

The Economic Role of Government and the EU and Turnout in European Elections

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Abstract: Accounting for variation, especially decline, in European voter turnout has drawn considerable recent scholarly attention. Most studies stress either the role of individuals' traits and attitudes and/or the impact of political parties and institutional factors as the key variables. Our paper brings an added dimension by asking whether changes in the size of national government and the EU, as well as their perceived roles in the economic order, also affect voter turnout in European Parliament elections. We employ a series of multivariate models analyzing aggregate data from Eurobarometer and OECD sources. Compulsory voting, as logic may suggest and as others have found, is the single most potent predictor of turnout. But other variables—socio-demographic, economic, attitudinal and institutional--also matter for turnout in European Parliament elections.

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Introduction

The 1999 European Parliament elections provide another opportunity to analyze several aspects of European electoral behavior and European Union (EU) politics. Will these elections continue to be marked by low turnout or will they attract greater voter participation? Has the growing importance of the European Parliament (EP) in the life of the EU led it to be perceived as more important by the citizens of EU member states? If so, will this be associated with greater turnout? Will the parties contesting the elections be more inclined than heretofore to campaign on European policy issues, or continue to stress domestic themes, especially treating the EP elections as referenda on the national government of the day?

Obviously, most of these questions cannot be answered until the votes are in and opinion polls analyzed. But past EP election results and analyses of them provide a number of benchmarks for measuring change. A review of past results and earlier studies tells us what has been fruitful in previous research and should be continued in the analyses to be done for 1999, and beyond. However, such a review done with an eye on changes in the importance of the EP, and changes in the general context of EU politics, can point to new analytical perspectives.

We bring an added dimension to the previous analytical traditions by asking whether changes in the size of national governments and the EU, and their perceived roles in the economic order have had an impact on voter turnout. Over the course of four EP elections the trend in the national government's share of GDP has been upward for most member states, despite some decline in some countries since 1989 (Goldsmith 1995). The EU's share of GDP, although still modest, also has increased since 1979. From a rational expectations perspective one may argue that where national government's size (as % of

GDP) has grown, voters may conclude that more is at stake in legislative elections than formerly and therefore be more likely to vote. In addition, where the EU's economic impact is growing (or perceived to be important from either a national benefit or cost perspective) turnout in EP elections may be expected to increase, or be higher than in countries where these conditions are not present. To test these propositions we employ a series of multi variate models analyzing aggregate data drawn from Eurobarometer and OECD sources.¹ The variables include several economic indicators and attitudes toward the EU as well as the social background and institutional factors other analysts have deemed relevant to the explanation of turnout in EP elections.

Literature Review

The general subject of voter turnout has attracted the interest of political scientists for many years. A massive literature of individual country studies has been produced. Much of it is American, sparked by the desire to explain why so many U.S. citizens do not vote (for recent examples, see Miller and Shanks 1996, Teixeira 1992, Timpone 1998). But almost all national and sub-national election studies pay some attention to turnout (see van der Eijk and Franklin 1996). Individual country studies have been complemented by growing body of works comparing turnout in national elections (Crepaz 1990; Flickinger and Studlar 1992; Jackman 1987; Powell 1986; Jackman and Miller 1995; Wattenberg 1998; Blais and Dobrzynska 1998). Analysts have discovered that phenomena believed to be unique from the perspective of individual country studies are sometimes part of a transnational pattern or trend, such as recent evidence of turnout decline--sometimes interpreted as a symptom of growing civic malaise (Borg 1995; Lijphart 1997; Putnam 1995a, 1995b).

The direct elections for the European Parliament beginning in 1979 offered both a new domain for the study of turnout and the opportunity for controlled comparison. The generally low but widely

varying levels of turnout in these elections compared to national ones pose additional puzzles, but there is more variance to explain than often is the case in national elections. As such, these elections offer new opportunities to test old propositions about turnout as well as to develop new ones. Considerable attention has already been given to the study of European Parliament elections (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Blumler and Fox 1982; Reif 1984; Mackie and Craig 1980; 1985; Mackie 1991, Niedermayer 1991; Schmitt and Mannheimer 1991; Cayrol 1991; Brauholtz and Atkinson 1996; Guyomarch 1995; Smith 1995; 1996; van der Eijk and Franklin 1996; McLean et al. 1997; Marsh 1998) .

