

EU “Homo Politicus:” A Single Model of Political Participation?

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ABSTRACT: Discussions on the European convergence towards a unified political, economic and social structure have dominated the scholars' research agenda on the evolution of the European Union. What is still not clear is whether the structural achievements of a final, “ever-closer” Union correspond to a single political European citizen. If the political and economic unification of Europe has succeeded, at least for the moment, the European citizen, as a unified model of individual political behavior, or “Homo Politicus,” still needs to take shape. Do Europeans display similar patterns of political behavior? Do different components of conventional and protest political participation have an equivalent importance for EU member states' individual political actors? Can we speak of a “EU Model” of political behavior, parallel to the achieved EU political system of governance? This paper investigates the existence of a single European political citizen, whose political behavior in its different styles and intensities can be represented by three dimensions of political involvement: 1) Political Sophistication, 2) Political Collective Action, 3) Unconventional Political Participation. The findings suggest that significant country-differences exist and that they seem to be as important as similarities, delaying the formation of a single EU political behavior mode.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Next January the European Union (EU) will celebrate its forty-five years of existence since the European Economic Community was formed (1957). The event assumes an additional special meaning for the member states because it will also witness the official introduction of the common currency, the EURO, as the final, indirect product of that first step. While many scholars of international relations and of comparative politics had to reconsider their pessimistic statements on the successful path of a Europe-wide association of nation-states, many studies have already pointed out the several, incremental phases of this monumental, supranational construction (Dinan, 1994; Marks, 1996; Wallace and Wallace, 1996; Rumford, 2000).

The research on the EU seems to have come to terms with a multifunctional organization, whose structure keeps innovating, but also improving towards a better representation of a *unitary* governmental body. Whether the focus is on the European Parliament's final empowerment, or on the more democratic ruling of the Commission, experts are more often underlining the shape of a *coherent* structure. If political and monetary unification has achieved its goals, few studies have tried to assess whether this structural construction is also corresponding to a parallel development of a "EU Citizen."

As one of its primary reasons, the EU evolution started from the need to have a peaceful, collaborative environment on the European continent, plagued by two world wars in less than thirty years. National leaders as well as political advisors have worked on the EU organization as the best tool to "invite" national citizens on the path to collaboration. What it still remains to be assessed is whether the development of a body of government, first, has actually brought along the corresponding development of the European citizen. Especially when dealing with the democratic functioning of the Union, few studies have investigated the political behavior of European nationals (Bréchon, 1994; Schild, 1998), and have cross-checked whether citizens participating in the same political environment (like in the case of the European Parliament elections, for instance) express themselves politically along the same model of political behavior.

This research plans to verify whether EU citizens do actually have the same type of political behavior, whether they show the same levels of political participation and competence, whether, in the end, they can represent a successful outcome of a unified model of political involvement, or "Homo Politicus." If the structural achievements are indisputable, the EU development may still have to work on the need to foster a EU-wide political behavior mode that not only corresponds across borders, but that also leads towards a more competent, sophisticated EU citizen, able to enjoy the democratic access to political activities.

The study considers three dimensions of political involvement to test levels of political participation across borders, as well as the relationship between political action measures and some of the usual predictors of individual political involvement. Country levels of political sophistication, collective political action and unconventional political activity can give a broad and diverse view on the different styles and levels of political behavior in the EU member states included in the research. The first dimension, political sophistication, is measured by the saliency level of politics, the individual's declared political interest level, and the periodicity of political discussions. The three variables provide a comprehensive understanding of an individual's perception of the political environment, supporting or hindering a person's political behavior. The second dimension, the collective political action variable, represents an individual's actual involvement through politically-based associations,¹ measured both by membership rates and declared unpaid activity. The collective dimension presents data on EU nationals' conventional involvement through

¹ Political parties, trade unions, professional associations and community action groups.

structures that should be enhancing participation through a better social integration. The last dimension used, the unconventional political participation level, is measured by the respondent's answer on five possible protest acts (petitions, lawful demonstrations, boycotts, unofficial strikes, building occupation). The third part of the research deals with the relationship, in each of the states considered, between unconventional political activity and potential, on one side, and the corresponding possible political behavior tradition that might favor/challenge a more unconventional approach to political participation. The EU states may clearly differ on this last measure, if we also include the impact of political culture and structural/legal constraints.

The use of the three dimensions described above allows the researcher to investigate whether there is an equivalence among EU countries in the general levels of participation (any way measured) and in the relationship among the different aspects of political action here considered, represented by the different dimensions. So for instance, according to the extensive literature on political participation and involvement,² high levels of political sophistication have been correlated with corresponding high levels of collective involvement into associations, with the intent to act, more or less directly, politically. If previous studies have finally presented evidence on an extended repertory of possible political acts, citizens might use, to express their voices (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Marsh, 1979; Dalton, 1984), it is important to verify whether the usual connection political sophistication-collective involvement-unconventional action is equally strong in EU member states, or if the relationship itself does not fit in all the countries of the Union. The data might highlight the presence of cases with high levels of political sophistication and unconventional activity, but low levels of collective involvement. Another possible position would present a country with high levels of citizens' political activity, both conventional and unconventional, but, instead, low levels of political sophistication among the participants, suggesting a more expressive form of political action, rather than an instrumental one. It is the goal of this study to discover whether the EU does have a single model of participation: a relationship among the three dimensions used that remains the same within the EU countries studied. In the end, a more democratic access to the European Parliament may not have the same meaning if some EU citizens prefer protest activity to conventional participation to express their opinions. Such type of finding, of course, would suggest a more careful interpretation of having the same rules for a Union of 340 million residents, when EU nationals do have different modes of participation, although all acting by the same rules. The focus when studying the evolution towards a Union should be more on the equivalence of national elements than on its identical meaning.³

The final outcome of this project can reveal whether the EU structural success is also valid if the scholar focuses on the EU citizens and how they have followed the unification pattern. The lack of a EU "Homo Politicus" can unsettle current feelings of satisfaction among those who have worked towards the finalization of the Union. The next sections challenge the figure of a cross-border homogenous EU political participant.

II. DOES A SINGLE "HOMO POLITICUS" EXIST?

Several publications have repeatedly analyzed the *anomalous* development of the EU. Few works instead have dealt with the individual level research in a EU-wide context. Only three authors⁴, to my knowledge, have tried to study similarities and differences among EU countries in regards to the

² Just to name the main studies: Campbell et al., 1960; Rokkan, 1960, 1962; Dahl, 1961; Converse and Dupeux, 1962; Verba and Almond, 1963; Milbrath, 1965; McClosky, 1968; Nie et al., 1969; Parry, 1972; Verba and Nie, 1972, 1978; Verba et al., 1973; Converse, 1975; Verba and Nie, 1975; Nie et al., 1976; Inglehart, 1977, 1990, 1997; Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Kaase, 1984, 1992; Dalton, 1988, 1996; Jennings and van Deth, 1990; Parry et al., 1992; Kriesi, et al., 1995; Fuchs and Klingemann, 1998.

³ See the methodological point made by Van Deth (1986) discussed below.

⁴ Is it a chance that all of them are Europeans?

political participation topic. Kaase (1992), Bréchon (1995), and Schild (1998) have focused on different aspects of comparison, but for all of them, the final interpretations point to differences in political behavior among the member states. Using different data,⁵ the conclusions seem to coincide: few doubts about the fact that EU nationals' political behavior seems to have different participants, different paths, and different motivations. Whereas Kaase considers exclusively unconventional political behavior, the other two authors present a more balanced approach to the repertory of political activities available in Europe. In both cases, whether participation was conventional or protest-styled, whether it was organized or spontaneous, EU citizens did not behave as "one."

The evidence presented in the literature in relation to the first dimension, the political sophistication measure, concurs that individuals with high levels of political interest and who discuss politics more often also participate more, conventionally and non-conventionally. In the same research, respondents who declare politics to be very important also seem to be stronger participants in the political domain. Bréchon's and Topf's findings support the conclusion that, overall, Europeans have showed an increase in political interest and in political discussion, across borders. However, there are still some surprises. Although Topf's data analysis has some methodological limits⁶ to be aware of, his average value for political discussion data among EU countries, from 1973 to 1992, shows Greece as the country with the highest value, and Spain and Portugal at the bottom of the list (p. 62). If the last two spots on the ranking are expected, the first spot is more difficult to account for, especially when the data in the following sections are considered.

The same point can be brought up in relation to Topf's evidence for the different aspects of participation. Clearly high levels of political activity do not correspond to the same type of political involvement. If we consider instrumental participation in the political domain in 1990, Finland⁷ has the highest spot on the scale with 57% of the respondents, while the last position goes to Spain with 19%. The Spanish case is probably the most consistent one among the different studies for the same period: Topf's contribution itself places Spain first in the European context, for the size of its apathetic group (54%), with Norway being the country with the smallest group of apathetic citizens with (19%). Yet another country leads the European countries for what concerns the expressive measure of political participation: Great Britain with 37%, while Germany, usually a top three country for political action, ranks last with only 13% (84-85). The multiple possible rankings clearly make the point regarding the fact that EU member states do not have the same preference when it comes to political participation type of actions.⁸

The major problem with EU-wide data investigations relates to the use, actually misuse, of "averages," as a way to interpret the position of all countries over time in a simple "average" shot. Topf's contribution represents that type of methodological weakness, which of course leads the author to emphasize "increasing homogeneity" (66), with EU members looking more alike. Van Deth's methodological note (1986), instead, clearly aimed at making scholars more aware of this

⁵ Kaase uses Euro-Barometer (EB) data for 1989, Bréchon uses World Values Survey (WVS) data for 1981 and 1990 (the same databases used in this research for the hypothesis testing section), and Schild uses different sources from EB, WVS, and aggregated data from other organizations.

⁶ As he himself states (60), what I would simply call "pick-and-choose" of data.

⁷ Although not a EU member in 1990, the position of Finland is included in the literature discussion and in the hypothesis testing below, because it can show the reader whether closeness of political behavior can actually be better recorded even with countries that were, at the time of the study, outside the Union. The same is true for comments on Sweden.

⁸ The ratio instrumental over expressive political participation for the European countries included in Topf's analysis goes from 4 for Germany, a country where achieving the political action goal is essential, to 0.7 for Belgium and Italy, countries where the expressive mode of political action prevails.

problem. The article stresses the importance of “equivalence” of measures used rather than “identity” of variables considered. Once a unidimensional, equivalent scale of political activities is constructed, it appears clear that different distributions of participation acts in the European countries are explained. Having two sets of elements to measure political action, one which is the same ranking of activities present, and weighted equally, in all countries, the other which is the group of possible activities recorded and relevant only in some of the countries studied, gives a better, direct idea that a diverse model of political participation is more reliable. Any common, homogeneous model of political involvement remains, in the end, an “average” created measure.

