The Political Consequences of Low Youth Participation in Contemporary Democracies

by

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Abstract

Previous studies on political participation have provided unambiguous evidence that citizen involvement in established democracies is unequal. Non-voters are found to be mainly the poor, those coming from minority groups, the less educated, and younger members of the electorate (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978, 1995; Gallego, 2007). If the structure of active participants is systematically biased towards certain political groups, the allocation of power can also be biased. Unequal participation can lead to unequal influences. This dissertation provides an empirical test of this proposition and asks whether inequalities in political representation follow from inequalities in political participation?

To answer this question I have focused on the group of citizens whose rates of participation are evidently unequal, but whose relationship to politics has not only spurred academic attention, but has also received a central spot on the political and media agendas in the majority of established democracies: young people. The study of the consequences of young people's unequal participation in the decision-making process is a perfect litmus test of the status of political equality in contemporary democracies. In addition, following the normative accounts of political representation, I focus on two components of representation and analyze the impact of young peoples participatory inequalities on their policy preference and interest representation.

The empirical analysis points to several important findings. In the light of the growing concern over young people's politics, the most important finding of this dissertation is that

age bias in turnout does not have negative consequences on the policy and interest representation of age groups. In fact, young people are on average closer to their representatives than adults, and the parties they support represent their views as much as the views of other age groups. In other words, young people's disengagement from politics does not have immediate consequences for their political representation.

I argue that it is possible that the effects of youth turnout bias on policy representation are not present, partly because unequal non-electoral participation works in favor of the policy representation of the young and partly because parties try to respond to inequalities in turnout by increasing their policy appeal to the young. However, while we should not be concerned about young people's policy representation, their interest representation is evidently unequal, and further studies are necessary to ascertain what kinds of factors create such inequalities in political outcomes.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"Unequal participation spells unequal influence - a major dilemma for representative democracy in which the democratic responsiveness of elected officials depends on citizen participation" (Lijphart 1997:1).

Every day we put some part of our lives in the hands of other people. We send our children to schools to be taught by teachers; we allow doctors to make decisions about our health; or we plan our weekends based on weather channel reports. We do this because we often lack the skills, time, or desire to handle these activities or gather the necessary information ourselves. For the very same reasons we put parts of our prospective lives in the hands of politicians through democratic elections. This relationship is the foundation of the system of representative democracy. It is most narrowly understood as a means of selecting those who have the ability to lead by those who cannot do it themselves (Manin, 1997, 161-183).

Political representation, therefore, in its nature combines elements of both democratic and non-democratic decision-making procedures. This imperfect match is also the fundamental problem with representative democracies, as it always includes a constant struggle between the competitive democratic and representative features (Urbinati and Warren, 2008). So, although we often comprehend representation as the fundamental feature of

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democracy, it is the representative feature that establishes the "distance between the rulers and the rule" (Fuchs et al., 1995, 2) and the democratic feature that tries to narrow this gap.

This is why citizen democratic involvement is a crucial component of modern democracies and democracy cannot function without it (Verba, 2003). Democratic political participation should also be normatively and very generally understood as the equal opportunity of every individual, who can potentially be affected by a decision, to influence the decision in question. These arguments hold true even if we are advocating the vision of bare electoral democracy because even a minimalist conception of democracy asserts that every citizen has an equal right to participate and to be heard in the competitive struggle for the allocation of power (Schumpeter, 1942). Because, even if rights enable individuals to participate, if that is their choice, the mere existence of rights does not guarantee that individuals will actually participate.

Citizens might decide to abstain from voting willingly, but if there are exogenous conditions that prevent them from voting, such as lack of knowledge, resources or institutional opportunities (Verba et al., 1995, e.g.), political equality might be in jeopardy. If the structure of active participants is systematically biased towards certain political groups, the allocation of power can also be biased. If some groups of citizens have a greater say in the selection of politicians than others, than the gap between citizens and political elites might become even greater. Unequal participation can lead to unequal influences, which transfers political inequalities into other facets of democratic representation, thus creating a vicious cycle of inequalities, widening the inequality gap further (Lijphart, 1997). These are the reasons why political equality in participation is at the forefront of studies on the quality of representative democracies, and political involvement in particular. From all the possible types of inequality that characterize modern day democracies, "political inequality is one of the most significant and troubling" (Verba, 2003, 663).

It is clear that the goal of perfect equality cannot be achieved and it is likely that even if it were achieved it could have some negative consequences for the democratic process (Verba, 2003). It is also evident that there are differences between those who decide to participate in politics and those who willingly choose not to. However, not every difference is recurrent across many elections, some that are (e.g. the attribution of less significance to elections) may themselves be a relatively innocent product of differences in participation itself, and only a few of them are likely to be systematically related to different political preferences.

Moreover, inequality in participation is an aggregate concept (Gallego, 2007). The demographic and socio-economic characteristics on an individual level can only influence the propensity of an individual to participate or not, but we cannot say that he/she is unequal. But if we know that the same characteristics influence many individuals' decision to participate, then we can talk about unequal participation. This is especially the case when a personal characteristic consistently influences participation over time and space and makes the otherwise under-privileged also less likely to exercise political influence via democratic channels. It should also be mentioned here that not only the under-represented groups suffer from unequal participation. Since elections are decision making procedure that have an impact on collective outcomes, 'the victims' of unequal turnout will be all those, irrespective of their personal characteristics, who share the same preferences as under-represented citizens since the expression of the preferences will be biased towards those who are numerically more present (Toka, 2003).

These are the reasons why this dissertation raises the following question: Do inequalities in political representation follow from inequalities in political participation? Namely, if we assume that the electoral process and political participation in general, as the pillars of democracy, have a positive impact on political equality and reduce the gap between citizens and representatives, then that impact should be assessed empirically. Moreover, return-

ing to the normative principles of representative democracies, if participatory inequalities have an impact on the group differences in representation, then the balance between the democratic and representative features is not well established. Thus, at the more abstract level, this project aims to analyse political equality as a dimension of democracy, which many deem the most important one, and that deserves our full attention in times of rising inequalities (e.g. Dahl, 2006; Verba, 2003).

1.1   Scope of the Study: Focus on Young Adults

Numerous empirical studies have already shown that citizens across representative democracies are withdrawing from the formal mechanisms of participation and that they are increasingly dissatisfied with the way politicians perform their representative roles (see Crozier et al., 1975; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Nye et al., 1997; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Torcal and Montero, 2006; Norris, 2011). This dissatisfaction is usually pointed towards political parties who are more often seen as self-interested, biased towards specific groups, or generally ineffective, rather than accountable to their supporters (Webb, 2005). These symptoms alone indicate that the link between citizen involvement and proper representation is a precarious one.

However, one group of citizens stands out in particular: young adults. Decline in youth turnout rates (e.g. Sloam, 2007, 2012, 2013; Henn et al., 2005), significant drops in party membership (e.g. van Biezen et al., 2012; van Biezen and Poguntke, 2012) and weak partisan ties between the youngest generations and parties (Anderson and Just, 2012; Dalton and Weldon, 2007) have raised concerns about the future of representative democracies (Gidengil et al., 2004; Franklin, 2004; Wattenberg, 2003; Fieldhouse et al., 2007) and have motivated a very large body of scholars to study young people's politics as a window into the future. Studies about political participation are at the forefront of this

research agenda with the task of answering the big question: what are the causes of this transformation?

Two dominant explanations are the life-cycle and generational approach. From the life-cycle perspective "as people grow older, in short, they accumulate information, skills, and attachments that aid them to overcome the cost of political participation" and therefore trends in the youth's disconnection with politics should be considered a short term effect that will not leave permanent imprints on the youngest cohorts (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993, 137). The generational approach, on the other hand, sees these trends as symptoms of a more permanent crisis. Anti-party sentiments and a lack of engagement might become a permanent cohort characteristic and eventually lead to the erosion of support for the political regime itself (Kestilä-Kekkonen, 2009).

Closely related to the generational approach, there is also an explanation provided by Franklin (2004) who suggests that changes in turnout levels often come as a consequence of generational replacement, when a new voter cohort turns out at a different rate than the previous one. If this explanation is a valid one, then the observed age differences in turnout can be merely an artifact of the period effects which leave a permanent 'footprint' on the participation habits for particular cohorts (Franklin, 2004).

Lastly, a more recent and perhaps more optimistic strand of research does not see the youth's lack of conventional engagement necessarily as a symptom of a democratic disease. They maintain that the young are finding other ways to convey their political views. Alternative forms of engagement combined with a different, broader understanding of what politics is, can become a safe haven for critical and detached citizens-in-the-making. This approach draws on the works of (Inglehart, 1977, 1997) and Dalton (Dalton, 1984, 1996), but it is has been controversial because the empirical evidence does not always support the claim that youth rates of non-conventional participation are as high as the theory anticipates (Henn et al., 2005; Garcia Albacete, 2014).

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Recent evidence from European democracies shows that not only is youth electoral participation spiraling down at a much faster rate than with any other social group, but what is even more worrying youth electoral engagement is also systematically unequal compared to the levels of participation among adults (Gallego, 2007, 2009, 2015; Sloam, 2013; Armingeon and Schädel, 2015). If the voices of young adults are distinct from the voices of the electoral majority and their rates of electoral participation are significantly lower than the rates for other age groups, we may expect a disproportionate response from elected officials. Lijphart's oft-cited statement best summarizes this assumption, whereby "unequal participation spells unequal influence" (Lijphart, 1997, 1). Young people do have a lower propensity to participate in politics and it is possible that participatory inequalities have a spillover effect into the formal political process. The results of which can be greater age based differences in political representation, thus creating a vicious cycle of inequalities (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1995, e.g.).

While the aforementioned explanations on young people's participation might also shed some light on the observed inequalities, they cannot say much about the consequences of unequal rates of participation or about the positive trends towards increased youth engagement in alternative, new forms of participation. If we set aside the assumption that involvement in politics is an "intrinsic value for the quality of life" (Sen and Drèze, 2002, 359) and that it can have positive psychological effects on individuals' subjective well-being (Weitz-Shapiro and Winters, 2011), the first and foremost role of participation is its link to representation and policy outcomes. While many studies on youth participation agree with this and argue that we should be concerned with the ramifications of the negative trends in young people's involvement because they "can (and have) often been ignored, victimized or even vilified by politicians and policy-makers" (Sloam, 2013, 857), there is still no empirical evidence that can support this claim. This is why age based inequalities in participation are perfect to study the connection between participation and representation,

and the reason why this dissertation focuses on the consequences and not on the sources of age-based inequality patterns.

Furthermore, young people's position in representative democracies, and especially European democracies, deserves additional attention for several reasons. First, widespread massive trends in the population's aging imply that the demographic weights of young adults are getting smaller all over Europe. Because of the low levels of fertility rates and increased longevity of Europe's population, median age in the electorate is rising and the voices of young adults will, even under the conditions of full participation, make less and less difference for political outcomes. These demographic changes are so rapid and widespread that some authors even maintain that an intergenerational conflict is inevitable (Kohli, 2005, 518). Moreover, studies on preferences towards redistribution and the welfare state already argue that the degree of preference stratification by age is so high that we can even start talking about the formation of a age based political cleavage (Matheson and Wearing, 1999; Gelissen, 2000; Svallfors, 2004; Fraile and Ferrer, 2005; Busemeyer et al., 2009).

Secondly, there is already convincing evidence that politicians worldwide give greater priority to the interests of elderly citizens than young people. Bertelsmann Stiftung has recently published a pilot study on intergenerational justice in OECD countries and has found that in the majority of countries policy outcomes with respect to child poverty, levels of public debt per child, ecological footprints and public spending are biased towards older generations (Schraad-Tischler and Azahaf, 2013). Also, even in the aftermath of the global economic crisis in Europe, there is evidence that young people are the hardest hit by austerity measures, more likely to be affected by the current decline in wages, they are most vulnerable to layoffs, and they are least protected by increases in social transfers (ILO, 2013; Sloam, 2013). These findings confirm the general concern in the welfare literature, whereby the 'greying welfare state' caters disproportionally to the needs of elderly citizens and thus neglects the investments in future-oriented policies such as education, environment

or sustainable pension reforms (Busemeyer et al., 2009, e.g.).

Finally, inequalities in political participation, mostly dominated by differences in age, education, gender, income and race (Barnes and Kaase, 1979; Parry et al., 1992; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978, 1995; Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980) have been mainly observed in the United States. It was believed for a long time that socio-economic position does not have a great impact on inequalities in electoral participation in Europe (Verba et al., 1978; Gray and Caul, 2000). Some studies suggest that this was mainly due to the successful mobilization strategies of trade unions and mass party organizations towards the lower classes (Gray and Caul, 2000). However, several recent studies have provided strong evidence that participatory inequalities are on the rise in European democracies (Gallego, 2007, 2009, 2015; Sloam, 2013; Schafer, 2012), especially the ones related to age and education (Gallego, 2007; Sloam, 2013). Since the research on participatory inequalities is still rather scarce in Europe, and research on the consequences of unequal participation even more so, this study will focus on age based participatory inequalities and its possible spillover effects on political representation in European countries.

1.2 Two Components of Representation

Since this inquiry is about the consequences of participatory input on processes of political representation, it is necessary to clarify what will be considered as good representation. The concept of representation adopted here is what Pitkin referred to as "substantive acting for others" representation that requires "a relative equivalence between the representative and the represented, so that the latter could conceivably have acted for himself instead" (Pitkin, 1972, 140). In practical terms, this implies that that a representative should both act in the manner in which her constituents expect her to act, and sometimes the

representative should ignore her constituents and base her action solely on her independent judgement. This means that representation includes two poles, adding up to a paradoxical requirement: the represented should be "simultaneously both present and not present" (Pitkin, 1972, 9).

This fundamental paradox, already visible in the mandate-independence controversy that precedes Pitkin's work, is basically a confrontation between expressed preferences and genuine interests. The traditional account of political representation, to which Disch (2011) refers to as the 'bedrock for social choice', is the common-sense notion that representatives should represent the preferences expressed by their constituents. Moreover, it is also closely connected to classical, mid-range understandings of democratic representation, wherein representative democracy is defined as "continuing responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens" (Dahl, 1971, 1). The second understanding of what representation entails relates to the view that representatives should represent constituents' interests. This is probably most visible in the oft-cited summary definition of representation, where Pitkin argues that "representing here means acting in the interest of the represented . . ." (Pitkin, 1972, 209).

Empirical research into political representation is dominated by the first approach to representation, where good representation is mostly defined as the fit "between the preferences of citizens and the committed policy positions of their representatives" (Powell, 2008, 2). But as we see from the normative debates, conceptualizing substantive representation in terms of ideological or policy congruence is just one way of approaching the problem. If we ignore that there is such a thing as interest representation not captured by measures of the correspondence of public preferences with campaign commitments or legislative behaviour, the current results of empirical studies on representation might be systematically biased.

Moreover, this standard, bedrock account of preference representation, often implies

that preferences are static and fixed at the election time. Normative theorists, in particular Disch (2011) and Mansbridge (2003), agree that the representative process is dynamic and interactive and it is unrealistic to conceive preferences as given and unchangeable. Disch argues that we should adapt our concepts of preferences to new empirical research that shows that individuals form strong and relatively stable preferences "not in spite of but by means of messages that political elites deploy in pursuit of unavowed competitive goals" (Disch, 2011, 101). Mansbridge also draws from empirical research to support her claim that representation is constitutive as legislators not only respond to constituents' preferences, but are also very active in "creating them" (Mansbridge, 2003, 518). If we focus our assessments of good representation only on the representation of expressed preferences, there is no way to determine whether the constituent's will is indeed logically prior to the will of the representative.

However, preference and interest representation should be closely related. In an ideal democracy, representatives would have fewer problems in anticipating citizens' fundamental needs and acting on behalf of those needs if the elections could successfully aggregate public preferences. After all, elections are the main vehicle for the aggregation of preferences in democracies and if they do not help generate closer correspondence in preferences between citizens and politicians, other, causally posterior linkages, might also fail. If the preferences and interests of an individual coincide, the difference between preferences and interests is irrelevant. However, if preferences and interests diverge, then the representative institutions have to be evaluated on both dimensions.

1.3 Unequal Participation and Political Representation

If the voices of some already disadvantaged groups in society are not heard in the decision making process, then the results will be biased against those groups. This assumption is quite common in the literature, as can be seen from the popular statement by Lijphart: "... low and unequal voting turnout should be a serious concern ... who votes and who doesn't, has important consequences for who gets elected and for the content of policies" (Lijphart, 1997, 4). However, we actually know very little about the way in which decision makers receive participatory messages, and even less about the circumstances under which these messages or 'voices' actually make a difference.

Existing empirical research offers several useful roadmaps, most notably research by Griffin and Newman (2005). They suggest that there are three possible mechanisms that might explain why parties would react differently to voters and nonvoters. The first explanation, which they call *the selection hypothesis*, is based on the similarity between the voters and their preferred parties. The authors argue that if voters actually elect "like-minded" candidates, the quality of representation of all citizens will depend greatly on whether there are indeed significant differences in political opinions, preferences or desires between those who participate and those who abstain (Griffin and Newman, 2005, 1207). We know from previous studies that this is not always the case (Bennett and Resnick, 1990; Highton and Wolfinger, 2001; Teixeira, 1992; Verba et al., 1995, e.g.), however Griffin and Newman (2005) do find that there are significant differences between voters and non-voters.

The second explanation, *the re-election hypothesis*, is that parties are more likely to have an "eye towards their constituency" and during election campaigns will be more likely to respond to the preference shifts of their supporters, or electoral sub-constituencies that

are composed of the affluent, educated and more involved citizens (Griffin and Newman, 2005, 1208). If young people do not participate and are not likely party supporters, parties might intentionally ignore their preferences and play it on the safe side. And lastly, *the communication hypothesis*, maintains that affluent citizens with higher levels of education and political involvement will also have easier access to their representatives and representatives should be more likely to respond to this group of opinion leaders. Empirical studies on dynamic representation in the United States (Erikson et al., 2002; Stimson et al., 1995; Bartels, 2005; Gilens, 2005, 2012, e.g.), and recently in European countries (Adams and Ezrow, 2009), offer convincing evidence to support this expectation.

Also, there are several studies that show that the representation regarding political outputs is also affected by differential rates of electoral participation (Hill and Leighley, 1992; Hill et al., 1995; Martin, 2003; Gallego, 2015). Hill and Leighley (1992) have analyzed the link between class bias in the active electorate and the generosity of welfare spending policies and have determined that if lower class citizens do not participate in elections, policies that favor their economic interests are less likely to be implemented. In a later study, Hill et al. (1995) test the same hypothesis on cross-sectional and time-series data and find additional support for their argument. Moreover, in a more recent study, Campbell (2003) analyses the rise in the turnout rates of senior citizens and shows how their higher political activity has influenced the implementation of the Social Security and Medicare programs, which have in turn empowered the elderly to actively defend the policy *status quo* at the expense of those citizens with a lower income status.

