The gender gap is greater and more general when we are looking to traditional political groups. In this case we see that Scandinavian countries –with small gender differences- clearly depart from the general pattern of men being up to three times more likely than women to join these organisations.

Table 4.6. Gender and Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

Country	Overall political membership			Only traditional political organisations			Only new political organisations			Membership of traditional and new political organisations			N
	women	men	ratio m/w	women	men	ratio m/w	women	men	ratio m/w	women	men	ratio m/w	
Finland	53	54	1.0	37	44	1.2	5	3	0.6	10	7	0.7	588
Iceland	70	73	1.0	49	64	1.3	5	2	0.3	16	8	0.5	702
Sweden	68	71	1.0	41	52	1.3	8	4	0.4	19	15	0.8	1029
Belgium	38	39	1.0	10	21	2.0	18	8	0.4	10	11	1.1	2794
Canada	36	40	1.1	15	27	1.8	11	5	0.4	10	9	0.9	1731
Ireland	23	24	1.1	11	20	1.9	8	3	0.3	4	2	0.4	1000
Netherlands	51	57	1.1	9	23	2.6	24	10	0.4	18	23	1.3	1018
Norway	53	62	1.2	39	51	1.3	6	3	0.5	8	8	1.0	1239
Denmark	60	69	1.2	41	51	1.3	6	4	0.7	14	14	1.0	1026
Great Britain	30	37	1.2	14	29	2.2	9	3	0.3	7	5	0.6	1484
United States	35	41	1.2	12	27	2.3	11	5	0.4	12	9	0.7	1965
France	13	20	1.5	6	13	2.0	5	4	0.8	2	4	1.9	1002
Austria	30	45	1.5	16	38	2.4	10	2	0.2	4	6	1.3	1460
W. Germany	30	45	1.5	11	34	3.2	14	6	0.4	5	6	1.1	2102
Switzerland*	22	39	1.8	11	28	2.5	6	5	0.9	4	5	1.3	1358
Portugal	9	19	2.0	7	14	1.9	1	2	2.1	1	2	2.9	1184
Italy	15	30	2.0	9	21	2.4	4	6	1.5	2	4	1.9	2018
Spain	5	11	2.1	3	7	2.7	2	2	1.0	1	2	3.0	2636

* The data for Switzerland are not exactly equivalent to the rest because some political organisations were not included in the questionnaire. Countries are ranked in ascending order of gender inequalities (ratio) for overall political membership.

Another result we should highlight is the reversion of the gender gap when we focus on membership of new political organisations. In this case, it is women that join these organisations to a greater extent, and the pattern is common to all countries, except south European ones. Nevertheless, these

differences are not as huge as the ones we find between men and women for traditional political organisations. Finally, when we look at simultaneous membership of both traditional and new political groups, we see that gender differences vary substantially across countries: in some, it is women that show a greater propensity to join both types of groups (as in several Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon countries), whereas in other countries it is men who behave more in this way (central and southern Europe).

The data coming from the 1998 EB 49 (Table 4.7) confirm these same patterns almost a decade later. Thus, the gender gap in political membership continues to be sizeable in many European nations.

Table 4.7. Gender and Political Membership, EB 49 (1998)

Country	Overall political membership			Only traditional political organisations			Only new political organisations			Membership of traditional and new political organisations			N
	women	men	ratio m/w	women	men	ratio m/w	women	men	ratio m/w	women	men	ratio m/w	
Finland	48	52	0.9	40	37	1.1	4	8	0.5	5	7	0.7	1044
Sweden	68	65	1.1	38	30	1.3	9	12	0.7	22	23	1.0	1026
Denmark	68	61	1.1	45	36	1.3	7	9	0.8	16	17	0.9	1000
Netherlands	54	45	1.2	19	8	2.5	18	26	0.7	17	11	1.6	1031
Luxembourg	49	39	1.3	21	14	1.5	13	11	1.1	16	13	1.2	607
Portugal	13	9	1.4	10	7	1.5	2	1	1.3	1	1	0.9	1000
Austria	38	27	1.4	21	12	1.7	9	10	0.9	8	5	1.7	1015
Great Britain	36	24	1.5	23	10	2.2	8	10	0.8	5	5	1.1	1055
Belgium	28	19	1.5	16	9	1.8	6	8	0.7	7	2	3.2	1006
Spain	20	13	1.5	11	6	2.0	6	6	1.1	3	2	1.5	1000
France	22	13	1.7	11	5	2.4	5	5	1.1	5	3	1.5	1044
Ireland	20	11	1.8	14	6	2.4	5	4	1.2	1	1	1.0	1000
W. Germany	34	18	1.9	22	7	3.1	8	7	1.2	4	4	0.9	1005
Italy	23	12	1.9	14	6	2.3	6	5	1.2	4	1	3.1	1000
Greece	14	4	3.4	11	2	5.2	2	1	1.6	1	1	1.4	1014

Countries are ranked in ascending order of gender inequalities (ratio) for overall political membership.

Other aspects that are intimately related to the impact of gender is marital status and child-rearing. Generally, we tend to think that being married and having children increases the

likelihood of participating in politics, as both situations are linked to the degree of social integration of citizens, as well as to life experiences that might increase their interest in public affairs (see Booth and Babchuk 1969a). However, some scholars have argued that both marital status and child-rearing have differential effects on men and women. In theory, it is reasonable to expect that married women with children will have more difficulties to participate in politics, as they tend to bear with housework to a greater degree. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence available up to now does not provide clear support of these conclusions. On the one hand, Parry, Moyser and Day (1992: 148 ff.) show that marriage limits British women's political participation to a great extent, as married women tend to participate less than married men, and single women tend to participate more than single men. But, on the other hand, these authors show that, in the British case, child-rearing has multiple and contradicting effects on gender inequalities depending on marital status and working situation. Thus, married women with children and a job participate to a much lesser extent than men in their same situation, but they participate more than men if the former do not have a job. In turn, lone mothers are more active in politics than lone fathers, no matter what their working situation. Similarly, Burns, Schlozman and Verba (2001: 221 ff., 307 ff.) show that marital status and child-rearing have no significant effects on the levels of associational membership of American men and women, nor do they have a different impact depending on gender. Hence, surprisingly enough, marital status and child-rearing seem to bear no substantial effect on gender inequalities in political participation, although they might have an indirect effect through differential labour market integration. According to these scholars, the more reduced amount of free-time available to women –due to family obligations- does not seem to be a crucial factor for political inequalities in the United States.

Table 4.8 presents the relation, first, between marital status and political membership, and secondly, between child-rearing and political membership. In general terms, living in couple

increases the likelihood of joining a political organisation in most European countries, with the exception of south European countries (Greece, Spain and Portugal) and Finland, where marital status seems not to be significantly related to political membership. It is, precisely, in these same countries of southern Europe that marital status has a different impact for men and women. In Spain, Greece and Portugal married women or who live in couple join political organisations to a lesser extent than single women, while in Italy marital status bears no relation to women's political membership. However, in these countries married men are more prone to be members of political groups. Thus, it seems that life in couple does contribute to a certain retirement from public affairs for women and not for men in most south European countries. These patterns remain very much the same when we distinguish between traditional and new political membership.

Table 4.8. Marital Status, Number of Children and Political Membership, EB 49 (1998)

Country	Ratio political membership with couple/no couple			Percentage of political membership for women			Percentage of political membership for men		
	Total	Women	Men	0 children	1-2	3 or +	0 children	1-2	3 or +
Portugal	0.8	0.6**	1.1	8	12	6	13	13	0
Spain	1.0	0.7**	1.2	12	16	0	20	219	40
Greece	1.2	0.5**	1.8**	4	5	4	13	15	17
Denmark	1.2**	1.2**	1.1**	56	72	79**	67	73	69
Sweden	1.2**	1.2**	1.2**	61	78	58**	67	71	85
Austria	1.3**	1.2*	1.5**	27	27	23	35	45	67*
Finland	1.4	1.3	1.6**	45	66	62**	42	67	39**
Belgium	1.4**	1.4**	1.4**	16	23	30	27	33	6
Germany	1.4**	1.3**	1.5**	17	19	28	32	44	14*
Ireland	1.4**	1.2	1.7**	10	12	9	16	25	24
Italy	1.5**	1.2	1.6**	12	13	11	22	27	67*
Netherlands	1.5**	1.6**	1.4	43	51	48	54	55	56
France	1.6**	1.5**	1.5**	12	15	18	21	26	17
Great Britain	1.6**	1.3**	2.0**	29	20	9**	33	38	55*
Luxembourg	1.8**	1.6**	2.0**	35	44	39	53	45	29

Note: For ratios, statistically significant differences between respondents living and not living in couple are marked. In the case of the two sets of columns for the number of children, the asterisks indicate whether the relation between the number of children and political membership is statistically significant as indicated by the F statistic of the analysis of variance (see Tables A4.5-A4.7 in Appendix 3). * Statistically significant difference for $p<0.05$. ** Statistically significant difference for $p<0.01$.

With regard to child-rearing, our results would indicate that in most European nations this aspect does not have any consequence on the political membership of either men or women.[15] There are, nevertheless, some interesting exceptions. Thus, in Scandinavian countries women with more children are more likely to join political organisations (although in Sweden this pattern does not extend to those with 3 or more children). In the opposite case, British women drastically flee from political organisations when the time comes to have children, while British men show just the opposite behaviour. Hence, child-rearing in Britain does seem to clearly disadvantage women and to have the inverse effect for men. But, in general terms, our results support Burns, Schlozman and Verba's (2001) conclusions for the American case, as the common belief that family obligations put women in a politically disadvantage position does not seem to hold. Women with children are no less likely to join political organisations than women without children. In any case, having children is linked to greater levels of political membership for both men and women. It is quite possible that, as several scholars have argued (see Milbrath and Goel: 115), the connection between family situation and political participation reflects a certain stage of the life-cycle that is characterised by greater levels of social integration within the community.

In this sense, it is important to take into account other factors that may be also related to the degree of citizens' social integration, and I will, thus, explore the effects of the size of the community individuals live in, as well as their religious practices.

The size of the community in which citizens live and its connection to political participation has been subject to debate for many centuries already. Several of the classical thinkers (for example, Plato, Aristotle, and Rousseau) considered that the small

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[15] In many cases, although percentage differences are huge, we cannot claim there is a significant relation between the number of children and political membership due to the reduced number of cases in each category. Frequently, the greatest differences are to be found among those with 3 children or more, a category that usually is scarcely populated.

polis or the city-state was the sole context in which democracy could fully develop. More recently, Dahl and Tufte (1973) retook this claim, and several other scholars have continued to analyse the bond between the size and type of community and citizens' participation in public affairs (Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Smith 1985, Mabileau, Moyser, Parry and Quantin 1989, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992).

We can find contradictory claims on the link between community size and political participation or associational membership.[16] On the one hand, it is argued that smaller communities foster individuals' participation for several reasons: information costs are more reduced, social networks are closer, social pressure to conformity increases, the possibility to have an impact on the final result of political action is greater, and the feeling of belonging to and commitment with the community tends to be greater. Thus, smaller communities facilitate communication among citizens because they can exchange opinions and information easily. This information flux allows, in turn, a greater awareness about public decisions made and of the behaviour of politicians. In addition, smaller communities would estimulate participation in public issues thanks to the greater impact of individual action and the greater simplicity of the institutional rules citizens have to take into account. The greater ability to influence on decision-making processes, as well as the fact of facing less institutional and/or bureaucratic obstacles in their way, will presumably contribute to increase citizens' feelings of political efficacy. Lastly, citizens' greater integration into the community and the development of deeper feelings of belonging to the community will foster a higher interest in public affairs, and will provide them greater social pressure to participate if

[16] Dahl and Tufte (1973) present a magnificent summary of the main arguments that relate community size and democracy along the history of democratic theory.

participation is considered a commong good (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 13-14, 42).[17]

On the opposite side, there are also a number of arguments that may lead to think that it is the bigger communities that induce greater participation and political membership. This is what Verba, Nie and Kim (1978: chapter 13) call "mobilization" hypothesis. Cities contribute to the emergence of a greater number of more varied interests and groups that represent them, since the diversity of beliefs, values, goals, and social characteristics of their inhabitants is greater. In addition, this greater social and political diversity incentives participation due to the existence of more conflict and the lesser pressure to conformity (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 13-14, 97-98, 108). Subcultural heterogeneity produces a wider offer of participation opportunities: the number and range of associations that emerge is much greater in big cities than in small communities. Besides, the greater development of mass media in big cities means that these participatory opportunities will get more publicity and that public affairs will generally be more frequently the subject of information (Oliver 2001: 41). Some scholars consider that urbanisation does also favour political membership because it reduces recruitment costs on the part of organisations, while it also increases the ability of members to communicate with each other and with the leaders of the associations (Kau and Rubin 1979). On the other hand, urban areas can also foster citizen participation due to their socio-economic composition: the greater levels of education of the population as a whole, the concentration of professional groups and new middle classes, the greater social, cultural and political heterogeneity of the citizenry, and the greater availability of economic and organisational resources for action.

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[17] Oliver (2001: 41) offers an additional argument that deserves mentioning: big cities also disincentive political participation due to the greater opportunity costs it entails. In big cities the opportunities and the range of choice to do alternative activities is much greater than that found in smaller communities, where leisure supply is much more limited.

Both sets of hypotheses seem reasonable and plausible. Thus, these possibly opposing effects could very well have as a consequence that we would not find a common and general pattern, or even no association whatsoever, between community size and participation. As Oliver (2001: 22) points out, it is not sufficiently clear which would be the real mechanism working out the connection between community size and political participation. Unfortunately, few empirical studies have systematically approached the connection between community size and participation. Dahl and Tufte (1973) and Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) are examples of initial attempts in this direction, although their conclusions are importantly limited by the data then available. Oliver's (2001) study is much richer in terms of the type of data available, but it is limited to the American case. Nevertheless, his results are of great interest and can, undoubtly, guide further analyses. Oliver concludes that the association between these two aspects is a complex one: some forms of political participation are favoured by a smaller size of the community (for example, contacting local officials, attending meetings, and community activity), while for yet others the connection between community size and participation is contingent on the type of urban areas we are dealing with. In this sense, associational participation increases with community size in the big metropolitan areas, but decreases with size in the small metropolitan areas and in rural areas. And the same is true for participation in local elections (pp. 45-51). However, the general conclusion is that citizens tend to participate more in local politics when they inhabit smaller communities. And a good deal of these differences in behaviour are linked to the smaller interest citizens have in local affairs in bigger cities, and to their more reduced feelings of political efficacy. In addition, the more reduced availability of close social networks that serve to mobilise politically in the big urban areas does also have an important effect –especially for women (pp. 56 ff.).[18]

[18] Oliver (1999 and 2001) does also study other issues related to the type of community and participation. For example, he analyses the effect of the degree of

What can we tell about the relationship between community size and political membership in western countries? The 1990-93 WVS allows us to explore the connection between these two aspects for a great number of western societies.[19] Graph 4.3 shows the different types of patterns we find between levels of political membership and community size in 16 western countries.[20] The bivariate analyses seems to confirm what we have just discussed from a theoretical viewpoint: the size of the community can impinge on political participation in various directions and in complex ways. We cannot even claim that in all cases, not even in most countries, living in big cities is related to a lower tendency to join political organisations. In countries such as the Netherlands, Canada and Denmark the inhabitants of the smaller communities more frequently join organisations with political ends. In the opposite case, in Norway, Ireland and Spain it is in big cities that citizens join political organisations the most. In several nations (Italy , Portugal, the United States, and Austria), the higher levels of political membership are to be found in medium-sized towns (between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants). Finally, in countries such as Switzerland and France community size seems not to bear quite a relation with citizens' likelihood of joining political groups.

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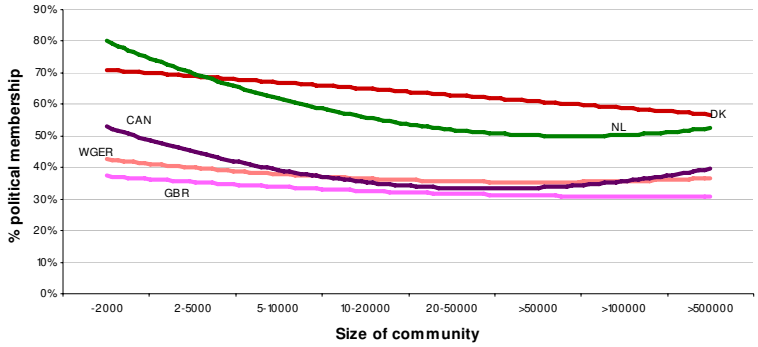
socio-economic seggregation on local participation and he argues that the high levels of racial and class seggregation introduced by the process of suburbanisation in the United States have as a main consequence the decrease in interest and in participation in local public affairs.

[19] Unfortunately, the 1990-93 WVS presents some problems in this variable for some nations. There are no data on community size for Iceland and Finland, in Switzerland the variable was coded differently, in the Netherlands and Canada the sample did not include communities of smallest size, and in Norway, Sweden and Austria the higher value groups several categories. See Appendix 1 for more detailed information.

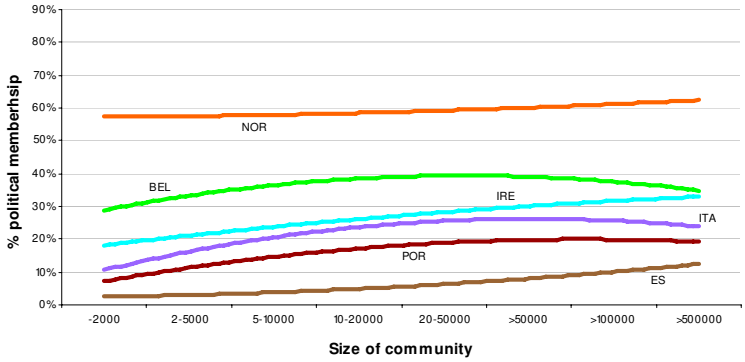
[20] In all cases the Graph shows the estimated polynomic trend from the values of the average of political membership of each size category. The original figures can be found in Table A4.8.

Graph 4.3. Size of the Community and Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

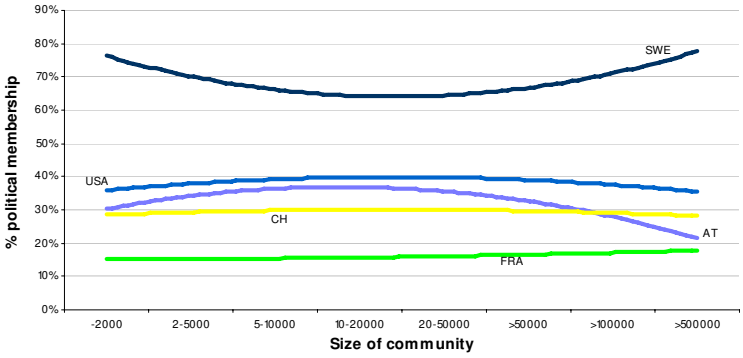
Negative relation



Positive relation



Other relations or lack of relation



When we check with the data of EB 49 (from 1998) the conclusion is similar: there is no single pattern.[21]

Therefore, it is very possible that the size of the community in which citizens live impinges on their associative political behaviour in several and contradictory ways. This would imply that it is not possible to find a single directional relationship, and that it is necessary to specify better the explanatory models that link the size of the community to political participation. Maybe this factor interacts with other factors. It is quite likely that social integration into the community will not foster individuals' political behaviour in the small communities where social norms are not participatory but quite the reverse. In any case, here we can only point to some hypotheses that might guide future analyses, given that the data at hand do not allow to reach further conclusions.

Another aspect related to social integration and that has generally been considered important for citizens' political participation is their religiosity or, rather, their religious habits and practices. People who frequently attend religious services or who participate in the activities organised by their religious congregation may participate more in public affairs through several processes. On the one hand, frequent contact with other persons with whom they share values and practices enable the generation of social networks where mutual trust will develop, thus fostering future co-operation. These networks, as well as the institutional characteristics of the religious centres[22] favour the

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[21] The results from EB 49 are not shown in this case because the variable on community size is not standardised for the 15 countries (see Appendix 1 and Graph A4.1 in Appendix 3).

[22] It is frequent to find the claim that it is the religious denomination or congregation, in terms of the type of faith practiced, that has an independent effect on political participation. Thus, some scholars argue that Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim faiths hinder the political participation of their followers due to the moral values they proclaim and to the hierarchical structuring of their religious institutions. However, Djupe and Grant (2001) show that "faith" as such has no impact on political participation, and that –if anything- it is the level of political activism of the different congregations and of their spiritual leaders that

mobilisation of the parishioners when causes emerge that require it.[23] Pippa Norris (2002: chapter 9), following the tradition of Lipset and Rokkan (1967), considers the churches as one of the traditional and most important agents of political mobilisation, together with trade unions. On the other hand, religious practice and participation in church-related activities may contribute to the development of skills that can be usefully transferred into the public sphere. And, in the case of ethnic or cultural minorities it can importantly help to create group identities that favour political mobilisation (Peterson 1992).[24] In this sense, several scholars (Wuthnow 1994 and 1999, Jackson et al. 1995, Smidt 1999,

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determine the degree of political involvement of parishioners. In addition, several pieces of research (Bréchon 1999, Halman and Pettersson 1999, and de Hart 2001) show that the faith in itself has no relevant effect on associational membership. For this reason I pay no special attention to denomination in the following pages.

[23] Although the process of secularisation and "depillarisation" in many European societies has weakened the linkage between churches and political organisations, in many European countries religious affiliation continues to be important for structuring the political behaviour of citizens (see Bréchon 1999, Broughton and Napel 2001) . In connection to the processes of political mobilisation through religious institutions in several countries see Kruijt (1959), Wald, Kellstedt and Leege (1993), Calhoun-Brown (1996), Greeley (1997), Wuthnow (1999), de Hart (2001) and Djupe and Grant (2001).

[24] Nevertheless, Peterson's (1992) results show only a modest impact of religious activism on the different forms of political participation. Many of these effects can only be found for the more fundamentalist individuals and not for traditional Protestants (Methodists, Presbiterians, Baptists, Lutherans, etc.). In this sense, Djupe and Grant (2001) show that the development of civic skills in the religious domain does not have a significant impact on political participation, as the connection between the religious life and politics does only take place when it is intentional, and when religious leaders make a conscious effort to extract political benefits from religious activity. The results by Calhoun-Brown (1996) with regard to the American Black church point to the same conclusion: churches only contribute to the political participation of their parishioners when they intentionally mobilise politically. Finally, Bréchon (1999) shows that the degree of religious practice does not seem to have much of an effect on different forms of political involvement, political protest or postmaterialism on the part of individuals, and that, in any case, it is the least religious citizens that get involved more in politics. McKenzie (2001) also shows the absence of an effect of church attendance on political participation in local politics.

Halman and Pettersson 1999, de Hart 2001, Uslaner 2001) have claimed that citizens' religiosity is closely connected to their associative behaviours.[25] More specifically, everything seems to indicate that church attendance is linked to greater levels of associational membership in a good number of countries, although not necessarily in all (see Halman and Pettersson 1999).

Is there any connection between political membership and the religious practices of citizens? Does religious integration foster individuals' political participation through organisations? In the following pages I will measure religious integration with individuals' frequency of church attendance, as well as by their membership of and voluntary work in religious or parish associations. Church attendance is in itself a good indicator of religious integration, as it manifests to what extent has the individual developed a religious identity which is dependent on an institutional system (Bréchon 1999). Religious associational

[25] The debate on social capital does not clarify much what is the connection we would expect to find between religion and membership. Thus, Putnam (1993) claims that Catholic structures limit the creation of social capital, whereas Coleman (1990) suggests that it is the individualistic Protestant ethic that hinders the development of this type of capital (see the discussion on this issue in Halman and Pettersson 1999: 134 ff.). An interesting contribution is that by Wuthnow (1999), who points to the important differences on the effects of religious practice on associational membership in the United States of the three main religious groups: Evangelists, traditional Protestants, and Catholics. His main argument is that the nature of the institutional organisation of each denomination (size of congregation, autonomy, etc.), as well as the religious values they promote (action upon the social context versus refuge within the spiritual community) and the type and frequence of the activities they develop (very frequent and intensive, and oriented towards the internal life of the congregation, as opposed to less frequent but oriented towards exerting an influence on the community where the congregation is located) have a crucial impact on the promotion or otherwise of associative behaviours. Thus, in the United States the traditional Protestants show a greater propensity to participate in associations, whereas Evangelists limit their participation almost exclusively to their religious life, and Catholics are in an intermediate position. These results indicate that it is not so much religious doctrines as such that lead to one or another type of associational behaviour, but rather that the consequences that religious teachings have on institutional organisation are more important.

membership provides further information on the degree of commitment to such an identity, as well as on the social networks the individuals have access to due to their religious practices.

Graph 4.4 illustrates the several forms that the relation between church attendance and political membeship adopts. These results confirm the claims of other scholars' work (especially, Bréchon 1999 and Halman and Pettersson 1999) that insisted on the importance of national contexts. Thus, of the 18 western countries considered here, in six of them (Belgium, Canada, the United States, Finland, France and Great Britain) frequent church attendance is linked to higher levels of political membership, in five nations (Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Norway and Portugal) to less political membership, and in the rest the association is more complex (curvilinear) or there is no such connection.[26]

This notwithstanding, the results shown in Graph 4.4 mask substantial variations that emerge when we analyse separately the effects of church attendance on traditional political membership and new political membership (see Graphs A4.2 and A4.3 in Appendix 3). Religious practice has, for the most part, negative effects on traditional political membership and positive effects on new political membership. Only in a few countries is the relationship between church attendance and political membership the same for both types of organisations (Spain, Ireland, Italy and Switzerland). In addition, in some nations (Germany, Austria, Iceland and Sweden) the absence of a relation between both aspects apparent from the results in Graph 4.4 is due to the existence of a correlation between religiosity and political membership that goes in opposing directions for both types of political organisations. On the other hand, the results do not seem to indicate any clear pattern based on the Christian tradition dominant en each society.

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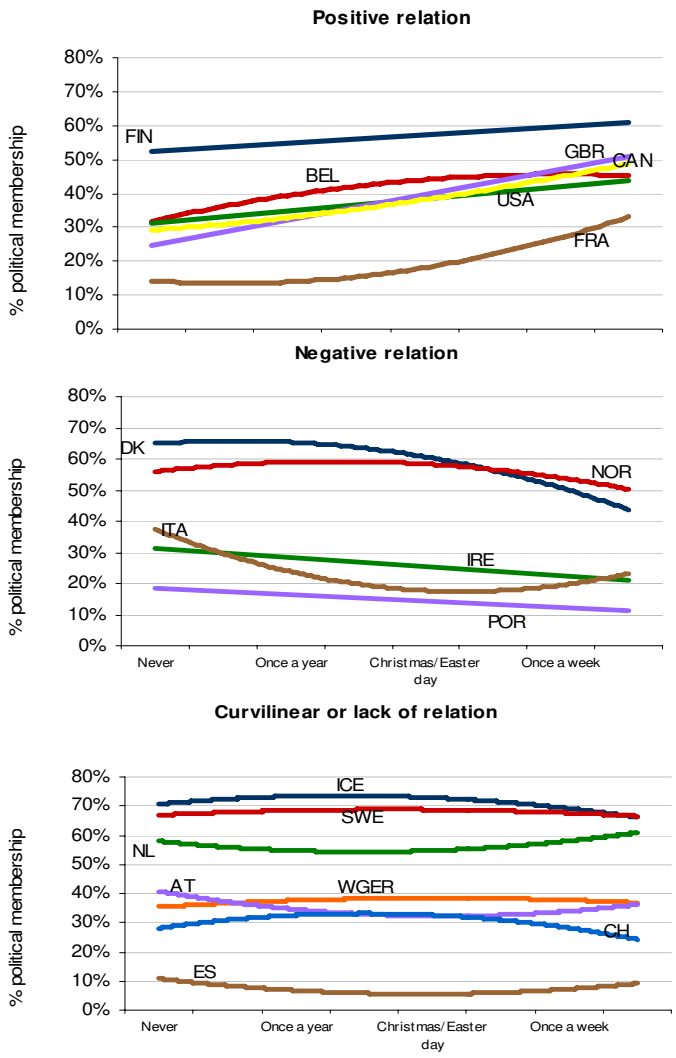
[26] In Iceland and Switzerland it seems that people with more extreme religious habits (either never attend or attend more than once a week) are less likely to join political groups, while in Austria, Spain and the Netherlands it is just the other way around. Finally, in Germany and Sweden religious practice does not bear much connection to political membership.

Graph 4.4. Religiosity and Political Membership, WVS 1990-93



Thus, in Catholic countries we find a pair of cases where religiosity seems to hinder political membership (Ireland and Italy), and others where it seems not to bear any relation (Spain and Portugal) or to vary depending on the type of political groups we look at (Austria, Belgium, and France). Likewise, in predominantly Protestant countries we see that in most cases (Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden), church attendance has opposite effects on traditional and new political memberships, whereas it shows unclear patterns in Norway.

Nonetheless, as I have already mentioned, religious practice is not the only means of grasping the religious integration of individuals. The information on the religious and church-related associational memberships of respondents allow us to explore the connection between immersion in religious social networks, as well as the processes of political mobilisation that take place within the religious environment. Table 4.9 shows to what extent the citizens who are members of church or parish associations are more prone to join associations with political ends. As we see, in the great majority of western countries religious associational memberships seem to foster political membership, with the exception of Scandinavian countries. Curiously enough, in these latter nations –which are mostly Protestant- religious organisations seem to play no relevant role in the political organising of their parishioners. And we do not find different patterns between religiously mixed and Catholic societies.

On the other hand, in several of the mixed or Catholic countries (Great Britain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Ireland) membership of traditional political organisations (parties, trade unions, and professional associations) is not related to membership of religious associations. This is especially intriguing for the cases of Belgium and the Netherlands, where pillarisation systems meant the close organisational linkage between churches and political groups. Lastly, the relation between religious and political membership seems to be higher for those citizens who are involved both in traditional and new political organisations. These are persons that, at a minimum, are

members of two political associations simultaneously, and it seems that religious involvement and commitment may positively contribute to gain a wider range of political commitments.

Table 4.9. Religious and Political Memberships, WVS 1990-93

Country	All political organisations	Only traditional	Only new	Both traditional and new
Iceland	1.3*	1.3*	0.7	1.7*
Norway	1.1	0.9	1.1	2.2*
Sweden	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.2
Finland	1.1	1.0	0.9	2.0
Denmark	1.1	0.8	1.9	1.8
Great Britain	2.1*	1.2	3.1*	6.3*
United States	2.0*	2.2*	1.5*	2.1*
Canada	1.9*	1.4*	2.3*	2.9*
W. Germany	1.6*	1.3*	1.9*	2.5*
Switzerland	1.6*	1.4	1.0	3.8*
Netherlands	1.3*	1.2	0.8	1.9*
Spain	4.0*	2.7*	4.8*	9.3*
France	3.5*	2.9*	2.8	7.6*
Ireland	2.5*	1.4	5.1*	6.2*
Belgium	2.2*	1.2	2.4*	3.9*
Portugal	2.1*	1.7*	7.7*	0.6
Italy	2.0*	1.8*	2.8*	2.1
Austria	1.8*	1.5*	2.8*	2.4*

Note: The figures are the ratios between the average percentage of political membership among members of religious associations and that of non-members. The asterisk indicates significant ratios for $p<0.05$. The dotted lines separate groups of countries that are mainly Protestant, religiously mixed, and mainly Catholic. Within each of these groups, countries are ranked in descending order of the gap (ratio) in political membership between members and non-members of religious associations.

With these results at hand, we may now wonder whether the link between religious integration and political participation is mostly due to the structural and network component of religiosity, or whether it is the narrower context of mobilisation by churches during services that has an independent impact on participation. Table 4.10 summarises the results of a stepwise logit regression model undertaken with the data for each of the 18 western countries included in the 1990-93 WVS. In several steps the variables of church attendance, membership of religious

associations and the interaction between both have been introduced into the model.[27]

Table 4.10. Religious Integration and Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

Country	Church attendance (step 1)	Step 2		Interaction (step 3)
		Church attendance	Membership of religious association	
Norway			(+)	
Sweden			+	+
Iceland			+	
Finland				
Denmark		(-)		
Great Britain	+		+	
United States	+	-	+	(+)
W. Germany		-	+	
Switzerland			+	
Netherlands	+		+	+
Canada	+		+	
Ireland	(-)	-	+	
Austria	(-)	-	+	
Belgium	+		+	
France	+		+	
Italy	-	-	+	
Spain	-	-	+	+
Portugal	-	-	+	

Note: The sign of the relation is only shown when it is statistically significant for $p<0.05$ and in brackets when it is significant for $p<0.10$. The complete results for step 3 can be found in Table A4.9 in Appendix 3.

The first column shows that the frequency in church attendance is only related to political membership in half of the western countries. When such a relation exists, in all religiously mixed countries it is a positive association between religiosity and political membership, but in some of the Catholic countries this bivariate relation is negative. The following two columns illustrate the relation between religious integration and political membership when we take into account both church attendance and membership of religious associations. The results are

[27] The goal of these analyses is not to obtain a good model of the dependent variable. It is basically treated as a descriptive analysis, and for this reason I do not include other individual characteristics as control –something that is done later on.

extremely interesting, as the pattern is the same wherever the relation is statistically significant. We now see that, with the exception of Norway, Finland and Denmark –all Protestant countries- membership of religious associations is linked to a greater likelihood of political membership, but what is probably more interesting, in almost all countries where church attendance had a positive impact on political membership this effect disappears or, as the case of the United States, it turns out to be negative.

Hence, once we control for the effect of religious membership, attending religious services has, if any, a negative impact. Nonetheless, we might wonder if this negative effect of church attendance does also hold for those individuals that are members of religious associations. The last column includes the results of an interaction effect between church attendance and religious memberhsip. This interaction is only significant for the cases of Sweden, the Netherlands and Spain. In such a way that in these countries frequent church attendance decreases the likelihood of joining a political organisation for those citizens who are not members of a religious or parish association, and it increases it for those who are members.

Therefore, the data at hand indicate that if religious integration has any relevant impact on political membership in western countries this stems primarily from the structural and mobilising effects of religious associational membership. As other researchers have noted (Calhoun-Brown 1996, Djupe and Grant 2001) religious integration has political consequences when the structures and social networks that develop in religious institutional domains are employed to politically mobilise parishioners.

In summary, a descriptive analysis of the relation between the various socio-economic resources, the social status of individuals and their political membership points to the existence of varied patterns of social inequalities with regard to this form of political participation in western countries. Thus, educational resources introduce inequalities in almost all countries, but they are less

acute in Scandinavia and stronger in southern Europe and Anglo-Saxon nations. Income inequalities are converted generally in a linear fashion into participatory inequalities, although in some Scandinavian countries this relation is curvilinear. And social class produces important inequalities as well, in such a way that the middle classes organise themselves politically more frequently while inactive groups do so much less frequently. Class differences are also wider in southern Europe and the Anglo-Saxon countries. Nevertheless, not all social inequalities originate in the economic sphere, and many are connected to aspects such as the age, the gender, and the family situation. Thus, younger citizens are less likely to join political organisations –although this pattern is not common to all types of political groups- and gender differences are greater in southern and central Europe and for traditional political organisations (parties, unions and professional associations), while family obligations are detrimental almost exclusively for south European and British women.

On the other hand, aspects related to citizens' social integration are also of importance. Consequently, the size of the community where an individual lives is related to some extent to his associative behaviour. In some countries, the inhabitants of smaller communities are more prone to joining political organisations, while in other nations it is individuals resident in big cities that are more inclined to become members of political groups. Likewise, religious integration is connected to political membership in complex ways, as church attendance does not seem to affect this form of political participation, while religious memberships do.

Therefore, I can provide two tentative conclusions: (1) socio-economic inequalities in political membership are greater in southern Europe and Anglo-Saxon countries, and (2) the mechanisms through which these differences in SES transform into participatory inequalites greately vary across countries. The next section considers other individual features that are important to gain a complete understanding of the individual determinants of

political membership, given that orientations frequently play an intervening role between social traits and the public sphere.

4.2.2. Civic and Political Orientations

In spite of the importance that we have already seen socio-economic and social integration factors have on political participation, various empirical studies have shown that the effect of these structural factors is very frequently mediated by other aspects (Rokkan and Campbell 1960, Verba and Nie 1972, Milbrath and Goel 1977, Verba, Nie and Kim 1978, Parry, Moyser and Day 1992, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). In this regard, political orientations act often as intervening variables in the relation between socio-economic resources and political participation. In the next pages I will explore the bivariate relation that exists between civic and political orientations and political membership. I will, thus, focus on variables that measure the psychological involvement of citizens with politics in its three dimensions: affective (interest, efficacy, and importance attributed to politics), cognitive (political information and knowledge), and behavioural (political discussions). I will also analyse the relation between political membership and social trust, value structures (materialist versus postmaterialist), and attitudes toward social change (reformism versus conservatism).

Chapter 3 has already introduced some theoretical notions regarding the concept of political involvement. As I mentioned, I adopt here the same approach as Sigel and Hoskin (1981, chapter 2) did, who consider this concept as tridimensional, and include the affective, cognitive and behavioural elements of it. I will only limit myself to eliminate from the operationalisation of the behavioural aspects those that are forms of political participation. Consequently, an interest in politics, the importance attributed to politics, and individuals' political efficacy all point to the affective dimension, while news consumption, and the subjective perception

of political informedness[28] will help to measure the cognitive dimension[29] and, finally, the frequency of political discussions, as well as trying to convince other citizens on political matters will help us tap the behavioural dimensions that do not overlap with political participation.

Psychological involvement in politics might be conceived of as an attitudinal prerequisite for political membership. Even if it is true that, in many cases, citizens can join political organisations for other reasons, or because political recruitment processes have been very effective, it is reasonable to expect that whoever joins an organisation with political goals will show greater psychological involvement with public affairs.

Table 4.11 shows that, indeed, the affective dimension of psychological involvement with politics is closely related to political membership. However, it is the degree of interest in politics that better discriminates among those who do and do not

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[28] Questions on political information and media consumption are only available for EB 49 (1998), as the WVS 1990-93 does not include any item that helps measure the cognitive dimension of political involvement. EB 49 does also include an item on the subjective feeling of political knowledgeability but, unfortunately very few respondents answer in a positive way and I exclude it from subsequent analyses. In any case, the correlation between the subjective evaluations of informedness and of political knowledge is very high for all EU countries (between 0.6 and 0.8).

[29] Although I will explore both the relation between political membership and news consumption, on the one hand, and the subjective perception of political information on the other, these latter two variables do not seem to be related to a same latent dimension. The correlation between both sets of items is fairly limited (between 0.05 and 0.3 in most countries). In fact, when validated with a more objective indicator of political information and knowledge (the answer to the question of how many states are members of the EU), everything indicates that –contrary to what we could think *a priori*- the subjective percepetion of informedness and knowledge measures much better the real degree of political information and knowledge the individual has. Whereas the correlation between the subjective and the objective items varies from 0.15 and 0.35, the correlation between the indicators of news consumption and objective information varies from 0 to 0.15 (with the exception of radio news consumption, that seems to be more connected to the real political information and knowledge citizens have in Italy, Spain and Greece).

join political organisations. In some countries, the importance attributed to politics, as well as internal political efficacy, do not seem to be related to this form of political participation.

Table 4.11. Political Membership and the Affective Dimension of Political Involvement

	WVS 1990-93			EB 49 (1998)	
Country	**Interest**	**Importance**	**Efficacy**	**Interest**	**Importance**
Spain	**3.8**	**2.6**	**2.1**	**7.2**	**3.3**
Italy	**3.2**	**2.8**	**2.7**	**7.4**	**3.9**
Portugal	**2.9**	**2.3**	**2.4**	**24.7**	**3.8**
Ireland	**2.2**	**1.6**	**2.4**	**7.4**	**3.1**
Switzerland	**2.2**	**1.4**	**---**		
France	**2.0**	**2.3**	**2.2**	**6.8**	**5.0**
United States	**1.9**	**1.5**	**1.8**		
Great Britain	**1.8**	**1.9**	**2.3**	**6.2**	**5.2**
Netherlands	**1.8**	**1.5**	**1.3**	**3.1**	**2.1**
Austria	**1.8**	**1.4**	**0.7**	**5.4**	**3.0**
W. Germany	**1.7**	**1.6**	**1.4**	**8.6**	**8.8**
Belgium	**1.7**	**1.6**	1.3	**4.3**	**3.2**
Canada	**1.7**	**1.4**	1.2		
Norway	**1.4**	**1.1**	**1.3**		
Sweden	**1.2**	**1.2**	1.1	**1.6**	**1.4**
Finland	**1.2**	**1.4**	**1.6**	**1.9**	**1.5**
Denmark	**1.1**	1.0	**1.2**	**1.8**	**1.9**
Iceland	**1.1**	1.1	0.9		
Greece				**5.8**	1.8
Luxembourg				**9.8**	**7.4**

Note: The figures are the ratios between the average percentage of political membership for the highest and lowest categories of political involvement. In bold, are highlighted the ratios statistically significant for $p<0.05$. Countries are ranked in descending order of the ratio for interest in politics.

Therefore, having feelings of political powerlessness does not prevent citizens in Belgium, Canada, Sweden and Iceland to join political groups, while having no interest in politics does act as a strong disincentive to join them. On the other hand, these attitudes have more of an impact in those countries (especially, south European ones) where both the levels of political membership and political involvement are lower; in such a way that political membership is limited to those individuals with a strong interest in politics.

Table 4.12. Political Membership and the Cognitive Dimension of Political Involvement, EB 49 (1998)

Country	Informedness (subjective evaluation)	News on the radio	News readership
Greece	**40.2**	**3.4**	**1.7**
Portugal	**30.5**	**7.2**	**2.3**
Ireland	**10.0**	1.5	0.9
Luxembourg	**10.0**	**2.2**	**6.2**
W. Germany	**9.0**	**2.2**	**4.0**
Spain	**8.4**	**3.4**	**1.6**
Italy	**7.7**	**3.5**	0.9
Austria	**5.8**	1.0	1.0
Great Britain	**5.0**	1.4	**2.2**
Belgium	**4.6**	**2.2**	1.1
France	**4.5**	**2.9**	**1.7**
Netherlands	**2.5**	**1.7**	**1.5**
Finland	**1.8**	1.7	1.2
Sweden	**1.8**	1.3	1.3
Denmark	**1.7**	**2.7**	1.4

Note: The figures are the ratios between the average percentage of political membership for the highest and lowest categories of political involvement. In bold, are highlighted the ratios statistically significant for $p<0.05$. Countries are ranked in descending order of the ratio for informedness.

Similar results are obtained when we analyse the relation between the cognitive dimension of political involvement and political membership (Table 4.12). As in the case of interest in politics, it is the more general indicator of subjective evaluation of one's own level of political informedness that has a greater impact on political membership. In all European countries, individuals who feel they are not informed about politics show less of an inclination to join political organisations. The gap between the most and the least informed is really substantial in southern Europe and in some central European countries, while it is much smaller in Scandinavian countries. News consumption through the radio and the newspapers[30] does not seem to be very determinant.

[30] I only present the results for the frequency of radio and newspaper news consumption because the frequency distribution for television is terribly skewed toward the values of higher frequency, such that there are very few respondents who do not follow the news on TV or that rarely do so.

Besides, as mentioned before, these indicators are less related to the real degree of information citizens express.[31]

Table 4.13. Political Membership and the Behavioural Dimension of Political Involvement, EB 49 (1998)

	Discussion			Persuasion		
Country	**Never**	**Frequently**	**Ratio**	**Never**	**Frequently**	**Ratio**
Portugal	5	47	**9.4**	3	23	**8.7**
Spain	8	40	**4.9**	9	22	**2.6**
Greece	4	18	**4.2**	4	20	**5.3**
Ireland	8	30	**3.9**	9	22	**2.6**
Italy	9	34	**3.8**	11	22	**1.9**
France	9	34	**3.8**	12	38	**3.1**
W. Germany	13	45	**3.6**	10	42	**4.0**
Belgium	16	57	**3.5**	14	40	**2.9**
Great Britain	15	51	**3.5**	20	46	**2.3**
Austria	17	53	**3.1**	18	53	**2.9**
Luxembourg	28	62	**2.2**	37	58	**1.6**
Netherlands	35	66	**1.9**	37	50	1.3
Denmark	44	71	**1.6**	58	71	**1.2**
Finland	40	55	**1.4**	46	53	1.1
Sweden	59	75	**1.3**	63	62	1.0

Note: The figures are the average percentages of political membership for the highest and lowest categories of political involvement. The ratios are calculated between these two percentages. In bold, are highlighted the ratios statistically significant for $p<0.05$. Countries are ranked in descending order of the ratio for discussions.

Lastly, I will analyse the bivariate relation between the behavioural dimension of political involvement and political membership (Table 4.13). As we see, in almost all countries, political membership is connected to behavioural aspects of psychological involvement with politics. We should certainly not be surprised about these results; however, we should point out that this link is not present in all countries, since in the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden citizens who join political organisations are not always behaviourally more politically involved than their

[31] This poses serious problems to the study of the cognitive dimension of political involvement, given that most of the surveys on political participation or electoral behaviour do not include objective measurements of citizens' levels of political informedness and knowledge, but rather items on news and media consumption.

fellow citizens. Once again, the most striking gaps between the most and the least involved in politics are to be found in south European countries, and the least acute differences in Scandinavia.

In short, the various dimensions of psychological involvement with politics seem to be closely related with political membership. Thus, individuals with more positive orientations towards politics, more politically informed, and who discuss political issues more frequently are more likely to join an organisation with political goals.[32]

Another civic orientation that has received enormous attention in studies of associational behaviour is social trust. Some scholars have claimed that trust in others –especially in strangers- is a basic orientation that enables social co-operation and collective action, up to the point of having considered it as one of the main indicators of social capital (Putnam 1993, 1995a and b, 2000, van Deth 1997, Stolle and Lewis 2002). It is not at all clear that the relation between social trust and associational membership is as close as some think[33], as several empirical studies have shown the absence of a substantial correlation between the two at the individual level (Herreros and Morales 2000, Newton 1999 and 2001, Norris 2002). In any case, some researchers continue to argue that participation in associations can promote social trust and viceversa, and that this connection between the two will be greater when the association pursues public goods (Boix and Posner 1996, Herreros 2002). Undoubtedly, all political organisations –as defined here- pursue public goods, so if this relationship holds we should detect it in our analyses.

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[32] As we will see in next sections, the lack of indicators that tap the three dimensions in the 1990-93 WVS prevents us from performing multivariate analyses with all of them, and we will have to content ourselves with these descriptive results.

[33] And this without getting into the debate of the doubtful usefullness of current question formulations on social trust in surveys, given their vagueness and lack of discrimination between the various types of social trust towards groups of people, roles, and colectivities.

Table 4.14 explores the bivariate association between social trust and political membership in its different types.[34] Firstly, we see that, although social trust and political membership are related, the magnitude of this association is not really overwhelming. In several countries the correlation coefficient is not even statistically different from zero, and in many others it is a quite small correlation. Secondly, it seems that trust is mostly related to multiple political membership; that is to say, trusting citizens tend to co-operate with several political organisations –traditional and new- simultaneously. But even in these cases, the effect of trust is modest.

Table 4.14. Associational Membership and Social Trust, WVS 1990-93

	All associations	Political associations	Only traditional political	Only new political associations	Both types of political associations
Netherlands	**0.18**	**0.13**	**-0.07**	0.06	**0.17**
Denmark	**0.17**	**0.10**	0.02	0.04	**0.08**
Italy	**0.15**	**0.09**	0.04	0.03	**0.09**
Great Britain	**0.14**	**0.17**	**0.12**	0.02	**0.12**
Belgium	**0.14**	**0.11**	-0.01	**0.07**	**0.11**
France	**0.14**	**0.10**	0.05	0.05	**0.08**
Finland	**0.13**	**0.10**	0.01	0.08	**0.10**
Austria	**0.12**	**0.13**	**0.06**	0.05	**0.11**
Switzerland	**0.12**	**0.11**	0.02	0.06	**0.13**
Ireland	**0.12**	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.04
Norway	**0.11**	**0.09**	0.04	0.04	**0.06**
United States	**0.09**	**0.15**	**0.08**	0.02	**0.11**
Canada	**0.09**	**0.12**	**0.08**	0.02	**0.06**
W. Germany	**0.09**	0.03	-0.01	0.04	0.03
Iceland	**0.08**	0.04	-0.07	0.01	**0.16**
Sweden	**0.07**	**0.11**	0.02	0.01	**0.10**
Portugal	**0.07**	0.03	0.00	-0.01	**0.09**
Spain	0.03	**0.05**	0.03	0.03	0.04

Note: The figures are Pearson correlation coefficients between each type of associational membership (0-1) and social trust (0-1). In bold, coefficients significant for $p<0.05$.

[34] I also show the relation with overall associational membership as a point of reference, given that the social capital "school" claims the existence of an important connection between participation in all sorts of associations and social trust at the individual level.

Attitudes toward social change –radical, reformist or conservative- as well as value priorities –as measured by Inglehart's (1991) scale- have also been put in connection with political participation. Individuals' values are linked to their preferences and priorities over public issues, and thus they can exert influence on their participatory decisions. *A priori*, we would expect that people with ideologically more extreme positions – either because they wish radical changes to take place or for their conservatism- will have more incentives to organise politically. As to value priorities, we would expect postmaterialist citizens to be more likely to join new political organisations and less likely to join tradtional ones (and viceversa with regard to materialist citizens).

Table 4.15. Political Membership and Attitudes toward Social Change, WVS 1990-93

	Radical	Reformist	Conservative
Spain	**23**	**8**	**6**
Italy	**29**	**24**	**12**
Great Britain	**21**	**37**	**27**
United States	**27**	**41**	**36**
W. Germany	**35**	**41**	**35**
Canada	**42**	**41**	**28**
Netherlands	**52**	**57**	**48**
Denmark	**40**	**67**	**63**
Portugal	5	16	14
France	17	17	13
Ireland	19	24	23
Austria	36	39	34
Belgium	47	41	39
Norway	46	61	55
Iceland	59	73	65
Finland	53	56	45
Sweden	71	71	63

Note: The figures are percentages of political membership. In bold, are highlighted differences that are statistically significant for $p<0.05$ (analysis of variance).

Table 4.15 indicates that, whereas in some countries the individuals ideological orientations are relevant to understand their associative behaviour, they are not so much in many others. On the other hand, we also see that it is not always the more extremist

citizens that join political organisations the most. Thus, in countries like Spain, Italy and Canada people with more radical or quasi-revolutionary ideals are the most likely to join political groups; while in Great Britain, the United States, Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark political reformists do so to a greater extent.

As to value priorities, contrary to what we expected, postmaterialist citizens are more likely to join all sorts of political organisations (Table 4.16). As a matter of fact, these citizens are more willing to co-operate with traditional political groups than with new political organisations. Nevertheless, in many countries value priorities do not help us much to predict the type of political association an individual might join.

Table 4.16. Political Membership and Value Priorities, WVS 1990-93

	Political organisations			**Traditional political orgs.**			**New political orgs.**		
	Material.	Mixed	Postmat.	Material.	Mixed	Postmat.	Material.	Mixed	Postmat.
France	7	15	29	5	10	13	1	3	10
G. Britain	35	31	43	24	20	23	6	6	8
Germany	30	36	45	16	22	23	12	9	12
Italy	11	20	36	8	14	21	2	4	9
Netherlands	41	52	62	21	15	16	12	18	20
Denmark	64	63	76	56	46	45	4	4	6
Belgium	26	38	53	12	14	22	9	15	12
Spain	5	8	14	3	5	8	1	2	3
Ireland	16	22	36	9	14	26	6	5	7
U. States	31	37	47	18	20	22	6	8	9
Canada	30	36	46	13	21	23	9	8	7
Norway	51	58	73	43	46	45	2	4	9
Sweden	63	69	77	46	49	40	3	5	7
Iceland	69	71	82	51	58	64	5	3	1
Finland	44	51	62	32	39	48	3	5	3
Switzerland	18	28	41	15	19	21	2	6	9
Portugal	13	13	25	12	10	15	1	1	4
Austria	21	35	46	15	24	29	3	7	10

Note: The figures are percentages of political membership. In shade are the highest values for each type of political membership by country.

Until this point I have explored the relevance of socio-economic resources, social integration and civic and political

orientations for explaining political membership. But, to what extent can these sets of factors offer an explanatory model of political membership in western countries? Are they all equally important? Do we still find the same relations we have seen in bivariate analyses once we control for the effects of other variables? In the next pages I will show the results of a multivariate model that aims at contrasting to what extent do resources, integration and orientations determine citizens' political membership.

4.3. The Individual Determinants of Political Membership: Resources, Integration, and Attitudes

In this section I will contrast what individual-level factors help us understand who joins political organisations in western countries and who does not. For this purpose, multivariate logistic binary and multinomial regression analyses are performed for each of the 17 western countries to analyse how these sets of factors impinge, first, on general political membership, and, secondly, on the different types of political membership. Thus, I first test the importance of resources, social integration, and attitudes for explaining who joins political organisations, and I later contrast whether these variables have a varying impact depending on the political groups citizens join.

Table 4.17 shows the results of 17 binary logistic regression analyses for each western country included in the 1990-93 WVS.[35] The dependent variable adopts the value of 1 when the individual is a member of any political organisation and a value of 0 when he or she is not a member of any. As explanatory variables I have included in the model all those explored on preceding pages and

[35] Switzerland was not included in the analyses because, as I have indicated before, the Swiss questionnaire did not include several of the political associations that are used to compute the dependent variable, and thus the results would not be equivalent to those of other countries.

that are available in this survey.[36] This is, thus, a quite complete model of individual-level factors related to political membership. The model is described by the following equation:

$$Ln\left(\frac{P_i}{1-P_i}\right) = \beta_0 + \sum \beta_k x_{ik} \ , \qquad i = 1, ..., n; \ k = 1, ..., K$$

(Equation 4.1)

where
$P_i = Pr(y_i = 1)$, and Y is the dependent variable previously defined,
x_{ik} = are the characteristics of individual i, and
β_k = are the regression coefficients associated to variable k.

These analyses aim at two objectives. On the one hand, I want to test which is the relative importance of citizens' socio-economic resources, social integration, and orientations when explaining political membership. On the other, I want to assess whether it is reasonable to fit the same individual-level model –and, thus, a general model- to all western countries.

[36] The specification of each of the 17 models has been done on a country basis and following these procedures. In a first step, all variables were included in the analyses, their coefficients were evaluated, and only those statistically significant for $p<0.10$ were retained. In a second step, the estimation was repeated with this more reduced set of variables. The results of this second more parsimonious model are the ones shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17. Political Membership in 17 Western Countries (WVS 1990-93). Multivariate binary logistic regressions.