Van Deth’s contribution to the investigation of political sophistication levels in a group of countries (1990, 2000) has also pointed out that an individual’s perception of the importance of politics may not affect a person’s political interest. The findings presented in Van Deth (2000) support the conclusion that citizens may participate even when they think that the political domain is not the most important thing to be dealing with. Van Deth’s surprise in recording this type of finding should not be overestimated. His use of a saliency scale, which includes family and work as challengers to politics, can be a serious factor in having politics ranking as the lowest item on the saliency list of the respondents (11% for 1981, and 8% for 1990). In addition, it could be observed that people might feel the duty to participate in the government of the society they live in, even when they think politics is not the most important thing to take care of. In brief, political sophistication seems to prevail over personal disillusion in regards to, mostly, the efficiency of the political domain.

Kaase’s more general position (1984) seems to be more cautious. Although presenting the generally supported view of a “participatory revolution” with people being more entitled to participate through the vote and through admissible unconventional forms of action, the general increase showed by the different data do not support the idea of a general level achieved by all countries. The gap in participation, not only for what relates to the level, but also to the type of activities, remains.

Previous research on the second dimension of political behavior here considered, the collective involvement variable, seems to have dealt more extensively with an EU-wide country comparison, mostly because New Social Movements (NSM) literature studied the social protest phenomenon in Europe in a comparative way, linking the same action groups across nations and political systems. Membership rates and unpaid activities performed in organizations are linked to the levels of political involvement recorded in a society. If the general position regarding political sophistication and political participation is a consistent increase, the relationship between association involvement and citizens’ political action is a surprising decline.

Several types of politically-oriented organizations have suffered a decrease of registered members. Trade unions data have widely showed that membership has been going down for a long time. Although Bréchon considers data for the 1970s in Europe, and reaches the same conclusions, he rejects the theory of a strong individualism in society, as presented by French political scientists. His remark is based on the fact that the decline is not so steep for all countries (Sweden and Denmark are less affected), and that the same respondents do not state a lower trust level for trade unions in comparison to the past. Schild’s data on trade union memberships support Bréchon’s interpretation: between 1985 and 1995 France, Greece, Portugal and Great Britain were the EU states with a serious decrease in trade unions registration, but Denmark, and Spain especially (+62.1%), had a parallel increase in the same period (163). Data from the European Trade Union Confederation from 1970 till 1997 show consistent decreases⁹ for selected countries only: France

⁹ Measured in relation to the proportion of the workforce.

(with the lowest value in 1970 as well as in 1997, 8.6%), Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain (The Financial Times, March 9, 2001, p. 14).

The emphasis on a reconsideration of why a membership rate decrease happens had led both Bréchon and Schild to reevaluate the quality of the participation, more than the quantity. Schild again does not see serious evidence of political disengagement, especially when measured by political party membership: from 1977 to 1991 there is overall stability or only minor decrease (162). Bréchon's corresponding point has to do with the "switching membership" situation, according to which participation through political parties and trade unions should not be assumed, today to be the first choice of those who want to be participants in the political domain (74). The type, of association an individual is participating in is therefore an important variable to assess, in relation to the real political participation rate.

Studying NSM groups in the 1980s and 1990s it has become clear to many scholars that several associations are not directly connected to political participation and should not be included in the study. Curtis, Grabb, and Baer (1981) tested Tocqueville's claim that America had the highest rate of association membership per citizen in the world. Their findings support Tocqueville's conclusions, but they also highlighted that if the scholar were to exclude religious groups, other countries were ahead of the US on the ranking (Table 1 p. 143). The same type of caution is needed when discussing the importance of NSM groups and their broad support.

Using members' actual numbers to assess whether citizens liked the idea of participating collectively in the political domain can be unreliable. Besides a possible problem with the numbers themselves, and the corresponding political opportunities situations that helped some NSMs to develop, and others to perish, the relevance itself of NSM membership is not convincing. Several studies on NSM evolution credibly show that NSMs preferred loose types of organizational structures, in which membership was not a primary goal. Supporters did not feel the need to become too closely linked to a group, and many citizens did support different movements at once, without having the inconvenience of paying membership dues (Dalton and Kuechler, 1990; Kriesi et al, 1995). The importance of the membership rate seems to be even more significant when assessing the conclusions of investigations which have based the research argument exclusively on this piece of information (for instance Putnam, 1995, 2000).

In the EU context, due to the similar cross-border nature of many NSMs, it seems more appropriate to consider even the membership rate as a possible, reliable element of analysis. Kaase and Newton (1998) examine the evolution of social movements in five European countries from 1982 to 1989. Two contrasting patterns appear: for both Germany and the Netherlands the number of NSMs increases (environmental, antinuclear, anti-war); for Italy and France, instead, that same period sees a decline in social movements, for all three types considered in the study. The British case is in-between: an increase in support for the environmental movements, but a decrease for the anti-nuclear and peace-oriented ones. The evidence is supported by Kriesi et al. (1995), which use 1989 data, and show how France is far behind Germany and the Netherlands for NSMs formation and development, with Switzerland in between.

The literature seems to agree that an association membership gap does exist among European countries. Koopmans adds his interpretation to the research, highlighting a ranking of collective political participation levels depending on the six countries¹⁰ he considered: the Netherlands clearly first with 48.8% of individuals with a declared association membership between 1980 and 1989, followed closely by Great Britain with 44.1% and Germany with 42.7%. A second group of countries includes France with 25% and Spain with 21% at the bottom of the list.

¹⁰ The Netherlands, West Germany, Switzerland, France, United Kingdom, and Spain.

If conventional activity in general, whether individual or collective, has, at the most, stalled from the 1980s,¹¹ unconventional political action instead has been consistently rising. Beyond an inclusion of protest activities in the individual's political repertory, as presented by Marsh (1979), Barnes and Kaase (1979), more citizens seem to use protest action more often and more extensively than before. Whereas similar political systems may have similar preferences regarding the use of a specific unconventional activity, like signing a petition before joining a boycott (Bréchon, p. 74-5), there are, however, significant differences in the ranking of protest acts performed across borders, depending on the nation's political culture and the political system's accessibility.

Kaase's work on EU members' unconventional patterns has showed variance among countries, based upon the style of action and the measure of unconventionality used. Based upon 1989 Euro-Barometer data, Kaase (1992) has constructed two indexes of unconventional activity. The index of civil disobedience included four protest actions: rent strike, wild-cat strike, building occupation and illegal demonstration. The second index was a scale of legal uninstitutionalized participation, composed by citizen initiative, boycott, petition, and legal demonstration. For both indexes Kaase calculated a behavioral only value, and an attitudinal and behavioral value, to test the possible gap between real action, and potentiality of action. The main findings showed that France, Greece and Great Britain should be considered as the countries with the highest expression of unconventional political action, in different forms.¹² More precisely, the first index, the behavioral only ranking, placed France first with 20.6% of the respondents having performed those actions, Greece second with 11.7%, and Denmark third with 11.5%. Surprisingly, Germany resulted the country with the lowest value, only 2.5%, contrasting many studies on German NSMs activities. The attitudinal and behavioral scale placed France again first with 67.9%, followed by the Netherlands with 67% and Great Britain with 60.7%. The distance between positions is in this case much smaller than in the previous behavioral measure, when the second position represented only half the index value of the first country on the scale.

The second index presented slightly different results. For the behavioral only version of the scale Greece ranked first with 13.1%, France was second with 12.7%, and Belgium was in third place with 12.2%. Two of the three countries in the previous scale remained in the first three positions, the same was confirmed by the attitudinal and behavioral scale. Germany was first with 66%, Great Britain came in second with 65.4% and France third with 59.1%, all three very close.

Besides the common patterns with some countries like France, Greece and Great Britain with high levels of protest activity, the rest of the scales changed significantly, and without a specific direction. Kaase's conclusion stated the need for country- and context-specific analysis, since, according to the results presented, cross-national investigation based upon sociodemographic and economic factors was not very helpful:

"But the overwhelming expression is that, for all EC countries, engagement in direct illegal political action is the result of processes and factors beyond the scope of the variables in this analysis. Since the actions included require a collective approach, it is obvious that one would have to look at the specific action, its contents, meaning, and mobilizing context in order to understand the conditions under which people engage in civil disobedience (85)."

¹¹ Although, on the same issue, Koopmans' concludes that conventional activity in itself in the Netherlands, for instance, had the highest increase ever between 1984 and 1990 (34).

¹² To note that according to NSMs research and this project's outcomes presented below, Greece is NOT a country with a high unconventional political participation.

In addition to Kaase's final interpretation, Opp (1994) has made the point that EU integration is a factor that hinders protest political behavior. Problems due to organizational strains for unconventional forms of action prevent protest movements to foster direct activities at the EU level, because the required collaboration effort would be too costly. Two years later Koopmans' article (1996) has achieved the same conclusions, although for different reasons. After a study of the Netherlands and other five European countries in relation to unconventional activity levels, the author stated that a higher number of NSMs or protest movements does not mean necessarily more unconventional action: the political opportunity structure of a country remains the main predictor for political action. Not only did social movements seem to behave more conventionally,¹³ shifting from protest only to other conventional activities of political expression, but they also confirmed that "large differences among countries exist, both in the strength of new social movement mobilisation, and in the overall levels of unconventional mobilisation (38)."

Koopmans' findings convincingly show that those countries with fewer and weaker NSMs (Spain and France in the study)¹⁴ had higher levels of mobilization than countries with more and stronger NSMs, like the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland. These conclusions do not correspond to what the Political Action research highlighted in the late 1980s. However, Marsh's contribution to the study supports the idea that even the simple difference between conventional and unconventional presents the scholar with different rankings of countries. If voting turn out is the easiest way to see how citizens so dissimilarly perceive the importance of electoral participation,¹⁵ Marsh has showed (1979) that the distance between countries in the preference for a specific style of political participation is an important element to consider. For his protest potential scale, the respondents for each country above level 4 of the 7 point scale, were only 9% in Austria, but three times as many in the Netherlands: 31% (93). The conventional political participation scale had its variance too: above the score of 3 on a 7 point index, Great Britain's respondents were 16%, while the West Germans were 28% (95).

In 1984 Russell Dalton reused the Political Action data to propose a new categorization of types of political participants. His research, even more than before, presents a view of the variance of political behaviors and of their consistency within European countries. If the new *gladiators* of the political context, the cognitive partisans, those individuals who are able to master the means of participation through the traditional political structure, as well as through the new direct forms of expression, such as NSMs, are almost one third of the Dutch respondents (32.5%), they are only 17% in the Austrian sample. The same difference exists between the percentages of apolitical citizens, 29.6% in Great Britain and in the Netherlands, but 43.2% in Austria. Simply using five European countries, differences seem to overshadow the possible equilibrium of political action levels in the European context.