1.4 Dissertation Outline

Given these theoretical arguments, the prior empirical evidence on the possible consequences of participatory inequalities, and the precarious political position of young people,

the second chapter asks whether youth detachment from voting and an increased engagement in less conventional non-electoral participation has consequences on their policy preference representation. Speaking in empirical terms, I first test whether the relationship between age and ideological congruence changes as a function of inequality in turnout and inequality in non-electoral participation.

Contrary to the main expectations, I first find that young people are in fact ideologically closer to their parliaments than older respondents, and secondly, and more importantly, that the policy representation of young adults is not weaker in countries where turnout inequalities are more pronounced. However, since the analysis also shows that young people tend to be more ideologically moderate than adults, which could signal a form of cognitive non-response, additional empirical tests are conducted before I can safely conclude that young people are in fact in a good position regarding their policy representation. Also, additional analysis was conducted to test whether the results stand when ideological congruence is replaced with congruence on specific policy issues. Results from supplemental analyses offer strong support for the initial conclusions.

Since it is equally rational for politicians to engage with those groups who systematically do not participate in elections, if they need their future votes to gain parliamentary, or even governmental seats, the third chapter tests whether parties might actually anticipate youth preferences even though they do not participate enough, and possibly because their levels of participation are so low. Results support this expectation, as empirical tests show that parties appeal to young people when age-based inequalities in turnout are pronounced. Confirmation of this relationship offers indirect evidence that the change in the party supply and targeted mobilization strategies might act as a pre-emptive corrective arm to youth turnout stratification.

Chapter 3 will show that parties emphasise New Politics issues when youth turnout inequalities are especially high, and it is very likely that those parties are small, niche

parties. However, we do not really know whether niche parties can also effectively mobilize young people and, aside from mainly speculative assessments on weak youth-party linkages based on indicators of young people's engagement in traditional forms of participation, we do not know much about the differences in voter-party representation among age groups. This is why the analysis in the fourth chapter moves a step further and asks which type of parties mobilize young people and how do those parties perform their representative roles. Results show that the parties' abilities to perform functions of mobilization and representation towards citizens differ both at the levels of individual parties and across age groups. However, overall results also indicate that young people are not worse-off in terms of voter-party linkages compared to their older counterparts.

The last chapter tests whether there are age-based inequalities in interest representation and whether unequal participation has an effect on age differences in interest representation. Analysis confirms the presence of age-based inequalities in interest representation at the expense of youngest generations. However, in terms of the impact of turnout inequalities the results tell the same story: differential rates of young people's participation compared to adults do not have an impact on interest representation. The lack of significant findings on the spill-over effects of turnout inequalities implies that those inequalities are neither enhancing nor ameliorating inequalities in interest representation, which is a good thing given the warnings on the consequences of youth disengagement from their representation. However, the second finding points to a different conclusion. While young people's increased engagement in non-electoral participation does enhance youth equality in ideological congruence, as found in the second chapter, it does not have an impact on the representation of anticipated demands towards political outcomes. Moreover, the last chapter also shows that there is a strong positive relationship between policy representation and interest representation and that age differences in interest representation are partly generated by differential policy representation.

In the Conclusion I discuss these findings in detail and provide an assessment of the implications of this study. Moreover, I identify the main setbacks and possible limitations of the research design and discuss several venues for future research.

Chapter 2

Unequal Participation And Policy Preference Representation

2.1 Introduction

The last two decades have seen a dramatic change in voter turnout, party membership, and other conventional forms of political engagement among citizens in developed democracies. One group stands out in particular: young adults. Abundant research on youth participation tries to quantify the importance of a range of individual and country-level factors for the decline in youth participation whilst trying to answer the big question: what are the causes of this transformation? Explanations range from youth participation trends seen as an expression of generational apathy in conventional participation (Sloam, 2007; Henn et al., 2002, 2005) an indicator of the wider crisis of democratic legitimacy across democratic systems (Gidengil et al., 2004; Franklin, 2004; Wattenberg, 2003; Fieldhouse et al., 2007) to a not necessarily negative but a transformative shift from institutional to non-institutional engagement patterns as a sign of 'democratic maturity' (Norris, 1999; Henn et al., 2002, 2005; O'Toole et al., 2003; Phelps, 2004).

Nevertheless, these explanations do not shed any light on the question of how well

the young are represented within the domain of old politics regarding their detachment from traditional anchors to politics" (Phelps, 2012, 284). Regardless of whether we isolate the sources of youth apathy, democratic maturity, or participatory inequality, political engagement has one main purpose: it is a precondition to a functioning representative democracy. Participation is a key mechanism by means of which young people can convey their interests and preferences to policy makers, and thus the study of their disengagement from 'real' politics should also focus on the consequences of trends in political participation.

Moreover, not only do we see youth electoral participation spiralling down at a much faster rate than with any other social group, but what is even more worrying youth electoral engagement is also systematically unequal when compared to the levels of participation of adults (e.g. Gallego, 2007; Sloam, 2013). This second concern regarding youth electoral participation has not received much attention (Franklin, 2004; Blais, 2000; Lijphart, 1997) and it is crucial because low turnout would not be problematic if all social groups participate at an equal rate. Many theorists argue that higher turnout does not imply a higher quality of democracy (Schumpeter, 1942; Verba, 2003). If overall turnout rates are low, but members of each politically relevant group are equally active, then they have the same chances to be heard by decision-makers. [1]

However, if the voices of young adults are distinct from the voices of the electoral majority and their rates of electoral participation are significantly lower than the rates for other age groups, we may expect a disproportionate response from elected officials.

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[1]Verba and Nie (1972) provide the only definition at least to my knowledge of political relevance in scientific literature. They define politically relevant group characteristics as those "whose visibility to a public official might make a difference in their responses to citizen participation' (Verba et al., 1995, 170). When pinpointing a threshold for deciding on the saliency of a certain characteristic, Verba and Nie (1972) suggest that a group characteristic need to be pertinent to political conflict, with the group delimited by that characteristic clearly distinguishable from all other groups. It is also relevant for group members to share similar attitudes on a specific issue (group homogeneity) and for the distribution of their preferences to differ from the distribution of preferences of the general electorate.

If youth electoral marginalization is especially high, then we should test to what extent such a bias affects their proximity to their representatives in parliaments. Also, if there is a structural shift among the youth towards non-institutional forms of engagement, we should test whether these trends actually contribute to a better political representation. These are the questions to be addressed in this chapter.

2.2 Theory and Expectations

Why should we worry about the generational bias in turnout? The answer is simple: because of the ideal of political equality, whose prerequisite is for the concerns of all citizens to be taken into consideration in the political process. This implies that political elites should not have a privileged stance towards any particular group of citizens. However, legal formalization of the principle of political equality in democratic constitutions does not prevent inequalities in opportunity. Although all citizens have equal rights to participation, the actual opportunities to participate are not equally distributed (Dahl, 1989). An individual's political equality might be impaired when he or she does not have the opportunity to exert influence in the same fashion as other citizens.

In practice, access to participation is often constrained by unequal social distribution of politically relevant resources and, as a result, some citizens are more likely to participate than others. Survey research consistently demonstrates that citizens who turn out on any given Election Day are not representative of the electorate. Non-voters are found to be mainly the poor, those coming from minority groups, the less educated, as well as and younger members of the electorate (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978, 1995; Gallego, 2007). Such groups do not participate at the same rate as other, as they do not have equal time, skills, or resources to do so, or because they are not mobilized by political organizations to the same extent.

This persistent trend in the United States and its recent feature in European countries could be treated as a standard consequence of democratic practices in cases when silent citizens choose not to participate in politics of their own free will, irrespective of resources available to them. But inequalities in turnout may become problematic in view of the possible consequences of those actions for the subsequent representative process. It is, of course, idealistic to expect that those who participate will be perfectly representative of the whole electorate; however, when inequalities from one stage of the process are consistently transferred onto the next one, the principle of political equality cannot be upheld. Normative theory and findings on turnout-based inequalities lead us to consider the role of political participation in purely instrumental termsas a means to achieve different ends. Greater citizen involvement should serve to increase the quality of governmental outputs (in terms of specific policies) and outcomes (in terms of direct policy output results). As Rehfeld aptly formulates it "voting is not the meaning of democracy, it is its central mechanism" (Rehfeld, 2005, 29).

Although unequal participation, especially in terms of turnout, might have direct effects on democratic legitimacy, election results, or spill-over to other forms of democratic engagement, I will focus here on the impact of youth turnout bias on the first stage of substantive political representation policy preference representation (Pitkin, 1972; Powell, 2014; Miller, 1999; Gilens, 2012). In the empirical literature, this concept closely matches 'ideological congruence' (Blais, 2006; Golder and Stramski, 2010; Powell and Vanberg, 2000; Powell, 2004, 2009, 2013) or - simply - 'correspondence'(Rehfeld, 2009).

Citizens make their electoral choices based on promises received during election campaigns and elections serve as a vehicle for the conversion of mass preferences into the compositions of legislatures. Therefore, the main subversion of promissory representation is bound to occur during elections. If youth preferences were to differ from preferences of older age groups and they were therefore less likely to participate in elections, age based

turnout bias should then have a direct effect on the quality of youth policy preference representation. This dimension of representation is best described as a "fit between the preferences of the citizens and the committed policy positions of their representatives" (Powell, 2013, 9).

The representation of young adults might be influenced by youth inactivity in electoral politics through several mechanisms. Firstly, during election campaigns, parties are more likely to adapt to the preference shifts of their supporters and vice versa (Adams and Ezrow, 2009). In fact, election polls calculate the chances of electoral success based on likely voters and parties keep an "eye toward their constituency" (Griffin and Newman, 2005, 1208), which does not include those who do not participate. As Lijphart argues: "...low and unequal voting turnout should be a serious concern ...who votes and who doesn't, has important consequences for who gets elected and for the content of policies" (Lijphart, 1997, 4). This problem is self-reinforcing since those who are perceived as left out from party programs might have even less motivation to participate than those who are targeted in campaign platforms. The result of this may be a political system systematically biased towards active citizens and, consequently, grossly illegitimate in the eyes of those who do not participate.

Moreover, citizens who are affluent, highly educated and politically involved, will have more opportunities to establish direct communication with their representatives. Representatives are, in turn, likely to respond to messages from this narrow group of opinion leaders (Adams and Ezrow, 2009; Gilens, 2012). Also, new research by Rohrschneider and Whitefield (2012) shows that parties today face the 'strain of representing' the views of increasingly diverse groups of citizens and simply lack the proper mechanisms for good representation. This is true especially if young adults have strong preferences only on infrequently salient issues, such as campaigns for sustainable development, sexuality, environment, or students' rights (Banaji, 2008). What is more, Kimberlee (2002) provides

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evidence that young people, even when affiliated with mainstream political parties, often feel marginalized compared to adult members of society. Parties often base their priorities on the interests of older voters and are reluctant to reach out to younger citizens (Mycock and Tonge, 2012, 138). This is why I expect youth turnout bias to have a subversive effect on the youth policy preference representation.

H1 (*the Inequality in Electoral Participation*): The policy preference representation of young adults is expected to be weaker in countries where age-based turnout inequalities are bigger.

Although younger citizens are not highly likely to vote, join political parties, or contact their elected officials, this does not mean that they are tuning out of all types of political engagement. A number of studies suggest that their rates of participation in non-conventional activities such as protests, product boycotts, and various modes of online participation are rising (Dalton, 2008; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 2002). Furthermore, while vote and party membership both provide a direct link between citizens and political elites, non-electoral forms of participation, such as protest or organizational membership might also sometimes be an equally efficient vehicle of citizen pressure, if not an even more efficient one.

Electoral representation has its functional limitations mainly because elections do not provide very clear information about what policies citizens prefer. By relying on information cues, representatives have to guess what voters want them to do, and citizens are usually exposed to information only on those issues salient for political parties themselves. Electoral institutions often cannot provide a decent means of deliberation on emerging issues. This is especially problematic in terms of representation of younger citizens, since younger citizens often lack the skills and experience necessary for acquiring the information by themselves and political mobilization is crucial for their engagement. If formal politics is not effective in meeting youth interests and it does not provide a relevant locus for the

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expression of youth preferences, we should also aim to understand the link between various modes of non-electoral participation and representation. As a matter of fact, as Hill et al. (1995) have noted, non-electoral forms of engagement are probably "most likely to have a direct influence on government officials" than voting (Hill et al., 1995, 196). Non-electoral participation hence serves not only as a developmental tool for the socialization of good citizens, but also has a strategic function via its potential to influence those in power (Warren and Castiglione, 2004).

Such potential of non-electoral participation will depend on the structure of active participants. If protest activities, associational membership, or product boycott is not equally distributed across age categories (or, in fact, across social categories), non-electoral engagement might fortify unequal distribution of voices in the public sphere (see Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1995). However, recent research suggests that non-institutional forms of engagement might be beneficial for younger citizens, but they are often dominated by the affluent youth (Marien et al., 2010), so the question remains whether these forms of participation do have an equalizing effect on overall youth representation. I expect that:

H2 (*the Inequality in Non-electoral Participation*): The policy preference representation of young adults is expected to be stronger in countries where age-based non-electoral participatory inequalities are lower and where the young are more likely to engage in non-electoral participation than adults.

Also, several authors have suggested that increased participation in non-electoral activities can serve as a successful mobilizing tool for younger citizens and, more importantly, it can act as a counterbalance to age inequalities in turnout (Marien et al., 2010; Norris, 2002). It is possible for the consequences of turnout-based inequalities among young adults to have only a minor impact on their policy representation if this group manages to voice their concerns through alternative forms of political involvement. After all, most of the research on participation emphasizes the benefits of the expansion of opportunities to be

politically engaged on the quality of democracy. Therefore, I will also test whether the impact of youth turnout inequalities on policy representation is less pronounced in countries in which young adults participate more in alternative forms of citizen involvement.

H3 (*the Participation Counterbalance*): The effect of turnout bias on policy preference representation is expected to decline in magnitude in those countries where young adults engage in non-electoral participation frequently. Consequently, this effect is expected to be significant only when inequality in electoral participation is more pronounced.

2.3 Concepts, Measures and Preliminary Analysis

Before broaching upon analytical steps, it is necessary to clarify the operational choices behind the concept of political representation. Studies of political representation are most clearly distinguished if one differentiates among the following: (a) who is being represented (constituents, all citizens, social groups, etc.); (b) who the representing party is (representative, party, movement, agency, etc.); and (c) what is being represented (preferences or interest). Contrary to what most empirical studies on representation do, this analysis will not undertake to focus on formal electoral constituencies, entire electorates, eligible voters or even on party supporters, but on comparing the quality of policy representation between younger citizens and other age groups.

The second decision, on the carriers of the act of representation, implies the choice among either individual members of legislature, political parties in legislature, or legislature taken as a collective agent. In European countries, parties are the main agents of representation and the dominant approach in analysing representation is the oft-cited party representation model. However, empirical studies of party representation focus either on the congruence between parties and party supporters (Klingemann et al., 1994) and put emphasis on representation through partisanship, or they analyse the congruence between

the median voter and all parties. These methods are not appropriate here since the main question of the analysis revolves around the problem of non-participation and it would in this respect be illogical to assess the link between young people who do not vote and the parties of their preference (provided they have any party preference in the first place).

What then is the alternative? Weissberg argued early on that there exists a large tradition of normative work that views representation "in terms of institutions collectively representing people" (Weissberg, 1978, 535). Collective representation is the idea that all legislators collectively, no matter which district they had been elected from, should represent the broadly conceptualized nation-wide constituency. This view captures the Burkean understanding of representation of public interests by trustees in which the purpose of the entire legislature was to represent the interest of all people. The collective representation model does not assume that only voters should be represented, nor does it assume that high-quality representation revolves around the close match between voters and their parties of choice; it is actually built on the idea that diverse parties represent diverse groups in society. When assessing youth representation, I will therefore look at how closely the positions of all parliamentary parties represent the positions of younger citizens compared to other age groups.

As mentioned earlier, representation is conceptualized here as the representation of existing (and inevitably somewhat inarticulate) citizen demands regarding which policies to follow i.e., as policy preference representation. Empirically, preference representation is measured by comparing survey-extracted measures of respondents' positions toward specific policy statements, more general issue domains, and the left-right self-placement of individual respondents with equivalent positions of representatives. Analytical choice falls on the last option, ideological congruence, as the congruence in the left-right placement of individuals and parliaments taken as collective institutions.

This popular approach has several benefits, but shortcomings as well. Social choice

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theorists argue that if there is a single dimension on which preferences are ordered, their aggregation can generate information on meaningful outcomes (Riker, 1982; Powell, 2014). Since the left-right dimension is not only frequently used in public discourses and by politicians, but citizens are also very familiar with its connotations and often use the Left and Right labels to navigate complex political space (Dalton et al., 2011), ideological congruence is the most common choice in comparative empirical studies of representation. Some also argue that left-right placement is so valuable in empirical research because of its inclusiveness; it is a "simple structure" that can "summarize the political positions of voters and other political actors" (Dalton et al., 2011, 85). Besides, it is an oversimplification of the multidimensional issue space, but an oversimplification that can only lead to a more "conservative estimate of the actual working of the party linkage in electoral politics" (Dalton et al., 2011, 86).

However, a number of studies have argued that self-placement on the left-right scale is not a meaningful indicator of political ideologies mainly because parts of the public do not or cannot organize their orientations based on an abstract ideological continuum (Converse, 1964; Klingemann, 1979). But this argument sets too high expectations for the attitude structures in the public that do not necessarily have to be realized for substantive policy representation to occur. It is not necessary for the public to have an in-depth understanding of ideological concepts to comprehend politics (see more in Dalton et al., 2011). Citizens can use the left-right continuum as a framework that serves as a general reference point without the need to understand each policy in detail (Fuchs et al., 1995; Dalton, 2008). Moreover, Dalton et al. (2011) have also found striking similarities between the citizens' perceptions of party positions and expert assessments.

Previous research also warns us that while left-right ideology certainly has a 'common base', given relevant socio-economic divisions in Europe (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012, 86), placements of respondents cannot be reliably comparable across contexts. How-

ever, this is not problematic for measures of ideological congruence and policy correspondence, as the focus of the analysis falls on whether and how the within-country congruence between citizens and representatives varies across age groups. Moreover, in the context of this research topic, flexibility of the left-right content is not a disadvantage, but rather an advantage since left-right placement should likely correspond to most salient and relevant issues in a given party system, regardless of the specific national context (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). The most important considerations should be evaluated first in order to assess the levels of representation.