	WGE	AT	BEL	CAN	DK	ES	USA	FIN	FRA	GBR	NL	IRE	ICE	ITA	NOR	POR	SWE
Education	0.40	---	---	**1.81**	**1.13**	**1.45**	**2.44**		**1.75**	**1.74**	**1.49**	**1.60**	---	**1.01**	**0.96**	0.58	---
Income	---	**2.84**	---	---	**6.02**	---	---	---	---	---	**3.60**	---	n.a.	---	---	---	---
Income (squared)	---	**-2.19**	---	---	**-4.54**	---	---	---	---	---	-2.94	---	n.a.	---	---	---	---
Work situation (ref=+30h)			---			---		---	---				---				
Works <30 hours		-0.46			**-0.91**					**-0.72**	0.46	**-0.69**					**-1.35**
Inactive	**-0.47**	**-1.00**		**-0.92**	**-1.99**					**-1.14**	-0.42	**-1.04**		**-0.51**	**-1.33**	**-1.00**	**-0.91**
Unemployed				**-0.85**			-0.51			**-0.95**		**-1.55**		-0.82	**-1.31**		**-1.51**
Age	---	**0.02**	**0.07**	**0.06**	0.07	**0.20**	---	**0.20**	**0.19**	**0.08**	**0.10**	**0.12**	**0.10**	**0.10**	**0.11**	---	**0.11**
Age (squared)	---		**-0.00**	-0.00	-0.00	**-0.00**	---	**-0.00**	**-0.00**	**-0.00**	-0.00	**-0.00**	**-0.00**	**-0.00**	**-0.00**	---	**-0.00**
Woman (ref=man)	**-0.45**		---		---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---		**-0.41**	---	**-0.63**	---
With couple (ref=no couple)	---	---	**0.36**	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	**0.75**	---	---	---	---	0.48	---
Size of community	---	---		---	-0.67	**0.84**	-0.41	n.a.	---	---	---	---	n.a.	---	-0.50	**0.97**	
Church attendance	---	---	---	**0.48**	---	---	**-0.58**	---	---	---	---	-0.88	---	**-0.64**	-0.54	-0.52	---
Religious assoc. member	**1.00**	**1.10**	**1.68**	**1.02**	---	**1.78**	**1.18**	---	**1.81**	**1.14**	---	**1.45**	**1.10**	**1.36**	0.47	**1.82**	0.57
Interest in politics	**0.52**	**0.74**	**0.74**	**0.59**	---	**0.87**	**0.60**	0.38	---	**0.64**	**0.75**	**0.79**	0.35	**1.18**	0.35	**1.07**	**0.52**
Political efficacy	---	---	---	---	---	0.47	---	**0.73**	**1.00**	**0.72**	**0.89**	---	---	0.36	---	0.61	---
Social trust	---	**0.35**	---	---	---	---	**0.43**	0.36	---	**0.49**	0.36	---	---	---	---	---	---
Value scale (ref=material.)	---			---	---			---			---		---				---
Mixed		0.39	**0.36**			0.51			0.71	-0.35				0.38		-0.41	
Postmaterialist		**0.82**	**0.87**			**0.85**	0.45		**1.41**			**0.75**		**0.75**	**0.77**		
Attitude social change (ref= conservative)		---	---		---		---	---	---		---	---	---			---	---
Radical				**1.07**		0.89								0.68			
Reformist	0.21			**0.54**										0.66			
Intercept	**-0.96**	**-2.74**	**-2.72**	**-4.36**	**-2.27**	**-8.88**	**-3.09**	**-5.42**	**-8.61**	**-4.31**	**-5.48**	**-4.50**	-1.29	**-4.89**	**-3.00**	**-2.50**	-1.06
Cox and Snell's R^2	0.082	0.139	0.136	0.160	0.294	0.110	0.163	0.098	0.136	0.191	0.185	0.173	0.085	0.201	0.130	0.130	0.108
Nagelkerke's R^2	0.111	0.189	0.184	0.217	0.410	0.232	0.219	0.131	0.227	0.263	0.249	0.259	0.122	0.301	0.176	0.222	0.155
Hosmer –Lemeshow test	0.688	0.068	0.030	0.279	0.813	0.459	0.941	0.360	0.444	0.095	0.086	0.446	0.939	0.128	0.746	0.121	0.416
Number of cases	1834	1158	2504	1493	834	1886	1398	535	848	1250	676	967	700	1634	1056	948	924

All coefficients indicate the change (increase or decrease) in the logit of the odds ratio (p/1-p) of the dependent variable (member of any political organisation = 1, not member = 0) when the independent variable increases its value in one unit. Given that all ordinal and scale variables (with the only exception of age) have been recoded such that the minimum value is expressed by a 0 and the highest value by a 1, coefficients can be interpreted as the impact each variable has on the dependent variable when it changes from its minimum to its maximum value. Only coefficients significant at p<0.10 are shown. Coefficients significant at p<0.05 are underlined, and at p<0.01 in bold. The sign --- means that this variable was not included in the final model (see note 36). The probability of the Chi-square of the Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test is shown: values lower than a 0.05 indicate a bad fit of the model to the data. N.a. = variable not available in the sample.

The results in Table 4.17 lead me to conclude that it is not extremely useful to use a single common model of individual-level factors to understand political membership in western countries. Although some common patterns emerge –on which I will comment briefly- the truth is that several countries present their own specific traits, and for which the proposed model is not the most adequate (especially in Belgium, Austria, the Netherlands and Great Britain). It is neither possible to claim, in simplistic terms, what is the relative importance of the three sets of individual factors considered in this model: resources, social integration, and attitudes; the fact being that their respective relevance varies across western nations. For example, we see that in Belgium and Finland the socio-economic resources of the citizens (education, income and working situation) do not seem to be a source of inequality with regard to political membership. While in Denmark, and to a lesser degree in Iceland and Finland, civic and political orientations do not help us much to gain an understanding of who joins political organisations.

Nonetheless, we can indeed extract some common patterns. Thus, in the great majority of countries education is a fundamental resource when joining political associations. As we already know about other forms of political participation, independent of other characteristics, individuals with higher levels of formal education are more likely to organise politically. Something similar happens with individuals' age. In most societies, the respondent's age shows a negative curvilinear relation (inverted-u shape) with political membership, such that the people in their middle-ages (30 to 60 years-old) are those to join political organisations the most, while the youngest and the eldest do so to a lesser extent. Integration into religious associational networks is also linked to political membership in nearly all countries. Indeed, whereas church attendance does not, in general terms, bear much of a relation with political membership (and, when it does, its impact is negative), religious membership has a strong positive effect on political membership. In other words, in most nations joining religious associations fosters political mobilisation through

political organisations. Lastly, interest in politics is also related to political membership in practically all western countries. Citizens who show a greater interest in public affairs are also the ones to join political groups more frequently.

It is also important to highlight other results that contradict some of the hypotheses put forward in previous pages. Firstly, it is interesting to note that income inequalities do not put the more resourceless in a disadvantaged position in most western countries. In addition, in countries where income is a source of political inequality, this relation is not linear, such that it is middle income people who join political organisations the most, and not the most resourceful. Secondly, as we saw in the descriptive analyses, these results do not allow us to claim that a clear relation exists between the size of the community where citizens live and political participation. In most countries the size of the community does not bear any relation with the likelihood of joining political organisations. And, what is even more interesting, wherever it does, its impact can go in several directions. Thus, in Denmark, the United States and Norway the inhabitants of big cities are more reluctant to join political groups, whereas in Spain and Portugal these are precisely the ones to join the most. Lastly, social trust seems scarcely relevant to explain political membership in western democracies. Contrary to what much of the social capital scholarship suggests, social trust is not necessary to generate colective action. In most nations, trusting individuals are not any more likely to join political groups, nor are mistrusting citizens less likely to do so. Without doubt, these results would support the skeptic views on the excessive role attributed to this civic orientation in recent times, or at least to its individualistic and generalised conceptualisation.[37]

[37] Clearly, it is not my aim to refute the validity of other forms of conceiving of trust. The item that is commonly included in questionnaires measures only individual generalised social trust. Hence, I do not evaluate other possible operationalisations of trust that may be particularistic and relational.

As we have seen in previous occasions, from both a theoretical and analytical viewpoint, it is useful to distinguish between traditional and new types of political organisations. To evaluate whether these sets of individual characteristics are equally important to explain membership of different political organisations we need to compare different categories of political membership. For this reason, multinomial logistic regression analyses have been peformed for each of these 17 western democracies. Multinomial logistic regression allows to compare the effects of each variable on multiple categories of a dependent variable (see Agresti 1990).

For that reason, we divide respondents into four categories: (1) individuals who are not members of any political organisation; (2) members of only traditional political groups; (3) members of only new political groups; and (4) members of both traditional and new political organisations. The distribution into each of the categories is presented in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18. The Distribution of the Dependent Variable: Types of Political Membership, WVS 1990-93

	Not a member	Traditional	New	Both	N of cases
Iceland	28	57	3	12	702
Sweden	31	46	5	18	1047
Denmark	36	46	5	13	1030
Norway	43	45	4	8	1239
Netherlands	46	16	18	20	1017
Finland	47	41	4	8	588
Canada	62	20	8	10	1730
United States	62	20	8	10	1836
Belgium	62	15	13	10	2792
W. Germany	63	21	10	6	2101
Austria	64	24	7	5	1460
Great Britain	67	21	6	6	1484
Ireland	77	15	5	3	1000
Italy	77	15	5	3	2010
France	83	9	5	3	1002
Portugal	86	11	2	1	1185
Spain	92	5	2	1	2637

Note: The figures are row percentages. Countries are ranked in descending order of political membership.

As previously indicated, with this type of categorical variable[38] the most appropriate statistical model[39] is a multinomial logistic regression that is described by the following equation:

$$Ln\left(\frac{P_{ir}}{P_{i1}}\right) = \beta_{0r} + \sum \beta_{kr} x_{ik} \ ,$$

i = 1, ..., n; k = 1, ..., K; r =1, 2, 3, 4 (Equation 4.2)

where
P_{ir} = Pr(y_i = r), and Y is the previously defined variable,
x_{ik} = are the characteristics of individual i, and
β_{kr} = are the regression coefficients associated to variable k for category r, and
r = 1 is the reference category ("not a member of any political group").

The results of the multinomial models for the 17 countries are shown in Tables 4.19, 4.20 and 4.21.[40] A first glance through the

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[38] The possibility that political membership, and especially some of its categories, had to be considered a "rare event" (as defined by King and Zeng 1999) was taken into account. The methods and software described in King and Zeng (1999) have been used with this data, but the difference in the coefficients and the standard errors were negligible and, thus, they are not presented. We can, hence, conclude that none of the categories of this variable qualifies as a "sufficiently rare" event.

[39] The model has been estimated with Stata 6 (© Stata Corporation). Since a great number of observations have item non-response problems, and to avoid the estimation bias that listwise deletion of incomplete observations entails, multiple imputation with the methods and software described in King et al. (1998) and Honaker et al. (1999) was performed. See Appendix 2 for more details on these estimation procedures.

[40] The presentation of 17 multinomial models can never be easy. To ease the detection of results I have considered best to divide them into three tables, one for each of the multinomial logistic equations. Thus, I priorise country-wise comparisons at the expense of greater difficulty in comparing the results for the different categories of the dependent variables. On the other hand, these tables present the results of the models that only include those variables statistically significant at p<0.10 in a preliminary analysis for each country. The complete

three Tables reveals that no variable is statistically significant in all countries for any of the contrasts with the category of respondents with "no political membership", although some of them tend to be relevant in most of these societies (e.g. gender, age, education, working situation, and interest in politics). When we observe the results in more detail we can find that some of the variables show interesting patterns, especially across the different categories of the dependent variable. In this sense, being a woman decreases the probability of being a member of tradional political groups in most of the countries, but it increases the likelihood of being a member of new political groups, and in some countries of being a member of both types of organisations too. Similarly, the working situation of the citizen shows a complex relation with the phenomenon of political membership. While being in any situation other than working for 30 hours a week or more decreases the probability of being a member of traditional groups and of both traditional and new, in a number of countries this is generally the other way around when we consider membership of new political groups only. In this case, where statistically significant, not being in the job market or being unemployed enhances the likelihood of joining new types of groups. The size of the place of residence also maintains an interesting connection with political membership. This variable is significant only in some countries, but whereas in southern Europe citizens living in larger towns are more likely to be political members, in the rest of western countries it is citizens from smaller towns that have a greater probability of being so.

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models are available upon request. The description of all variables can be found in Appendix 1.

Table 4.19. Political Membership in 17 Western Democracies. Multinomial Logistic Regressions (Only Traditional vs Not Member)

Variables	WGE	AT	BEL	CAN	DK	ES	USA	FIN	FRA	GBR	NL	IRE	ICE	ITA	NOR	POR	SWE
Education			**0.10**	**0.18**	**0.1**	**0.12**	**0.24**		**0.21**	**0.16**			---	**0.13**	0.05	0.09	---
Income			0.07	**0.14**	---	---	**0.12**		---	**0.13**		**0.24**	---	**0.19**	**0.09**	---	0.05
Work situation (ref=works + 30h)													---				
Works <30 h. or self-employed		**-0.84**		**-0.57**	**-1.04**		-0.38			-0.61		-0.69					**-1.85**
Inactive	**-1.24**	**-1.61**	**-0.50**	**-1.70**	**-2.69**	**-0.85**	**-0.68**	**-1.01**	**-1.07**	**-1.50**	**-0.70**	**-1.97**		**-1.53**	**-1.21**	**-1.31**	**-1.46**
Unemployed		-1.98		-0.59							-1.73			-1.25	**-1.38**		**-2.3**
Age	**0.01**	**0.02**	---	**0.02**			**0.02**	0.01	**0.03**	**0.02**		**0.02**	-0.01	0.01	**0.02**	**0.03**	0.01
Woman (ref = man)	**-0.92**	**-0.66**	**-0.45**	**-0.38**	---	-0.46	**-0.72**		-0.61	-0.38	-0.84		-0.33	---	-0.22	-0.53	-0.30
No couple (ref=with couple)		-0.32	**-0.55**	---	**-0.68**	-0.51	---		-0.65	---	-0.58	---	---	---	---		**-0.53**
Size of community			**-0.10**		-0.09	**0.16**		---	---	0.08	---	---	---		**-0.10**	0.10	---
Church attendance		---		**0.14**	---	---	**0.09**	---	0.14		0.08	---			---	---	-0.09
Interest in politics (ref=none)								---									
Very interested	**1.52**	**1.21**	**1.06**	**1.08**		**2.22**	**2.03**		0.77	**0.86**	**1.62**	**1.71**	0.75	**2.89**	**1.19**	**1.66**	0.87
Somewhat interested	**0.96**	**0.87**	**0.68**	**0.85**		**1.39**	**1.78**		0.59	**0.74**	**1.14**	0.76	0.56	**1.55**	0.57	**1.19**	
Not very interested		0.50				0.68	**1.50**				1.00			0.64			
Political efficacy	---	-0.11		---		---			0.19	**0.16**	0.19		-0.16			0.17	---
Social trust	---	0.27		---	---		0.30		---	**0.53**		---		---	---		---
Value scale (ref= mixed)							---				---		---	---			
Materialist		-0.50		-0.43	0.42					0.40						0.48	
Postmaterialist			0.41					0.40				0.57					
Attitude social change (ref=reformist)			---				---	---		---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Radical					-0.97	0.81											
Conservative				-0.41													
Intercept	**-1.69**	-0.86	**-1.66**	**-3.19**		**-5.16**	**-5.48**	**-1.84**	**-3.99**	**-4.85**	-1.78	**-4.51**	**1.56**	**-4.04**	**-1.74**	**-4.64**	
N of cases in the model	2101	1460	2792	1730	1030	2637	1836	588	1002	1484	1017	1000	702	2010	1239	1185	1047

Note: Only coefficients significant at p<0.10 are shown. Coefficients significant at p<0.05 are underlined, and at p<0.01 in bold. The sign --- means that this variable was not included in the final model (see note 40).

Table 4.20 Political Membership in 17 Western Democracies. Multinomial Logistic Regressions (Only New vs Not Member)

Variables	WGE	AT	BEL	CAN	DK	ES	USA	FIN	FRA	GBR	NL	IRE	ICE	ITA	NOR	POR	SWE
Education	**0.14**	0.11			**0.17**	0.14	**0.22**			0.14	0.14	**0.23**	---	0.14	**0.19**	0.18	---
Income	**-0.11**				---	---			---			0.2	---			---	
Work situation (ref=works + 30h)													---				
Works <30 h. or self-employed		0.67															
Inactive		0.77	0.54							0.96		0.82				-2.19	-1.50
Unemployed			0.71		1.08		-1.23							0.93			
Age			---					**0.06**			0.01			-0.03			
Woman (ref = man)	**0.65**	**1.28**	**0.77**	**0.59**	---		**0.88**			0.73	**1.14**	**1.11**	1.08	---	0.80		**0.86**
No couple (ref=with couple)	-0.30			---	**-1.24**		---			---	**-0.66**	---	---	---	---		
Size of community	**-0.11**	-0.17		**-0.16**		**0.27**	**-0.15**	---	---		---	---	---	0.11			---
Church attendance	**0.10**	---	**0.10**	**0.18**	---	---		---		**0.17**		---			---	---	
Interest in politics (ref=none)								---									
Very interested	**1.09**	0.75	**1.17**	**1.04**							**1.50**		**2.31**		1.90		1.38
Somewhat interested	0.65	0.57	0.44	**1.02**						0.92	**0.77**	0.85					
Not very interested	0.73		**0.59**	**0.90**						0.87							
Political efficacy	---			---		---		0.37	0.29								---
Social trust	---	0.44	**0.44**	---	---			1.19	---			---		---	---		---
Value scale (ref= mixed)							---				---		---	---			
Materialist		-1.11	**-0.57**														
Postmaterialist	0.43	0.50				0.65			**1.07**	0.53					**1.18**		
Attitude social change (ref=reformist)			---				---	---		---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Radical						0.94											
Conservative	**-0.56**	-0.77		-0.53													
Intercept	**-2.09**	**-4.27**	**-2.61**	**-2.89**	**-3.69**	**-7.13**	**-4.43**	**-6.63**	-3.76	**-5.06**	**-3.96**	**-7.95**	-4.17	**-4.03**	**-5.38**	**-5.71**	-2.27
N of cases in the model	2101	1460	2792	1730	1030	2637	1836	588	1002	1484	1017	1000	702	2010	1239	1185	1047

Note: Only coefficients significant at p<0.10 are shown. Coefficients significant at p<0.05 are underlined, and at p<0.01 in bold. The sign --- means that this variable was not included in the final model (see note 40).

Table 4.21. Political Membership in 17 Western Democracies. Multinomial Logistic Regressions (Traditional and New vs Not Member)

Variables	WGE	AT	BEL	CAN	DK	ES	USA	FIN	FRA	GBR	NL	IRE	ICE	ITA	NOR	POR	SWE
Education	**0.16**			**0.23**	**0.25**	**0.28**	**0.26**	0.19		**0.26**	**0.16**		---	0.18	**0.19**		---
Income		0.11		**0.16**	---	---	0.12	-0.20	---		**0.11**	0.19	---			---	
Work situation (ref=works + 30h)													---				
Works <30 h. or self-employed					**-1.02**											-1.32	**-1.22**
Inactive	**-0.83**	-0.92		**-0.90**	**-3.03**	-0.91	-0.60	**-1.16**		-1.10	**-0.88**	-1.18		-0.99	**-2.34**	-1.82	-0.86
Unemployed																	**-1.73**
Age	**0.02**		---	**0.03**	**0.03**	**0.03**	**0.02**	**0.04**	**0.04**	**0.04**	**0.05**	0.04			**0.04**	-0.05	0.02
Woman (ref = man)					---	-0.75	**0.61**	0.66		0.67	0.53	**1.74**	0.72	---			
No couple (ref=with couple)	-0.42		**-0.85**	---			---	-1.25	-0.84	---		---	---	---	---	-1.65	-0.55
Size of community				-0.09	-0.13	0.17		---	---		---	---	---	**-0.26**		**0.39**	---
Church attendance	0.11	---	**0.11**	**0.18**	---	---		---		**0.26**		---	**0.20**	**-0.23**	---	---	
Interest in politics (ref=none)								---									
Very interested	1.39	**2.11**	**1.98**	**1.15**	1.16	**1.87**	**2.68**		**2.88**	**1.79**	**1.95**	**3.77**	**2.47**	**3.21**	**19.9**	**3.62**	**2.28**
Somewhat interested		0.92	**0.98**	0.61	**1.45**		1.31		1.53	**1.42**	**1.22**	2.05	**2.13**	1.65	**18.6**		**1.33**
Not very interested			0.41		1.11		0.90					1.92	1.35		**17.8**		0.78
Political efficacy	---	0.20	0.13	---	0.13	---	0.13	**0.48**		**0.47**	0.30	**0.53**		0.28	**0.30**	0.64	---
Social trust	---	**0.74**	**0.54**	---	---		**0.53**	0.92	---	0.66	**0.68**	---	**0.80**	---	---	1.54	---
Value scale (ref= mixed)							---				---		---	---			
Materialist																	
Postmaterialist	0.53		**0.75**	**0.82**	0.63	0.69		0.79	1.17	0.74					0.81		**1.00**
Attitude social change (ref=reformist)			---				---	---		---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Radical	0.94								1.48								
Conservative	-0.47				-0.63												
Intercept	**-3.56**	**-5.45**	**-2.35**	**-5.42**	**-4.38**	**-8.55**	**-7.44**	**-4.95**	**-7.01**	**-7.05**	**-6.34**	**-11.6**	-2.32	**-5.32**		**-6.59**	**-2.22**
N of cases in the model	2101	1460	2792	1730	1030	2637	1836	588	1002	1484	1017	1000	702	2010	1239	1185	1047

Note: Only coefficients significant at p<0.10 are shown. Coefficients significant at p<0.05 are underlined, and at p<0.01 in bold. The sign --- means that this variable was not included in the final model (see note 40).

The rest of the factors considered show effects that are, more or less, consistent with the theoretical expectations, and which do not vary much depending on the type of political membership. Education is important in most countries and, usually, for all types of membership patterns. Nevertheless, it seems to have greater of an effect in determining membership of both traditional and new political groups. As hypothesised in the literature, citizens that are married or living in couple are more likely to belong to political groups than single, divorced or widowed people are. The frequency of church attendance is relevant only in a few countries, and only systematically for several membership types in Canada, Germany, Belgium and Great Britain. In general, the more frequent the attendance to religious services, the more likely membership of a political group is. The exceptions are Italy and Sweden, where more frequent attendants are less likely to belong to specific types of political groups.

If we turn to consider political attitudes and values, we find that interest in politics is, by far, the most relevant cognitive factor. It is statistically significant in all western societies analysed except for Finland. However, it has a greater impact on the probability of joining traditional groups only, and even more on the likelihood of joining both types of groups, than it is the case for membership of new political organisations. It seems, then, that membership of new political groups could be thought of as less politicised or, alternatively, that citizens involved in these types of associations are more alienated from what is usually labelled as "politics".

It is also interesting to note that social trust is generally not relevant in the explanation of most types of political membership. It has, however, more of an effect when considering simultaneous membership of traditional and new political groups. Given that this is the least populated category, its impact has to be considered limited in absolute terms. In this sense, a feeling of political efficacy is more relevant than trust for determining political membership. It has, though, a greater impact on membership of both traditional and new groups.

With regard to values, we see that whether citizens are materialist, postmaterialist or a mixture of the two is not too important for joining political groups. However, it has more of an effect for the prediction of simultaneous membership in traditional and new organisations. In the case of multiple political membership, being a postmaterialist citizen increases the likelihood of joining both types of groups in several western countries. In the few cases where it is statistically significant, the pattern of the effect of the value index is consistent with that expected: membership of traditional groups is associated to materialist values (except in France), whilst memberhip of new and of both types simultaneously is related to postmaterialism. Values are, however, rarely relevant in south European countries. On the other hand, attitudes towards social change are generally not a relevant attitudinal factor but, where significant, their effects are limited to having conservative attitudes. Thus, conservative individuals tend to be less likely to join political groups in general but much less new types of political organisations.

In general terms, a conclusion we could derive from these results is that the individual determinants of membership of new types of political groups usually show a greater variation across countries than the other two types of membership (membership of traditional political groups and membership of both traditional and new types of groups). Thus, it seems that the former type of behaviour is more heterogenous cross-nationally than the latter. This means that it is not advisable to impose a single explanatory model of the individual-level determinants of new political membership for all western countries, while it seems more reasonable to propose a general model of traditional political membership.

In summary, as it happens with other forms of political participation, political membership is unequally distributed across different social groups. Socio-economic resources help adequately to discriminate who will join political organisations and who is less likely to do so. However, although socio-economic resources are important, they are so to a different extent depending on the

type of political membership we are dealing with. Membership of new political organisations is less related to socio-economic resources and more so to attitudinal aspects such as an interest in politics and value preferences.

4.4. The Explanatory Limits of Individual-Level Models

As we have seen, citizens' characteristics, the resources they have available, their habits and practices, their attitudes and orientations, as well as the social networks in which they are immerse, are without doubt crucial aspects to understand better who joins political organisations and who does not. Yet, as I will show in the remaining pages of this chapter, explanatory models of political participation and, specifically, of political membership that are limited to individual-level factors are seriously incomplete if we also want to explain cross-national variations.

So far, all analyses have shown that the impact of resources, social integration, and orientations does vary across countries. However, single-level techniques do not allow to establish if the differences in the levels of political membership we find across western societies are due or not to the individual characteristics studied. And, as we have seen, cross-national variations are both one of the most interesting and least analysed aspects in the field of participation.

Some scholars have claimed that differences in the levels of political participation of western countries are related to their citizens' characteristics (Almond and Verba 1989, Inglehart 1991, Dalton 1996, Inglehart 1998, Torcal and Montero 1999), whether socio-economic or attitudinal. It would be plausible that in some countries citizens join political organisations to a greater extent because they have more education, more social or economic resources, free-time, or because they trust their fellow citizens more, or are more interested in politics. In other occasions, cross-national variations in participation have been attributed to differential modernisation (see, for example, Roller and Wessels

1996, Wessels 1997): participation would be greater wherever public and universal education is more developed, and the levels of economic development and well-being are greater. Although it is formulated in a slightly different way, this latter claim can also be reduced to the former one, as it only makes sense if the effects of modernisation are manifest on citizens' characteristics. In short, these hypotheses imply that cross-national variations in political membership are due to the varying socio-economic and attitudinal composition of the countries' citizenry.

Using *multilevel models*[41] we can tell whether significant differences across countries remain once we take into account the social and attitudinal characteristics of their citizens. This method allows to estimate a single model for all countries at the same time that it calculates the variation of each country around the general model, and estimates the coefficient of the higher-level variance.[42] Consequently, if after controlling for all individual-level variables, the country of residence were not relevant to determine and individual's likelihood of political membership, then the variance coefficient at the aggregate level (countries) would not be statistically significant. In the opposite case, we could conclude that cross-national differences in political membership remain to be important once we take into account their citizens' social and attitudinal composition.

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[41] Multilevel models (also termed hierarchical or random-coefficients models) are designed to allow the analysis of data "naturally" structured in several hierarchies or levels (for example, individuals within households and neighbourhoods, or individuals within regions and countries), in such a way that we can introduce variables related to the different levels of aggregation, and estimate their effects on some phenomenon measured at the lower level (see Hox 1995, Goldstein 1995, Kreft and de Leeuw 1998, Snijders and Bosker 1999). In this Thesis, the two levels of interest are the individual and her country of residence. However, in this chapter I will not introduce explanatory contextual (level-2) variables related to the national level. This part of the research will be developed in subsequent chapters, and more specifically in chapter 7.

[42] The model has the following general structure: Logit $(\pi_{ij}) = \gamma_0 + \sum\beta X_{ij} + u_{0j}$. Thus, level-2 error or variation (u_{0j}) is modeled, in our case for countries. Level-1 variation or error is in this case predetermined by $p_j(1-p_j)$. See Snijders and Bosker (1999: 213 ff.).

Table 4.22 shows the results of the multilevel analysis performed.[43] With a view to evaluating the relative impact of the different sets of individual-level factors I have estimated the model step-wise (models 1a-1c), and I compare them to the empty model (model 0) and to a model where the effect of individual-level variables is allowed to vary across countries (model 2 of random coefficients).

Thus, the empty model only estimates the intercept and the variation across countries and is described by equation 4.3. Models 1a to 1c estimate the intercept, the variation across countries on the average level of political membership, as well as the effect of the several individual level variables (Equation 4.4). Model 1a only incorporates variables related to individuals' socio-economic resources; model 1b introduces also factors related to the respondent's social status and integration, while model 1c includes as well her most relevant attitudes and orientations.

$$\text{Logit}\ (\pi_{ij}) = \gamma_0 + u_{0j} \qquad \text{(Equation 4.3)}$$

$$\text{Logit}\ (\pi_{ij}) = \gamma_0 + \sum\beta_h x_{hij} + u_{0j} \qquad \text{(Equation 4.4)}$$

Lastly, model 2 incorporates, as a reference point, the estimation of the random slopes for certain individual-level variables that showed differential effects across countries in previous single-level analyses (Tables 4.17 to 4.21). In this latter model all parameters estimated in model 1c appear, but in addition we are able to estimate the variation across countries around the average coefficients of education, income, church attendance, size of community and gender (Equation 4.5).[44]

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[43] In all cases, *random intercepts* models have been estimated, such that we estimate the variation in the average value of political membership across countries. Additionally, as we will see in the next paragraphs, model 2 also estimates *random coefficients or slopes*. All models have been estimated with the software HLM 5 and the estimation has been done via *full-PQL* approximation. The results interpreted are those for the *non-linear logit-link unit-specific model*.

[44] I have selected these variables following the results obtained in Table 4.17, which seemed to indicate the existence of different effects across countries.

$$\text{Logit}(\pi_{ij}) = \gamma_0 + \sum\gamma_h x_{hij} + u_{0j} + \sum u_{hj} x_{hij} \qquad \text{(Equation 4.5)}$$

where,
i = individual i, for I = 1, 2, 3, ..., n;
j = country j, for J = 1, 2, 3, …, N;
$\pi_{ij} = p_{ij}/1\text{-}p_{ij}$, and $p_{ij} = \text{prob}(y_{ij}=1)$, for y=1 (member of a political organisation);
γ = average parameters estimated at the country level (level 2)
β = parameters estimated at the individual level (level 1)
x = variables measured at the individual level (level 1)
u_j = parameters of the variation or error across countries associated to parametres γ

The results shown in Table 4.22 lead to several conclusions.[45] On the one hand, we see that model 1, in its three variants, improves our capacity to account for individual-level variations in political membership at the same time that it substantially reduces the unexplained cross-national variations (from 21% in model 0 to 12% in model 1c).[46] This means that part of the differences we find in the levels of political membership of western democracies are due to the diverse social composition of their populations.

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[45] The impossibility to estimate the parametres through Laplace approximation, due to the non-convergence of the algorythm, prevents from presenting statistics on the goodness-of-fit of each model, which are generally based on the Deviation or the –2-log likelihood. The estimation via PQL, being a quasi-likelihood method, does not allow to compute reliable statistics on the significance of the models.

[46] This can be also seen in the decrease in the proportion of total variance that is attributable to countries (intraclass correlation), computed as $\rho = \dfrac{\text{var}(u_j)}{\text{var}(u_j) + \pi^2/3}$.

Table 4.22. The Individual Determinants of Political Membership: multilevel analyses

Variables	Model 0	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 2
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)					
Intercept	-0.549	**-1.426**	**-2.131**	**-2.654**	**-2.647**
Education		**1.029**	**1.268**	**0.938**	**0.923**
Income		**1.410**	**1.188**	**1.148**	**1.349**
Income (squared)		**-0.549**	-0.405	-0.466	-0.572
Working situation (ref= +30h)					
Works <30 hours		**-0.174**	**-0.227**	**-0.257**	**-0.239**
Inactive		**-0.586**	**-0.674**	**-0.688**	**-0.661**
Unemployed		**-0.630**	**-0.577**	**-0.572**	**-0.521**
Age			**3.707**	**3.413**	**3.332**
Age (squared)			**-3.495**	**-3.146**	**-3.049**
Woman (ref=man)			**-0.205**	**-0.111**	n.s.
With couple (ref=without couple)			n.s.	0.079	n.s.
Size of community			**-0.171**	**-0.225**	-0.254
Church attendance			**-0.235**	**-0.187**	-0.279
Religious membership			**1.127**	**1.079**	**1.074**
Interest in politics				**0.559**	**0.566**
Political efficacy				**0.273**	**0.268**
Social trust				**0.130**	**0.124**
Value scale (ref=materialist)					
Mixed				0.129	**0.148**
Postmaterialist				**0.489**	**0.516**
Attitude social change (ref= conservative)					
Radical				0.218	0.209
Reformist				**0.149**	**0.148**
Random parameters (country lev.)					
$u_{ij} \sim N(0, \Omega_u)$: Ω_u	**0.85**	**0.67**	**0.59**	**0.59**	**0.35-1.36**[†]
u_{0ij} [intercept] *	**0.85 (0.92)**	**0.67 (0.82)**	**0.59 (0.77)**	**0.59 (0.77)**	**1.36 (1.16)**
u_{1ij} [education]					**0.12 (0.34)**
u_{2ij} [income]					**0.24 (0.49)**
u_{3ij} [church attendance]					**0.13 (0.37)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]					**0.17 (0.41)**
u_{5ij} [gender]					**0.06 (0.24)**
Intraclass correlation [+]	0.21	0.17	0.15	0.15	0.10-0.29[†]
R^2 dichotomous[§]	0	0.09	0.16	0.19	0.20-0.16[†]
% unexplained level-2 variance	21	15	13	12	8-24[†]
Number of cases (number countries)	23,754 (15)	16,063 (15)	16,063 (15)	16,063 (15)	16,063 (15)

Source: Own elaboration from 1990-93 WVS data. All coefficients indicate the change (increase or decrease) in the logit of the odds ratio (p/1-p) of the dependent variable (member of any political organisation = 1, not member = 0) when the independent variable increases its value in one unit. Given that all ordinal and scale variables (with the only exception of age) have been recoded such that the minimum value is expressed by a 0 and the highest value by a 1, coefficients can be interpreted as the impact each variable has on the dependent variable when it changes from its minimum to its maximum value. Only coefficients significant at $p<0.10$ are shown. Coefficients significant at $p<0.05$ are underlined, and at $p<0.01$ in bold. The sign --- means that this variable was not included in the final model.

* For variation parameters, coefficients represent the component expressed in variance terms, and in brackets in standard deviations. [+] Proportion of the total residual variance attributable to country variance. § R^2 for multinomial binomial regressions (see the details of its calculation and interpretation in Snijders and Bosker 1999: 225-226). [†] The first value corresponds to the computation with all random coefficients variables in their maximum value (1), and the second to the same calculation with the variables fixed at their minimum value (0).

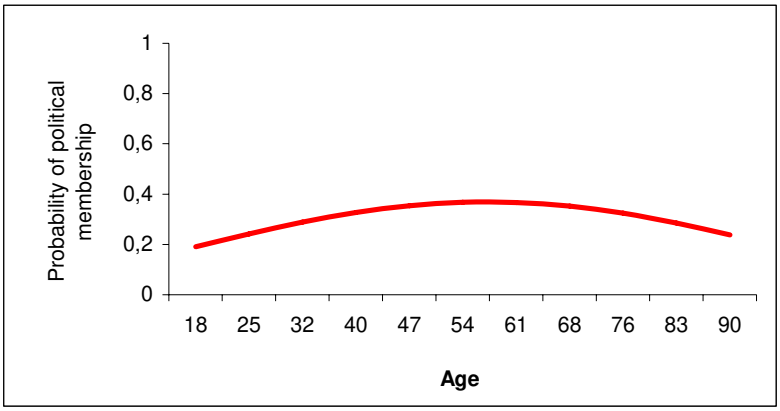
Thus, these three models are taking into account the "compositional" effect, in line with Roller and Wessels (1996) and Wessels' (1997) arguments on the impact of varying levels of socio-economic modernization. Nevertheless, it is also important to underline that political attitudes and orientations contribute very little or nothing to explain variation across countries, since the intraclass correlation, as well as the total country-level variation of models 1b and 1c are of the same magnitude, and the difference in the percentage of unexplained variation attributable to countries is equivalent for both models. Thus, while socio-economic factors (resources and social integration) are, to a great extent, responsible for the different levels of political membership we find in western societies, political and civic attitudes and orientations are quite irrelevant to explain the variations across countries in this form of political participation. In other words, north European citizens are more likely to join political organisations because they have more resources available and because they are socially more integrated into their communities than their fellow south European citizens, but not because their political culture is more favouring of participation in politics.

Table 4.23. Variance Correlations of Individual-Level Variables (Model 2 of Random Effects)

	Intercept	Education	Income	Church attendance	Size of community
Education	-0.798				
Income	-0.410	0.752			
Church attendance	-0.390	0.213	-0.237		
Size of community	-0.795	0.314	-0.015	0.167	
Gender	0.447	0.016	0.235	-0.219	-0.775

Secondly, it is important to point out the greater impact that the more classic socio-economic characteristics have; especially age, income, and education. As well as the clearly curvilinear effect of age (Graph 4.5) and the slightly curvilinear effect of income.

Graph 4.5. Age and Political Membership: Predicted Probabilities (Model 2)



Finally, these results (model 2) confirm my previous claim that a single model of the individual-level factors of political membership is not completely realistic for all western countries. When we allow for random variation of the coefficients of some of the main variables that indicate citizens' availability of resources and their social integration, we see that the variation around these parameters is, indeed, substantial.[47] For this reason, it is of some interest to look at this model more in detail.

As we can see in the lower section of Table 4.22 the variation parameters of the random coefficients are such that in the cases of

[47] Given the high number of parameters required to estimate the variation of random coefficients (variances plus correlations) I have chosen to divide the presentation of the results in two tables. The variance of coefficients are included in the lower section of Table 4.22, while the correlation of these coefficients with the intercept and among them is presented in Table 4.23. On the other hand, it is important to mention that the variation across countries in a random coefficients model depends on the values of the variables whose effects randomly vary (Snijders and Bosker 1999: 105). For this reason I present two illustrative situations: one in which all variables adopt their minimum value (0) and the one in which they adopt the maximum value (1).

church attendance, size of community, and gender, the effect of these variables can be positive, negative or inexistent depending on the country we choose.[48] These results confirm those obtained in the preceding single-level analyses shown in Table 4.17, where the different effect of these factors on political membership was already apparent.

On the other hand, the correlations between the variances of these five variables and the intercept lead to other very interesting conclusions (see Table 4.23). Firstly, when inspecting the correlations with the intercept, we reach the conclusion that the magnitude of the impact of income, church attendance, and especially size of community and education decreases as the level of average political membership of the country increases. That is to say, those countries where the worse-off citizens[49] show greater rates of political membership are the countries where these four factors introduce less political inequality. Thus, we can conclude that the main differences across countries are due more to the relatively higher participation of the worse-off in the former countries, than to the higher participation of the more resourceful.

Secondly, it stands out the fact that the variation around the gender slope is consistent with the variation of the intercept. Thus, in countries that deviate more from the average level of political membership we find a stronger effect of gender, positive or negative depending on the case. Lastly, it is important to note the strong correlation between the variance parameters of education and income, thus indicating that both variables vary jointly across countries. Thus, where education is a discriminating factor for political membership, so it is family income, and viceversa. Just the opposite is what we find with the variations of gender and size

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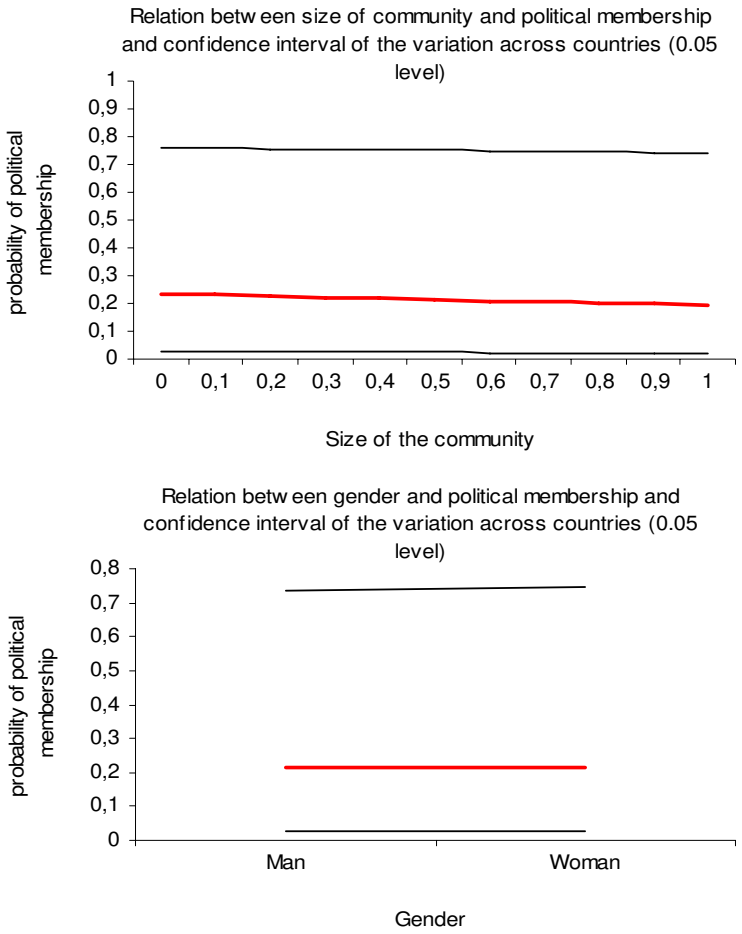
[48] We know this when comparing each variation component expressed in standard deviations with the average coefficient of the respective variable.

[49] We should remind that all independent variables are expressed in a 0-1 range, where 0 represents the minimum value. Thus, the intercept reflects the likelihood of political membership for those individuals with lower education, lower income, lower age (15-16 years), etc., and with the values of the reference categories for nominal variables.

of the community, such that wherever one factor is more important, the other is less so. Graph 4.6 illustrates this differential variation of both coefficients. In it we can see that the variation is higher for individuals who live in smaller size communities and for women.

Graph 4.6. Variation around the Coefficients for Size of the Community and Gender



In summary, as I said before, models 1c and 2 are the best fit to understand the real impact the different individual-level factors have on political membership in western countries. Nonetheless, even such a complete individual-level model as this one does not contribute much to reduce the cross-national variations we initially had. Therefore, we must conclude that any explanatory model of political membership that limits itself to considering only factors related to the citizens themselves will leave an important part of the cross-national differences unexplained. Thus, it is necessary to incorporate in our analytical models the factors related to the social and political context in which citizens live, and that impinge on their political behaviour. This is the goal of the next chapter.

4.5. Conclusions

This chapter pursued three main objectives. On the one had, it has presented the main hypotheses about the way in which socio-economic resources, social status, social integration, and civic and political orientations determine citizens' participation in political organisations. Secondly, it has provided a detailed bivariate and multivariate test of the degree to which these hypotheses hold in western democracies, using the available cross-national survey data. These analyses have shown that the extent to which individuals' resources and social position are transformed into political inequalities substantially varies across western countries. Thus, resources such as education introduce inequalities in most western societies, but not so much income or social class. Other aspects related to the social status of individuals do also exert a varying impact. For example, gender differences and the burdens of family obligations are much greater in southern Europe than in other western countries. Likewise, we have seen that several aspects that are related to citizens' social integration in their communities very frequently do not have the effects assumed in the scholarly literature. For example, the size of the community may foster or hinder political membership, while the effect of

religious integration seems to be channelled through its structural component: membership of religious associations. As to civic and political orientations, I have shown the central role played by having an interest in politics, and the minor impact of other forms of psychological involvement with politics, social trust, and social values when determining citizens' political membership.

Finally, the chapter leads us to conclude that, although certainly important, the social and attitudinal characteristics of citizens are not enough to satisfactorily and completely understand why some citizens join political organisations and others do not. And, especially, they do not help us explain much why we find so huge differences in the propensity to join political groups across western democracies.

The next chapters will turn to analyse to what extent do the participation opportunities that political systems provide, as well as the patterns of political mobilisation of organisations themselves, contribute to further our understanding of these vast differences in political membership among western citizens.

CHAPTER 5. INSTITUTIONS, POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES, AND MOBILISATION: THE CONTEXTUAL DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP

"If an individual thinks he can influence his government, the probability that he will try to form a group for this purpose appears to depend on the nation in which he lives, and not on other social characteristics" (Almond and Verba 1989 [1963]: 218).

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter we have seen that, despite the fact that scholarly attention has almost exclusively focused on the characteristics of individuals in order to explain their political behaviour, the various individual factors we can consider are clearly insufficient to help us understand why citizens show in some countries a higher tendency to join political organisations.

In the past decade the literature on political participation has begun to adopt new approaches that have led to the introduction of explanatory elements that go beyond the individual. In this way the social and political context in which citizens act has come to form part of the set of factors that should be taken into account to understand what determines their political behaviour. The social and political context conditions the set of participation opportunities and the stimuli to mobilisation that individuals

receive. Without opportunities to act in an organised way and without stimuli to mobilisation on the part of political organisations, citizens interested in public issues will have to face increased costs to join political groups. Therefore, the socio-political context that surrounds individuals forms part of the structure of costs, benefits and incentives for collective action, and it thus conditions the level of political membership of individuals.

This chapter and the following centre on these analytical approaches and consider a series of factors connected to the institutional, social and political context that allow us to better explain the differences in political membership among western countries. I will show that the important cross-national variations in the propensity of their citizens to join political organisations are related to important aspects of the political context in which those individuals act. Specifically, the various analyses that are presented prove that certain institutional changes facilitate and provide incentives for political participation, while others hinder it. As opposed to what Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas (2001) say, it is not only the general political outlook of countries which is important: certain institutional structures are able to promote or provide incentives for organised participation of citizens on public issues.

5.2. Citizens, Contexts and Political Participation

Probably, it is not very controversial to claim that people are conditioned in their behaviour by the time, space and environment in which they live. Nevertheless, as Huckfeldt and Sprague (1993: 281) point out, it is surprising that very little, if any, attention is generally paid to the context or the contexts that surround the individual. Methodological individualism in the field of political behaviour has led, for many years, to consider almost exclusively the impact of individuals' characteristics and social inequality on participation. In spite of the fact that, as Almond and Verba already pointed out (see quote above), researchers were aware of

the important differences that existed between countries, empirical studies have not been undertaken to introduce context until very recently. For decades the analysis of political participation has been characterised by the use of approaches that have detached individuals from their contexts and, to a large extent, eliminated the political from the study of political action.

From the opposite position, or rather as a complement, the contextual approaches to political behaviour depart from the conviction that individual political action is strongly conditioned by the environment which surrounds individuals. So much so that to ignore the context in which citizens act may mean, if this is relevant, to incorrectly specify the analytical models and to fall into the trap of individual fallacy (Przeworski 1974, Brown 1991). For this reason, it is necessary to take into account the possible effects that the context brings with it, to incorporate variables linked to it, and to study the interaction between these and individuals' characteristics.

While there may be a consensus of opinion that the context may in many cases be relevant to explain individuals' political behaviour, the central question is which context is relevant, how and why.

5.2.1. Which Context?

As Przeworski pointed out (1974: 33 ff.), one of the most crucial aspects when proposing contextual hypotheses or theories is to define what type of context is relevant to explain the behaviour under investigation. What exactly do I understand by context in this research and at what level do I define context?

Firstly, one can identify different types of context and contextual effects. Huckfeldt and Sprague (1993), following Przeworski and Teune (1970) and Eulau (1986), distinguished various types of contexts or environments and classified their different effects on individual behaviour. Thus, contexts may be defined by the level of aggregation of the population

(neighbourhoods, municipalities, counties, provinces, regions, countries, etc.) or by their functions (place of residence, place of work or study, religious communities, etc.). Additionally, it is possible to distinguish between *environmental* effects, which are those produced by all external factors impinging on the individual (social and political institutions, social structure, physical environment, etc.), and *contextual* effects, which according to Huckfeldt and Sprague (1993: 289) are the result of social interaction with the environment. Among the latter we also include the effects produced by the interaction between individuals; that is to say, the aggregated individual properties that Przeworski and Teune (1970: 56) refer to. For his part, Przeworski (1974: 34) makes a distinction between "social context" and "political context" which is substantially different to the one that will be used in this research. According to Przeworski, the social context can be defined as the distribution of the set of socially relevant individual characteristics of the social groups where the behaviour and attitudes we wish to explain are inserted. For example, if we are explaining electoral participation, the social context could be the social class predominant in voters' neighbourhoods. On the other hand, the political context is, for Przeworski, the distribution of the very behaviour and attitudes that we wish to explain among the social groups that interact with the individuals we are studying. To continue with the former example, the political context would be the distribution of electoral participation in the voters' neighbourhoods. As we can see, for Przeworski (1974), social and political context are, in short, the product of the aggregation of individual characteristics and behaviour, and their effect on the behaviour or the attitudes of a given individual is produced by means of social interaction.

Therefore, a good part of the sociological literature on environmental or contextual effects on political behaviour has focused on the impact of the socio-economic environment and on social interaction between individuals (Przeworski 1974, Huckfeldt 1979 and 1986, Giles and Dantico 1982, Huckfeldt and Sprague 1987, Huckfeldt, Plutzer and Sprague 1993, Kenny

1992). The attempt to overcome an excessively individualistic vision of social and political action has led to a recovery of the use of social groups and interaction to explain political behaviour. We are urged to abandon the study of atomised and isolated individuals and adopt an analysis of individuals surrounded by other individuals.

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that these are not the only relevant contexts and environments involved in conditioning political action on the part of citizens. In spite of the methodological and analytical importance of this recovery of social groups for the study of political behaviour, this group of researchers seems to forget that individuals are not only surrounded by other individuals; they are also entangled in a network of organisations, institutions and rules of the game.

In this line, Kenny (1992: 260) recognises that contextual effects are not limited exclusively to individual interaction in a particular environment. Institutions and socio-political structures provide a structure of incentives for individual action. In some cases, certain aspects of the way political and social institutions work that may appear to be of little importance –such as the distance between polling stations and the quality of public transport mentioned by Hardin (1991: 371)- can have relevant consequences on individuals' participation because they substantially impinge upon the structure of costs and benefits of collective action (see also Conway 1991: chapter 5).

Another fundamental aspect in the definition of context is the choice of the level of the environment considered relevant to determine individual behaviour (Przeworski 1974: 34 ff.). This implies deciding which is the level that hosts the set of relevant interactions to explain the political action we are interested in. The environmental and contextual effects of institutions and political organisations may be studied at different levels: local, regional or national. And it is reasonable to think that each institutional level will have different consequences on citizens' political behaviour and with respect to different types of behaviour.

The choice of the national level in this study as the main context is determined, fundamentally, by the requirements of the main question posed by this research, and by the analytical framework used to address it. On the one hand, I am trying to find out which factors affect citizens' decisions to join political organisations. This goal of the research does not prevent from considering other socio-political environments closer to the individual, such as the local environment or the neighbourhood. But, on the other hand, I am also trying to give a satisfactory answer to the enormous differences in political membership that we find between countries with a relatively similar level of social and economic development. For this purpose we need to use national representative samples, which inevitably makes the analysis of micro-contexts difficult. Besides, it seems logical to think that differences that are found at a national level are linked to characteristics or properties of the same level of aggregation.[1] There is no logical or theoretical need to assume *a priori* that contexts closer to the citizens are those which will have a larger impact on their behaviour (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1993: 299). It all depends on the behaviour we are considering and the level of analysis we are using.

This implies that, although I share the vision of the interdependence of individual behaviour with respect to other individuals and to the immediate context in which they act, and that it is quite likely that various environmental levels (local, regional, national) interact in their effects on political membership, the type of cross-national data available do not allow

[1] As will be seen later, choosing the national level of aggregation and measurement of institutional variables does not imply eliminating subnational institutions from the analysis. Specifically, I take into account the configuration of subnational institutions that are related to the processes of political and administrative decentralisation. Simply, the level of aggregation of the characteristics of those institutions is the national and the limitation that this entails is that the intra-national variation which may exist of the characteristics and functioning of the subnational institutions have not been taken into account in this study.

me to test to the maximum the hypotheses that these levels of analysis might generate.

5.2.2. How and What Does the Context Affect? Micro-Macro Mechanisms of Political Membership

The socio-political context does not necessarily affect or affect in the same way all types of political behaviour (see, for example, Huckfeldt, Plutzer and Sprague 1993). Before attributing or exploring the effects that the environment in which citizens act could have, it is fundamental to assure that our explanatory models are well specified at an individual level; that is to say, that we are not using context as a residual element of models badly specified at the individual level (Hauser 1974).[2]

Once that chapter 4 has already shown that exclussively individual-level analyses are insufficient to explain the differences in political membership that we find in western countries, we can consider the possibility that these differences may be linked to the structural characteristics of the societies in which these individuals live.

One of the fundamental problems of studying the effects of the environment or the context on individual behaviour lies in adequately establishing the links or causal mechanisms that connect macro-structures with micro-behaviour. That is, it is necessary to establish a plausible and reasonable mechanism for the *macro to micro* transition (Coleman 1990).[3] Following Coleman's classification (1990: chapter 1), this study is an internal analysis of system behaviour, since the explanation of the

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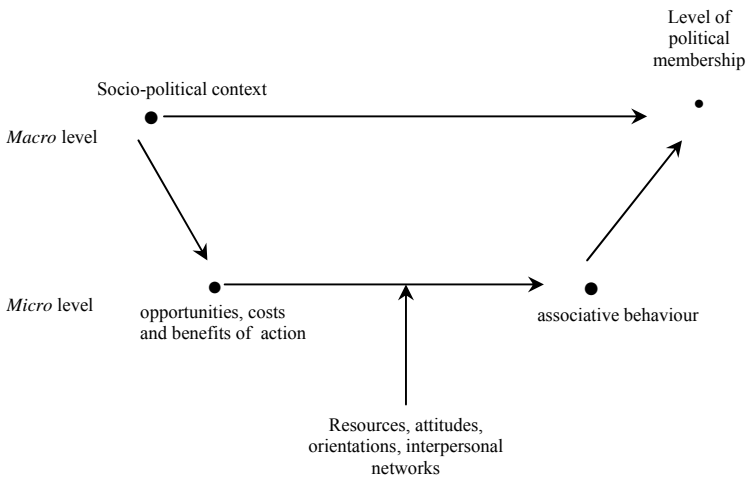
[2] This is one of the reasons why I have paid special attention in the previous chapter to the estimation of an individual-level model that contained all the variables that could be linked to the propensity to join political organisations.

[3] The transition from the micro to the macro in our case does not pose serious problems, since the systemic phenomenon that we are studying is little more than a simple aggregation of micro-behaviour. Therefore, the main problem lies in establishing the connections between the systemic characteristics (institutional, for example) and individuals' behaviour.

configuration of the social system (the level of political membership in each country) is carried out by reference to the explanation of the behaviour of its component parts (the citizens).

As can be seen in Figure 5.1, which shows schematically the explanatory process that is used in this work following Coleman's proposals, the set of propositions which are presented in this chapter relate two properties at the system or *macro* level: the socio-political context of the country with the level of political membership of that society. Nevertheless, the connection between the two is made through the individual level. The socio-political context structures the opportunities, costs and benefits that individuals may get from organised political action. This structure –mediated by the resources, attitudes, orientations and personal networks of the individual- determines or conditions the associative behaviour of the citizen. Lastly, the aggregation of the patterns of individual political membership results in a certain level of political membership in the society in question.

Figure 5.1. The Transition from the *Macro* to the *Micro*: the Effect of the Socio-Political Context on Political Membership



In this way the transition from the macro level of the socio-political context to the micro level of individuals is carried out through the impact that the former has on the structures of opportunities, benefits and costs of organised political action. Given that this mechanism is fundamental to the argument of this Thesis, I will detail more clearly how and under which circumstances the characteristics of the socio-political context can affect the decision to join political organisations.

Although I share with many scholars a critical approximation to the utility of rational choice models to explain collective action, I also consider like many others (Knoke 1990c, Hardin 1991, Schlozman, Verba and Brady 1995, Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995 and 2000, Whiteley 1995) that the paradoxes that arise from the logic of collective action (Olson 1992 [1965]) contribute to structure coherently our views on the sets of factors that are involved in individual decisions to participate in politics.[4] Additionally, many studies have shown that, while rationalist models have serious limitations when accounting for the motivations that lead citizens to act collectively, and of the benefits or incentives that they look for in organisations, rational choice theories help us enormously to understand the impact of the cost structure on participative decisions.[5] In any case, while in the following pages I adopt elements and concepts of these formal models for their analytical use, I also consider that the mathematical formalisation of the same is not necessary, nor

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[4] As Zintl says (1995: 191), in order to evaluate the usefulness of rational choice analytical frameworks, the important issue is to determine if it is possible to learn something that we did not know before, or which we could not express so clearly. In this sense my evaluation of rationalist models of collective action is, without doubt, positive.

[5] This reflection is essential for this research, since the analytical framework that is presented here assumes that individuals' "motivations" *per se* are not enough to explain political participation. To take into account the context is to affirm that preferences, on many occasions, are not exogenous and that, therefore, the interaction with the social and political environment moulds preferences, as well as the cost-benefit structure of political action.

probably excessively useful for my purposes.[6] Neither does the presentation of the arguments that follow, concerning the factors that structure participative decisions, imply that these decisions obey an explicit and utilitarian calculation on the part of individuals –not even in terms of a wide notion of utility that includes normative motivations. Like Rosenau (1973) and Huckfeldt (1986: 152-153), I believe that a good part of the political activity of citizens is a response to the social experiences and the interaction with mobilising agents, more than the result of individual calculations on costs and benefits. Rosenau (1973: 96) expressed this idea very clearly:

> "Most citizens, in other words, are not autonomous actors who calculate what ought to be done in public affairs, devise a strategy for achieving it, estimate their own resources, and then pursue the course of action most likely to achieve their goals. Their instrumental behaviour is often suggested, if not solicited, by others [...]. Thus, to conceive of the practices of citizenship as being largely sustained by independent action toward the political arena initiated by individuals is to minimize the relational context in which citizens participate in public affairs."