Most studies have stressed either the role of individuals' socioeconomic traits (education, sex, age, income, location), attitudes (general political interest, party identification, sense of civic responsibility) and political behavior (organizational membership, discussion of politics) or the impact of institutional factors (the mechanics of the electoral system, changes in electoral systems, patterns of party competition, form of government, date of election). The individual and institutional approaches to explaining turnout are sometimes linked to create instrumental explanatory factors, e.g., different groups of voters' perceptions of the importance of a particular election. The instrumental approach is especially important in the ongoing discussion of Euro elections as "second order"; that is elections ostensibly about EU affairs but really about national politics (Reif and Schmitt 1980; Reif 1997; van der Eyck and Franklin 1996; Marsh 1998, Franklin 1999) . Instrumental and institutional explanations have received greater attention in recent literature compared to individual factors because, as Franklin (1996: 218) observes, "turnout varies much more from country to country than it does between individuals" (see also Anderson 1998a).

In terms of topics, one can divide the relevant research into general cross-national democratic turnout studies, cross-national studies of European national elections, studies of European elections, and single-country studies. We shall give most attention to the first three categories.

Among recent single-country studies, Miller, and Shanks (1996) emphasize generational differences, stemming from socialization experiences, as the key to understanding turnout in the United States since the 1950s. In another analysis of U.S. turnout, Timpone (1998) demonstrates the importance of analytically separating the decision to register and the decision to vote, which standard models do not do (see also Rhine 1995). He finds that the single most important factor in bringing registrants to the polls is perceived candidate differential. Parry *et al.*'s study (1992) of Great Britain shows that those who participate believe that they often learn about politics, especially if they are also interested in politics and discuss it. Denver and Hands (1997) employ social structure and electoral context variables to account for differences in turnout among parliamentary constituencies in the 1997 British general election.

As more data have become available, there have been an increasing number of cross-national studies of democratic turnout. The pioneers in this effort, Powell (1986) and Jackman (1987) argued that institutional and contextual factors such as compulsory voting, registration laws, the linkage of political parties to social groups through electoral systems, nationally competitive districts, seats/votes disproportionality, multipartyism and unicameralism were most important. Blais and Carty (1990) update Jackman's study, arguing that proportional representation electoral systems are a more important positive factor than the competitiveness of the party system, which Jackman favored (see also Katz 1997). Jackman, and Miller (1995) investigate turnout rates in 22 industrial democracies in the 1980s to evaluate two broad arguments about turnout differences, one emphasizing long-term cultural and

historical forces, the other the role of institutions and electoral attributes. They conclude: “Rather than reflecting cultural norms, levels of voter turnout are a function of institutional and electoral procedures”(484). Franklin (1996), in a broad cross national survey comparing individual vs. institutional effects on turnout, shows the latter are much more important. Most recently, Blais and Dobrzynska (1998) in an analysis of turnout in 324 national lower house elections, 1972-1995, find that three blocs of factors affect turnout: socioeconomic environment, institutions and party systems. A study by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (1997) agrees that institutions and party systems matter but finds little evidence socioeconomic factors do. On the subject of party systems, Wattenberg (1998) identifies a number of factors that have weakened parties’ abilities to mobilize voters; he argues that this weakening leads to declining turnout (see also Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

Among European countries specifically, several turnout studies also have been done. Although there is considerable indication that turnout has declined for various elections, including European Parliament ones, over the past two decades (Flickinger and Studlar 1992; Borg 1995, Wattenberg 1998), Topf (1995b) argues that turnout has been remarkably stable from the late 1940s to the late 1980s. Furthermore, he contends that such changes in turnout as have occurred are due to demographic changes. For instance, his data show a sharp decline in voting by the less well educated in 1992.² More generally, Topf (1995a) argues that age, gender and educational differences are declining as influences on political participation. More and more people are participating in some forms of political action (although not necessarily voting).

In another comparative study of European national elections, but only one election in each country, Crepaz (1990) argues that institutional explanations of turnout must be coupled with variables such as the number and type of parties, especially the growing presence of “post-materialist” parties. He

finds the degree of party polarization (Castles and Mair 1984) and compulsory voting, the only institutional factors he considers, are not significant predictors when employed in a multivariate model with the number and type of parties also as predictors. Curiously, he does not employ the type of electoral system as a predictor variable. Anderson (1998a) provides useful indices of proportionality and fragmentation of party systems, but he also finds the strongest individual effect on turnout is participation in political discussion.