The dataset used in the present analysis is the European Election Study (henceforward EES) (van Egmond et al., 2013) from 2009, conducted in 27 countries. It is supplemented with country-level data on parties' policy positions from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (henceforward CHES) (Hooghe et al., 2010).[2] Ideological congruence, a dependent variable, is calculated by taking the absolute value of the mean ideological self-placement of each respondent from the weighted mean position of parties in parliament, extracted from the CHES. The measure is then recoded so the high values indicate high levels of agreement and low values low congruence. Both individual and party placements are measured on the same 11-point scale. The mean position for each national parliament on the left-right dimension is calculated by taking into consideration the number of seats each party received in parliamentary elections closest to the survey year (Döring and Manow, 2012).

Age groups in political science are usually delimited quite arbitrarily, but since there is

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[2]There are various options for calculating party positions: manifesto data from the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), expert surveys like the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES), and party position estimates from individual respondents in surveys. I will use the CHES data from 2010 because it was collected at the same time as the EES, from which I will calculate youth ideological positions. Besides, the CHES data covers all countries included in the European Election Survey 2009. Dalton et al. (2011) recently compared citizens' placement of parties with the CMP data, expert evaluations from the CHES, and even elite evaluations (where members of national parliaments were interviewed). He found striking similarities between public perceptions, expert judgments, and elite placements.

a strong link between age and political participation, one needs to be systematic in selecting appropriate age limits (see Grasso, 2014; Garcia Albacete, 2014). Young adulthood is a phase of transition between childhood and adulthood. There is a rather broad consensus about which events should be regarded as 'demographic markers' of the transition to adulthood: forming a partnership, leaving the parental home, completing school, entering the labour market and having the first child (Garcia Albacete, 2014, 81). The lower limit is usually set given the available data, in this case to 18 years. 29 years, as the upper limit for youth in this analysis, is the rounded average age for two transition markers for 27 countries in EES for which data was available. Since the median age of leaving the parental home varies extensively across EU countries due to large differences between Western countries and South and East European countries (Breen and Buchmann, 2002), average age at first marriage and average age at first childbirth were taken as upper group boundaries.[3]

Several studies suggest that differences in socioeconomic and demographic characteristics among voters and non-voters do not imply differences in preferences (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). Young adults do not necessarily have systematically and grossly different preferences with respect to other age groups over a wide range of issues at stake in political competition (Rhodebeck, 1993). If preferences of young adults do not differ from the preferences of the electoral majority, there should be no concern about the quality of youth representation. This is why an initial examination of differences in average ideological positions between young adults and other age groups is plotted in Figure 2.1.

In 18 countries there are no significant differences in ideological positions between age groups. However, age differences are clearly present in the rest of the countries and young adults have higher levels of the within-group cohesion with smaller standard deviations on

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[3]Information is collected from the following sources: EU Labour Force Survey, EUROSTAT and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe datasets.

left-right self-placement. Younger respondents also tend to lean more towards the left side of the spectrum in Southern and Western countries, except in post-communist countries where age differences are much less pronounced, but the young tend to be placed more on the right side. However, in terms of measuring ideological congruence, the direction of the difference between age groups is less relevant.
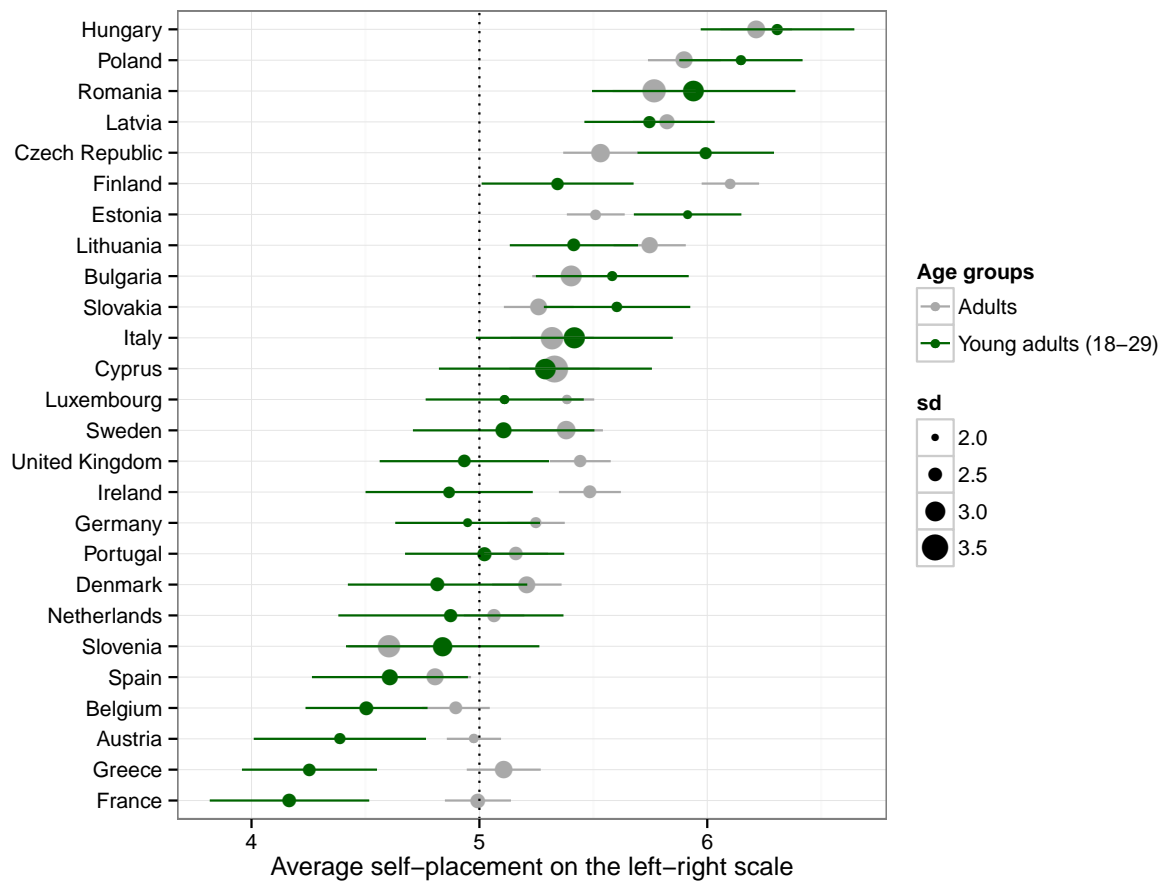
Figure 2.1: Average ideological self-placement of young compared to adults. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each mean estimate.

Turnout bias of young adults compared with those of adults is measured by the coefficient of inequality in electoral participation (PIE). The coefficient is estimated only for young people as a logistic regression coefficient, calculated separately for each country. The logistic form was chosen given the dichotomous nature of the variable vote. This

dependent variable is regressed on age coded 1 if the respondents belong to the group of young people and coded 0 in all other cases. The model also controlled for education because of recent findings on turnout inequality patterns that also indicate a strong presence of education-based gaps in participation (Gallego, 2015). The coefficient of inequality in electoral participation (PIE) gives us information on the likelihood of young people voting relative to all other age groups. Negative values indicate that young people are less likely to vote compared to older respondents and the size of the estimates shows how large this difference is. Figure 2.2 plots the distribution of PIE across countries in EES. The figure shows that turnout inequality across age groups exists in nearly all analysed countries and the young nearly always participate at a lower rate than older cohorts, although the size of this difference varies. Non-significant estimates are found in only five countries, so it can firmly be concluded that young people are significantly under-represented among the voting population in all of the cases.

Figure 2.2: Youth inequality in electoral participation (PIE). Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

Survey-based measures of voting are problematic because a large share of non-voters does not report accurate responses and because actual voters are overrepresented among survey respondents (e.g. Belli et al., 1999; Martinez, 2003; McDonald, 2003; Selb and Munzert, 2013). Selection and inaccuracy bias can have serious consequences on the empirical results based on survey data. For instance, they can dramatically overestimate the differences between voters and non-voters which can be crucial for studies on political participation and representation such as this one (Ansolabehere and Hersh, 2012). However, current research is still silent on possible solutions to this problem and there is not much than can be done to alleviate the errors in empirical models that might stem from these

biases other than acknowledge that they might occur.

Also, it should be noted that some studies suggest that the same characteristics that affect voting are also related to over-reporting (Hill and Hurley, 1984; Karp and Brockington, 2005; Silver et al., 1986; Kritzinger et al., 2012). But when it comes to the effect of age, findings are inconclusive (Kritzinger et al., 2012, 7). Some researchers argue that over-reporting increases with age or that there is no difference between age groups, while others indicate that younger citizens are less likely to report abstention (Hill and Hurley, 1984) or that the relationship between over-reporting and turnout is curvilinear (Silver et al., 1986), similar to the relationship between age and turnout. If any of the three out of the four mentioned scenarios are true, the estimated levels of youth inequality in turnout should be very conservative estimates.

To test the potential impact of age bias in non-electoral participation, I have also calculated the coefficient of participation inequality in non-electoral forms (PINE). Since the EES does not include variables inquiring about any political engagement besides voting, the measure has been calculated from the Eurobarometer 73.4 from 2010. PINE was calculated for associational membership, with associational membership selected as the 'representative' of non-electoral participation for several reasons.

A large number of associations are normatively often regarded as a positive indicator of a healthy civic society and developed social capital. Furthermore, associational membership is not a novel type of participation and it is widespread across all countries, but it still attracts younger citizens. Secondly, associational membership requires more skills and resources than petitioning or product boycott, and it is a more permanent type of engagement not used only for sporadic events. Lastly, associations can provide additional resources for those who do not have enough capacity to participate on their own. For younger citizens these resources mostly relate to the development of a set of skills necessary for the integration into the political community, and, as some researchers argue,

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associational membership might be a starting point for other types of political engagement, since it fosters political discussion and the exchange of political information (van Deth et al., 2007; Verba et al., 1978).

Twelve items pertaining to membership in various organizations (sports and recreation; education and culture; trade unions; professional, consumer, international, environmental and animal protection; charity, leisure for the elderly; rights of the elderly; religious interests and patient rights) were aggregated into a single dichotomous variable. Zero was used to mark those respondents who have no practice engaging in any of the aforementioned activities and one was for those respondents with membership in at least one organization. Figure 2.3 shows the distribution of PINE for associational membership across countries. As previously demonstrated in youth participation research (Sloam, 2013), young people are either participating at an equal rate as adults or are over-represented with significant bias towards adults such as in Belgium, Slovenia or Romania.
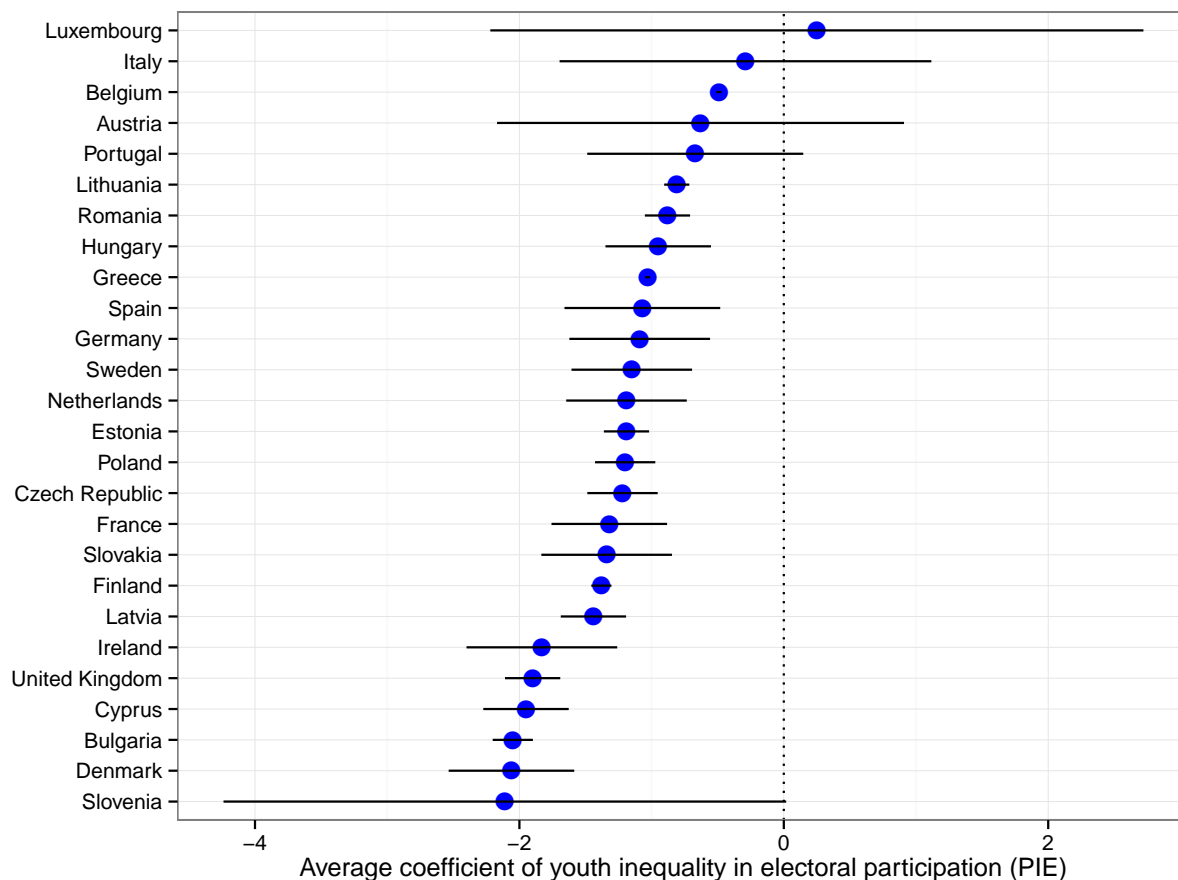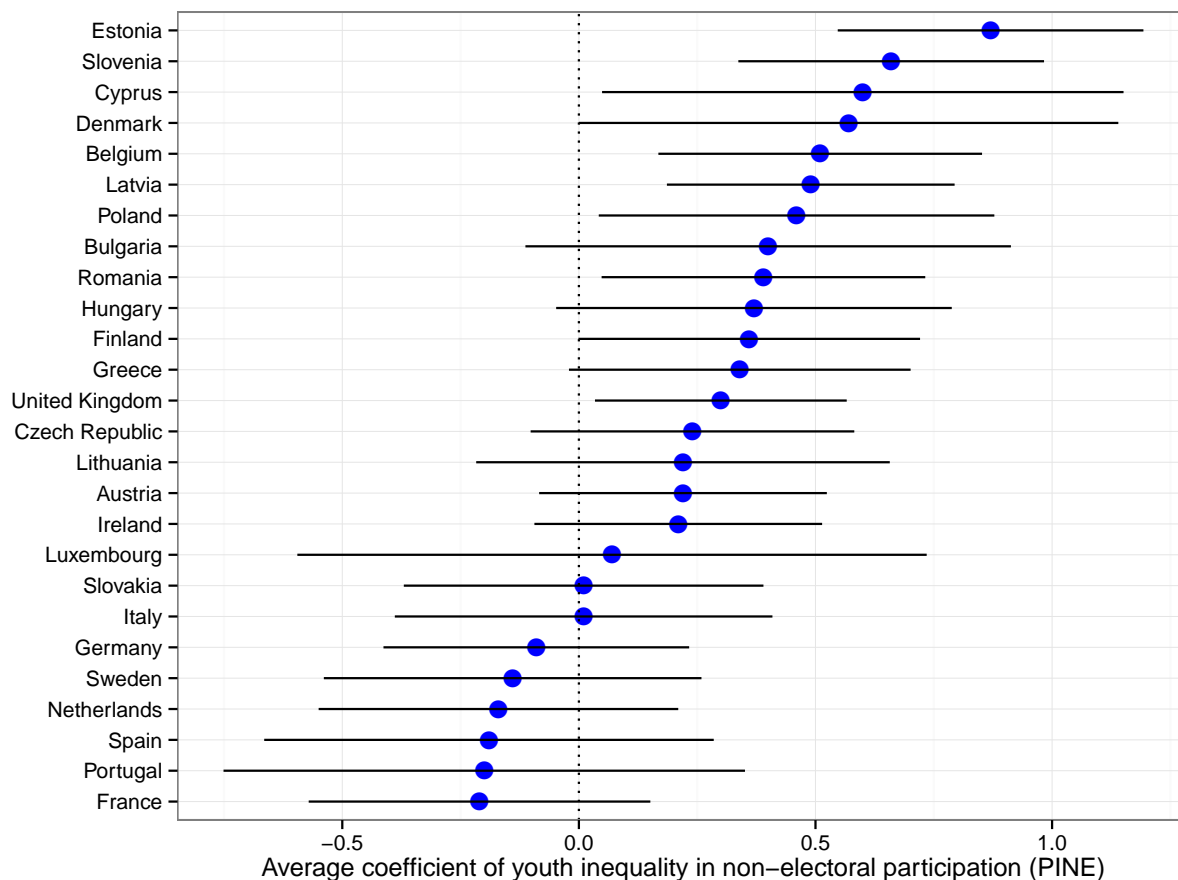
Figure 2.3: Youth inequality in non-electoral participation (PIE). Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

2.4   Model Specification and Results

The substantive interest of this analysis is to see whether the relationship between age and individual ideological congruence from parliament (individual level variables) change as a function of inequality in turnout and inequality in non-electoral participation (country level variables). For that reason, the main goal of the analysis is to test cross-level interaction effects through multiple mixed effects model specifications (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002). All models for individual i in country k include predictors at the two levels of analysis, as well as varying intercepts and error terms for the country. Models also include a standard

set of individual-level control variables related to ideological congruence. At the individual-level, the main theoretical predictor of interest is a respondent's age that is included in the models as a binary variable. Younger respondents (from 1829) are coded as 1, and adults are the baseline category (0). Respondent education is included in the models as a three-level categorical variable with low levels of education, medium levels of education, and high levels of education. Since the EES does not have a reliable income measure, subjective evaluation of personal living standard is used as an alternative to income. All models also control for the respondents' sex. Furthermore, to improve the substantive interpretation of effects and the certainty of those effects, all country-level predictors were centred prior to the analysis (Kam and Franzese, 2007), and all individual-level predictors are recoded so that they have a meaningful zero value. Results from all models are shown in Table 2.1.

First model is the baseline model that includes only the intercept and country dummies. Ideological congruence is measured in such a way that low values indicate low and high values high congruence between respondents and parliaments. Citizens are on average 2.16 points away from their respective parliaments on the ideological scale.

There is relatively little variance in average levels of congruence across countries (ICC is 0.04). Most comparative representation studies that compare ideological positions of parties (or entire parliaments) and citizens find that congruence is fairly and equally good across European countries. This might explain why so little of the total variation in ideological congruence is accounted for by variation across countries (e.g. Miller, 1999). However, some variation does exist and there might be a higher-level variable that explains the detected, but small, cross-national heterogeneity (Aguinis et al., 2013).

The second model reveals that young people are in fact more congruent with their parliaments than older respondents. If we consider that levels of turnout among the youth are much lower than for other age groups across all analyzed countries, this finding alone is puzzling and calls for explanation. First, parties might actually be anticipating youth

Table 2.1: Mixed model for policy preference representation.