In this way, the underlying notion used here is more that of *purposive individuals* who seek certain ends with their actions and, therefore, may give reasons for their behaviour, rather than of rational individuals whose behaviour is oriented to maximise their utility (see Coleman 1990: 13-18).

There are multiple rational models of collective action that include different elements in the function of an individual's decision to participate. The most simple is described in Equation 5.1, in which *AC* is the decision to act collectively, p_i is the probability that the contribution of the individual will lead to the

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[6] Additionally the reader should not understand that the reflections that follow are proposing rational choice models of political behaviour in a strict sense. I limit myself, simply, to borrow certain concepts and logical arguments that are useful for the analysis of political membership, but I do not try to give an exclusively rationalist explanation of this phenomenon.

common good that is sought, *B* is the main benefit (the collective good) and *C* are the costs derived from the action.

$$AC_i = (p_i * B_i) - C_i \qquad \text{(Equation 5.1)}$$

The Olsonian version (1992 [1965]) includes also, and with a crucial role, private benefits or selective incentives (S_i) –as is shown in Equation 5.2.

$$AC_i = (p_i * B_i) - C_i + S_i \qquad \text{(Equation 5.2)}$$

In this way, selective incentives –whatever they may be- contribute to favouring collective action because they impinge directly on the benefits received individually. In the case under study here, even when the provision of selective incentives may be certainly relevant to determine the propensity to join political organisations, there is no reason to think that the provision of selective incentives on the part of these groups varies systematically between societies. In general terms, the provision of selective incentives is an organisational decision that is, very likely, independent of the socio-political context in which the organisation acts.

Later developments of the models of collective action introduce additional elements, which impinge on the individual decision to co-operate. A first aspect is related to the efficacy or effectiveness of the group that acts collectively in providing the common good sought. As opposed to what is claimed by Whiteley (1995), incorporating the probability that the group can obtain the collective good – p(B) in Equation 5.3- does not mean establishing a "collective rationality" incompatible with models of rational actors. The efficacy of the political organisation in question is decisive for the common good to be provided by the same, and it is not rational to co-operate in a useless enterprise.[7] Nevertheless,

[7] See Moe's (1980a and b) interesting analysis of the tendency individuals have to overestimate their ability to have an influence of the final outcome of colective action.

as Whiteley claims, irrespective of the efficacy of the group, a rational individual would not participate if her influence on the provision of the good were null. Therefore, the relation between one aspect and the other has to be multiplicative.

$$AC_i = [(p_i{*}B_i)\ p(B) + (aN - N^2)] - C_i + S_i \quad \text{(Equation 5.3)}$$

Another element that has been included in the factors that condition individual decisions to co-operate, and which is also linked to the efficacy of the group, is the number of individuals who also co-operate[8] –N in Equation 5.3. The link between this aspect and the individual decision to co-operate is not, however, completely clear.[9] Baron (1997: 321) considers that, for those individuals who include in their utilities the welfare of others, political action is more useful when others are not co-operating. Nevertheless, Baron recognises that when the number of co-operators is excessively low, the probability of success of the action is also low. Therefore, political action will be effective only when a substantial number of individuals are co-operating. For his part, Hardin (1991) claims that one of the fundamental aspects that distinguish the two main forms of collective action *–acting together* and *contributing together*- is their functional relation with the number of other persons that participate in the collective action. The relation between coordination and the number of participants shows increasing marginal returns, and provides an

[8] Elster (1997: 39) claims that obtaining the public good is a continuous function of the number of agents who take part.

[9] See Elster (1997: chapter 1) to get a general vision of the distinct links that may be established between the number of agents that co-operate and the distribution of costs and benefits of collective action. For this reason, the parabolic function included in equation 5.3 is only one of the possible alternatives to describe this relationship. Klandermans (1997: 26 ff.) also discusses various aspects that have an influence on the expectations of the success of collective action, among which is the number of persons who participate in the action. Nevertheless, Klandermans does not limit himself exclusively to the framework of rational choice and combines this with value-expectancy theory which is more common in social psychology.

incentive for collective action on the part of new participants as it reduces the costs of repression derived from the same. The relation between co-operation and the number of participants has, on the contrary, a functional form of decreasing marginal returns: up to a certain level, the increase in the number ofparticipants increases the resources available and the efficacy of the group and, therefore, the probabilities of obtaining the collective good, but after a certain point, a larger number of participants makes individual contribution more and more irrelevant, reducing the chance of joining the group (pp. 366-367). Given this relationship, the structure of incentives to co-operation is, according to Hardin, always that of no co-operation, irrespective of the number of other individuals who already co-operate.

Nevertheless, Oliver (1984) shows empirical results that contradict this conclusion. In her study on activism in neighbourhood groups, she seems to indicate that the relation between the number of co-operators and the decision to act is negative: individuals interviewed said they contributed actively to obtain the common good because "nobody else would do it". Actually, this finding is not necessarily incompatible with the formulations of Baron and Hardin, if we take into account the "magnitude" of the common good. That is to say, if the good which is sought does not demand a high quantity of resources and may be provided by the co-operation of a few active persons, the relationship that Oliver finds may be perfectly compatible with other versions of the relationship between the number of participants and the decision to act. In general, the typical relationship between both aspects may be expressed in a parabolic expression such as that of Equation 5.3, although as Oliver indicates there may be interactions with other elements that change the functional form. Hence, when the number of participants is low, its increase will heighten the chances of joining the group, but from a certain threshold of participants the chances go down. In any case, the number of participants may impinge upon the decision to co-operate with a political organisation, either because of its impact on the expected benefits

of the action, or because it modifies the impact of individual action.[10]

In this way, according to the different approaches to the paradox of collective action, we can distinguish four main elements that intervene in an individual's decision to join a political organisation and that may vary depending on specific environmental characteristics:[11] the expected impact of individual contribution, the expected benefits of participation, the costs derived from action, and the estimated probability that other individuals will co-operate.[12] How does the socio-political context affect each of these elements? Figure 5.2 presents a diagram that presents schematically the connections that we can establish between various environmental aspects and the elements that comprise the decision to join a political organisation.[13] As we can see, environmental factors impinge on the final decision to join a political association through their effect on the subjective evaluations of the costs and the benefits that an individual expects to derive from co-operation with the organisation (Hansen 1985).

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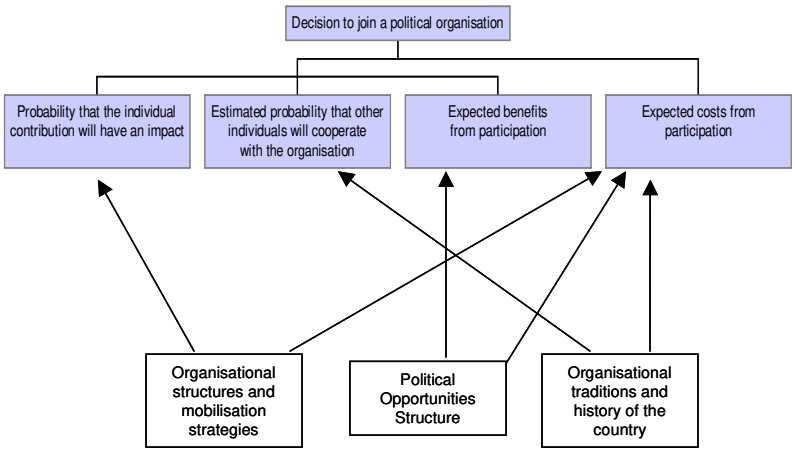
[10] This is why Equation 5.3 includes these parameters in the section related to benefits.

[11] Other aspects which are generally taken into account to explain collective action are not excessively relevant in the case of co-operation with political organisations. So, for example the role of negative selective incentives – sanctions- for not co-operating play a lesser role in most political groups due to the voluntary nature of membership and because they are barely capable of imposing penalties.

[12] Both in the case of the estimation of the probability that other individuals will also co-operate, as in the case of the impact of individual contribution, the perceptions or beliefs of individuals may be erroneous and not correspond to reality, in line with versions of practical rationality (see Verba, Schlozman and Brady 2000: 245).

[13] For the moment I am only explaining the general links among the various contextual factors that will be considered in the next chapters. In chapter 6 I explain in more detail the specific hypotheses, while also presenting the variables that are used to measure these environmental aspects.

Figure 5.2. Contextual Elements that Influence the Decision to Co-Operate with a Political Organisation



According to the logic of collective action, the importance of the impact of the individual contribution comes from its direct effect on the relevance of the collective benefit as a source of motivation to individual action. Only in the case that individuals can have a real influence on the result of their actions and the provision of the good that is sought, can this be sufficient motive for co-operation –as long as the costs are not higher. In contrast to the situations we find regarding electoral participation, the value of *p* may vary much from one political organisation to another, depending on (a) the size of the organisation, and (b) the "size" of the common good that this seeks.[14] Thus, some individuals may

[14] Olson (1992 [1965]) pointed out the importance of both aspects. Especially, Olson argues that, although small groups may provide incentives to individual participation due to the possibility to have an impact on collective action, the existence of greater social control, and due to the risk that defection may prevent the group from obtaining the common good; if we are dealing with a *lumpy good*, small groups may have difficulties in providing the good itself since too many resources are needed.

have reasons to think that their participation may be decisive or, at least, relevant to reach the common goal; while others may find themselves in the situation commonly expected by the logic of collective action. To a large degree, which of these two situations is the most usual when we compare different societies will be determined, fundamentally by the size of the political organisations of each society, and by the environment in which they act.[15] In this way, the organisational structures prevalent in each society can have an important impact on the participative decisions of their citizens. Especially, the degree to which participation in organisations is concentrated to a greater or lesser extent at the local level, rather than at higher levels, will be an important factor for the average size of organisations, and for the possibility that the good sought may be obtained by small-sized groups.[16] Also, the mobilisation strategies of the organisations themselves may have an influence, as the perceptions of individual influence on collective action may be formed by the discourse elaborated by organisations.[17]

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[15] Recent data from a study of organisations in 23 communities of varying size in six European countries (Germany, Denmark, Spain, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Switzerland) by the network *Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy* of the *European Science Foundation* indicate that, in fact, there are substantial differences in the number of members political associations have in cities of a similar size. So that, for example, the political associations of Sabadell have an average number (5% trimmed to eliminate atypical cases) of only 107 members, while those of Berne have an average of 1,498. The average size (trimmed) of explicitly political associations seems to be larger than that of the average local association, as in the same cities the average size of local associations varies between 48 members in Sabadell and 309 in Berne.

[16] Whiteley (1995: 214) provides a similar argument: "... if collective goods are provided in significant amounts at the local level by a relatively small number of actors, then the small size of the group will promote co-operation. In this situation the collective good will very likely be provided, and the actors will participate."

[17] There are numerous studies that indicate that individuals tend to overestimate the possibility that their contribution will have an impact on the final result (see for example, Muller and Opp 1986, Coleman 1990: 14, Baumgartner and Leech 1998: 71). Some authors, nevertheless, do not consider it problematic to conceptualise rationality according to the beliefs and perceptions

As I have said before, the chances that other individuals also co-operate, and the final number of those that do, impinge on the expected benefits of co-operation with a political organisation, as well as on the impact of the individual contribution in obtaining the common good. Nevertheless, this aspect of an individual's decision is, in many cases, a subjective perception frequently based on imperfect information. The socio-political context may influence these perceptions, since organisational traditions and the past history of co-operation conditions the degree of optimism or pessimism with which calculations of the number of people who will also co-operate are made. Therefore, citizens of countries with a long tradition of political membership and of organisational co-operation to obtain common goods will have reasons to evaluate optimistically the capacity of organisations to call for action and, thus, they will be optimistic about their potential efficacy in obtaining the common good. On the contrary, the inhabitants of less participative societies will have few reasons for optimism and –unless they have specific information about the political organisation in question- will probably have not very positive perceptions about the willingness of other individuals to co-operate.[18] In some way, we can think of the situation as an n-players iterated prisoner's dilemma, so that past experiences of co-operation impinge on the strategies of co-operation in successive games (see Axelrod 1984 and Taylor 1976: chapter 4). In this way, the rewards that may be received from co-operation or desertion depend on the probabilities of different levels of participation (Oliver 1984, Chong 1991: 115).[19]

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of the actor himself. See Elster (1989: chapter 3) to get a global view of the various forms of problematic rationality.

[18] Muller and Opp (1986 and 1987) mention a similar process of evaluation of the probability of success of political protest initiatives from the past success of similar initiatives.

[19] In the absence of data which explicitly study the individual perceptions of the impact of individual participation and of the probability of co-operation on the part of other individuals, we can only examine indirectly the relationship between contextual factors and subjective perception through individual participative behaviour or, as Economists say, from revealed preferences.

Therefore, the expected benefits of participation in an organisation depend on the impact of the individual contribution, and on the number of participants. However, other aspects of the political context may also have a direct impact on whether the common good is obtainable. Specifically, the political opportunity structures (POS) of the society in question will condition to a great extent how permeable the political system is to the demands of organised groups. All other factors being equal, if the political structures accommodate relatively easily and quickly the different interests expressed through organisations, there will be more incentives to create organisations and to join them. If the effort of participating in collective action is considered in vain there will be few motives to assume the costs derived from co-operation. Additionally, some institutional structures favour more than others the creation of political organisations and interest groups by means of aids and subsidies of various types (see Hansen 1985).

But the costs of co-operating with political organisations are also affected by various aspects of the socio-political environment in which the citizens act. On the one hand, mobilisation by organisations reduces the transaction costs of joining them (see Wielhouwer and Lockerbie 1994, and Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), while also reducing the costs of obtaining information about the existing political organisations, their offer, how they work, their location, etc. Undoubtedly, if organisations dedicate resources and efforts to recruit new members it is more likely that individuals will respond positively than if they never receive requests of this sort.[20] And if, as we have seen in the previous chapter, a good part of these recruitment efforts are carried out by persons from the immediate social environment of the recruited

[20] Although their data do not refer to organisational participation, but to other forms of political action, Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 134-136) show that between 10 and 30% of Americans receive requests to participate in collective action. Of those, between 30 and 60% responded positively to the requests and participated in the action in question. In general Verba, Schlozman and Brady's study highlights the importance of recruitment processes for citizens' participation in politics. Those who do not receive requests of this type are less likely to participate on their own initiative.

individuals, social pressure and norms will contribute even more to the success of the mobilising effort. Mobilisation strategies are not, however, the only contextual factor that can have a relevant impact on the cost structure of co-operation. The political opportunity structure, as has been mentioned before, affects to a large degree the structure of costs and benefits of political action (see an example in Hansen 1985). If political institutions are hermetic and impermeable to the social demands of groups and individuals, the cost of action increases because it is necessary to dedicate larger amounts of resources and efforts to obtain collective objectives. Not only will the costs of organised coordination increase, but also individuals will need more resources of many types (economic, social and cognitive) to be able to contribute to collective action. In short the POS may contribute to increasing or decreasing notably the costs of co-operation.

Lastly the organisational history of a country influences, decisively, the organisational costs of collective action. Olson (1986: 58 ff.) suggests that the number of organisations increases over time in stable societies as, once a collective has overcome the fixed costs of mobilisation and of the creation of an organisation, this tends to last over time. Stinchcombe (1965: 152) also presents similar arguments: organisational experience determines the capacity to create new organisations, while it also increases the resources available to do so. Additionally, several works of research in the field of social movements have demonstrated that inter-organisational networks are very important to understand the emergence of new groups and actors (see, for example, Curtis and Zurcher 1973, Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson 1980: 797 ff., Morris 1984, Kriesi and van Praag 1987, Klandermans 1989, Fernández and McAdam 1989, McAdam and Fernández 1990). Inter-organisational networks, coalitions, and alliances between organisations provide material (money, infrastructure, etc.) and social (experience, leadership, access to means of communication, etc.) resources, which are essential to the emergence of new organisations, and also serve to extend the scope of

communication of new demands and of recruitment networks (Klandermans 1989: 306). In this way the pre-existence of consolidated organisational structures of more traditional organisations (parties, unions, religious associations and churches), contributes to reducing the initial investment costs in the creation of new organisations, thus facilitating organised collective action.

In short this Thesis incorporates aspects of the socio-political context of citizens that have been analysed in some detail in the literature on social movements, in an attempt to complement the traditional models of political participation that focus, almost exclusively, on individual characteristics. Before I turn to the following chapters I should, nevertheless, mention briefly some methodological aspects, as well as the sources of the data that will be used in the next two chapters.

5.3. Data and Methodology for the Analysis of Environmental and Contextual Effects

The set of mechanisms that relate macro-structures and micro-behaviour will be tested in chapters 6 and 7 using, mainly, data from 18 western countries included in the 1990-93 World Values Survey (WVS). This study has been used –rather than more recent ones- for several reasons.

Firstly, this second round of the WVS is the cross-national survey study that includes the largest number of countries, and that was available at the time the Thesis was written. To maximise the number of societies included in the analyses is fundamental to maximise the variation of contextual variables, and thus, to obtain results which will be the most robust possible. Secondly, this study includes one of the most extensive and most suitable batteries of associations for the purposes of this Thesis.[21] Lastly,

[21] The 1995-1997 round of the WVS only included 9 western countries, while Eurobarometers 47.2 (1997) and 49 (1998) include the then 15 member countries of the EU, but the questionnaire limited excessively the number of

the analysis of the impact of contextual factors requires the collection of national-level aggregate data that are prior to the survey which contains information on individual behaviour. This creates more difficulties when using the data from more recent surveys, since some official statistics and other data may take time to become available for researchers.

In any case, the questions that motivate this research are not substantially affected by the timing of the study. If the factors of the socio-political context that are studied have an impact on individual behaviour, they should have such an effect at any moment in time. What is more, the data from more recent surveys which are presented in chapter 2 show that differences between countries are substantially the same and of the same magnitude across time. So that using a survey from the early 1990s does not introduce a bias or any other type of problem when making suitable inferences from the results.

The following chapter presents in some detail each of the contextual factors which are considered in this research, as well as the hypotheses on their links with political membership, and I justify the use of various indicators and variables. Likewise, I show the results of exploratory bivariate analyses that allow us to obtain a first view of the credibility of the hypotheses that are posed, and to select the most suitable indicators to measure more precisely the most interesting elements of the socio-political context of western societies.

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political associations of which it asked about membership (see chapter 2 in this Thesis). The data of the study *Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy* (2000-2003) also includes only 9 west European countries and, on the other hand, the data were still under embargo at the moment of finishing this Thesis. Finally the data of the first round of the *European Social Survey* (2002) constitute a good source of information for this study, and includes representative samples from 22 countries. Unfortunately, these data have only been available a few months before this Thesis was being finished and therefore, it has not been possible to include them in the main part of the analyses in following chapters. Comparative data on the suitability of various cross-national surveys for the study of membership can be found in Morales (2002).

Later, in chapter 7 I take a further step in the analysis of contextual effects and present multivariate models that allow us to reach more solid conclusions on the relevance of these factors. As we will see, the results support many of the hypotheses put forward in this chapter and that are developed further in chapter 6. The political context and, especially, certain political institutions provide powerful incentives for the political membership of citizens.

CHAPTER 6. HOW DOES THE CONTEXT MATTER? THE EFFECT OF INSTITUTIONS AND MOBILISATION ON POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP

6.1. Introduction

Chapter 5 has introduced the analytical and conceptual framework that puts forward the socio-political context as a set of fundamental factors when explaining participation in political organisations. As we have seen, approaches which are limited to the individual characteristics of citizens are insufficient. The main aim of this research is to analytically complement those models that explain political participation and, more specifically, political membership. To do so, the introduction of factors of the socio-political context that have been the object of research in the field of social movements is of special interest.

The aim of this chapter is: (1) to present each of the sets of environmental factors that I consider relevant to explain political membership and its cross-national variations, and to discuss the hypotheses that relate them to political membership; (2) to elaborate indicators which will be of use to measure the different dimensions of interest; and (3) to present exploratory bivariate analyses to be able to reach preliminary conclusions on the veracity of our hypotheses.

Two types of contextual or environmental factors are analysed in this chapter: firstly a series of factors related to political

opportunity structures, and secondly the set of patterns and structures of socio-political mobilisation.

6.2. Political Opportunity Structures: The *Openness* of the Political System

The study of political opportunity structures (POS) plays a central role in explaining the birth, development and success (or failure) of social movements (Kitschelt 1986, Kriesi 1989, Tarrow 1994, Koopmans 1995, Kriesi et al. 1995, della Porta and Rucht 1995, Rucht 1996).

The concept of POS has become, too frequently, a catch-all or umbrella category that limits its analytical usefulness (Gamson and Meyer 1996: 275). There are multiple definitions of POS. Probably one of the most well known is that offered by Sidney Tarrow[1] (1994: 85):[2]

> "consistent –but not necessarily formal or permanent- dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure."

Tarrow's definition, like most of those first proposed, suffers from a certain vagueness and is excessively inclusive: any element of the political environment may form part of the POS. In some ways the definition proposed by Kitschelt (1986: 58) is more precise:

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[1] However, the concept was first introduced by Eisinger (1973: 25): "the degree to which groups are likely to be able to gain access to power and to manipulate the political system."

[2] In Tarrow (1996: 54) a slightly modified version of this definition is offered: "[the] consistent –but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national- signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements."

> "Political opportunity structures are comprised of specific configurations of resources, institutional arrangements and historical precedents for social mobilization, which facilitate the development of protest movements in some instances and constrain them in others."

Besides, Kitschelt's concept (1986) of POS is sufficiently systematic when considering two differentiated sets of factors that determine the open or closed nature of a political system to new players: those factors which condition the input procedures, and those which determine the outputs of the political system. The former are those which enable or prevent the access of citizens and organised groups to the formation of political agendas and which, therefore, structure the procedural impact of social movements. While the latter determine the substantive impact or the final efficacy of collective action. These distinctions made by Kitschelt are useful for my research because both the opportunity structures related to the inputs, and those related to the outputs condition the expected benefits of collective action and the organisational strategies that citizens choose.[3]

Nevertheless, research over the last decade has given rise to a more or less implicit consensus on the set of basic elements that make up POS. Thus it may be said that the POS comprise: (1) formal institutions, (2) the informal processes that take place in those institutions, and (3) the alliance opportunities which organisations and social movements are faced with (McAdam 1996: 27, Rochon 1998: 200). This means that the conception of POS which is to be found in the literature of social movements is

[3] Kitschelt (1986) shows how assimilative strategies are more frequent in the antinuclear movement of countries with more open POS as regards *input*; while movement strategies tend to be *confrontational* in countries with more closed POS. Although Kitschelt does not refer to this, it implies that collective action via stable and effective organisations will be more attractive in the former than in the latter, where the most important factor is the capacity to call for protest actions.

dynamic rather than static.[4] There are certain elements that give continuity to the configuration of the POS –mainly political institutions- but dynamics and informal processes also contribute to the creation of the final opportunities which movements and citizens are faced with (Kriesi et al. 1995: 33).

For this research, the interest of these approaches lies in the fact that these aspects of the political context of societies are used not only to explain the success or failure of social movements to get governments to accept their demands, but are also useful to explain the different degree of citizen participation in those same movements (Kriesi and van Praag 1987, Koopmans 1996, Dekker, Koopmans and van den Broek 1997, Klandermans 1997). All these works highlight the importance of the configuration of political opportunities and of the political system to be able to understand the mobilisation strategies of social movements, their results and their popular support. Kriesi (1996), himself, extends the analytical use of POS to explain the different organisational development of social movements in Germany, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland.[5]

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[4] Various scholars distinguish between stable and dynamic elements in POS. See, for example, della Porta and Rucht (1995), Rucht (1996), Kriesi et al. (1995).

[5] In some cases, Kriesi (1996: 161-163) uses survey data and indicators of membership similar to those used in this research, thus establishing a clear precedent for the analysis that is presented in this chapter of a larger number of western countries. Nevertheless, the limited number of countries studied by Kriesi (four) reduces the possibilities to check systematically the hypotheses generated by the literature on the effects of the POS. On many occasions the existence of patterns of behaviour that deviate from the expected ones raise the doubt as to whether we are dealing with national exceptions or an inadequacy of the hypotheses. This happens when he tries to explain the scarce professionalisation of Swiss social movements (p. 173), of alliance structures with the left in the Netherlands (note 21), or the limited relations between Swiss social movement organisations and political authorities.

6.2.1. Relevant Dimensions of the POS for the Study of Political Membership

There is a huge range of dimensions of POS that different researchers use in their analyses (see, for example, Kriesi et al. 1995: xiii ff., McAdam 1996: 27, Klandermans 1997: chapter 7, Rochon 1998: chapter 7). But not all these dimensions are equally useful for the purposes of this research. Thus, while the informal processes and the alliance structures or opportunities are of great interest for the study of specific cases of collective action, they are of less interest and difficult to operationalise when we are dealing with participation in political associations. For this reason, here I will limit myself to considering the most institutional and stable component of the POS, since institutions –without being unalterable- are fairly permanent over time and common to all associations.[6] The most stable POS are those that are of more interest to us in this research, because differences in the level of political membership on the part of Western citizens are relatively stable over time.

Even so, it is necessary to clearly define which aspects we are considering. Kriesi et al. (1995) deal with institutional structures and distinguish between strong and weak States depending on the degree of autonomy that they enjoy, and on their ability to act. This characterisation is applied to three different political arenas: the parliamentary, the administrative and that of direct democracy. In this way these scholars classify the institutional configuration of the four countries which they study (Germany, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland) depending on: (1) the degree of centralisation of the State, (2) the level of functional separation of powers, (3) the proportionality of parliamentary representation, and the number of parties, (4) the system of interest-representation in the administrative arena, and (5) the availability of mechanisms of direct democracy. Actually the five institutional features which Kriesi and his colleagues propose can be conceived of, for our

[6] These features differentiate institutions from other elements of the POS, namely processes and alliance structures (Rochon 1998: 200).

purposes, as elements that define the degree of *openness of the political system* of each society.[7]

A political system is more open or more closed with respect to the influence of its various social groups depending on the degree to which its political institutions allow interaction, or on the contrary, exclude citizens' associations (Rochon 1998: 202). The openness of the political system may influence the propensity of citizens to co-operate with political associations in various ways. Firstly, political associations are, to a large degree, demand creators, articulators and aggregators.[8] These functions inevitably connect them to the political institutions through multiple channels.

The degree of openness of the political system acts as an incentive (or disincentive) for collective action in general and for the membership of associations in particular (Knoke 1990: 189). In the first place, it influences the development of new demands: the more open a political system is to new demands, the greater its legitimacy and support among the population. Secondly, a larger degree of openness to those demands will increase the efficacy of new players when trying to achieve their aims, which increases the expected benefits of collective action. If the political system responds with ease to the requests of its citizens and of the

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[7] This coincides with the dimensions of the POS that McAdam distinguishes (1996). Rochon (1998: chapter 7), for his part, proposes to distinguish between institutional pluralism and institutional porousness, in such a way that the former is defined by the number of decision nodes that exist in the political system, and the latter depends on how far movement organisations can form part of the decision-making system. In my opinion, both pluralism and institutional porousness point in the same direction: the accessibility or openness of the political system.

[8] Generally it is considered that it is the political parties who are in charge of aggregating demands which are disperse in societies. It is worth remembering that parties are included in our more general category of "political associations". But, besides, other political associations can also exercise the role of demand aggregation for specific collectivities. Thus, professional associations and unions not only create and articulate the demands of the groups of professionals and workers that they represent, but also aggregate the demands that may arise between different sectors of the same groups.

organisations they create in order to give a voice to their demands, individuals will have reasons to consider that associations are useful tools to achieve their objectives.

Without doubt, the openness of political systems is a multidimensional phenomenon, since the same political system may show itself to be open in certain aspects and closed in others. It is necessary to specify the various elements that form the different dimensions of openness of a political system. For this, adapting the proposals of Kriesi et al. (1995) and Rochon (1998: cap. 7), I distinguish between:

1) The *access points* to the political system,
2) the *fragmentation* of the political elites, and
3) the *porousness* of the administrative system which takes decisions.

6.2.2. *The Access Points of the Political System*

A first feature which defines the degree of openness is access to decision-making processes, which will depend to a large extent on the number of nodes, or to use Rochon's term (1998), on institutional pluralism. The number of access points to the system of political decisions will depend on (a) the degree of political decentralisation, and (b) the availability of institutions of direct democracy. Below I set out the hypotheses that connect each of these features with political membership, as well as the various indicators available to measure them, and their bivariate relation to the dependent variable.

(a) The Degree of Political Decentralisation

Alexis de Tocqueville (1980: 100-101) pointed out that the level of political decentralisation existing in the United States was one of the factors that fostered the enormous development of

associations in that country.[9] Knoke (1990a: 189) details the mechanisms that lie behind Alexis de Tocqueville's statement:

> "American interest group proliferation is encouraged by a federal constitutional structure and electoral systems that fragment power among hundreds of separate policy domains. Each domain comprises a sub government consisting of congressional subcommittees, government bureaus, and interest group clientele that resist the intrusion of a strong central authority."

Thus, political organisations are created at all kinds of government layers to formulate demands, support some decisions, and oppose others. Additionally, Knoke's reflection highlights a fundamental aspect: although geographical decentralisation is fundamental, it is not the only type of decentralisation (or deconcentration) that may be relevant. Deconcentration or functional autonomy also multiplies access nodes (see Conway 1991: chapter 5, and Lane and Ersson 1999: 184-186). Thus, in political systems which are consociational, such as the Dutch, the Belgian and the Austrian, the State has given up the management of certain functions and services of a semi-public character to private organisations such as the Church, economic associations, and recreational associations.

In principle, the proliferation of access points that political decentralisation favours contributes, as Knoke pointed out, to the multiplication of groups and organisations that take advantage of the opportunities to influence the decision-making processes (see also Almond and Verba 1989 [1963]: chapter 5). In turn, this fact increases the chances that individuals will participate in those organisations. Nevertheless, high levels of decentralisation may also have a negative effect on organised collective action, as it complicates the allocation of responsibilities and increases the information costs of collective action (Klandermans 1997: 193).

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[9] More recent studies have confirmed that the degree of decentralisation influences different types of citizen participation (Mabileau et al. 1987).

Decentralisation and functional deconcentration of the decision-making system contributes to bringing the government closer to its citizens. And, traditionally, it has been considered that the closer the government is, the more individuals will participate. This leads us on to another aspect related to decentralisation but not necessarily identical: the size of municipalities.[10] Dahl and Tufte (1973: 21) express concisely the most common thesis in this way:

> "In order for citizens fully to control the decisions of the polity, they must participate directly in making those decisions. In order to participate directly in making decisions, the number of citizens must be very small."

The size of the political community that is relevant for Dahl and Tufte[11] –and later for other researchers- is that of the local community, as this is the one which is closer to the everyday life of citizens and is the one, therefore, that has most influence on their habits and participative attitudes. But, apart from being small, local communities have to enjoy enough autonomy for their citizens' decisions to be really an expression of self-government, and not be limited excessively by authorities extraneous to the body of citizens (Dahl and Tufte 1973: 5).

In this way the hypotheses that connect these different aspects of decentralisation lead me to expect that levels of political membership will be higher in countries with:

(a) higher levels of political decentralisation,
(b) more deconcentration or functional autonomy,
(c) small-sized municipalities, and
(d) more autonomous local governments.

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[10] A good deal of the literature and theoretical arguments that relate the size of the community to associative participation have been set out in chapter 4.

[11] "Among countries, the proportion of the population living in small communities might explain more than the total population of the country. Thus a large country in which most of the population lived in small towns might produce much greater conformity to the norms of good citizenship than a much smaller country in which most people lived in large cities." (p. 42)

The operationalisation of the concept of decentralisation requires a series of decisions. The specialised literature has debated widely which are the best indicators to measure this concept. A first possibility considers the distribution of functions between different levels of government (Council of Europe 1988, Norton 1991, Blair 1991, Sharpe 1993). However, measuring the functions directly is a complex task and does not provide very clear information, as some competences are shared by various levels of government and the degree to which the exercise of a specific competence leads to autonomy in decision-making varies greatly. As various researchers have pointed out (Tarrow 1977, Smith 1985, Page 1991, Norton 1993), not even in those cases where the relation between local/regional governments and central government is one of high formal dependency is it correct to affirm that there does not exist a certain degree of discretion or capacity to take decisions. In fact, in general there exist formal and informal channels to negotiate the competences that each level of government will have, and the resources it will have at its disposal. For these reasons, most researchers have opted to look at the topic of the functions and the autonomy of subnational levels of government indirectly, using local and regional governments' spending levels and their ability to levy taxes as approximate indicators (Stoker 1991, Page 1991).[12]

An alternative approach uses global indicators that take into account the general institutional structure and which allow us to distinguish among countries depending on their constitutional structure and the organisation of their levels of government (Bennett 1993a and b, Sharpe 1993, Lane and Ersson 1999, Lijphart 1999).[13]

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[12] Vetter (2002a and 2002b) uses both strategies and similar indicators to those used in this research.

[13] Without doubt, these indicators present the evident limitations of subjectively assigning numerical values to each country, guided by decision criteria that on many occasions are not explicit and difficult to quantify. However they are, of course, informed codings, given the detailed knowledge by the authors of the institutions compared.

Lastly I measure the proximity of the local and regional political arenas to their citizens using the population size of the local communities (Norton 1991). Table 6.1 shows the indicators that I use to measure the various aspects of decentralisation of the political system of each society.

The data on spending[14] and the ability to raise taxes[15] are only available at a local level[16], as regional data are only included in the national accounts of the OECD for federal states. As regards Lijphart's and Lane & Ersson's indexes, it is necessary to clarify some points. Both include information on the degree of federalism and decentralisation; however, there are important differences in the content and operationalisation of both. Lijphart's index has values ranging from 1 to 5, and he assigns values to each country depending on his own assessment of whether it constitutes a centralised unified (1), unified and decentralised (2), semi-federal (3), federal and centralised (4) or federal and decentralised (5) State. On the other hand, Lane and Ersson calculate an additive index of four sub- indexes that they also create assigning subjective values, and which reflect various aspects of the level of institutional autonomy: federalism, special territorial autonomy, functional autonomy and the degree of discretion of the local government. Although both indexes are subjective, when they are compared the correlation between them is very remarkable (Pearson's R of 0,86). Nevertheless, Lane and Ersson's index of autonomy has a wider range (theoretical minimum and maximum of between 0 and 10), which allows for a greater variation in values and, therefore, reflects institutional differences between countries more precisely.

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[14] Calculated from item 38 (*Total current disbursements and net saving*) for *General government* and for *Local government* in OECD National Accounts (1993).

[15] Includes income from direct and indirect taxes and for *fees, fines and penalties* in OECD National Accounts (1993).

[16] The figures for Spain and the Netherlands provided by the OECD also include those from the provincial level.

Table 6.1. Indicators of Decentralisation

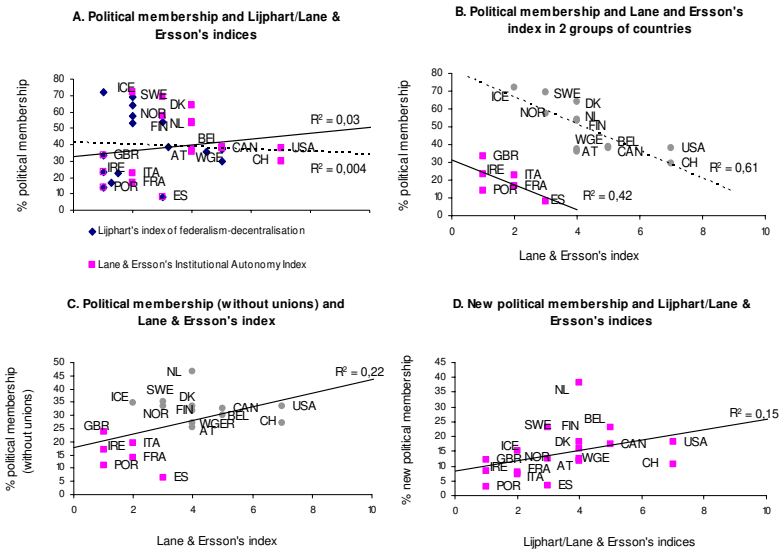
Country	% local expenditure over total public expenditure in 1989 [a]	% taxes raised by local governments over total taxes raised in 1989 [b]	Average population size of local units[c]	Lijphart's federalism-decentralisation index (1971-1996) [d]	Lane & Ersson's institutional autonomy index [e]
Austria	14.8	17.84	3,000	4.5	4
Belgium	12.74	6.64	16,740	3.2	5
Canada	25.29	11.64	5,594	5	5
Denmark	51.66	31.07	18,673	2	4
Finland	40.14	26.92	10,646	2	4
France	15.22	16.99	1,549	1.3	2
Great Britain	24.57	12.93	11,9353	1	1
Iceland	21.99	22.66	1,100	1	2
Ireland	24.81	3.63	41,910	1	1
Italy	28.97	6.57	7,129	1.5	2
Netherlands	30.02	5.31	17,860	3	4
Norway	32.79	28.2	9,145	2	3
Portugal	10.63	7.76	32,305	1	1
Spain	22.78	17.32	4,794	3	3
Sweden	35.47	34.82	30,249	2	3
Switzerland	21.91	26.3	2,122	5	7
United States	41.06	44.41	6,600	5	7
W. Germany	12.49	13.17	7,240	5	4

Sources: [a] OECD National Accounts (1993); [b] OECD National Accounts (1993); [c] Norton (1993), Navarro (1998); [d] Lijphart (1999: 313); [e] Lane & Ersson (1999: 187) and my extension to Canada and the US.[17]

Graph 6.1 allows us, simultaneously, to check the greater usefulness of Lane and Ersson's institutional autonomy index (compared to Lijphart's index of federalism-centralism) and the relation between these aspects of the political decentralisation of western democratic societies and the level of political membership in its various forms.

[17] I would like to thank Svante Ersson for his help and advice when assigning values to the index for the cases of Canada and the United States. The partial values that have been allocated to each of the cases are, respectively, the following: Federalism (3, 3), Special territorial autonomy (1, 1), Functional autonomy (0, 1), Discretionary powers of local government (1, 2).

Graph 6.1. Political Membership and Institutional Pluralism



Dispersion diagram A presents the bivariate association between each of these indices and the percentage of membership of political organisations for the 18 western countries that are included in the 1990-93 WVS. As can be seen, neither of them maintains an excessively strong linear relationship with political membership and, in any case, Lane and Ersson's index is more useful due to its greater range and variation. For this reason, I will concentrate on this index in the rest of the diagrams of Graph 6.1. The limited relation between the degree of decentralisation and political membership (R^2 of 0.03 for Lane and Ersson's index in diagram A) seems to be due to the interference of another contextual variable that distinguishes between two groups of countries, among which the relation between the aforementioned variables seems to be clearly negative and of considerable magnitude (see dispersion diagram B). A visual inspection of the distribution of countries in the scatterplot leads us to believe that the high levels of unionisation in Scandinavian countries are the

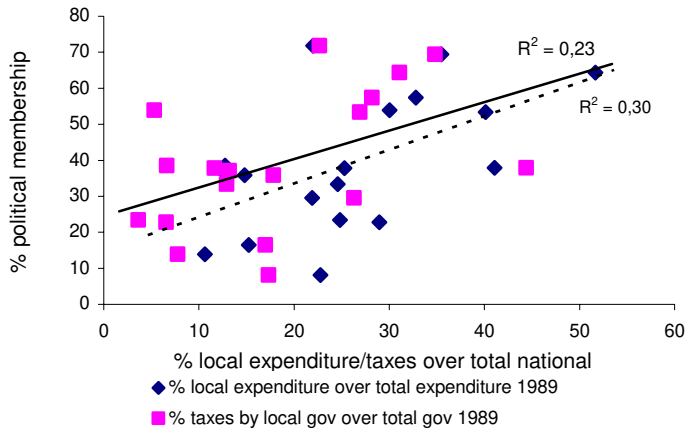
source of this negative relation. However, when we use the percentage of membership of political organisations excluding unions, the decrease in the percentage for Scandinavian countries does not vary substantially the configuration of the two groups of countries nor the negative relation which can be seen when we distinguish between both groups (diagram C). This negative relation between the degree of institutional decentralisation and membership of political groups, if confirmed, would weaken the theoretical hypotheses that assume that a higher degree of political decentralisation leads to a proliferation of political groups and, therefore, to more popular participation in the same. Nevertheless, given that these hypotheses were developed mainly to explain the emergence and development of new social movements (NSMs), we should check if this negative relationship affects the membership of organisations connected with NSMs: new political organisations. Diagram D seems to indicate a negative relation, and the existence of two clearly differentiated groups of countries disappears when we only consider membership of new political groups. Although weak, the relation between decentralisation and membership seems positive for the case of NSM organisations, which would support the hypotheses in this sense set out in the specialised NSM literature.[18]

These are not, however, the only indicators of decentralisation which are available. As we have seen in Table 6.1, we also have indicators that allow us to consider the specific characteristics of local autonomy (spending ability and the ability to levy taxes), and their closeness to the citizen (average size of local units).

Graph 6.2 presents the bivariate relation between political membership and the two indicators of the financial autonomy of local units: power of consumption and capacity to levy taxes. In line with what is suggested by the hypotheses presented above, the relation between both characteristics and membership of political groups is clearly positive and slightly higher in the case of spending capacity.

[18] Later in this chapter I will go back to analyse the effect of this aspect on a multivariate model with other variables of the political context.

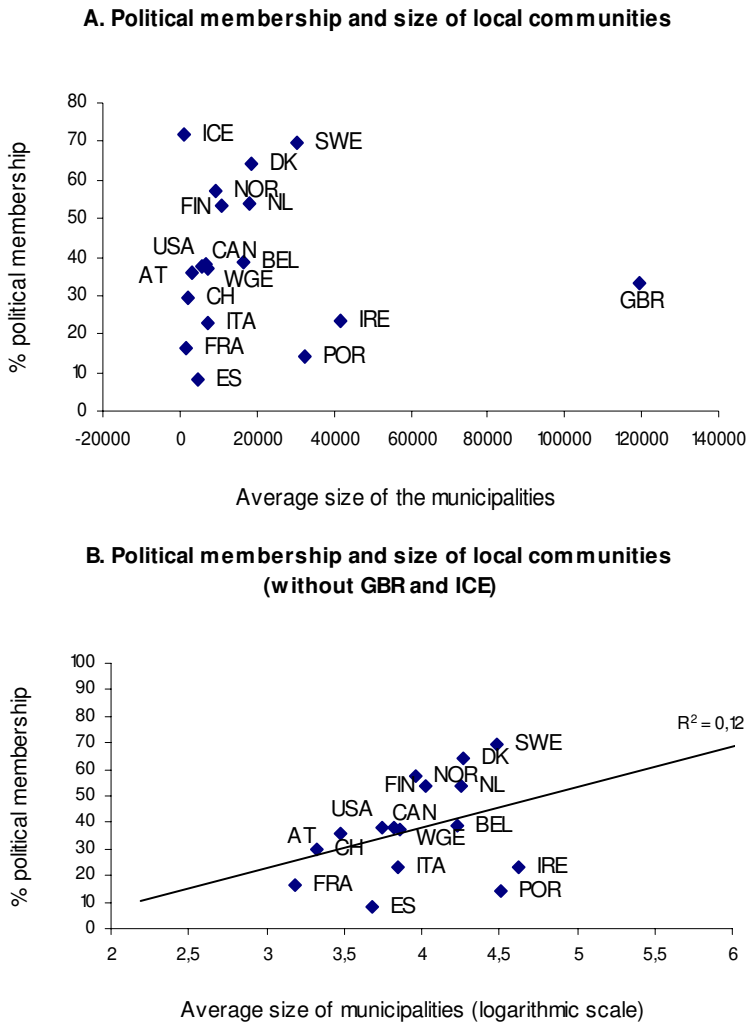
Graph 6.2. Relation between Political Membership and Local Financial Autonomy



As regards the average size of municipalities, the relationship is less clear (Graph 6.3). On the one hand, the small average size of municipalities in Iceland, and the much larger size of the same in Britain, distort the relation between this aspect and political membership. Nevertheless, when we ignore these two deviant cases, the relation between both variables –although still positive and in clear contradiction with the most classic hypotheses- is not very remarkable (R^2 of 0.12). Maybe we have not, so far, taken into account sufficiently the other factor mentioned by Dahl and Tufte (1973: 15): larger communities can deal with a larger number of tasks and policies and, therefore, increase the ability of their citizens to control the decisions that affect their daily life.[19]

[19] "[…] larger democracies provide more opportunities for all citizens, acting collectively, to exercise control over a broader range of important matters, and hence over their situation."

Graph 6.3. Political Membership and Size of the Local Units



Later I will return to the analysis of the effect of the degree of political decentralisation. Before doing so, it is necessary to describe the other aspect that determines the pluralism in the

access points to the political system: the existence and development of institutions of direct democracy.

(b) The Availability of Institutions of Direct Democracy

The ability to influence the decision-making process by means other than regular elections of representatives also contributes to motivating a higher degree of organised political participation on the part of citizens. The existence of institutions of direct democracy constitutes an incentive to the creation of organisations to mobilise, first, the support necessary to comply with the legal requirements needed to call a referendum or popular initiative, and afterwards to capture votes in favour of their option. As Boehmke points out (2002), the existence of institutions of direct democracy offers various additional opportunities to citizens' organisations to influence the decision-making process, as it offers them, an alternative mechanism to the traditional activities of lobbying and, secondly, it gives them more bargaining power with the political authorities as they can use the threat of a referendum campaign.[20] The analytical model developed by Boehmke (2000) also predicts that, given that the expected benefits of mobilisation are, *caeteris paribus*, larger where institutions of direct democracy exist, the number of interest groups will multiply in these societies.

Kriesi and Wisler (1996: 22) point out that, in addition, institutions of direct democracy lower the costs of individual participation in collective action as, being regulated and conventional processes, the risks of repression decrease. At the same time, in many cases, the participants only have to sign the

[20] In this way Boehmke's model predicts, and his results bears this out, that the important thing for the density of the interest group sector is the possibility to use mechanisms of direct democracy, and not the frequency with which they are really used. Nevertheless, this prediction at an organisational level does not necessarily extend to the individual level, since recurrent exposure to referendum campaigns will have, probably, effects on the predisposition to cooperate with citizen organisations.

petitions, which involves a minimum cost.[21] Additionally, around a campaign in favour of (or against) a referendum a large number of political actors are mobilised and, especially, of organisations which acquire a higher profile. This fact also contributes to reducing the information costs of the citizens who may be interested in the issues that each organisation defends.

The dynamism that the processes and institutions of direct democracy bring with them also encourages citizen participation in political organisations through indirect mechanisms related to the strategies of the organisations themselves. In this sense, social movements are forced to moderate their repertories and, mainly, to develop and consolidate their organisational structures to be able to use these resources in mobilisation (Kriesi and Wisler 1996: 23). This strategic necessity of developing organisations leads them to try to capture activists and members who will contribute with time and money in their plebiscitary campaigns. Besides, the dynamic of referendums, as they are mobilised around the vote in favour of or against the proposal, lead to the growth of organisations opposed to those who initiate the campaign (Boehmke 2002: 831). In this way institutions of direct democracy favour the mobilisation of groups that, in the absence of said institutions, would probably not have been mobilised.

But, for the effects on organised collective action, not only is the presence or absence of institutions of direct democracy important, but also the specific institutional configuration of these processes. Therefore, the facilities or difficulties that are produced

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[21] This does not mean that the organisation of referendum campaigns is not costly in organisational terms. In fact, as Kriesi and Wisler themselves point out (1996), the financial and organisational costs involved in these types of campaigns can lead to important participative inequalities and marginalise disadvantaged social groups even more. Boehmke (2002) also points out that the existence of institutions of direct democracy favour unequally different groups. Nevertheless his conclusions on the data of the North American states suggests that it is the most inclusive or general interest groups (*citizen interest groups*), rather than particular interest groups (*economic interest groups*) that most multiply in relative terms and take advantage of the opportunities that they are given by direct democratic processes.

by statutory regulations are of special importance, as these are what determine the access cost of these processes (Kriesi and Wisler 1996: 25, Boehmke 2002: 830).

Thus, the scarce references in the specialised literature on the relation between the presence or absence of institutions of direct democracy and organised political participation lead me to expect that the levels of political membership will be higher in those countries with:

a) Regulations that are more permissive and accessible to popular initative through mechanisms of direct democracy, and
b) a higher frequency of use of these processes of direct democracy.

Most western democracies have included mechanisms of direct participation in decision-making processes through referenda or popular legislative initiatives. Butler and Ranney (1978) offer a typology of referenda: (1) those controlled by the government, (2) those which are mandatory by the Constitution, and (3) those initiated by popular petition and initiative.[22] In general, the distinctions are made depending on the source of the initiative: the Constitution, the head of State, the Government, the Parliament, or part of the electorate. Nevertheless, a second criterion for distinguishing between types of referenda is based on the type of decisions which are subject to popular consultation. Thus, Uleri (1996) proposes a classification of referenda and popular initiatives that consists of: (1) referenda/initiatives that promote a decision, (2) referenda/initiatives that control a decision, and among the latter, (3) referenda that allow for the rejection of decisions not yet carried out (*rejective vote*), and (4) referenda that allow for the rejection of decisions already executed (*abrogative vote*).

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[22] There is a certain debate about considering popular initiatives as a type of referendum (see Uleri 1996). This debate is irrelevant for the classification and construction of indicators that I am going to propose here, since at the moment there is no systematic information on the regulation of popular initiatives in the 18 countries under study.

Table 6.2. Formal Regulation of Referendum (until 1990)

Country	Referendum mentioned in Constitution (0-1)	Referendum required for constitutional amendments (0-2)	Constitutional provision for referendum in non-constitutional legislation? (0-1)	Who is entitled to trigger the referendum? (0-4)	Provision for qualified majority? (0-1)	Referendum consultative or binding? (0-1)	Additive index
Switzerland	Yes (1)	Yes (2)	Yes (1)	Electorate (4)	Yes (0)	Binding (1)	9
Italy	Yes (1)	No[d] (1)	Yes (1)	Electorate (4)	Yes (0)	Binding (1)	8
Spain	Yes (1)	Yes[e] (1.5)	Yes (1)	Gov or ML (2)	No (1)	Binding (1)	7.5
Austria	Yes (1)	Yes[a] (1.5)	Yes (1)	Gov or ML (2)	No (1)	Binding (1)	7
Denmark	Yes (1)	Yes (2)	Yes (1)	ML (2)	Yes (0)	Consult. (0)	7
France	Yes (1)	Yes[b] (0.75)	Yes (1)	Gov (1.5)	No (1)	Binding (1)	6.25
Ireland	Yes (1)	Yes (2)	Yes (1)	H & ML (1)	Yes (0)	Binding (1)	6
United States*							5.8
Federal level	No (0)	No (0)	No (0)	No (0)	Nobody (0)	Nobody (0)	0
State level	Yes (49=0.98)	Yes (49=1.96)	Yes (24=0.41)	Electorate (24=1.64)	No (0.41)	Binding (0.41)	5.8
Iceland	Yes (1)	No[c] (0.2)	Yes (1)	H (1)	Yes (0)	Binding (1)	5.2
Portugal	Yes (1)	No (0)	Yes (1)	H (1)	No (1)	Binding (1)	5
Finland	Yes (1)	No (0)	Yes (1)	Gov (1.5)	No (1)	Consult. (0)	4.5
Sweden	Yes (1)	No (0)	Yes (1)	Gov or ML (2)	Yes (0)	B. & c. (0.5)	4.5
Canada	No (0)	Yes[f] (1.25)	No (0)	Gov (1.5)	No (1)	Consult. (0)	3.75
Norway	No (0)	No (0)	No (0)	Gov (1.5)	No (1)	Binding (1)	3.5
W. Germany	Yes (1)	No (0)	No (0)	Nobody (0)	No (1)	Binding (1)	3
Belgium	No (0)	No (0)	No (0)	Gov (1.5)	No (1)	Consult. (0)	2.5
Great Britain	No (0)	No (0)	No (0)	Gov (1.5)	No (1)	Consult. (0)	1.5
Netherlands	No (0)	No (0)	No (0)	Nobody (0)	Nobody(0)	Nobody (0)	0

[a] For a total reform of the constitution. A partial reform could be put to a referendum by a petition of a third of the members of each house. [b] As one of the alternatives. The other is holding a joint session of the two houses and a majority of 3/5. [c] Only to alter the position of the established Lutheran church. [d] As one of the alternatives, if requested by half a million voters, 1/5 of the members of either of the houses, or five regional assemblies. But a referendum can not be called if the amendment has been approved by a majority of 2/3 in both houses. [e] For a total reform and for partial reforms that affect certain basic issues. Other questions can be put to a referendum if it is requested by 1/10 of the members of either house. [f] A referendum is necessary in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia for the houses to approve a constitutional amendment at the federal level.

* For the US I distinguish between federal and state regulations. In the row corresponding to the state level I present the number of states with each regulation and the corresponding value estimated at the national level (once weighted for the proportion of the US population affected by the regulation). Gov= Government; ML = Legislature minority; H = Head of State.

Sources: Own elaboration from information in Bogdanor (1994: 26-27) for European countries. For Canada and the US the values have been elaborated from information from the Centre d'études et de documentation sur la démocratie directe (2003), and the I & R Institute (2003b).

For the purposes of this research, these differences in the institutions of direct democracy have to be operationalised in indicators that allow us to carry out comparative analyses. There are various ways of constructing such indicators. Firstly, we can create an indicator that reflects the formal regulation of institutions of direct democracy (especially in the case of a referendum) in each political system. In Table 6.2, I present the elaboration of an indicator of these characteristics from the assignment of numerical values to the classification proposed by Bogdanor (1994) and the creation of a global additive index.

Table 6.3. Indicators of the Availability of Direct Democracy Mechanisms

Country	Formal direct-democracy regulation index [1]	Popular sovereignty index (Suksi)[2]	Number of nationwide referenda/popular initiatives 1985-1992[3]
Switzerland	9	7	62
Italy	8	1	12
Spain	7.5	4	1
Austria	7	3	0
Denmark	7	7	2
France	6.25	1	2
Ireland	6	2	6
United States	5.8	1	6.2*
Iceland	5.2	1	0
Portugal	5	-1	0
Finland	4.5	0	0
Sweden	4.5	2	0
Canada	3.75	-3	1
Norway	3.5	-1	0
W. Germany	3	-3	0
Belgium	2.5	-2	0
Great Britain	1.5	0	0
Netherlands	0	-2	0

Countries are ranked in descending order of the first column. * Between 1985 and 1990, 167 statewide referenda/initiatives took place. When weighted by the population affected by each of them, this is equivalent to an average American citizen beeing exposed to 6.2 nationwide such processes.
Sources: [1] see footnote in Table 6.2. [2] Suksi (1993), extended to Great Britain. [3] For Western Europe, Butler and Ranney (1994); for Canada, Centre d'études et de documentation sur la démocratie directe (2003); for the US, I & R Institute (2003a).

A second possible indicator is that proposed by another specialist in referenda. Suksi (1993) has created an index of popular sovereignty –as opposed to State sovereignty- that combines information on the existence of basic democratic

institutions and institutions of direct democracy. The inclusion of the former type of institutions is due to the fact that Suksi also considers non-democratic countries, but for western countries the variation in the index comes down to, almost exclusively, the configuration of institutions of direct democracy. In this way, positive values indicate more popular sovereignty, and negative ones less sovereignty through mechanisms of direct democracy (Table 6.3).[23]

It is important to highlight that, just as in the case of Lijphart's and Lane and Ersson's indices of decentralisation, the subjective allocation of values for each country gives fairly reliable results, as the indicators based on the information from Bogdanor and Suksi's indexes show a quite remarkable correlation (Pearson R of 0.77).[24]

Lastly, one can simply count the number of referenda held in each country during a certain period of time before the survey used (WVS 1990-93). Although this is informative on the real possibilities that citizens have had to participate in said processes, this is a rather crude indicator and above all, subject to small variations in most countries.