Borg (1995) looks at the impact of post-materialism and increasing secularization on turnout in national and Euro elections, using turnout data for the first three EP elections. This study finds that post-materialism has virtually no impact while secularization does, but it varies by country. Post-materialism does show somewhat greater impact on turnout in Euro elections in 1989 than in 1979, based on the hypothesis that the more internationally minded post-materialists would be more likely than materialists to vote in Euro elections.

In comparing the 1979 and 1989 European election campaigns, Cayrol (1991) finds that media were more inclined to treat Euro elections as second order in 1989, but attention to the 1989 campaign was somewhat less “sexist” and biased toward the “socially advantaged” than the 1979 campaign. Brauholtz and Atkinson (1996) use Market and Opinion Research International (MORI) exit poll data from a survey of London in 1994 to examine the characteristics and motivations of voters. They were older, better educated, and more pro-European than the overall population. Seventy percent of voters saw the campaign as being about the record of the national government rather than Europe despite a Conservative party effort to focus the campaign on Europe, thus supporting the second order elections argument.

Marsh (1998) finds that Euro elections are of increasing relevance for national politics, especially in those countries where national elections lead to regular alterations in governing parties. He sees little evidence that EU considerations *per se* are a significant factor in party choice at EP elections, similar to McLean *et al.* (1997:18), who say “Like other analysts, we find little evidence that European issues affected turnout or vote in the European elections.” Among these analysts are Schmitt and Mannheimer (1991), who, in a multivariate analysis, find that “habitual voting” (see also van der Eijk and Franklin 1996) is a better explanation of turnout than interest in, knowledge of or attitudes toward the EC. Their analysis, however, does not include institutional or national contextual factors.

Niedermayer (1991) maintains that turnout in European Parliament elections is to some extent determined by the intensity of inter-party competition during the campaign. However, Smith (1996) concludes that, with the exception of Denmark, parties have avoided European issues in EP campaigns either because they want to concentrate on domestic matters (2nd order elections) or because they fear internal divisions. Furthermore, EU issues tend to cut across parties rather than reinforce the traditional lines of party competition (Niedermayer 1991.)

Van der Eijk and Franklin (1996) in a wide-ranging analysis of the 1989 and 1994 European Parliament elections find systemic and contextual determinants of participation in European elections more important than individual level determinants. Among the former are compulsory voting, Sunday voting, proportionality of the party system and the relationship between the national election cycle and the timing of European elections (see also Guyomarch 1995). Among individual level determinants, the most important is general political interest but political orientation and finding an appealing party are more important than socio-demographic variables. Finally, using a Eurobarometer from 1990, Anderson

(1998b) finds that the relationship between economic factors and support for European integration is likely to be mediated by domestic political attitudes, especially satisfaction with democracy in the respondent's country and support for the party/coalition governing the country. Although Anderson is not concerned with electoral turnout in this work, it suggests that economic variables may have an indirect rather than a direct impact on turnout.³

As the preceding survey attests, a multitude of variables has been found to matter in the explanation of turnout. But there is considerable disagreement and few cases where anything approaching the entire range of potentially important variables has been considered. Van der Eijk and Franklin (1996) employ the most comprehensive approach in their analysis of the 1989 and 1994 European elections.

What we attempt here is an analysis of the potential impact of many of the variables identified in the existing literature and to do so by considering them for each of the four EP elections, as well as for all the elections combined. We are looking not only for the impact of variables in a particular election, but equally with changes in their relative impact over time.

Models

We test four models drawn from the previous discussion of relevant literature. The models respectively are: socio-edemographic background conditions, economic conditions, political attitudes, and institutional factors. Our models encompass the four major explanations of aggregate voting turnout--attitudinal, institutional, social, and economic.⁴ They also offer some opportunity to assess the relative importance of national (second order) and European Union based explanations of turnout. Each model includes a limited number of variables in order to preclude statistically overwhelming the modest number of cases in our data base. Within each model a good case can be made for other variables. Some

were not included because we lacked appropriate data, but each we do use is justified by the work of one or more of the scholars cited above. Bivariate correlation tests were used to exclude other potential variables that were too closely related to those in our models. In every instance, the variables are expressed in aggregate terms. The dependent variable, turnout, is measured as the proportion of the registered electorate who appeared at the polls.⁵ We expect economic conditions to be more important than previously thought, but that political structure factors will dominate the overall analysis.