	Base	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
(Intercept)	7.89***	7.57***	7.57***	7.57***	7.57***	7.57***	7.60***
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Young		0.17***	0.17***	0.17**	0.17***	0.17**	0.15*
		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Female		-0,01	-0,01	-0,01	-0,01	-0,01	-0,01
		(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Economic standard		-0.04***	-0.04***	-0.04***	-0.04***	-0.04***	-0.04***
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Secondary education		0.39***	0.39***	0.40***	0.39***	0.40***	0.40***
		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Tertiary education		0.48***	0.48***	0.49***	0.48***	0.49***	0.49***
		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
PIE			0.12	0.13	-	-	0.09
			(0.11)	(0.13)	-	-	(0.14)
Young:PIE				-0.10	-	-	-0.07
				(0.11)	-	-	(0.11)
PINE					0.11	-0.29	-0.19
					(0.14)	(0.17)	(0.27)
Young:PINE						0.26*	0,21
						(0.13)	(0.20)
PIE:PINE							0.19
							(0.48)
Young:PIE:PINE							-0.15
							(0.40)
AIC	67254	67156	67142	67144	67157	67140	67151
BIC	67277	67218	67227	67238	67227	67233	67275
Log Likelihood	-33624	-33570	-33560	-33560	-33570	-33558	-33559
Observations	17388	17388	17388	17388	17388	17388	17388
Countries	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
Variance: country	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.14	0.14
Variance: residual	2.79	2.76	2.76	2.76	2.76	2.76	2.76
Variance: young				0.05		0.05	0.05

Note: Linear mixed model estimation with 'lmer' package in R (version 3.1.0). Standard errors in paren-thesis. Models with PIE and PINE were calculated across 1000 values of bias estimators and aggregated using 'mice' package in R with adjusted Rubin rules for small samples. Model 6 is calculated for all combinations of biased estimators of PIE and estimated 1 000 000 times.

preferences even though they are not participating enough, and maybe even more because their rates of participation are so evidently lower. Because low rates of participation of young people are so distinctively low and well known, it is possible that parties strategically decide to appeal to that particular group of non-voters. Young people have weak, if any, established party loyalties and are more malleable (e.g. Jennings et al., 2009; Wolak, 2009). This implies that appeal to young people might have substantial payoffs even when the costs of their mobilization may be substantial.

Second, Figure 2.4 indicates that the young are more likely to be self-described moderates, in 14 out of 26 countries, and often place themselves in the ideological center, with young non-voters even more so. Mathematically speaking, the weighted average of the left-right positions of all parties in parliament will almost always be more or less ideologically moderate. Citizens with moderate positions will therefore have a representational advantage over those citizens who do not describe themselves as being in the centre of the ideological scale.
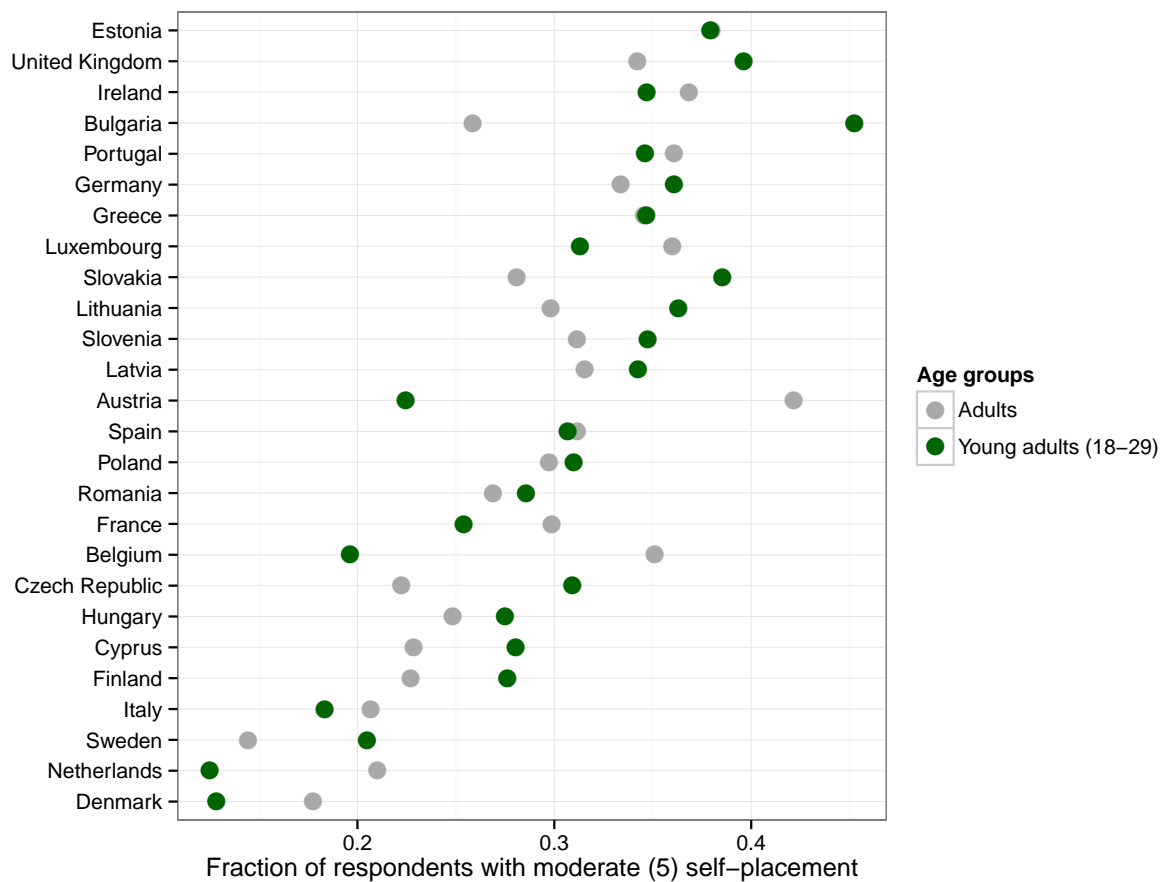
Figure 2.4: The fraction of moderate respondents.

Turning back to Table 2.1, models 3 to 6 include country level measures of participatory inequalities, PIE and PINE. These indicators are estimated prior to the analysis from survey data and they come with a certain level of uncertainty, which has to be incorporated in the models presented above. To at least partly account for the sampling error adherent to regression estimates, I have used a two-step estimation procedure. I have first estimated 1,000 parameters of both measures with an ordinary nonparametric bootstrap procedure on random subsamples of each country and year. Second, every mixed model presented in Table 2.1 that includes PIE and PINE as predictors is estimated with 1,000 versions of both variables. The results were then aggregated using Rubin rules with a correction for small samples with the'mice' package (van Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011) in R

(version 3.1.0). The last model, which includes both PIE and PINE, is calculated for each combination of the two indicators, which results in 1,000,000 model estimates aggregated using the Rubin rules.

The core aim of this analysis is to assess the impact of unequal participation among youth on their levels of ideological congruence. Turnout and associational participation bias is calculated in such a way that it substantively conveys information about the likelihood of turnout and associational participation of young people, so the effect of turnout bias, sometimes referred to as the main effect in Model 2, is not of particular importance here. I am predominantly interested in cross-level interaction that tests the conditional effect of turnout bias regarding ideological congruence of young adults. In other words, the models test whether the impact of a discrete change from being young to being older on ideological congruence differs as a function of youth turnout inequality (PIE). Interaction between PIE and the 'young' variable in Model 3 tests this relationship. Against the theoretical expectation of the first hypothesis the interaction term does not have a statistically significant negative effect. The relationship between the inequality in electoral participation and youth policy preference representation is not confirmed.

Combined with previous findings on high levels of congruence, it is possible that the effects of youth turnout bias on policy representation cannot be observed directly, because targeted mobilization strategies act as a pre-emptive corrective arm to youth turnout stratification. Moreover, moderate self-placement of young people can also provide additional clues for this unexpected finding. The percentage of respondents who have selected a moderate position on the left-right scale is plotted against levels of youth turnout bias in Figure 2.5. The figure demonstrates that young people are more likely to choose moderate positions than their older counterparts, and, they are also more likely to do so in countries with higher levels of turnout bias.
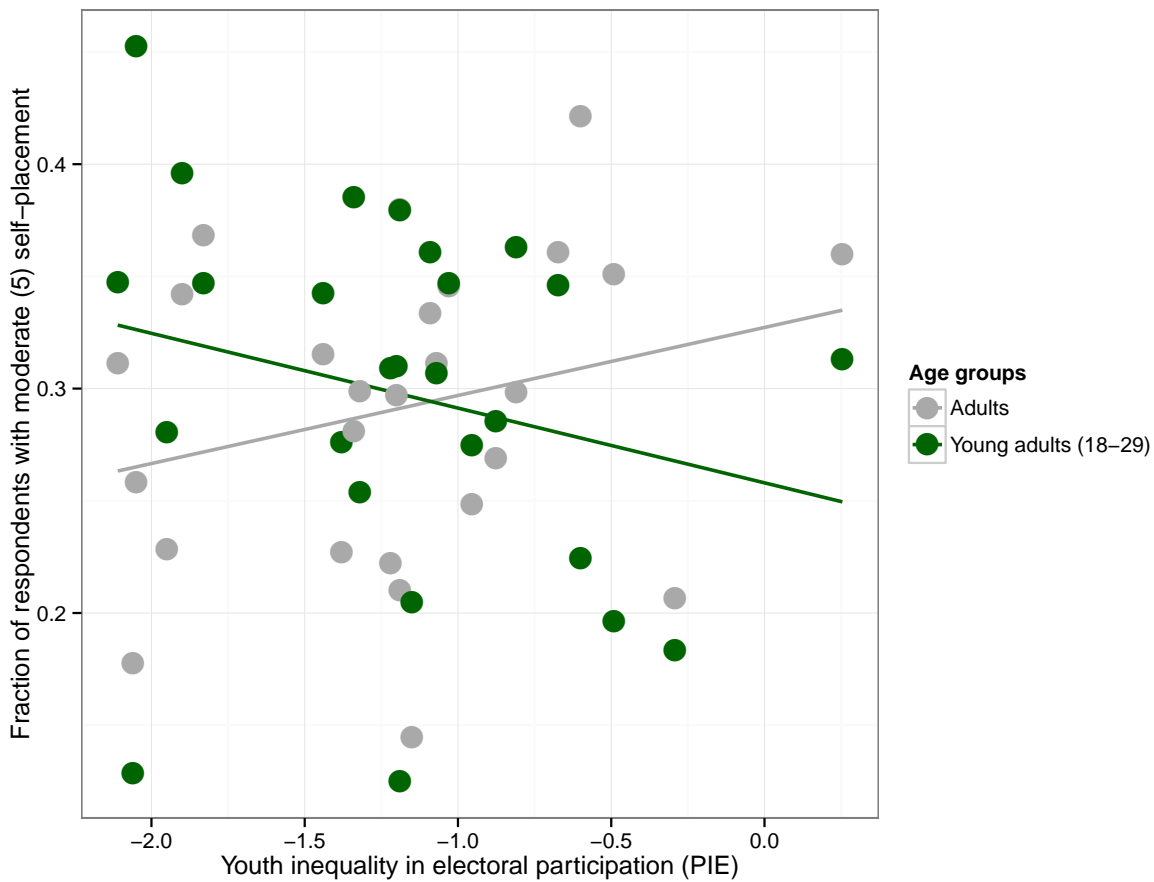
Figure 2.5: Relationship between the propensity to select a moderate left-right position by age group and PIE.

This self-stated moderate position among young might signal very different messages. It can be an indicator of the ideological indifference and revolt against conventional politics, it can suggest cognitive limitation as concealed type of non-response (Treier and Hillygus, 2009; Sturgis et al., 2014), or inconsistent views of relevant issue dimensions whereby individuals can be liberal on one issue but conservative on the other (Treier and Hillygus, 2009). Ideological moderates do not have to necessarily think in ideological terms and ideological congruence might not capture fine-grained differences in youth opinion oa issues that are of interest for them and on which they might have more extreme positions, but this will hold true for any group of citizens. If low levels of cognitive abilities drive the responses

of the young, the model presented cannot be an accurate assessment of the interaction between participatory inequality and policy representation since the same factors might drive both turnout inequality and placement on the left-right scale. Moreover, findings on high congruence of the young with their parliaments are then an artefact of an inappropriate measure.

To test whether young people are 'true' moderates, I ask whether those young people who declare themselves as ideologically moderate also identify with moderate parties and whether their levels of partisanship are equal to those of moderate adults. The most appropriate model to answer these questions is a three-level mixed-effect model (Snijders and Bosker, 1999; Steenbergen and Jones, 2002) with partisan identification as a dependent variable. Individuals at level-1 are nested according to their future vote choice within parties at level-2. Future vote choice, rather than previous vote choice, is selected to ensure that the sample size of young adults is large enough to conduct a three-level analysis with enough young people nested within parties.

Moreover, in order to ensure that the party differences are appropriately captured and the variance in party characteristics does not reflect country differences, countries are included in the level-3 but simply as a control variable and without any specific predictors. Because partisan identification is a dichotomous variable, models were estimated as binomial three-level mixed effects models. Two variables are included at level-1, a dummy variable that captures whether a respondent is moderate or not and a dummy variable 'young'. Only one variable is included at level-2, a dummy variable that captures whether the party they voted for is a centrist party or not. Those parties that are one standard deviation away and less from the left-right mean position of all parties in the country are considered centrist parties. Detailed results are presented in the Appendix B.

The main interest of the models was to test the three way interaction effect between 'young', 'moderate respondents' and 'moderate parties'. Figure 2.6 summarizes the results

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and helps in interpreting the three way interaction effect. The figure only shows the marginal effects of being moderate on partisanship for young and adults who have voted for moderate parties. The figure clearly indicates that moderate respondents who have voted for moderate parties, be they young or adults, have similar levels of partisanship. This is not to say that ideological self-placement should not be replaced with a more reliable benchmark for the calculations of citizen-party agreements, but we can safely assume that any cognitive bias that might affect left-right evaluations should work similarly for all citizens regardless of their age.
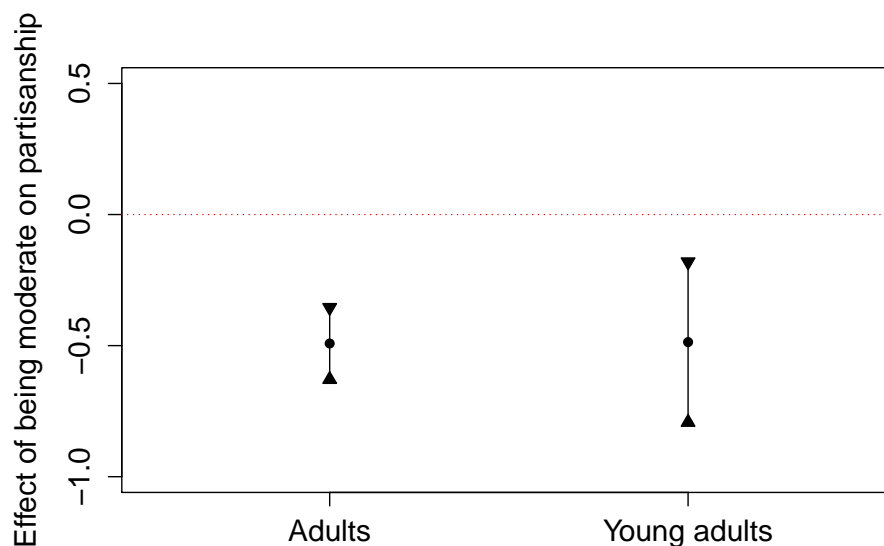
Figure 2.6: Marginal effects plot of being moderate on partisanship for voters of moderate parties.

Returning to Table 2.1, the remaining models test the relationship between inequality in associational membership and ideological congruence for the young in comparison to older respondents (Models 4 and 5). The interaction effect of being young on ideological congruence regarding different levels of the PINE for membership is significant. However, to confirm this finding it is necessary to check whether this relationship holds when sub-

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stantively meaningful marginal effects of predictors are considered. Significant interaction effects only imply that the 'young' variable has a significant effect on ideological congruence when PINE is at its average value, as it is centred on zero (Brambor et al., 2006; Kam and Franzese, 2007). Figure 2.7 shows the marginal effects of the 'young' variable on ideological congruence and youth inequality in non-electoral participation and confirms the second hypothesis: that policy representation of young adults is stronger in countries where young engage more in non-electoral participation than adults. Moreover, the model in which only associational bias is added at the second level has a better fit than the previous models with turnout bias.
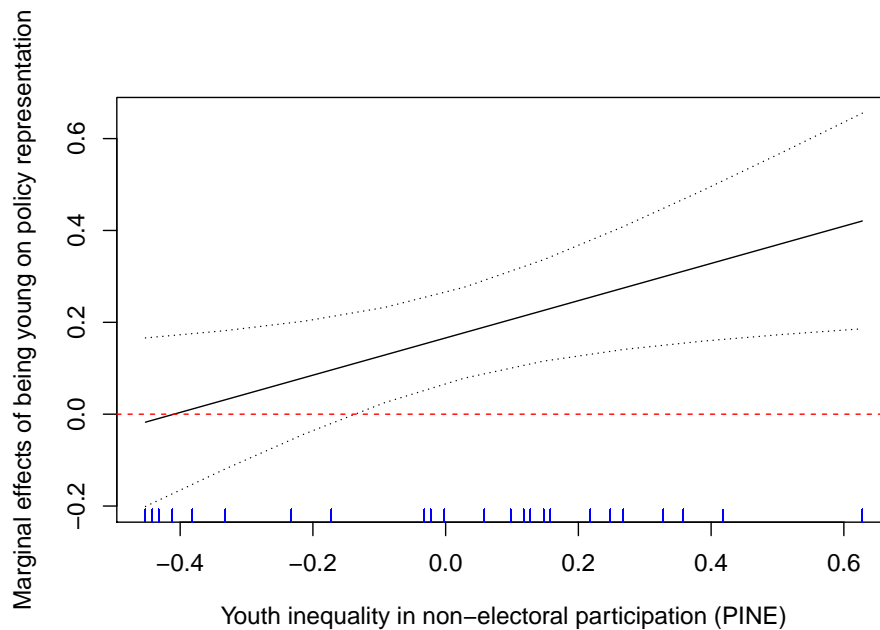
Figure 2.7: Marginal effects of young on ideological congruence and PINE.