Curiously, and in contradiction to all the hypotheses that have been set forward in the literature, the bivariate relation between the three indicators of direct democracy and political membership is negative or non-existent.[25]

As we can see in Graph 6.4 the relationship between a greater openness in terms of the availability of institutions of direct democracy and political membership is negative for all of the different types of political organisations. The intensity of the bivariate relation increases when we exclude unions, and is even

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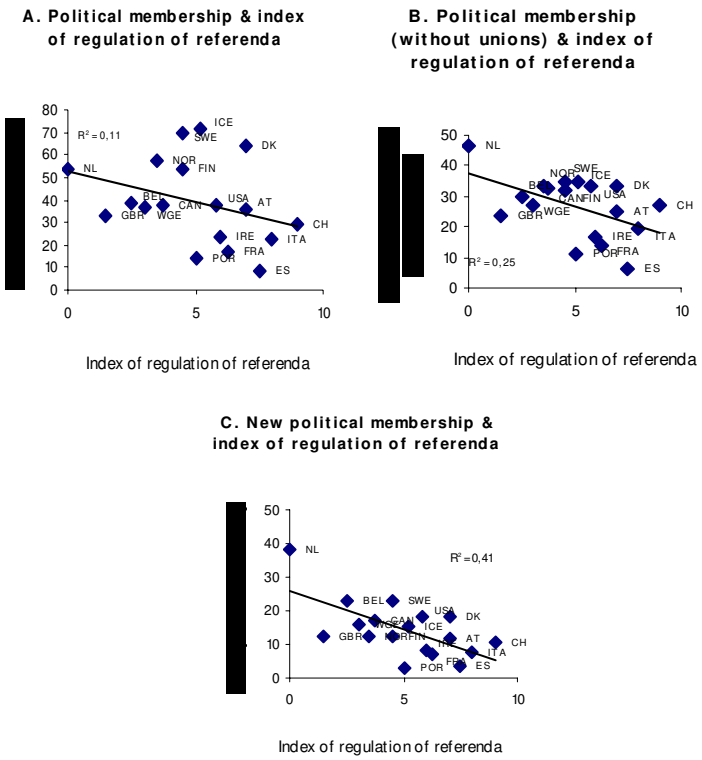
[23] The theoretical range varies between –10 and +10.

[24] The two indices differ especially in the relative values allocated to Italy and Canada, that Suksi undervalues.

[25] The relation between the number of referenda held and political membership is almost nil or negative with or without the atypical case of Switzerland; while Suksi's index shows a similar but weaker relation to that of the index of formal regulation of referenda based on Bogdanor. For this reason I only show the bivariate relation with the latter index.

more so when we take into account only membership of new political organisations. In effect, the percentage of people who belong to NSM organisations is inversely related to a higher degree of permissiveness in the processes of direct democracy, and the latter variable accounts for 40% of the variation in new political membership among the 18 countries.

Graph 6.4. Political Membership and the Regulation of Direct Democracy



It is difficult to interpret the *macro-micro* mechanism that may lie behind this negative relationship between organised political participation and the formal regulation of direct democracy. What

is certain is that the frequency of use of referendum processes does not maintain any relationship at all with political membership, so that it is not very likely that the mere existence of a regulation open to the processes of direct democracy could have a negative effect in itself on citizens' participation in political organisations. Later on, we will see whether, with multivariate analyses, this negative relationship that we have found is spurious, or if it holds once other systemic characteristics are included.

6.2.3. The Fragmentation of Political Elites

The second dimension that defines the degree of openness of a political system is the extent to which its political elites are fragmented. Political pluralism increases with the fragmentation of the elites, which means that well established political actors will be more able to represent new social demands and less able to limit their articulation (Kitschelt 1986: 63). The mechanisms that link a higher degree of fragmentation to greater openness to new demands are fundamentally two. On the one hand, a higher degree of political fragmentation frequently tends to give rise to stronger centrifugal forces in political competition, thus leading political leaders to more frequently try to appropriate the demands put forward by new organisations and play the role of "people's tribunes" (Tarrow 1994: 88, Rochon 1998: 201). This, in turn, allows outsiders to establish alliances with part of the political elite, thereby increasing their impact (Rucht 1996). Additionally, a higher degree of fragmentation of the political elite tends to be associated with more political and electoral vulnerability[26], due to the necessity to form coalitions with other groups who are subject to their own competitive dynamics. This vulnerability leads, on many occasions, to more flexibility when faced with popular demands (Koopmans and Rucht 1995), mainly when these are accompanied by protest movements. Both types of mechanisms

[26] I am not referring here to cabinet stability.

favour the success of collective action by organised groups, and increase the expected benefits of collective action.

The indicators available on the fragmentation of the elites refer to both the fragmentation of the party system, and to the type of governments that predominate in each political system. Logically both aspects are related –above all in parliamentary systems- since a fragmented party system will give rise to more frequent coalition governments.

(a) The Fragmentation of the Party System

The rules on how to count the number of parties are still the subject of academic debate (see Lijphart 1994 and 1999), and there are various classic references on the subject (Duverger 1965, Sartori 1976, Taagepera and Shugart 1989). In the same way, various indicators of the degree of fragmentation or fractionalisation of the party system have been proposed. It is difficult to establish, *a priori*, which of these would be the most appropriate for the purposes of this research, as I am not so much interested here in the dynamics of the western party systems as in their relation to citizen participation. For this reason I will here consider three indicators: the absolute number of parties in the lower house, the effective number of electoral parties, and the effective number of parliamentary parties (Table 6.4).

(b) The Fragmentation of Governments

There are various ways of measuring the degree to which governments are "fragmented". For this research I prefer the concept of fragmentation to that of division, as we do not need to establish assumptions on a Government's unity or division with respect to political preferences, policy decisions, or other aspects. In fact, we only need to approximate the degree to which governments may be vulnerable to external demands, and the extent to which they are composed of multiple political actors. In this way, I consider that those governments which are not made up

of a single party with an absolute majority are, in general terms, more vulnerable. That is to say, governments with a parliamentary minority, and coalition governments should be, in principle, more open to popular demands than governments made up of a single party with an absolute majority. Therefore, for my purposes we can use the following indicators: the percentage of "vulnerable" governments[27], the average number of parties in the government, and the frequency with which coalition governments are formed, as measured by the percentage of time that these governments are in power. Table 6.4 shows these three indicators for the 18 western countries under study.

Table 6.4. Indicators of the Fragmentation of the Elites

Country	N of parties in Parliament 1985-1989 [1]	Effective number of electoral parties 1985-1989 [2]	Effective number of parliamentary parties 1971-1996 [3]	100 - % minimal-winning one party governments 1971-1996 [3]	Average number of parties in government 1980-1989 [4]	% time with coalition governments 1980-1989 [4]
Switzerland	15	6.84	5.57	100	4	100
Italy	14	4.61	5.22	90.8	4.58	97.61
Belgium	11.5	8.12	5.49	71.2	4.39	100
Denmark	8.5	5.83	5.11	76.1	2.99	74.2
Spain	13	3.84	2.76	27	1	0
Ireland	6.5	3.42	2.76	42.7	1.62	61.71
Norway	6.5	4.23	3.61	54.9	1.6	30.19
Finland	9	5.81	5.17	94	3.97	100
Great Britain	9	3.33	2.2	6.7	1	0
Netherlands	9	3.83	4.68	62.7	2.04	100
France	7	3.86	3.54	36.5	1.65	64.72
Iceland	7	5.79	4	52	2.81	97.25
Portugal	7	3.88	3.33	59.8	2.27	58.55
Sweden	6	3.72	3.52	58.6	1.44	28.82
W. Germany	5	3.56	2.84	53.8	1.99	99.66
Austria	4	2.72	2.72	34.9	1.65	65.19
Canada	3	2.87	2.35	4.8	1	0
United States	2	2.02	2.41	19.9	1	0

Sources: 1 Lane and Ersson (1999: 142); my extension for Canada and the US from information in Armingeon, Beyeler and Menegale (2000). 2 Lane and Ersson (1999: 143); my extension for Canada and the US from information in Armingeon, Beyeler and Menegale (2000). 3 Lijphart (1999: 312). 4 The average number of parties in the government is weighted by its term in office. My own elaboration from information in Woldendorp, Keman and Budge (1998); for the US information comes from Armingeon, Beyeler and Menegale (2000); for Spain information comes from El País (various years); for Portugal the information comes from Keesing's Record of World Events (www.keesings.com).

[27] Calculated as 100 minus the percentage of single party governments with an absolute majority.

The results of previous research, as well as the general hypotheses that I have developed above, lead me to expect a positive relation or, at the least, one that is curvilinear[28] between the fragmentation of elites –irrespective of whether this is at a party level or a governmental one- and political membership, and that this relationship will be more intense for membership of new political organisations.

An examination of the bivariate relations (Table 6.5) between each of the six indicators of the fragmentation of elites and the membership of political groups (in their various forms) leads me, however, to reject the idea that the fragmentation of elites is excessively relevant when explaining the behaviour of political membership in western countries. Indeed, all the bivariate relationships are of a very low significance but, except for the case of the absolute number of parties in parliament, they are all in the expected direction.[29] Additionally, the relation between the fragmentation of the elites and political membership is not very intense either –rather just the contrary- when we focus only on new political organisations, closely linked to the NSMs.

Therefore, although research in the area of social movements has shown that the mobilisation of these is closely linked to traditional politics both in the parliamentary arenas as well as in the extra-parliamentary ones (Kriesi et al. 1995: xii), and that the fragmentation of elites is related to the power of the NSMs to reach their objectives, it is not clear that this aspect influences the capacity of these political organisations to attract citizens to collaborate with them in a more stable way. Nevertheless, we will see if this is true later on with multivariate analyses.

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[28] The existence of a curvilinear relation between the openness of a political system and the capacity and level of mobilisation of social movements has been noted by many authors (Eisinger 1973, Kitschelt 1986, Kriesi et al. 1995: 40, Tarrow 1996: 54).

[29] I have also visually checked that there only exists an appreciable curvilinear relation between the effective number of parties (Lijphart's index for the period 1971-1996) and membership of all types of political groups (R^2 = 0.15). Nevertheless, this relation becomes inappreciable when we limit ourselves to the consideration of new political groups.

Table 6.5. Bivariate Relation between the Indicators of Fragmentation and Political Membership

	Political membership	Political membership (without unions)	New political membership
N of parties in Parliament 1985-1989	-0.26	-0.27	-0.17
Effective number of electoral parties 1985-1989	0.23	0.14	0.09
Effective number of parliamentary parties 1971-1996	0.27	0.28	0.25
100 - % minimal-winning one party governments 1971-1996	0.22	0.17	0.08
Average number of parties in government 1980-1989	0.10	0.10	0.02
% time with coalition governments 1980-1989	0.18	0.20	0.20

The figures are Pearson's correlation coefficients. None of the correlations is statistically significant.

6.2.4. The Porousness of the System of Interest-Representation

A fundamental problem when studying the effect of interest-representation systems lies in the distinct concepts and approaches that can be adopted and that have been used in the political science literature to define interest-representation systems. Although the main approach is that which distinguishes between pluralist and corporatist or neo-corporatist systems, the content and definition of both concepts is far from being unequivocal and consensual (see Lane and Ersson 1999: chapter 7, Siaroff 1999). In fact, the fundamental problem that, for this research, poses the multiple definitions that have been given to this distinction lies in the fact that, on occasions, it is used to describe complete interest-representation systems (Schmitter 1988) or styles of interaction between the public and the private sectors (Lehner 1987 and 1988), and on other occasions to differentiate between methods of elaborating specific policies –especially economic- or between different degrees of economic integration (Siaroff 1999).

These distinct concepts or definitions of the pluralist-corporatist *continuum* and the frequent lack of precision between one and the other when creating empirical indicators, may lead to

a confusion of different types of behaviour regarding interest-representation systems that have very different consequences on the degree of porousness of the decision-making system. Which of the elements normally attributed to pluralist and corporatist systems are related to a higher level of porousness in the interest-representation system?

On the one hand, porousness depends on the degree of openness of the decision-making arenas to a plurality of groups and organisations. In this sense we may differentiate between pluralist systems that allow access to a multitude of players in the decision-making process, and systems with a *monopolistic* tendency that are characterised by limiting access to a select group of players and organisations. In general, the research in the field of social movements attributes a greater capacity to channel new demands to pluralist interest-representation systems and to "weak" administrative systems (Kitschelt 1986, Kriesi et al. 1995: 31 ff.). When the bureaucratic structure of the state is fragile and lacks consolidated coordination and decision-making mechanisms, and professionalisation, interest groups have more chances to influence decision-making processes. However, what is an advantage in enabling the action of organised groups becomes a disadvantage when the State has to implement decisions already adopted, even those that favour citizens' organisations, opposing in this way access to efficacy (Kitschelt 1986, Kriesi et al. 1995). Additionally, pluralist systems of interest-representation incorporate a larger number of demands, since no group has a privileged or preferential position in the representation system. Monopolist systems on the other hand, give privileges to economic interest groups –mainly unions and business organisations- when adopting decisions, which often leads to the exclusion of other players and political organisations outside these sectors.

Furthermore, the porousness of the interest-representation system also depends on the degree to which the access of interest groups is instutionalised and forms part of the normal *modus operandi* of the decision-making process. The existence of formal

structures, such as committees or commissions to discuss, negotiate or for consultation allows the channelling of demands through institutions that have established mechanisms and rules of inclusion and resolution of negotiations (see Lehner 1987, Lane and Ersson 1999: 226-234). In general, the distinction between *consensual* and *conflictual* representation systems points in this direction.[30]

In this way, representation systems that combine pluralism in interest-representation with predominantly consensual representation will be, *a priori*, the most porous and accessible to citizen demands expressed through more or less formal groups and organisations.

The fact is that both aspects of interest-representation systems are empirically linked. In other words, neocorporatist systems tend to adopt consensual representation forms, while pluralist systems are often characterised by more conflictual methods of decision-making.[31] In part, this empirical co-occurrence is due to the fact that the historical factors that led to the establishment of the rules of social bargaining in the employment sector have also produced wider bargaining systems in other areas of political decision-making (Schmitter 1988, Siaroff 1999).

The proximity between both aspects is reflected well in Table 6.6, which shows four indicators that we can use to measure the degree of pluralism and conflict in interest-representation systems as well as the correlation between all these indicators.

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[30] This distinction does not exactly adjust to what I want to describe, since systems which are of a conflictual nature such as the American, nevertheless, systematically resort to the formation of committees and commissions that serve to adopt decisions that are not necessarily consensual.

[31] See the interesting debate related to this topic in Lijphart and Crepaz (1991), Keman and Pennings (1995) and Crepaz and Lijphart (1995).

Table 6.6. Indicators of the Porousness of Interest-Representation Systems

Country	Lane & Ersson's corporatism index [1]	Condensed index of corporatism (Siaroff) [2]	Condensed index of the consensual element of corporatism (Siaroff) [2]	Lehner's index of public-private interaction (extended by Siaroff) [3]
Austria	3	5	5	4
Denmark	3	3.58	2.8	3
Finland	3	3.46	2.2	3
Norway	3	4.92	4.8	4
Sweden	3	4.81	4.4	4
Netherlands	2	4.27	4.2	4
W. Germany	1	3.31	4.6	3
Belgium	1	2.75	2.6	3
Iceland	1	3	-	3
Switzerland	1	3.37	4.25	5
Canada	0	1.1	1.4	1
Spain	0	1	1	1
United States	0	1.1	1.4	1
France	0	1.46	2	1
Great Britain	0	1.58	1.2	2
Ireland	0	2.05	2	3
Italy	0	1.58	1.2	2
Portugal	0	1	1	1
Correlations				
Siaroff 1	0.91		0.92	0.89
Siaroff 2	0.73	0.92		0.86
Lehner-Siaroff	0.71	0.89	0.86	

Sources: [1] Lane & Ersson 1999: 235, my extension to the US; [2] Siaroff (1999: 180); [3] Siaroff (1999: 192). All the correlations are significant for a confidence level of 99%.

All these indicators measure, primarily, characteristics which are related to the representation of socio-economic interests. Lane and Ersson's index is of a general nature and tries to reflect the structure of the overall organisation of interests. While Siaroff's condensed index of corporatism is a measure of the values of 13 indices of corporatism, many of which are centred on the almost monopolistic situation of the big unions and employers' groups in decision-making processes in the areas of economic and social policy.[32] In contrast, the rest of the indices provide more

[32] The fact that these indicators stress the importance of interest groups does not stop them from being useful as approximate indices or *proxies* of the set of interest-representation systems. Schmitter (1988) uses this same assumption and Wiarda (1997: 175), additionaly, claims that corporatist systems have expanded to new areas of public policy beyond those of the traditional areas of economic

information on conflict in the methods of interest-representation. Thus, Siaroff's condensed index is the measurement of five indices that give prominence to the role of consensus and bargaining in policy determination –fundamentally in the economic field. While Lehner's index (modified by Siaroff) focuses on the degree of public-private interaction, including all types of public policies.

The high correlations between the four indicators mean that there is not much sense in considering them separately, although they may reflect important conceptual differences. The fact that all aspects of the porousness of the interest-representation system co-vary so remarkably forces us to use a single indicator in the examination of the bivariate relationships.[33]

Graph 6.5 shows the relation between corporatism and membership of political organisations. Given that corporatist institutions are closely linked to the structure and organisational capacity of unions, I present the bivariate relations with and without citizens' membership of unions for each country, as well as the membership of political organisations linked to NSMs.

As can be seen, in three cases the relationship is clearly curvilinear and positive with decreasing marginal returns, since the maximum levels of political membership are reached when the system of interest-representation is of an average value of the corporatism scale.[34]

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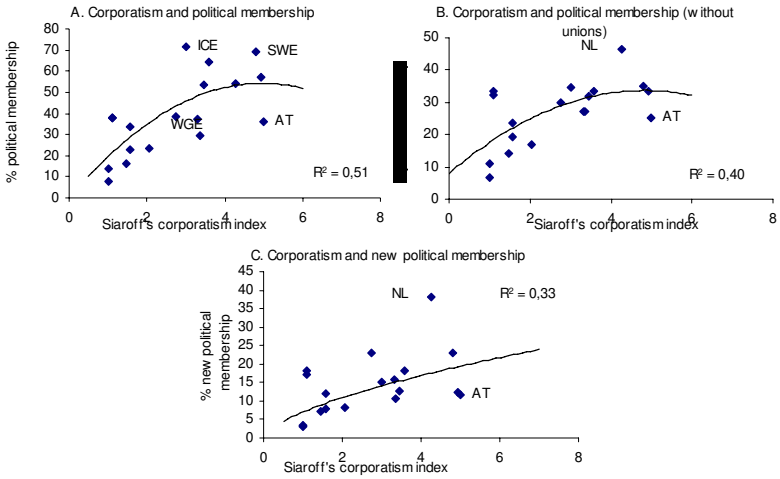
policy and social policy connected to economic competitivity (especially, education and social security).

[33] The results of a principal components analysis of the four indicators gives a single component that summarises 88% of the variation of the four indicators. The dominant index in this component (with a load of 0.99) is Siaroff's condensed corporatist index, and for this reason it constitutes a good indicator that contains the information of the other three.

[34] Iceland and the Netherlands are particularly influential in the determination of this bivariate relation. But the exclusion of the Icelandic case makes the bivariate relation between corporatism and political membership even more intense; the exclusion of the Dutch case diminishes this relation in its second (without unions) and third (new groups) variants.

Graph 6.5. Corporatism and Political Membership



These results, therefore, provisionally support the hypotheses that establish that consensual and non-monopolistic systems of interest-representation in decision-making processes in the public administration favour the formation and development of numerous political organisations that represent different types of citizens' interests. Nevertheless, as these hypotheses also point out, too much corporatism may not always be good, as it also limits the ability to act and develop of the political organisations that are unrelated to the economic sphere, due to the monopolistic role of unions and business organisations.

6.3. The Effect of the Patterns and Structures of Socio-Political Mobilisation

As we saw in chapter 1, one of the answers to the question of why citizens participate is "because someone asked" (see Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995, Klandermans 1997: 67). Although

research on the impact of the structures and the efforts of mobilisation on political participation is not very abundant, an important set of research has demonstrated the relevance of mobilisation processes to explain why and when citizens get involved in political matters (Pollock 1982, Klandermans 1984 and 1997, Briet, Klandermans and Kroon 1987, Klandermans and Oegema 1987, Klandermans and Tarrow 1988, Klandermans 1997, Knoke 1990, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). Many qualitative studies emphasise the role of mobilisation processes to determine the final decision of whether to get involved in an association or group. In general, all political organisations make some effort –greater or smaller- to recruit new members and, some organisations even make this objective one of their main organisational tasks (Harasse 1996, Jordan and Maloney 1997, Johnson 1998).

How do the mobilisation processes affect popular participation? And how can this help us to understand the different levels of political membership in western countries?

In contrast to the concept of POS, there are not many definitions of mobilisation.[35] Tilly (1978: 69) characterises mobilisation as "the process by which a group goes from being a passive collection of individuals to an active participant in public life". But, maybe the simplest and most suitable definition for this research is that proposed by Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: 25): "*Mobilisation* is the process by which candidates, parties, activists and groups induce other people to participate."[36] Nettl (1967: 32-33), however, characterises mobilisation by the presence of an attitudinal component –a commitment to action- and a behavioural component –the transfer of this commitment into an observable

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[35] See Nedelmann (1987) to obtain a summary of the most important definitions of mobilisation to date.

[36] Tilly's definition is intentionally very wide because his intention is to cover different types of mobilisation and collective action (see 1978: 84). And Nedelmann's definition (1987: 185) –"the development of relationships between different types of actors in the social and political system"- is too vague for the purposes of this research.

action or behaviour. This assumes the conceptualisation of mobilisation as a process that unfolds in distinct phases: (1) the development of the values and the objectives that mobilisation requires, (2) action on the part of leaders and institutions to mobilise individuals and social groups, (3) collective organisation to achieve these aims, (4) the creation of a symbolic framework of reference that allows the transmission of the values and aims of the mobilisation, and (5) the patterns of social interaction that give rise to effective mobilisation. In a similar line, Nedelmann (1987) distinguishes three dimensions of the activities of mobilisation: cognitive, affective, and instrumental. The first and the third dimensions mentioned by Nedelmann are of special interest to this research, as they connect perfectly with the distinction proposed by Klandermans (1997: 7) between the processes of cognitive or consensus mobilisation, and of mobilisation into action. The former contribute to the creation of an ideological support base, while the latter transform diffuse ideological support into explicit support through the creation of structures, direct induction into action, and by the creation of opportunities for participation. Nevertheless, both processes are closely linked. Cognitive mobilisation and the construction of collective action frames allow mobilisation into action, at the same time that explicit mobilisation into action contributes to constructing and publicising collective action frames through the interaction of individuals and groups. Additionally, although ideological mobilisation is necessary to create a potential of citizen mobilisation, only the presence of mobilisation into action can convert potential mobilisation into effective mobilisation (Kriesi 1993, Klandermans 1997).

Klandermans (1997: 22 ff.) points out to the existence of three factors that intervene in the dynamic of effective mobilisation into collective action: the creation or existence of recruitment networks, the formation of stimuli to motivation for participation provided by mobilisation agents, and the facilitation of participation thanks to lowering the barriers to participation.

The existence or creation of recruitment networks is fundamental in transforming the potential for mobilisation,

generated through the construction of common ideological frameworks, into effective mobilisation. This entails the existence of solid inter-organisational networks, as well as the development of sufficiently widespread organisational structures, both at a national and a local level, in order to recruit a large number of citizens. The more widespread these networks are, the greater the reach and the success of mobilisation initiatives. For their part the activities organised by social movements and political organisations in general constitute important instruments for the motivation of co-operation on the part of individuals and to lower the barriers to action. This is especially the case when mobilisation consists of the organisation of non-conflictual activities such as exhibitions, festivals, or the distribution of informative materials, since all these activities may highten the profile of groups and organisations, make their aims and principles known, and bring the organisations closer to the citizen (Rochon 1988: 116). As Hansen points out (1985: 83) just the fact that associations have a higher profile and are more visible is an stimulus to join. Besides, activities organised by the groups are particularly effective when they are symbolic actions, since these tend to link the message to the activity, which fosters its publicity among the population (Rochon 1988: 120-121), contributing, thus, simultaneously to cognitive mobilisation and mobilisation into action.

Koopmans (1996: 35) establishes a direct link between the mobilisation carried out by NSMs and the increase in the number of members of organisations linked to these. This would be due as much to the cognitive mobilisation carried out by NSMs and its success in putting new topics on the political agenda, as to explicit mobilisation into action. Nevertheless, it is interesting to point out that Koopmans does not give much of a role to the less conventional means of political action and highlights that, to a large extent, the NSMs have adopted conventional means of action. In fact, Koopmans (1996: 41) argues that there is a negative relationship between the frequency and radicalism of the means of non-conventional protest mobilisation and political membership. The least conflictual western societies are also those

that show higher levels of participation through political associations. And this is closely linked to the degree of openness of their respective political systems and the POS: when POS are open and inclusive, social movements do not need to resort to more radical forms of political action, and it is strategically more practical for them to develop stable and solid organisational structures. When POS are closed, less conventional protest is a more valuable resource which is resorted to more frequently and the creation of organisational structures is more costly.

As I said in chapter 5, organisational structures and mobilisation processes influence the individuals' decision to co-operate with a political organisation, fundamentally, through its effect on their perception of the efficacy of individual action and of the participation costs. Both effects are, to a large extent, related to the information provided by organisations when they mobilise and recruit. Firstly, the existence of organisational infrastructures, mobilising, and recruitment activities, provide information to citizens on the very existence of organisations whose political objectives they may share. This greatly contributes to reducing the costs of co-operation, as they reduce the investment and information costs each individual would have to meet in the absence of previously existing organisations. Secondly, mobilisation on the part of political organisations also contributes to providing substantive information on the issues which are the object of dispute, thus reducing further the information costs that each individual would have to bear in order to take up a position with respect to them. Lastly, mobilisation on the part of organisations can contribute crucially to increasing the sense of efficacy of individual action, as it provides information on the results of past actions[37] while at the same time it offers a

[37] As an illustration, Amnesty International puts special emphasis on the success of past initiatives of putting pressure on the competent authorities to stop actions that violate human rights, such as the execution of the death penalty. To do so, they relate specific cases, often with photographs of the people who have benefited from the actions, with the aim of humanising what could be just a simple statistical summary. This, without doubt, allows citizens that receive this

generally optimistic vision of the likely results of their current or future actions.

Despite the importance of the processes of mobilisation to explain political participation, there is little research that analyses systematically the relationship between differences in the processes of mobilisation and citizen political participation in a large number of countries. Koopmans' (1996) study limits itself to the analysis of six European countries, and it only presents data at an aggregate level, and without taking into account other factors that may intervene in the relation between mobilisation and political membership. For their part, Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), Kriesi (1993) and Klandermans (1997) only study one case: the United States the former, and the Netherlands the latter two.

Below I shall present bivariate and multivariate analyses that allow us to explore the connection that may exist between the structures and patterns of mobilisation of political organisations and the levels of political membership in western countries. To do so I shall distinguish three different dimensions of mobilisation: direct mobilisation through structures and actions, indirect mobilisation through cognitive processes and the construction of identities, and the legacy of historical traditions of mobilisation.

In principle, the theoretical hypotheses and the results of prior research lead me to expect that, generally, higher levels of mobilisation on the part of political organisations will translate into higher levels of political membership; although, on occasions I may qualify these hypotheses depending on the specific type of mobilisation we are dealing with.

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information to see directly the usefulness of their co-operation, especially as this may seem as little effective as sending a letter.

6.3.1. Direct Mobilisation and Organisational Visibility: Organisational Structures and Mobilising Action

Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson (1980: 790) distinguish between four direct mechanisms of mobilisation or recruitment depending on the spatial context in which they take place (public vs private spaces) and the way the information is transmitted (face-to-face or mediated): (1) face-to-face private mechanisms (for example, through interpersonal networks and door-to-door petitions), (2) mediated private mechanisms (for example, by mail or phone), (3) face-to-face public mechanisms (distribution of leaflets in the street, organising public events, demonstrations, etc.), and (4) mediated public mechanisms (for example, mobilisation via the mass media).

Without a doubt, intentional mobilisation initiatives are fundamental to understand what leads people to collaborate with political organisations. Nevertheless, it is difficult to link this type of mobilisation with individual behaviour in a significant number of countries given the survey data available.[38] To be able to draw direct inferences on the significance of intentional mobilisation, it is necessary to find out what the specific process was that led each individual to co-operate with a political organisation, which tends to complicate questionnaires excessively. However, we have some isolated data that allows us to illustrate the relative relevance of direct forms of mobilisation that we can measure indirectly. Table 6.7 shows the results of a survey carried out on the members of various local associations in Spain.[39]

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[38] As has been shown in chapter 3, the survey data used by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) are an exception rather than the rule.

[39] This study forms part of the project *Participación política y capital social en España: un análisis comparado* (SEC 2000-0758-C02), financed by the Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología and led by Prof. José Ramón Montero, in which the author participated as a researcher.

Table 6.7. Recruitment Processes in Spanish Associations

	Self-initiated		Interpersonal	Organizational				Total	N of cases
Municipality /District	Own initiative	Influenced by the mass media	Relatives, friends, colleagues	Intentional recruitment	Thanks to communication channels or interorganisational networks	Through activities	Work-professional relations		
Alcalá de Henares	14	2	60	2	5	15	2	100	221
Andoain	17	0	73	0	0	10	0	100	30
Deusto (Bilbao)	11	0	60	0	2	24	2	100	140
Caldes de Montbui	14	1	64	0	8	14	0	100	45
Sabadell	9	0	70	1	3	16	0	100	422
Gracia (Barcelona)	13	2	65	2	5	11	2	100	333

Source: *Survey to organisational members*, 2002 (CID Project, Spain). My own ellaboration.

As can be seen, apart from the absolute preponderance of personal face-to-face mechanisms based on interpersonal networks, recruitment in associations depends to a large extent on the mobilisation efforts of those organisations.[40] Especially, the organisation of activities on the part of associations has a great impact, since between 10 and 25 percent of the people who joined these associations did so thanks to these activities. These results support the findings of Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson (1980: 795) on the emergent and interactional character of the process of recruitment:

> "[…] it is important to emphasise that people seldom initially join movements per se. Rather they typically are asked to participate in movement activities. Furthermore, it is during the course of initial participation that they are provided with the "reasons" or "justifications" for what they have already done and for continuing participation. [...] We would thus argue that the "motives" for joining or continued participation are generally emergent and interactional rather than prestructured. They arise out of a process of ongoing interaction with a movement organisation and its recruitment agents."

[40] Naturally, the survey only allows us to draw conclusions about the Spanish case, and can not be generalised to other societies.

The organisation of activities gives, therefore, a higher visibility to associations and groups, while at the same time enables direct contact with potential collaborators and their eventual recruitment. Likewise, the availability of extended organisational structures and infrastructures integrate associations into their communities, giving them a visibility they would lack if they did not have those infrastructures. Besides, a certain organisational structure is needed to carry out mobilisation activities. If a group with political aims wants to recruit new members and has the resources to do so it will create an organisational infrastructure, which allows it to reach the largest number of citizens possible. If political associations do not grow over time it may be due to two reasons: maybe they do not have the resources to do so, or may be they simply do not wish to do so. In either case the mobilisation power of these groups will be smaller than that of those organisations with infrastructures all over the country.

This allows us to illustrate the simultaneous importance of organisational structures, and of the initiatives and activities that associations carry out. The former constitute the premise that allows or facilitates the development of the latter. Therefore, when operationalising the dimension of direct mobilisation I will focus on both. To do so, I present a series of indicators that allow us to measure the spread of the organisational structures in each country, and the intensity of the organisation of activities and actions on the part of groups and movements.

Measuring in a complete way the existence of organisational infrastructures in a country is an almost impossible task even in a single case study and, therefore, it is even more so when we find ourselves faced with a comparative study like this one. Without doubt, any attempt at measurement has to be, at the most, approximate. In other words, the aim will be to find an indicator that allows us to obtain an approximate measurement of what we really want to measure. In our case the best indicator or *proxy* can be found in the organisational density of political parties; that is,

in the number of party branches per thousand inhabitants.[41] Logically, by using the density of the party organisational structures as a proxy indicator I assume that the variations that may arise in European countries with respect to this reflect in some way the variations that exist in the organisational density of the whole set of political groups. In other words, I assume that those countries in which political parties have a more solid and widespread organisational infrastructure are also the countries in which the rest of the political organisations have more consolidated organisational structures.

Unfortunately the data on the number of party branches[42] is not available for all western European countries, nor for the United States nor Canada, given their different form of party organisation. Graph 6.6 shows the important variations that exist in the organisational density of European political parties.

As we can see, the organisational consolidation of European parties differs substantially among countries, varying from more than one and a half branches per thousand inhabitants in Finland to the very few 0.1 branches per thousand inhabitants (or, put differently, one branch for every ten thousand inhabitants) in France. Clearly, the organisational density of parties is generally higher in Scandinavia, but also in Ireland, Austria and Italy, and much lower in France, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. *A priori*, the theoretical hypotheses set out above would lead me to expect that this density would be linearly and positively related both with traditional and new political membership.

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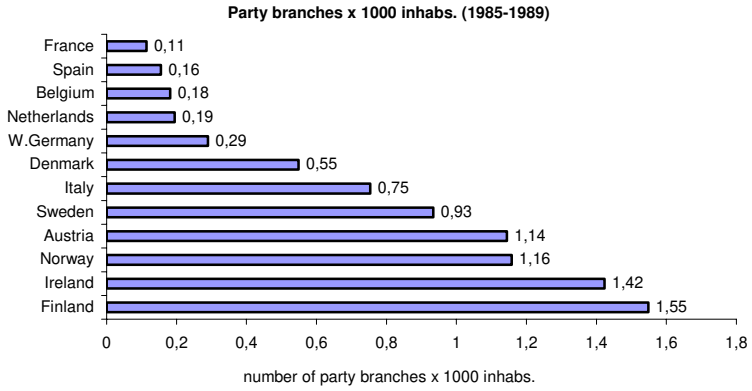
[41] I have tried to construct another *proxy* indicator that was more specific to political organisations of the new type with data on the organisational density of large environmental and human rights organisations present in all western countries (Amnesty International, AI, and Greenpeace, GP); but, unfortunately, most of the national organisations of AI and GP do not keep data on the number of branches or local groups that existed at the end of the 1980s. In some cases they did not even have membership records for that period.

[42] The main source for this information is Katz and Mair (1992), although it has been complemented with other sources.

Graph 6.6. Organisational Density of Political Parties in Europe



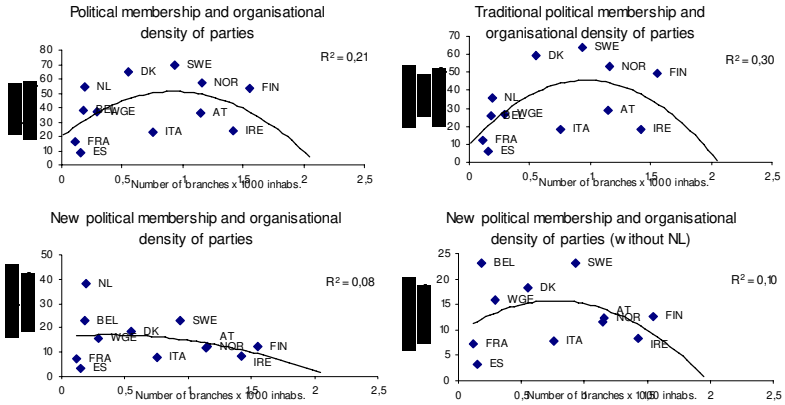
Graph 6.7 shows, however, that the bivariate relationship between party organisational density and political membership is not linear. In effect, it is the existence of a medium level of organisational density which most promotes membership of all types of political associations. When parties are organisationally very weak or very strong, citizens are less keen on joining political organisations. As we can see, in addition, this relation is much more pronounced in the case of traditional political associations, among them the political parties themselves, and much less so when we analyse only membership of groups related to the NSMs.

As regards direct mechanisms of face-to-face public mobilisation (see Snow, Zurcher and Ekland-Olson 1980) such as the distribution of leaflets in the streets, the organisation of public events, demonstrations, etc., the available comparative data are also limited and come exclusively from studies of protest events. Kriesi et al. (1995) carried out a pioneer study on the levels of protest in Europe, based on the information available in the daily press. The database this research group constructed, which brought together all the protest events related to social movements[43] that were reported in Monday's edition of a national

[43] Excluding economic strikes.

newspaper[44] and which took place between 1975 and 1989, is unfortunately limited to four countries: The Federal Republic of Germany, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland.[45] Recently, a group of North American researchers led by Ron Francisco developed a study with similar aims but using different data collection strategies: the *European Protest and Coercion Dataset* (1980-1995).[46]

Graph 6.7. Political Membership and Organisational Density of Political Parties in Europe



[44] In each country they chose a single newspaper to obtain information about protest actions.

[45] Nevertheless, in more recent times other researchers have reproduced the study in other countries, among them Spain (see Koopmans 1996 and 1999: 90-91).

[46] Information on this project and the data can be obtained on the web page: http://lark.cc.ukans.edu/~ronfran/data/index.html. Gerner et al. (1994) describe the original system of data collection on events (KEDS). See, for example, Francisco (1996) for an application of the data different to that which is presented in the pages below.

This dataset, which is the one I am using here, collects all the protest and repression events, including economic ones, which are reported by a large series of national and local communication media in 28 European countries.[47] The nature of the data collected thanks to this project makes it the most complete to date for research into the level and type of protest mobilisation in Europe.[48] Surely, this does not mean that we do not have to be wary and take into account that, even the most inclusive and wide-covering media only report on a minority of the protest events that really occur. Some estimations indicate that the media tend to report between 4 and 10% of all the protest actions that take place in a given territory (Koopmans 1999: 96, note 10). In any case, the most important thing for this research is not the absolute number of protest actions that take place in a country, but the differences across countries in the number and type of protest, as well as the political actors who initiate them.

We can, nevertheless, compare the data available in each database for the two countries included, for the moment, in both: Germany (FRG) and France.[49] Limiting ourselves to the 1985-1989 period, which is the one I used earlier to construct indicators of the level of direct mobilisation, Graph 6.8 allows us to see in what measure one or the other dataset gives us similar or different results.

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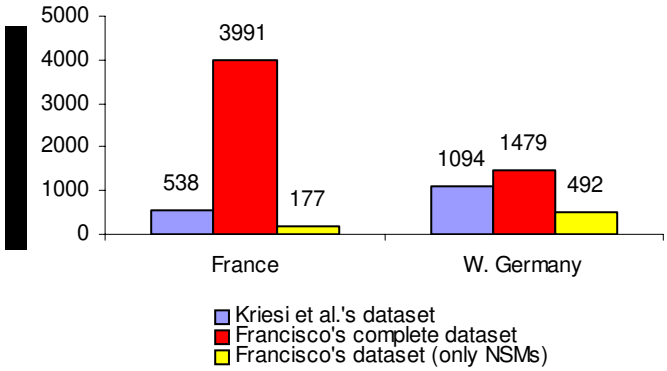
[47] The research project uses Lexis-Nexis as the main source of information and through this accesses the Reuters database which allows consultation of 400 publications, as well as access to the agency's local, regional, and global teletext services.

[48] Without doubt, these data have their limitations which are common to the project led by Kriesi, to the extent that the media and communication agencies introduce a bias in the attention they pay to protest events. The debate on the use and the limitations of journalistic information to research collective action is wide and a sample can be seen in Rucht and Olemacher (1992), Fillieule (1996), Hug and Wisler (1998), Tarrow (1999), Rucht and Neidhardt (1999), Koopmans (1999) and, in general, a good part of the chapters that appear in the book edited by Rucht, Koopmans and Neidhardt (1999).

[49] I am sincerely grateful to Hanspeter Kriesi for having granted me access to their dataset, and to Ron Francisco for making available to the public the data collected through his project.

Graph 6.8. Comparison of the Results of the Two Datasets: Germany and France, 1985-1989



On the one hand, the results of the database used by Kriesi et al. (1995) reflects a smaller volume of protest in France than in the Federal Republic of Germany; while the data collected by Ron Francisco and his team, from a much larger range of sources of information, reveal the existence of a volume of protest substantially greater in France than in Germany during the same period. However, Kriesi's team excluded all actions related to labour strikes or those of an economic nature, while the data from Ron Francisco include this type of events. Actually, as one of the researchers of Kriesi's team states (Koopmans 1999: note 17), the data of this latter research reflect, fundamentally, protest mobilisation of social movements and, above all, of the NSMs. For this reason, it is more appropriate to compare the results of Kriesi et al.'s dataset with the subsample of protest action collected in Ron Francisco's dataset whose main actors form part of the NSMs (right-hand column for each country). On this occasion, the comparison between the number of protests in the two countries is in line with those of Kriesi and his team, since in

Germany protests linked to NSMs are more frequent than in France.[50]

Although the reliability of the data collected by Francisco and his team, which I am using here, is –as we have seen- limited, it seems that when we use concepts similar to those used by Kriesi et al. (1995) the results for both countries are similar. I will go on, therefore, to describe the mobilisation indicators I have constructed from the aforementioned dataset.

Firstly, the files prepared by the research team led by Ron Francisco allow us to construct a general indicator of the relative number of protests included in the dataset for each country.[51] To do this, I have selected the period 1985-1989, which is immediately prior to the survey that I am using (1990-1993 WVS).[52] Besides, the data allow us to distinguish between different types of protest depending on the type of action involved, and of the degree of conflict involved in the same. Following the distinction made by Kriesi and his colleagues (1995), I have prepared another three indicators that reflect the number of protest in the form of demonstrations, confrontation, and violence. Demonstrative protest is in general that which implies some kind of non-violent collective demonstration with low levels of confrontation –for example, demonstrations, petitions, large scale meetings, festivals, etc.. Confrontational protest entails a higher degree of confrontation with the authorities or with opposing

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[50] The lower number of total events both in Germany and in France that results from Ron Francisco's dataset is quite likely due to the codings that I have done of the main actors, which probably excludes many actions that would have been included in Kriesi and his colleagues' codings. See Appendix 4 to obtain more information on the codings I have used for the analysis of the data collected by Ron Francisco.

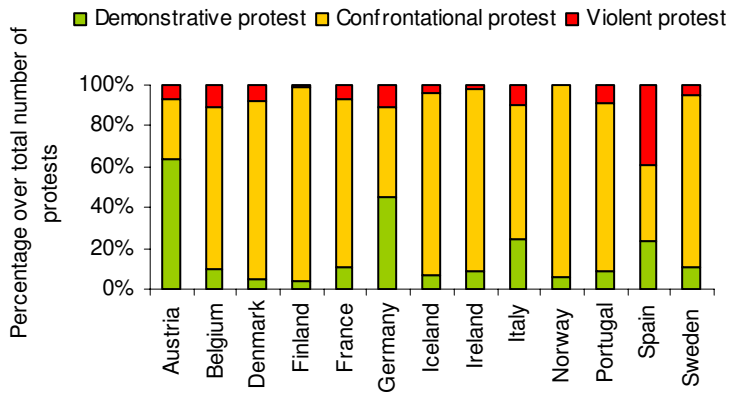
[51] We should keep in mind, as does Koopmans (1999), that all the estimations that are made from any analysis of protest events underestimates the real protest that occurs. Let me remind that what interests me here is not so much the exact number of protest events that took place in each country, but the relative differences that exist among the different European countries.

[52] I have chosen a period of five years to minimise the measurement errors that may appear from using a single year for the calculations, if exceptionally strong (or weak) mobilisations occur in some countries for that same year.

groups without coming to physical violence –for example, boycotts, hunger strikes, sit-ins, etc.. Lastly, violent protest actions are all those which involve some degree of violence against persons or property.[53]

Graph 6.9 shows the relative distribution of these three forms of protest in each of the 13 European countries for which data are available. As we can see, in most countries the most common type of protest action is that which involves some kind of confrontation with the authorities or with opposing groups.[54] Only in Austria and in West Germany are demonstrative protest actions less confrontational. Besides, in most countries there is a significant number, although generally a minority, of violent actions.

Graph 6.9. Distribution of Protest Actions by Types, 1985-1989



[53] See Kriesi et al. (1995: 267-268) to obtain a more detailed description of the type of protest actions that are included in each category, and Appendix 4 of this Thesis to see which actions of those collected in the data produced by Ron Francisco's team were classified in one category or another.

[54] Interpretation has to be careful on this point, since the informative bias of the communication media probably show a greater number of protests that imply some degree of confrontation.

Given that the absolute numbers of protest are partly linked to the population size of each country, I also calculate a series of indicators that take this aspect into account.[55] The set of indicators is shown in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8. Indicators of Direct Mobilisation: Number of Protests in Europe, 1985-1989

Country	Total protest (1985-1989)		Demonstrative protest		Confrontational protest		Violent protest		Population	
	Absolute number	n/log pop.	Absolute number	n/log pop.	Absolute number	n/log pop.	Absolute number	n/log pop.	1000s	Log pop.
Austria	158	40.7	98	25.3	45	11.6	11	2.8	7,570	3.9
Belgium	697	174.3	69	17.3	550	137.6	78	19.5	9,960	4.0
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	25,880	4.4
Denmark	585	157.6	31	8.4	510	137.4	44	11.9	5,140	3.7
Finland	329	89.0	12	3.2	314	85.0	3	0.8	4,950	3.7
France	3991	840.7	419	88.3	3303	695.8	269	56.7	55,860	4.7
W. Germany	1479	302.5	670	137.1	655	134.0	154	31.5	77,380	4.9
Great Britain	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	47,320	4.7
Iceland	122	51.0	8	3.3	108	45.1	5	2.1	248	2.4
Ireland	1660	467.5	145	40.8	1474	415.1	39	11.0	3,553	3.6
Italy	609	128.0	148	31.1	400	84.1	61	12.8	57,400	4.8
Netherlands	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14,750	4.2
Norway	353	97.4	20	5.5	330	91.1	1	0.3	4,202	3.6
Portugal	384	95.6	32	8.0	317	79.0	33	8.2	10,350	4.0
Spain	2522	549.3	585	127.4	936	203.9	1001	218.0	38,996	4.6
Sweden	425	108.3	44	11.2	335	85.3	19	4.8	8,415	3.9
Switzerland	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6,536	3.8
United States	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	245,560	5.4

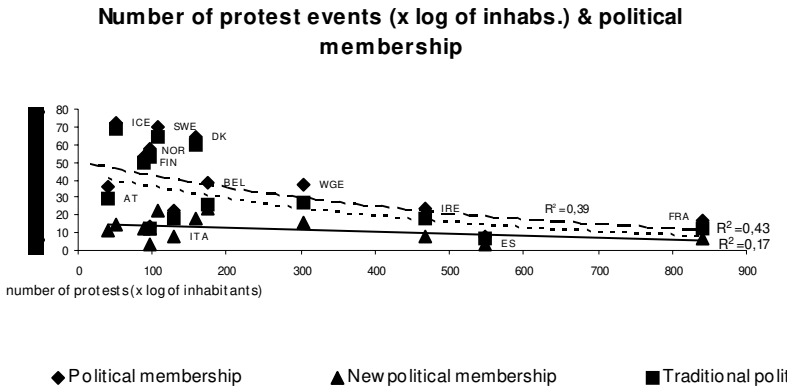
Source: Dataset *European Protest and Coercion Dataset* (1980-1995). Own ellaboration. Key: n.a.= no information available.

What is, therefore, the relation between the levels of direct mobilisation (as measured by the level of protest) in a country and the level of political membership? As I have mentioned above, the hypotheses point in different directions that are not necessarily contradictory. On the one hand, Koopmans (1996) argues that the frequency of protest is inversely linked to the level of development of the NSMs and to the levels of political membership. Thus, countries with higher levels of protest are those in which the NSMs have not gained much ground because

[55] To do this I have divided the total number protest events by the logarithm in base 10 of the population size (in thousands of inhabitants).

the traditional social cleavages (class, religion or centre-periphery) have still not been pacified and institutionalised, and this disincentivates participation through conventional and stable structures: political organisations. At the same time, the hypotheses on the impact of mobilisation on political participation lead us to expect that participation in associations linked to NSMs will be higher in those countries where the former have a greater visibility. In other words, where the NSMs are more frequently the protagonists of collective action, participation in new political associations will be higher. The results of the bivariate analyses presented in Graphs 6.10 and 6.11 support both hypotheses.

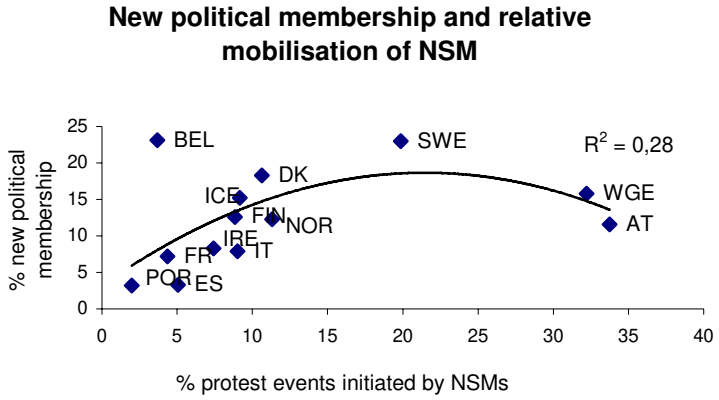
Graph 6.10. Negative Association between Protest and Political Membership



As we see, just as the research on social movements points out, social conflict is, in general terms, negative for the development of more stable forms of participation such as political membership. A very high level of protest tends to be accompanied by very low levels of all types of membership, although the negative relationship between protest and membership of associations is much more acute when we are dealing with traditional political associations. Nevertheless, a slightly negative

relationship can be seen between the levels of socio-political conflict and membership of associations linked to NSMs.[56]

Graph 6.11. Positive Relation between the Visibility of NSMs and New Political Membership



Despite this, given certain levels of socio-political protest, a higher level of relative mobilisation on the part of the NSMs is positively related to citizen participation in associations linked to these movements. This supports the premise that we should not confuse all protest with mobilisation by NSMs: the NSMs mobilise in ways other than just protest and, in turn, not all protest actions are organised by the NSMs (see Rucht, Koopmans and Neidhardt 1999: 9). In this case, we can see that not all types of mobilisation favour the expansion of political membership in European countries, and that it is necessary to distinguish between those protest actions initiated by organisations linked to the NSMs and those initiated by other political actors linked to the traditional *cleavages*.

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[56] The degree of protest conflictuality increases even more the strength of this negative relationship. Equivalent analyses that only consider the level of violent protest result in higher regression coefficients.

Thus, the data available seem to support two provisional conclusions. On the one hand, the level of visibility and the direct mobilisation on the part of political organisations seems to have a reflection in citizens' participation in these organisations, though in many cases this relationship is not necessarily linear. As a result, the organisational development of political parties contributes to explain the variations among countries in the percentages of membership of traditional political groups, and at the same time the level of protest mobilisation on the part of the NSMs is linked to a greater or lesser support by citizens for new political organisations. On the other hand, however, an extreme abundance of conflict and protest is indicative of the lack of pacification of the traditional socio-political cleavages and this, in turn, seems to diminish political membership in general.

As will be seen, this latter aspect is closely related to the second dimension of the context of socio-political mobilisation: the cognitive dimension.

6.3.2. Cognitive Mobilisation: Cleavage and Polarisation Structures

As we have seen above, the cognitive processes of mobilisation play a fundamental role for the creation of the conceptual frameworks for action. These mechanisms are the ones that allow the creation of collective identities and of reference frameworks, and the establishment of conceptual links that associate collective action with the desired political and social changes.

In a perfect world, the study of the impact that cognitive processes of mobilisation have on political membership would be done through the measurement of the set of processes of constructing collective identities and reference frameworks for action that take place in each of the countries included in this research. This task is impossible both in practical and probably in conceptual terms. For this reason, I have opted to use an indirect

way of approximating this dimension of mobilisation: by studying the level of ideological polarisation in each society.

In a certain way, the level of ideological polarisation of a society serves as an indirect indicator of the level of cognitive mobilisation carried out by the political actors in the society. And, in turn, this can have consequences on the level of political membership. For example, Kalyvas (1997) describes how the political strategies of polarisation by PASOK and Nea Demokratia in Greece during the mid 1980s led to a considerable increase in party identification and affiliation in Greece.

How do we, therefore, define ideological polarisation? In the first place, it is necessary to define the ideological dimensions around which polarisation (or its absence) exists. It is usual to pay almost exclusive attention to the ideological dimension resulting from class divisions: the left-right axis. However, polarisation in contemporary western societies is not only (and in some cases not even mainly) based on the left-right dimension.[57] It is necessary to take into account other dimensions of political competition and other social cleavages: for example, the religious cleavage, the regional or nationalist cleavage, etc..

Once again, the limitations of the data at hand force me to use indirect indicators, in this case of religious and ethno-regional polarisation. The lack of cross-nationally standardised scales around these two dimensions equivalent to the traditional left-right scale leads me to use indicators of social segmentation or heterogeneity as proxies of the polarisation around these cleavages (see similar methods used in Bartolini and Mair 1990, and Billiet 1997).

Much research in the field of political participation reinforces the idea that social segmentation increases citizen participation. For example, Huntington and Nelson (1976: 103) claim that social segmentation increases political participation because it favours residential segregation, intensifies collective or group

[57] Besides, the fundamental cleavage around which this ideological distinction emerges does not have to be the social class, and can be based on cleavages of another political nature (Kalyvas 1997: 98).

consciousness, and stimulates the organisation of the distinct collectivities in associations. Some of these ideas are confirmed by Oliver (1999), who states that social heterogeneity is linked to the existence of higher levels of conflict and political competition for scarce resources and this, in turn, incentivates citizens' participation in public issues.

In addition, social segmentation may influence the mobilisation capacity that political organisations have. Thus, Oberschall (1973: 129) considers that:

> "The more segmented a collectivity is from the rest of society, and the more viable and extensive the communal ties within it, the more rapid and easier it is to mobilize members of the collectivity into an opposition movement."

And, later, Kriesi (1993) points out even more clearly this relationship between segmentation and mobilisation when he states:

> "A closed group is above all mobilisable by its own political organisations […] the closure of social relationships is very likely to imply the stabilisation of mobilisation capacities not only for specific parties, but also for given interest groups and social movements." (p. 13)

However, not all types of social conflict, segmentation or polarisation will have positive consequences on citizens' participation in political associations. Kriesi et al. (1995: 5) argue that the centrality and polarisation of traditional class conflicts are counterproductive to the opportunities of mobilisation by the NSMs, and that it is in those countries in which class conflict has been pacified through the expansion of the welfare state where new political organisations have had more space to articulate new conflicts. In this way, they argue, the intensity of the class cleavage is inversely related to the strength of the NSMs (1995: 25).

When measuring the ideological polarisation around the left-right axis that we find in each society we have several possibilities. Firstly, we can distinguish between polarisation evident at the party-level from that which is manifest at the individual-level. Although one and another are, without doubt, related (Sani and Sartori 1983: 308), the political elites have, despite the dependence they have on their electorate, a certain ability to generate depolarising dynamics through institutional mechanisms. In fact, a wide range of political and social institutions have been developed in western societies that have been used to institutionally pacify social conflicts (see Lijphart 1975, 1977 and 1999). Secondly, once we make this distinction there exist various dimensions of party polarisation and therefore, various forms of measuring them.

As regards the degree of polarisation of citizens on the left-right axis, here I have chosen to use a convenient indicator from the calculation of the variance in respondents' self-positioning in the left-right axis,[58] for each of the national samples in the 1990-93 WVS. A higher value of the variance indicates more heterogeneity in the ideological positions of citizens and, therefore, more polarisation around the main dimension of political competition in western societies.[59]

As regards polarisation at the level of party-systems there are various measurement options available and many proposals from different researchers. Sani and Sartori (1983: 316 ff.) propose three possible ways of measuring polarisation: (1) through the perception of the elites themselves on the position of and ideological distance between parties, (2) through an analysis of the contents of electoral manifestoes and other party documents, and (3) using the perceptions of the positions and ideological distance of parties by the electorate. This last option poses serious methodological problems because it is an excessively indirect

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[58] On a scale that ranges from 1 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right).