Each model is described briefly here.⁶ Model I (socio-demographic background conditions) includes education level, gross domestic product per capita, the proportion of the population living in large urban areas, and the proportion of the work force employed in agriculture. Higher education and affluence often have been linked to higher turnout levels, while large urban areas have been associated with lower turnout (Font and Viros 1995). The proportion of the work force employed in agriculture may suggest a less developed country and hence lower turnout, but recall that agriculture has been the most developed and expensive area of EU policy. European farmers appear to understand that Brussels matters; this may work to increase turnout.

Model II (economic factors) includes national government's share of GDP, the impact of the EU budget, trade as a proportion of GDP, and the unemployment rate in the run-up to the EP elections. A high spending national government's programs arguably touch more people thus encouraging voter participation. Citizens in trade-dependent economies may also have greater reason for paying attention to EU matters; as would citizens in countries, which are either major beneficiaries of or major contributors to the EU budget. Unemployment rates may well be the single most sensitive economic indicator for most citizens, and as numerous studies have shown economic perceptions are an important influence on political behavior.

Model III (general political and European attitudes) encompasses satisfaction with democracy (national), closeness to a political party, awareness of the European Parliament, and perception of whether the EU is a good thing. Anderson (1998a, 1998b) recently has shown that democratic satisfaction is strongly associated with support for the EU. We assume that EU supporters also are more likely to vote in EP elections. Similar reasoning attaches to perceiving the EU as a good thing and being aware of the EP. Persons close to a political party are assumed to be more likely to participate in political processes (including elections) than those who are not.

Model IV (political structure factors) includes compulsory voting, hosting a major EU institution, a country's length of EU membership, an election cycle measure of the time between the European Parliament election and the next national election, and the number of political parties per country.⁷ Hosting a major institution, i.e., Commission, Parliament and Court of Justice, creates the possibility of greater EU awareness as does long standing membership. Compulsory voting and the election cycle provide different kinds of incentives to participate. The former does so because of the potential sanction attached to non-voters, the latter because the nearer before a national election an EP election occurs, the greater the incentives for parties to mobilize their supporters. A larger number of effective political parties presumably mean that a voter is more often able to find one to her liking and, therefore, be more likely to vote (Crepaz 1990).

Causal Ordering and Statistical Analysis

The four major explanations of aggregate voting turnout---attitudinal, institutional, social, and economic--will be tested through the entry of blocks of variables in a regression decomposition technique. This is a decomposition of effects in path analysis (see Alwin and Hauser 1975, for a general review of the method and Studlar *et al.* 1998 for an application). By undertaking a series of regression

equations in which each of our models is entered sequentially and their effects in terms of changes in the coefficients for other variables are observed, an assessment of the relative contribution of each set of variables can be made. However, as in all regression models, the causal ordering of the various explanatory factors requires careful consideration because the method can be sensitive to the order in which the variables are entered. As the most causally distant variables, the characteristics which men and women acquire early in life, the various socio-demographic characteristics were entered simultaneously as one block. This was done because we wanted to estimate the overall influence of these characteristics in terms of their impact on turnout. Second, economic factors (Model II) are entered because they are a part of the general environment. Attitudinal characteristics were entered into the regressions next because these are orientations, which are acquired later in life and are more susceptible to change. Finally, we include institutional factors because these are the factors, in the case of compulsory voting and the election cycle, that immediately shape the voting act. Length of membership and hosting a major EU institution cannot be so considered, but during an EP election campaign they are an ongoing reminder of the EU's existence.

Data Analysis

Our initial approach to constructing each model examined the bivariate correlation coefficients between each of the predictors in a model and turnout in each European election beginning with 1979. The next step was to regress all the independent variables in a model on turnout.⁸ Although we have too many predictor variables to employ causal ordering in each election, we do use a fully-fledged decomposition model using data for the four elections combined.