The last model tests the interaction effect between the PIE and the PINE. I expected that the negative effect of turnout inequality on ideological congruence would be annulled if young adults are advantaged in other channels of political participation, as measured by the PINE. Before we turn to the results, Figure 2.8 shows the bivariate plot of youth

turnout inequality and inequality in non-electoral participation. In countries with high levels of turnout inequality we also see that young people engage more in non-electoral forms of participation, as the relationship between PIE and PINE is negative.
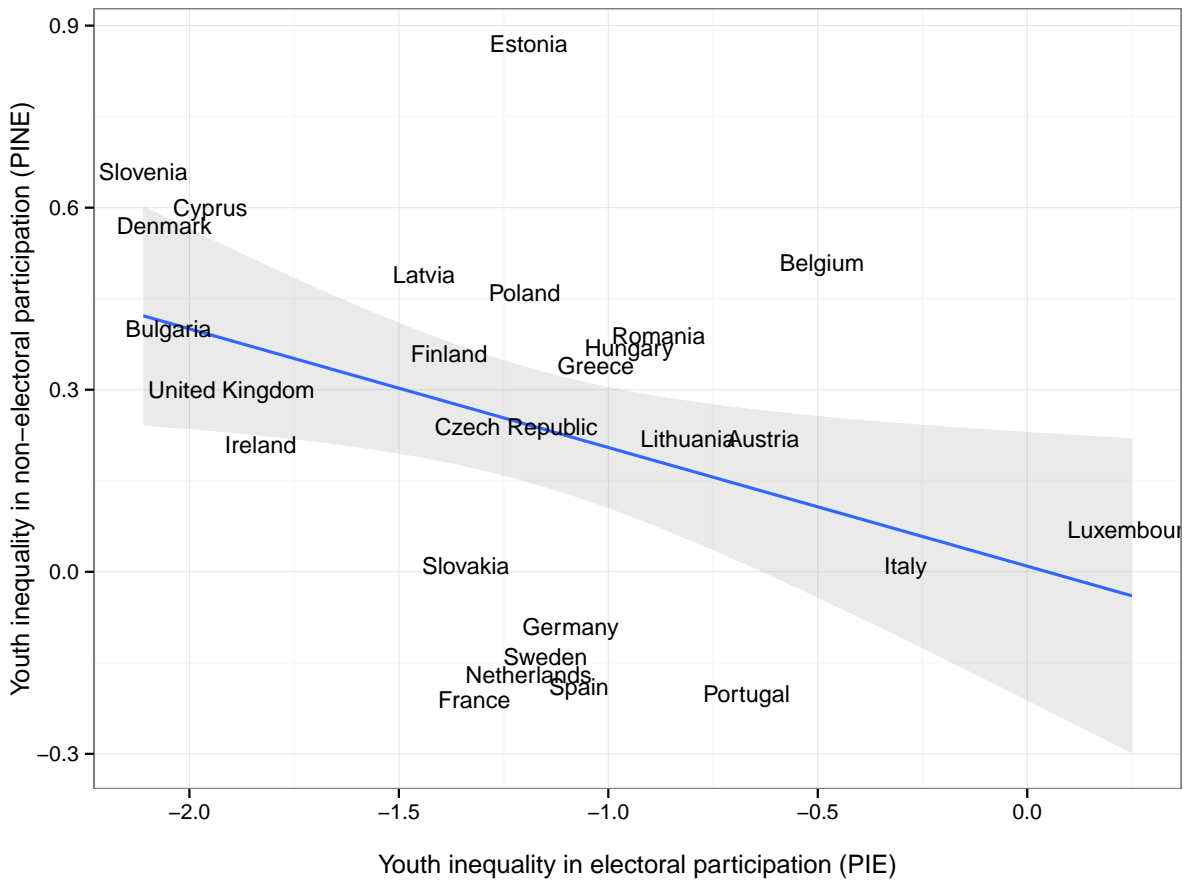
Figure 2.8: Relationship between PIE and PINE.

However, the results from the previous models already indicated that turnout inequality does not have the expected impact on ideological congruence between legislators and young citizens. In this light it is probably not surprising that I do not find evidence of the compensatory mechanism anticipated by Hypothesis 3. Indeed, the three-way interaction effect is not significant and the effects of turnout bias on youth congruence do not differ across levels of inequality in non-electoral participation. Although we see from Figure 2.8

that the relationship between the two explanatory variables is negative as expected, there are countries where turnout inequality and inequality in non-electoral participation overlap, which reduces the possibility of the counterbalance effect. For instance, in Germany, Spain or France we see that young are both less likely to turn out and less likely to become members of NGO's.

2.5   Sensitivity analysis

Results indicate that young people are in fact more congruent with their parliaments than their older counterparts, and that, against all previous expectations, turnout bias does not have a negative effect on the quality of youth representation. To make sure these findings are not dependent on the selection of the ideological congruence as a measuring rod, same analysis was also conducted by using specific issue questions as an alternative indicator of policy representation. Main goal of this analysis was to see whether the key findings also hold when we look at issue positions which might hold more meaning for young people than the general left-right orientation.

To replicate the same analysis with different dependent variables I have calculated two measures of issue congruence by matching the EES dataset with the party level information available from the Rohrschneider and Whitefield expert survey on party positions (henceforth RWES) conducted in 24 countries in Central Eastern and Western Europe between autumn 2007 and spring 2008 (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). I select two issues from the EES for this purpose, voters' preferences on government actions on redistribution of income towards ordinary people and preferences on liberal policies, in particular whether the voters favour the prohibition of same-sex marriages or not. Party positions are taken from the RWES, where experts were asked to assess a party's position on redistribution and whether a party opposes or supports liberal policies such as gay marriage, LGBT rights,

abortion or legalization of cannabis.

Issue congruence on liberal policies and redistribution is calculated as the absolute difference between the weighted mean position of parties in parliament and the preference of each respondent. While the RWES uses a 7-point scale to estimate the issue placements of political parties, the EES uses a 5-point scale to measure the respondents' issue positions. Both variables have been rescaled to have the same 0-1 range to facilitate comparisons (for a similar approach see Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012; Wessels, 1999). The variable's values were then reversed so that the higher values indicate better congruence.

Estimated models are identical to the models used for ideological congruence as a dependent variable and they are presented in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 respectively. Table 2.2 shows the results for the first issue, issue congruence on liberal policies, and Table 2.3, issue congruence on redistribution. Results add additional support for the previous findings. Even when we consider specific policy issues, and not only generalized left-right congruence, young people are closer to their parliaments than their older counterparts. Results are also clear on the relationship between turnout inequality and congruence, as they also do not provide any evidence that low turnout has an effect on policy representation. Moreover, when issue congruence is considered even the inequality of non-electoral participation does not have consequences on the policy preference representation of young adults.

Table 2.2: Mixed model for issue congruence: liberal policies

	Base	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5
(Intercept)	6.45 ***	5.22 ***	5.18 ***	5.20 ***	5.18 ***	5.20 ***
	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.30)	(0.30)
Young		0.51 ***	0.51 ***	0.51 ***	0.51 ***	0.50 ***
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.10)
Female		0.38 ***	0.38 ***	0.38 ***	0.38 ***	0.38 ***
		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Economic standard		0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Secondary education		0.77 ***	0.77 ***	0.77 ***	0.77 ***	0.77 ***
		(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Tertiary education		1.22 ***	1.22 ***	1.22 ***	1.22 ***	1.22 ***
		(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
PIE			-0.21	-0.19	-	-
			(0.54)	(0.56)	-	-
Young:PIE				-0.04	-	-
				(0.20)	-	-
PINE					-0.21	-0.20
					(0.55)	(0.57)
Young:PINE						-0.04
						(0.20)
AIC	66284	65810	65811	65792	65807	65788
BIC	66307	65871	65879	65883	65875	65879
Log Likelihood	-33139	-32897	-32896	-32884	-32895	-32882
Observations	14393	14393	14393	14393	14393	14393
Countries	20	20	20	20	20	20
Variance: country	1.40	1.38	1.43	1.53	1.22	1.31
Variance: residual	5.81	5.61	5.61	5.60	5.61	5.60
Variance: young				0.14		0.13

Note: Linear mixed model estimation with 'lmer' package in R (version 3.1.0). Standard errors in parenthesis. Models with PIE and PINE were calculated across 1000 values of bias estimators and aggregated using 'mice' package in R with adjusted Rubin rules for small samples. Model 5 is calculated for all combinations of biased estimators of PIE and estimated 1 000 000 times.

Table 2.3: Mixed model for issue congruence: redistribution

	Base	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5
(Intercept)	7.37***	7.78 ***	7.77***	7.77***	7.77***	7.77***
	(0.12)	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Young		0.19***	0.19***	0.20***	0.19***	0.19***
		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Female		0.13***	0.13***	0.13***	0.13***	0.13***
		(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Economic standard		-0.11***	-0.11***	-0.11***	-0.11***	-0.11***
		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Secondary education		-0.08	-0.08	-0.08	-0.08	-0.08
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Tertiary education		-0.32***	-0.32***	-0.33***	-0.33***	-0.33***
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
PIE			-0.06	-0.07	-	-
			(0.24)	(0.25)	-	-
Young:PIE				0.04	-	-
				(0.11)	-	-
PINE					-0.07	-0.07
					(0.25)	(0.25)
Young:PINE						0.04
						(0.11)
AIC	60339	60216	60218	60226	60218	60222
BIC	60362	60276	60287	60317	60286	60313
Log Likelihood	-30167	-30100	-30100	-30101	-30100	-30099
Observations	14205	14205	14205	14205	14205	14205
Countries	20	20	20	20	20	20
Variance: country	0.29	0.30	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32
Variance: residual	4.07	4.03	4.03	4.03	4.03	4.03
Variance: young				0.01		0.00

Note: Linear mixed model estimation with 'lmer' package in R (version 3.1.0). Standard errors in parenthesis. Models with PIE and PINE were calculated across 1000 values of bias estimators and aggregated using 'mice' package in R with adjusted Rubin rules for small samples. Model 5 is calculated for all combinations of biased estimators of PIE and estimated 1 000 000 times.

2.6 Conclusions

Research on youth participation often starts with two normative assumptions. The first one is that political participation holds an important role in the development of good citizens as a factor contributing to political socialization. Through engagement in political activities, younger citizens learn what it means to be a fully contributing member of a political community and they adapt to a community's civic and political norms and values. Another role of participation is goal-oriented and much more narrowly 'political' as such. This is clear from the classical definition of political participation as a "means by which governing officials are informed of the preferences and the needs of the public and are induced to respond to those preferences and needs" (Verba et al., 1995, 1). I began this chapter by asking whether youth detachment from vote and an increased engagement in less conventional non-electoral participation has consequences on their substantive political representation. Or, to put it more simply, does political participation actually fulfil the second role?

Speaking in empirical terms, the main interest of this analysis was to see whether the relationship between age and ideological congruence changes as a function of inequality in turnout and inequality in non-electoral participation. The results have revealed several unexpected findings. Young people are in fact ideologically closer to their parliaments than older respondents. Also, although it was expected for turnout bias to have a negative effect on the quality of youth representation, the policy preference representation of young adults is not weaker in countries where turnout inequalities are more pronounced. In countries with especially big turnout inequalities, such as the United Kingdom and Slovenia, the young are more congruent to their representatives than other age groups. As for the relationship between the inequality of non-electoral participation and of ideological congruence, increased youth presence in associations has positive consequences on their policy

preference representation. However, I did not find evidence to support the final hypothesis whereby a more equal associational membership might have an equalizing effect on vote.

Chapter 3

Party Appeal and Youth Turnout Inequalities

3.1 Introduction

In his seminal work on socio-economic voting patterns of the American South, Key argued that group differences in voting patterns should be closely examined because "the blunt truth is that politicians and officials are under no compulsion to pay much heed to classes and groups of citizens who do not vote" (Key, 1949, 527). Several influential studies on turnout stratification have suggested that if members of certain politically relevant groups do not participate in elections, parties will have fewer incentives to consider their specific preferences and interests (Lijphart, 1997; Verba, 2003). What is more, the overall distribution of ideological preferences of the entire electorate signaled through electoral choices will be distorted. However, while findings from the second chapter clearly show that youth participation in elections is unequal, the young are in fact ideologically closer to their parliaments than adults. They do not vote but are represented. This finding came as a surprise given the widespread concern about young people's relationship to democratic institutions as demonstrated by the level of academic and institutional attention dedicated

to the subject, and even greater surprise given the established assumption that those who do not vote are not heard in the policy making process.

This chapter will argue that it is equally rational for politicians to respond to those groups who systematically do not participate in elections, if they need their future votes to gain parliamentary or even governmental seats. This is especially true for young people, as parties might actually be anticipating youth preferences even though they are not participating enough, and maybe even more so because their rates of participation are so evidently lower. Political parties might pay special attention to young people because such investment can have a significant yield.

Young people have less political experience and often undefined political preferences and they are perfect mobilizational targets. Early investment in campaign strategies that target young people might have a permanent imprint on their voting choice in the future as their turnout rates might well rise as they get older (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993; Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978). Also, faced with changing electoral markets, mainstream parties might be forced to search for new voters among those who do not participate and apply targeted new strategies towards the youngest members of the electorate. New parties can emerge just because segments of the electorate are not probed and can seize the opportunity to grab unlikely voters by competing on new issues that specifically target young absentees. If this explanation stands empirical scrutiny, the effects of youth turnout bias on policy representation cannot be observed directly, because change in the party supply and targeted mobilization strategies act as a pre-emptive corrective arm to youth turnout stratification.

3.2 Theory and Expectations

This chapter asks, is youth disengagement pre-empted by spontaneous market correction, whereby parties sense a potentially lucrative market and appeal to younger people? In particular, it is expected that the shifts in youth turnout inequality will correspond to the changes in party appeal towards the youngest citizens:

H1 (*the Market Correction*): When youth turnout inequality increases, parties are expected to increase their appeal towards young adults.

There are several reasons why we would expect such an effect. First, we know from studies on party change that parties react to the changes in the electorate and adjust their strategies to new circumstances (e.g. Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Mair et al., 2004). Broad social and political changes in the electorates of developed democracies, such as socio-demographic changes in the populations, overall decline of voter loyalties (e.g. Schmitt and Holmberg, 1995; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2002), increase in electoral volatility or a decline in turnout rates (e.g. Flanagan and Dalton, 1984; Franklin, 2004), and the parties' responses to those changes have received substantial academic attention. Mair and colleagues nicely sum up the recent trends by saying that: "Confronted by either a shrinking base of core voters, or by a more fragmented and instrumental constituency, these parties are obliged to develop new responses and new strategies" (Mair et al., 2004, 4).

Sociological approaches to political cleavages have also demonstrated that parties not only respond to social changes but also through their strategies actively shape political divisions (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Sartori, 1969; Kitschelt, 1994; Enyedi, 2008). In fact, with the weakening of social-class connections and partisan identification, party strategies and mobilization efforts are becoming even more important for overall levels of citizen involvement (Aarts and Wessels 2005). Political parties act as rational agents motivated primarily by vote-seeking goals (Müller and Strøm, 1999). There are many examples when

old parties reinvent themselves and their policy appeal to attract new, larger constituencies at the expense of their traditional constituencies (e.g. Evans, 1999; Kitschelt, 1993). Or when new and niche parties more or less successfully try to seize the opportunity and appeal to volatile voters, while mainstream parties are losing their electoral strongholds and becoming more vulnerable (Kitschelt and McGann, 1997). Moreover, Mair et al. (2004) show that parties do differentiate between specific socio-economic groups when analyzing their electoral chances and we also know from previous studies that some parties benefit from high turnout (e.g. Pacek and Radcliff, 1995; Aguilar and Pacek, 2000; Hansford and Gomez, 2010). So it is rational for parties to pay attention to both changing turnout rates and to the differences in turnout rates across social groups.

Because low rates of participation of young people are so distinctively low and well known, it is possible that parties strategically decide to appeal to that particular group of non-voters. Young people have weak, if any, established party loyalties and they are more malleable (e.g. Jennings et al., 2009; Wolak, 2009), which implies that appeal to young people might have substantial payoffs even when the costs of their mobilization may be substantial. Moreover, there is substantive evidence that parties youth base is getting smaller over time and parties are losing their necessary life-blood (e.g. Scarrow, 2010; Cross and Young, 2004). Scarrow (2010) show that compared to 29% of party members in Britain aged 60 and over in 1990s, in 2000s these figures have risen to 56%. Recent research in the United Kingdom also shows that parties are increasing their efforts to give young people a more meaningful role in their organizations and to include young people in the design of their party platforms (Bennie and Russell, 2012).

Also, the success of their strategies depends on the amount of information they have about the changes in the electorate, and their ability to discern the changes they should respond to and those that are merely short term fluctuations. As such, they act in a space of bounded rationality (Marini, 2015). If parties target their appeal to young people

because they abstain from elections more than other age groups, there has to be some prior evidence that this kind of information is received by parties and interpreted as important (Mair et al., 2004). Research on party organizational and campaign strategies strongly suggest that, at least well entrenched mainstream parties, intensely care about the changes in their support base and invest a lot of resources in opinion polls, focus groups and more professionalized campaigning (e.g. Farrell, 1996; Gibson and Römmele, 2001, 2009; Swanson and Mancini, 1996). Evident changes in party digital communication strategies via new social media and Internet are also a clear indication that parties are searching for venues to mobilize young people.

Parties' incentives are not solely based on vote-seeking strategies, as there are scenarios where office and policy seeking behavior might lead to increased appeal towards non-active members of the electorate. For instance, smaller parties that are trying to gain ministerial positions by entering into coalition agreements with mainstream parties might be perfect guinea pigs who can absorb new issues such as anti-growth or pro-abortion policies more easily than their older, vote-seeking partners. Similarly, single issue parties, such as the Swedish Pirate party might be policy seeking parties, but they can indirectly attract young voters (e.g. Erlingsson and Persson, 2011).

This leaves us with the "how?" question. How do parties exactly adapt to these challenges and which type of party appeal shift would we expect to see if parties are targeting the youngest members of the electorate? There are several venues parties might opt for. Mair et al. (2004) have identified organizational changes, new strategies vis--vis other parties, new strategies vis--vis voters, and party platform shifts as the most common mechanisms of change. Parties can quickly adjust their public appeal with stressing certain issues more than others and thus maximizing their electoral success. If citizens perceive those changes to be in line with a a party's policy behavior, they will respond positively to party policy shifts (Adams et al., 2014). But if there is an obvious gap in party behavior

and the new policy stances, the change in party positions, however strongly emphasized, might not have the desired effect. Changes in party manifestos require the least effort and should potentially have the largest impact on potential voters. For instance, after the initial success of the Greens, mainstream German parties incorporated environmental issues into their programs to attract new post-materialist and younger voters (Mair et al., 2004).

However, new parties will have an advantage in setting new issues onto the political agenda because they have less baggage, they are more likely to bargain with their electoral success, and are not restricted with previous positions on issues that might clash with traditional party orientations (Tavits, 2008). Also, new parties have more information about the positions of mainstream parties than vice-versa and they are in a unique position to scan the landscape from the outside (Tavits 2008). Of course, the dynamics of the above mentioned scenarios will most certainly depend on the characteristics of existing party competition, country specific socio-economic conditions, and the electoral system's regulations.