[59] It is also common to use variance-related indicators when measuring polarisation at the party-system level (see Taylor and Herman 1971 and Hazan 1995).

measurement of systematic properties: citizens may have problems when perceiving correctly the ideological positions of parties for many reasons (cognitive, informative, etc.). And, in fact, this form of measuring polarisation has fallen into disuse among scholars specialised in the analysis of party-systems. Accumulated use in political science has favoured the option of content-analysis and a modified version of the perceptions of the elite: expert surveys.[60] In the first case, the work of a European research group on electoral manifestoes stands out (*Manifesto Research Group* and *Comparative Manifesto Project*, which was led by Ian Budge, David Robertson and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, and whose main results can be found in Budge, Hearl and Robertson 1987, Laver and Budge 1992, Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge 1994 and Budge et al. 2001). One important problem of this approach is the comparison of the ideological spaces resulting from the analysis of electoral manifestoes and, above all, the important fluctuations that are frequently produced in the positions of parties in successive elections. As far as elite surveys go, the difficulty in obtaining comparative data of a certain methodological quality has implied its practical substitution by the use of expert surveys (Mair 2001: 15 ff.). These, on occasions, are limited to placing the political parties on the classic left-right scale (Castles and Mair 1984, Huber and Inglehart 1995), while on other occasions the ideological positioning of parties in multiple dimensions of political competition is evaluated (Laver and Hunt 1992). In any case, the results of expert surveys also present serious limitations: fundamentally, there are few and the positions are attributed on the basis of a relatively small number of "expert" opinions.

Given the alternative measurements available, in this research I have opted to use various indicators of polarisation at a systemic level. On the one hand, I use the simple indicator of party-system polarisation proposed by Lane and Ersson (1999: 145), which is simply the percentage of votes obtained by the parties situated at the extremes of the ideological spectrum (Communists, Populists

[60] See a good summary of the various alternatives for measuring the ideological positions and policies of political parties in Mair (2001).

and Extreme Right). Additionally, I also use two slightly different versions of the indicator of polarisation proposed by Hazan (1995: 426). The first reproduces the calculations of this researcher[61] but uses the evaluations that appear in Huber and Inglehart (1995) instead of those presented by Castles and Mair (1984).[62] The second differs from the first in that it does not include in the polarisation calculation the parliamentary weight of each party. This indicator, thus, assumes that the political parties situated at both ideological extremes may have a capacity to polarise political competition in a manner disproportionate to their number of parliamentary seats, either because of their "blackmail" ability (Sartori 1976), due to the media coverage they receive, or due to their organisational rooting in civil society. Besides, the inclusion of the proportion of seats in the calculation gives extraordinary weight to the electoral thresholds that minority parties must overcome, even if these might not prevent these parties access from being at the forefront of political competition.

Table 6.9 shows the values of each of these indicators of polarisation used in this chapter for each country included in this research.

As was mentioned before, the use of separate indicators of citizen and system polarisation is justified by the fact that, although linked, the one and the other are empirically different. Indeed, bivariate analyses between citizen polarisation and the three indicators of party-system polarisation (Graph 6.12) reveal that the relation between both forms of polarisation is moderate and limited, and that it is not only mediated by the political effects of each electoral system.

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[61] Actually his calculation is the variance in the positions allocated to parties, with the only particularity that it is weighted by the parliamentary weight of each party.

[62] This decision is motivated by the fact that the values that appear in Castles and Mair (1984) date back to the beginning of the 1980s, while Huber and Inglehart's expert survey (1995) was carried out in 1993. Given that the dependent variable I am interested in (political membership) is measured in this Thesis through the 1990-93 WVS, Huber and Inglehart's results are more suitable and closer in time.

Table 6.9. Indicators of Polarisation: Citizens and Party-Systems, 1986-1990

	Citizen polarisation [a]	System polarisation 1 [b]	System polarisation 2 [c]	System polarisation 3 [d]
Iceland	4.85	24.2	2.58	14.05
Portugal	4.54	16.5	1.24	12.57
Spain	4.53	7.2	3.05	32.11
Italy	4.48	34.2	4.52	41.34
Finland	4.45	21.1	3.46	46.74
Sweden	4.39	5.6	2.99	22.46
Switzerland	4.36	8.5	2.76	42.29
Norway	4.16	16.3	4.64	30.18
Belgium	4.12	2.7	1.95	24.37
Netherlands	3.98	1.8	2.06	17.47
France	3.88	21.4	5.89	42.23
Great Britain	3.62	0	2.21	5.87
Denmark	3.59	24.6	4.19	29.28
Ireland	3.39	4.9	1.98	24.37
United States	3.21	0	1.8	3.65
Austria	3.01	0.7	1.73	17.83
W. Germany	2.87	0.6	2.09	13.21
Canada	2.75	2.1	3.18	21.09

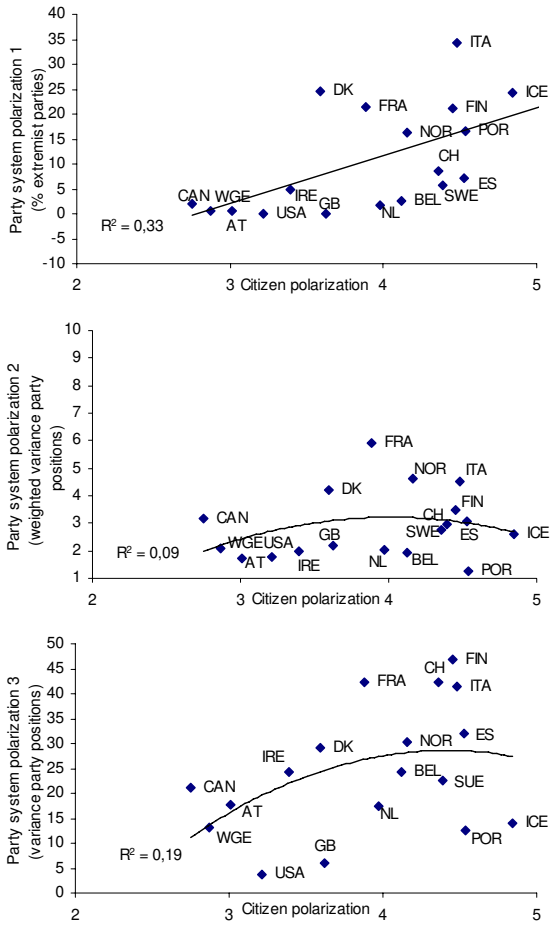
[a] Variance of ideological self-placements. Source: WVS 1990-93, my own ellaboration.

[b] Percentage of the vote for extreme (Communists, Populists and Extreme right) parties. Source: Lane and Ersson (1999: 145), extended to Canada and the US.

[c] Variance in the parties' ideological position (Hazan's formula 1995). Sources: Huber and Inglehart (1995) for most parties; Castles and Mair (1984) for the following parties not included in Huber and Inglehart, and whose values were reasonable for the end of the 1980s: PVV (Belgium), Workers' Party (Ireland). In some cases, a different value was given depending on the available information: for the SKDL (Finland) an average value was given (2.65) between that given by Castles and Mair (1984) and that given to Vasemmistoliitto in Huber and Inglehart (1995); for DEVA (a Prosoviet faction of the SKDL en Finland that only obtained seats in1987) the same value was allocated as that of SKDL (1.8) in Castles and Mair (1984); the BF (citizens party in Iceland) does not appear in Huber and Inglehart (1995) and Iceland is not included in Castles and Mair (1984), so its value is given (6) according to the position on the left-right axis attributed in the data from Budge et al. (2001); for the PCI (Italy) an average value is give (2) between that given to the PCI in Castles and Mair (1984) and that given to the PDS in Huber and Inglehart (1995), to account for the important ideological movements that the PCI underwent at the end of the 1980s; for the PR (Italy), as it is not included in Huber and Inglehart (1995), I have extrapolated its intermediate position between the PCI and the PSI in Castles and Mair (1984) to the period of the 1980s, using the values attributed to these parties in Huber and Inglehart (1995) and, therefore, assigning it a value of 4; the PRD (Portugal) does not appear in Castles and Mair (1984) nor in Huber and Inglehart (1995), so I give it a value to the left of the PSD (6) following the results of Budge et al. (2001); in the case of Switzerland, three parties do not appear in Castles and Mair (1984) nor in Huber and Inglehart (1995) –the IP, NA/SD and the Greens- so I attribute their value using data in Budge et al. (2001): 2.6, 5.5 and 1.5 respectively.

[d] Variance of the ideological position of the parties without weighting for the number of parliamentary seats of each one. Sources: the same as the previous indicator.

Graph 6.12. Citizen and System Polarisation: Bivariate Relations



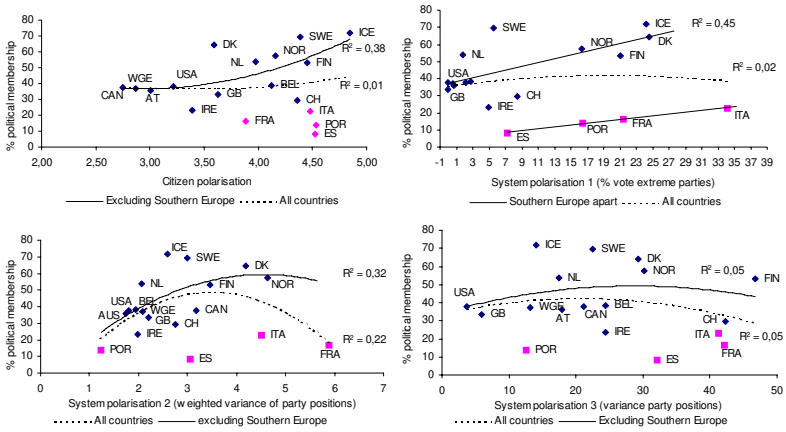
What is the relation I expect to find between the different forms of ideological polarisation and political membership? Although from the point of view of the analysis of rational choice

we would expect that higher polarisation served to incentivate popular political participation, as it allows citizens to distinguish clearly the benefits derived from contributing to collective action and, probably, increases the net value of the benefits for the winners; it can also be viewed from the opposite side. Polarisation converts political competition into something that resembles more and more a no-win situation, and increases the potential losses of players in the event that they end up on the losing side. To this we should add the possible social costs that can be incurred by identifying clearly with one or the other of the competitors: associating oneself politically is to position oneself with one of the competing groups, and to be exposed to the criticism or rejection from those who support the opposing camp. These costs are, in all probability, higher today than at the beginning of the 20th century when social segmentation was greater. Social mobility and the fact that people from very different social and political groups, with different ideological positions, have come to live side by side makes the potential costs of taking sides in a context of polarisation higher in current societies. Therefore, we could expect a positive relationship between the degree of ideological polarisation of the party system and political membership, and on the other hand, maybe, a negative relationship between the level of citizen ideological polarisation and citizens' participation in political organisations.

Graph 6.13 presents the bivariate relationships between each indicator of citizen and systemic polarisation and the percentage of membership of political associations in the 18 western democracies included in this research. These results seem to indicate that ideological polarisation, whether among citizens or generated by the party system, contributes to mobilise citizens to co-operate with associations of a political nature. This positive relationship is much clearer when we analyse separately the countries of Southern Europe (France, Spain, Italy and Portugal) and the rest of the western societies, as those countries systematically show lower levels of political membership, although the relationship between ideological polarisation and the

degree to which its citizens participate in associations with political objectives also shows a positive trend.

Graph 6.13. Ideological Polarisation and Political Membership

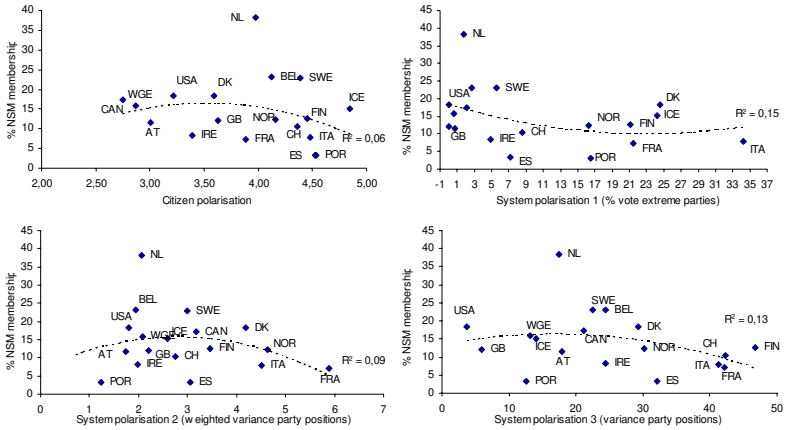


It is worth remembering, however, that some researchers of social movements claim that the relevance of the traditional class cleavage limits the organisational development of the NSMs, in such a way that where this dimension of conflict manifests itself more acutely, the NSMs are politically weaker (see, for example, Kriesi et al. 1995). Given that the importance of the class cleavage is also reflected in the level of ideological polarisation in the left-right axis, it is to be expected that the latter will be inversely related to the level of participation in associations linked to the NSMs. Graph 6.14 allows us to explore these hypotheses.

Although the results obtained with all these indicators of polarisation do seem to indicate the existence of a certain negative relationship between ideological polarisation on the left-right

dimension and membership of organisations of the NSMs, the relationship between both aspects is so weak that it is of little relevance. In general, the limited relationship between polarisation and new political membership is due to a higher degree of heterogeneity in the levels of political membership of countries with little ideological polarisation. Thus, in spite of the fact that – in general terms- in the most polarised societies levels of new political membership are lower, the opposite is not true in most of the societies which are less polarised.

Graph 6.14. Ideological Polarisation and New Political Membership



In conclusion, ideological polarisation in the main dimension of political competition (left-right) seems to contribute to the participation of citizens in political associations, although not necessarily in all types of organisations with political objectives.

What about the political mobilisation derived from other divisions and social conflicts? As I have indicated above, in the case of ethnic, linguistic, and religious cleavages we do not have available comparative data on the positions of citizens nor of

political parties, so it is not possible to create similar indicators of polarisation. Therefore, we have to content ourselves with proxies: indices on the presence of these cleavages. No doubt that, as Bartolini and Mair explained (1990), the existence of social differences does not necessarily imply the political mobilisation around those differences. Nevertheless, as a general rule, in the western countries we are studying the mobilisation of ethnic, linguistic, and/or religious differences has taken place. The most problematic issue is that, although these cleavages are mobilised, a greater social differentiation does not necessarily lead to a greater polarisation around these, given that in many countries these social conflicts have been pacified institutionally.

Table 6.10 presents the indicators of social segmentation that will be used in this research. The first aspect that we have to point out is the limited variation in the effective number of linguistic groups, and the only slightly greater variety in the ethnic and religious composition of western societies.

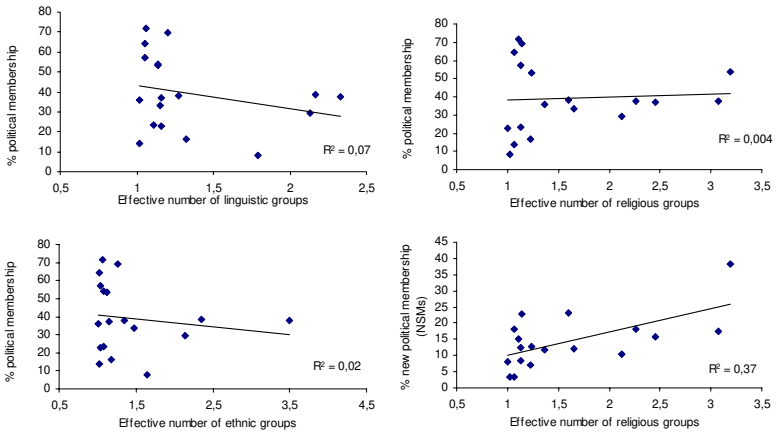
Table 6.10. Indicators of Social Segmentation (1981-1987)

	Effective number of linguistic groups	Effective number of ethnic groups	Effective number of religious groups
Austria	1.02	1.01	1.36
Belgium	2.17	2.35	1.60
Canada	2.33	3.49	3.07
Denmark	1.05	1.02	1.06
Finland	1.14	1.13	1.24
France	1.32	1.17	1.23
Great Britain	1.15	1.48	1.65
Iceland	1.06	1.06	1.11
Ireland	1.11	1.08	1.13
Italy	1.16	1.04	1.00
Neterlands	1.14	1.08	3.19
Norway	1.05	1.04	1.13
Portugal	1.02	1.02	1.06
Spain	1.79	1.65	1.02
Sweden	1.20	1.26	1.14
Switzerland	2.13	2.13	2.12
United States	1.27	1.35	2.26
W. Germany	1.16	1.15	2.45

Source: Cox and Amorim Neto (1997).

As in the case of ideological polarisation around the left-right dimension, we would expect that social segmentation could have, on the one hand, negative effects on political membership if such segmentation gives rise to an acute level of hostility and conflict. Nevertheless, social segmentation or heterogeneity in contexts which are not so conflictual, thanks to the institutionalisation of this heterogeneity, may have net positive effects on associative political participation thanks to the self-organisation that it favours. Graph 6.15, however, leads us to conclude that neither of these hypotheses seems to be confirmed in western societies.

Graph 6.15. Social Segmentation and Political Membership



In effect, the relationship between social segmentation –in its three forms- and general political membership is practically non-existent and not clearly consistent with any of the directions we would expect it to take. The only exception is the relationship that is established between religious pluralism and membership of organisations linked to the NSMs. In this case, it seems that religious heterogeneity can be a motive of more self-organisation

and mobilisation of the various social collectivities, in such a way that it increases support of organisations linked to the NSMs. A good example of this is the role played by organisations with religious roots in social movements –especially the peace movement- in many European countries such as the Netherlands (Kriesi and van Praag 1987). Often, various organisations linked to the NSMs replicate religious cleavages, for example, between Catholics and Protestants; giving, thus, rise to a larger number of organisations; at the same time as the churches serve as places of mobilisation and recruitment.

In summary, bivariate analyses allow us to reject the relevance of the social segmentation related to ethno-linguistic and religious cleavages to explain the global phenomenon of political membership. However, our results seem to indicate that the polarisation around the main cleavage –socio-economic differences, as manifest in the left-right ideological dimension- is indeed related to political membership, and to the cross-national variations among western countries.

6.3.3. The Organisational Heritage of the Past: Consolidating Mobilisation Structures

The third aspect of the mobilisation context that I will take into account are the historical traditions of political mobilisation. These may have an effect on present levels of political membership through various mechanisms.

In the first place, in those countries where political mobilisation has been important in the past it is very likely that there will remain, over time, a set of networks and infrastructures of mobilisation that will serve to support present and future mobilisation. Inter-organisational networks and resources for mobilisation contribute to the emergence and development of new groups, organisations and movements that may resort to existing infrastructures to carry out their own activities. In this sense the fruits of past cooperation and mobilisation are transferred into the

present thanks to the resources available to new organisations. Hence, the costs of citizen organisation will be lower in those countries in which there already exist high levels of organisational resources and infrastructures, and higher where they are less frequent.

This possible relationship between past mobilisation and present mobilisation linked via the existence of organisational resources has been pointed out, although generally not systematically tested, by various scholars. Thus, Stinchcombe (1965: 153) argued the following:

> "Because literacy, urbanisation, money economy, political revolution, and previously existing organisational density affect the variables leading to high motivation to found organisations and the variables increasing the chances for success of new organisational forms, they tend to increase the rate at which new organisational forms are developed. Such, at least, is the current theory, which remains at a relatively low level of verification." (my underlining).

For his part, Olson (1986 [1982]: 58 ff.) claims that the number of organisations increases over time in stable societies: once they have overcome the fixed costs of mobilisation, organisations tend to perpetuate themselves, thus giving rise to an accumulation of groups and associations over time. According to Olson, collective co-ordination, being costly, requires a long gestation period, in the sense that it does not spontaneously come about under every circumstance but, once it has, it establishes the bases to reproduce itself and multiply the self-organisation of social groups. Olson (1986 [1982]: 62) expressed this concisely in the form of the following hypothesis:

> "Stable societies, whose frontiers have not been rectified, tend to accumulate more agreements and organisations for collective action as time goes by."

Walker (1991: chapter 5) does provide data that supports some of these hypotheses. His study of interest groups in Washington

allowed him to demonstrate the importance of the support of already existing organisations for the creation of new ones. Associations frequently help to create new ones with the aim of generating wider organisational networks that will allow them to reinforce their positions when defending causes that are fairly "volatile", or when defending social sectors that are particularly disadvantaged (p. 80).

On the other hand, past experiences in mobilisation and collective coordination can be transferred to present behaviour by means of the creation of a certain culture of co-operation and mobilisation. If organisations with political objectives have been successful when recruiting members and mobilising citizens, a series of favourable orientations towards collective action, and a set of beliefs about its effectiveness and suitability to reach collective goals will be formed. The absence of extensive past experience of political membership probably contributes to more reticence on the part of individuals who might potentially take part in collective action (see Olson 1986 [1982]: 58).

Although both mechanisms are, probably, relevant when explaining the differences between countries in terms of present levels of political membership, in this research I give more weight to the structural factor:[63] the prior existence and accumulation of infrastructures and resources for action and co-operation facilitate the development of political organisations, and therefore, promote political membership.

One of the possible ways of operationalising these legacies of past mobilisation in structural terms consists of considering the levels of organisational development of those political organisations that have been historically more important: political parties and unions. As I have argued before, it is reasonable to think that where people have traditionally participated in an organised way in politics –especially in parties and unions- there

[63] In contast to the second mechanism of a more cultural or attitudinal nature that I have just pointed out.

will be positive "sequelae".[64] For this reason, I use as basic indicators of organisational legacies the membership of political parties and unions in each country during the period 1945-1960.[65] This period is the most suitable as a point of reference for organisational legacies and historical mobilisation because World War II led to important changes in the structure of politics and political organisations,[66] and because from the 1960s onwards participation in parties and unions began –in general terms- to decline but at a different pace in the various countries, and thus an indicator that covered a longer period could well be distorted.

It is important to highlight that the spillover effects to which I am referring affect all types of political associations, both traditional and of the new type. Research on new social movements shows that there is not always a radical separation between these two types of organisations, and that organisational interconnections are important to understand the success or failure of mobilisation (Kriesi and van Praag 1987, Schmitt 1989). Good organisational relations between new and traditional political organisations leads to an increase in the available resources for action. In this sense, works such as Klandermans' (1997: 66) confirm the relationship between traditional and new political organisations, and support the hypothesis of the importance of organisational structural legacies:

> "To a large extent, the formation of movement networks is accomplished by co-optation of indigenous organisations (church

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[64] This type of connection between past participation and present participation can be found, in addition to the literature on social capital, in historical studies on 19th century associational membership and sociability (c.f., degl'Innocenti 1984, Baravelli 1999).

[65] Membership density of parties and unions has been calculated over the total population and not over the number of electors and active population respectively.

[66] Long term historical traditions have not been analysed because they complicate the causal connections of the explanation, and because, in principle, they should be reflected in the period in question –or on the contrary their influence is debatable.

parishes, chapters of unions, political parties, or women's organisations, community organisations and so on). […] By co-opting, let's say, a national church organisation a movement gains access to church parishes all over the country. […] Similar examples can be given of movements that successfully co-opted such organisations as political parties and labour unions."

Table 6.11 shows the distribution of the two indicators of membership density that I use to measure the historical organisational legacies in each country. The indications of previous research lead me to expect, as I have said, that past levels of membership density of parties and unions will be positively related to present levels of political membership in its different forms.

Table 6.11. Indicators of Organisational Legacies

	Party membership (average 1945-60) [a]	Party membership x 1000 inhabs. (average 1945-60) [a]	Union membership (1950) [b]	Union membership x 1000 inhabs. (1950) [b]
Austria	1,106,531	159.6	1,290,581	186.1
Sweden	1,101,000	157.0	1,298,300	185.1
Denmark	598,000	140.0	656,400	153.7
Finland	440,500	109.9	n.a.	n.a.
Norway	324,000	99.2	488,400	149.6
Italy	3,989,000	84.7	5,830,410	123.8
Netherlands	680,000	67.2	1,023,040	101.2
Great Britain	3,250,000	64.8	7,827,900	156.2
Belgium	463,462	53.6	887,319	102.7
France	924,000	22.1	3,600,000	86.1
Ireland	59,000	19.9	113,789	38.4
W. Germany	1,072,422	15.7	5,454,183	79.8
Portugal	0	0	0	0
Spain	0	0	0	0
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	1,006,000	71.8
Iceland	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Switzerland	n.a.	n.a.	443,500	94.1
United States	n.a.	n.a.	16,300,000	107.0

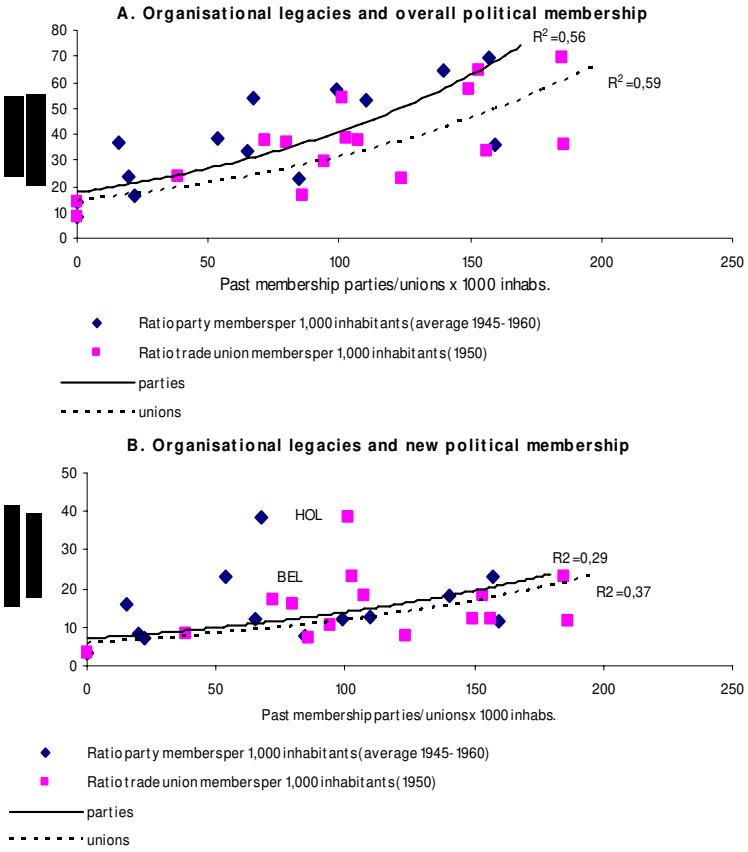
Sources: [a] Katz and Mair (eds.) (1992). For Belgium, data from 1960; for Denmark, data from Scarrow (2000: 89) and an average for 1950-1960. [b] Ebbinghaus (1993); Statistics Canada; US Department of Labor.

In effect, the reduction of the organisational investment costs when creating new organisations that the existence of structures and organisational traditions provides, is especially important for the organisations of the NSMs since these are, frequently, the ones that have the least resources in the development phase, as they have much less access to public resources. For this reason, I predict that both the membership density of parties and of unions will have a clear relationship to levels of new political membership.

Graph 6.16 provides results that support these hypotheses. Dispersion diagram A reflects the existence of a strong positive and exponential relationship between membership levels of both parties and unions in the mid-20th century and general levels of political membership at the beginning of the 1990s. Besides, the results seem to indicate that the historical organisational development of political parties is slightly more determinant, in general terms, for levels of present political membership than the organisational development of the unions. In the case of new political membership, logically the predictive capacity of past organisational development is weaker.[67] Nevertheless, the relationship between the historical legacy and present behaviour is still remarkable; and much more so when we eliminate the clearly atypical case –as has been explained above- of the Netherlands. When we exclude the Dutch case the R^2 of the exponential relationship between past party membership and new political membership increases from 0.29 to 0.40; while in the case of union membership the change is from an initial R^2 of 0.37 to 0.47.

[67] It is worth remembering that the variable of general political membership includes membership of political parties and unions, so it is natural that the relation of dependency between the past and the present is much higher when we include these forms of political membership than when we only consider membership of political organisations linked to the NSMs.

Graph 6.16. Organisational Legacies and Political Membership



Without doubt, these results, whilst still descriptive, allow us to claim that the role of historical traditions of mobilisation and organisation is important to understand the present, and that we should not ignore the relevance of the accumulation of resources and infrastructures for action over time. In short, the legacies of the past seem to be important; although it is not strictly necessary

–but probably neither superfluous- to resort to cultural explanations in order to take into account the effect that these legacies have on the present.

6.4. Conclusions

This chapter has shown that there is enough empirical evidence to justify the detailed analyses of the impact of the socio-political context on the individual decisions to join political organisations. As we have seen, several aspects that are linked to the POS of western democracies –among others, the degree of decentralisation, the fragmentation of the political elites, and the porousness of the system of interest-representation- show a clear relation to the aggregate levels of political membership of these countries. In addition, the patterns of socio-political mobilisation that exist in each of these nations do also seem to bear a close connection to the propensity of their citizens to participate in political organisations. The exploratory results shown in this chapter, thus, provide further stimuli to incorporate these types of factors in a more complete model of why do western citizens join (or not join) political organisations.

Besides reflecting on the results that I have shown in this chapter, I should also mention here some other features of the institutional and mobilisation context of the western countries studied that have not been analysed here, despite their great relevance for defining the citizens' opportunities to join political organisations. For example, I have not been able to take into account, due to a lack of adequate data, the extent to which the different levels of "patronage" (see Walker 1991) of each society affect the associative political behaviour of its citizens. It would have been especially interesting to examine whether the different levels of membership of political organisations that we find in western countries are linked to the differential subsidising behaviour of the different States. As many scholars have pointed, a solution to the dilemma of collective action is the intervention of

an external agent that enables co-operation by means of positive or negative incentives (see Ordeshook 1986: 206-225, Laver 1997: chapter 3). The State can –and very frequently does- play a determining role in the promotion of political membership, not only through the creation of participative channels,[68] but also by expressly fostering the creation and maintenance of organisations that collaborate with diverse institutional agencies in the provision of services or in decision-making.[69]

Another fundamental aspect, related, on this occasion, to mobilisation on the part of organisations, and that has not been possible to include in this study due to the lack of data, are the specific recruitment strategies that predominate in each country. Rothenberg's model (1988, 1989 and 1992), which describes the process of approaching and joining political associations as an "experiential search " leads us to conclude that the decision to join a group of this type is very contingent on the circumstances that surround the individual. In this sense, the context in which the individual decision takes place and, especially, the opportunities to participate, as well as the mobilisation and recruitment efforts of the organisations themselves, seems crucial. For his part, Johnson (1998) demonstrates the great importance of mobilisation and recruitment strategies for political organisations, especially public interest groups, to recruit new members and he expresses it in strong terms like this:

> "Collective interests do not explain group membership -recruiting activity does. this is the case because people who have an interest in a collective good do not tend to be 'self-starters' who seek out and join groups. Instead they must be sought out, pursued, enticed, and persuaded. [...] Rather, to understand the groups that exist, one must understand that there are organizers and recruiting strategies whose efforts must somehow interact with the attitudinal basis of support in the community." (p. 60)

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[68] See some work on initiatives to promote citizen participation in Font (2001), Blanco and Gomà (2002), and Navarro (1998 and 2002).

[69] See the work collected in Kuhnle and Selle (1992) on the relationship between governments and voluntary associations, as well as Walker (1991).

Besides, his data clearly point to the existence of many different types of recruitment among organisations, that are especially related to the size of the organisations themselves and their degree of professionalisation. It is currently not possible to obtain comparative data on a wide range of western countries regarding the variation in recruitment strategies on the part of political organisations. But a passing observation by anyone when traveling and staying in several of the countries under study in this Thesis would lead one to think that, in effect, these strategies vary considerably between the organisations of one country and another. The probabilities of being approached by an activist of any environmental, human rights or any other type of organisation in the street is very different in large cities such as London, Amsterdam or Madrid. And it is also quite different the chance of receiving requests for contributions by mail, if we compare the United States and most European countries.

In conclusion, the results presented in this chapter show that political opportunity structures and the patterns and traditions of mobilisation of each society have a relevant impact on citizens' propensity to join organisations that seek political objectives. And, very likely, our limitations when measuring adequately these characteristics of western political systems make our conclusions more conservative than they might have been.

CHAPTER 7. ATTITUDES, RESOURCES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND MOBILISATION: A MULTILEVEL MODEL OF POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP

"Human actions, social contexts and institutions work upon each other in complicated ways, and these complex, interactive processes of action and the formation of meaning are important to political life." (March and Olsen 1984:742)

7.1. Introduction

Chapter 6 gave us the opportunity to explore the bivariate relationship between the different characteristics of western political systems and the levels of political membership among their citizens as a whole. As we have seen, certain aspects of the institutional organisation of western democracies, together with certain characteristics of the forms and traditions in which these societies are mobilised, seem relevant to an understanding of the significant differences that exist between them in terms of their citizens' participation in associations of a political nature.

This chapter takes a further step forward in analysing the impact of contextual factors on political membership in western countries, in order to verify if the relationships that have emerged in the previous chapter are still valid when several factors are taken into account simultaneously. In the following pages I will

thus combine analyses at both the individual and the contextual level, using multivariate models that will allow us to assess the combined impact that variables of the political environment have on individual behaviour and, more importantly, once we control for the socio-economic and behavioural characteristics of individuals.

As we shall see, the hypotheses that relate the political context to political participation are indeed useful for the analysis of parcipitative behaviour among western citizens. This is especially relevant, as the former hypotheses were developed in the field of social movements studies. This chapter will demonstrate, using multivariate and multilevel analyses, that it is necessary to take the political and institutional context into account, along with the level of political mobilisation that surrounds individuals, in order to properly understand the factors that lead some people to join political organisations while others do not.

Extensive use will be made throughout this chapter of multilevel statistical models. Chapter 4 contained a brief introduction to these models, but at this point it is worth reminding the reader of their particular usefulness – and of the fact that they are almost essential – given that the type of hypotheses that we are testing requires inferences to be made between different levels of aggregation.

Multilevel models (also known as hierarchical or random-coefficient models) are designed to allow for the proper statistical analysis of data that are "naturally" structured in several hierarchies or levels (e.g. individuals within households and within districts, or individuals within regions and within countries), in such a way that it is possible to introduce variables related to the different levels of aggregation and assess their effects on a particular phenomenon that occurs at the lower aggregate level (see Hox 1995, Goldstein 1995, Kreft and de Leeuw 1998, Snijders and Bosker 1999). In this study, as we have already seen, the two levels of aggregation are individuals and nations, in such a way that the dependent variable, i.e. membership of political groups, is measured at an individual level,

and explanatory variables are measured at both the individual and the national level. The traditional methods that consist of disaggregating the super-unit variables (i.e. country-level variables) and of allocating to each observation (the individual) the value from the super unit to which they belong (the country) present serious estimation problems which are all too frequently disregarded by analysts.[1] As Hox emphatically states (1995: 4):

> "a few data values from a small number of super units are 'blown up' into values for a much larger number of subunits. Ordinary statistical tests treat all these disaggregated data values as independent information from this much larger sample."

We generally, therefore, underestimate the standard errors and invalidly reject the null hypothesis of an absence of relationship more frequently than we should.

An added advantage of multilevel methods is that they allow one to assess a single model for all countries, at the same time that they estimate the variation for each country in relation to the general model and, thus, a variance coefficient related to the higher level that allows us to assess the reduction in the variation of our dependent variable when we include environmental and contextual variables. The models shown on the following pages have the following structure:

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = ?_{00} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} ß_{h0} x_{hij} + \sum_{k=1}^{q} ?_{0k} z_{kj} + \sum_{k=1}^{q} \sum_{h=1}^{p} ?_{hk} z_{kj} x_{hij} + U_{0j} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} U_{hj} x_{hij}$$

(Equation 7.1)

Where,
i = individual i for I = 1, 2, 3, ..., n;

---

[1] This occurs, for example, when ordinary least squares regressions or logistic regressions are used with variables that assign the value of the context variable to each individual, in such a way that if there are 1,000 individuals in the national sample for country X, we will have 1,000 cases with the same value for the contextual variable.

j = country j, for J = 1, 2, 3, …, N;
π_{ij} = p_{ij}/1-p_{ij}, y p_{ij} = prob(y_{ij} = 1), and y = 1 = belongs to some political association;
β = estimated parameters at individual level (level 1)
x = variables measured at individual level (level 1)
? = average estimated parameters at national level (level 2)
z = variables measured at national level (level 2)
U_{0j} = variance or error parameter between countries associated with parameter $?_{0j}$
U_{hj} = variance or error parameters between countries associated with parameters β_{h0}

In this way, these series of models estimate the variance of countries around the general model, either in terms of variance around the intercept (U_{0j}) or in terms of variance around the individual-level variables coefficients (U_{hj}).

7.2. Is Context Really Important? A Multivariate Exploration

To what extent do opportunities for participation and the mobilisation context contribute to condition the associative behaviour of citizens? As I have discussed in previous chapters, I am focusing in this study on the opportunities for participation offered by the institutional configuration of each of the western societies examined, as well as on the structures and mobilisation patterns available to the citizens of these countries.

Given the greater limitations of the data available in relation to socio-political mobilisation, and the resulting reduction in the number of countries for which this kind of information is available, I will first make a separate examination of each of the factors relating to the openness of the political system and to mobilisation, which will subsequently be combined in a multilevel model of political membership.

7.2.1. The Openness of Political Systems and Political Membership

As I have discussed in chapter 6, it is possible to identify at least three basic elements in the openness of western political systems: (1) the plurality of points of access to the political decision-making system, (2) the fragmentation of political elites, and (3) the porousness of the administrative decision-making process. We can, in turn, distinguish between two components that make up the first of these three elements: (i) the degree to which the power of the State is decentralised, and (ii) the availability of direct democratic institutions. As was also shown in chapter 6, many of these aspects would seem to be inter-related, at least in bivariate terms, with the level of political membership in western democracies.

However, the limited number of countries (18) for which we have data[2] also makes it necessary to reduce the number of variables relating to the openness of the political system that can be considered simultaneously. As a result, I have used a principal components analysis to explore the empirical dimensionality of the indicators of openness, and selected those variables that best represent each element in the openness of western political systems. The results of these analyses[3] indicate the usefulness of distinguishing between two types of decentralisation – general subnational decentralisation and the autonomy of the local units – which are represented more adequately by each of the two variables that display greater loadings on the two factors resulting from the rotation of the dimensional analyses:[4] Lijphart's

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[2] Of course, this is a subjective opinion regarding the limitations of this number of cases when applying frequentist statistical techniques. Processing data from 18 countries actually means having quite a broad amount of information for common comparative studies.

[3] The results can be seen in Table A7.1 in Appendix 3.

[4] The fact that we have only 18 cases prevents the use of confirmatory factor analysis. Nevertheless, Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998: chapter 3) indicate that the results of analysing principal components and factors are usually empirically similar. Furthermore, these authors also consider it

federalism-decentralisation index, and the percentage of local public spending as a proportion of total public spending. In the case of the direct democracy indicators, their limited number (three) makes it advisable to select the indicator most associated with our dependent variable: the index relating to the formal regulation of direct democracy. Finally, for the two remaining groups of indicators (fragmentation and porousness), I will use those which respectively provide a better representation of each element, as evaluated by their loadings on the principal components:[5] Lijphart's effective number of parliamentary parties (1971-1996), and Siaroff's condensed corporatism index. Table 7.1 shows the distribution of each of the five variables of openness that I will, therefore, be using in the multivariate analyses that follow.[6]

Some earlier studies (Roller and Wessels 1996, Wessels 1997) are restricted to an analysis of the relationship between contextual variables, basically relating to aspects of the socio-economic modernisation of specific countries, and public participation through aggregate analyses. It is therefore interesting to consider the effect of our indicators relating to the openness of political systems without, to start with, including individual-level variables. This will allow us subsequently to examine the extent to which some of these relationships are spurious and reflect a variation that is similar to certain individual characteristics.

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appropriate to rotate the axes of the principal components in order to obtain a clearer interpretation of the factor loadings.

[5] The results can be seen in Tables A7.2 and A7.3 in Appendix 3.

[6] An analysis of the correlation between the five variables shows that there are no problems of multicolinearity or close inter-relation between some dimensions and others - the largest correlation is 0.32 (between the effective number of parties and the corporatism index) and is not statistically significant. We can, therefore, be sure that these five variables represent differing dimensions of the openness of western political systems.

Table 7.1. Five Dimensions and Variables Relating to the Openness of Western Political Systems

Country	General decentralisation	Local autonomy	Formal regulation of direct democracy	Effective number of parties (Lijphart, 1971-96)	Corporatism index (Siaroff)
Austria	4.5	14.8	7	2.72	5
Belgium	3.2	12.74	2.5	5.49	2.75
Canada	5	25.29	3.75	2.35	1.1
Denmark	2	51.66	7	5.11	3.58
Finland	2	40.14	4.5	5.17	3.46
France	1.3	15.22	6.25	3.54	1.46
Great Britain	1	24.57	1.5	2.2	1.58
Iceland	1	21.99	5.2	4	3
Ireland	1	24.81	6	2.76	2.05
Italy	1.5	28.97	8	5.22	1.58
Netherlands	3	30.02	0	4.68	4.27
Norway	2	32.79	3.5	3.61	4.92
Portugal	1	10.63	5	3.33	1
Spain	3	22.78	7.5	2.76	1
Sweden	2	35.47	4.5	3.52	4.81
Switzerland	5	21.91	9	5.57	3.37
USA	5	41.06	5.8	2.41	1.1
West Germany	5	12.49	3	2.84	3.31

Sources: see Tables 6.1, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.6 in chapter 6.

The models shown in Table 7.2 have the following functional form, which is a variation on Equation 7.1 shown earlier:

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = ?_{00} + \sum_{k=1}^{q} ?_{0k} z_{kj} + U_{0j}$$

(Equation 7.2)

Given that union membership can be questioned as being strictly equivalent to membership of other political groups,[7] particularly in countries in which levels of union membership are very high and closely linked to the obtention by members of social benefits and services, models 1c and 1d replicate these analyses while excluding union membership from the dependent variable. Furthermore, in this case, it may be argued that the possible relationship between levels of corporatist development and political membership may be strongly biased by the inclusion of union membership along with other forms of political

[7] See the discussion in this regard in chapter 2 of this Thesis.

membership, since one of the main features of the more developed corporatist systems is the existence of strong unions with strong support among the work force.

In addition, models 1c and 1d incorporate a dummy variable that identifies the countries of southern Europe (France, Italy, Spain and Portugal) which, as we have seen in previous chapters, show lower levels of political membership. These models allow us to determine the extent to which factors relating to openness contribute to an explanation of the exceptionality of these countries.

The results contribute to draw several very interesting conclusions. In the first place, the change in the random parameters reflects the fact that the introduction of the variables relating to openness, even without individual-level variables, allows us to take partial account of the differences in political membership among citizens in western democracies, both if we include union memberships and if we exclude them. The progressive increase in R^2 and the parallel reduction in the proportion of non-explained variance that is attributable to the national level, implies that these variable are relevant in explaining the phenomenon of political membership.

Table 7.2. Political Membership and the Openness of the Political System: Contextual Effects

Variables	Model 0 with unions	Model 0a with unions	Model 1a with unions	Model 1b with unions	Model 0b without unions	Model 1c without unions	Model 1 without unions
Fixed parameters (level = country)							
Intercept	-0.5	n.s.	**-0.55**	-0.16	**-0.78**	**-1.12**	**-0.91**
General decentralisation			n.s.	n.s.		**0.15**	**0.12**
Local autonomy			**0.04**	0.02		**0.02**	**0.01**
Formal regulation of direct democracy			-0.12	n.s.		**-0.12**	**-0.08**
Effective number of parties			n.s.	**3.45**		n.s.	**1.52**
Effective no. of parties (squared)			n.s.	**-0.42**		n.s.	**-0.18**
Corporatism index (Siaroff)			**0.37**	n.s.		0.72	n.s.
Corporatism index (squared)			n.s.	n.s.		-0.09	n.s.
Southern Europe (dummy)		**-1.75**		**-1.79**	**-1.29**		**-0.96**
Random parameters (level = country)							
$u_j \sim N(0, ?_u)$: $?_u$	**0.85**	**0.32**	**0.24**	**0.09**	**0.11**	**0.07**	**0.03**
u_{0j} [intercept] *	**0.85 (0.92)**	**0.32 (0.57)**	**0.24 (0.48)**	**0.09 (0.30)**	**0.11 (0.33)**	**0.07 (0.27)**	**0.03 (0.18**
Intra-class correlation +	0.20	0.09	0.07	0.03	0.09	0.02	0.01
R^2 dicho§	0	0.14	0.13	0.18	0.03	0.08	0.10
% unexplained level 2 variance	20	8	6	2	3	2	1
Number of cases (no. of countries)	26,268 (18)	26,,68 (18)	26,268 (18)	26,268 (18)	26,268 (18)	26,268 (18)	26,268 (1

Source: Own ellaboration using data from the 1990-93 WVS. All coefficients indicate the change (increase or decrease) occurring in the natural logarithm of the odds ratio (p/1-p) o
dependent variable (membership of any political association = 1, non-membership = 0) when the explanatory variable in question increases by one unit. The contextual variables are cen

Secondly, we can conclude that these variables are more useful in partially explaining the low levels of political membership among citizens in southern Europe when we exclude union membership. In other words, the lower level of openness of political systems in southern Europe contributes to an understanding of the lower levels of participation in political associations among their citizens, though the causes of lower levels of union membership must be sought elsewhere. As has already been pointed out, union membership would seem to be a phenomenon that is somewhat different from the other forms of political membership. Likewise, we see that, as a whole, the different aspects of the openness of political systems are more relevant in explaining non-union political membership, since practically all the variables are significant in models 1c and 1d, while they are not in models 1a and 1b.

Thirdly, it should be emphasised that considering the countries of southern Europe separately cancels the effect of the indicator on corporatism and strengthens the effect of the indicator relating to the fragmentation of political elites. This is very interesting, because both variables (and in particular the one relating to the fragmentation of political elites) have a notable effect on the likelihood of political membership. Graphs 7.1 and 7.2 allow us to observe the magnitude of these contextual effects more clearly.

As we can see, the effects of corporatism on political membership would seem to be notable, particularly when we exclude union membership, a fact that is even more important when we bear in mind that the variation between countries as regards levels of political membership among citizens is substantially lower when we do not include union membership.[8]

However, this whole effect disappears when we include the dummy for the countries of southern Europe in the model, while at the same time revealing the strong relationship with the fragmentation of parliamentary political elites.

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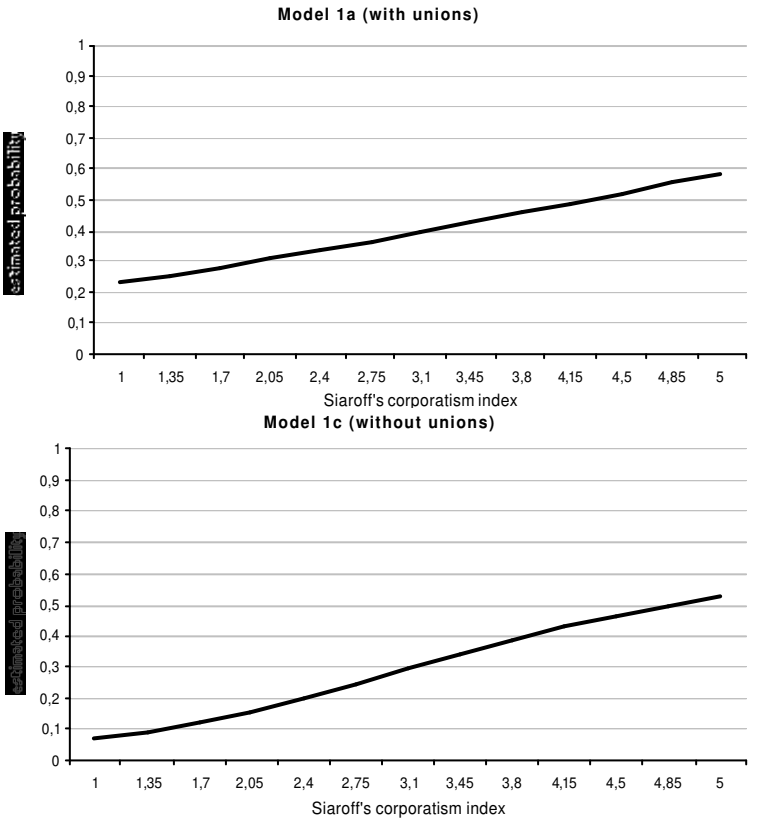
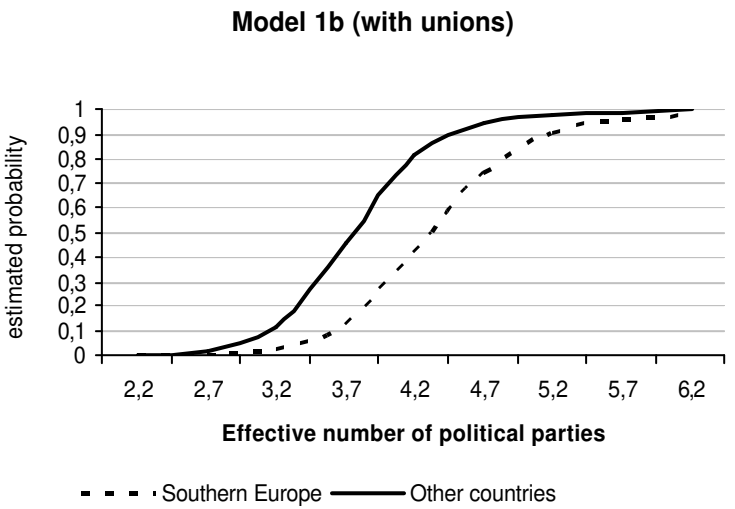
[8] The variance of the intercept is 0.32 in model 0a and 0.11 in model 0b.

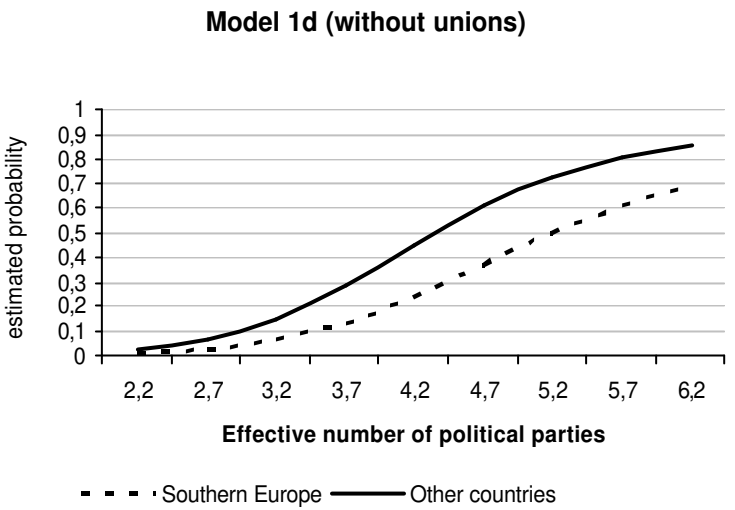
Graph 7.1. Political Membership and the Level of Corporatism



Although the effect of fragmentation of the elites is tempered slightly when we exclude union membership, this effect continues to be notable. If we maintain the other aspects of the openness of the political system constant at their average levels, we can see that citizens in two-party and limited multi-party democracies show a tendency to join political organisations that is up to 3 or 4 times lower than that of citizens of extremely multi-partisan democracies.

Graph 7.2. Political Membership and the Fragmentation of Parliamentary Elites

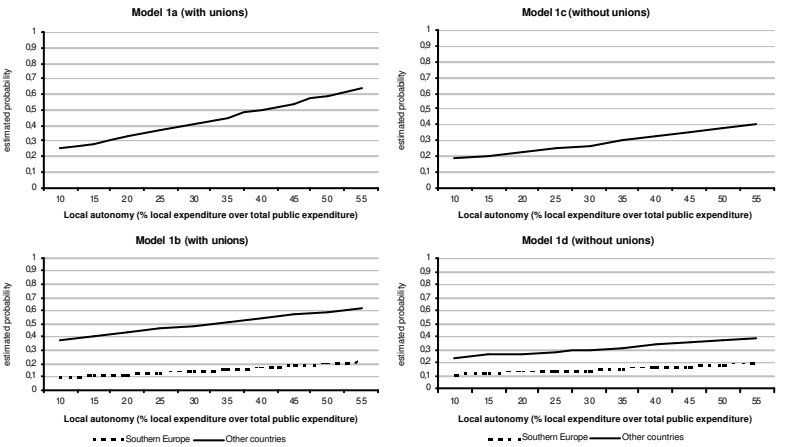




Finally, it is very interesting to confirm that the level of budgetary autonomy enjoyed by local or municipal governments is

related to the levels of political membership in all the models, both with or without unions and with or without the southern Europe indicator (Graph 7.3).

Graph 7.3. Political Membership and Local Autonomy



These results would seem to indicate that the autonomy of local governments is important when it comes to conditioning participation by citizens, and that, as Dahl and Tufte indicated (1973: 5):

> "A democratic polity must be completely autonomous, because otherwise its citizens could not be fully self-governing: some of their decisions would be limited by the power or authority of individuals or groups outside the citizen body."

The importance of the results relating to decentralisation at the local level and the lack of importance of more general decentralisation variables point to the relevance of sub-national contexts that, in any case, are dependent on national configurations and regulations. The decentralisation of all the

powers of the State may not be sufficiently important as an incentive to citizens' participation if this does not result in real autonomy for local communities. By the same token, the formal centralisation of the State and the absence of regional or provincial entities does not restrict participation if it is compensated by a high level of local autonomy. As Alexis de Tocqueville argued:

> "[municipal institutions] simultaneously offer the people a love of freedom and the art of being free." (1980a: 270); "Local freedoms, which cause a large number of citizens to value the affection of their friends and allies, unceasingly push people towards each other, in spite of their isolationist tendencies, in that they force them to offer mutual support to each other." (1980b: 94).

However, these results are still only partial, since some of these relationships may turn out to be spurious when we take into account the effect of the resources, the social status and the civic and political orientation of citizens, as well as their variations across countries.

Table 7.3 shows four multilevel models of political membership which respectively include and exclude union membership from the operationalisation of the dependent variable.

Models 2a and 2b, which only include variables measured at an individual level, serve as reference points for evaluating the better adjustment of models 3a and 3b to the data, which incorporate the variables relating to the context of the openness of political systems.[9]

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[9] Excluded from these four models are family income and the size of the community variables, because the samples from Iceland and Finland do not include them, and their inclusion in these models would entail that we would loose these two countries, thus reducing the number of countries from 17 to 15. Switzerland is excluded from all these and subsequent analyses because its sample also omits several explanatory variables, and what is more important, some of the variables relating to membership of new political groups. See Appendix 1 for more information in this regard.