The dissimilarities among the countries considered in the Political Action study become more important when the following volume, Continuities in Political Action, presents a longitudinal analysis of the participation categories used. Of the three original countries included in the second volume (the US, the Netherlands, Germany), all of them manifest changes in levels and preferences

¹³ Schild has tested the possible correlation between income level and citizens' support for an environmental movement, using WVS data. His conclusions claim that individual with higher income resources are more likely to support an environmental NSM, questioning indirectly the relevance of NSMs' action if indeed related, again, to the financial status of the participant. This type of assessment might explain why NSMs in the Netherlands have slowly shifted towards more conventional activities: their participants' financial background might be a cause (Schild, 120).

¹⁴ Data were from 1980 to 1989.

¹⁵ Dalton (1996) presents data for the 1990s in Table 3.2 (p. 45): among the same European countries included in this research, there is an important gap: Ireland with a voting turnout of 66%, but Italy, Luxembourg and Sweden all with a turnout of 87%, more than one third higher the corresponding Irish one.

of political behavior, suggesting the hypothesis that political participation is a constantly evolutionary phenomenon, affected by many factors, always active.

Outcomes can be less volatile, according to the data presented in Schild (1998), if a country has a specific political culture favoring one particular action over others. For instance, in relation to street demonstration, all countries seem to have increased their preference towards this means of unconventional political activity, between 1981 and 1990. Two countries, especially, France and Italy, have always showed an infatuation for this type of protest, that is probably closely related to trade unions action, particularly left-wing workers organizations in both countries. Schild's data clearly support this point: in 1981 the ranking among EU countries in relation to individual participation to street demonstrations saw France first with 25%, Denmark second with 23% and Italy third with 21%. The same list in 1990 saw the same three countries within the first three positions, but ranked differently: 1) Italy (37%), 2) France (31%), 3) Denmark (27%). The country with the lowest street protest level was Austria with 10%, but all the countries considered showed an increase in the use of street demonstration as a way for citizens to express themselves politically.

The interpretation concerning the general increase in forms of political action indirectly hinders the real diversity of political participation intensity across countries. Yet the general increase in action has not leveled all the countries to a similar stage of political involvement. Topf's consideration of at least some form of political action among European countries supports the picture of a consistent gap: in 1990 Spain has 32% of the respondents declaring some form of political action, while Great Britain has 77%, twice as much as the Spanish level.

The introduction to the several data-based literature materials on political participation levels in European countries should have made the reader aware of the consistent variety of political involvement intensities recorded in the countries studied. If there is disagreement among the scholars on what exact measure to use, there is even more disagreement in the data, when different measures present different rankings of political involvement levels. Although different aspects of political participation might be responsible for this variety of conclusions, the final agreement must be that European countries do differ for what concerns their levels of citizens' political commitment.

III. POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION DIMENSION

Individual political involvement, measured by political interest, political discussion and importance of politics, as declared by the respondents, is an initial tool that allows the scholar to determine whether EU member states have, indeed, a common level of general political participation to start with, as a base for political action, whether collective, conventional or unconventional. Keeping in mind that political interest is always a subjective measure (Van Deth, 1990), it remains however an important instrument to judge the individual's self-understanding of his/her own involvement in political matters. Tables 1 and 2 present the reader with the political interest data on EU members available through the WVS databases used, including for both years Finland and Sweden, which were not, at that time, members of the European Economic Community, but that will become so later on. The comparison the study can make using Finland and Sweden, as two countries not members of the European political and economic structure, can provide the research with an important point of observation, by comparing levels of political engagement and action between countries that were within the same political structure and nations that were not. The final goal of this type of comparison would be to test whether Sweden and Finland would better *fit* the EU member country profile than other countries already in the Union.

[TABLES 1 AND 2 ABOUT HERE]

Both tables suggest that national contexts might actually dominate the political engagement level evolution, judging from the diversity of positions. In 1981 and 1990 there are some surprising findings that this scholar finds particularly intriguing. The first unexpected result is the country with the lowest percentage for the “very interested” answer: the Netherlands with a mere 2.8%! Considering that the Netherlands was the most politically involved country in the Political Action Study, based upon data from the early 1970s, and that other NSMs studies on the Netherlands have confirmed a high level of participation and involvement, such a low value comes as a shock. The second lowest percentage for the same answer is Belgium’s 3.3%. Two non-EU members in 1981 lead the list with the highest values: Finland with 9% and Sweden with 7.1%. France and West Germany follow with 6.5% and 6.4% respectively. It seems, from this first set of results, that the two Scandinavian countries could actually lead within the EU, in relation to political engagement. They are much ahead of other countries that already were EU members, such as Belgium or Ireland, or could have entered the Union before another outsider, Spain, whose level of political interest for the highest intensity group is 4.4%.

A parallel analysis can be presented in relation to those individuals who stated they were not interested at all in politics. Belgium has the highest value for this type of answer (54.5%), confirming that Belgians’ political interest is very low compared to the EU average. The country with the smallest group of respondents not being interested in politics is Denmark with 13.9%. In comparison to the assessment of Belgium’s position, Denmark fits the EU group of countries better than Belgium, although being a member only since 1973.

Table 2 gives the reader a possible longitudinal view of the political interest level in the group of countries considered. Overall, there is a general shift upwards, except for France and Spain. The French case is particularly interesting, because through the next tables and measures, it will become clear that France has been experiencing a down-slope in political interest¹⁶ and institutional engagement in the 1980s. The Netherlands is instead the pleasant surprise for the 1990 data: the country skyrocketed from 2.8% of those respondents very interested in politics in 1981, to 13.6% for the same category in 1990. From the lowest value to the third highest one among all countries considered. The new last position goes to Italy with 6%, although the value has actually increased from 4.9% in 1981. West Germany is the new leader of the ranking with 25.2%, followed by Denmark with 15%, but the actual gap separating the first position from the last one has widened: 25.2% to 6% in 1990, 9% to 2.8% in 1981.

In relation to the respondents who were not at all interested in politics, the new leadership for this answer goes to Spain with 48.9%, lower than the last position in 1981, but still incredibly high for 1990. The second worst is another newcomer into the Union, Portugal with 44.1%. The lowest value for the group of respondents not interest in politics at all is West Germany’s 7.3%, coherent with the findings from the “very interested” category.

If the data on political interest in general show an initial variety of positions on a possible political engagement scale among EU member states, there is one element that is present in all the countries considered: gender gap. Tables 3A and 3B show the political interest data broken down by genders. The first finding that clearly stands out is the serious gender gap that appears in all countries in relation to genders’ levels of declared political interest: across borders, women are consistently less interested in politics than men. The usual ratio for those who stated to be very interested in politics seems to be 1 to 2, with the exception of the Netherlands which has a slightly better one of 1 to 1.8. Italy and Ireland both have a worse ratio of 1 to 3, while Denmark and

¹⁶ In 1981, France had the third highest value among respondents being very interested in politics (6.5%), but in 1990 in the same category, the French score is the 8th highest one, with only 7%!

Finland, two of the countries with the highest political interest positions, surprisingly have a ratio of almost 1 to 3 as well! Whereas West Germany and Sweden are the countries with the most equal ratio between women and men very interested in politics, four other countries show a serious gap. Two of those countries, Spain and Portugal, not only are relatively new members, but they also are relatively new democracies, a factor that could account not only for the low levels of political engagement, but also for the serious gender gap situation. Belgium and Italy, the other two serious cases, are instead more difficult to read. Belgium seems to be the anomaly among the EU members, but in both cases we are dealing with a catholic country, an important factor in order to read that serious gender gap value.

[TABLES 3A AND 3B ABOUT HERE]

Switching from political interest to periodicity of political discussion should not, theoretically, present the reader with dissimilar readings: a *political gladiator* should be able to master the full repertory of political engagement, whether it is simple interest or a more involving discussion. The assumption does not hold however. The first surprise comes from Table 4, with the data for 1981: Finland is the country with the lowest percentage of respondents declaring they discuss politics often! This is the same country which ranks first for the highest category of political interest, as stated above. The two highest positions in regards to the frequent political discussion level go instead to West Germany and Denmark, respectively with 23.2% and 23.4%, showing a stronger coherence with the corresponding level of political interest showed in Table 1. After this first group of two countries, there is another group of European states, including the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Sweden, and Great Britain, achieving a second highest position, although quite distant from the first two values. It is very interesting that both Spain and Italy belong to this second group, since both of them had rather low levels of political interest, but they still show rather high levels of political discussion. A situation that is symmetrically opposite in regards to Finland, and it also challenges the bases of the political sophistication paradigm, which relates political competence to political action. In the Spanish and Italian cases, although the level of political interest is not high, that factor has not affected the strength of the political discussion variable, suggesting a relevant impact of national political culture.

A finding, instead, that is not surprising at all concerns Belgium's percentage for the respondents who declared to never discuss politics: it is the highest one in the group, supporting the conclusion, already proposed above, that Belgium really is an outlier on the lower part of the political participation scale for EU member states. The politically apathetics in Belgium reached 56.4%, more than half the sample of those interviewed, whereas the second worst case is Ireland, with 50.6%, not surprisingly. The country with the lowest percentage of politically apathetics is Denmark, coherently, with only 19.8% of the individuals declaring to never discuss politics.

[TABLES 4 AND 5 ABOUT HERE]

Table 5 presents data that suggest a stability in political discussion levels, and even some increase, although not a consistent increase as showed by the political interest level measure. First of all the bad news: Spain seems to have had in the 1980s a serious collapse in political engagement/participation, as suggested in relation to the data presented in Table 2. Spain's percentage regarding those respondents who discuss politics often declines from 15.7% in 1981 to 9.8% in 1990. Even worse is the evolution for the level of those who never discuss politics: up from 30% to 47.5% (!) in the same period. There are no doubts that Spain seems to have gone through a period of democratic disillusionment, with citizens' involvement in the 1980s declining consistently, according to different measures. The rest of the data confirm overall stability, with the same ranking of countries discussing politics often: West Germany becomes first with 24.7% and

Denmark loses the first position for a close second place with 24.1%. In 1990 Portugal replaces Finland for the last position with only 8% discussing politics often, whereas Finland almost doubles its original percentage from 5.1% to 9.7%.

In regards to the group of individuals who never discuss politics, Portugal and Spain take the last two positions on the ranking, with very high percentages of 50.8% and 47.6% respectively. The smaller group of politically apathetic discussants is in West Germany, very coherently, with 15.8%.

The partial correspondence between the political interest values and the political discussion measure is tested again with the data in Table 6. When asked about the importance of politics, respondents in the Netherlands, Sweden and Great Britain took the three highest spots based upon their "very important" answer. Dutch respondents, although not the ones with the highest political discussion levels, achieved the highest percentage in regards of politics being very important with 11.5%. Sweden came in second with 10.6% and the United Kingdom third with 10.3%, this last country appearing for the first time in the group of nations with high political involvement values. An important finding from Table 6 concerns the countries with the lowest percentage in relation to the high relevance of politics: Portugal with 3% and Finland with only 3.1%. The Finnish case in particular deserves a better analysis, but it appears intuitive that the country perfectly fits the pattern presented by Van Deth in his 2000 article, in which high levels of political interest corresponded to low levels of political saliency. Although the irony of it is that people might discuss and have an interest for something they judge to be not really important, it is also true that a saliency scale should be carefully constructed: comparing family with politics might not be an appropriate comparison, as Van Deth's scale results in the end suggest.

[TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE]

The data for the respondents who stated that politics is not important at all present once again Spain and Portugal as the outliers at the bottom of the scale: 45.6% and 41.8% of individuals, respectively, not considering politics important at all. The findings would support the data in Table 2, where those countries have a very low level of political interest, as well as the interpretation from Table 5, where Spain and Portugal have low levels of political discussion. The situation for the two countries would seem coherent: low political sophistication, low political competence, low levels of political discussion.

A summarizing, final conclusion from this first section on the political dimension measure comes from the wide gap between groups of those respondents who declared politics not to be important at all: 45.6% in Spain vs. only 13% in the Netherlands. This last data distance between countries in the group studied is the element that reminds of all the other dissimilar rankings and countries' positions among the EU member states, so far highlighted by the discussion of the data. The next section will test whether this diversity/discrepancy among EU nations exist also for collective levels of political involvement.

IV. POLITICAL COLLECTIVE ACTION DIMENSION

Citizens' political participation through collective forms of engagement, measured by association memberships and unpaid work for politically based organizations, could be a direct corresponding element of individual measures of political commitment, whether assessed by interest, discussion or perception of the relevance of politics. This section of the study tries to assess whether those countries that came out as the leaders of political participation in the EU, are indeed the same ones in regards to citizens' association membership rates and activities.

Data for 1981 are presented in Tables 30 through 40. For each country, the research considers four types of politically-oriented associations: trade unions, political parties, community action groups and professional associations. In each case, both membership and unpaid work activity were recorded in the survey, as a way to separate simple membership (less demanding) from more involving forms of collective-level participation.

[TABLES 30 THROUGH 39 ABOUT HERE]

A first finding from the data is that trade unions are the organizations with the highest level of declared membership in each of the countries whose data are available. This commonality assumes, however, a different connotation if the reader pays attention to the range of trade union membership: only 5.9% of the respondents stated to be members of trade unions in Spain, but almost nine times more did in Sweden (43.9%). On the opposite end of the membership scale, community action groups seem to represent the least favored choice for citizens interested in participating collectively to the political domain. Ten of the eleven countries surveyed in 1981 had the community group association choice as the lowest percentage of membership: from 0.2% in West Germany¹⁷ (!) to 4.3% in Sweden. Only the Netherlands had professional associations as the lowest value for membership rate, with 6.8%.

The second place on the ranking of associations whose European citizens belong to depends on the country considered. If trade unions were very important in 1981, as a convincing form of political expression, in six countries professional associations ranked second as membership rate. In the other four countries, political parties, instead, represented the second highest membership rate, while in Ireland only there is a tie between political parties and professional associations for the second place.

The interpretation of unpaid activity in associations gives the scholar a different picture of which organizations are actually considered important for political participation, based upon citizens' involvement. The overall conclusion focuses on the incredibly low level of activity declared by the respondents, in all countries, aside from the specific association considered. An element which once again suggests caution when a research's final conclusions are based only on membership levels, and not on effective activity through associations. According to the data, the highest unpaid activity declared, among the four associations included, is in Finland, for professional organizations, with 7%, while the lowest one is 0.1% (!) in Italy and UK, for community action groups. In five countries, political parties rank first as the highest value for activity in politically-based organizations. In three other countries instead, trade unions maintain the highest ranking, as it was for the membership only measure. Three more countries, Belgium, Sweden and Finland, ranked professional associations as the citizens' first choice for unpaid activity in a politically-based organization, although, as stated above, in these same countries the membership rate highest ranking goes to trade unions. Spain is an anomaly: both trade unions and professional associations rank first with 2.2%.

The least preferred type of organization chosen by citizens to perform unpaid activity in 1981 seems to draw a larger consensus across borders. Nine countries have community action groups as the lowest case of unpaid activity for the respondents. If Finland has political parties, the real surprise remains West Germany whose least preferred association is the trade union! A rather unexpected finding considering the peculiar relationship in the German economic structure between entrepreneurs' interests and workers' positions, and the on-going collaboration to overcome problems, in the interest of economic growth.

¹⁷ The West German value is particularly astonishing considering the relevance of New Social Movements in West Germany in the 1980s.

The membership rate situation almost a decade later has not really changed (Tables 41 through 52). All the twelve countries included in the study have trade unions with the highest membership level recorded: the percentages range from 58.5% in Sweden to 3.2% in Spain. Trade union membership shows a multiple pattern of development: in six countries trade unions membership levels went down, in four countries they increased, while in West Germany remained stable, and in Portugal they could not be compared with previous data. However, what it appears evident from the data is that the gap between the country with the highest value and the country with the lowest one has actually increased. The general pattern of association proximity seems to be similar in all European countries, but the actual levels of association memberships are still very diverse.

[TABLES 41 THROUGH 52 ABOUT HERE]

The respondents' position on the least favored association to belong to remains stable: in eleven countries the lowest percentage goes to community action groups,¹⁸ the only exception being political parties in France! In this case, as in the previous German choice of trade unions, the value is surprising, not only because of the French tradition of strong political participation (Perrineau and Mayer, 1992), but also because of the relevance of political parties, still today, in European political systems. As a matter of fact, from the rest of the data it is clear that Europeans are not so fond of political parties any more. The second highest choice for associations membership is professional organizations in ten countries, and political parties in the remaining two, leaving, therefore, the political party membership card in third place in most of the countries. If we also consider that, usually, community action groups, as NSMs, do not particularly aim at increasing the number of their supporters/followers, or at least do not target membership specifically, the third place scored by political parties has the meaning of a last place.

The respondents' answers in relation to unpaid activity performed in associations for 1990 confirm the lack of a single, possible ranking within EU countries. Four countries had political parties with the highest percentage of respondents' choice, while France and Great Britain had professional associations as the preferred type of organizations in which citizens perform unpaid activity. In three other countries, trade unions were the most favored association chosen for unpaid activity, but in Ireland, the Netherlands, and Belgium the community action choice ranked first. Spain is here an anomaly again, not only for its very low levels of activity declared, but also because three associations are tie for the first spot: trade unions, political parties and professional associations with 0.7% (!). Spain is also, together with Finland, Sweden, and Denmark, showing a complete coherence in relation to their membership choice: they have the same preference when it comes to association membership and activity. A final remark can be presented in relation to the longitudinal perspective of the data: in seven cases the percentage itself of the highest choices for activity in 1990 had actually increased since 1981, but in four other cases the value had decreased.

The conclusion from these results must highlight the variety of preferences showed among the countries considered. More specifically, an important consequence of this outcome is that if political parties are preferred in some countries, but community action groups are chosen in others as the best way to participate politically, it remains unquestionable that if the European Union allows only the European Parliament elections as the best way to hear from EU citizens, those countries in which political parties were not the first choice to perform unpaid activity for, would have fewer chances available to make their interests/requests heard. The different preferences showed seem to be somewhat correlated to the stage of economic development and the type of

¹⁸ The range of the percentages across European countries seems to be rather consistent in this case: from 1.1% in Spain to 5% in Denmark.

economic system adopted. The reader can easily notice that in three of the four countries whose first choice for activity was the trade union (Finland, Sweden, and Denmark), the corresponding economic system has a very strong social policy, oriented towards the workers' protection.

For what concerns the least preferred choice of association type in which to perform unpaid activity, the diversity of answers across countries persists. In six countries, the respondents declared to have done unpaid activity in community action groups the least, probably because the type of action supported by those associations is sometime problematic and demanding, not only in relation to the goals, but also in relation to the organizational efficiency of that type of groups: Olson's point on the pursuit of inclusive goods vs. exclusive benefits supports this interpretation. In Ireland and the Netherlands the least favored activity was in trade unions (I would say that probably the highest absolute preference in Ireland goes to Church groups), while in Italy, a country renown for its strikes, the preference goes actually, unexpectedly, to professional organizations. Belgium, Denmark and France list political parties as their least favored association to perform unpaid activity, a finding that is not surprising at all for Belgium, as seen in relation to this country's political sophistication levels in the section above. It remains astonishing that the French seem to be so distant from political parties.

In an attempt to simplify the reading of the huge amount of data presented in regards to association membership and activity, two scales have been constructed. Using the same data, the scale INDCOLL in Table 53 shows the membership rate in each of the countries included in the research. The value goes from 0 to 4 (the potential being the four politically-oriented organizations considered) and is a cumulative scale: each respondent receives one point for each membership declared. The scale in Table 54, INDCOLL2, is instead the scale of unpaid activity in politically-based associations. A cumulative scale, from 0 to 4, based upon the individual's responses on the number of activities performed in the organizations considered.

[TABLES 53 AND 54 ABOUT HERE]

The main overall finding that immediately appears from both tables is the incredibly low level of collective political engagement expressed by European citizens. It seems that Scandinavian countries actually perform well above all the other countries included in the study, maybe because of the favorable impact of a social democratic system. In particular, the reader can see, in regards to the membership data, that Ireland has the highest percentage for zero memberships declared (93.9%!), followed closely by Spain (93.2%) and Portugal (89.1%). A common element appears immediately evident: the lowest membership level countries are all Catholic. On the contrary, the lowest rate of zero memberships declared goes to Sweden (36%, more than half the Irish, the Spanish and the Portuguese value!), followed by Denmark (40.5%) and Finland (50.7%). The severity of the difference is astonishing: the range from the highest to the lowest level of zero-memberships eliminates any possible doubt. The interpretation remains consistent if the reader were to consider the one-membership level, for which the three best performing countries remains Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

The activity scale, INDCOLL2, reposes the same position: the lack of unpaid activity into associations is very severe. The worst cases for the countries with the lowest level of activity declared are Spain with 98% (!) of the respondents without any activity, followed by the United Kingdom with 95.6% and Portugal with 95.1%. The second place comes as a surprise, considering that Great Britain has scored rather high on the previous dimension of political sophistication (importance of politics was high, averaged level of political interest and discussion), although not in the top three. The most puzzling piece of information is that according to the membership data

(Table 53) Great Britain has a rather high citizens' association involvement; when the measure used is not simple membership, but effective activity, the British seem to avoid participating.

An important finding in Table 54 is that the low level of association activity is much more consistent to all the countries in the group, although there are some exceptions. The range between the highest and lowest value for the zero-membership declared data goes from 98% in Spain to 81.9% in Ireland, a much narrower one than the membership scale's. A partial surprise comes from the two lowest values for the zero-activity category: they in fact correspond to Ireland (!) and Finland. The Irish case is a very interesting one: a very low membership rate in politically-based associations, but still a rather good activity in the same organizations. A possible motivation behind this finding is the political situation in Ireland, and the serious relevance that political activity has for some groups of individuals who, although a minority, decide to participate politically, even if they do not officially become members.