The change in party appeal, however, might not be a result of pre-emptive actions on behalf of young adults and their low turnout rates. Policy shifts can be a result of a cumulative effect of socio-economic and other relevant developments. Parties might attract young voters indirectly by reacting to wider social changes. For instance, the process of secularization has affected the incentives of parties to compete on the issues of moral and cultural traditionalism that were important for their traditional constituencies, such as farmers or religious groups (Norris and Inglehart, 2004). Parties are now more likely to appeal to secularized urban, middle class citizens, which are numerically more worth-while in pursuing, with all kinds of parties, not only the new ones, being pushed to emphasize green and libertarian positions.

3.3 Data and Measures

The Market Correction hypothesis postulates that the party appeal towards younger parts of the electorate will increase when turnout inequality among young adults also increases. To test this proposition it is necessary to develop both longitudinal and cross-national measures of party appeal and turnout inequality. Following the approach set in the second chapter, turnout inequality of young adults will be measured as the impact of age, dichotomized into youth and adult categories, on electoral behavior by using the Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002 (Schmitt et al., 2008). Electoral behavior is measured through the vote intention question in the Eurobarometer survey conducted closest to the national parliamentary election day. With these data, I first calculate the impact of the youth dummy and education measures, as in chapter 2, on vote intention for each country and year of elections. Negative values of the parameter estimate, the youth turnout bias, indicate that young adults are less likely to participate in elections. The final dataset contains information on 15 countries, 98 national elections with 2-12 time points per country (unbalanced panel).

In almost all cases (country-years) young adults are less likely to turn out than their older counterparts Figure 3.1. Even in the countries with compulsory voting, such as Belgium, youth turnout rates are significantly lower than adult turnout. Compulsory voting is often seen as the most efficient way of increasing voter turnout, and it has been argued that compulsory voting should reduce inequalities in electoral participation (e.g. Lijphart, 1997, 2008; Birch, 2009). However, results from Figure 3.1 are in line with a recent study on the effects of compulsory voting that shows that turnout inequality patterns for gender, education and age do not disappear when compulsory voting is taken into account (Quintelier et al., 2011).

Increases in party attention towards younger parts of the population cannot be observed
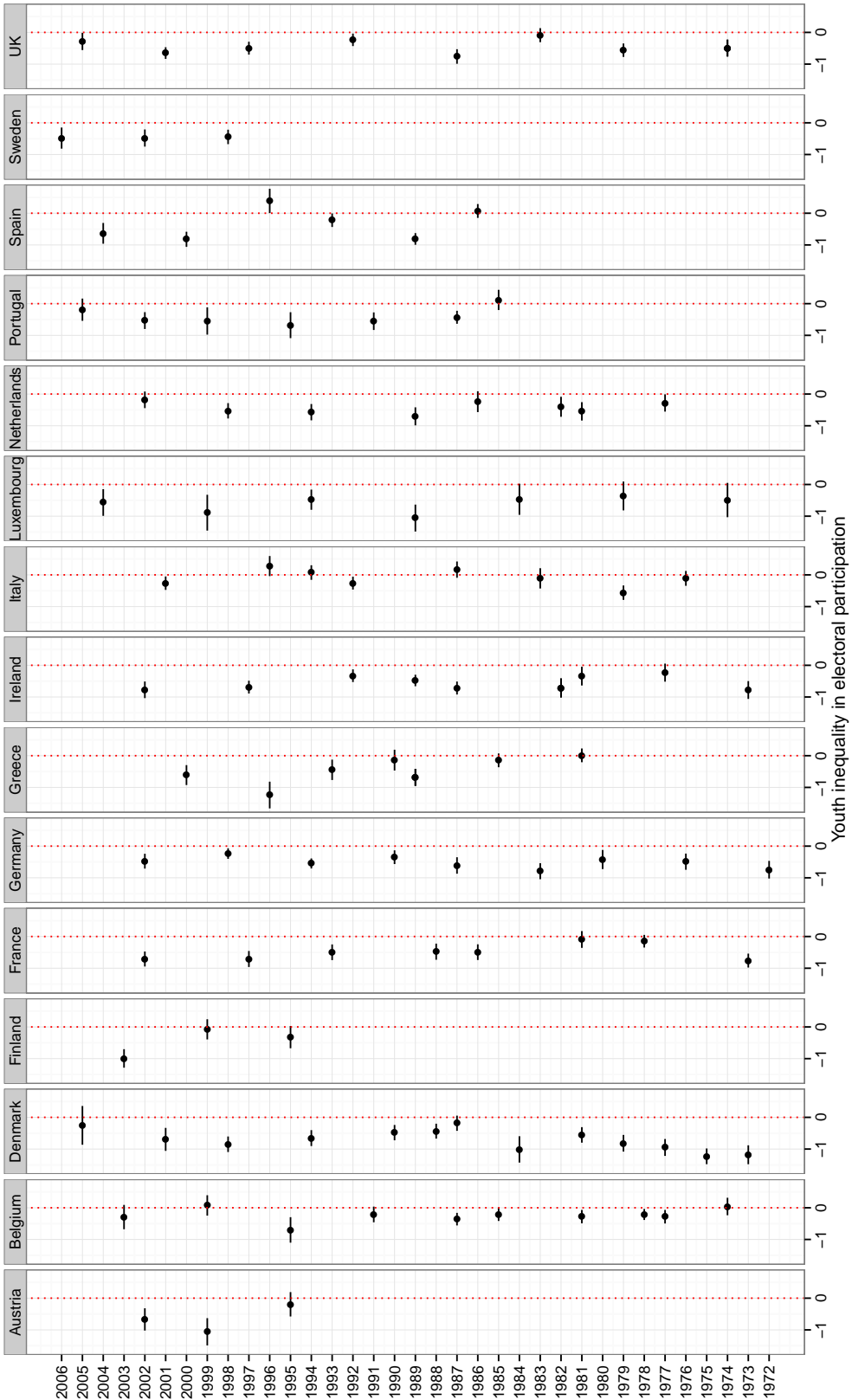
Figure 3.1: Trends in youth turnout inequality in national elections in 15 European countries from 1970-2002. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

directly, as there is no longitudinal and cross-sectional data on party appeal strategies towards particular groups. There are two possible ways in which we could estimate changes in party positions. First, many studies on party competition model party system changes by looking at voting behavior data from national or European election studies. It would be possible to assess the increase in party appeal towards young voters by modeling the discrete change in the effects of being young on vote choice. Those parties which successfully mobilize young adults should have a significantly younger support base. However, we know from the literature on electoral behavior that modeling vote choice comes with several shortcomings. The most obvious one is that the effects of age could not be estimated for smaller parties because the number of respondents who positioned themselves as small party supporters would not be large enough to make reliable comparisons. This problem is usually avoided if surveys contain separate questions on the probabilities of voting for each relevant party (van der Eijk et al., 2006), but this question is not asked in the Eurobarometer surveys.

However, we know which issues attract younger citizens the most from the previous research on young people's attitudes. First clue comes from the oft cited work by Inglehart (1990) and Scarborough (1995). They argue that the distinctiveness of young people in the electorate comes from the generational shift in values from the materialistic view of society and into a more post-materialistic individual perspective. Inglehart (1990) and Scarborough (1995) provided some evidence on the extent to which a shift from basic needs for physical sustenance and safety is replaced by self-actualization values among the members of different birth cohorts. This shift is often taken as an explanation of young people's lack of involvement in mainstream politics, as young people are more likely to express an interest in environmental issues, animal rights or anti-war and anti-globalization movements (Bennie and Rudig, 1993; Mulgan and Wilkinson, 1997).

Furlong and Cartmel (2006) says that because those issues are not sufficiently, or con-

vincingly adopted by mainstream parties, young people in Europe tend to lend more support to non-governmental organizations than political parties. But there is also some empirical evidence that these patterns are translated into politics when Green parties, emerging from social movements, successfully mobilize young people to vote (Bennie and Rudig, 1993). However, a similar stream of research suggests that young people and adults do not differ much in their positions towards post-materialist issues, but they do differ in the levels of emphasis they attach to those issues compared to other axes of political competition (Bennie and Rudig, 1993). In a volume that synthesizes national youth policies in several European countries, Williamson (2002) presents a list of key issues appearing in the majority of national strategies for young people. The dominant issues are multi-culturalism and minorities, mobility and internationalism, sustainable development, and equal opportunities. All of which perfectly match those policy domains to which Poguntke (1987) referred to as the New Politics.

To measure party appeal to young adults I rely on the Manifesto Research Project data set (henceforward CMP, Volkens et al. (2015)) and define party appeal to young adults as salience of issues that belong to the domain of 'new politics' in parties' electoral manifestos. CMP is a collection of 'quasi-sentences' within electoral manifestos and other available party documents, hand coded into 56 policy categories. This dataset has the broad coverage of countries and years which can be matched to Eurobarometer surveys used to calculate the main predictor turnout inequality. Moreover, the whole project is based on the idea of issue salience in party competition (Budge and Farlie, 1983) and the dataset captures the relative emphasis of these 56 categories at particular elections. CMP includes a number of policy issues that can be used to measure the party appeal towards young people as the salience of issues in the domains of New Politics in party platforms.

The measure of party appeal is calculated as the mean sum of the relative share of 'quasi-sentences' for all parties in a given country/year that relate to six policy items

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reflecting (1) favorable mentions of anti-growth politics and steady state economy, (2) environmental protection, (3) positive references to multiculturalism, (4) general references to the transition process of one-party states into pluralist democracies, (5) declarations of belief in peace and peaceful means of solving crises and (6) support for any international goals and international cooperation. Note that while CMP instructions argue that the policy preferences of each relevant party are included in the dataset, CMP defines relevance based on seat share, so only those parties that win seats in their respective elections are included in the dataset. This means that the proposed measure is a conservative estimate of the total presence of these issues in the political systems since young adults might be motivated to turn out by parties that have emphasized crucial issues but did not manage to get parliamentary representation.

In order to aggregate party positions into meaningful country/year indicators, it is necessary to decide whether the mean party salience in the domains of 'new politics' should be weighted by party size or not. So far the literature is not clear on the best approach (see Alvarez and Nagler, 2004; Kollman et al., 1998). Weighting approach is justified by the fact that small parties in some countries might disproportionately affect the distribution of the New Politics' salience when they in fact do not have any political influence. Policy proposals of small parties do not necessarily "enlarge the menu of policy choices available to voters in any meaningful sense" (Ezrow, 2007, 186). But given that the main intention of this analysis is to see if any of the parties in the political system emphasize issues that are attractive to young adults, analysis should include all of those parties that intended to appeal to young people, and not their actual performance on promised goals.

Even though small parties will have a minor influence in the later stages of representation, they "provide a vehicle through which voters can express their policy preferences, regardless of whether or not such parties significantly influence government policy outputs" (Ezrow, 2007, 50). For instance, the Green Party of England and Wales received only

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3.8% of the vote in the recent 2015 general elections in the UK. However, they appealed to young voters by competing on the New Politics' issues, such as the legalization of cannabis, the abolishment of the monarchy or animal protection. The reports from a number of polls prior to elections clearly show that their support among 18-24 year olds was higher than that for the LibDems and UKIP. An additional argument for the unweighted measures, also put forward by Ezrow (2007) is that any weighting is arbitrary since parties' policy influence does not always correlate with voter or seat share.

Figures 3.2 and 3.3 show the differences in unweighted and weighted measures in the German example. It is evident that the largest increase in the New Politics' appeal happened after the formation of the German Greens in the 1980s, and during their second elections in 1993. After that the unweighted mean salience of New Politics issues is slightly lower, but still remains significant, comprising about 20 per cent of total 'quasi-sentences'. The weighted measure offers a different picture, especially in the 1990s when the share of relevant issues shows a significant drop. This was the worst election year for the German Greens as they received only 3.8% of the vote share. The result was not surprising because of the incredible gaff of the Greens who refused to compete on the ramifications of reunification and instead campaigned on global warning. Their 1990s campaign slogan was: "Everyone is talking about Germany; we're talking about the weather!" (Hockenos, 2007, 202).

A weighted measure of party appeal downplays the emphasis of New Politics issues among minor parties and the unweighted measure is more appropriate for this analysis. However, empirical results will be reported for both weighted and unweighted measures of party appeal. If New Politics issues are present in mainstream parties' platforms then we would see the same effect of turnout inequality for both models. On the other side, if the unweighted mean salience is affected by turnout bias and the weighted mean salience is not, the results will indicate that New Politics issues are more commonly introduced by

smaller parties.
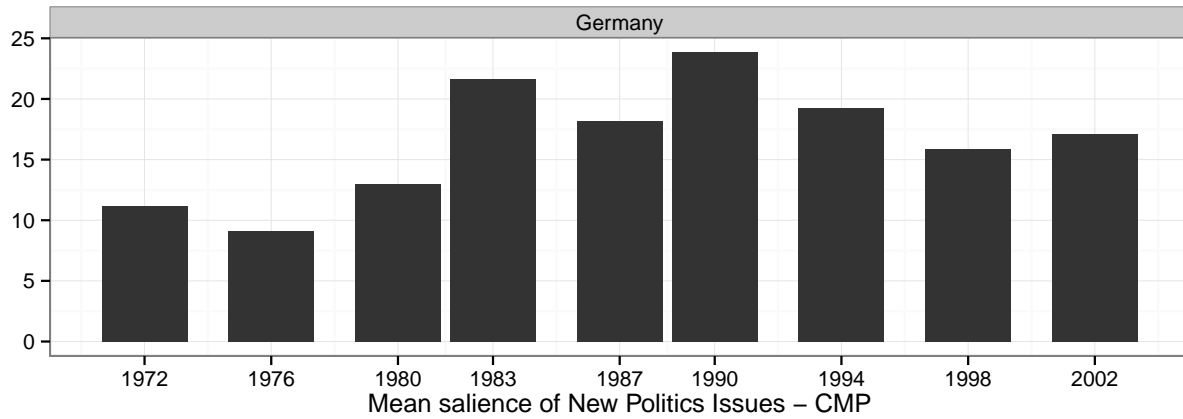
Figure 3.2: Mean salience of New Politics issues: example of Germany.
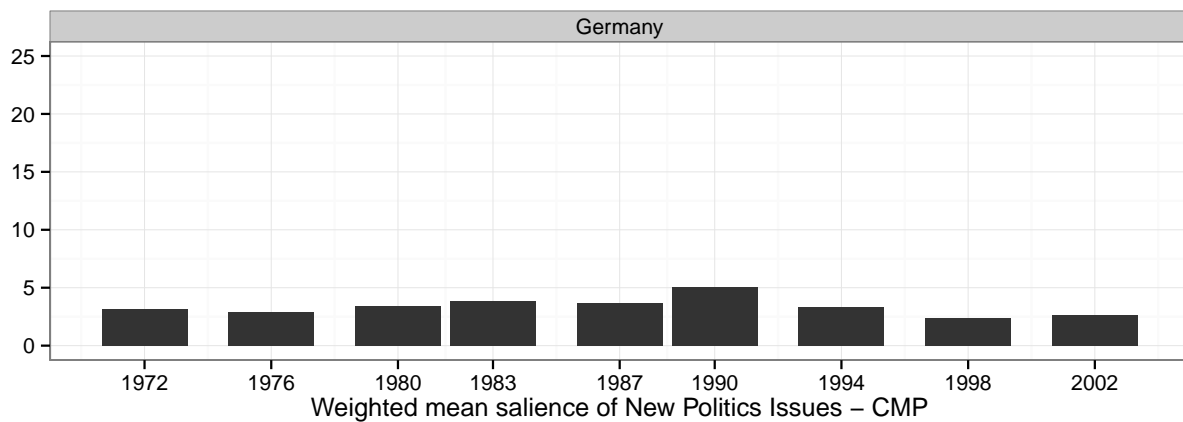
Figure 3.3: Weighted mean salience of New Politics issues: example of Germany.

3.3.1 Electoral System and Party System Permeability

Changes in party appeal could be driven by other factors asides from inequalities in turnout. There are two sets of institutional constraints that can directly or indirectly influence the relationship between youth turnout bias and party appeal, *electoral system design* and *party system permeability*, respectively.

Electoral rules determine the environment in which parties interact (Rae, 1967; Riker, 1982; Taagepera and S., 1989; Cox, 1997). Voting rules can affect whether it is advantageous from a vote-seeking strategy to advocate different, non-centrist, policy positions (see Ezrow, 2010). According to the influential spatial model study by Cox (1997), proportional electoral rules create incentives for parties to present party programs that are further away from the center, and disproportional systems create vote-seeking incentives whereby parties cluster around the mean or median voter position. Limitations of the policy space in disproportional systems can also exert influence on the appearance of parties that compete on the New Politics domain or on the adaptation of New Politics issues by established parties. Also, as a by-product of electoral rules, high effective thresholds of representation can significantly decrease the chances of new party appearance. Because of the possibility of electoral and party system influence on the relationship between turnout bias and party appeal, empirical test will also include an indicator of electoral system disproportionality (Gallagher, 1991), as a continuous measure of electoral system differences and the effective number of political parties (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979).

New party success in entering the party space will ultimately depend on the political opportunity structures that are constrained by formal and informal aspects (Hug, 2000, 2001). The same argument can be extended to changes in programmatic party appeals. Formal aspects refer primarily to national party laws that with varying intensity regulate party registration procedures, party finance, activities, organizational structure, and free media access (van Biezen and Rashkova, 2014). Some of these rules impose higher costs for smaller parties, such as registration requirements, while others are meant to replace the traditional membership based finance, such as generous regimes of public funding. Regimes of public funding can be quite restrictive and over-regulated, such as the requirement that only parties that gain parliamentary representation in previous elections have access to funds. Recent research on new parties' entry and potential success demonstrates that

while these regulations have intended greater liberalism for all parties, such rules have actually benefited the mainstream parties the most and have significantly decreased the number of new party entries (van Biezen and Rashkova, 2014).

Public subsidies are very important for small parties, even though they tend to favor incumbents over new parties (Müller, 1993). The majority of funding available for smaller parties actually comes from public subsidies as they are not established enough to develop effective private fundraising strategies (Nassmacher, 2001). Information on the differences in public subsidies is hand-coded from the new publicly available database of party regulation "Party Law in Modern Democracies" (van Biezen, 2013) and supplemented by information from the IDEA (2013) political finance database. The measure captures whether public subsidies exist and which mode of access to public subsidies is adopted in each country. For the purposes of this analysis, I have recoded the measure to differentiate between the systems where public funding is not available (0), countries where funding is available only for parties with parliamentary representation (1) or for all parties which gain a certain percentage of votes with lower and higher thresholds (2).