(Table 1 about here)

Table 1 allows us to see readily the relative potency of each of the models and their overall relationship to turnout in EP elections. Neither Model I nor any of its components achieves significance for turnout in the four EP elections taken together. Model II approaches statistical significance. One of its components, whether a country is a net beneficiary of the EU budget, is significantly related to turnout. Two other economic indicators, the importance of trade and government in a country's GDP, approach significance. Note that the inclusion of the economic variables has raised the proportion of the work force employed in agriculture to statistical significance.

Model III achieves statistical significance at the .05 level. Among attitudes, added in Model III, only satisfaction with democracy emerges as significant. Work force in agriculture and EU budget beneficiary retain significance and are now joined by the GDP/trade indicator.

The addition of institutional factors in Model IV changes the picture substantially, as compulsory voting becomes the factor most strongly associated with turnout. Democratic satisfaction slips out of significance. The work force in agriculture variable disappears as do GDP/trade and budget beneficiary. Two other institutional factors approach significance, election cycle and EU host status.

Because the influence of compulsory voting overwhelms other variables in the combined model, we decided to test our models again excluding the compulsory voting variable. As expected, the coefficients for Models I-III show little change. In the case of Model IV, the model itself again

(Table 2 about here)

achieves statistical significance, albeit with a lower R-squared. But this time four individual variables achieve significance: share of the work force in agriculture, election cycle, hosting an EU institution, and the number of political parties. Three others--budget beneficiary, length of country's membership in the EU, and whether the EU is perceived to be a good thing--approach significance. These seven include all

four of the institutional factors in the model and one each from the socioeconomic background, economic and attitudinal models.

A second approach to controlling for the effects of compulsory voting was to exclude the compulsory voting countries from the analysis (as well as the compulsory voting variable) from Model IV. When this is done a very different picture emerges. Economic and attitudinal variables move to the fore in Model III. Unemployment rate and trade's share of GDP achieve significance. Contrary to what we expected, however, the sign for trade's share of GDP is negative rather than positive, indicating that the increasing importance of trade (and indirectly of the EU because of its role in trade policy) has not been associated with increased turnout in most countries.

(Table 3 about here)

The results clearly differ from the first two analyses. As before, Models I and II have no significant relationships. But now neither does Model IV. When the compulsory voting countries are not present, none of the other institutional factors are significant, and the power that Model IV exhibited in the first two analyses disappears. Model III, on the other hand, achieves its greatest importance. Not only is the overall model significant, five of its components are significantly related to turnout at the .05 level and two others approach significance. The significant variables include two attitudinal variables (satisfaction with democracy and the perception that uniting Europe is a good thing), two economic variables (trade and unemployment), and one socio-demographic indicator (the proportion of the population living in urban areas). Those approaching significance include a socio-demographic indicator (agworker) and an attitudinal one (awareness of the EP). Being satisfied with democracy in one's own country and perceiving European unification as good are traits possessed by EP voters as are living in a country with higher than average unemployment. As in our second analysis, trade as a share of GDP is

inversely related to national turnout levels. The greatest surprise in this analysis is the positive relationship between living in urban areas and turnout. The literature led us to expect an inverse relationship. But our result may be due to measurement error because our indicator was the proportion of the population living in the largest one-third of communities. This may not be sufficiently sensitive to capture the effects of living in Europe's largest cities.

All three analyses appear to do a reasonably satisfactory job of explaining variations in turnout when all four EP elections are pooled, but has the importance of variables in the models changed over time? The answer is difficult to determine because the number of cases per election (10 or 12) is insufficient to permit tests of the full model. When each component is tested separately, the institutional factors model emerges as the most robust. It achieves significance in the 1994 election while none of the others do for any election. Only compulsory vote emerges as a significant individual factor, then only in 1989 and 1994.