A similar finding can be seen in the one-activity declared category. The three highest values 15.5%, 10.5%, and 8.7% correspond to Ireland, Finland, and Sweden, respectively. If the Irish position has been addressed above, the other two countries, as noted previously, might be favored by the social democratic type of political and economic system.

The data presented in this collective political involvement section show a new ranking among the countries considered, in relation to political commitment levels. Although a few of them continue to score high in different political participation scales, most of them seem to clearly have preferences for political activity. In particular, in comparison with the political sophistication data, the Netherlands and West Germany seem not to choose collective types of political involvement: a very unexpected finding considering the extensive literature on NSMs in the two countries. A more consistent finding has instead to do with the high levels of the Scandinavian countries, and the low levels of Spain and Portugal. Once the unconventional dimension of political participation is included in the discussion, the rankings so far presented can be reassessed.

V. UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION DIMENSION

Political participants' preferences of means of political expressions have greatly expanded, beyond the limits of conventionality and legality. Whether as a way to become louder in their political expression or as simply a more direct, clear statement about individuals' positions in the political context, protest activity accounts for a large part of political participation. The increase recorded in regards to conventional engagement applies to unconventional activities as well, although some countries more than others have been able to use the full repertory of activities available. EU member states seem to have maintained a clear line of separation between countries that have gone the whole way towards unconventionality (France, Germany and the Netherlands come to mind) and countries that are still to develop a strong conventional action tradition, before enjoying the benefits of more direct types of action.

Once again, it appears evident from the data presented below that the diversity of positions overcomes a possible common political behavior in regards to unconventional commitment. Tables 7 through 17 collect data for five protest activities in eleven European countries, two of those not yet EU members in 1981. The behavioral measure, namely the "have done" question, represents the only serious commonality among the respondents in different countries. In 1981, petition was always the first choice of protest political action, with the exception of Spain, where lawful demonstrations ranked first. Although European citizens seem to have chosen petition as their preferred mode of unconventional expression, the intensity of that choice is not equal across borders: 63.3% in UK vs. 23.8% in Spain. The range of scores for the petition option is wide

enough to question the relevance of that answer across borders. The ranking of the “have done” activities confirms, however, that European citizens assess the petition action as the easiest one among the five activities available, supporting a possible interpretation that their model of political unconventionality is similar, although showing different levels of strength. Countries with a higher level of political engagement seem to score higher on the protest action scale as well, as expected from the literature findings.

[TABLES 7 THROUGH 17 ABOUT HERE]

The least favored protest action citizens have performed is a building occupation, in nine of the eleven countries considered, a result that is perfectly in line with the conclusions presented in the previous section, probably due to the type of demanding task and its possible level of danger. Only in two countries, Italy and the Netherlands, unofficial strike is the least preferred unconventional activity. The relevance of the Italian score might be explained by the importance of trade unions and of coordinated action among unions as the only way to be effective, creating a very uncomfortable environment for proposals of unofficial strikes.

The second type of data displayed in the tables reveals the potentiality of protest action in the European countries. Whereas the behavioral measure showed almost a perfect unanimity of choice in the group, the attitudinal dimension of the unconventionality presents the reader with a clear variety of positions across borders. In six of the countries included in the study, the potential protest action ranking first is the petition again, supporting a certain level of coherence. As a matter of fact, the range among those countries with petition as their first choice is much narrower than for the corresponding behavioral measure: 47.1% in Ireland vs. 32.9% in Italy, about 15% vs. the previous 40% difference. Among the other countries, UK and Denmark opted for lawful demonstration as their first choice of “might do” answer, suggesting that their behavioral choice of petition might turn into something more “activity” oriented. Finland, Sweden and France clearly stated their more “aggressive” potential by choosing boycott as their first pick of “might do” action. A first diversity in regards to more active forms of unconventionality creates cleavages within the group of countries.

The almost unanimity of the behavioral aspect of protest activity is regained in relation to the least favored type of unconventional action: eight countries ranked building occupation as their first choice. The finding fits the pattern of the “have done” scores, with the exception of Belgium, whose sample ranked strikes as their least preferred protest action. The Netherlands and Italy, again, chose unofficial strikes as their least favored protest activity, showing coherence with their behavioral score.

The last measure for political unconventionality dealt with the negative form of potential: the “would never do” option. Respondents in eight countries confirm their previous answers by declaring that building occupation would not be included in their repertory of protest action. In the three remaining countries, the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium, the highest choice was unofficial strikes, consistent with previous positions for the first two countries, but not for Belgium. Unanimity among all countries appears from the lowest score of the same “would never do” question: in all eleven countries signing a petition was the answer with the lowest number of picks. The only country lacking some coherence with this particular finding would be Spain, whose respondents declared lawful demonstration as their first choice of protest behavior.

Data from 1981 support the initial conclusions on two parallel types of findings: less violent/demanding forms of unconventional political action seem to be already on the political behavior agenda of European citizens. European countries (within or out of the EU) share a

common understanding and ranking of the possible activities available, when the “have done” measure is considered. Yet, when the question deals with the protest potential of the respondents, two groups of countries form: the first one, more inclined to support or be ready to use more challenging, maybe dangerous, or violent forms of protest action; the second one, less inclined to even consider the possibility of more aggressive types of unconventional political behavior, remaining “loyal” to more acceptable, and less demanding, forms of protest, like petitions.

Data from the same source, but nine years later, as presented in Tables 18 through 29, give the scholar a more reliable base to interpret the countries’ position on protest action. Overall, it seems European countries have moved forward on the unconventionality scale, showing more “tempting” or aggressive types of political activities in their protest repertory. In 1990, petition is once again the first choice for protest behavior, except for Spain, as in 1981, where lawful demonstrations still ranked as the Spaniards’ first choice of unconventionality (24.2%). If all respondents across borders have become more unconventional in their political action modes, the range between the highest and the lowest score for petition has widened: 75.3% in UK, but 27.5% in Portugal. Although Europeans seem to share the same ranking for protest behavior actions, the intensity of their first choice differs significantly, showing countries at different levels on the political participation scale.

[TABLES 18 THROUGH 29 ABOUT HERE]

As nine years earlier, the least preferred unconventional action performed by European individuals remains building occupation: ten out of twelve countries ranked it first. For Italy and the Netherlands, exactly like the 1981 data displayed, unofficial strikes are the least favored protest behavior recorded. Once again, for the behavioral measure of unconventionality, European countries seem to show a strong common behavior, presented by both the most favored as well as the least favored protest activity performed.

The potential for protest action in 1990 presents the scholar with important differences in regards to the data analysis for 1981. The interpretation of a consistent variety of activities, when the protest action is measured by attitude and not actual behavior, remains clear, although the countries considered seem to have shifted their potential for protest towards more aggressive types of activities. Five countries in the group (France, UK, Finland, Sweden, and Italy) ranked boycott as their highest choice for the “might do” question. The range of the scores among these countries showed a relevant gap: 68.8% in Sweden, but only half that value (34.2%) in Great Britain. Six other countries (Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Ireland, Belgium and Denmark) chose instead lawful demonstration as their highest pick for the potential protest measure. Here again the range of the values among the countries was considerable: 51.3% for Portugal, but 30.4% for Belgium, a significant difference, especially considering the position of the two countries within the EU. The rather low Belgian score is not a real surprise considering the very low levels of political interest and discussion for the same country, as introduced above.

As many countries seem to have clearly moved in their political attitude towards more direct forms of expression, Spain, instead, is the only country whose protest potentiality has indeed receded. Among the Spanish respondents, 38.5% declared the petition the unconventional activity they might perform, making it the first choice. A rather “soft” manifestation of protest potential.

The respondents’ answers in relation to the least favored activity for their protest potential remains building occupation, a coherent finding for nine countries, since it corresponds to their respective answer for the “have done” question (Spain once again differs). As in 1981, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium ranked unofficial strikes as their least preferred possible activity. The

same type of longitudinal correspondence in data exist in regards to the “would never do” question: nine countries again declared building occupation the highest ranked choice, with the other three (Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium) presenting the exact choice of their potential question. Supporting the answers from the “have done” question, eleven countries ranked petition as the action they would not perform the least. The only exception is Spain, which clearly shows a consistent pattern in its own, with 37.6% declaring instead lawful demonstrations, in correspondence with the Spanish value for the “have done” measure.

The analysis of the 1990 data shows an evident move in the potential measure towards more aggressive and demanding forms of protest activity, where either boycotts or lawful demonstrations replace the petition. Although the actual behavioral measure presents petition as the first ranked choice again, the range between the highest and the lowest score has widened. Behavior and negative potentiality confirm a more group-like political action mode among the respondents across national borders. Political potential shows, instead, a more diverse country-approach to unconventional political action, with countries divided into two groups, but still sharing the more demanding protest action preference. Whether European countries choose the same protest action modes, although with different intensities, or whether they simply choose divergent ones, differences within the group remain.

VI. DIFFERENT MOTIVATIONS

Knowledge of the European levels of political participation is the first step towards a better understanding of European citizens’ modes of political activity. If countries within the EU differ based upon the intensities of actual political action showed, whether conventional or unconventional, a comparative analysis based exclusively on levels of activity cannot provide the scholar with evidence on the main participation predictors. In an attempt to propose some simple conclusions on possible relationships between specific issues and individuals’ values assessments, on one side, and the respondents’ corresponding modes of political participation on the other, the last part of this research presents the reader with some relevant information on the citizens’ answers on political involvement-related issues.

A first interesting comparison can be presented using the data in Table 55 on the individual’s declared importance of social/political change as a reason to do voluntary work. Based upon those who stated change to be an extremely important reason to be doing unpaid work (Import+), the scholar can find the first surprise. The countries with the highest percentages for that category are Spain (21%) and Italy (20.8%), respectively, followed in third place by Denmark with 18.1%. If the Danes’ answer corresponds to the high levels of political sophistication and activity showed in the previous section of the paper, the first two countries were not expected. Spain had definitively one of the lowest political sophistication and participation score among all the European countries of the group, but its citizens seem to consider social/political change an important issue. There is in the data a clear gap between what the individuals declare and the way they behave. If the reader considers the second highest category for importance of social/political change (level 4), the findings resemble much more closely the rankings presented by the previous measures of political engagement. For this level 4 of importance, Finland ranks first with 23.4% and West Germany is second with 19.6%, as expected.