Media access is the dominant way through which parties present their programs to the public. While some countries do not regulate broadcasting at all (0), or provide free broadcasting for all parties equally (3) in some countries broadcasting time is dependent on similar thresholds as public funding, namely lower requirements on vote share (2) and more restrictive seat share requirements (1). Cross-country and cross-year differences in media access were also hand-coded from the database of party regulation (van Biezen, 2013) and IDEA (2013) political finance database.

Informal aspects of party system permeability include existing cleavage structures and the structure of party competition. Ever since the work of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) the stability of West European party system has been attributed to the existence of deep historical divisions based on class, nationality and religion that were institutionalized through

mass party organizations. In the recent two decades, however, a large group of scholars (e.g. Dalton, 1996; Franklin and Rudig, 1992; Kitschelt, 1994) has argued that because of the transformation in the labour market and national economies, traditional cleavages have lost their pivotal role and have been replaced by other less enduring divisions. The organization of traditional cleavages and resulting initial political competition thus can work against the electoral entry of new parties or the electoral mobility of voters (Roberts and Wibbels, 1999). In those systems where class and religious cleavages still inform party competition party system permeability will surely be smaller. However, direct measures of cleavage structures are complex, therefore this analysis will use an approximate measure, namely electoral volatility, which should help in discriminating between rigid systems strongly embedded along cleavage lines with low volatility and those more fluid and open systems with high levels of volatility (for a similar apprach see Tavits, 2008).

3.4 Model Specification and Results

The relationship between unweighted and weighted mean party appeal and the main explanatory variable, youth turnout inequality, is assessed with a dynamic model:

$$PartyAppeal_{kt} = \beta PIE_{k(t-1)} + \beta PartyAppeal_{k(t-1)} + \beta X_{kt} + \varepsilon_{kt},$$

where the levels of (un)weighted mean of New Politics issue salience at election year t are modeled as a linear function of the levels of turnout inequality from previous elections, the first lag of the (un)weighted mean of New Politics issue salience at election year t-1, with a vector of additional controls, all of which are time variant, and an error term. The introduction of the lagged explanatory variable is necessary since it is possible that youth turnout levels do not affect changes in party appeal at the time of elections, but rather with a delay.

To confirm the main hypothesis, the direction of the effect of the lagged turnout bias

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should be positive, as turnout bias is calculated in such a way that higher values indicate less turnout inequality or no difference between age groups and lower values indicate higher levels of turnout bias. This model is estimated for two versions of the explanatory variable, weighted and unweighted party appeal. Since the data is pooled, the number of time points is not enough to treat it as time-series cross-sectional. However, it is still necessary to control for the possibility of heteroskedasticity as observations are not independent across countries (e.g. Green et al., 2001). The regression model with clustered corrected standard errors will reduce the chance of biased estimates. Moreover, a lagged dependent variable will be included to control for the problems of serial autocorrelation.

Table 3.1 summarizes the results from a set of models estimated for both versions of the dependent variable, the mean salience of New Politics issues in party platforms. The first models include only lagged turnout bias and lagged dependent variable. As expected, models with the weighted explanatory variable do not show the expected effects, the measure is not sensitive enough to capture the changes in minor parties' platforms. However, results from the first model (M1) with unweighted party appeal show that an increase in turnout bias with a one election lag is followed by an increase in party appeal on New Politics issues. In the second model (M2), which includes concurrent turnout bias, the main effect is unchanged. The last model includes five additional predictors: effective number of electoral parties, electoral system disproportionality, mode of public funding for parties, access to broadcasting and volatility. The effect of turnout bias remains stable even when controls are taken into consideration.

The final set of models (M3) includes indicators of the electoral system and party system permissibility. The effect of turnout bias remains stable and the effect is even stronger. Asides from volatility, other control variables do matter for party appeal in New Politics domain. The negative direction of the parameter for volatility suggests that party appeal on New Politics issues is lower in countries with lower levels of electoral volatility.

Table 3.1: Pooled linear regression models for party appeal

Variables	Un-weighted party appeal			Weighted party appeal		
	M1	M2	M2	M1	M2	M3
Lagged PIE t-1	0.14*	0.16*	0.17*	-0.05	-0.04	-0.03
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Lagged party appeal	0.66***	0.66***	0.67***	0.75***	0.75***	0.70***
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
PIE t0		-0.09	-0.08		-0.00	0.03
		(0.09)	(0.10)		(0.09)	(0.07)
Disproportionality			0.01			0.05
			(0.07)			(0.04)
ENEP			0.00			-0.09*
			(0.06)			(0.04)
Direct public funding			0.00			-0.00
			(0.06)			(0.05)
Access to broadcasting parties			0.03			0.01
			(0.04)			(0.04)
Electoral volatility			-0.14**			-0.18*
			(0.04)			(0.07)
Constant	0.10**	0.13**	0.14**	0.11*	0.11	0.16*
	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.07)
R-Squared	0.49	0.50	0.52	0.60	0.60	0.64
Parties	98	97	97	97	97	97

Note: *** p<0.001, ** p <0.01, * p <0.05. Estimates from pooled linear regression with cluster corrected standard errors that take into account that the observations within countries are non-independent.

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Additional models have also been specified that probe the interactions between each of the party system permissibility indicators with lagged party appeal, but the interactions' effects were small and did not reach statistical significance.

The main independent variable, the youth turnout inequality bias is an estimated value with a measurement error that must be accounted for. As in the second chapter, 1,000 parameters of turnout inequality were estimated with an ordinary nonparametric bootstrap procedure on random subsamples of each country and year. The resulting estimates were used to run 1,000 pooled regression models, in particular models 1 for each dependent variable, using the cluster option from the "Zelig" package (Choirat et al., 2015) in R. Results were pooled using Rubin rules, and the reported R square was pooled using the formulas developed by Harel (2009) and implemented in the "mice" package (van Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011) in R. Pooled results, suggest that the impact of lagged turnout bias remains significant in 500 out of 1,000 models (90% CI). Detailed table is presented in Appendix B.

3.5   Conclusions

This chapter has investigated the link between age based turnout inequalities and parties' programmatic mobilization strategies in the domain of New Politics. To assess this relationship I calculated a measure of turnout inequality for 15 countries and 98 national elections. In almost all of the countries and election years, young adults were found to be less likely to turn out than adults. The findings also show that this trend is present even in those countries with compulsory voting systems, which confirms the previous findings by Quintelier et al. (2011). Youth turnout inequality is not only a recent, but a persistent problem. But more importantly, I have argued that parties might actually be anticipating youth preferences even if young people are not their core constituents and even if they are

less likely to be effectively mobilized. Results support this expectation as youth turnout bias from previous elections has a significant, although small, impact on concurrent mean salience of New Politics issues. With one election lag, young people's abstention from elections can influence party programmatic strategies.

Since the main intention of this dissertation is to see whether participatory inequalities have a spill-over effect on age differences in representation, inquiry about the impact of the party systems does not stop here. The present analysis has demonstrated that parties do matter, and that in fact, they do react to turn out differences. However, we still do not know what type of parties mobilize young people and how do those parties perform their representative roles. The results show that the mobilization-turnout bias relationship is significant only for the measure of party appeal that takes into consideration the party platforms of all parties in the system, regardless of their electoral strength. So it is relevant to see whether niche parties are solely responsible for mobilizing young people because they are often the 'owners' of the New Politics issues. The focus of the next chapter will be to explore the relationship between party types and age based differences in voter-party linkages.

Chapter 4

Age Differences in Voter-Party Linkages

4.1 Introduction

Over the last decade an emerging body of literature has shown that young people are harbingers of decay for old politics (Anderson, 1976; Franklin, 2004; Inglehart, 1977, 1990, 1997). Scholars interested in youth all seem to agree that part of the blame for these negative trends should be attributed to the political system, and political parties in particular (Henn et al., 2002, 2005; Henn and Weinstein, 2006; Mycock and Tonge, 2012; Kimberlee, 2002). Decline in youth turnout rates (Sloam, 2007; Henn et al., 2005), significant drops in party membership (e.g. van Biezen et al., 2012; van Biezen and Poguntke, 2012), and weak partisan ties between the youngest generations and parties (Dalton and Weldon, 2007; Campbell et al., 1960; Miller and Shanks, 1996; Sears and Funk, 1999; Franklin, 1984) have been taken as clear signs of a disconnect between parties and young citizens. Young people themselves often report that political parties have been overlooking their specific needs, as parties are also not fulfilling their representative role (Mycock and Tonge, 2012). If we also consider evidence on the rise of anti-party sentiments among all generations, decline

in electoral turnout, considerable drops in party membership, and broader discussions on the qualities of democracy and performance of governments, it is necessary to ask 'what are parties for?' and how are they performing their roles (e.g. Lawson and Poguntke, 2004; Dalton et al., 2011; Sartori, 2005).

Results from the second chapter strongly suggest that young people are well represented in terms of collective group-to-parliament ideological and issue congruence. Also, the previous chapter has provided some evidence that parties can find ways to appeal to young people through changes in their party platforms. Parties emphasize New Politics issues when youth turnout inequalities are especially high, and it is very likely that those parties are small, niche parties. However, the previous chapter did not provide evidence on youth mobilization, so we do not really know whether niche parties can also be effective in providing an impetus for the development of partisan attachments among young adults, which would be the ultimate goal of every mobilization effort. Additionaly, we do not know much about the differences in representation among age groups in terms of voter-party congruence. It is, therefore, necessary to ask whether age differences in partisanship and voter-party congruence exist and whether those parties that manage to get young people to vote and with whom the young identify, are also able to perform their representative functions of articulating and aggregating their supporters' preferences.

In this chapter the focus shifts to the level of parties, and voter-party dyads because we can test party-voter linkages only for those citizens who are engaged in politics and who have expressed their party preference.

4.2 Niche and Mainstream Parties

It is not surprising that most causal explanations of citizen involvement in politics turn to political parties. Changes to the party system and party organizations and changes in

the broader society might have made some functions less the exclusive domain of political parties. The traditional understanding of what parties are supposed to do is historically conditioned. Scholarly expectations are often "tied to an image of party which hinged on the model of the mass party as being both normatively and practically desirable." (Mair, 2003, 7). In fact, "parties have probably never really dominated all of the functions claimed for them", and "in truth, parties have always had to share the performance of, say, the representative functions with actors such as interest groups and the mass media, and they have never been more than one of a number of factors which influence the governing process." (Webb, 2005, 637).

However, parties are rational actors and some functions are essential for their existence. Parties have to recruit and select their candidates for elective office and potential government positions. They should compete in the electoral arena and try to get their candidates elected. To increase their chances of electoral success they should mobilize their supporters to the polls and even turn to unlikely supporters and try to convert them to their side. Moreover, parties should articulate and aggregate their supporters' preferences and fulfill their electoral promises through policy formulation and implementation. This function is crucial for all normative understandings of representative democracies, but it is also crucial for parties' subsistence, as retroactive assessments of a party's performance play a large part in voter electoral decisions.

The emerging systematic evidence of partisan de-alignment, anti-party sentiments, decline in electoral turnout, and the inability of parties to retain a broad membership base has spurred academic attention and revived the scholarly interest in party system change and party politics in general (for a review see Gunther et al., 2002; Montero and Gunther, 2003). The observed decline in the relevance of political parties and the apparent changes in party organizations, mostly in Western democracies and Northern America, have been used to re-examine the orthodox sociological model of political cleavages proposed by Lipset

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and Rokkan in 1967. For some scholars a decline in the ability of social characteristics to predict vote choice, along with the previously mentioned trends in voting behavior and political participation, was sufficient evidence to argue that the decline of cleavage politics is happening in Western European and Northern American countries (e.g. Dalton, 1984; Franklin and Rudig, 1992).

But others still maintain that signs of increased instability are moderate and that political cleavages are still relevant (e.g. Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Mair, 1998; Enyedi, 2008). The de-structuring of traditional cleavages does not imply that the group-based politics has completely vanished. Tertialization, mediatization, affluence, cognitive mobilization, individualization, and secularization have not eliminated the impact of group identities entirely (289 Enyedi, 2008) and group identities still play an important role in explaining voters' policy positions on a number of issues (such as immigration or welfare state benefits), while social status categories like employment status or type of residential community still matter for vote choice (Oesch, 2008). More importantly, new cleavages, based on value orientations, are becoming increasingly relevant (Dalton, 1996; Knutsen, 2004, 2006, 2009; Enyedi, 2008).

When old social divisions lose political strength, the political space is left with a void that can either be filled by old parties that have the ability and the foresight to absorb social changes and transform their organization and programmatic appeals, or with new political parties who seize and institutionalize new conflicts (e.g. Dalton, 1996; Mair et al., 2004). Traditional parties adapt by changing their interactions with their members, moving closer to the state, and increasingly use modern techniques of market research to identify and collect demands from relevant societal groups (Poguntke, 2004, 1-5). The British Labour Party under Blair is often cited as a success story in this regard. By weakening the ties with the trade union movement and a declining unionized blue-collar worker base, by moderating its ideological positions and adapting centrist policy positions on a number

of salient topics, and by making significant changes in the organizational structures and communication style, the Labour Party managed to transform itself into the "pragmatic party of the centre-left" (Poguntke, 2004, 6).

Alternatively, when the Old Politics of social-democrats, conservatives or left-libertarians falls short in retaining their supporters and does not respond to people's demands quickly, new parties enter the stage. Examples are numerous. Rising environmental concerns have led to the emergence of green parties, while changes in welfare systems and a growing awareness of social inequalities and marginalization have led to higher demands for social equality. Gaps in policy space were filled with new players that differ significantly both in terms of the content they offer and in terms of their base of supporters.

A novel conceptual distinction between 'mainstream' and 'niche' parties is gaining momentum in the literature on party change and competition (Meguid, 2005, 2008; Adams et al., 2006; Ezrow, 2010; Wagner, 2011; Meyer and Miller, 2015). This distinction is especially useful here since it perfectly captures the differences between parties which should be most important for age based differences in partisan identification and representation. While the changes in the nature of party politics towards greater pragmatism, professionalization, or market-lead campaigning might "yield maximum electoral dividends" among key supporters of mainstream parties, these same changes are often seen as the main explanations of young people's anti-party sentiment (Henn et al., 2005, 559). Because large parties are either adopting catch-all vote maximizing strategies to appeal to a wider circle of potential voters, or they focus specifically on the middle-aged and elderly voters, their policy appeal becomes indistinct and issues that are of interest for young people are marginalized (Kimberlee, 2002). On the other side, single-issue campaigns, an emphasis on the New Politics and a form of ideological distinctiveness are the defining characteristics of niche parties (Ezrow, 2010) and the reasons why those types of parties might be a perfect vehicle for young people's views.

4.2.1 Age Differences in Partisan Identification

Studies on young people's preferences, based on the works of Inglehart (1990) and Dalton (1996), maintain that young people reject conventional political parties, because they have a particular political agenda that is not covered in mainstream party platforms. This agenda is a result of the modernization processes, the same changes often seen as detrimental due to their weakening of traditional cleavage systems (Inglehart, 1990; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005). Because they were socialized in periods with improved economic conditions, core value priorities of recent cohorts have shifted from materialist values, such as physical sustenance and safety, towards post-materialist concerns of self-expression and quality of life (Inglehart, 1990). Therefore, issues that matter most for young people are greater social justice, environmental protection, or inclusive liberal policies. Moreover, young people are more sympathetic towards cause-oriented' activities (Norris, 2003), so they will be attracted to single-issue campaigns and parties that come out of new social movements.

The literature on green and extreme right party supporters offers clear support for this argument. Ever since the first systematic study on Green voters in the 1980s (Poguntke, 1987), there is a widespread consensus that Green parties are most commonly supported by young voters more than other age groups (Franklin and Rudig, 1992; MüllerRommel, 2007; Dolezal, 2010). Additionally, young people have fewer civic skills and their lower levels of education, experience, and income are preventing them to become active participants (Verba et al., 1995). Moreover, as the 'start-up' point of adulthood has significantly shifted, young adults today will be concerned with their labour force positions or family circumstances even longer and will have even less resources and desire to engage in politics. These characteristics are also found to translate into weaker partisan ties, lack of psychological identifications and political interest (Garcia Albacete, 2014). Because of the weak community integration, young adults also have a higher tendency to vote for extreme right parties, a behavior that can be considered deviant for older citizens (Arzheimer and

Carter, 2003). So even though I expect to find large differences in partisanship across age groups, as previous literature indicates, I also expect that:

H1 (*the Equality in Partisanship*): The differences in partisan identification among age groups are expected to be smaller for niche than for mainstream parties.

4.2.2 Age Differences in Policy Representation

Not all parties are expected to perform all functions equally. Some parties might have a larger number of partisans and reliable voters, but that does not imply that they perform better at representing their preferences compared to parties with fewer supporters. While partisanship is certainly an important indicator of a good party-voter relationship, the representative link is much more important in the light of democratic principles. We know from a number of studies on political representation that examine the levels of policy congruence between parties and their supporters that party-voter linkages in European democracies are quite strong (Dalton et al., 2011). But the literature on the contextual influences of party-voter agreement still dominates party representation studies, and the focus is mainly directed towards the differences in the quality of representation across different types of electoral and party systems and not between age groups or across types of parties.

Results from the second chapter strongly show that that young people are better off in terms of ideological representation than adults. I have also conducted an additional analysis to check whether good congruence of young people and their parliaments holds when other measures of policy representation are considered. Comparison of age differences in issue congruence on two specific policy domains, liberal policies and redistribution, confirms previous findings regarding youth congruence. The young are indeed better off than their older counterparts in terms of policy representation. However, these results do not imply that a comparison of voter-party congruence among age groups will be the same. While it

is possible that young people will also be better off in terms of voter-party linkages, some parties can still outperfom other parties in providing better representation.

Recently, there is some evidence that congruence, as the mostly used proxy for the quality of representational linkage, differs across party types (Pierce and Miller, 1999; Mattila and Raunio, 2006; Dalton et al., 2011). Dalton et al. (2011) studied the degree of ideological congruence and found that congruence is weaker at the ideological poles than at the centre, since parties hold more extreme positions than voters do. Moreover, they argue that ideological disagreement is slightly higher for communist and extreme right parties, but not significantly so when compared to the gaps in representation for other parties. On the other side, Pierce and Miller (1999) analyzed voter-party issue congruence in six countries and found that leftist and green parties have the highest levels of voter-party issue congruence, followed by a large cluster of rather heterogeneous rightist parties. This finding goes in line with the comparative study by Mattila and Raunio (2006) on the responsiveness of political parties on European integration issues, and its conclusion that smaller and ideologically distinctive parties perform their representative functions better than other parties.

Little is still known empirically about the mechanisms behind those findings but results suggest that niche parties outperform mainstream parties in representing their supporters on specific issue domains, while mainstream parties are better at representing their supporters ideologically. Should niche parties also be better at representing young people and do they reduce the differences in voter-party linkages between age groups? There are several reasons why this might be expected.