Table 7.3. Political Membership and the Openness of the Political System: Individual and Contextual Effects

Variables	Model 2a (with unions)	Model 3a (with unions)	Model 2b (without unions)	Model 3b (without unions)
Intercept	-2.32	-2.32	-3.72	-3.72
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)				
Education	**0.94**	**0.94**	**1.26**	**1.25**
Income	---	---	---	---
Income (squared)	---	---	---	---
Employment situation (ref= +30h)				
Works <30 h.	**-0.27**	**-0.26**	**0.15**	**0.16**
Inactive	**-0.67**	**-0.67**	**-0.25**	**-0.25**
Unemployed	**-0.62**	**-0.62**	**-0.32**	**-0.31**
Age	**4.18**	**4.16**	**5.92**	**5.91**
Age (squared)	**-4.31**	**-4.29**	**-3.65**	**-3.63**
Woman (ref=man)	-0.14	-0.14	n.s.	n.s.
With partner (ref=without partner)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Size of community	---	---	---	---
Church attendance	-0.26	-0.25	n.s.	n.s.
Religious membership	**1.09**	**1.09**	**1.02**	**1.02**
Interest in politics	**0.57**	**0.57**	**0.74**	**0.74**
Political efficacy	**0.27**	**0.27**	**0.37**	**0.37**
Inter-personal trust	**0.16**	**0.16**	**0.24**	**0.23**
Values index (ref=materialist)				
Mixed	**0.14**	**0.13**	**0.14**	**0.14**
Post-materialist	**0.50**	**0.49**	**0.50**	**0.50**
Attitude to social change (ref= conservative)				
Radical	n.s.	n.s.	0.21	0.22
Reformist	**0.14**	**0.14**	0.11	0.11
Fixed parameters (country level)				
General decentralisation		n.s.		n.s.
Local autonomy		**0.04**		n.s.
Formal regulation of direct democracy		n.s.		-0.7
Effective number of parties		n.s.		0.12
Effective no. of parties (squared)		n.s.		n.s.
Corporatism index (Siaroff)		0.65		**0.13**
Corporatism index (squared)		-0.09		n.s.
Random parameters (country level)				
u_{ij} ~ N (0, ? $_u$): ? $_u$ †	0.48-0.89	**0.26-0.57**	**0.25-0.37**	**0.16-0.17**
u_{0ij} [intercept] *	**0.89 (0.94)**	**0.57 (0.76)**	**0.37 (0.61)**	**0.17 (0.41)**
u_{1ij} [education]*	**0.22 (0.47)**	**0.21 (0.46)**	**0.27 (0.52)**	**0.27 (0.52)**
u_{2ij} [income]*	---	---	---	---
u_{3ij} [church attendance]*	**0.12 (0.34)**	**0.11 (0.33)**	**0.10 (0.31)**	**0.09 (0.29)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]*	---	---	---	---
u_{5ij} [gender]*	**0.05 (0.23)**	**0.04 (0.21)**	**0.08 (0.28)**	**0.08 (0.28)**
Intra-class correlation * †	0.13-0.21	0.07-0.15	0.07-0.10	0.05-0.05
R^2 dicho § †	0.19-0.17†	0.27-0.25	0.21-0.20	0.55-0.55
% unexplained level 2 variance †	10-18†	5-11	6-8	2-2
Number of cases (no. of countries)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)

Source: Own ellaboration using data from the 1990-93 WVS. All coefficients indicate the change (increase or decrease) occurring in the natural logarithm of the odds ratio (p/1-p) of the dependent variable (membership of any political association = 1, non-membership = 0) when the explanatory variable in question increases by one unit. All the ordinal and quantitative variables at individual level have been recodified so that 0 represents the minimum value and 1 the maximum. The contextual variables are centred around their mean, so that the value 0 corresponds to the average value of the variable for the 17 countries. Only the significant coefficients are shown for p<0.10. The significant coefficients for p<0.05 are underlined, and for p<0.01 they are shown in bold. N.s. = not statistically significant for p<0.10. --- Variables not introduced in order not to loose countries in the analysis (see Appendix 1). * For the variance parameters coefficients the component is expressed in terms of the amount of variance, with the value expressed in terms of standard deviations shown in brackets † Proportion of the total residual variance attributable to the variation between countries. § R^2 for multilevel binomial regressions (see the details on calculation and interpretation in Snijders and Bosker 1999: 225-226). † The first figure corresponds to calculations with all the variables associated with random coefficients set at their maximum value (1), while the second corresponds to the equivalent calculation setting variables at their minimum value (0).

Thus, models 2a and 2b adopt the functional form of Equation 7.3 and models 3a and 3b that of Equation 7.4, both of these being reductions of the general model presented as Equation 7.1 at the beginning of the chapter.

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = ?_{00} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} ß_{h0} x_{hij} + U_{0j} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} U_{hj} x_{hij}$$

(Equation 7.3)

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = ?_{00} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} ß_{h0} x_{hij} + \sum_{k=1}^{q} ?_{0k} z_{kj} + U_{0j} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} U_{hj} x_{hij}$$

(Equation 7.4)

Table 7.4. Correlations between Random Parameter Variances

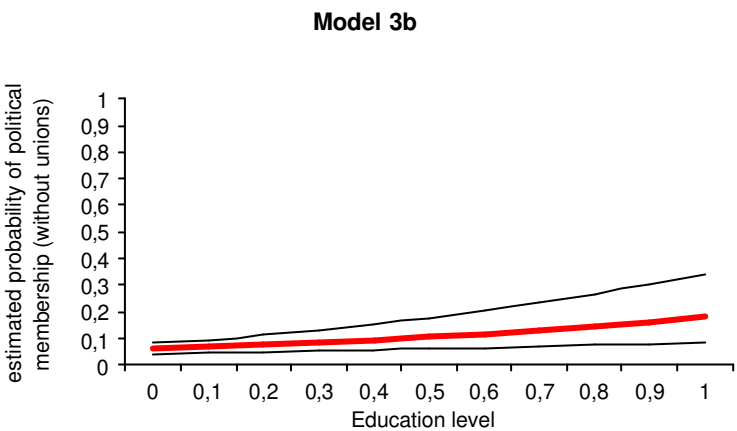
Model 3a	Intercept	Education	Church attendance
Intercept	1.000		
Education	-0.965	1.000	
Church attendance	-0.139	0.164	1.000
Gender	0.042	-0.068	0.148
Model 3b			
Intercept	1.000		
Education	-0.848	1.000	
Church attendance	-0.143	-0.191	1.000
Gender	-0.404	0.214	0.276

Moving on to an analysis of the results, we should first emphasise the substantial improvement in the proportion of explained variance allowed by the inclusion of the variables relating to the openness of the political system in political membership models. This is particularly notable in the case of the model that excludes union membership from the operationalisation of political membership, since the R^2 statistic for model 3b is more

than two times higher than the one for model 3a. It is also important to point out that these variables considerably reduce the dependence of the cross-national variations on the individual-level values for education, church attendance, and gender.

This does not mean, of course, that there is no variation among these coefficients; there is, and this must be interpreted as a clear manifestation that the effect of these three individual characteristics varies depending on the country being examined. For example, Graph 7.4 illustrates the average estimated relationship between political membership and the individual's level of education for the average western country (thick line), and it includes the 95% confidence-level margin around which each country slope varies.

Graph 7.4. Relationship between Education and Political Membership and Margin of Cross-National Variations in this Relationship (95% confidence level)



As we can see, in some countries the relationship between political membership and education is much more noticeable, while in others it is much less pronounced or even non-existent.[10] This would seem once again to confirm the results shown in Table 4.17 (chapter 4), which have already shown that education was an important factor as regards unequal participation in the majority of countries, though it was not in countries such as Sweden, Belgium or Austria, for example.

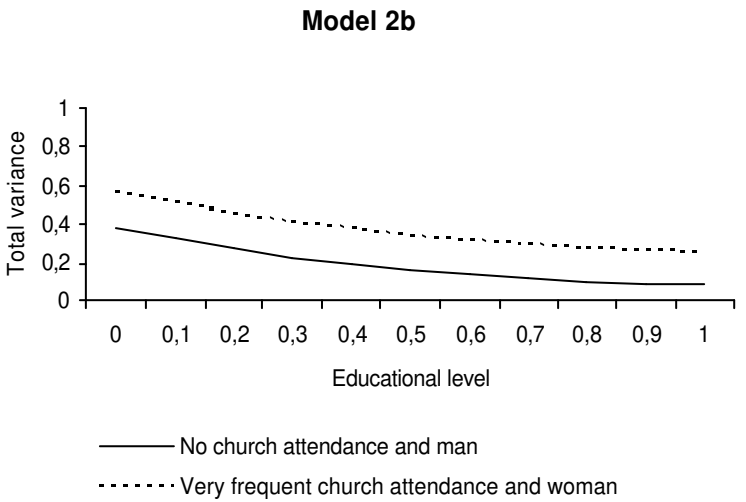
However, what is substantially reduced is the relationship between the residual variation in the model (3b) and the actual values of these variables.[11] In other words, while the results shown in model 2, Table 4.22 in chapter 4 (results which are reproduced in models 2a and 2b in Table 7.2), indicate that the variation across countries which is not explained by the individual-level factors considered is greater for individuals with a value 0 in the five variables with coefficients that vary (men, lower education level, lower income, less church attendance and living in smaller communities), the results shown in model 3b indicate that the introduction of the variables relating to the openness of the political system also contributes to a notable reduction in the residual variation across countries among these individuals (Graph 7.5).

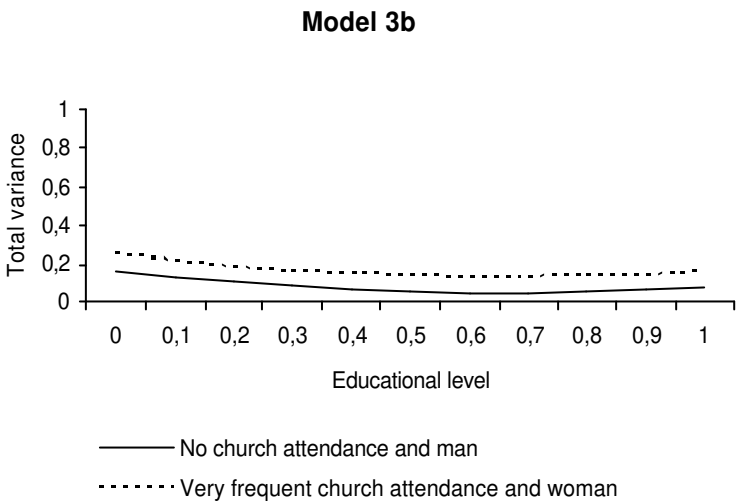
---

[10] For approximately 95% of countries the education coefficient varies between 0.22 and 2.30 (expressed in increments of the natural logarithm of p_{ij}).

[11] In random-coefficient models the residual variation at the higher levels depends on the values adopted by the lower level variables (the x_{ij}). This can be seen in equations 7.3 and 7.4.

Graph 7.5. Residual Variation between Countries, by Levels of Education

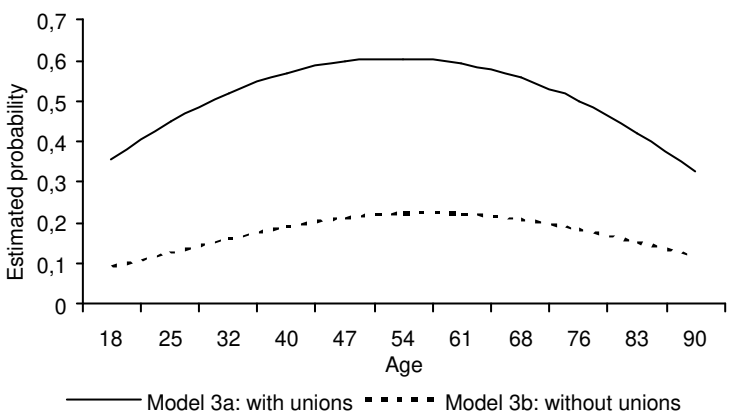




In addition to an interpretation of the random parameters and their variation from model to model, special mention should also be made of the results relating to the fixed parameters, at both the individual and national levels.

In the first place, certain differences in the size and direction of the effects of individual factors are notable. Thus, the effect of education substantially increases when one excludes union membership from political membership, while, on the other hand, the effect of age decreases considerably (see Graph 7.6). Also of great importance is the different effect caused by the employment situation when we include or exclude the unions. In the first case, it is people who work full time (more than 30 hours per week) who have a higher tendency to associate with political groups, though if unions are excluded it is people who work part-time (less than 30 hours per week) who join political associations more.

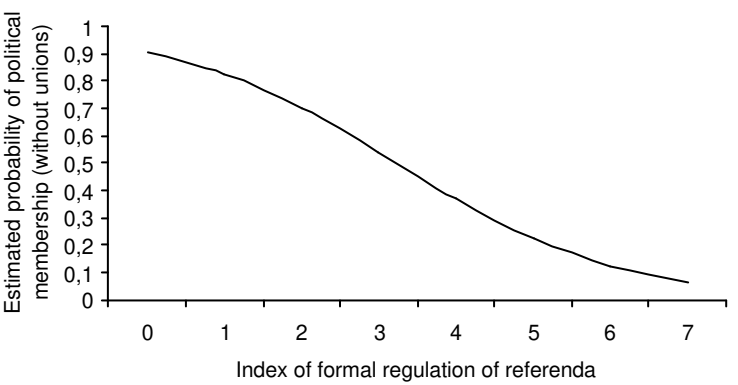
Graph 7.6. Political Membership and Age: Estimated Probabilities



Equally, as one would expect, having no job (inactive and unemployed) reduces the probability of associating with political groups much more when we include the unions than when we

exclude them. Both the fact of being a woman and more frequent church attendance show overall negative effects when we include the unions, but these average effects disappear when we exclude them. Nevertheless, this does not mean that these variables have no impact on political membership. Their random parameters tell us that what is happening is that this impact varies considerably from country to country: in some it is negative while in others it is positive, and finally, in still others it is zero. As regards civic and political orientations and social values, it is worth pointing out that the effect of the former is significantly increased when the unions are excluded and the effect of the latter remains unchanged by this different operationalisation of the dependent variable.

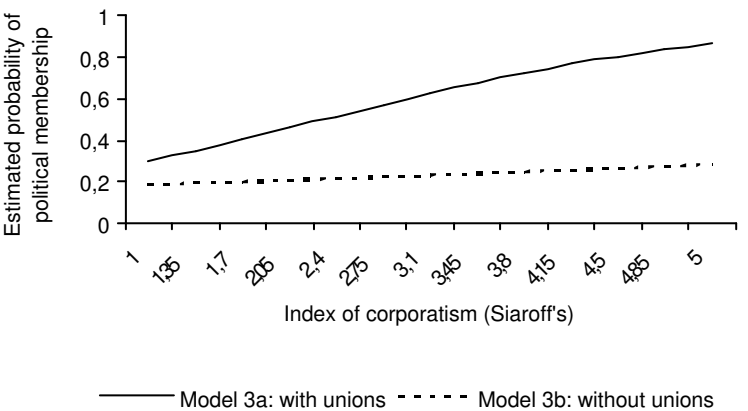
Graph 7.7. Political Membership and the Availability of Direct Democratic Institutions



Secondly, it should be mentioned that the variables relating to openness that are relevant in explaining political membership are affected by the inclusion or exclusion of union membership. Thus, the degree of local autonomy ceases to have an influence when we exclude the unions, while there is a highly negative influence from the availability of direct democracy institutions (Graph 7.7) and a

moderately positive effect from the effective number of parliamentary parties. Only the degree of development of corporatist systems of interest-representation has a clear impact on political membership, either with or without unions, though it is considerably smaller in the latter case (Graph 7.8).

Graph 7.8. Political Membership and Corporatism



Although at first sight it may appear that the effect of some of the openness variables is moderate, it should be borne in mind that, as a general rule, the effect of contextual variables on an individual's behaviour is usually smaller than the effect of the individual's own characteristics, given the generally significant aumount of heterogeneity in individual behaviour within each particular country.

In short, the institutional aspects of western democracies that relate to the openness of the political system to potential demands from their citizens contribute considerably to improving our understanding of political membership among individuals and, above all, the differences seen across countries in this regard.

7.2.2. Socio-Political Mobilisation and Political Membership

The main hypotheses that connect the three aspects relating to the context for mobilisation and citizens' participation in political organisations have already been set out in Chapter 6. As we have seen, we can identify three different aspects of socio-political mobilisation: (1) the mobilisation patterns and structures that already exist, measured by the levels of direct mobilisation to which the citizens of each country are exposed; (2) the levels and forms of cognitive mobilisation, which structure the conceptual frameworks for collective action; and (3) the historical traditions of political mobilisation.

The bivariate analyses shown in Chapter 6 would seem to indicate that these three aspects of the mobilisation context in which citizens act are related to their greater or lesser levels of political membership. Thus, we saw how a greater organisational presence of political organisations, and a greater visibility of new social movements (NSMs) as the instigators of protest, favour general political membership and new forms of political membership respectively, while excessive conflictuality disincentives organisational participation. For their part, different aspects relating to ideological mobilisation would seem to have rather ambiguous effects on participation: ideological polarisation is on occasions related positively to high levels of political membership, and in others it maintains a negative relationship; while religious heterogeneity would seem to favour organised political participation. Finally, the organisational legacy of past mobilisation does seem to have systematically a positive effect on present levels of political membership.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, these results were provisional in as much as they were restricted to an analysis of bivariate relationships at the aggregate level. In the following pages, as in the preceding section, I will put these hypotheses to more stringent tests using multivariate multilevel models. In order to do this, and once again due to the limitations imposed by the number of countries included in this research, I have chosen the

indicators that are most representative of each of the dimensions relating to mobilisation (Table 7.5). [12]

Table 7.5. Indicators on the Mobilisation Context Employed

Country	No. of party branches per 1,000 inhabitants (1985-1989)	No. of protests / population (log)	Citizen polarisation	Party system polarisation	Effective no. of religious groups	No. of union members per 1,000 inhabitants (1950)
Austria	1.14	40.73	3.01	0.70	1.36	186.10
Belgium	0.18	174.33	4.12	2.70	1.60	102.71
Canada	n.a. (0.70)	n.a. (238.63)	2.75	2.10	3.07	71.80
Denmark	0.55	157.64	3.59	24.60	1.06	153.69
Finland	1.55	89.05	4.45	21.10	1.24	n.a. (102.21)
France	0.11	840.72	3.88	21.40	1.23	86.07
Great Britain	n.a. (0.70)	n.a. (238.63)	3.62	0.00	1.65	156.16
Iceland	n.a. (0.70)	50.95	4.85	24.20	1.11	n.a. (102.21)
Ireland	1.42	467.53	3.39	4.90	1.13	38.40
Italy	0.75	127.97	4.48	34.20	1.00	123.77
Netherlands	0.19	n.a. (238.63)	3.98	1.80	3.20	101.16
Norway	1.16	97.42	4.16	16.30	1.13	149.59
Portugal	n.a. (0.70)	95.64	4.54	16.50	1.06	0.00
Spain	0.16	549.33	4.53	7.20	1.02	0.00
Sweden	0.93	108.28	4.39	5.60	1.14	185.10
Switzerland	n.a. (0.70)	n.a. (238.63)	4.36	8.50	2.12	94.06
USA	n.a. (0.70)	n.a. (238.63)	3.21	0.00	2.26	107.05
West Germany	0.29	302.54	2.87	0.60	2.45	79.77

Sources: see Tables 6.8, 6.9, 6.10 and 6.11.
Notes: n.a. = information not available. The figures in brackets shows the average value for all other countries, used to replace these missing values in some of the analyses that follow.

Firstly, the results are shown from various models that successively introduce the mobilisation variables relating to each dimension: structural, cognitive and historical. As is the case with the openness of the political system, the nature of these contextual variables makes it advisable to consider the two operational forms

[12] The number of missing values for each variable and the reduced number of variables for each dimension means that it is impossible to use factor techniques to select the most representative indicators for each theoretical dimension. Practical criteria have therefore been followed in their selection (number of valid values, strength of the bivariate relationship with the dependent variable, etc.).

of the dependent variables used up to this point: with (Table 7.6) and without union membership (Table 7.7). As we shall see, although the exclusion of the unions does not substantially change the results in many cases, in other cases it does. Models 4a1-4a3 and 4b1-4b3 adopt the following functional form:

$$\text{logit}(p_{ij}) = ?_{00} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} ß_{h0} x_{hij} + \sum_{k=1}^{q} ?_{0k} z_{kj} + U_{0j} + \sum_{h=1}^{p} U_{hj} x_{hij}$$

(Equation 7.5)

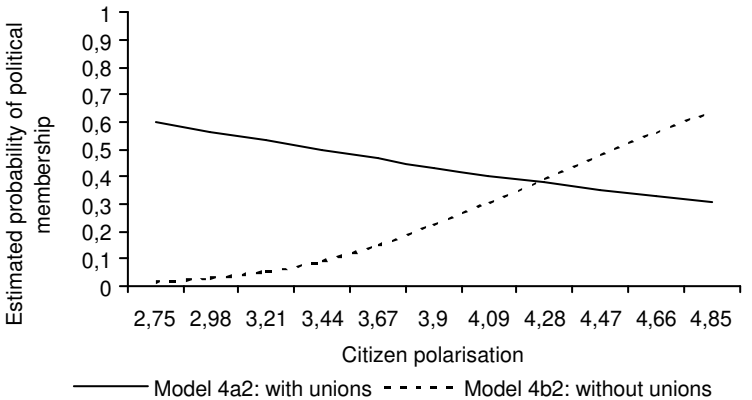
The results shown in Tables 7.6 and 7.7 confirm the preliminary conclusions reached in Chapter 6 regarding the relevance of mobilisation factors in accounting for the political membership of western citizens, and for its cross-national variations. The three dimensions of mobilisation (structural, cognitive and historical) are relevant even when we control for the resources, social status and civic or political orientations of the individual. Furthermore, their effects on political membership are similar and relatively stable whether we include or exclude unions from the category of political associations. The most important difference in this regard occurs in relation to the effect of citizen polarisation. As we may see in Graph 7.9, polarisation is inversely related to membership of political groups when we include the unions, though this relationship becomes a positive one if we exclude them. Furthermore, the religious heterogeneity of a country fosters political membership when we exclude union membership.

Table 7.6. The Mobilisation Context and Political Membership: Step-Wise Models (With Unions)

Variables	Model 2a (with unions)	Model 4a1 (with unions)	Model 4a2 (with unions)	Model 4a3 (with unions)
Intercept	**-2.32**	**-2.62**	**-2.33**	**-2.65**
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)				
Education	**0.94**	**0.65**	**0.94**	**0.92**
Income	---	**1.69**	---	**1.41**
Income (squared)	---	**-0.92**	---	-0.60
Employment situation (ref= +30h)				
Works <30 h.	**-0.27**	**-0.22**	**-0.27**	**-0.23**
Inactive	**-0.67**	**-0.59**	**-0.67**	**-0.66**
Unemployed	**-0.62**	**-0.47**	**-0.62**	**-0.52**
Age	**4.18**	**4.1**	**4.2**	**3.44**
Age (squared)	**-4.31**	**-4.29**	**-4.31**	**-3.16**
Woman (ref=man)	-0.14	n.s.	-0.13	-0.14
With partner (ref=without partner)	n.s.	---	---	---
Size of community	---	---	---	-0.25
Church attendance	-0.26	-0.25	-0.27	-0.27
Religious membership	**1.09**	**1.01**	**1.1**	**1.07**
Interest in politics	**0.57**	**0.55**	**0.57**	**0.57**
Political efficacy	**0.27**	**0.34**	**0.27**	**0.27**
Inter-personal trust	**0.16**	0.11	**0.16**	**0.12**
Values index (ref=materialist)				
Mixed	**0.14**	**0.21**	**0.14**	**0.15**
Post-materialist	**0.50**	**0.65**	**0.50**	**0.52**
Attitude to social change (ref= conservative)				
Radical	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.21
Reformist	**0.14**	0.09	**0.14**	**0.15**
Fixed parameters (country level)				
No. political party branches (x1000 inh.)		**6.01**		
No. political party branches (squared)		**-3.56**		
No. protests relative to population		n.s.		
Citizen polarisation			**-0.58**	
Citizen polarisation (squared)			n.s.	
Party system polarisation			0.03	
Effective no. of religious groups			n.s.	
Tradition of participation (union members x 1000 inhabs. in 1950)				**0.01**
Random parameters (country level)				
$u_{ij} \sim N(0, ?_u)$: $?_u$ †	0.48-0.89	**0.68-0.69**	**0.54-1.05**	**0.21-0.97**
u_{0ij} [intercept] *	**0.89 (0.94)**	**0.69 (0.83)**	**1.05 (1.02)**	**0.97 (0.98)**
u_{1ij} [education]*	**0.22 (0.47)**	0.05 (0.23)	**0.22 (0.47)**	**0.12 (0.35)**
u_{2ij} [income]*	---	**0.33 (0.57)**	---	**0.25 (0.50)**
u_{3ij} [church attendance]*	**0.12 (0.34)**	**0.07 (0.26)**	**0.12 (0.34)**	**0.14 (0.37)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]*	---	---	---	**0.15 (0.38)**
u_{5ij} [gender]*	**0.05 (0.23)**	**0.06 (0.25)**	**0.05 (0.23)**	**0.06 (0.25)**
Intra-class correlation +†	0.13-0.21	0.17-0.17	0.14-0.24	0.06-0.23
R^2 dicho§ †	0.19-0.17	0.24-0.24	0.21-0.19	0.30-0.26
% unexplained level 2 variance †	10-18	13-13	11-20	4-17
Number of cases (no. of countries)	20,815 (17)	12,303 (12)	20,815 (17)	16,063 (15)

Sources and notes: see the footnote to Table 7.3.

Graph 7.9. Polarisation and Political Membership



On the other hand, the reduction in the unexplained variance between countries produced by each dimension is not very spectacular, though mobilisation unquestionably contributes to explaining part of this reduction.

Nevertheless, the overall contribution of mobilisation factors when explaining political membership can be assessed more clearly when all the variables for mobilisation are considered simultaneously. Models 5a and 5b in Table 7.8 jointly combine all the variables that describe the context of socio-political mobilisation for the 17 countries examined.[13]

[13] In calculating models 5a and 5b, the values that are missing due to lack of information are replaced by the average values for all other countries for the following mobilisation variables: number of political party branches per 1,000 inhabitants (5 cases), number of protests weighted by the logarithm of the national population (4 cases), and number of union members per 1,000 inhabitants in 1950 (2 cases). See Table 7.5.

Table 7.7. The Context of Mobilisation and Political Membership: Step-by-Step Models (Without Unions)

Variables	Model 2b (without unions)	Model 4b1 (without unions)	Model 4b2 (without unions)	Model 4b3 (without unions)
Intercept	-3.72	-3.89	-3.72	-3.82
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)				
Education	**1.26**	**0.92**	**1.25**	**1.21**
Income	---	**0.76**	---	**0.83**
Income (squared)	---	**-0.92**	---	-0.60
Employment situation (ref= +30h)				
Works <30 h.	**0.15**	**0.26**	**0.14**	**0.19**
Inactive	**-0.25**	**-0.11**	**-0.25**	**-0.24**
Unemployed	**-0.32**	**-0.20**	**-0.33**	-0.25
Age	**3.92**	**4.05**	**3.93**	**3.20**
Age (squared)	**-3.65**	**-3.85**	**-3.65**	**-2.64**
Woman (ref=man)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
With partner (ref=without partner)	n.s.	---	---	
Size of community	---	---	---	-0.24
Church attendance	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Religious membership	**1.02**	**1.00**	**1.02**	**1.07**
Interest in politics	**0.74**	**0.72**	**0.74**	**0.70**
Political efficacy	**0.37**	**0.46**	**0.37**	**0.38**
Inter-personal trust	**0.24**	**0.20**	**0.24**	**0.17**
Values index (ref=materialist)				
Mixed	**0.14**	**0.19**	**0.14**	0.14
Post-materialist	**0.50**	**0.59**	**0.49**	**0.48**
Attitude to social change (ref= conservative)				
Radical	0.21	0.27	0.22	**0.31**
Reformist	0.11	n.s.	**0.11**	0.12
Fixed parameters (country level)				
No. political party branches (x1000 inh.)		**2.63**		
No. political party branches (squared)		**-1.64**		
No. protests relative to population		n.s.		
Citizen polarisation			2.19	
Citizen polarisation (squared)			-0.31	
Party system polarisation			0.01	
Effective no. of religious groups			**0.31**	
Tradition of participation (union members x 1000 inhabs. in 1950)				0.002
Random parameters (country level)				
$u_{ij} \sim N(0, ?_u)$: $?_u$ †	**0.25 0.37**	**0.27 0.21**	**0.17 0.43**	**0.13 0.46**
u_{0ij} [intercept] *	**0.37 (0.61)**	**0.21 (0.46)**	**0.43 (0.66)**	**0.46 (0.68)**
u_{1ij} [education]*	**0.27 (0.52)**	n.s.	**0.27 (0.52)**	**0.23 (0.48)**
u_{2ij} [income]*	---	**0.22 (0.47)**	---	**0.13 (0.36)**
u_{3ij} [church attendance]*	**0.10 (0.31)**	**0.10 (0.31)**	**0.09 (0.30)**	**0.09 (0.29)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]*	---	---	---	0.06 (0.25)
u_{5ij} [gender]*	**0.08 (0.28)**	**0.07 (0.27)**	**0.08 (0.29)**	**0.10 (0.31)**
Intra-class correlation *†	0.07 0.10	0.08 0.06	0.05 0.12	0.04 0.12
R^2 dicho $ †	0.21 0.20	0.18 0.18	0.24 0.23	0.22 0.20
% unexplained level 2 variance †	6-8	6-5	4-9	3-10
Number of cases (no. of countries)	20,815 (17)	12,303 (12)	20,815 (17)	16,063 (15)

Sources and notes: see the footnote to Table 7.3.

Table 7.8. Mobilisation Context and Political Membership: Complete Models

Variables	Model 2a (with unions)	Model 5a (with unions)	Model 2b (without unions)	Model 5b (without unions)
Intercept	**-2.32**	**-2.32**	**-3.72**	**-3.73**
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)				
Education	**0.94**	**0.94**	**1.26**	**1.25**
Income	---	---	---	---
Income (squared)	---	---	---	---
Employment situation (ref= +30h)				
Works <30 h.	**-0.27**	**-0.27**	**0.15**	**0.15**
Inactive	**-0.67**	**-0.67**	**-0.25**	**-0.25**
Unemployed	**-0.62**	**-0.62**	**-0.32**	**-0.32**
Age	**4.18**	**4.15**	**3.92**	**3.89**
Age (squared)	**-4.31**	**-4.29**	**-3.65**	**-3.63**
Woman (ref=man)	-0.14	-0.13	n.s.	n.s.
With partner (ref=without partner)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Size of community	---	---	---	---
Church attendance	-0.26	-0.26	n.s.	n.s.
Religious membership	**1.09**	**1.09**	**1.02**	**1.02**
Interest in politics	**0.57**	**0.57**	**0.74**	**0.74**
Political efficacy	**0.27**	**0.27**	**0.37**	**0.37**
Inter-personal trust	**0.16**	**0.16**	**0.24**	**0.23**
Values index (ref=materialist)				
Mixed	**0.14**	**0.14**	**0.14**	**0.14**
Post-materialist	**0.50**	**0.50**	**0.50**	**0.50**
Attitude to social change (ref= conservative)				
Radical	n.s.	n.s.	0.21	0.22
Reformist	**0.14**	**0.14**	0.11	0.11
Fixed parameters (country level)				
No. political party branches (x1000 inh.)		1.83		0.91
No. political party branches (squared)		-1.09		-0.44
No. protests relative to population		n.s.		n.s.
Citizen polarisation		n.s.		**3.63**
Citizen polarisation (squared)		n.s.		**-0.46**
Party system polarisation		n.s.		n.s.
Effective no. of religious groups		n.s.		**0.39**
Tradition of participation (union members x 1000 inhabs. in 1950)		0.005		0.002
Random parameters (country level)				
$u_{ij} \sim N(0, ?_u)$: $?_u$ †	0.48-0.89	**0.37-0.59**	**0.25-0.37**	**0.14-0.37**
u_{0j} [intercept] *	**0.89 (0.94)**	**0.59 (0.77)**	**0.37 (0.61)**	**0.37 (0.61)**
u_{1ij} [education]*	**0.22 (0.47)**	**0.21 (0.46)**	**0.27 (0.52)**	**0.27 (0.52)**
u_{2ij} [income]*	---	---	---	---
u_{3ij} [church attendance]*	**0.12 (0.34)**	**0.11 (0.34)**	**0.10 (0.31)**	**0.8 (0.28)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]*	---	---	---	---
u_{5ij} [gender]*	**0.05 (0.23)**	**0.05 (0.23)**	**0.08 (0.28)**	**0.08 (0.28)**
Intra-class correlation +†	0.13-0.21	0.10-0.15	0.07-0.10	0.4-0.10
R^2 dicho $^{\$\dagger}$	0.19-0.17†	0.24-0.23	0.21-0.20	0.26-0.24
% unexplained level 2 variance †	10-18†	8-12	6-8	3-8
Number of cases (no. of countries)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)

Sources and notes: see the footnote to Table 7.3.

In general terms, the results confirm the conclusions drawn from the preceding Tables (7.6 and 7.7) that show the models stepwise. Mobilisation variables are more relevant when we exclude unions from the operationalisation of political membership, since all three dimensions have a significant effect in this case (model 5b). The fact that the negative effect of polarisation disappears when unions are included (model 5a) is notable.

Finally, we can see that mobilisation factors contribute significantly to a reduction in the unexplained variation between countries, both when we include the unions and when we exclude them. This reduction in unexplained variation is most notable in the case of individuals that show the highest values for variables with random parameters: women, with higher levels of education and more frequent church attendance.

In short, our model for political membership importantly improves when we take into account the context of political mobilisation in which citizens make their decisions to act politically.

7.2.3. Openness, Mobilisation and New Forms of Political Membership

Several of the hypotheses dealt with in this research in relation to the impact of the political context on the political behaviour of western citizens specify the potentially differentiating effects depending on the type of political organisation being analysed. We should remember that many of these hypotheses that underline the importance of the openness of political systems and the mobilisation of political agents come from the field of studies relating to new social movements (NSMs), and it is therefore especially interesting to confirm their validity in explaining membership of political organisations linked to such movements.

The literature on NSMs has stated that there is a close relationship between certain aspects of the openness of the political system and the context of socio-political mobilisation,

one the one hand, and the development of NSMs in western democracies on the other. Consequently, the greater decentralisation of State powers (Kriesi et al. 1995), the greater availability and use of direct democratic institutions (Kriesi and Wisler 1996, Boehmke 2002), the greater fragmentation of political elites (Tarrow 1994, Kriesi et al. 1995, Rucht 1996, Rochon 1998) and, finally, the existence of pluralist systems for the representation of interests (Kitschelt 1986, Kriesi et al. 1995) are institutional features that entail a greater openness of political decision-making systems. All of this research points to the fact that increased accessibility translates into a greater capacity to channel and incorporate new demands and, as a result, particularly favours the development of NSMs. In addition, research in the NSMs field has also frequently confirmed that the mobilisation patterns linked to more significant social conflicts or traditional cleavages (particularly that of class) impede the development of these movements (Kriesi et al. 1995, Koopmans 1996). We would therefore expect that greater relative mobilisation by NSMs, and the consequent decrease in relative mobilisation in conflicts of a traditional nature, will result in a larger proportion of citizens joining organisations linked with these movements. In the same way, ideological polarisation, being an expression of the central role of traditional ideological conflicts, would show a negative relationship with membership of new political groups.

The results of the four multilevel models shown in Table 7.9 allow us to test the validity of these hypotheses. A large number of the relationships that we find with regard to this more specific type of political membership are similar to those that we described in relation to political membership in general. We thus see that the level of local autonomy is an important factor only when we do not take into account the socio-political mobilisation context, and that the main openness factor is the level of porousness in systems of interest-representation. Curiously, and contrary to what many NSMs researchers expect (e.g. Kitschelt 1986 and Kriesi et al. 1995), it is not the pluralist systems (which are considered to have a greater capacity to channel and incorporate new demands) that

Table 7.9. New Forms of Political Membership, Openness and Mobilisation

Variables	Model 2c	Model 6a	Model 6b	Model 6c
Intercept	**-4.46**	**-4.47**	**-4.47**	**-4.47**
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)				
Education	**0.99**	**1.00**	**0.96**	**0.97**
Income	---	---	---	---
Income (squared)	---	---	---	---
Employment situation (ref= +30h)				
Works <30 h.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Inactive	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Unemployed	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Age	**2.38**	**2.38**	**2.35**	**2.37**
Age (squared)	**-2.27**	**-2.26**	**-2.24**	**-2.26**
Woman (ref=man)	**0.58**	**0.59**	**0.60**	**0.59**
With partner (ref=without partner)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Size of community	---	---	---	---
Church attendance	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Religious membership	**0.96**	**0.96**	**0.95**	**0.95**
Interest in politics	**0.45**	**0.44**	**0.44**	**0.44**
Political efficacy	**0.38**	**0.38**	**0.38**	**0.38**
Inter-personal trust	**0.25**	**0.25**	**0.25**	**0.25**
Values index (ref=materialist)				
Mixed	**0.17**	**0.17**	**0.17**	**0.17**
Post-materialist	**0.61**	**0.62**	**0.62**	**0.62**
Attitude to social change (ref= conservative)				
Radical	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28
Reformist	**0.19**	**0.19**	**0.19**	**0.19**
Fixed parameters (country level)				
Local autonomy (local spending)		0.01		n.s.
General decentralisation (Lijphart index)		n.s.		n.s.
Siaroff's corporatism index		0.13		**0.13**
Corporatism index (squared)		n.s.		n.s.
Index of formal regulation of direct democracy		**-0.12**		n.s.
Effective no. of parliamentary parties		n.s.		0.14
No. political party branches (x 1000 peop.)			**-3.15**	**-0.70**
No. political party branches (squared)			**1.44**	n.s.
No. protests relative to population			-0.001	n.s.
% protests initiated by NSMs			**0.14**	**0.13**
% protests initiated by NSMs (squared)			**-0.003**	**-0.003**
Citizen Polarisation			n.s.	n.s.
Citizen Polarisation (squared)			n.s.	n.s.
Party system polarisation			n.s.	n.s.
Effective no. of religious groups			n.s.	n.s.
Tradition of participation (union members x 1,000 inhabs. in 1950)			0.004	n.s.
Random parameters (country level)				
$u_{ij} \sim N(0, ?_u)$: $?_u$ †	0.43	**0.21-0.35**	**0.24-0.23**	**0.30-0.21**
u_{0ij} [intercept] *	**0.43 (0.66)**	**0.35 (0.59)**	**0.23 (0.48)**	**0.21 (0.46)**
u_{1ij} [education]*	**0.14 (0.37)**	**0.13 (0.36)**	**0.11 (0.34)**	**0.11 (0.34)**
u_{2ij} [income]*	---	---	---	---
u_{3ij} [church attendance]*	**0.24 (0.49)**	**0.25 (0.50)**	**0.25 (0.50)**	**0.25 (0.50)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]*	---	---	---	---
u_{5ij} [gender]*	**0.12 (0.35)**	**0.11 (0.33)**	**0.12 (0.34)**	**0.11 (0.34)**
Intra-class correlation * †	0.12-0.16	0.06-0.10	0.7-0.7	0.08-0.06
R^2 dicho § †	0.15-0.14	0.21-0.21	0.23-0.23	0.21-0.21
% unexplained level 2 variance †	11-14	5-8	5-5	7-5
Number of cases (no. of countries)	24,868 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)

Source and notes: see the footnote to Table 7.3. Dependent variable: member of a political association related to NSMs = 1, does not belong to any association of this type = 0.

are encouraging a greater development of organisations linked with the NSMs. It is the countries with more corporatist systems that display higher levels of membership of this type of organisations.

The results concerning the impact of the availability of direct democratic institutions also contradict the hypotheses put forward until now in the literature. Everything would seem to indicate that, if they were to have any effect on participation in political associations,[14] this would be negative and not positive as the studies carried out by Boehmke (2002), and Kriesi and Wisler (1996) indicate. In this case, it seems that the hypotheses on the possitive effects of direct democratic mechanisms on citizens' participation (though consistent in theoretical terms) are based in empirical analyses that are reduced to a quite limited number of cases. In short, the great majority of these studies use the Swiss case as a reference point, which in the light of our results could be influencing the conclusions reached until now.

As regards socio-political mobilisation factors, the hypotheses proposed by previous research in the field of social movements are more accurate. All the relationships, when significant, move in the expected direction, except for the case of the indicator relating to the organisational development of political parties (number of branches per 1,000 inhabitants), which shows an inverse relationship with the new forms of political membership. As was already explained in Chapter 6, this indicator is intended to be a

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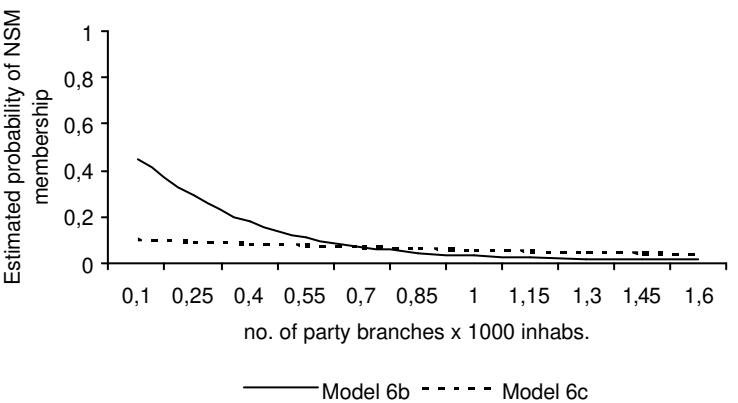
[14] The index for the formal regulation of direct democracy is significantly negative when only contextual factors relating to the openness of the political system are included, but it ceases to have a significant impact when we control by the factors relating to the mobilisation context. It is important to remember, in this case, that all of these analyses were made excluding the case of Switzerland, since the questionnaire distributed in this country did not include a significant number of organisations related to NSMs in the list dealing with associative membership (see Appendix 1 in this regard). However, as Graph 6.4 shows, a correct estimate of the percentage of people associated with new political groups in this country would only have meant that Switzerland would have been a deviant case from the general pattern, in terms of the relationship between the availability of direct democratic institutions and membership of NSM organisations.

proxy of the level of visibility and capacity for mobilisation of all political organisations. Unfortunately, this indicator is, in all certainty, less suitable for reflecting the reality of the organisational infrastructures of NSMs. However, it should be emphasised that the negative relationship is not so relevant when we control for the factors relating to the openness of the political system (model 6c and Graph 7.10).

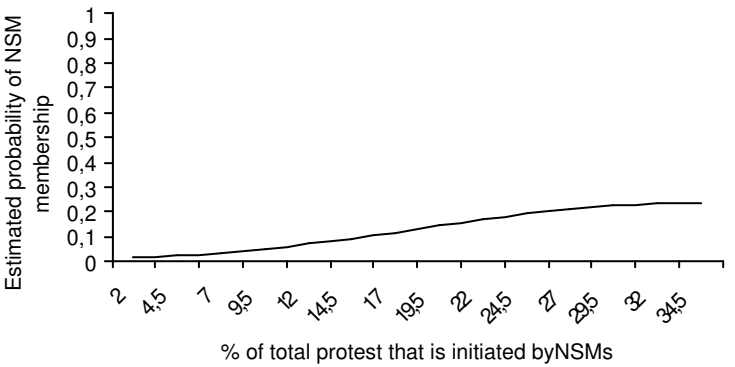
Graph 7.10. Membership of NSM Organisations and Organisational Development of Parties



Our results do partially confirm the hypotheses regarding the negative effect of the centrality of traditional conflicts. The absolute magnitude of conflictuality or protests shows a limited inverse relationship with membership of NSM organisations, though this disappears when factors relating to the openness of political systems are included. By contrast, the other indicator relating to the centrality of traditional cleavage conflicts, the proportion of protests promoted by NSM organisations, shows a clear relationship in the expected direction with new forms of political membership, which is maintained in the model that includes all variables from the political context (Graph 7.11). Finally, as for general membership, we see that a historical legacy

of mobilisation also has a reduced positive impact on new forms of political membership.[15]

Graph 7.11. New Political Membership and Mobilisation Initiated by NSMs



As regards the rest, the explanatory model for individual-level attributes remains quite stable when we consider this sub-group of political associations, which reinforces the idea that we are dealing with a type of political participation that is to a great extent similar to political membership of a more traditional form. The only relevant exceptions in this regard are the absence of a relationship with the employment situation and the important change in the direction of the effects of gender. In other words, working (either full- or part-time), being unemployed or being inactive in the labour market is irrelevant in terms of conditioning participation in NSM organisations and, in contrast to the results for political associations as a whole, women show a greater tendency than men to join these types of groups.

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[15] For the reference individual, the change from living in a country with minimum levels of union membership in 1950 (0 members per 1000 people) to living in another with maxium levels (186 per 1000) means an increase in the probability of belonging to a NSM organisation of between 0.05 and 0.10.

To summarise, the incorporation of the context of political openness and of mobilisation as factors that condition political participation allows us to present a model of political membership that is appropriate to explain both traditional and new forms of political membership. The accumulated results of the research in the field of social movements allow us to bring new perspectives to the study of participation in organisations related to the NSMs, but also to an analysis of participation in all associations and groups of a political orientation.

7.3. Resources, Attitudes, Institutions and Mobilisation: a General Model of Political Membership

Up to this point, in this chapter I have gradually built up what constitutes the central analytical model for this research. As has been observed in detail in different parts of this work, the fundamental contribution made by this study is the proposal of an analytical framework for political participation that deals with the behaviour of individual citizens while taking into account not only their own individual characteristics, which condition their participation, but also factors from the political context that may either incentive or disincentive them.

As we have noted over the course of several chapters, citizens display a greater or lesser tendency to join associations of a political nature depending on the resources available to them, the higher or lower social status that they enjoy, and the civic and political orientations that they display. However, this also depends on the political context in which they find themselves.

The political context conditions associative behaviour because it provides incentives or disincentives to participate. However, another of the fundamental effects of the political context is the capacity that it may have to increase or reduce participatory inequalities among individual citizens. The provision of incentives for participation sometimes has differentiating effects for one type

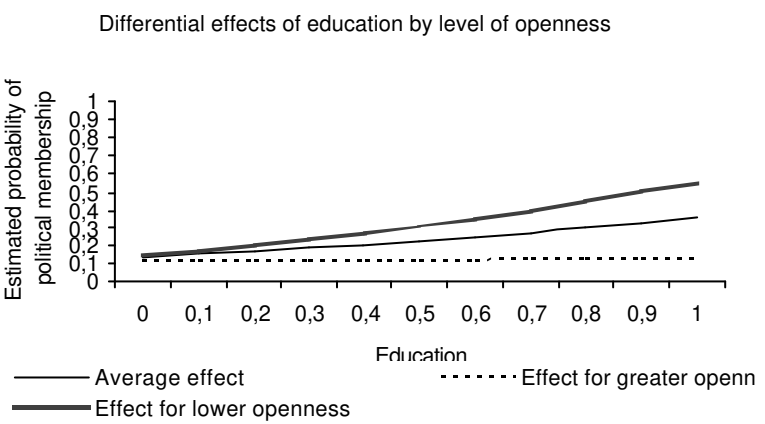
Table 7.10. A General Multilevel Model of Political Membership

Variables	Model 2a (with unions)	Model 6a (with unions)	Model 2b (without unions)	Model 6b (without unions)
Intercept	**-2.32**	**-2.31**	**-3.72**	**-3.73**
Fixed parameters (indiv. level)				
Education	**0.94**	**0.92**	**1.26**	**1.24**
Income	---	---	---	---
Income (squared)	---	---	---	---
Employment situation (ref= +30h)				
Works <30 h.	**-0.27**	**-0.26**	**0.15**	**0.16**
Inactive	**-0.67**	**-0.67**	**-0.25**	**-0.25**
Unemployed	**-0.62**	**-0.62**	**-0.32**	**-0.29**
Age	**4.18**	**4.15**	**3.92**	**3.94**
Age (squared)	**-4.31**	**-4.29**	**-3.65**	**-3.67**
Woman (ref=man)	-0.14	-0.13	n.s.	n.s.
With partner (ref=without partner)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Size of community	---	---	---	---
Church attendance	-0.26	-0.24	n.s.	n.s.
Religious membership	**1.09**	**1.09**	**1.02**	**1.01**
Interest in politics	**0.57**	**0.57**	**0.74**	**0.72**
Political efficacy	**0.27**	**0.27**	**0.37**	**0.36**
Inter-personal trust	**0.16**	**0.17**	**0.24**	**0.23**
Values index (ref=materialist)				
Mixed	**0.14**	**0.13**	**0.14**	**0.15**
Post-materialist	**0.50**	**0.50**	**0.50**	**0.51**
Attitude to social change (ref= conservative)				
Radical	n.s.	n.s.	0.21	0.24
Reformist	**0.14**	**0.15**	0.11	0.12
Fixed parameters (country level)				
Local autonomy (local spending)		**0.02**		n.s.
Siaroff's corporatism index		**1.48**		**0.23**
Corporatism index (squared)		**-0.16**		n.s.
Index of formal regulation of direct democracy		n.s.		**-0.08**
Effective no. of parliamentary parties		n.s.		**0.44**
No. political party branches (x 1,000 inhab.)		**2.90**		**1.25**
No. political party branches (squared)		**-1.79**		**-0.75**
No. protests relative to population		n.s.		n.s.
Citizen polarisation		n.s.		**-0.20**
Citizen polarisation (squared)		n.s.		n.s.
Party system polarisation		n.s.		n.s.
Effective no. of religious groups		n.s.		n.s.
Tradition of participation (union members x 1,000 inhabs. in 1950)		n.s.		n.s.
Interactions between levels				
Education x level of corporatism		**-0.26**		**-0.19**
Education x effective no. of parties		n.s.		**-0.30**
Gender x local autonomy		0.01		n.s.
Random parameters (country level)				
$u_{ij} \sim N(0, ?_u)$: $?_u$ †	0.48-0.89	**0.22-0.09**	**0.25-0.37**	**0.09-0.04**
u_{0ij} [intercept] *	**0.89 (0.94)**	**0.09 (0.30)**	**0.37 (0.61)**	**0.04 (0.21)**
u_{1ij} [education]*	**0.22 (0.47)**	**0.06 (0.25)**	**0.27 (0.52)**	**0.08 (0.28)**
u_{2ij} [income]*	---	---	---	---
u_{3ij} [church attendance]*	**0.12 (0.34)**	**0.10 (0.32)**	**0.10 (0.31)**	**0.06 (0.25)**
u_{4ij} [size of community]*	---	---	---	---
u_{5ij} [gender]*	**0.05 (0.23)**	**0.04 (0.21)**	**0.08 (0.28)**	**0.08 (0.29)**
Intra-class correlation *†	0.13-0.21	0.06-0.03	0.07-0.10	0.03-0.01
R^2 dicho $ †	0.19-0.17†	0.30-0.30	0.21-0.20	0.20-0.21
% unexplained level 2 variance †	10-18†	4-2	6-8	2-1
Number of cases (no. of countries)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)	20,815 (17)

Source and notes: see the footnote to Table 7.3.

Thus, citizens with low levels of educational qualifications who live in countries with a highly developed corporatist system and a large effective number of political parties (as would be the case, for example, in the Netherlands or Norway) display an almost identical probability to associate themselves with a political group as their fellow citizens with university degrees (Graph 7.12). By contrast, in countries with minimum levels of corporatism, and a reduced number of parliamentary parties (like Spain, Canada and the United States), people with greater educational training are up to four times more likely to join political associations than citizens with less resources of this nature.

Graph 7.12. The Equalising Effect of the Openness of Political Systems



Similarly, a greater degree of autonomy of the local governments contributes to an equalisation of political participation by both men and women through membership. Thus, in countries in which local municipalities have greater budgetary autonomy, women participate in political associations in

proportions more similar to men, than is the case in countries in which municipal authorities have fewer budgetary powers.

As a result, the impact of the political context, particularly as regards the openness of the political system, is doubly important: on the one hand, it aids an understanding of why political membership is much more frequent in some western countries (such as in Scandinavia and the Netherlands) and much less frequent in others (like the countries of southern Europe, for example), while on the other it offers an explanation as to why social inequalities condition participation more in some countries and less in others.

7.4. Alternative Contextual Hypotheses: the Welfare State

Some recent studies have suggested that the phenomenon of membership may be related to factors involving the economic policies of the country in which citizens live. Thus, some researchers point to the possible incentives that the country's economic capacity or the level of public spending by the State may offer when considering citizens' creation of and participation in voluntary associations (Curtis, Baer and Grabb 2001, Herreros and Criado 2001, Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001).

Although the theoretical arguments that accompany these statements are frequently quite reasonable (i.e. that the State has a significant capacity to provide direct incentives for the creation of and participation in voluntary associations), the methodological tools used in all these cases to test the validity of such hypotheses are defective. In some cases (Herreros and Criado 2001), ordinary statistical analyses are applied that do not take into account the multilevel or hierarchical structure of the data analysed, meaning that the conclusions reached may result from an unsuitable application of statistical techniques. In other cases (Curtis, Baer and Grabb 2001, Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001), the operationalisation of the State's economic capacity is questionable

if one is attempting to measure the direct actions of the State in promoting membership.

In reality, the information that would allow us to make a proper comparison of this type of hypotheses is not available for a large number of countries: the amount of state subsidies given to voluntary associations. In the absence of this data, the type of proxy indicators that are used must be selected with great care, with much attention paid to their real meaning. To use the amount of total public spending (the option taken by Herreros and Criado 2001) as such a proxy is hugely problematic, since it includes budget items (spending on defence, for example) that have nothing to do with the Welfare State or the encouragement of voluntary associations.[18] Taking GDP per capita (the alternative used by Curtis, Baer and Grabb 2001, and Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001) is probably even more problematic, since it does not reflect the State's economic capacity as much as the economic capacity of the whole of society.

In order to be able to reasonably discard these alternative hypotheses found in the literature on associative participation, I have tested the impact of two variables relating to the economic capacity of western States: total government spending, and total spending on social security, both of which are shown as a percentage of GDP (Table 7.11). Graph 7.13 shows the bivariate relationships established between these indicators and political membership.

[18] This is neither a good indicator of total social welfare spending. See the discussion by Rein and Rainwater (1981) on the importance of welfare programmes funded by private institutions, be they voluntary or State-imposed.

Table 7.11. Indicators of State and Welfare State Development

Country	Total government spending as a % of GDP	Total spending on social security as a % of GDP
Austria	17.67	20.38
Belgium	14.35	25.26
Canada	25.99	9.27
Denmark	23.14	16.32
Finland	18.82	10.81
France	16.17	22.07
Great Britain	15.72	13.9
Iceland	18.8	5.5
Ireland	18.55	16.49
Italy	14.37	17.16
Netherlands	11.46	19.62
Norway	16.88	14.76
Portugal	28.04	6.81
Spain	12.76	15.96
Sweden	24.96	18.22
Switzerland	13.35	13.75
USA	12.12	10.86
West Germany	17.24	16.14

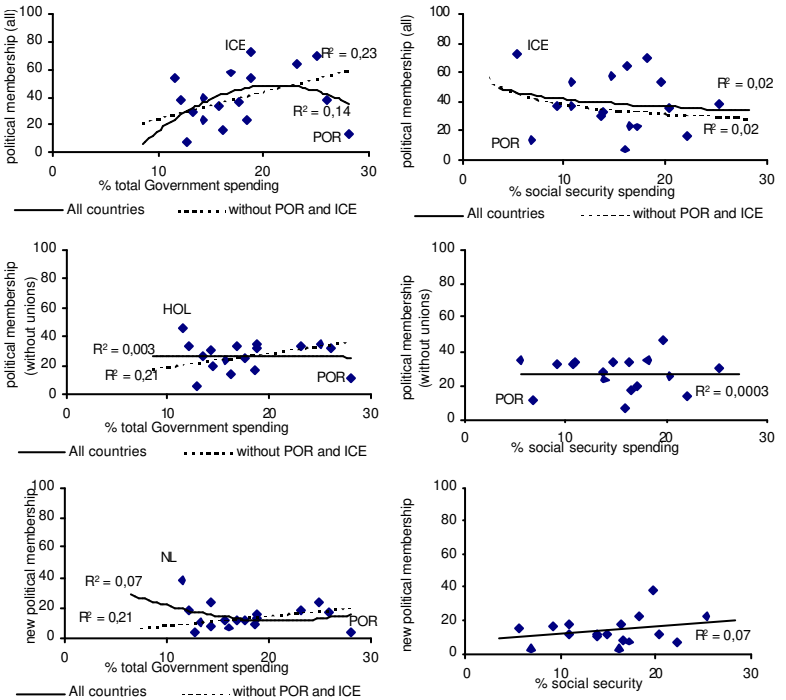
Sources: Crouch 1999: 482-486, except for Canada, which was obtained from the OECD (1993).

As we can see, the relationship between both of these indicators and membership is limited, and it depends, in the case of total government spending, on the exclusion of various deviant cases. If we bear in mind that spending on social security is generally considered to be one of the clearest indicators of the development of an individual country's Welfare State (Esping-Andersen 1990), the result is even more apparent: there would not appear to be any clear relationship between the development of the Welfare State and political membership.

In addition, although it could seem that there may be a relationship between total public spending and political membership, the results of a multilevel model which allows us to test the effect of this variable when controlled by all the individual and contextual variables that have turned out to be important in previous analyses, indicate that this bivariate relationship disappears. Hence, public spending does not have any significant effect, either positive or negative, on political membership.[19]

[19] These results are included in Tables A7.4 and A7.5, Appendix 3.