[TABLE 55 AND 56 ABOUT HERE]

The respondents’ answer on their life satisfaction in general (Table 56) challenges, instead, previous political participation theories based upon individual deprivation as the most important reason to become involved in politics. Using the four highest levels of life satisfaction, the ranking among the

European countries follows closely the previous sections' results. Denmark (85.8%), the Netherlands (84.3%), and Sweden (84.1%) are the three highest countries on the life satisfaction ranking scale. As the reader can easily notice, all three of them are also countries with rather high levels of political sophistication and activity, conventional and non-conventional. The findings clearly weaken any assumptions made with regards to possible lack of personal satisfaction as a possible reason to foster people's engagement in the political domain. On the contrary, personal deprivation seems to have a negative impact on the individuals' political behavior. The last three spots on the life satisfaction ranking go to France (58.9%), Portugal (63.3%) and Spain (67.2%), all countries with low levels of recorded political interest, association membership and activity in politically based organizations, and protest involvement.

These conclusions can point to an advanced mode of political activity for Scandinavian countries, as well as for the Netherlands and Germany, based upon their actual high satisfaction with the society in which the respondents live. On the opposite side, citizens not satisfied with the environment to which they belong, seem to become more apathetic, because disappointed and disillusioned by the ineffectiveness of their political behavior. A case that it is worth mentioning is Belgium. A country whose individuals have declared an average level of life satisfaction, but that still does not foster citizens' political interest, nor discussion, nor participation in any forms in particular. Are Belgians then rationally avoiding participation?

The consistency of results presented in this section is supported by the data in Table 58. To the question on whether individuals thought the government should be more open to the public, the countries with the higher scores among those who agreed or strongly agree are not unexpected. Among the respondents who declared to strongly agree (agree+) with that statement, Sweden ranks first (55.6%), Denmark is second (47.7%), and Ireland ranks third (46.2%). The first two countries' position does not create any doubts after the results so far discussed, but the Irish case needs more reflection. Although the table confirms a general consensus across borders to have the government more open to the citizens, Ireland seems to complain about the national government's supposed detachment from the people, but at the same time, the average level of political participation in the country is not one of the highest. In brief, Irish citizens pretend to be heard by the government, but they do not really express their opinions that often or that strongly as other countries' citizens seem to be able to do (the Scandinavians especially).

[TABLE 57 AND 59 ABOUT HERE]

Ireland's unexpected position is confirmed by the data collected in Table 59 on the statement that political reform is too rapid. The percentages of those individuals who in each country at least disagree with that statement creates a very unusual ranking among the cases considered. The Netherlands ranks first (63.5%), followed by Ireland (61%), Finland (57.2%) and Italy is a close fourth with 55%. If the first and third positions are consistent with the countries' high levels of political action, the second and fourth places are more difficult to interpret. The only possible conclusion from the data available is that both Italy and Ireland seem to be more aware of the need for a stronger citizen involvement in the political domain, but their tradition of political apathy is hard to change. Unless the respondents in both cases are not coherent, Italy and Ireland represent two countries with a strong potential and agreement for more active political participation, but still low levels of individual political involvement.

The importance of personal values to assess the corresponding level of personal political engagement is highlighted in Tables 57, 60 and 61. A first element to be considered in judging levels of political involvement might be the citizen's personality in relation to the ability to take action. If studies in political participation in the past have addressed the issue with regards to the

difference between leaders and followers, strong and weak personalities (see Bréchon for a similar point, 1994: 172-173), a person's predisposition towards making changes in life might be a rather relevant element to study. According to the data presented in Table 57, adding the four highest levels percentages for the cautious/bold scale in relation to making changes, the ranking of countries does not surprise. Among the respondents with a score of 7 or higher, Finland ranks first (80.8% of its national sample), Sweden is in second position (75.8%), and the Netherlands is third (60.1%). It is evident that a rather bold personality strongly helps political participation, since all those three countries have correspondingly high levels of political sophistication and activity. A positive correlation between the two variables is confirmed by the countries that rank last in the table. Still above the score of 7, Portugal has the lowest percentage of respondents declaring to be bold in relation to making changes in life (25.1%) and Spain has the second lowest score (28.4%): the result should not surprise the reader. A strong, bold personality does matter in political action.

[TABLES 60 AND 61 ABOUT HERE]

A final consideration on people's values and the relation to political participation levels comes from Tables 60 and 61. Inglehart's dimension of materialism/postmaterialism can provide the research with a final finding. The main result is that, for both 1981 and 1990, the countries with the highest percentage of pure postmaterialists are also the countries with high levels of political activity. In Table 60, among the postmaterialists group, Finland ranks first (30.3%) and Denmark second (28.1%): two countries with high levels of citizens political involvement. At the same time, Italy (9.8%), Spain (9.8%) and Ireland (9%) have the three lowest percentages for postmaterialists.

The data for 1990 confirm a general increase of postmaterialists in each country, with the exception of Denmark, which actually shows a decline by half of its 1981 value (from 28.1% to 15.6%)! The three highest scores for postmaterialists are still in countries with a strong tradition of political action: the Netherlands (34.1%), West Germany (28.9%) and Finland (28.4%). As expected, Portugal has the lowest percentage of postmaterialists with only 10.8% declared. One final comment on the 1990 data is the strong increase of postmaterialists in Italy: their percentage more than doubled in nine years (from 9.8% to 24.2%)!

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The construction of the EU in the past half century has focused mainly on its political and economic structures. Political leaders planned to create a European Union based upon rules and bodies of government. Whereas the current results are, without doubt, excellent, the parallel development of a single European political participant in the Union has been overlooked. The founders of the EU have created accesses to the policy-making bodies of the Union, with the intention to foster a stronger participation from its citizens. The hope for a final, more democratic European government has to deal with EU residents' different modes of political engagement.

The three dimensions of political participation used in this research suggest that there is no single particular mode of political involvement across European countries. For each dimension, political sophistication, collective political engagement, and unconventional political activity, there are three groups of countries showing a similar level of political activity. Overall, the Scandinavian countries, in addition to West Germany and the Netherlands, show a consistently high level of political commitment, using the full repertory of political actions available. At the bottom of the participation ranking we find Portugal, Spain and, sometime, Ireland and Belgium. The size, the level of economic resources available and very likely the Catholicism of these countries seem to have a possible correlation with its low levels of political commitment among citizens. All the other

countries in the group position themselves in between, the strength of their activity levels depends on the dimension used to measure political involvement.

The data analysis of the multiple measures of political participation supports the interpretation of a variety of intensities of political commitment among EU countries. The next step in the research is to assess how the usual predictors (age, gender, education, income level, community size, religion, for instance) of political action can have different strengths across European countries. The data presented in the study suggest that a single EU mode of citizens' political involvement does not exist at the moment, and that we cannot speak of a European "Homo Politicus," unless we underline the clear differences in preferences and intensities of political behavior recorded.

APPENDIX¹⁹

Individual Conventional Political Involvement Measure

TABLE 1: INTERESTED IN POLITICS 1981

Interested in Politics	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	NET	SP	SWE	UK
Very	3.3%	4.2%	9%	6.5%	6.4%	4.4%	4.9%	2.8%	4.4%	7.1%	5.6%
Some	23%	37.9%	36.6%	56.6%	42%	21.9%	23%	39.2%	24.6%	37.1%	33%
Not Very	19.1%	44%	35.9%	11.2%	37.1%	27.9%	25%	33.5%	30.9%	41.7%	33%
Not At All	54.5%	13.9%	18.5%	25.7%	14.6%	45.8%	47.1%	24.5%	40%	14%	28.5%

Source: World Values Survey (1981). Data for Portugal not available.

TABLE 2: INTERESTED IN POLITICS 1990

Interested in Politics	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	NET	P	SP	SWE	UK
Very	6.9%	15%	10.9%	7%	25.2%	8.2%	6%	13.6%	6.2%	5.7%	10.2%	12.8%
Some	22.6%	39.2%	36.6%	30.6%	44.2%	29%	23.4%	48.7%	22.1%	20.3%	36.5%	34.3%
Not Very	30.7%	32.4%	36.3%	31%	23.2%	33.8%	39.1%	17.1%	27.7%	25.1%	43.5%	31.3%
Not At All	39.9%	13.4%	16.2%	31.4%	7.3%	29%	31.5%	20.6%	44.1%	48.9%	9.8%	21.5%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

¹⁹ B=Belgium, DK=Denmark, FD=Finland, FR=France, WG=West Germany, IRE=Ireland, I=Italy, NET=The Netherlands, P=Portugal, SP=Spain, SWE=Sweden, UK=United Kingdom.

TABLE 3A: CROSSTABULATION POLITICAL INTEREST/GENDER (1990)

Interested in Politics	FD		WG		UK		SWE		SWE		SP		SP		NET	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Very	15.2%	6.1%	35.7%	15.6%	17.4%	8.8%	13.2%	7%	7.9%	3.7%	18.1%	10.1%	18.1%	10.1%	18.1%	10.1%
Some	40.4%	32.5%	45.6%	43%	37.2%	31.8%	39.3%	32.9%	23.5%	17.6%	53.3%	45.1%	53.3%	45.1%	53.3%	45.1%
Not Very	29.8%	43.3%	15.3%	30.5%	29.6%	32.8%	38.6%	49.7%	27.8%	22.7%	13.8%	19.7%	27.8%	22.7%	13.8%	19.7%
Not At All	14.6%	18.1%	3.3%	10.9%	15.8%	26.5%	8.9%	10.4%	40.8%	56%	14.7%	25.1%	40.8%	56%	14.7%	25.1%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: World Values Survey (1990). Cross-tabulation significant $p < .000$

TABLE 3B: CROSSTABULATION POLITICAL INTEREST/GENDER (1990)

Interested in Politics	B		P		I		I		FR		DK		DK		IRE	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Very	9.4%	4.6%	8.7%	3.9%	9.2%	3%	9.2%	5.1%	21.7%	8.2%	12.6%	4.2%	21.7%	8.2%	12.6%	4.2%
Some	26%	19.2%	25.8%	18.7%	31.3%	16%	35.8%	25.9%	43%	35.4%	32%	26.2%	43%	35.4%	32%	26.2%
Not Very	30.1%	31.1%	28.3%	27.1%	38.1%	40.2%	27.7%	33.9%	25%	39.8%	34.1%	33.5%	25%	39.8%	34.1%	33.5%
Not At All	34.4%	45.1%	37.2%	50.3%	21.4%	40.9%	27.3%	35%	10.3%	16.6%	21.3%	36%	10.3%	16.6%	21.3%	36%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: World Values Survey (1990). Cross-tabulation significant $p < .000$

TABLE 4: DISCUSS POLITICS VARIABLE 1981

Discuss Politics	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	NET	SP	SWE	UK
Often	5.4%	23.4%	5.1%	11.7%	23.2%	7.7%	12.1%	15.7%	15.7%	10.9%	10.9%
At Times	38.2%	56.8%	63.1%	51.6%	57.1%	41.6%	41%	58%	54.3%	65.3%	52.9%
Never	56.4%	19.8%	31.7%	36.7%	19.6%	50.6%	47%	26.3%	30%	23.8%	37.1%

Source: World Values Survey (1981). Data for Portugal not available.