Discussion

As we anticipated, institutional factors have emerged as important, leading the pack in two of our three analyses. In the first analysis, this is due primarily to the power of the compulsory voting variable. Yet its power may be simply a reflection of the general decline in turnout in European elections. Some have argued that turnout decline has been a function of the addition of new members, but of the "original six" three had compulsory voting while only one of the six newer members (Greece) does so.⁹ On the evidence of their first EP elections, the most recent tranche of members--Austria, Finland and Sweden—may continue the pattern of newer members having lower turnouts. Closer analysis of turnout over the course of all the EP elections indicates a variety of national patterns. As expected, the countries with compulsory voting have held steady (though in Italy, a marginal case of compulsory voting, turnout

(Table 4 about here)

has declined). Three, Denmark, Ireland and the Netherlands, have experienced volatility but no clear trend. Four others, France, Germany, Portugal and Spain have declined. Only Britain has shown some increase in turnout, admittedly small. These varied national patterns indicate that we may have profited from including country dummies in our analysis. A preliminary look at this, excluding the compulsory voting countries, finds country dummies significant for the four largest countries, but not for the smaller four.

Whether turnout decline will be reversed in 1999 remains an important question. The fact that a smaller proportion of members will have compulsory voting suggests that it may. Eurobarometer 49 (spring 1998) found that seventy-three percent of those surveyed planned to vote in June 1999, a figure very comparable to those found by “election eve” Eurobarometers past.

Another important question is whether EP elections will remain primarily “second order” elections. The factors we have found to be significantly related to turnout point in different directions. The election cycle variable and democratic satisfaction support the primacy of national concerns. Yet recall that satisfaction with democracy has been found to be associated with greater propensity to vote in EP elections (Anderson 1998a, 1998b). The EU host variable along with the near significance of length of EU membership, being an EU budget beneficiary and having a positive attitude toward European integration suggest that turnout could be based increasingly on European concerns. Eurobarometer 49 found that a majority of citizens in one country (the Netherlands) claimed they would cast their 1999 EP vote primarily on the basis of European criteria; substantial minorities in several other countries made this claim. Only a careful analysis of future trends in these variables and in their relationship to turnout will permit a definitive judgement of whether the second order quality of EP elections persists.

What of economic factors, which we expected might play a growing role? The limitations of our data precluded us from a careful analysis of over time change in the importance of different types of variables. The only economic factor to approach significance in Model IV was being an EU budget beneficiary (this in the second analysis when the compulsory voting variable had been removed.) However, when all the variables in all three analyses are considered, economic variables achieve significance more often than those in any of the three models do. They are notably present in Model III in the analysis of the eight countries, which do not have compulsory voting. If one considers that the share of the workforce in agriculture may well have an economic component, the case for giving greater attention to economic variables in future analyses is even stronger. Furthermore, the size of the workforce in agriculture may well be an EU rather than second order component accounting for turnout given the EU's primacy in agricultural policy.

Although we have not solved the riddle of accounting for variations in turnout in EU elections, we have learned that several of the factors thought to help explain turnout do not matter here, e.g., education and GDP per capita. But institutions do not carry the day either. Most economic and some attitudinal variables contribute to our understanding of turnout in European Parliament elections.

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Table 1: Regression of Turnout in European Elections with Selected Predictors

Predictor	Model I			Model II			Model III			Model IV		
	<i>b</i>	s.e.b.	T=	<i>b</i>	s.e.b.	T=	<i>b</i>	s.e.b.	T=	<i>b</i>	s.e.b.	T=
(Constant)	74.789	59.979	1.247	14.090	56.616	.249	-1.459	62.824	-.023	16.901	44.759	.378
AGWORKER	.531	.651	.815	1.783	.674	2.645*	1.885	.620	3.039*	-.282	.594	-.475
EDLEVEL	-1.217	3.703	-.329	-.833	3.998	.208	3.428	3.184	1.077	-1.918	2.791	-.687
GDPGAP	-3.4E-04	.001	-.315	-6.8E-04	.001	-.732	-6.275E-04	.001	-1.72	-5.1E-04	-.001	-.587
POPURBAN	.147	.443	.333	.244	.448	.545	.152	.409	.372	.390	.261	1.497
UNEMPLOYRATE				-.877	.805	-1.089	-1.099	.885	-1.241	.812	.669	
NETBENEFICIARY				-21.005	9.697	-2.166*	-19.846	8.849	-2.243*	3.718	7.606	.489
GDPTRADE				.393	.197	1.994	.470	.222	2.114*	-.191	.172	-1.110
GOVTGDP				1.053	.639	1.648	.326	.680	.480	6.368E-03	.416	.015
PARTYCLOSE							.500	.432	1.156	.275	.304	.904
DEMSATIS							-.553	.252	2.120*	.437	.221	1.979
EUGOOD							.123	.243	.506	.256	.195	1.313
EPAWARE							.304	.312	.973	6.488E-02	.196	.331
ELECCYCLE										-.228	.128	-1.778
EUHOST										14.291	6.844	2.088
N of PARTIES										2.176	1.450	1.500
MEMLONG										-.108	.509	-.213
COMPVOTE										28.446	10.912	2.607*
Adjusted R Square		.053			.258			.405			.843	
S.E.E.		19.851			16.668			14.923			7.663	
F statistic		.657			.052			.023*			.000***	
N=		46			46			46			46	