Graph 7.13. Political Membership and the Welfare State



In short, the claims around the importance of aspects relating to the economic policies of western societies when determining participation in associations are not sufficiently supported by the data available at the present time. Although I am only dealing here with participation in associations with political ends, these results have a central effect on arguments such as those put forward by Herreros and Criado (2001), as these are associations which act in pursuit of public goods and which, furthermore, are especially sensitive to the way in which power and the structure of political interests is configured by the State. It may, perhaps, be necessary to reassess which are the causal mechanisms that would really link

the development of the Welfare State and participation in voluntary associations, or perhaps one should conclude that the effect is only indirect (through the equalisation of the socio-economic resources available to individuals), or merely spurious, and related to other aspects of the political context such as the ones that have formed the central core of this research.

7.5. Conclusions

The most general conclusion that we can draw from this chapter is as follows: politics matters. The way in which political institutions and political systems are specifically configured in a given democracy is fundamental to an understanding of how its citizens behave politically. It is not enough to refer to the general political "outlook" of each country (Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001), the specific institutions are important. The political institutions in place, and the incentives for political players to become mobilised are factors which fundamentally condition political participation by individuals. It is these factors that create opportunities for participation and the motivation to co-operate. These factors of the political context of democracies have a multiple effect on citizens *being able* to participate and on their finding reasons to do so.

In particular, certain institutional characteristics that shape the degree to which political systems are open to the demands of citizens, such as the level of development of corporatist systems of interest-representation and the degree of fragmentation among the political elites, represent powerful incentives (or disincentives) for associative political participation by citizens. In addition, the type and magnitude of mobilisation of the political organisations themselves also represent fundamental factors that determine the extent to which citizens join political organisations and the type of organisations with which they associate.

The results of this research suggest an observation already put forward twenty years ago by Brody (1978: 287): if the political

of individual or another.[16] Thus, the political context not only contributes to an understanding as to why the citizens of some countries are more inclined to associate themselves with organisations that have political aims, but also as to why this participation is more egalitarian in some countries for citizens with different levels of social and financial resources.

The last models shown in Table 7.10 lead us to conclude that, in effect, the importance of the political context and, in particular, the degree to which political institutions have become more open in each country, is of such magnitude that any explanation of political participation by citizens that ignored it would be incomplete. As we can see, aspects relating to the degree to which the political system has become more open –such as the level of corporatism, and the degree to which parliamentary elites are fragmented- not only have a clear positive effect on political membership in western democracies but also contribute notably to reducing the unbalancing effects of a resource as crucial as education. This is the case because the interaction between education and the level of corporatism on the one hand, and between education and the effective number of political parties on the other, contribute to a reduction in the impact of education.[17]

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[16] This interaction between individual characteristics and the participative context has begun to be studied recently, particularly in relation to electoral participation (see Oppenhuis 1995, Anduiza 1999, Leighley 2001).

[17] I have also tested other potential interactions between education and gender, on the one hand, and other context variables on the other, both for political membership as a whole and for political membership excluding union membership. Only those which are statistically significant are shown. This model has also been replicated for new political membership, and the results are consistent, though only the interaction between education and the fragmentation of parliamentary elites is significant.

context is important to an explanation of citizens' political participation, then the "blame" for the fact that some (or many) of them do not participate does not lie with the citizens themselves. It is also essential to make another observation, this time of a methodological nature. If the political context is important, as the results of this study would unquestionably lead one to conclude, then to ignore it would be to place an enormous restriction on our capacity to understand political behaviour on the part of citizens, and particularly our capacity to understand the important differences that we encounter among various western democracies.

CONCLUSIONS

"Whether economic or political the claims, the organisation is the only means to advance a collective will. As it is based on the principle of the least effort, that is to say, on the maximum possible economy of energy, the organisation is the weapon of the weak in their struggle against the powerful." (Michels 1991 [1915]: 67)

Which aspects help us understand why some citizens participate in politics through organisations while others do not? How can we explain the huge differences in levels of political membership across westerns societies? This Thesis has tried to provide answers to these questions by proposing an explanatory model of this form of political participation that combines factors related to the individuals themselves –their resources, their social status, and their civic an political orientations- with the characteristics of the socio-political context where citizens act – the institutional background, and the patterns of socio-political mobilisation.

All along this study I have been able to evaluate the huge differences that exist between, for example, south European and Scandinavian countries in terms of the propensity of their respective citizens to join political organisations. And we have also seen that these gaps cannot be explained by the socio-economic characteristics of the citizenry alone. In other words, south European citizens are not less likely to join political groups just because they may have on average less educational resources, are less integrated in the labour market, or have more negative orientations toward politics. Undoubtedly, these aspects do also contribute to their being less participative, but they do not help us

much to explain the important cross-national variations in political membership that we find among western democracies.

The results of this research reveal the great importance of the socio-political context to explain why citizens in some western countries participate through organisations, and why other citizens from otherwise similar societies do not. Certain political opportunity structures foster citizens' participation in important ways. Thus, political systems that are more open to the influence of political organisations, due to the existence of corporatist arrangements of interest-representation, and to the greater pluralism and fragmentation of parliamentary representation, contribute to citizens finding greater incentives for participating in public affairs. In countries such as the Scandinavian ones, the Netherlands, and Belgium, this type of configuration of political institutions has as a main consequence that political decision nodes are more accessible to the citizens that are organised in political associations. Likewise, the degree to which the political organisations themselves act as effective agents of political mobilisation has an important impact on the participatory behaviour of citizens. Where political organisations display a wide organisational network, and their infrastructures are more densely distributed across the territory, citizens are more exposed to political recruitment stimuli and, hence, they participate more.

Besides, the political context does not only structure the opportunities for the participation of citizens, it does also interact with the citizens' own characteristics, thus contributing to increase or decrease participatory inequalities. The more open and accessible political structures diminish the barriers and costs of participation, in such a way that individuals with less socio-economic resources –for example, education- are not so impeded in their ability to influence decision-making processes. On the opposite case, more closed political structures accentuate the effects of social inequalities and transform them into political inequalities.

In this way, the political context has a double impact on political membership in western democracies. On the one hand, it

conditions how many citizens participate in public affairs via political organisations and, on the other, it impinges on who the participants will be. The more open political systems expand and equalise citizens' organised participation; the more closed political systems reduce participation and make it socially more unequal.

What are the implications of these results for the study of political participation? In my view, we can extract several conclusions from the findings of this research. Firstly, this Thesis demonstrates that we need to go beyond the analytical approaches that reduce the explanation of political behaviour to individual factors. Certainly, what resources, social status, and civic and political orientations citizens have will condition their political participation. However, individuals do not act in a social or political vacuum where their personal attributes will have immutable and permanent effects. People interact with each other, with organisations, and with institutions. And these interactions condition their participation decisions and their eventual behaviour. The social and political context that surrounds citizens serves to structure the participation opportunities they are presented with, as well as the expected costs and benefits from co-operation. Therefore, if we want to properly analyse the participatory behaviour of citizens, we can not ignore these contexts.

A second consequence we may extract from the findings of this research is the importance of politics, with capital letters, and more specifically of the configuration of the political institutions of our democracies when it comes to citizen participation. Unfortunately, the study of political participation has too frequently, and with the exception of research on electoral participation,[1] ignored the study of political institutions. The results of this Thesis help to underline the evaluations of many neo-institutionalist scholars:

> "Institutions limit not only the ends to which their behavior must be directed, but also the means to reach those ends. They provide individuals with vocabularies and incentives, and they endow them with a sense of self. [...] Institutions trace the limits of the nature of rationality itself and, thus, of individuality. In spite of all of it, the individuals, groups and organizations try to use institutional orders in their own benefit." (Friedland and Alford 1993 [1991]: 187).

After all, it is not that surprising that the way in which democratic political institutions are designed and develop have an impact on how, and how much, do citizens participate in public affairs.

Lastly, relating to the relevance of institutional analysis for the study of political participation, this Thesis has shown to what extent the theories, approaches and concepts developed in the field of study of new social movements have much to offer to the researchers that analyse political participation from the perspective of individual political behaviour. Although the approaches that pay special attention to the political opportunity structures have been developed to primarily explain the emergence, development, and success or failure of social movements, the concepts and analytical categories that these approaches provide are of great usefulness to better understand individual political behaviour. We should, certainly, try to expand the cross-fertilisation of both fields of research, and incorporate more frequently in studies of political participation the results of the research on social movements.

What are the implications of this research for the theories of democracy? In my opinion, this Thesis makes two contributions of a different nature. Firstly, the results of this research underline the important impact that participation in political organisations has on the way democracies work. On the one hand, how much organised political participation there is will impinge on the capacity of the citizenry as a whole to make politicians and governments democratically accountable. An active and informed citizenry will be a better guarantee of governments that are held accountable for their political actions. Political organisations serve to provide greater information of what happens in the political arena, as well as to mobilise citizens into action when the reasons to do so emerge.

On the other hand, who joins political organisations has important consequences on the nature of the process of representation of political preferences. The greater the social equality of organised political action, the greater assurance we will have that the process of interest-representation is not introducing greater inequalities than the already existing in our societies. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that the relation between socio-economic inequalities and the inequalities in political leverage via organisations is a complex one. This Thesis has shown

[1] Good examples of it are Leighley and Nagler (1992), Kaempfer and Lowenberg (1993),Oppenhuis (1995), van Egmond, de Graaf and van der Eijk (1998), and Anduiza (1999 and 2002).

that, as we knew, the amount of economic, social and cognitive resources citizens have clearly moulds their opportunities to join political organisations. However, socio-economic inequalities are not transformed into participative inequalities in the same extent in all western societies. As we have seen, in some countries, income or educational inequalities do not translate into a participatory gap. One of the most remarkable findings of this research is that political institutions play a role in this equalising task. We can, thus, be facing a process of generation of virtuous or vicious dynamics with regard to socio-economic and political inequalities. As Verba, Nie and Kim (1978: 14-17) pointed out, for social and political equality of citizens to exist, the worse-off have to self-organise. Otherwise, the generally greater organisational resources of the wealthier social groups will act to increase participative inequalities and, later, socio-economic inequalities.

A second implication of the findings of this research for democratic theories is related to the possibility of intervening on participatory realities. As we have seen in chapter 3 in this Thesis, participation in political organisations has beneficial effects on the generation of politically active citizens that show positive attitudes and orientations toward politics. If we aim at contributing to create a democratic citizenry, then maybe we should pay much more attention to promoting participation via political organisations, and maybe we should not put all of our efforts in promoting participation in associations that have no relation whatsoever with public affairs.

On the other hand, the results of this research lead us to reflect on the real possibilities of intervening in participatory reality through the introduction of institutional reforms. In the case of electoral participation, institutional intervention is possible through the limitation of the maximum influence –one person, one vote- as well as with the introduction of reforms –such as the compulsory vote- that serve to also establish a minimum influence. Both types of electoral institutional designs have the effect of equalising the political influence of citizens through their vote.[2] However, these possibilities are not at hand when it comes to promoting other forms of political participation for which it is not feasible to impose minimum or maximum limits to voluntary participation. Thus, our capacity to directly intervene in favour of participative equality is fundamentally restricted to electoral participation –whether through the vote or through contributions to electoral campaigns.

This research, nevertheless, allows to argue that maybe other forms of intervention are possible if we want to contribute to the greater political equality of citizens. Although it is clearly not realistic to propose institutional reforms at the national level whose only purpose is to promote citizens' participation in political organisations, it is nonetheless possible to direct the eventual reforms that might emerge with other purposes in such a way that they will also contribute to give greater participation opportunities to citizens. For example, if electoral reforms are debated for other reasons, we could argue that adopting more proportional systems would contribute to increase the opportunities for the participation and influence of citizens, and the results of this research may provide additional arguments against the adoption of more majoritarian systems of representation. Other reforms that are frequently the object of public debate in western democracies are related to the organisation of the competences of local units and governments. In this case, this research provides additional arguments to support reforms that will endow municipalities with greater financial autonomy. In summary, although modest, the results of this research allow us to endorse the possibility, quite forgotten lately, of using mechanisms of institutional reform to improve the quality of democracies and to, thus, contribute to the greater effective political equality of citizens.

In summary, the relevance of political institutions and of their effects on citizens' participation lies in the fact that the former can be designed and intentionally reformed so as to produce the intended results. The political institutions a society adopts, and the degree to which they facilitate citizens' participation are fundamental because, as Alexis de Tocqueville (1980a [1835]: 222) claimed, they are "the most powerful, and maybe the only means, that we retain to interest men in the destiny of their country and to make them partakers in its government."

[2] An interesting debate in this regard can be found in Anduiza (1999).

Finally, I would like to briefly comment on the possible avenues for future research. This Thesis can not, and does not pretend to, evaluate completely the theories that suggest the importance of the socio-political context to better understand the participative behaviour of citizens. As Jackman points out (1985), any empirical study can only aim at evaluating some of the implications of the theoretical propositions it takes into account. This Thesis has tried to make explicit some of these implications, and especially in what regards the role of the political opportunity structures and of socio-political mobilisation. And it is these implications and expectations of empirical relations that I have put to test. Following Dogan's (1994: 37) advice, I will not try to transmute into gold data that, without any doubt, have limitations. It is unavoidable to admit that the data that would allow us to measure the real impact of the factors of the political context –and, especially, those relating to the context of political mobilisation- are subject to substantial improvement. But it is also important to stress that, probably, the less than perfect quality of the data at hand lead us to reach conservative and modest conclusions about the real impact these factors have. In my view, our knowledge about citizens' political behaviour would greatly benefit if we were able to design our research and our data-collection efforts with a view of improving the measurement of the political context. In other words, if we want to be able to incorporate the political context into our models of politics, we will have to invest greater effort and resources in retrieving empirical data of a better quality. In this sense, international research projects that analyse citizens' political participation should include in their research agendas the standardised collection of information on the political institutions of each country, as well as on other aspects of the political context.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEYS AND ITEMS USED, INDICATOR CONSTRUCTION AND MEASUREMENT PROBLEMS

Surveys Used and their Complete References

European Values Study Group, *European Values Study*, 1999/2000 [Computer file] 2003 / Release 1, The Netherlands, Germany: Tilburg University, Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung, Cologne (ZA), Netherlands Institute for Scientific Information Services (NIWI), Amsterdam [producer], 2003. Germany: Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung, Cologne [distributor], 2003.

Ronald Inglehart, et al., *World Values Surveys and European Values Surveys*, 1981-1984, 1990-1993, and 1995-1997 [Computer file], ICPSR version (Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research [producer], 2000. Ann Arbor, MI: ICPSR [distributor], 2000).

Roger Jowell and the Central Co-ordinating Team, *European Social Survey* 2002/2003, London: Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University (2003-2004) [Computer file and producer], Release 4 (Norwegian Social Science Data Services [distributor], 2004).

Anna Melich, *Eurobarometers, 1983-1998* [Computer files], ICPSR version, (Brussels, Belgium: INRA (Europe) [producer], several years. Ann Arbor, MI: ICPSR / Koeln, Germany: Zentralarchiv fuer Empirische Sozialforschung [distributors], several years).

Steven J. Rosenstone, Donald R. Kinder, Warren E. Miller, and the National Election Studies, *American National Election Study, 1996: Pre- and Post-Election Survey* [Computer file], 4th version (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, Center for Political Studies [producer], 1999. Ann Arbor, MI: ICPSR [distributor], 2000).

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Universidad Pompeu Fabra, and Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas. *Ciudadanía, participación y democracia, 2002*. Study 2450 of the CIS (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas [producer and distributor], 2003).

Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, Henry E. Brady, and Norman H. Nie. *American Citizen Participation Study, 1990* [Computer file], ICPSR version, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, National Opinion Research Center (NORC) [producer], 1995. Ann Arbor, MI: ICPSR [distributor], 1995).

Description of the Surveys

World Values Surveys 1981-1983 and 1990-1993

The first round of the World Values Survey (WVS) was carried out between 1981 and 1983 in 22 societies. Only the samples corresponding to 15 western countries have been employed. All samples are representative of the national population aged 18 or over. The documentation of the survey, made available by the ICPSR at Michigan does not include information on the sampling methods undertaken in each country.

The second round of the World Values Survey (WVS) was done between 1990 and 1993 in 45 societies. Only the samples corresponding to 18 western counties have been used, although for some multivariate analyses the Swiss sample has not been included due to the missingness of important items that make up the dependent variable. All samples are representative of the

national population aged 18 or over.[1] Some of the samples used stratified sampling methods, others some form of multistage probabilistic sampling, and finally others some variant of quota sampling. However, the details on the sampling methods included in the survey documentation are scarce. Probabilistic multistage sampling was used in Great Britain, Ireland and Italy; in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the United States and Canada stratified random samples were extracted; and the majority of the remaining countries claim to have extracted samples with quotas for sex, age, occupation and region. The majority of the national teams did not report on response rates.

The data for both rounds were merged, cleaned and documented by Prof. Ronald Inglehart (University of Michigan), study 6160 of ICPSR. In the next pages I show the question wording of the items used for several of the analyses in this Thesis as well as the main recodings I have performed, when relevant.

- Membership of and voluntary work in associations (V19 to V54)

"Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say...
a) which, if any, do you belong to?
b) which, if any, are you currently doing unpaid voluntary work for?"
v19/37: Social welfare services for elderly, handicapped or deprived people
v20/38: Religious or church organizations
v21/39: Education, arts, music or cultural activities
v22/40: Trade unions
v23/41: Political parties or groups
v24/42: Local community action on issues like poverty, employment, housing, racial equality
v25/43: Third world development or human rights
v26/44: Conservation, the environment, ecology
v27/45: Professional associations
v28/46: Youth work (e.g. scouts, guides, youth clubs, etc.)
v29/47: Sports or recreation
v30/48: Women's groups
v31/49: Peace movement
v32/50: Animal rights
v33/51: Voluntary organizations concerned with health
v34/52: Other groups
v35/53: None
v36/54: Don't know
The questionnaire in Switzerland did not include the following groups/organisations: v25/v43, v29/v47, v30/v48, v31/v49, v32/v50, v33/v51, v34/v52.

Recoding to construct the indicators on political and non-political membership. Political = v22/v40, v23/v41, v24/v42, v25/v43, v26/v44, v27/v45, v30/v48, v31/v49, v32/v50. Social = the rest.
Recoding to construct the indicators on traditional and new political membership. Traditional = v22/v40, v23/v41, v24/v42, v27/v45. New = v25/v43, v26/v44, v30/v48, v31/v49, v32/v50.

- Importance given to politics (V8)

Please say, for each of the following, how important it is in your life. (Politics)
Very Important……1
Quite Important…….. 2
Not Very Important…….3
Not at All Important……4
DK…….. 9

[1] The minimum age was 17 years in Belgium and Ireland, 19 in Norway and 20 in Switzerland.

- Social trust (V94)

"Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"
1. Most people can be trusted
2. Can't be too careful
3. Don't know

- Church attendance (V147)

"Apart from weddings, funerals and christenings, about how often do you attend religious services these days?"
1. More than once a week
2. Once a week
3. Once a month
4. Christmas/Easter day
5. Other specific holy days
6. Once a year
7. Less often
8. Never or practically never

This variable has been inversely recoded so that the value 8 means a greater frequency of church attendance (more than once a week) and the value 1 indicates a scarce or null church attendance (never or practically never).

- Marital status (recoded from V181)

"Are you currently ...."
1. Married
2. living as married
3. divorced
4. separated
5. widowed
6. single

Recoding: 1 and 2 = with couple; 3-6 = without couple.

- Interest in politics (V241)

"How interested would you say you are in politics?"
1. Very interested
2. Somewhat interested
3. Not very interested
4. Not at all interested
9. Don't know

- Attitude toward social change (V249)

"On this card are three basic kinds of attitudes concerning the society we live in. Please choose the one which best describes your own opinion."
1. The entire way our society is organized must be radically changed by revolutionary action
2. Our society must be gradually improved by reforms
3. Our present society must be valiantly defended against all subversive forces
9. Don't know

Note: This item was not included in the Swiss questionnaire.

- Political efficacy (V338)

"I am going to read out some statements about the government and the economy. For each one, could you tell me how much you agree or disagree? Please use the responses on this card"
If an unjust law were passed by the government I could do nothing at all about it
1. Agree completely
2. Agree somewhat
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Disagree somewhat
5. Disagree completely
6. Don't know
Note: This item was not included in the Swiss questionnaire.

- Gender (V353)

Sex of respondent: 1. Male 2. Female

- Age (V355)

"This means you are ..... years old"

- Education (V356)

"At what age did you or will you complete your full time education, either at school or at an institution of higher education? Please exclude apprenticeships"

1. completed formal education at 12 years of age or earlier
2. completed education at 13 years of age
.

.10. completed education at 21 years of age or older

Note: In West Germany codes 1 and 2 were not used and, thus, 3 means "completed at 14 years or earlier". In Finland codes 1 to 3 were not used and, thus, 4 means "completed at 15 years or earlier". In Switzerland this question was not included in the questionnaire. In Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland and Austria other questions on the educational level were also included (v375).

In the statistical analyses two different version of the variable on education are used. In multivariate analyses variable v356 is used in its original codings and, thus, the aforementioned problems do not have important effects. In the bivariate analyses a recoded version in three categories was used: primary or less (codes 1 to 4 of v356, up to 15 years), some secondary education (codes 5 to 9, 16-20 years), and some university or higher education (code 10, 21 or + years). For Switzerland this corresponds to codes 1 to 3 in v375, 4 to 8, and 9 to 10, respectively for each of these three categories. Those who had yet not finished their studies were located in the age at which they "intended" to finish them, since the survey did not allow to identify this group of respondents because a "non-completed" category was not included.

- Working situation (recoded from V358)

"Are you yourself employed now or not? If yes, about how many hours a week? If more than one job: only for the main job."
Has paid employment:

1. 30 hours a week or more
2. less than 30 hours a week
3. self employed

If no paid employment

4. Retired/pensioned
5. housewife not otherwise employed
6. student
7. unemployed
8. other, please specify

Recoding: 2 and 3 recoded into one category (works <30 hours or self-employed); 4, 5, and 6 recoded into another category (inactive); 8 treated as missing.

- Income (V363)

"Here is a scale of incomes and we would like to know in what group your household is, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in. Just give the letter of the group your household falls into, before taxes and other deductions"
Coded into 10 ordinal categories. The values are country-specific but more or less equivalent.
Note: This item was not included in the Icelandic questionnaire.

- Size of community (V368b)

"To be filled in by the interviewer: size of town"

1. under 2,000
2. 2,000 – 5,000
3. 5 – 10,000
4. 10 – 20,000
5. 20 – 50,000
6. 50 – 100,000
7. 100 – 500,000
8. 500,000 and more

Note: This item was not included in Finland nor Iceland. In Switzerland a categorical variable was used: 1= rural, 5= middle-sized, 8= big city. In the Netherlands the sample did not include respondents living in communities of less than 2,000 inhabitants, nor in Canada respondents of communities of less than 5,000 inhabitants. In Norway and Sweden the maximum value (8) was not included. While in Austria the maximum value is of more than 50,000 inhabitants.

- Values scale (V378)

This index was constructed from the responses to variables v259 and v260.
1. Materialist if 1 in v259 and 3 in v260, or 3 in v259 and 1 in v260
2. Mixed if 1 or 3 in v259 and 2 or 4 in v260; or 2 or 4 in v259 and 1 or 3 in v260
3. Post-materialist if 2 in v259 and 4 in v260; or 4 in v259 and 2 in v260.

V259 and v260 are identical and with the following answers:

1. Maintain order in the nation
2. Give citizens a greater say in the important decisions of the Government
3. Fight against price increases
4. Protect freedom of speech
9. Don't know

The following countries had a different coding in some variable or did not include some of them.

- Finland: size of community not included (v368)
- Iceland: income not included (v363) nor size of community (v368)
- Switzerland: age at which ended full-time education not included (v356), nor attitudes toward social change (v249), nor political efficacy (v338). The size of the community (v368) was not coded between 1 and 8, but as a categorical variable (1: rural; 5: middle-sized; 7: big city). Some associations were not included in the items on membership and voluntary work (v25, v29-v34).

Eurobarometers 19 (March-April 1983), 28 (1987) and 34 (1990)

Eurobarometer (EB) 19 was carried out betwen 25 March and 27 April, 1983 in 10 European countries. EB 28 was carried out from 5 October to 24 November, 1987 in 12 European countries. EB 34 was done between 10 October and 30 December, 1990 in 13 European countries.

All samples are representative of the national population aged 15 or over. Some of the samples used probabilistic multistage sampling methods, while other employed stratified quota sampling. However, the details on the sampling methods are scarce in the survey documentation, and it also seems that in all countries some sort of random routes was employed. The data were obtained from the archive of the ICPSR at the University of Michigan (US), studies 8152, 9082, and 9576 respectively.

What follows is the question wording of the items on associational membership used for the analyses shown in chapter 2 of this Thesis. Given that the battery of items is the same for these three surveys, it is only included once.

Which, if any, of the following groups or associations do you belong to? (SHOW CARD. MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE).
1. Charities and social action groups
2. Church or religious organizations
3. Cultural or arts groups
4. Trade unions or professional associations
5. Political parties or movements
6. Organizations concerned with any abuse of human rights taking place in (YOUR COUNTRY) or abroad
7. Nature conservation, animal welfare, or ecology groups
8. Youth organisations (e.g. scouts, youth clubs, etc.)
9. Consumer groups
10. Sports clubs or associations
11. Other specific groups or associations (e.g. stamp collecting, etc.)

Recoding of the indicators on political and social membership. Political = 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9. Social = the rest. Traditional political = 4 and 5; new political = 6, 7 and 9.

Eurobarometer 49, April-May 1998

Eurobarometer 49 was conducted between 7 April and 27 May, 1998 in 15 European countries. All samples are representative of the national population aged 15 or over. Some of the samples used probabilistic multistage sampling methods, while other employed stratified quota sampling. However, the details on the sampling methods are scarce in the survey documentation, and it also seems that in all countries some sort of random routes was employed. The data were obtained from the archive of the ICPSR at the University of Michigan (US), study 2559.

What follows is the question wording of the items used for different sets of analyses.

- Membership of and voluntary work in associations (Q46)

From the following list, could you tell me, which organisations you are a member of or whose activities you participate in ? (SHOW CARD - READ OUT - SEVERAL ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

Social welfare and charitable organizations
Religious or parish organizations
Cultural or artistic associations
Political parties
Trade unions, professional organisations, employer associations
Human rights movements or organisations
Organisations for the protection of nature, animals, the environment
Youth organisations (scouts, youth clubs, etc.)
Consumer organisations
Sports clubs, associations

Hobby or special interest clubs (collectors, fan clubs, computer clubs, etc.)
Other clubs or organisations (SPONTANEOUS)
No club or organisation (SPONTANEOUS)
Don't know

Political organisations are: parties, trade unions, human rights, environmental and consumers' organisations. Social organisations include all the remaining categories.

- Interest in politics (Q37)

To what extent would you say you are interested in politics these days ?
A great deal.....1
To some extent.....2
Not much.....3
Not at all.....4
DK..... 5

- Importance given to politics (Q4205)

How important is each of the following to you personally ? (Politics)
Not Very Important……1
Not at All Important……2
Very Important……3
Quite Important…….. 4
DK…….. 5

- Subjective feeling of political informedness (Q38)

How well informed do you feel about politics ?
Very well informed.....1
Well informed.....2
Not very well informed.....3
Not at all well informed.....4
DK..... 5

- Subjective feeling of political knowledge (Q39)

How much do you know about politics or political issues ? Would you say you know... ?
Very much..... 1
Much..... 2
Fairly much..... 3
Rather less..... 4
Nothing at all..... 5
DK..... 6

- News following through newspapers (Q13b) and the radio (Q13c)

About how often do you ... (SHOW CARD)
b) read the news in daily papers ?
c) listen to the news on the radio ?
Several times a week……1
Once or twice a week……...2
Everyday…….. 3
Less often……..4
Never…….5
DK…….6

- Frequency of discussion about political matters (Q2)

When you get together with friends, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally, or never ?
Frequently.....1
Occasionally.....2
Never.....3
DK..... 4

- Frequency of persuading about political matters (Q3)

When you hold a strong opinion, do you ever find yourself persuading your friends, relatives or fellow workers to share your views ? Does this happen ... ? (READ OUT)
Often..... 1
From time to time.....2
Rarely.....3
Never.....4
DK..... 5

- Marital status (recoded from D7)

"Are you ...?"

1. Single
2. Married
3. Living as married
4. Divorced
5. Separated
6. Widowed

Recoding: With couple = 2 and 3; without couple = 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

- Education (D8)

"How old were you when you stopped full-time education? (IF STILL STUDYING CODE 00)"
In the statistical analyses two different version of the variable on education are employed. In the multivariate analyses item D8 is used in it original coding. In bivariate analyses a recoded version in three categories is used: primary or less (up to 15 years), some secondary education (16-20 years), and some university or higher education (21 or more years). Those who had not yet finished their full-time education where given the value of their own age in substitution for the value of 00 given in the survey original codings.

- Gender (D10)

Sex: 1. Male 2. Female

- Age (D11)

"How old are you?"

- Working situation and social class (recoded from D15)

D15. "What is your current occupation?"
1. Farmer
2. Fisherman
3. Professional (lawyer, medical practitioner, accountant, architect, …)
4. Owner of a shop, craftsmen, other self employed person
5. Business proprietors, owner (full or partner) of a company
6. Employed professional

7. General management, director or top management (managing directors, director general,)
8. Middle management, other management (department head, junior manager, teacher)
9. Employed position, working mainly at a desk
10. Employed position, not at a desk but travelling (salesmen, driver, ...)
11. Employed position, not at a desk, but in a service job (hospital,police, restaurant,...)
12. Supervisor
13. Skilled manual worker
14. Other (unskilled) manual worker, servant
15. Responsible for ordinary shopping and looking after the home or without any current
16. Student
17. Unemployed or temporarily not working
18. Retired or unable to work through illness

Construction of the variable on social class:
- Inactive: categories 15, 16, 17 and 18.
- Manual and technical workers: categories 12, 13 and 14.
- Non-manual routine workers: categories 9, 10 and 11.
- New middle classes: categories 6, 7 and 8.
- Traditional middle classes and small business owners: categories 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

In the cases where the inactive (exception made of the retired) declared a previous job, the code for such job was used to construct the variable on social class.

Construction of the variable of working situation:
Inactive: categories 15, 16, 17 and 18.
Employed: categories 6-14.
Self-employed: categories 1-5.

- Income (D29)

"Harmonised income scale"
1. - -
2. -
3. +
4. + +
5. DK/refusal

The dataset does also include 15 country-specific variables on income that, in spite of having the same number of categories are not approximately equivalent. For example, the scale for Spain has as its last category 225,001 pts or more (approx. 1,352€ a month), while the scale for Italy has as its last category 5,000,000 lire (approx. 2,600€ a month) which means a much greater capacity to discriminate among the higher incomes for the Italian than the Spanish scale, since these enormous differences in the range of the scales do not correspond to equivalent differences in the salaries and prices in both countries.

- Size of the community (P6_XXX)

Unfortunately, this item in EB 49 has not been standardised for the 15 EU member States and each national survey has collected the information on the basis of a country-specific coding. In addition, the response categories are such that it is not possible to construct a single equivalent scale for all countries. Following are the response categories for each of the countries.

West Germany

< 2000 inhabitants..... 1
2000 < 5000 inhabitants.....2
5000 < 20000 inhabitants.....3
20000 < 50000 inhabitants.....4

50000 < 100000 inhabitants.....5
100000 < 500000 inhabitants.....6
> 500000 inhabitants.....7

Austria

Rural.....1
Mixed urban/rural.....2
Urban.....3
Metropolitan.....4

Belgium

5 Grands centres.....1
Localités urbaines.....2
Localités secondaires.....3
Autres localités..... .4

Denmark

< 2000 inhabitants..... 1
2000 < 4999 inhabitants.....2
5000 < 9999 inhabitants.....3
10000 < 19999 inhabitants.....4
20000 < 49999 inhabitants.....5
50000 < 99999 inhabitants.....6
> 100000 inhabitants.....7

Spain

< 2000 inhabitants..... 1
2001 < 10000 inhabitants.....2
10001 < 50000 inhabitants.....3
50001 < 100000 inhabitants.....4
100001 < 300000 inhabitants.....5
300001 < 500000 inhabitants.....6
500001 < 1000000 inhabitants.....7
+ 1000000 inhabitants.....8

Finland

Helsinki area.....1
Turku, Tampere.....2
Other town.....3
Rural center..... 4

France

< 2000.....1
2000 - < 20000 inhabitants.....2
20001 - < 100000 inhabitants.....3
> 100000 inhabitants.....4
Agglomération parisienne.....5

Great Britain

Metropolitan country.....1
Other 100 % urban..... 2
Mixed urban/rural.....3
Rural.....4

Greece

< 2000 inhabitants..... 1
2001 < 10000 inhabitants.....2
10001 < 50000 inhabitants.....3
50001 < 1000000 inhabitants.....4
+ 1000001 inhabitants.....5

The Netherlands

< 5000 inhabitants..... 1
5000 < 10000 inhabitants.....2
10000 < 20000 inhabitants.....3
20000 < 50000 inhabitants.....4
50000 < 100000 inhabitants.....5
100000 < 400000 inhabitants.....6
> 400000 inhabitants.....7

Ireland
< 2000 inhabitants..... 1
2001 < 20000 inhabitants.....2
20001 < 100000 inhabitants.....3
> 100000 inhabitants.....4

Italy

< 10000 inhabitants..... 1
10001 - 100000 inhabitants.....2
100111 - 250000 inhabitants.....3
> 250000 inhabitants.....4

Luxembourg

< 2500 inhabitants.....1
2501 < 5000 inhabitants.....2
5001 < 10000 inhabitants.....3
10001 < 20000 inhabitants.....4
20001 < 50000 inhabitants.....5
> 50000 (Luxembourg ville).....6

Portugal

< 100 inhabitants..... 1
101 < 200 inhabitants..... 2
201 < 500 inhabitants..... 3
501 < 1000 inhabitants..... 4
1001 < 2000 inhabitants..... 5
2001 < 5000 inhabitants..... 6
5001 < 10000 inhabitants..... 7
10001 < 20000 inhabitants..... 8
20001 < 100000 inhabitants..... 9
100001 < 500000 inhabitants..... 10
> 500000 inhabitants..... 11

Sweden

Less than 5000.....1
5000 - 10000.....2
10000 - 30000.....3
30000 - 50000.....4
50000 - 100000.....5
100000 - 150000.....6
more than 150000.....7

European Values Survey, 1999-2000

The European Values Survey (EVS) of 1999-2000 was carried out in 32 European countries to representative samples of their respective national populations aged 18 years or over between 1999 and 2000. The sampling procedures vary between those countries that extracted strictly probabilistic samples, with or without unit substitution (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Slovenia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Malta, Romania and Ucrania), random routes procedures (Germany, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Lithuania), quota sampling (Croatia, Spain, Finland, France, Latvia and United Kingdom) and yet others for which insufficient information on the sampling procedures was included in the survey documentation (Bielorussia, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Russia and Sweden).

Membership and voluntary work in associations (V19 a V54)

"Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say...
a) which, if any, do you belong to?
b) which, if any, are you currently doing unpaid voluntary work for?"
v12/30: Social welfare services for elderly, handicapped or deprived people
v13/31: Religious or church organizations
v14/32: Education, arts, music or cultural activities
v15/33: Trade unions
v16/34: Political parties or groups
v17/35: Local community action on issues like poverty, employment, housing, racial equality
v18/36: Third world development or human rights
v19/37: Conservation, the environment, ecology, animal rights
v20/38: Professional associations
v21/39: Youth work (e.g. scouts, guides, youth clubs, etc.)
v22/40: Sports or recreation

v23/41: Women's groups
v24/42: Peace movement
v25/43: Voluntary organizations concerned with health
v26/44: Other groups
v27/45: None
v28/46: Don't know
v29/47 No answer

Recoding to construct the indicators on political and non-political membership Political = v15/v33, v16/v34, v17/v35, v18/v36, v19/v37, v20/v38, v23/v41, v24/v42. Social = the rest.
Recoding to construct the indicators on traditional and new political membership. Traditional = v15/v33, v16/v34, v17/v35, v20/v38. New = v18/v36, v19/v37, v23/v41, v24/v42.

European Social Survey, 2002-2003

The European Social Survey (ESS) 2002-2003 is a survey conducted in 20 European countries and of the Middle East (Israel). It is jointly funded by the 5th Framework Programme of the European Commission, the European Science Foundation and the funding agencies of academic research in the participating countries. All samples are strictly probability samples (with no quotas nor substitution of units) for which a minimal response rate of 70% and rigurous translation protocols were fixed. The majority of the national studies were carried out between September 2002 and March 2003.

Following is the item on associational involvement, as well as the recodings employed to construct the indicators used in chapter 2 in this Thesis.

E1-12 a) CARD 43 For each of the voluntary organisations I will now mention, please use this card to tell me whether any of these things apply to you now or in the last 12 months, and, if so, which.

READ OUT EACH ORGANISATION IN TURN. PROBE: 'Which others?'
ASK b) FOR EACH ORGANISATION CODED 1 TO 4 AT a). IF ALL CODED '0', GO TO E13.

E1-12 b) Do you have personal friends within this organisation?

	a)	CODE **ALL** THAT APPLY FOR EACH ORGANISATION				b)		
	None	**Member**	**Participated**	**Donated money**	**Voluntary work**	**Personal friends?**		
						Yes	**No**	(Don't know)
E1 ….Firstly, a sports club or club for out-door activities?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E2 … an organisation for cultural or hobby activities?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E3 … a trade union?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E4 … a business, professional, or farmers' organisation?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E5 … a consumer or automobile organisation?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8

E6 … an organisation for humanitarian aid, human rights, minorities, or immigrants?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E7 …an organisation for environmental protection, peace or animal rights?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E8 … a religious or church organisation?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E9 … a political party?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E10 … an organisation for science, education, or teachers and parents?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E11 … a social club, club for the young, the retired /elderly, women, or friendly societies?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8
E12 … any another voluntary organisation such as the ones I've just mentioned?	0	1	2	3	4	1	2	8

Political associations = E3, E4, E6 and E9. Social associations = the rest.

APPENDIX 2: ANALYSIS OF MISSING CASES AND MULTIPLE IMPUTATION PROCEDURES

Several analyses of the missingness issue of the survey employed were carried out. First, a descriptive approach was made in a country-by-country analysis of item non-response. Very different patterns of non-response are evident. Sex and marital status had missing values only in a few countries. Income is in most countries a variable with high levels of non-response, although this is not the case for Austria and Portugal. As was mentioned in Appendix 1 this item was not asked in Iceland. Besides this, there was high non-response for the item of education (age finished school) in the U.S. and Portugal; for the item of social change in Canada, UK, Denmark, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Spain, the U.S., Austria and Portugal; for the item of trust in Germany, Norway, Sweden and Austria; and for the item of materialist/postmaterialist values in Spain and Portugal.

After a descriptive overview, the relationship of missingness to the dependent variable –membership of political groups- was scrutinised. The most important result is that non-response with respect to income is inversely related to membership in political groups in a majority of countries, and the relationship is more important in countries as the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.[1] In the case of attitudes toward social change and materialist/postmaterialist values I found a moderate relationship between non-response and the dependent variable (membership of political groups) in most countries. This is probably pointing to a certain tendency of the more cognitively sophisticated and skilled respondents to be more active and engaged in politics.

A detailed analysis of the implications of using listwise deletion or employing multiple imputation methods for the core parts of this research that has been published in Morales (2000), led to opt for the latter possibility. Thus, in a second step multiple imputation techniques were used to "recuperate" the missing values, so as not to loose an important amount of information contained in the 1990-93 WVS.

Multiple imputation is a Monte Carlo technique in which missing values are substituted for m>1 simulated values. Put briefly, multiple imputation consists of the imputation of missing cases through the estimation of an appropriate stochastic model. However, this imputation is performed M times and M complete data files are produced with imputed values. In a later stage, the analyses are carried out with the M matrices of complete data and the results are combined with a set of formulae proposed by Little and Rubin (1987). The crucial aspect about multiple imputation lies in the definition of the imputation model and method. It is fundamental that the model employed to estimate the missing values contains all the variables that will be later used in the ordinary statistical analyses, with an aim of preserving the relations between variables. On the other hand, the better the model is –in predictive terms- the smaller the variation in the imputed values will be, and the more precise our subsequent estimators will be. The estimation method varies from some applications to the others, as do their properties (Allison 2000).

In general, multiple imputation is one of the most adequate solutions for the problem of item non-response, since it is relatively easy to apply (if compared, for example, with other maximum likelihood methods) and of general validity. Although other methods based on the EM algorithm may be more efficient –since they do not employ simulation techniques- its use is more complex and costly in terms of time (Schafer 1997). On the other hand, it has been demonstrated that value imputation through multiple imputation is highly reliable, even when a reduced number of complete matrices is produced (Rubin 1987: 114). Unless the proportion of missing information is very high, imputing between 3 and 5 complete matrices will be enough.

[1] It is important to recall that this variable was excluded from the multilevel analysis due to its inexistance in the Finnish case.

Currently there are several applications that allow to perform multiple imputation of different types of data matrices.[2] One imputation software available is that described by King et al. (1998) and implemented via the free software Amelia (Honaker et al., 1999) and available at http://Gking.harvard.edu. This application employs the EMis algorithm (*Expectation-Maximization with importance sampling*), which is based on the EM algorithm modified by a round of iterated samplings and on simulation. The user introduces a file with the incomplete data matrix in any of the formats allowed. At a second stage, she establishes the imputation algorithm to be used –a choice can be made among four variants- and indicates the number of complete data files to be imputed (the value of m), and selects other available options that allow to adjust the estimation model to the type of data (ordinal, categorical, time series, etc.). Finally, Amelia produces M complete data matrices that will be successively used in the ordinary statistical analyses that the researcher wishes to perform. Together with the Amelia software, a Stata programme, called "miest" (Scheve 1999) is provided that automatically combines the results for the M models. Thus, a single coefficient ($\bar{q}$) is obtained that combines the m point estimations (q_j) in the following way:

$$\bar{q} = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^{m} q_j$$

Similarly, the standard error of the new coefficient is calculated as:

$$se(q)^2 = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{j=1}^{m} se(q_j)^2 + \left[\sum_{j=1}^{m} (q_j - q)^2 \Big/ m-1 \right] \left(1 + 1/m\right)$$

In addition, the "miest" programme produces other information that serve to evaluate the significance of the coefficients (statistic t, degrees of freedom and probability).

The software Amelia has been used with the 1990-93 WVS as to solve the item non-response problem for the multinomial analyses presented in chapter 4. For this purpose, 5 complete data matrices were imputed for each of the 17 countries analysed.[3] In a later step, the multinomial regression models have been estimated with the 5 datafiles for each country, and combined the results with the "miest" Stata programme with version 6 of Stata (©Stata Corporation). These are the coefficients shown in Tables 4.19 to 4.21 in chapter 4 of this Thesis. The results shown in Morales (2000) lead to conclude that listwise deletion of incomplete cases would lead us to conclusions that do not hold when all the available information in the incomplete cases are used. More specifically, there are variables that systematically turn out to be statistically significant when the imputed datasets are used. In some countries even the estimated probabilities change importantly, depending on the method –imputation or listwise deletion- used. And in all cases the multinomial regression is more stable and precise, as it is based in a bigger sample size.

[2] Gradually, the number of statistical applications that can perform multiple imputation of missing values increases. On the one hand, there are the applications exclusively designed for imputation; and other other hand, the applications incorporated in more general statistical software. Among the former, we should mention the programmes AMELIA, EMCOV, MICE, NORM-CAT-MIX-PAN, and SOLAS. A brief description of each of them can be found in http://www.multiple-imputation.com. Among the latter stand out the ones included lately in SAS (versions 8.1 and 8.2).

[3] I have chosen to perform the multiple imputation of missing values countrywise instead of using the merged dataset for all 17 countries. The reasons are several: firstly, the samples are of radically different sizes (from the 2792 cases of Belgium to the 588 of Finland) and some countries would have had an excessive weight in the imputation model, as Amelia does not allow to include weighting variables. Secondly, it is risky to assume that the same imputation model will be valid for the 17 countries. The proportion of missing values enormously varies across countries (between 4.1% in Iceland and 72.2% in Belgium) and the association between item non-response and citizens' attributes do also differ across countries.

APPENDIX 3: OTHER TABLES

Additional Tables and Graphs relating to Chapter 2

Table A2.1: Evolution of associational membership

	EMV 1981	EB 19, 1983	EB 28, 1987	EB 34, 1990	1990-93 WVS	EB 49, 1998	EB 50.1, 1998	EVS 1999	ESE 2002
Iceland	83.4				89.9				
United States	74,9				70.6				
Denmark	67.4	65.2	82.8	85.6	80.9	85.1	84.4	84.4	92
Sweden	66				85	89.5	84.6	96.1	90.2
Norway	62				81.2				84
Canada	58.5				63.6				
Netherlands	57,8	76.8	71.4	73.8	84.4	81.25	79.3	92.4	83.8
Ireland	54.2	54.9	65	55	48.7	60.2	50.7	56.6	68.1
Great Britain	53,8	58	61.3	60.5	53.1	58.4	53.4	34.1	70
W. Germany	49,5	60.4	47.3	57.2	66.7	62.6	56	50.9	71.1
Belgium	41.2	44.4	50.8	55.9	58	59.3	47.9	68.2	71.2
Finland	40.1				76.5	78.05	72.1	79.9	76.4
Spain	31.3		19.1	28.2	22.3	43.1	27.7	30.9	36.3
France	27.8	43	43.8	40.8	37.5	52.3	40	38.4	
Italy	26.5	35.8	35.6	39.4	39.1	47.4	33.6	42	34.9
Luxembourg		69.3	76.8	76.4		71.1	56.8	59	77.6
Portugal			30.6	24.2	35.9	31.4	26.2	23.6	28.9
Greece		31.6	21.8	24.4		23.5	23.6	56.4	24.8
Austria					52.9	65.4	53	66.6	75.2

Table A2.2: Evolution of the average number of association citizens are members of

	WVS 1981	EB 19, 1983	EB 28, 1987	EB 34, 1990	WVS 1990	EB 49, 1998	EVS 1999	ESE 2002
United States	2				2.8			
Iceland	2				2.7		2.9	
Netherlands	1.9	2.1	2	2.1	3.2	2.5	3.3	2.6
Canada	1.8				2.6			
Great Britain	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.2	2.1	1.8	2.2
Norway	1.7				2.4			2.9
Ireland	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.6	2	1.7	2	2.4
Sweden	1.6				2.4	2.6	3.4	2.8
W. Germany	1.5	1.8	1.6	1.7	2	1.9	1.6	2.2
France	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.9	1.8	1.6	
Denmark	1.4	1.6	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.7
Italy	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.8
Spain	1.4		1.3	1.2	1.7	2	1.7	1.9
Belgium	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.8	2.5	1.9	2.4	2.2
Finland					2.3	2	2.3	2
Luxembourg		2.2	2.3	2		2.3	2.5	2.5
Portugal			1.3	1.4	1.8	1.5	1.4	1.5
Greece		1.5	1.4	1.3		1.5	2.2	1.5
Austria					2.1	2	2.2	2.8

Graph A2.1: Multidimensional analysis of associational membership, 1990-93 WVS (all respondents of western samples included).

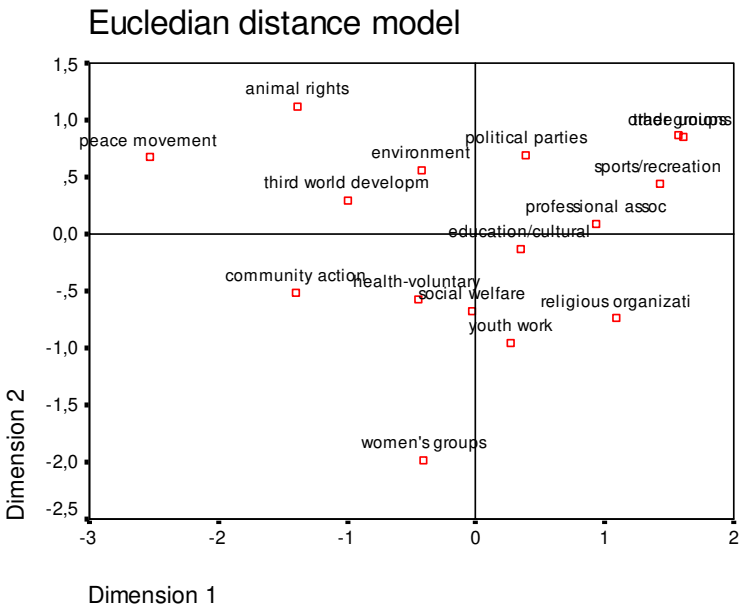


Table A2.3: Definition of political associations: political issues discussed at meetings?

Association related to the response	In this association, is politics discussed at meetings?		
	Yes	No	Total
Sports clubs	43	200	243
	17.7%	82.3%	100.0%
Youth	11	8	19
	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
Environmental	5	5	10
	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Animal protection	1	9	10
	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%
Peace	2		2
	100.0%		100.0%
Human rights or humanitarian co-operation	18	25	43
	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%
Charities or social welfare	28	58	86
	32.6%	67.4%	100.0%
Illnesses, health	4	27	31
	12.9%	87.1%	100.0%
Disabled people	9	17	26
	34.6%	65.4%	100.0%
Retired or pensioners	38	79	117
	32.5%	67.5%	100.0%
Political parties	51	1	52
	98.1%	1.9%	100.0%
Trade unions	50	6	56
	89.3%	10.7%	100.0%
Farmers' associations	9	13	22
	40.9%	59.1%	100.0%
Business organisations	13	12	25
	52.0%	48.0%	100.0%
Professional organisations	16	14	30
	53.3%	46.7%	100.0%
Consumers'	3	7	10
	30.0%	70.0%	100.0%
Parents' associations	18	80	98
	18.4%	81.6%	100.0%
Cultural, musical, arts, etc.	50	83	133
	37.6%	62.4%	100.0%
Hobbies	2	13	15
	13.3%	86.7%	100.0%
Automobile, drivers, etc.	2	4	6
	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Neighbourhood	16	42	58
	27,6%	72,4%	100,0%
Immigrants'	5	2	7
	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Religious	15	70	85
	17.6%	82.4%	100.0%
Womens'	12	38	50
	24.0%	76.0%	100.0%
Victims of terrorism	1		1
	100.0%		100.0%
Other	6	7	13
	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%
Total	428	820	1248
	34.3%	65.7%	100.0%

Source: Study 2450, CIS.

Table A2.4: Definiton of a political association: does it take stands on public or political issues?

Association related to the response	In this association, is politics discussed at meetings?		
	Yes	No	Total
Sports clubs	45	176	221
	20.4%	79.6%	100.0%

Association related to the response	In this association, is politics discussed at meetings?		
	Yes	No	Total
Youth	17	3	20
	85.0%	15.0%	100.0%
Environmental	10		10
	100.0%		100.0%
Animal protection	2	4	6
	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Peace	2		2
	100.0%		100.0%
Human rights or humanitarian co-operation	29	15	44
	65.9%	34.1%	100.0%
Charities or social welfare	47	31	78
	60.3%	39.7%	100.0%
Illnesses, health	13	14	27
	48.1%	51.9%	100.0%
Disabled people	7	17	24
	29.2%	70.8%	100.0%
Retired or pensioners	24	69	93
	25.8%	74.2%	100.0%
Political parties	51	1	52
	98.1%	1.9%	100.0%
Trade unions	50	5	55
	90.9%	9.1%	100.0%
Farmers' associations	13	7	20
	65.0%	35.0%	100.0%
Business organisations	12	11	23
	52.2%	47.8%	100.0%
Professional organisations	16	14	30
	53.3%	46.7%	100.0%
Consumers'	9	1	10
	90.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Parents' associations	39	50	89
	43.8%	56.2%	100.0%
Cultural, musical, arts, etc.	49	77	126
	38.9%	61.1%	100.0%
Hobbies	5	10	15
	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Automobile, drivers, etc.		6	6
		100.0%	100.0%
Neighbourhood	23	34	57
	40.4%	59.6%	100.0%
Immigrants'	2	3	5
	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
Religious	25	57	82
	30.5%	69.5%	100.0%
Womens'	23	25	48
	47.9%	52.1%	100.0%
Victims of terrorism	1		1
	100.0%		100.0%
Other	3	9	12
	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Total	517	639	1156
	44.7%	55.3%	100.0%

Source: Study 2450, CIS.

Table A2.5: Degree of inter-connection between both types of political membership EVS 1999

		Only traditional	Only new	Traditional and new	Total
AT	N	363	123	92	579
	%	63	21	16	100
BE	N	363	271	204	838
	%	43	32	24	100
DE	N	246	96	37	379
	%	65	25	10	100
DK	N	513	52	124	689
	%	74	8	18	100
ES	N	72	51	29	152
	%	47	34	19	100
FI	N	338	72	71	481
	%	70	15	15	100
FR	N	126	41	28	195
	%	65	21	14	100
GB	N	110	30	21	161
	%	68	19	13	100
GR	N	190	115	88	393
	%	48	29	22	100
IE	N	171	55	39	265
	%	64	21	15	100
IS	N	593	35	116	744
	%	80	5	16	100
IT	N	271	68	62	401
	%	68	17	15	100
LU	N	156	145	105	407
	%	38	36	26	100
NL	N	168	289	238	695
	%	24	42	34	100
PT	N	37	10	5	52
	%	71	19	10	100
SE	N	536	44	204	784
	%	68	6	26	100

The figures indicate the percentage of respondents that are members of each type of political organisations for the sub-sample of individuals who are members of any political organisation.

Additional Tables Related to Chapter 3

Table A3.1: Descriptives of political involvement and protest, 1990-93 WVS

	Interest in politics	Importance of politics	Discussions of politics
Norway	71.8	50.4	22
W. Germany	69.3	42.3	24.6
Netherlands	61.8	54.3	15.3
United States	59.7	50.5	14.1
Canada	58	47.9	18.9
Denmark	54.2	43.2	24.1
Austria	53.8	35.4	19.6
Great Britain	49	43	14.5
Finland	47.5	25.9	9.7
Sweden	46.7	45.4	17.8
Iceland	46.7	26.1	14.3
France	37.6	32.6	11.8
Ireland	37.2	28.2	11.7
Italy	33.9	34.9	14.9
Portugal	30.8	21.7	8.5
Belgium	29.5	25.8	9.1
Spain	25.5	20.3	9

	Sign petition	Legal demonstration	Boycott	Illegal strike	Occupy buildings
Canada	76.8	20.8	22.3	7	3
Great Britain	75.4	13.6	14.7	8.5	2.3
Sweden	71.7	22.6	16.5	3.1	0.2
United States	71	15.5	17.9	4.4	2
Norway	61.1	19.5	12	24.4	1
W. Germany	56.4	20.5	10	2.3	1.1
France	53.7	32.7	12.5	10.1	7.9
Italy	53.6	38.7	12.7	7.7	9.7
Denmark	51.2	27.4	10.6	17.4	2.1
Netherlands	50.6	25.2	7.7	2.4	2.5
Belgium	49.7	25.4	10.3	7.3	4.3
Austria	47.7	10.4	5.2	1.1	0.7
Iceland	47.3	23.7	21.4	5	1.3
Ireland	42	16.5	7.4	3.7	2
Finland	40.7	14.2	13.5	8.1	1.6
Portugal	29.2	24.8	4.6	3.6	1.4
Spain	21.9	21.7	4.8	5.4	2.5

Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of the first column in each section.

Table A3.2: Interest in politics and membership of associations. Percentage who are very or quite interested.