TABLE 5: DISCUSS POLITICS VARIABLE 1990

Discuss Politics	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	NET	P	SP	SWE	UK
Often	9.3%	24.1%	9.7%	11.8%	24.7%	11.7%	12.6%	14.7%	8%	9.8%	17.8%	13.9%
At Times	45%	54.5%	71.9%	53.6%	59.5%	46.5%	46.6%	60.7%	41.2%	42.6%	61.2%	51%
Never	45.8%	21.4%	18.4%	34.6%	15.8%	41.8%	40.8%	24.7%	50.8%	47.6%	21%	35%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 6: IMPORTANCE OF POLITICS VARIABLE (1990)²⁰

Importance of Politics	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	NET	P	SP	SWE	UK
Very	5.6%	8.4%	3.1%	7.9%	8.8%	4.7%	7%	11.5%	3%	5.6%	10.6%	10.3%
Quite	19.3%	34.8%	22.7%	24.7%	33.6%	23.5%	24.2%	41.8%	16.9%	15.9%	34.8%	31.2%
Not Very	36.4%	41.7%	51.7%	33.5%	44%	42%	35.4%	33.7%	38.3%	32.9%	39.5%	36.8%
Not At All	38.7%	15.1%	22.4%	33.9%	13.6%	29.7%	33.4%	13%	41.8%	45.6%	15%	21.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

²⁰ Data for 1981 were not available.

Individual Unconventional Political Involvement Measures

TABLE 7: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – WEST GERMANY 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	47.4%	7.5%	14.7%	1.8%	1.5%
Might Do	37.3%	34%	36.9%	14.1%	12.7%
Would Never Do	15.3%	58.5%	48.4%	84%	85.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 8: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – UK 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	63.3%	7.2%	9.9%	6.9%	2.5%
Might Do	28.1%	31.4%	35.1%	18.7%	12.6%
Would Never Do	8.6%	61.4%	55%	74.5%	84.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 9: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – THE NETHERLANDS 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	35.1%	6.5%	12.6%	1.6%	2.4%
Might Do	41.9%	30.2%	33.9%	13.8%	20.9%
Would Never Do	23%	63.3%	53.6%	84.7%	76.7%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 10: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – ITALY 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	42.1%	6%	26.7%	2.6%	5.8%
Might Do	32.9%	30.8%	25%	10.2%	13.5%
Would Never Do	25%	63.2%	48.3%	87.2%	80.7%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 11: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – FINLAND 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	29.8%	8.5%	14.4%	5.7%	0.7%
Might Do	41%	43.4%	36.5%	15.3%	9.4%
Would Never Do	29.2%	48.1%	49%	79%	89.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 12: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – SWEDEN 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	54.2%	8.5%	15.4%	1.6%	0.3%
Might Do	37.4%	52%	50.7%	25%	11.5%
Would Never Do	8.5%	39.6%	33.9%	73.5%	88.2%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 13: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – SPAIN 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	23.8%	8.9%	24.7%	7.2%	3.1%
Might Do	44.6%	29.1%	36.6%	21%	13.8%
Would Never Do	31.5%	62%	38.8%	71.8%	83.1%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 14: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – IRELAND 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	29.4%	6.9%	13%	4.8%	1.9%
Might Do	47.1%	34%	40.7%	23.9%	15.1%
Would Never Do	23.4%	59%	46.3%	71.3%	83%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 15: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – BELGIUM 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	24.4%	3.1%	14.2%	3.5%	2.7%
Might Do	38.7%	24.1%	33.3%	14.7%	17.8%
Would Never Do	36.9%	72.8%	52.5%	81.9%	79.5%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 16: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – DENMARK 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	44.4%	9.7%	18.9%	9.1%	2.7%
Might Do	32.1%	33.5%	38.4%	29%	11.3%
Would Never Do	23.5%	56.8%	42.7%	61.9%	85.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 17: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – FRANCE 1981

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	45.3%	11.5%	26.7%	10.1%	7.3%
Might Do	33%	38.1%	31.5%	26.3%	25.6%
Would Never Do	21.8%	50.4%	41.8%	63.6%	67.2%

Source: World Values Survey 1981.

TABLE 18: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – FRANCE 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	53.7%	12.5%	32.7%	10.1%	7.9%
Might Do	29%	40.2%	32.4%	24.9%	24.8%
Would Never Do	17.3%	47.4%	34.8%	65.1%	67.4%

Source: World Values Survey 1990.

TABLE 19: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – WEST GERMANY 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	56.9%	10.4%	21%	2.4%	1.1%
Might Do	31.1%	37.2%	42.3%	14%	10%
Would Never Do	11.9%	52.4%	36.7%	83.6%	88.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 20: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – UK 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	75.3%	13.8%	14%	10%	2.4%
Might Do	16.6%	34.2%	35%	18.4%	10.2%
Would Never Do	8%	52%	51%	71.7%	87.4%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 21: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – THE NETHERLANDS 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	50.6%	8.5%	25.3%	2.5%	3.2%
Might Do	31.5%	33.7%	38.9%	20.8%	21.7%
Would Never Do	17.4%	57.8%	35.8%	76.7%	75.1%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 22: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – PORTUGAL 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	27.5%	4.1%	21.2%	3.5%	1.6%
Might Do	47.5%	28.4%	51.3%	17.7%	11.8%
Would Never Do	25%	67.5%	27.5%	78.9%	86.6%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 23: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – FINLAND 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	40.7%	13.5%	14.2%	8.1%	1.6%
Might Do	45.5%	68.8%	53.4%	34.8%	19.8%
Would Never Do	13.8%	17.7%	32.4%	57.1%	78.7%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 24: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – SWEDEN 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	71.7%	16.5%	22.6%	3.1%	0.2%
Might Do	23.8%	61.6%	58.9%	40.9%	19.4%
Would Never Do	4.5%	21.9%	18.6%	56%	80.4%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 25: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – IRELAND 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	42%	7.4%	16.5%	3.7%	2%
Might Do	39.8%	33.3%	41.5%	23.4%	19.2%
Would Never Do	18.2%	59.3%	41.9%	72.9%	78.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 26: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – BELGIUM 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	46.8%	9.2%	22.8%	6.3%	4%
Might Do	27.9%	27.9%	30.4%	18.4%	21.2%
Would Never Do	24.4%	62.8%	46.8%	75.3%	74.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 27: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – DENMARK 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	51.2%	10.6%	27.4%	17.4%	2.1%
Might Do	25.4%	31.6%	31.9%	23.3%	6.7%
Would Never Do	23.4%	57.7%	40.7%	59.3%	91.3%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 28: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – ITALY 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	48.1%	10.9%	36%	6.1%	7.6%
Might Do	33.8%	47.3%	36.6%	19.4%	20.5%
Would Never Do	18%	41.8%	27.4%	74.5%	71.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 29: UNCONVENTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY – SPAIN 1990

Type of Action	Sign Petition	Join Boycott	Lawful Demonstration	Unofficial Strikes	Occupy Building
Have Done	21.2%	5.7%	24.2%	6.7%	2.9%
Might Do	38.5%	26.5%	38.2%	20.6%	20.3%
Would Never Do	40%	67.8%	37.6%	72.6%	76.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

Collective Conventional Political Involvement Measures

TABLE 30: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – WEST GERMANY 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	15.8%	8.1%	0.2%	7.6%
NO	84.2%	91.9%	99.8%	92.4%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.7%	3.8%	NA%	1.8%
NO	98.3%	96.2%	NA%	98.2%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 31: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – UK 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	19.6%	4.6%	1.1%	10.1%
NO	80.4%	95.4%	98.9%	89.9%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.1%	1.5%	0.1%	1.4%
NO	98.9%	98.5%	99.9%	98.6%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 32: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – THE NETHERLANDS 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	14.3%	7.6%	11.1%	6.8%
NO	85.7%	92.4%	88.9%	93.2%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.1%	1.6%	0.5%	1.4%
NO	98.9%	98.4%	99.5%	98.6%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 33: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY –ITALY 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	7.8%	6.4%	0.2%	2.7%
NO	92.2%	93.6%	99.8%	97.3%
Activity in Associations				
YES	3.7%	4.5%	0.1%	1.3%
NO	96.3%	95.5%	99.9%	98.7%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 34: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY –FINLAND 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	17.9%	3%	0.6%	7.8%
NO	82.1%	97%	99.4%	92.2%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.9%	0.5%	0.9%	7%
NO	98.1%	99.5%	99.1%	93%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 35: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY –SWEDEN 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	43.9%	13.5%	4.3%	7.2%
NO	56.1%	86.5%	95.7%	92.8%
Activity in Associations				
YES	2.5%	2.1%	1.4%	4.2%
NO	97.5%	97.9%	98.6%	95.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 36: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY - SPAIN 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	5.9%	2.7%	0.9%	4.9%
NO	94.1%	97.3%	99.1%	95.1%
Activity in Associations				
YES	2.2%	2.1%	0.9%	2.2%
NO	97.8%	97.9%	99.1%	97.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 37: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY - IRELAND 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	13.2%	4.1%	0.3%	4.1%
NO	86.8%	95.9%	99.7%	95.9%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.4%	1.6%	0.3%	1.2%
NO	98.6%	98.4%	99.7%	98.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 38: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY - BELGIUM 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	15%	2.5%	1.6%	3.8%
NO	85%	97.5%	98.4%	96.2%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.3%	1.4%	0.3%	1.8%
NO	98.7%	98.6%	99.7%	98.2%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 39: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – DENMARK 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	42%	6.5%	1.4%	13.8%
NO	58%	93.5%	98.6%	86.2%
Activity in Associations				
YES	2.5%	1.9%	0.6%	1.3%
NO	97.5%	98.1%	99.4%	98.7%

Source: World Values Survey (1981).

TABLE 40: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – FRANCE 1981

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	9.2%	2.5%	1.3%	4.2%
NO	90.8%	97.5%	98.7%	95.8%
Activity in Associations				
YES	2.8%	1.2%	0.7%	1.8%
NO	97.2%	98.3%	99.3%	98.3%

Source: World Values Survey 1981.