SOURCES: Eurobarometer Cumulative File, Eurobarometer 41, annual editions of *The OECD in Figures* and Mackie (1991), Mackie and Craig (1980, 1985) and Smith (1995). Key: *p=.05 **p=.01 ***p=.001

Table 2: Regression of Turnout in European Parliament Elections with Selected Predictors*

Predictor	Model I			Model II			Model III			Model IV		
	b	s.e.b.	T=	b	s.e.b.	T=	b	s.e.b.	T=	b	s.e.b.	T=
(Constant)	68.122	59.053	1.154	3.308	57.540	.057	-1.590	61.182	-.026	10.658	48.460	.220
AGWORKER	.649	.631	1.029	1.935	.683	2.835**	1.890	.597	3.165**	.986	.391	2.524*
EDLEVEL	-.847	3.653	-.232	-6.8E-02	3.653	-.017	.523	3.517	.149	-2.541	2.834	-.865
GDPGAP	-1.81E-04	.001	-.173	-4.4E-04	.001	-.473	6.441E-04	.001	.647	4.105E-04	.001	.458
POPURBAN	9.107E-02	.434	.210	9.115E-02	.447	.204	.147	.384	.382	.440	.296	1.483
UNEMPLOYRATE				-.698	.816	-.856	-1.100	.863	-1.275	-.262	.589	-.445
NETBENEFICIARY				-21.861	9.919	-2.204*	-19.844	8.626	-2.301*	-10.567	6.038	-1.750
GDPTRADE				.333	.197	1.686	.470	.216	2.174*	.103	.147	.702
GOVTGDP				1.071	.655	1.636	.321	.655	1.636	.319	.419	.763
PARTYCLOSE							.506	.401	1.261	.513	.326	1.576
DEMSATIS							-.539	.219	-2.458*	5.855E-02	.189	.309
EUGOOD							.121	.235	.517	.420	.210	2.003
EPAWARE							.305	.304	1.003	.140	.212	.658
ELECCYCLE										-.371	.132	-2.811*
N of PARTIES										4.126	1.294	3.189**
EUHOST										18.601	6.766	2.749
MEMLONG										-.939	.448	-2.096
Adjusted R Square		-.054			.210			.427			.793	
S.E.E.		19.730			17.081			14.546			8.745	
F statistic		.592			2.064			2.989*			8.660***	
N=		46			46			46			46	

*Analysis excludes compulsory voting. SOURCES: Same as Table 1. Key: *p=.05 **p=.01 ***p=.001

Table 3: Regression of Turnout in European Parliament Elections with Selected Predictors*

Predictor	Model I			Model II			Model III			Model IV		
	b	s.e.b.	T=	b	s.e.b.	T=	b	s.e.b.	T=	b	s.e.b.	T=
(Constant)	7.501	43.557	.172	4.679	53.488	.087	-85.167	52.757	-1.614	59.825	109.730	.545
AGWORKER	.679	.708	.944	1.281	1.040	1.231	1.767	.815	2.167	1.613	.901	1.790
EDLEVEL	1.669	2.715	.626	1.370	3.550	.386	3.428	3.184	1.077	-4.178	6.835	-.611
GDPGAP	-4.1E-05	.001	-.060	1.113E-04	.001	.145	-1.6E-03	.001	-1.713	-8.1E-04	-.608	-.608
POPURBAN	.260	.261	.998	.260	.334	.779	.674	.295	2.284*	.212	.406	.523
UNEMPLOYRATE				-.441	.700	-.629	1.232	.500	2.467*	1.058	.792	1.336
NETBENEFICIARY				1.064	9.635	.110	5.709	5.914	.965	8.343	8.707	.958
GDPTRADE				-.231	.209	-1.106	-1.089	.195	-5.592***	-.654	.372	-1.755
GOVTGDP				.284	.565	.503	.493	.397	1.244	.195	.474	.411
PARTYCLOSE							9.588E-02	.488	.196	.974	.771	1.263
DEMSATIS							.934	.379	2.461*	.386	.555	.695
EUGOOD							.576	.120	4.787***	.222	.239	.930
EPAWARE							-.430	.200	-.553	-.348	.256	-1.361
ELECCYCLE										-.227	.141	-1.610
EUHOST										10.159	15.399	.660
N of PARTIES										1.616	3.325	.486
MEMLONG										.327	.482	.679
Adjusted R Square			-.090			-.241			.661			.660
S.E.E.			10.723			11.442			5.980			5.987
F statistic			.568			.491			4.414*			3.551
N=			30			30			30			30