		Associational membership				
Country		None	Only political	Only social	Political and social	Total
France	N	190	34	93	57	374
	% members	30.6	58.6	44.5	53.3	37.6
Great Britain	N	276	97	136	217	726
	% members	39.7	54.8	46.4	68.2	48.9
W. Germany	N	393	169	433	448	1443
	% members	56.8	73.2	70.2	82.6	69.3
Italy	N	274	112	107	166	659
	% members	23.3	62.2	33.3	62.6	33.9
Netherlands	N	57	42	161	368	628
	% members	35.8	67.7	51.7	75.7	61.7
Denmark	N	85	143	93	235	556
	% members	43.4	52.8	54.7	60.2	54.1
Belgium	N	214	119	152	324	809
	% members	18.7	32.5	28.4	46.1	29.5
Spain	N	455	55	91	64	665
	% members	22.5	56.7	24.6	56.6	25.5
Ireland	N	148	34	90	99	371
	% members	29	57.6	35.6	56.9	37.2
United States	N	269	58	356	496	1179
	% members	46.9	58	54.9	75.9	59.7
Canada	N	302	81	241	375	999
	% members	48.3	64.3	54.3	71.3	58.1
Norway	N	143	145	193	405	886
	% members	61.9	74	65.9	78.8	71.8
Sweden	N	61	119	61	248	489
	% members	38.8	46.1	37.4	53	46.7
Iceland	N	29	36	47	215	327
	% members	40.8	35.6	37	53.6	46.7
Finland	N	50	42	60	123	275
	% members	37.9	40	44.1	59.7	47.5
Switzerland	N	428	194	127	128	877
	% members	57.1	75.5	69.4	92.1	66
Portugal	N	199	36	73	56	364
	% members	26.3	61	28	53.3	30.8
Austria	N	297	117	131	235	780
	% members	43.5	57.6	52.8	74.1	53.8
Average 18 countries		39	57.1	46.3	65.2	48.8

Table A3.3 Importance attributed to politics and types of membership. Percentage who attribute a lot or quite importance.

		Associational membership				
Country		None	Only political	Only social	Political and social	Total
France	N	160	31	72	56	319
	% members	26.4	53.4	34.4	52.3	32.6
Great Britain	N	230	92	112	201	635
	% members	33.3	52	38.5	63.2	43
W. Germany	N	209	104	242	307	862
	% members	31	46.2	40	57.7	42.3
Italy	N	312	107	109	168	696
	% members	25.6	59.1	33.7	60.9	34.9
Netherlands	N	53	34	146	318	551
	% members	33.5	54.8	47.1	65.6	54.3
Denmark	N	80	106	74	182	442
	% members	41.2	39.3	43.5	46.9	43.2
Belgium	N	209	96	115	290	710
	% members	18.1	26.5	21.3	41.4	25.7
Spain	N	366	41	73	44	524
	% members	18.2	42.3	20.2	38.3	20.3
Ireland	N	131	24	61	65	281
	% members	25.7	41.4	24.2	37.1	28.2
United States	N	253	51	286	411	1001
	% members	44	50	44.1	62.5	50.4
Canada	N	262	59	198	306	825
	% members	41.9	46.5	44.6	57.9	47.8
Norway	N	90	96	156	280	622
	% members	38.6	48.7	53.4	54.8	50.4
Sweden	N	59	121	59	232	471
	% members	38.3	47.3	36.4	49.9	45.4
Iceland	N	20	20	24	119	183
	% members	28.6	19.8	18.9	29.6	26.1
Finland	N	24	26	25	73	148
	% members	18.6	24.8	18.7	35.8	25.9
Switzerland	N	265	118	89	77	549
	% members	35.5	45.9	47.6	55.4	41.3
Portugal	N	136	23	53	39	251
	% members	18.3	39	20.9	38.6	21.7
Austria	N	206	66	79	154	505
	% members	30.8	32.8	32.6	48.9	35.4
Average 18 countries		30.4	42.8	34.4	49.8	37.2

Table A3.4 Discussion of politics and types of membership. Percentage who discuss frequently

		Associational membership				
Country		None	Only political	Only social	Political and social	Total
France	N	45	16	28	28	117
	% members	7.3	27.6	13.4	26.4	11.8
Great Britain	N	82	34	29	70	215
	% members	11.8	19.2	9.9	22	14.5
W. Germany	N	112	61	155	185	513
	% members	13.3	26.5	25	34	24.7
Italy	N	103	68	46	83	300
	% members	8.4	36.9	14.1	30.1	14.9
Netherlands	N	11	13	28	103	155
	% members	7	21	9	21.2	15.2
Denmark	N	34	67	34	113	248
	% members	17.4	24.8	19.9	29	24.2
Belgium	N	54	38	44	115	251
	% members	4.6	10.5	8.1	16.4	9.1
Spain	N	137	25	34	38	234
	% members	6.8	25.5	9.2	33.3	9
Ireland	N	44	11	26	36	117
	% members	8.6	19	10.3	20.7	11.7
United States	N	63	18	46	155	282
	% members	10.7	17.6	7	23.6	14.1
Canada	N	83	29	68	146	326
	% members	13.3	22.8	15.3	27.7	18.9

Norway	N	25	47	49	151	272
	% members	10.8	23.9	16.7	29.5	22
Sweden	N	23	42	18	103	186
	% members	14.7	16.2	11	22	17.8
Iceland	N	9	11	15	65	100
	% members	12.7	10.9	11.8	16.2	14.3
Finland	N	4	6	9	37	56
	% members	3	5.8	6.7	17.8	9.7
Switzerland	N	103	65	31	52	251
	% members	13.4	25	16.8	37.1	18.6
Portugal	N	42	14	23	21	100
	% members	5.6	23.3	8.8	20	8.5
Austria	N	91	53	42	99	285
	% members	13.3	25.8	16.9	31.1	19.6
Average 18 countries		10.1	21.2	12.8	25.5	15.5

Table A3.5 Social trust and types of membership: percentage who trusts.

		Associational membership				
Country		None	Only political	Only social	Political and social	Total
France	N	106	14	58	36	214
	% members	18.1	25.9	29.0	36.4	22.8
Great Britain	N	244	82	116	183	625
	% members	36.3	47.1	40.8	60.4	43.6
W. Germany	N	178	68	217	190	653
	% members	31.6	35.6	42.3	41.5	37.9
Italy	N	368	69	152	119	708
	% members	31.3	39.4	48.9	48.8	37.1
Netherlands	N	49	39	165	278	531
	% members	33.3	65.0	55.0	60.3	54.9
Denmark	N	78	144	105	244	571
	% members	40.4	54.1	64.0	66.3	57.6
Belgium	N	277	93	186	299	855
	% members	25.4	27.2	37.3	46.4	33.2
Spain	N	674	37	125	52	888
	% members	35.1	40.2	35.9	49.1	36.0
Ireland	N	211	27	137	93	468
	% members	41.6	45.8	55.0	53.8	47.4
United States	N	245	53	289	386	973
	% members	42.8	53.0	45.3	60.8	50.0
Canada	N	279	67	218	313	877
	% members	46.1	54.5	50.3	61.3	52.5
Norway	N	120	105	175	352	752
	% members	54.3	58.0	64.3	73.0	65.1
Sweden	N	82	154	83	305	624
	% members	58.6	65.3	58.0	71.8	66.1
Iceland	N	21	42	55	175	293
	% members	31.3	44.7	45.8	44.8	43.6
Finland	N	66	65	82	137	350
	% members	51.6	63.7	63.6	68.8	62.7
Switzerland	N	185	63	52	60	360
	% members	38.1	41.7	46.8	69.0	43.2
Portugal	N	142	5	65	33	245
	% members	19.3	8.5	25.9	32.7	21.4
Austria	N	157	52	71	134	414
	% members	25.9	27.2	31.7	48.0	31.8

Table A3.6 Internal political efficacy and types of membership. Range of efficacy (1-5)

Country	Associational membership	Media	N	Desv. típ.
France	None	2.08	590	1.10
	only political	2.55	55	1.34
	only social	2.34	204	1.28
	political and social	2.68	103	1.39
	Total	2.22	952	1.20
Great Britain	None	2.66	657	1.28
	only political	3.21	174	1.35
	only social	2.83	282	1.33
	political and social	3.26	313	1.29
	Total	2.89	1426	1.32
W. Germany	None	2.21	647	1.28
	only political	2.49	221	1.36
	only social	2.51	585	1.30
	political and social	2.67	525	1.38
	Total	2.45	1978	1.33
Italy	None	2.68	1127	1.36
	only political	3.34	181	1.40
	only social	3.11	312	1.38
	political and social	3.24	266	1.23
	Total	2.90	1887	1.38
Netherlands	None	2.73	146	1.27
	only political	2.67	62	1.24
	only social	2.85	301	1.14

Country	Associational membership	Media	N	Desv. típ.
	political and social	3.19	476	1.18
	Total	2.99	985	1.20
Denmark	None	1.98	180	1.32
	only political	2.56	258	1.55
	only social	2.66	161	1.55
	political and social	2.82	381	1.48
	Total	2.57	981	1.51
Belgium	None	2.22	1027	1.12
	only political	2.27	345	1.11
	only social	2.49	496	1.11
	political and social	2.63	666	1.23
	Total	2.39	2534	1.16
Spain	None	2.35	1749	1.30
	only political	2.77	97	1.56
	only social	2.24	333	1.32
	political and social	2.79	112	1.52
	Total	2.38	2291	1.34
Ireland	None	2.78	500	1.40
	only political	3.40	58	1.27
	only social	3.10	250	1.34
	political and social	3.35	173	1.39
	Total	3.00	981	1.40
United States	None	3.14	563	1.28
	only political	3.33	99	1.25
	only social	3.35	637	1.26
	political and social	3.63	652	1.18
	Total	3.38	1951	1.25
Canada	None	3.07	602	1.39
	only political	3.25	126	1.37
	only social	3.10	428	1.33
	political and social	3.24	521	1.37
	Total	3.14	1677	1.37
Norway	None	2.62	232	1.37
	only political	2.81	196	1.42
	only social	3.02	290	1.37
	political and social	3.22	512	1.40
	Total	2.99	1230	1.41
Sweden	None	1.94	141	1.22
	only political	2.26	245	1.38
	only social	2.24	148	1.37
	political and social	2.32	442	1.45
	Total	2.24	976	1.39
Iceland	None	3.23	70	1.35
	only political	3.10	97	1.20
	only social	3.37	123	1.19
	political and social	3.22	397	1.28
	Total	3.23	687	1.26
Finland	None	2.24	132	1.15
	only political	2.69	98	1.37
	only social	2.48	131	1.34
	political and social	2.73	202	1.36
	Total	2.55	563	1.32
Portugal	None	2.43	695	1.33
	only political	2.92	59	1.47
	only social	2.44	245	1.31
	political and social	2.82	104	1.40
	Total	2.50	1103	1.35
Austria	None	2.35	619	1.36
	only political	2.17	191	1.25
	only social	2.32	235	1.30
	political and social	2.34	311	1.17
	Total	2.32	1356	1.29

Table A3.7 Reliability analysis of the political involvement scale

Country	Cronbach's α	Cronbach's α if political efficacy variable deleted
France	0.6276	0.8033
Great Britain	0.6201	0.7800
W. Germany	0.6449	0.8143
Italy	0.6268	0.8219
Netherlands	0.6416	0.8012
Denmark	0.6019	0.7857
Belgium	0.6473	0.7793
Spain	0.5879	0.7738
Ireland	0.5811	0.7526
United States	0.5791	0.7198
Canada	0.6005	0.7678
Norway	0.5428	0.7350
Sweden	0.5564	0.7592
Iceland	0.5761	0.7527
Finland	0.6154	0.7412
Portugal	0.5942	0.7844
Austria	0.5089	0.7817

Additional Tables and Graphs Related to Chapter 4

Table A4.1 Types of political membership and level of education, 1990-93 WVS

Country		Primary or less	Some secondary education	Some university or higher education	Total
France	None	245	397	128	770
		89.7	85	69.9	83.4
	only traditional	18	39	34	91
		6.6	8.4	18.6	9.9
	only new	6	17	14	37
		2.2	3.6	7.7	4
	traditional and new	4	14	7	25
		1.5	3	3.8	2.7
Great Britain	None	454	454	71	979
		75.7	65.4	41	66.7
	only traditional	96	153	62	311
		16	22	35.8	21.2
	only new	36	36	18	90
		6	5.2	10.4	6.1
	traditional and new	14	51	22	87
		2.3	7.3	12.7	5.9
W. Germany	None	608	582	107	1297
		68.3	61.3	46.5	62.7
	only traditional	166	214	66	446
		18.7	22.6	28.7	21.6
	only new	85	92	31	208
		9.6	9.7	13.5	10.1
	traditional and new	31	61	26	118
		3.5	6.4	11.3	5.7
Italy	None	1154	258	112	1524
		84.5	66.2	49.8	77
	only traditional	136	98	63	297
		10	25.1	28	15
	only new	49	17	35	101
		3.6	4.4	15.6	5.1
	traditional and new	26	17	15	58
		1.9	4.4	6.7	2.9
Netherlands	None	129	218	120	467
		55.8	48.2	36.3	46.1
	only traditional	41	67	50	158
		17.7	14.8	15.1	15.6
	only new	32	83	67	182
		13.9	18.4	20.2	17.9
	traditional and new	29	84	94	207
		12.6	18.6	28.4	20.4
Denmark	None	117	119	123	359
		57.6	33.1	27.6	35.6
	only traditional	74	176	214	464
		36.5	49	48	46
	only new	5	18	24	47
		2.5	5	5.4	4.7
	traditional and new	7	46	85	138
		3.4	12.8	19.1	13.7
Belgium	None	483	844	284	1611
		72.2	59.6	49.9	60.7
	only traditional	64	223	132	419
		9.6	15.8	23.2	15.8
	only new	82	202	60	344
		12.3	14.3	10.5	13
	traditional and new	40	146	93	279
		6	10.3	16.3	10.5
Spain	None	1334	590	389	2313
		94.9	91.8	81	91.5
	only traditional	49	30	49	128
		3.5	4.7	10.2	5.1
	only new	13	17	21	51
		0.9	2.6	4.4	2
	traditional and new	9	6	21	36

Country		Primary or less	Some secondary education	Some university or higher education	Total
		0.6	0.9	4.4	1.4
Ireland	None	319	395	50	764
		85.8	73.7	55.6	76.6
	only traditional	39	89	23	151
		10.5	16.6	25.6	15.1
	only new	9	36	8	53
		2.4	6.7	8.9	5.3
	traditional and new	5	16	9	30
		1.3	3	10	3
United States	None	97	670	297	1064
		86.6	68.9	43.6	60.3
	only traditional	9	155	204	368
		8	15.9	30	20.8
	only new	3	74	66	143
		2.7	7.6	9.7	8.1
	traditional and new	3	73	114	190
		2.7	7.5	16.7	10.8
Canada	None	161	626	263	1050
		76.7	67.6	47.6	62.2
	only traditional	21	158	169	348
		10	17.1	30.6	20.6
	only new	17	82	32	131
		8.1	8.9	5.8	7.8
	traditional and new	11	60	88	159
		5.2	6.5	15.9	9.4
Norway	None	114	200	188	502
		54	45.9	34.6	42.1
	only traditional	88	187	262	537
		41.7	42.9	48.2	45.1
	only new	4	17	30	51
		1.9	3.9	5.5	4.3
	traditional and new	5	32	64	101
		2.4	7.3	11.8	8.5
Sweden	None	44	129	130	303
		34.1	30.5	28.3	29.9
	only traditional	70	208	199	477
		54.3	49.2	43.3	47.1
	only new	4	22	27	53
		3.1	5.2	5.9	5.2
	traditional and new	11	64	104	179
		8.5	15.1	22.6	17.7
Iceland	None	44	78	68	190
		34.4	29.4	23.7	27.9
	only traditional	67	151	167	385
		52.3	57	58.2	56.6
	only new	6	9	9	24
		4.7	3.4	3.1	3.5
	traditional and new	11	27	43	81
		8.6	10.2	15	11.9
Finland	None	43	113	118	274
		51.2	56.2	39.2	46.8
	only traditional	30	73	135	238
		35.7	36.3	44.9	40.6
	only new	5	6	13	24
		6	3	4.3	4.1
	traditional and new	6	9	35	50
		7.1	4.5	11.6	8.5
Switzerland	None	100	771	83	954
		91.7	70	58	70.5
	only traditional	7	216	33	256
		6.4	19.6	23.1	18.9
	only new	2	62	16	80
		1.8	5.6	11.2	5.9
	traditional and new		53	11	64
			4.8	7.7	4.7
Portugal	None	600	174	161	935
		88.2	83.7	76.3	85.1
	only traditional	65	26	36	127

Country		Primary or less	Some secondary education	Some university or higher education	Total
		9.6	12.5	17.1	11.6
	only new	8	7	5	20
		1.2	3.4	2.4	1.8
	traditional and new	7	1	9	17
		1	0.5	4.3	1.5
Austria	None	79	770	72	921
		56.8	65.5	59.5	64.1
	only traditional	40	284	26	350
		28.8	24.1	21.5	24.4
	only new	8	75	15	98
		5.8	6.4	12.4	6.8
	traditional and new	12	47	8	67
		8.6	4	6.6	4.7

Table A4.2 Income and political membership, 1990-93 WVS

Country	Income decile									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
France	9	10	10	17	16	20	24	22	42	31
Great Britain	21	21	20	20	33	35	39	42	52	51
W. Germany	28	34	37	40	42	44	43	41	41	41
Italy	10	8	18	28	37	43	36	79	42	100
Netherlands	37	46	40	55	62	55	69	70	72	68
Denmark	13	36	69	72	81	78	85	76	73	80
Belgium	30	31	28	33	43	47	43	49	50	56
Spain	1	2	6	6	8	9	12	17	12	21
Ireland	9	7	6	12	17	18	21	42	37	42
United States	21	30	28	33	44	49	53	31	40	25
Canada	17	27	21	27	39	38	46	47	54	54
Norway	32	45	66	62	70	62	69	67	69	70
Sweden	74	55	67	43	64	68	68	66	78	
Finland	33	38	36	55	38	45	57	51	55	61
Switzerland	17	19		27	31	35	39		45	53
Portugal	4	11	13	9	21	13	26	24	14	30
Austria	15	22	36	36	43	35	38	41	56	40

Note: The figures indicate the % who are members of any political organisation. In Iceland no item on income levels was included.

Table A4.3 Types of Political Membership and Social Class. EB 49 (1998)

Country		Inactive	Manual and technical workers	Non-manual routine	New middle classes	Traditional middle and small owners	Total
Belgium	none	86.7	76.0	71.4	50.0	73.7	76.7
	Traditional	6.6	16.7	14.1	24.2	10.1	12.2
	New	4.7	4.4	9.4	12.1	8.1	6.8
	Traditional and new	1.9	2.9	5.1	13.6	8.1	4.4
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Denmark	none	57.0	25.5	27.0	21.6	38.3	35.4
	Traditional	23.4	55.7	43.2	44.8	38.3	40.3
	New	9.6	3.4	11.9	3.7	5.0	7.7
	Traditional and new	10.0	15.3	18.0	29.9	18.3	16.6
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Germany	none	79.6	72.5	79.5	59.1	66.7	74.3
	Traditional	10.2	15.9	10.8	26.3	14.3	14.1
	New	6.1	8.2	5.8	10.2	9.5	7.3
	Traditional and new	4.2	3.4	3.9	4.4	9.5	4.3
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Greece	none	95.3	89.0	92.1	84.3	88.3	91.2
	Traditional	3.6	8.7	6.3	11.8	8.4	6.6
	New	1.2	2.4	0.5	2.0	1.9	1.5
	Traditional and new		1.1	2.0	1.3	0.7	
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Italy	none	89.9	81.3	77.0	72.3	71.7	82.4
	Traditional	4.6	15.4	13.4	16.9	15.2	10.1
	New	4.2	3.3	5.7	6.2	9.0	5.2
	Traditional and new	1.3		3.8	4.6	4.1	2.3
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Spain	none	92.8	87.5	73.6	48.1	80.9	83.6
	Traditional	3.2	6.9	12.8	26.6	10.0	8.3
	New	3.2	4.2	8.1	20.3	7.3	6.0
	Traditional and new	0.8	1.4	5.4	5.1	1.8	2.1
		100	100	100	100	100	100
France	none	86.5	80.7	86.7	74.6	69.4	82.6
	Traditional	3.9	8.5	7.4	13.6	18.4	8.0
	New	7.5	3.4	2.6	6.8	3.1	5.1
	Traditional and new	2.1	7.4	3.3	5.1	9.2	4.3
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Ireland	none	92.0	87.3	86.0	60.0	74.2	85.0
	Traditional	3.1	8.9	10.2	28.6	15.9	9.5
	New	4.9	2.5	2.5	11.4	7.6	4.6
	Traditional and new	1.3	1.3		2.3	0.9	
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Luxembourg	none	62.4	57.5	50.0	42.0	59.6	56.2
	Traditional	17.0	17.8	19.6	23.5	6.4	17.7
	New	9.2	7.5	13.7	13.6	29.8	11.7
	Traditional and new	11.4	17.1	16.7	21.0	4.3	14.4
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Netherlands	none	63.1	51.6	47.1	41.0	29.0	50.8
	Traditional	10.1	16.4	14.6	12.4	11.3	13.3
	New	19.9	18.3	22.7	24.8	40.3	22.2
	Traditional and new	7.0	13.7	15.7	21.9	19.4	13.7
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Portugal	none	97.2	94.2	75.9	61.3	82.3	89.1
	Traditional	2.1	5.8	17.7	32.3	12.2	8.5
	New	0.7		4.3	1.6	3.4	1.5
	Traditional and new		2.1	4.8	2.0	0.9	
		100	100	100	100	100	100
G.Britain	none	84.8	79.1	62.1	44.5	72.0	70.2
	Traditional	3.6	14.4	23.3	28.6	9.3	16.3
	New	8.6	5.0	9.6	12.6	17.3	8.8
	Traditional and new	3.0	1.6	5.0	14.3	1.3	4.7
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Finland	none	71.6	50.0	33.1	33.1	45.8	50.0
	Traditional	18.7	43.1	53.8	49.7	40.2	38.5
	New	7.0	3.7	5.1	5.1	9.3	5.8
	Traditional and new	2.8	3.2	8.1	12.1	4.7	5.7
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Sweden	none	54.9	24.9	24.1	13.6	31.0	33.3
	Traditional	16.9	43.0	43.6	37.6	38.0	33.9
	New	16.9	4.7	5.5	13.6	15.5	10.7

Country		Inactive	Manual and technical workers	Non-manual routine	New middle classes	Traditional middle and small owners	Total
	Traditional and new	11.3	27.5	26.7	35.2	15.5	22.2
		100	100	100	100	100	100
Austria	none	78.9	66.9	67.8	54.0	55.2	67.6
	Traditional	11.0	17.8	14.1	25.2	20.0	16.2
	New	6.9	8.1	12.1	12.9	14.4	9.9
	Traditional and new	3.2	7.2	6.0	7.9	10.4	6.2
		100	100	100	100	100	100

Table A4.4 Political membership and age, 1990-93 WVS

Country	17-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75+
France	6%	10%	18%	14%	16%	19%	21%	24%	23%	16%	24%	19%	0%
Great Britain	20%	25%	28%	44%	31%	39%	43%	48%	41%	33%	28%	29%	23 %
W. Germany	24%	34%	37%	36%	47%	44%	43%	42%	37%	38%	36%	27%	28 %
Italy	8%	15%	26%	42%	31%	30%	24%	24%	16%	12%	11%	13%	4%
Netherlands	21%	37%	55%	64%	55%	70%	61%	51%	67%	55%	55%	48%	39 %
Denmark	31%	57%	71%	87%	74%	72%	75%	71%	82%	58%	47%	38%	13 %
Belgium	20%	36%	36%	43%	53%	44%	42%	37%	40%	43%	32%	34%	18 %
Spain	5%	7%	8%	14%	11%	12%	14%	6%	8%	5%	9%	1%	2%
Ireland	17%	23%	22%	24%	33%	27%	28%	30%	24%	17%	22%	14%	7%
United States	16%	25%	38%	38%	44%	47%	48%	38%	46%	39%	44%	33%	35 %
Canada	21%	30%	37%	38%	43%	43%	51%	50%	39%	37%	30%	29%	31 %
Norway	32%	40%	53%	63%	64%	71%	67%	61%	60%	60%	57%	43%	32 %
Sweden	37%	61%	73%	83%	81%	73%	74%	75%	74%	75%	51%	53%	
Iceland	67%	68%	76%	70%	77%	83%	75%	86%	69%	59%	71%	48%	47 %
Finland	29%	37%	46%	53%	53%	72%	72%	55%	61%	28%	49%	38%	21 %
Switzerland		16%	25%	29%	33%	36%	34%	40%	32%	27%	35%	30%	20 %
Portugal	7%	14%	20%	8%	15%	22%	12%	18%	15%	7%	7%	15%	16 %
Austria	16%	24%	38%	45%	44%	40%	41%	48%	37%	32%	31%	25%	21 %

Table A4.5 Political membership and marital status, EB 49 (1998)

	Whole sample			Men			Women		
	No couple	With couple	Ratio	No couple	With couple	Ratio	No couple	With couple	Ratio
Belgium	18.6	26.9	1.4	22.9	31.3	1.4	15.4	21.8	1.4
Denmark	57.6	68.1	1.2	62.0	70.4	1.1	54.5	65.5	1.2
Germany	20.3	29.4	1.4	26.1	39.3	1.5	15.4	20.3	1.3
Greece	7.8	9.3	1.2	9.2	16.5	1.8	6.3	2.9	0.5
Italy	13.9	20.9	1.5	17.7	28.1	1.6	11.1	13.3	1.2
Spain	16.7	16.1	1.0	18.1	21.6	1.2	15.5	10.9	0.7
France	13.0	20.4	1.6	16.9	24.5	1.5	10.3	15.6	1.5
Ireland	12.2	17.4	1.4	14.5	24.1	1.7	9.7	11.3	1.2
Luxembourg	29.5	52.6	1.8	30.3	59.2	2.0	28.3	46.3	1.6
Netherlands	38.1	57.2	1.5	43.7	60.9	1.4	33.0	53.5	1.6
Portugal	12.1	10.1	0.8	12.0	13.4	1.1	12.6	7.2	0.6
G.Britain	21.3	35.0	1.6	21.4	42.7	2.0	20.8	26.9	1.3
Finland	39.8	57.5	1.4	34.7	56.7	1.6	44.0	58.3	1.3
Sweden	60.0	70.7	1.2	62.3	71.8	1.2	58.1	69.5	1.2
Austria	27.9	37.1	1.3	30.9	45.1	1.5	25.3	29.5	1.2

Table A4.6 T-Test for the equality of means: political membership and marital status (value of statistic t)

Country	Whole sample	Men	Women
Belgium	3.1	2.1	1.8
Denmark	3.2	1.8	2.5
W. Germany	3.3	3.1	1.5
Greece	0.9	2.5	-1.7
Italy	2.9	2.8	0.7
Spain	-0.3	1.0	-1.6
France	3.2	2.1	1.8
Ireland	2.4	2.7	0.6
Luxembourg	5.8	4.9	3.2
Netherlands	6.2	3.9	4.7
Portugal	-0.9	0.5	-1.9
Great Britain	5.0	5.1	1.6
Finland	5.7	5.0	3.4
Sweden	3.5	2.1	2.7
Austria	3.1	3.2	1.1

Table A4.7 Number of children (3 categories) and political membership: F statistic

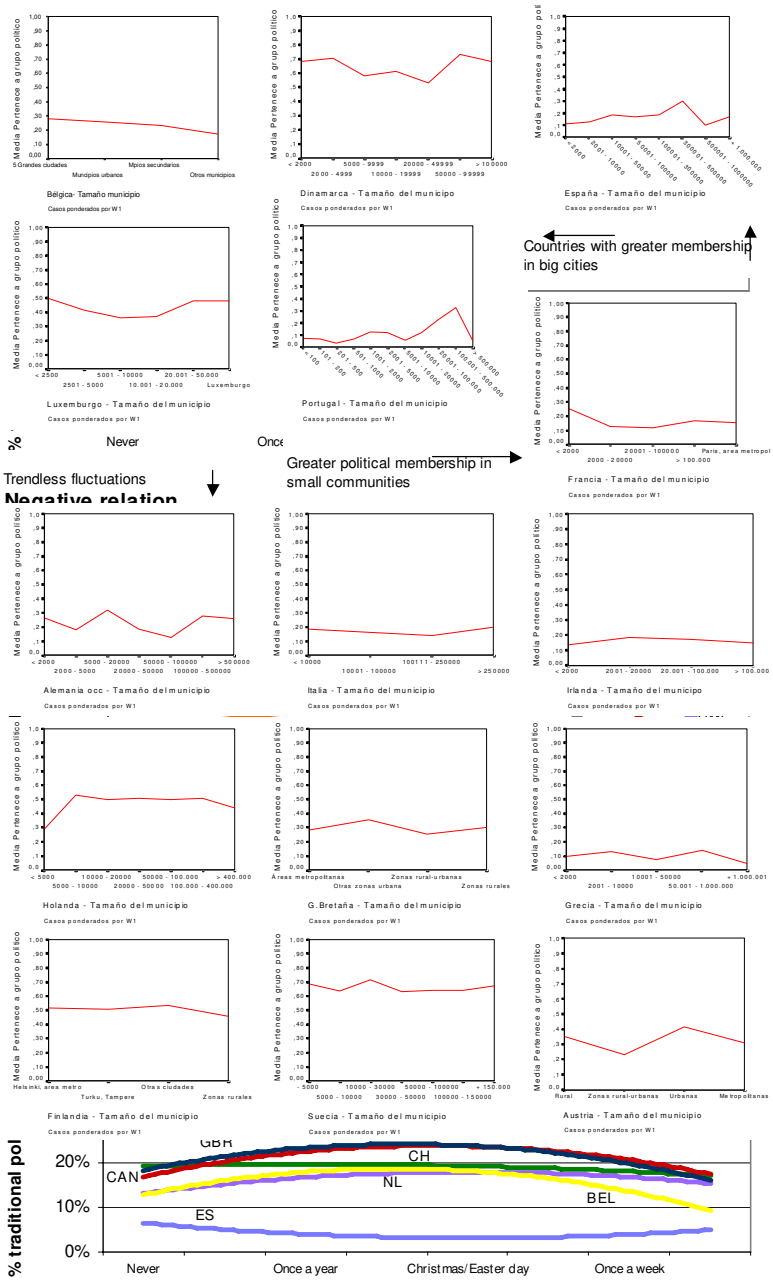
Country	Gender	F	Sig.
Belgium	Men	1.0	0.4
	Women	1.9	0.1
Denmark	Men	1.3	0.3
	Women	5.4	0.0
Germany	Men	1.9	0.1

	Women	0.5	0.7
Greece	Men	0.2	0.9
	Women	0.2	0.9
Italy	Men	2.4	0.1
	Women	1.1	0.3
Spain	Men	0.7	0.6
	Women	0.7	0.6
France	Men	0.6	0.7
	Women	1.1	0.4
Ireland	Men	1.1	0.4
	Women	0.7	0.7
Luxembourg	Men	1.6	0.2
	Women	1.1	0.3
Netherlands	Men	0.6	0.7
	Women	0.7	0.6
Portugal	Men	0.4	0.7
	Women	1.2	0.3
G.Britain	Men	2.4	0.0
	Women	2.4	0.0
Finland	Men	5.7	0.0
	Women	4.5	0.0
Sweden	Men	0.7	0.6
	Women	3.2	0.0
Austria	Men	2.5	0.0
	Women	0.8	0.5

Table A4.8 Size of community and political membership, 1990-93 WVS

	<2000	2-5000	5-10000	10-20000	20-50000	>50000	>100000	>500000
France	16%	12%	20%	11%	21%	15%	13%	20%
Great Britain	37%	41%	25%	35%	29%	36%	32%	28%
W. Germany	45%	37%	37%	39%	36%	34%	37%	36%
Italy	7%	24%	23%	15%	28%	19%	39%	18%
Netherlands		77%	53%	51%	54%	55%	54%	48%
Denmark	68%	73%	67%	66%	61%	59%	61%	
Belgium	33%	25%	36%	43%	42%	37%	36%	36%
Spain	2%	5%	2%	5%	7%	5%	13%	11%
Ireland	19%	23%	23%	20%	20%	50%	26%	31%
United States	38%	37%	38%	36%	45%	36%	42%	33%
Canada			39%	34%	37%	31%	36%	40%
Norway	56%	64%	52%	55%	59%	70%	56%	
Sweden	78%	71%	58%	72%	63%	68%	70%	
Switzerland		29%			30%		29%	
Portugal	9%	12%	9%	14%	22%	29%	12%	20%
Austria	32%	34%	34%	32%	47%	27%		

Graph A4.1 Political membership and size of community, EB 49 (1998)



Graph A4.3 Church attendance and new political membership, WVS 1990-93

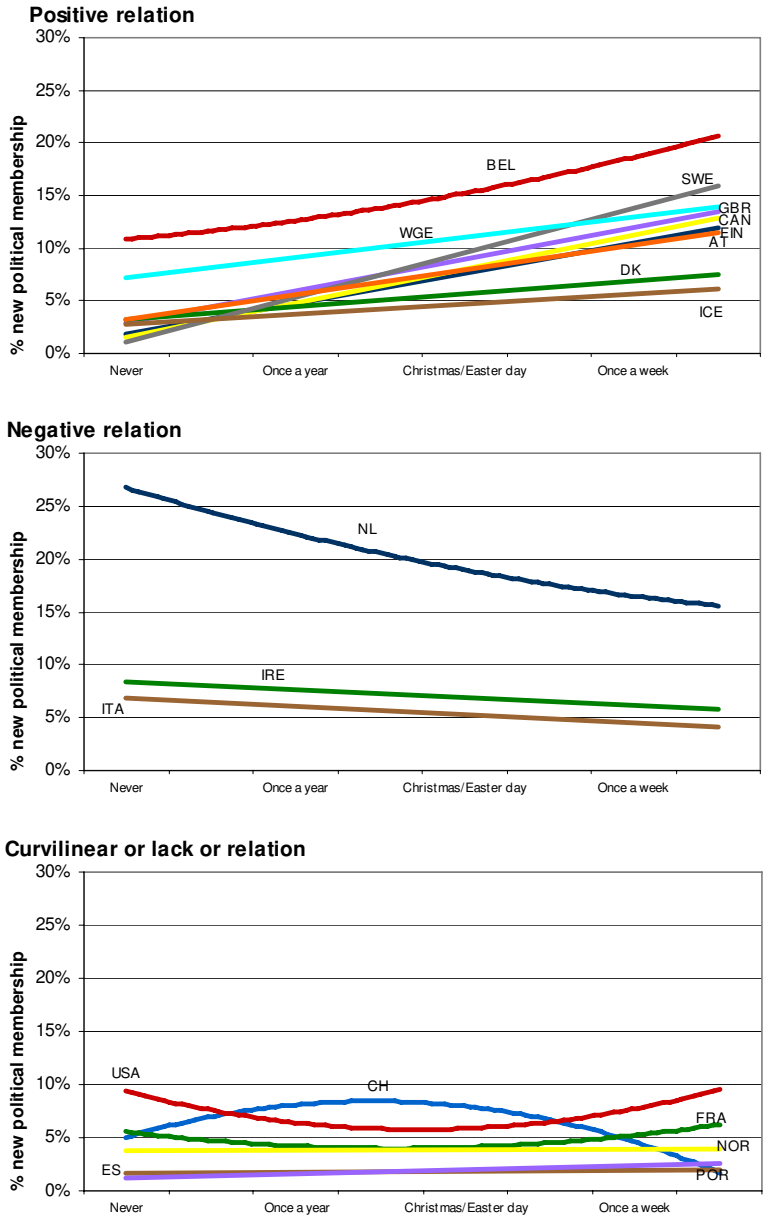


Table A4.9 Logistic regression of political membership, 1990-93 WVS

Country		B	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
France	pracreli	0.05	0.02	0.88	1.05
	asocreli	1.24	2.46	0.12	3.46
	pracreli*asocreli	0.71	0.46	0.50	2.04
	Intercept	-1.80	235.71	0.00	0.16
Great Britain	pracreli	0.02	0.01	0.93	1.02
	asocreli	1.18	7.41	0.01	3.25
	pracreli*asocreli	0.20	0.12	0.73	1.22
	Intercept	-0.93	142.98	0.00	0.39
W. Germany	pracreli	-0.25	2.39	0.12	0.78
	asocreli	1.26	17.83	0.00	3.52
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.40	0.91	0.34	0.67
	Intercept	-0.59	58.67	0.00	0.55
Italy	pracreli	-1.43	70.13	0.00	0.24
	asocreli	1.51	1.45	0.23	4.52
	pracreli*asocreli	0.16	0.01	0.91	1.17
	Intercept	-0.63	43.49	0.00	0.53
Netherlands	pracreli	-0.52	3.55	0.06	0.59
	asocreli	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00
	pracreli*asocreli	1.20	6.66	0.01	3.34

Country		B	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
	Intercept	0.07	0.55	0.46	1.07
Denmark	pracreli	-0.31	1.34	0.25	0.74
	asocreli	0.92	2.75	0.10	2.51
	pracreli*asocreli	-1.22	1.86	0.17	0.30
	Intercept	0.64	51.84	0.00	1.90
Belgium	pracreli	0.07	0.33	0.56	1.07
	asocreli	2.12	36.36	0.00	8.33
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.53	1.36	0.24	0.59
	Intercept	-0.70	155.59	0.00	0.50
Spain	pracreli	-1.17	26.51	0.00	0.31
	asocreli	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00
	pracreli*asocreli	2.67	10.49	0.00	14.39
	Intercept	-2.17	417.22	0.00	0.11
Ireland	pracreli	-1.11	10.97	0.00	0.33
	asocreli	0.07	0.00	0.95	1.08
	pracreli*asocreli	1.56	1.19	0.28	4.78
	Intercept	-0.55	4.12	0.04	0.58
United States	pracreli	-0.76	12.99	0.00	0.47
	asocreli	0.96	14.78	0.00	2.60
	pracreli*asocreli	0.66	3.60	0.06	1.94
	Intercept	-0.81	65.80	0.00	0.45
Canada	pracreli	0.11	0.35	0.55	1.11
	asocreli	1.37	15.27	0.00	3.95
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.34	0.54	0.46	0.71
	Intercept	-0.84	93.46	0.00	0.43
Norway	pracreli	-0.33	1.87	0.17	0.72
	asocreli	-0.07	0.02	0.89	0.93
	pracreli*asocreli	0.72	1.09	0.30	2.06
	Intercept	0.34	17.25	0.00	1.40
Sweden	pracreli	-0.59	4.30	0.04	0.56
	asocreli	-0.14	0.12	0.73	0.87
	pracreli*asocreli	1.80	4.60	0.03	6.04
	Intercept	0.88	101.37	0.00	2.42
Iceland	pracreli	-0.16	0.14	0.71	0.85
	asocreli	1.22	18.88	0.00	3.40
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.36	0.29	0.59	0.70
	Intercept	0.51	10.85	0.00	1.66
Finland	pracreli	0.08	0.03	0.85	1.08
	asocreli	0.24	0.34	0.56	1.27
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.12	0.02	0.88	0.88
	Intercept	0.10	0.46	0.50	1.10
Switzerland	pracreli	-0.25	1.53	0.22	0.78
	asocreli	1.16	5.59	0.02	3.20
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.40	0.40	0.53	0.67
	Intercept	-0.83	59.05	0.00	0.43
Portugal	pracreli	-1.31	21.00	0.00	0.27
	asocreli	1.19	4.80	0.03	3.28
	pracreli*asocreli	0.31	0.19	0.67	1.37
	Intercept	-1.50	147.45	0.00	0.22
Austria	pracreli	-0.66	12.46	0.00	0.52
	asocreli	1.29	11.12	0.00	3.63
	pracreli*asocreli	-0.01	0.00	0.98	0.99
	Intercept	-0.48	22.09	0.00	0.62

Dependent variable: 1=member of any political association. 0=not member.
Pracreli: Frequency of church attendance. Ordinal (8 values, rescaled to range 0-1). 0=never. 1=more than once a week.
Asocreli: 1= member of any religious/parish association. 0=not member.

Additional Tables Relating to Chapter 7

A7.1 Matrix of rotated components

	Component	
	1	2
Lijphart's index of federalism-decentralisation	0.92	-0.01
Lane & Ersson's Institutional Autonomy Index	0.89	0.33
Average size of local unit	-0.71	-0.01
% local expenditure over total expenditure 1989	-0.09	0.93
% taxes by local gov over total gov 1989	0.28	0.86
Total explained variance = 78.9	44.7	34.2

Method of extraction: Principal components analysis. Method of rotation: Varimax Normalization with Kaiser.
a The rotation converged after 3 iterations.

A7.2 Matrix of components

	Component
	1
Effective number of parliamentary parties, 1971-1996	.964
Average number of parties in government 1980-1989	.957
100- % non-minimal winning one-party governments 1971-1996	.927
Effective number of electoral parties, 1985-1989	.886
% of time with coalition governments, 1980-1989	.828
Absolute number of parties in parliament, 1985-1989	.733

Method of extraction: Principal components analysis.
a 1 component extracted

A7.3 Matrix of components

	Component
	1
Condensed index of corporatism (Siaroff)	.994
Condensed index of the consensual element of corporatism (Siaroff)	.938
Index of public-private interaction by Lehner (extended by Siaroff)	.923
Lane and Ersson's corporatism index	.894

Method of extraction: Principal components analysis.
a 1 component extracted

A7.4. Results from the multilevel model with the indicator of total government expenditure

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RESULTS FOR NON-LINEAR MODEL WITH THE LOGIT LINK FUNCTION: Unit-Specific Model
(macro iteration 68)

 Tau
 INTRCPT1.B0      0.12594      -0.15912      -0.01816      -0.04962
 EDUCYEAR.B3     -0.15912       0.24243      -0.02300       0.02980
 PRACRELI.B4     -0.01816      -0.02300       0.06266       0.02634
  FEMALE.B12     -0.04962       0.02980       0.02634       0.07994

 Standard Errors of Tau
 INTRCPT1.B0      0.06041       0.07508       0.03512       0.03596
 EDUCYEAR.B3      0.07508       0.10489       0.04480       0.04391
 PRACRELI.B4      0.03512       0.04480       0.03748       0.02653
  FEMALE.B12      0.03596       0.04391       0.02653       0.03556

Tau (as correlations)
 INTRCPT1.B0  1.000 -0.911 -0.204 -0.495
 EDUCYEAR.B3 -0.911  1.000 -0.187  0.214
 PRACRELI.B4 -0.204 -0.187  1.000  0.372
  FEMALE.B12 -0.495  0.214  0.372  1.000
 ---------------------------------------------------
  Random level-1 coefficient   Reliability estimate
 ---------------------------------------------------
  INTRCPT1. B0                        0.684
  EDUCYEAR. B3                        0.765
  PRACRELI. B4                        0.519
   FEMALE. B12                        0.762
 ---------------------------------------------------
The value of the likelihood function at iteration 2 = -2.925341E+004
 The outcome variable is  POLMEM2
 Final estimation of fixed effects: (Unit-specific model)
 ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
                                   Standard             Approx.
    Fixed Effect         Coefficient   Error      T-ratio   d.f.     P-value
 ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
 For       INTRCPT1. B0
    INTRCPT2. G00          -3.733038   0.130144   -28.684         9    0.000
    BOGDANOR. G01          -0.075466   0.011108    -6.794         9    0.000
    EFFN7196. G02           0.235840   0.026515     8.895         9    0.000
    CORPSIAR. G03           0.111595   0.018854     5.919         9    0.000
    CITIPOLA. G04          -0.207817   0.042621    -4.876         9    0.001
     PMEMB_1. G05           1.122641   0.244152     4.598         9    0.001
    PMEMB1SQ. G06          -0.694751   0.152439    -4.558         9    0.001
    GOVCONSU. G07           0.006222   0.005389     1.154         9    0.278
 For MEMBRELI slope. B1
    INTRCPT2. G10           1.011042   0.048116    21.013     20791    0.000
 For INTEREST slope. B2
    INTRCPT2. G20           0.726685   0.038140    19.053     20791    0.000
 For EDUCYEAR slope. B3
    INTRCPT2. G30           1.239040   0.136753     9.060        16    0.000
 For PRACRELI slope. B4
    INTRCPT2. G40           0.054225   0.086456     0.627        16    0.539
 For    TRUST slope. B5
    INTRCPT2. G50           0.231447   0.036600     6.324     20791    0.000
 For EFICAPOL slope. B6
    INTRCPT2. G60           0.360049   0.054116     6.653     20791    0.000
 For    MIXED slope. B7
    INTRCPT2. G70           0.144612   0.048945     2.955     20791    0.004
 For  POSTMAT slope. B8
    INTRCPT2. G80           0.510986   0.057606     8.870     20791    0.000
 For EMPLPART slope. B9
    INTRCPT2. G90           0.159136   0.054915     2.898     20791    0.004
 For INACTIVE slope. B10
    INTRCPT2. G100         -0.249515   0.049953    -4.995     20791    0.000
 For UNEMPLOY slope. B11
    INTRCPT2. G110         -0.303443   0.095789    -3.168     20791    0.002
 For   FEMALE slope. B12
    INTRCPT2. G120         -0.007094   0.079080    -0.090        16    0.930
 For  RADICAL slope. B13
    INTRCPT2. G130          0.236724   0.101105     2.341     20791    0.019
 For   REFORM slope. B14
    INTRCPT2. G140          0.120871   0.043941     2.751     20791    0.006
 For    AGE01 slope. B15
    INTRCPT2. G150          3.926782   0.294716    13.324     20791    0.000
 For  AGESQ01 slope. B16
    INTRCPT2. G160         -3.659569   0.359073   -10.192     20791    0.000
 ----------------------------------------------------------------------------

 Final estimation of variance components:
 ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
 Random Effect           Standard      Variance     df    Chi-square  P-value
                         Deviation     Component
 ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
 INTRCPT1.       U0       0.35488       0.12594      9      66.10936    0.000
 EDUCYEAR slope. U3       0.49238       0.24243     16      84.81066    0.000
 PRACRELI slope. U4       0.25033       0.06266     16      49.00949    0.000
   FEMALE slope. U12       0.28273       0.07994     16      73.97162    0.000
 ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

A7.5. Results from the multilevel model with the indicator on Social Security expenditure

```
RESULTS FOR NON-LINEAR MODEL WITH THE LOGIT LINK FUNCTION: Unit-Specific Model
(macro iteration 32)

 Tau
 INTRCPT1.B0      0.37601      -0.27995      -0.00995      -0.00337
```

```
 EDUCYEAR.B3     -0.27995       0.27130      -0.03960       0.02528
 PRACRELI.B4     -0.00995      -0.03960       0.09908       0.01959
  FEMALE.B12     -0.00337       0.02528       0.01959       0.08038

 Standard Errors of Tau
 INTRCPT1.B0      0.14840       0.12313       0.06324       0.05167
 EDUCYEAR.B3      0.12313       0.11754       0.05656       0.04636
 PRACRELI.B4      0.06324       0.05656       0.05260       0.03101
  FEMALE.B12      0.05167       0.04636       0.03101       0.03572

Tau (as correlations)
 INTRCPT1.B0  1.000 -0.877 -0.052 -0.019
 EDUCYEAR.B3 -0.877  1.000 -0.242  0.171
 PRACRELI.B4 -0.052 -0.242  1.000  0.220
  FEMALE.B12 -0.019  0.171  0.220  1.000

 ---------------------------------------------------
  Random level-1 coefficient   Reliability estimate
 ---------------------------------------------------
  INTRCPT1. B0                        0.861
  EDUCYEAR. B3                        0.784
  PRACRELI. B4                        0.624
   FEMALE. B12                        0.763
 ---------------------------------------------------
The value of the likelihood function at iteration 2 = -2.930612E+004
 The outcome variable is  POLMEM2

 Final estimation of fixed effects: (Unit-specific model)
 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------
                                        Standard             Approx.
    Fixed Effect         Coefficient   Error      T-ratio   d.f.     P-value
 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------
 For       INTRCPT1. B0
    INTRCPT2. G00          -3.721220   0.178687   -20.825        15    0.000
    SOCSECUR. G01          -0.000233   0.013164    -0.018        15    0.986
 For MEMBRELI slope. B1
    INTRCPT2. G10           1.020440   0.049392    20.660     20797    0.000
 For INTEREST slope. B2
    INTRCPT2. G20           0.739953   0.038460    19.240     20797    0.000
 For EDUCYEAR slope. B3
    INTRCPT2. G30           1.257932   0.144554     8.702        16    0.000
 For PRACRELI slope. B4
    INTRCPT2. G40           0.031020   0.099695     0.311        16    0.760
 For    TRUST slope. B5
    INTRCPT2. G50           0.236351   0.036868     6.411     20797    0.000
 For EFICAPOL slope. B6
    INTRCPT2. G60           0.371057   0.054417     6.819     20797    0.000
 For    MIXED slope. B7
    INTRCPT2. G70           0.140585   0.049111     2.863     20797    0.005
 For  POSTMAT slope. B8
    INTRCPT2. G80           0.498351   0.057953     8.599     20797    0.000
 For EMPLPART slope. B9
    INTRCPT2. G90           0.149226   0.055209     2.703     20797    0.007
 For INACTIVE slope. B10
    INTRCPT2. G100          -0.248527   0.050415    -4.930     20797    0.000
 For UNEMPLOY slope. B11
    INTRCPT2. G110          -0.320937   0.096247    -3.335     20797    0.001
 For   FEMALE slope. B12
    INTRCPT2. G120          -0.012805   0.079229    -0.162        16    0.874
 For  RADICAL slope. B13
    INTRCPT2. G130           0.213406   0.101227     2.108     20797    0.035
 For   REFORM slope. B14
    INTRCPT2. G140           0.110815   0.044039     2.516     20797    0.012
 For    AGE01 slope. B15
    INTRCPT2. G150           3.922040   0.295273    13.283     20797    0.000
 For  AGESQ01 slope. B16
    INTRCPT2. G160          -3.654730   0.359645   -10.162     20797    0.000
 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------

 Final estimation of variance components:
 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------
 Random Effect           Standard      Variance     df    Chi-square  P-value
                         Deviation     Component
 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------
 INTRCPT1.       U0        0.61320       0.37601    15     148.41397    0.000
 EDUCYEAR slope. U3        0.52086       0.27130    16      85.33948    0.000
 PRACRELI slope. U4        0.31477       0.09908    16      49.02958    0.000
   FEMALE slope. U12        0.28352       0.08038    16      74.83345    0.000
 ---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

APPENDIX 4. RECODING OF PROTEST EVENTS DATA

The following is the SPSS syntax used to compare the data coming from the protest events dataset compiled by Ron Francisco and his team with that compiled by Kriesi et al. (1995: 267).

```
* I create a variable on the action repertory following Kriesi et al. 1995: 267.
** Note: the events with action= accede, arrest, blockade, convict, deport, dismiss, expulsion, extradition, extradite, fine,
preclude, offer, ouster, raid, reject, release, seizure, trial, ultimatum, or deployment have been considered as non-protest
events, as they simply account for the result of the protest or of the government's reaction to it.

COMPUTE repertor=0.
VAR LAB repertor 'Type of action: repertory'.
VAL LAB repertor 0 'no event' 1 'Conventional, juridical' 2 'Conventional, political' 3 'Conventional, media-directed' 4
'Demonstrative, petitions' 5 'Demonstrative, other'
6 'Confrontational' 7 'Violent'.

if (action='appeal') repertor=1.
if (action = 'resign' or action='negotiation' or action='agreement' or action='compromise') repertor=2.
if (action = 'statement') repertor=3.
if (action = 'petition') repertor=4.
if (action = 'demonstration' or action='demonstrate' or action = 'rally' or action = 'symbolic' or action = 'mobilization' or
action = 'vigil' or action='march' or action='commemoration' or action='mobilize' or action= 'convoy' or
action='motorcade') repertor=5.
if (action = 'obstruction' or action = 'obstruction-b' or action = 'obstruction-c' or action = 'obstruction-e' or action = 'strike'
or action='Strike' or action = 'strike-b' or action = 'strike-c' or action = 'strike-e' or action = 'confiscate' or action = 'harass'
or action = 'hunger strike' or action = 'occupation' or action = 'occupation-b' or action = 'occupation-e' or action='boycott'
or action='boycott-e' or action='general strik' or action='slowdown' or action='slowdown-b' or action='slowdown-c' or
action='slowdown-e' or action='lockout' or action='suicide' or action='exit' or action='break in' or action='escape' or
action='disrupt' or action='civil disobed') repertor=6.
if (action = 'bomb-nd' or action = 'bomb-wd' or action='bombs' or action='defuse bomb' or action='defuse bombs' or action
= 'murder' or action = 'arson' or action = 'assassination' or action = 'attack' or action = 'vandalism' or action='hostage-nd' or
action='hostage-wd' or action='hostage-wd-e' or action='kidnap' or action='riot' or action='threat' or action='hijack' or
action='sabotage' or action='assault' or action='offer' or action='gunfight' or action='torture' or action='release' or
action='robbery' or action='threaten') repertor=7.
exe.


RECODE repertor (0=0) (1 thru 3=1) (4, 5=2) (6=3) (7=4) into repert2.
VAR LAB repert2 'Type of action: repertory 4 categories'.
VAL LAB repert2 0 'no event'  1 'Conventional' 2 'Demonstrative' 3 'Confrontational' 4 'Violent'.
EXE.


COMPUTE nsmactor=0.
VAR LAB nsmactor 'Protest actor is related to NSMs?'.
VAL LAB nsmactor 0 'no' 1 'yes'.


if (proteste='"AI, Junge Union') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"AI, Tibet Initi') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"DGB, Greens') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"Greens, AI, Jus') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"Greens, PCF"') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"JUSO, Greens"') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"pacifists, sepa') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"PDS, Greens"') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"SPD, Greens"') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"students, publi') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"students, teach') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"students, worke') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='"teachers, stude') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='abused women act') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Accion Familiar') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Act-Up Paris') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Act Up') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Action for Irela') nsmactor=1.
```

```
if (proteste='AI') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='aid advocates') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='AIDS activists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='AIDS patients') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='AIDS prisoners') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='AIDS sufferers') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='AIDS victims') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='AISDPK') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Amnesty Internat') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Amnesty Intl') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Animal Liberatio') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='animal protectio') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='animal rights') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='animal rights ac') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-abortion') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-abortionist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-AIDS') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-apartheid') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-apartheid a') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-apartheid g') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Anti-Atom Intern') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-capitalist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-elite') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-elites') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-globalizati') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-military') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-NATO') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Anti-NATO') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-NATO protes') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-Nazi') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-Nazis') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-nuclear') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-nuclear act') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-nuclear gro') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-nuclear ter') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-racism') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-racism grou') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='anti-racists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='BELT') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='bicyclists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='C-Team') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='citizen') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='citizens') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='civil rights act') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='civil rights gro') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Committee for Di') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='community care w') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='conscientious ob') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='consumer groups') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='consumers') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='CSPPA') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='DAIC') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Desenmasquemos e') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='disabled') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='disabled citizen') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='disabled people') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='drug addict pare') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='drug addicts') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Dutch Greenpeace') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Earthwatch') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='ecologi') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='ecologist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='ecologists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='ecology activist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Ecopole') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Elkarri ') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='European anti-nu') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='FASB') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='feminists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='former anorexics') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='gay & lesbians') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='gay rights activ') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='gays') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='gays & lesbians') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='gays/lesbians') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Gestora pro-Amni') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Gesture for Peac') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='GFBV') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Global 2000') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Green J') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Green party') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Green Party') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Green Warriors') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Green Wave') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Greenpe') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Greenpeace') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Greens') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Greens/SPD') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='health activists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='homeless') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='homosexuals') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='housing activist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='human rights') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='human rights act') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='human rights gro') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='human rights org') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='IFPA') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='immigrants') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='IRLF') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Movement for Dem') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Movement for Fre') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Movement for Pea') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='MRAP') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='New Austria') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='nuclear activist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pacifis') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pacifist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pacifists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='parents of disab') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Peace 93') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='peace activists') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Peace Conquerors') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Peace Parade') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Peace Train') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='PETA') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-choice') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-choice activ') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-choice group') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-choice/gay-l') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-immigrant') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-life') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-life & Catho') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='pro-life activis') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='prostitutes') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='punks') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Red/Green') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Robin Wood') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Sea She') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Sea Shepherd') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Sea Shepherd Con') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='SHRC') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='SOS-Mitmensch') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='SOS Familia') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='SOS Racism') nsmactor=1.
```

```
if (proteste='squatte') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='squatter') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='squatters') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='student') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='student group') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='students') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='transexuals') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='university stude') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='vegetarians') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='vivisectionist') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Womens groups') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='woman') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='women') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='WWF') nsmactor=1.
if (proteste='Youth Defence') nsmactor=1.

DO if (noevent='no event' AND nsmactor=0).
RECODE nsmactor (0=SYSMIS).
END IF.
exe.
```

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