TABLE 41: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – WEST GERMANY 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	15.7%	7.5%	1.7%	8.9%
NO	84.3%	92.5%	98.3%	91.1%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.7%	2.9%	1%	1.7%
NO	98.3%	97.1%	99%	98.3%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 42: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – UK 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	14.4%	4.9%	2.7%	9.8%
NO	85.6%	95.1%	97.3%	90.2%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.3%	1.5%	0.7%	1.8%
NO	98.7%	98.5%	99.3%	98.2%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 43: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – THE NETHERLANDS 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	19.1%	9.4%	4.9%	13.1%
NO	80.9%	90.6%	95.1%	86.9%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.5%	2.3%	2.9%	1.9%
NO	98.5%	97.7%	97.1%	98.1%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 44: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – PORTUGAL 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	4.5%	4%	1.4%	3.5%
NO	95.5%	96%	98.6%	96.5%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.4%	2.6%	0.8%	1.1%
NO	98.6%	97.4%	99.2%	98.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 45: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – SWEDEN 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	58.5%	10.1%	2.2%	11.9%
NO	41.5%	89.9%	97.8%	88.1%
Activity in Associations				
YES	6.3%	4%	1%	3%
NO	93.7%	96%	99%	97%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 46: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – FINLAND 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	35.9%	13.8%	3.2%	15.3%
NO	64.1%	86.2%	96.8%	84.7%
Activity in Associations				
YES	8%	6.8%	2.9%	7.1%
NO	92%	93.2%	97.1%	92.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 47: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – IRELAND 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	8.8%	3.8%	3.3%	5%
NO	91.2%	96.2%	96.7%	95%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.1%	2.2%	2.6%	1.2%
NO	98.9%	97.8%	97.4%	98.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1990)

TABLE 48: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – BELGIUM 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	14.4%	5.8%	4.3%	6.7%
NO	85.6%	94.2%	95.7%	93.3%
Activity in Associations				
YES	1.9%	1.6%	2.6%	2%
NO	98.1%	98.4%	97.4%	98%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 49: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – DENMARK 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	49%	6.5%	5%	12.1%
NO	51%	93.5%	95%	87.9%
Activity in Associations				
YES	3.3%	1.9%	2%	2.6%
NO	96.7%	98.1%	98%	97.4%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 50: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – ITALY 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	5.9%	5%	1.6%	3.9%
NO	94.1%	95%	98.4%	96.1%
Activity in Associations				
YES	2.7%	3.5%	1.3%	1.1%
NO	97.3%	96.5%	98.7%	98.9%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 51: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – FRANCE 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	5.2%	2.7%	3.3%	5%
NO	94.8%	97.3%	96.7%	95%
Activity in Associations				
YES	2.4%	1.6%	2.9%	3.1%
NO	97.6%	98.4%	97.1%	96.9%

Source: World Values Survey 1990.

TABLE 52: POLITICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP AND ACTIVITY – SPAIN 1990

Membership	Trade Unions	Political Parties	Community Action	Professional Associations
YES	3.2%	1.8%	1.1%	2.6%
NO	96.8%	98.2%	98.9%	97.4%
Activity in Associations				
YES	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.7%
NO	99.3%	99.3%	99.5%	99.3%

Source: World Values Survey 1990.

TABLE 53: INDCOLL
Index of Collective Level Memberships in Politically Oriented Associations 1990

Number of Memberships	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
0	75.6%	40.5%	50.7%	88%	72.6%	93.9%	86.4%	64.5%	89.1%	93.2%	36%	74.2%
1	18.8%	48.3%	34.5%	9%	22.1%	5.2%	10.9%	26.1%	8.8%	5.3%	47.8%	20.6%
2	4.5%	9.5%	11.1%	2%	4.5%	0.8%	2.4%	8.1%	1.9%	1.3%	13.9%	4.6%
3	0.9%	1.4%	3.4%	0.8%	0.7%	0.1%	0.2%	1.2%	0%	0.3%	2%	0.4%
4	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0%	0%	0.2%	0.2%	0%	0.3%	0.2%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 54: INDCOLL2
Index of Collective Level Unpaid Activity in Politically Oriented Associations 1990

Activity in How Many Associations	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
0	93.2%	92.5%	83.2%	92.5%	93.6%	81.9%	92.7%	93.7%	95.1%	98%	88.7%	95.6%
1	5.6%	5.7%	10.5%	5.5%	5.5%	15.5%	6.1%	4.9%	4.1%	1.6%	8.7%	3.6%
2	0.9%	1.2%	4.8%	1.7%	0.8%	2.4%	1.1%	0.8%	0.8%	0.3%	2.2%	0.7%
3	0.2%	0.5%	1.4%	0.1%	0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.1%
4	0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0%	0%	0%	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 55: SOCIAL POLITICAL CHANGE 1990

Importance of Social/Political Change	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
Import-	33.1%	50%	22.8%	31.2%	22.3%	44.1%	40%	51.7%	34.5%	36.7%	31.4%	39.9%
2	19.4%	8.7%	17.5%	18.6%	18.9%	15.2%	12.4%	13.5%	12.4%	16.8%	12%	16.2%
3	21%	11%	24%	17.7%	23.4%	15.2%	12.6%	13.2%	20.6%	11.9%	25.3%	18.5%
4	14.2%	12.2%	23.4%	15.8%	19.6%	11.7%	14.3%	13.8%	14.9%	13.6%	16.8%	14.9%
Import+	12.3%	18.1%	12.3%	16.7%	15.8%	13.7%	20.8%	7.8%	17.5%	21%	14.6%	10.6%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 56: LIFE SATISFACTION 1990

Life Satisfaction Level	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
Satisfy-	1.2%	1.6%	0.7%	1.4%	0.7%	0.7%	2.2%	0.6%	2%	1%	0.7%	0.9%
2	1.1%	0.5%	0.5%	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1%	0.7%	1.4%	1%	0.2%	0.9%
3	1.7%	1.5%	3.1%	3.1%	3.5%	1.4%	2.7%	1.1%	2.7%	2.2%	1.2%	2.3%
4	2.3%	1.2%	3.8%	4.1%	4.1%	3%	2.9%	1.1%	4.6%	3.2%	2.3%	2.7%
5	7.7%	5.2%	5.9%	17.7%	9.8%	5.6%	8.4%	4.7%	13.2%	12%	6.2%	8.8%
6	8.3%	4.4%	6.9%	13.4%	8.9%	8.2%	12%	7.6%	12.8%	13.4%	5.3%	9.3%
7	16.9%	11.5%	13.7%	18.2%	17.3%	13.8%	17.7%	17.5%	15.6%	20.4%	13.7%	19%
8	27.2%	25.3%	25.5%	21.6%	30.2%	24.8%	24.1%	37%	22%	23.7%	30.1%	25.8%
9	18.3%	20%	27.6%	11.1%	15.1%	17%	13.9%	18%	9.5%	11.2%	19.2%	12.6%
Satisfy+	15.2%	29%	12.3%	8%	9.1%	24.3%	15%	11.8%	16.2%	11.9%	21.1%	17.6%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 57: MAKING CHANGES 1990

Making Changes Position	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
Cautious	11.1%	3.6%	0.5%	12.6%	5.8%	13.1%	6.6%	1.7%	20.8%	10.7%	2%	6.3%
2	5.8%	2.1%	1.7%	6.7%	5.4%	8.7%	4.4%	2.5%	7.2%	8.5%	1.4%	4%
3	9.7%	7.2%	3.1%	9.3%	10.2%	10.7%	5.7%	5.4%	10.2%	13.1%	1.9%	10.2%
4	7.9%	6.3%	1.7%	8.8%	6%	9.7%	6.8%	4.7%	9.4%	11.1%	3.1%	10.1%
5	16.4%	18.2%	4.3%	17.2%	14.4%	16.5%	12.5%	12.1%	18.3%	19.7%	8.8%	17.6%
6	8.3%	14.9%	7.8%	10.8%	8.5%	9.2%	11.6%	13.6%	9%	8.5%	7%	12.2%
7	10.7%	14.5%	14.7%	12.1%	11.6%	10.8%	12.2%	23.1%	6.5%	9.6%	13.2%	12.2%
8	14.4%	19.9%	23.2%	12.4%	17.3%	11.3%	19%	22%	7.2%	9.2%	27.4%	16.9%
9	7%	6.3%	20.1%	4.5%	8.9%	3.9%	8.2%	8.3%	4%	4%	13.2%	4.4%
Bold	8.8%	7.1%	22.8%	5.7%	11.9%	5.9%	13.1%	6.7%	7.4%	5.6%	22%	6.1%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 58: GOVERNMENT MORE OPEN 1990

Government More Open Position	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
Agree+	31.3%	47.7%	41.5%	33.3%	40.2%	46.2%	37.9%	19.8%	46.1%	45.6%	55.6%	43.6%
Agree	54.4%	37.8%	49.3%	51.8%	48.4%	41.9%	48.2%	58%	38.7%	40.1%	35.9%	42.2%
Neither	10.7%	10.4%	7.2%	8.6%	6.7%	7.7%	10.2%	14%	10.2%	11.8%	5.5%	7.3%
Disagree	3.1%	3.2%	1.9%	6%	4.2%	3.4%	3.5%	7.7%	3.4%	2%	2.6%	6.1%
Disagree+	0.4%	0.9%	0%	0.3%	0.6%	0.8%	0.2%	0.5%	1.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.8%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 59: POLITICAL REFORM RAPID 1990

Political Reform Position	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
Agree+	8.8%	20.6%	5.8%	11%	14.1%	4.4%	6.4%	2.9%	10.6%	11.1%	19.9%	7.6%
Agree	24.8%	22.7%	13%	25.3%	28.5%	14.1%	18.1%	13.2%	18.1%	18.3%	26.8%	21.8%
Neither	30.6%	18%	24%	19.1%	19.8%	20.5%	20.5%	20.3%	23.3%	31%	15.8%	25.1%
Disagree	28.5%	25.7%	37.7%	36.6%	29.1%	42.5%	30.9%	56.2%	28.4%	24.3%	22.1%	35.2%
Disagree+	7.3%	13.1%	19.5%	8%	8.5%	18.5%	24.1%	7.3%	19.6%	15.4%	15.4%	10.3%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

TABLE 60: MATERIALIST/POSTMATERIALIST VALUES 1981

Mat-PostMat Scale	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	SP	SWE	UK
Materialists	31%	13.9%	9.3%	NA	23.3%	39.6%	44.9%	24.6%	49%	24.1%	23.3%
Mixed	56.6%	57.9%	60.4%	NA	56.6%	51.4%	45.3%	55.4%	41.2%	63.1%	62.6%
Postmaterialists	12.4%	28.1%	30.3%	NA	20.1%	9%	9.8%	20%	9.8%	12.8%	14.1%

Source: World Values Survey (1981). Data for Portugal not available.

TABLE 61: MATERIALIST/POSTMATERIALIST VALUES 1990

Mat-PostMat Scale	B	DK	FD	FR	WG	IRE	I	N	P	SP	SWE	UK
Materialists	22%	16.1%	5.8%	NA	14.3%	23.5%	24%	10.6%	37.8%	24.4%	14.1%	20%
Mixed	54%	68.3%	65.3%	NA	56.8%	57.2%	51.8%	55.2%	51.4%	54.9%	63.2%	61.3%
Postmaterialists	24%	15.6%	28.9%	NA	28.9%	19.3%	24.2%	34.1%	10.8%	20.8%	22.7%	18.7%

Source: World Values Survey (1990).

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