*Excludes countries with compulsory voting.

SOURCES: Same as Table 1.

Key: *p=.05 **p=.01 ***p=.001

Table 4: Turnout in European Parliament Elections

Country	1979	1984	1989	1994	Mean Turnout
Belgium	91.4	92.2	90.7	90.6	91.2
Denmark	47.8	52.2	47.4	52.9	50.1
France	60.7	56.7	48.8	52.7	54.7
Germany	65.7	56.8	62.3	50.0	58.7
Britain	32.2	31.8	36.6	36.1	34.2
Greece	78.6	77.2	80.1	71.2	76.8
Ireland	63.6	47.6	68.3	44.0	55.9
Italy	84.9	83.4	81.4	74.8	81.1
Luxembourg	88.9	87.0	96.2	86.6	89.7
Netherlands	58.1	50.6	47.5	35.6	48.0
Portugal		72.4	51.2	35.7	53.1
Spain		68.9	54.7	59.5	61.0
Mean by Year	67.2	64.7	63.8	57.5	63.1

Sources: Mackie (1991), Mackie and Craig (1980; 1985) and Smith (1995).

Endnotes

1. Some analysts doubt that aggregate analyses have any value, claiming that aggregates are but the product of many individual decisions (Lane and Ersson 1990); we have some sympathy with this view. However, a number of variables of theoretical interest are not readily available as individual level data. We believe that aggregate data analysis, despite its limitations, can yield fruitful insights and point the way for future individual level analyses.
2. But this may be due to the fact that the 1992 data were drawn from a Eurobarometer rather than a national election study.
3. Also relevant here is Huseby's (1995) argument that "size of government, *per se*, matters less [for democratic satisfaction] than whether or not people perceive government to be effective" (p. 118).
4. We considered breaking a mobilization model out of its usual location in the attitudinal and institutional patterns of explanation on the ground that the variables included are more proximate to the election than the other elements of the standard attitudinal and institutional models. However, we rejected this in favor of achieving greater comparability with other studies.
5. This method of measuring turnout has its flaws owing to differences in registration practices among countries and to variations in the age of the electoral registers. An alternative approach to measuring turnout as a percentage of the voting age population is one that we plan to employ in a second version of this analysis.
6. Most economic and social indicators are drawn from relevant annual editions of *The OECD in Figures*. Attitudes toward politics and the EU were taken from the Eurobarometer Cumulative File and from Eurobarometer 41. Indicators for education and urbanization also were based on Eurobarometer data. Detailed description of each model's components is available from the authors.
7. Our measure of number of political parties is the number which won seats in the EP election. Even though this measure is based on the outcomes it indicates the effective range of choices presented to voters. The information is drawn from Mackie and Craig (1980, 1985), Mackie (1991) and Smith (1996).
8. Given the modest size of our data set and the rather expansive combined model, we expected--and found--evidence of collinearity among some of our variables (Cohen and Cohen, 1983). The three most evident cases are election cycle, number of parties and closeness to a political party. However, a logical argument can be mounted for why these three are related, e.g., the nearer a national election to a European election, the more people may begin to think about parties and the choices available to them. This reasoning is compatible with the "second order" elections argument.
9. Rules differ for each compulsory voting case. In the Greek case voters living away from their place of registration are not expected to appear.