First, the youngest citizens have limited resources for voluntary engagement and less knowledge about politics. Therefore, they will be more reliant on simple, heuristic party cues. Not only specific issue appeal, but party programmatic distinctiveness might also play a large role in attracting supporters among the youngest generations. Niche parties

not only compete on new politics issues, but also have more incentives to offer more extreme policy positions to separate themselves from the mainstream parties (Ezrow, 2010; Tavits, 2008). After all, the very term 'niche' assumes that new parties are formed in order to fill the gaps within the policy space that mainstream parties do not want or cannot afford to attend to. Moreover, while traditional theories of two-party competition argue that parties will gain votes if they converge towards the centre (Downs, 1957), as mainstream parties tend to do, in multi-party settings non-centrism might be a better strategy (Cox, 1997).

Secondly, previous research on party mobilization efforts argues that parties will be more likely to contact their supporters when the costs of not contacting them are strategically determined to be higher than the costs of contact (Karp and Banducci, 2007). Niche parties have more incentives to appeal specifically to young people and also to develop stronger ties with their supporters, because they are competing on non-traditional issues that are less likely to attract older voters, and voters with strong previous partisan attachments.

Moreover, niche parties often appeal to a narrow base of potential voters and they emphasize future-oriented policy goals which implies they have greater incentives to maintain their supporter base in the long run. A recent analysis by Ezrow (2010) offers additional support for this argument. He found that while mainstream parties adjust their positions to the median voter policy preferences at the expense of their core constituency base, niche parties adjust their position to their mean supporters. It should also be added that niche party supporters are more likely to be more homogeneous in their demands so the representative strain should be smaller for niche parties and it will be easier for such parties to retain close connections with their supporter and membership base (van Biezen et al., 2012). I expect that:

H2 (*the Equality of Policy Representation*): The differences in policy representation between age groups, if present, are expected to be smaller for niche parties than for main-

stream parties.

4.3 Data and Measures

Party level information is available from the Rohrschneider and Whitefield expert survey (henceforth RWES) conducted in 24 countries in Central Eastern and Western Europe between autumn 2007 and spring 2008. The survey had a good response rate with close to 10 experts for each country (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). Some of the relevant party and system variables, which were not available in the RWES were added from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2012). To examine voter-party linkages the individual level dataset from the 2008 European Social Survey (henceforth ESS 2008) was matched with RWES based on the party choice in the last national elections, so the presented analysis is conducted only for voters. I rely on the ESS because it was conducted at about the same time as RWES, but also because it has a large sample size in each country (more than 1500 respondents). Not all countries from the RWES were covered in the ESS, so the final data set on which the analysis below was conducted covers 21 countries and 132 parties. Parties that have less than 20 voters were excluded from the analysis.

The first dependent variable is partisanship, because it is an ideal indicator of the abilities of parties to form close linkages with their supporters. Political parties, if they were to give a sense of representation to young voters, not only need to attract young voters to vote for them, but also make them develop enduring psychological attachments (Green et al., 2002; Lazarsfeld et al., 1948; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). As several studies demonstrate, partisanship is also a valid indicator of party-voter relationships even across countries where partisan traditions and institutional arrangements differ (Holmberg, 1994; Dalton and Weldon, 2007). To capture party identification, the ESS asked respondents: "Is there a particular political party you feel closer to than all the other parties?". Response

categories were coded dichotomously, with 1 indicating a positive response and 0 a negative one.

Policy preference representation at the voter-party level is best summarized by the expectations formulated through the responsible party model (henceforth RPM), a dominant theoretical justification for studies on political representation (e.g. Miller, 1999; Thomassen, 1994). According to the RPM parties are core instruments of representation and "transmission belts for the conversion of popular desires into public policies" (Pierce and Miller, 1999, 9). Accordingly, if parties' positions correspond to the preferences of their supporters they come close to the ideals of good representation (e.g. Huber and Powell, 1994; Blais, 2006; Golder and Stramski, 2010). Party-voter correspondence can be assessed by comparing parties' ideological positions and voters' self-placement on the left-right scale, or parties' positions on specific policy issues and voters' preferences on the same issues.

I select two issues for this purpose, voters' preferences on government actions towards income inequality (pro and anti-redistribution) and preferences on liberal policies, in particular whether the voter favors LGBT rights or not. Similar to the sensitivity analysis in Chapter 2, party positions are taken from the RWES, where experts were asked to assess a party's position on redistribution and whether a party opposes or supports liberal policies such as LGBT rights, abortion, or legalization of cannabis. While issue formulation is not equivalent, they are close enough to gauge differences in representation between age groups, parties, and between countries. Moreover, these issues were selected because young people are more likely to provide an opinion on policies they care about and because these issues are also relevant and salient for adults.

Issue congruence on liberal policies and redistribution is calculated as the absolute difference between the position of the party and the preference of each party supporter (voter). While the RWES uses a 7-point scale to estimate the issue placements of political parties, the ESS uses a 5-point scale to measure the respondents' issue positions. Both

variables have been rescaled to facilitate comparisons and to have the same 0-1 range to facilitate comparisons (for a similar approach see Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012; Wessels, 1999). The variable's values were then reversed so that the higher values indicate better congruence.

The simplest approach to test the impact of party characteristics would be to dichotomize parties as niche vs. mainstream by restricting the concept to party families and classifying Green, Extreme Right and Communist parties as niche (Adams et al., 2006; Ezrow, 2010; Wagner, 2011). However, the demarcation of niche parties, which has received significant academic attention in the last few years, is still a contentious matter. Some claim that niche parties should be defined on the basis of their ideological position on the left-right space, as being distinctively non-centrists (Adams et al., 2006). A more nuanced approach argues that niche parties "are best defined as parties that compete primarily on a small number of non-economic issues" (Wagner, 2011, 1) by putting unusually a high emphasis on issues of the environment, immigration and liberal policies and a low emphasis on economic issues.

However, these disagreements are not necessarily bad for the present analysis. Should the data show that there are smaller age differences in partisanship and congruence for the supporters of niche parties, it will be possible to say whether that is because they are rarely moderate in their left-right positions, because they emphasize New Politics issues, both or neither. The first set of models will therefore test the differences in party identification by classifying niche parties as those belonging to the Green, Right and Communist party families, and as mainstream those parties that belong to agrarian, Christian-democrat, liberal, social-democrat and conservative families, as the most crude distinction. Small single-issue parties are excluded from the analysis because they often have less than 20 supporters in the ESS.

The second set of models includes a variable that classifies as niche those parties that

are distinctively non-centrist compared to moderate parties and a measure of niche parties based on issue emphasis. Each party's ideological distinctiveness was calculated as the absolute distance of each party from the centre of the leftright scale in each country. Nicheness based on issue emphasis is calculated by using the expert assessments on the importance of environmental issues, liberal policies on moral issues (on issues such as abortion, equal opportunities for women, homosexuality or euthanasia), and the migration issues for each party. Response categories were ordered from low importance (1) to high importance (6 or 7). For each issue, party-issue salience was subtracted from the mean issue salience in the country, and parties that put unusually high emphasis on a selected issue, by being one standard deviation higher than the mean issue salience in the country, were identified as parties that satisfy the New Politics issue emphasis requirement. The final variable was calculated as a dichotomous variable with a score of 1 identifying those parties that scored high on any of the three issues and 0 for parties that did not score high on any of the three issues.

Since this analysis is focused on party effects, only the most relevant individual characteristics are included as controls: completed years of education, political interest with response categories from 1 (very interested) to 4 (not at all interested), income as a 4-point measure capturing respondents' feelings about household income (from comfortable to very difficult), and the presence of post-materialist values. These variables are included to control for the possibility that observed age differences in partisanship and congruence actually stem from differences in the levels of education, political interest or income.

The post-materialist value scale was created from five questions that most closely match the variables used for the measurement of self-expression values in the World Values Survey (Inglehart and Baker, 2000, 24). The index was created by aggregating answers to these five questions with responses recorded on a 6-point Likert-scale: (1) important to make own decisions and be free; (2) important to think new ideas and being creative; (3) important to

be rich, have money and expensive things (reversed scale); (4) important to live in secure and safe surroundings (reversed scale); and (5) important that government is strong and ensures safety (reversed scale). The final index is recoded such that lower values indicate the presence of post-materialistic attitudes with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.6.

4.4 Model Specification and Results

Because the hypotheses posit an expectation about the relationship between party characteristics, individual level attitudes (partisanship), and preferences (congruence), the most appropriate model to test these hypotheses is a three-level mixed-effect model (Snijders and Bosker, 1999; Steenbergen and Jones, 2002) with partisan identification, voter-party issue congruence on liberal policies, and redistribution as three separate dependent variables. Individuals at level-1 are nested according to their vote choice within parties at level-2. Moreover, in order to ensure that the party differences are appropriately captured and the variance in party characteristics does not reflect country differences, countries are included in the level-3 but simply as a control variable and without any specific predictors.

Since partisan identification is a dichotomous variable, partisanship models were estimated as binomial three-level mixed effects models, and models for representative linkage dependent variables were estimated as linear mixed-effects models. And most importantly, multivariate analysis includes only those respondents who voted. Also, all predictors of interest and dependent variables were rescaled from 0 to 1, and all continuous predictors at level-1 were group mean centered. Since all party level predictors are dichotomous, grand mean centering was not necessary.

Figure 4.1 presents a visual inspection of differences in partisanship and two types of issue congruence for the young and adults. The distinction between young people and adults is the same as in the previous chapters, younger respondents (from 1829) are coded

as 1, and adults (30 +) are the baseline category (0). The first plot shows the differences in the percentage of partisans by age group. The young are clearly less likely to identify with political parties, but more than 50% of young adults who have voted still report to be close to political parties. The second plot shows the issue congruence on liberal policies, and while the young are on average less congruent, the difference in congruence between age groups is not significant. The last plot shows the difference in issue congruence between voters and parties on redistribution policies, and we see a starkly different picture. Young people are more congruent than adults, and the differences between age groups appear to be statistically significant.

Furthermore, since the logic behind the postulated hypothesis relies heavily on the assumption that young people are becoming increasingly self-expressive in their core values, it is necessary to check whether those young people, who vote in elections and are partisan, differ from those young people who abstain in terms of the importance of post-materialist positions. Figure 4.2 shows the differences on the post-materialism scale between voters and non-voters for both age groups. Young people are clearly more post-materialistic than adults, and young people who abstain from electoral participation even more so. But the differences in electoral participation between post-materialist and materialist respondents are in fact present in all age groups.
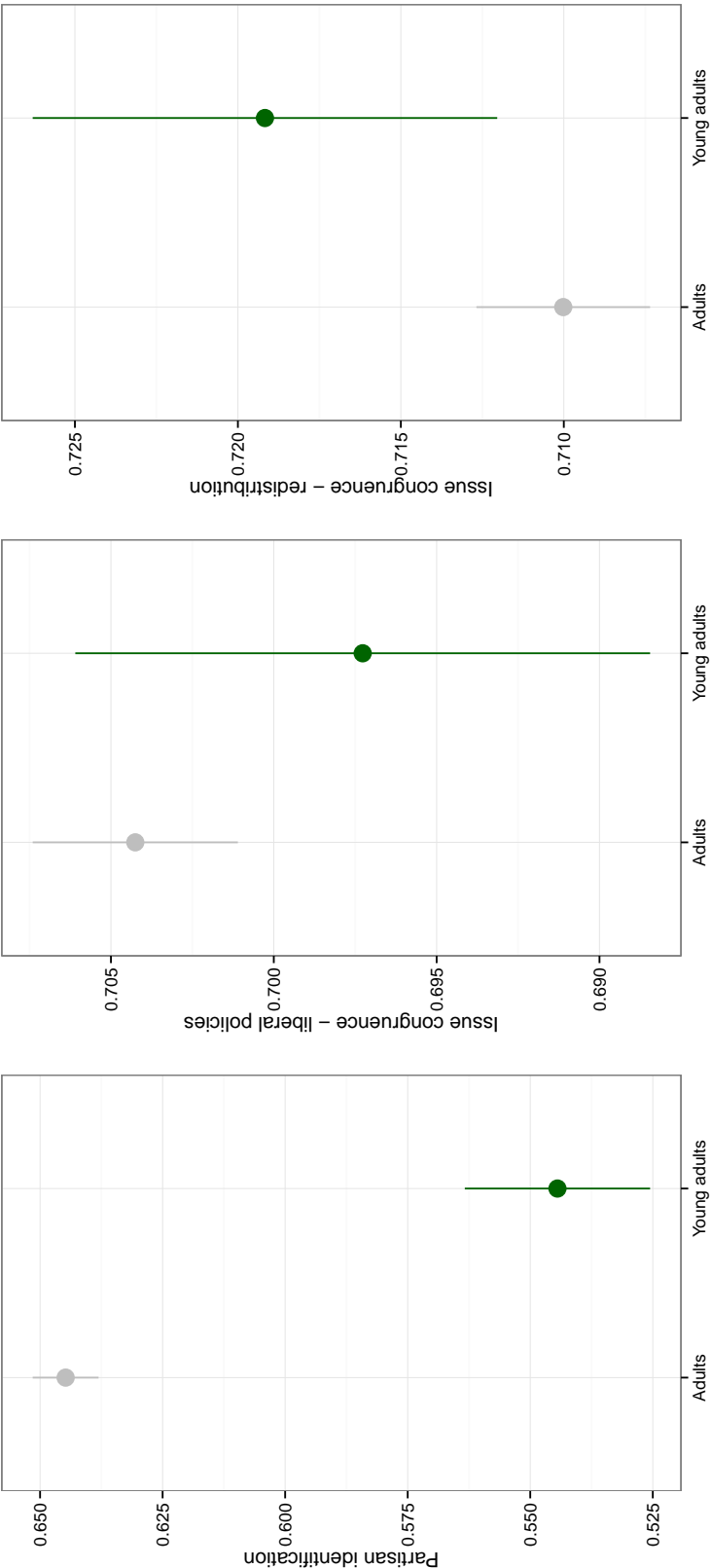
Figure 4.1: Dependent variables: partisanship and issue congruence. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.
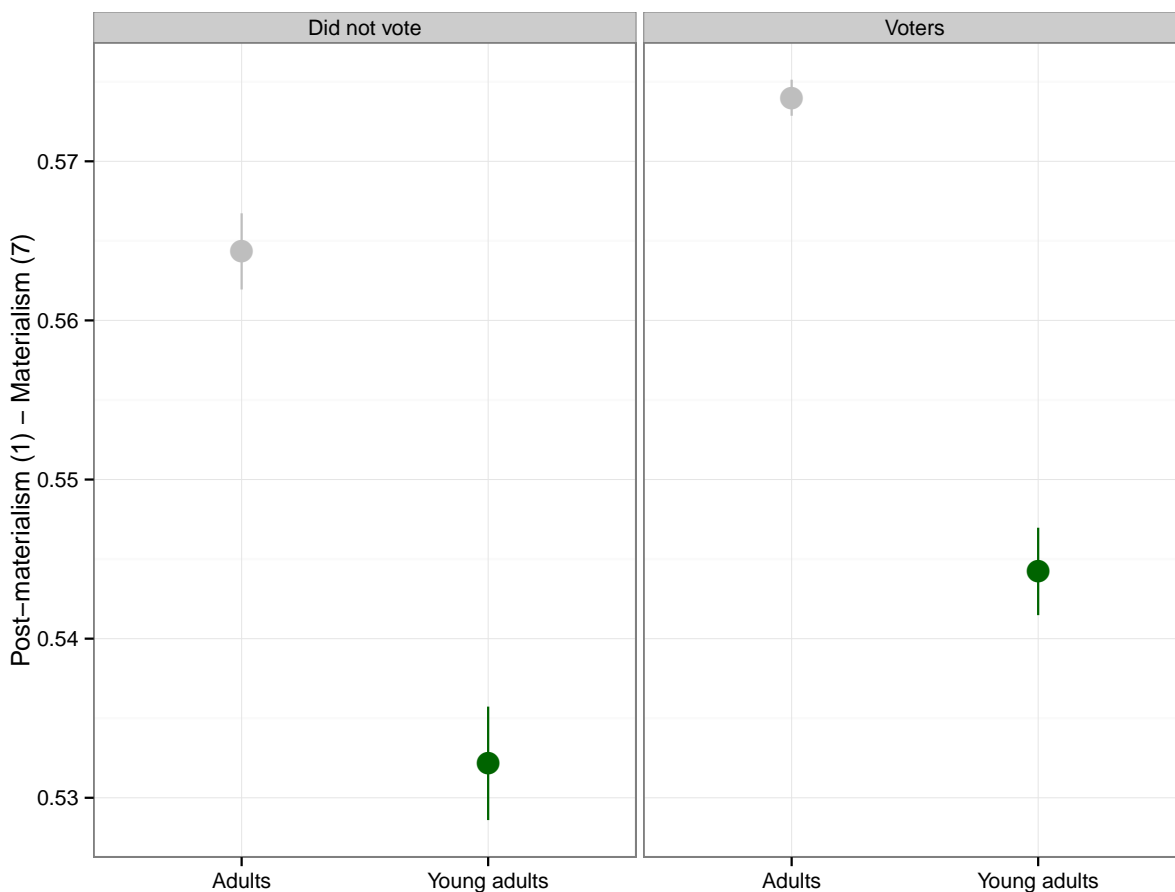
Figure 4.2: Differences on the post-materialism scale for voters/non-voters and partisans/non-partisans. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

To gauge the relationship between the three dependent variables and party characteristics, partisanship, and issue congruence were first plotted against all party families. Figure 4.3 shows the differences in partisanship between young people and adults for eight main party families, and Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5 for two types of issue congruence. Among voters of agrarian, Christian-democrat, conservative, and social-democrat families there are stark age differences in partisan identification, with a significantly smaller number of young partisans. However, age groups are equally distributed within supporters of communist, green, and right-wing parties. Only one mainstream family, liberal, also seems to

attract a somewhat larger number of young partisans, which can probably be explained with the party's emphasis on liberal policies that attract young voters.

Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5 show the age differences in issue congruence. Similarly to partisan identification, communist and green parties show the highest overall levels of voter agreement for both issues and no differences in congruence between their young and adult supporters. However, parties from social-democrat and liberal families are also very close to their supporters in terms of liberal policy congruence, and social-democratic parties even show higher congruence with their youngest supporters. Moreover, for most of the party families, levels of congruence on liberal policies do not differ across age groups, except for right and conservative parties. Similarly, age differences in congruence are not present for any of the party families when it comes to an agreement on redistribution policies, but some parties outperform others in terms of their overall levels of congruence.

To see whether these findings stand up to more conservative empirical tests, the first set of models test the impact of party characteristics on partisanship, the second set of models test the impact of party characteristics on ideological congruence and the final set of models focus on issue congruence.

As I have mentioned before, three variables measure differences in party characteristics: a binary variable 'niche' based on simple classification of niche versus mainstream parties regarding party families; a binary variable 'distinctive' that measures whether the party is moderate or ideologically non-centrist; and the variable 'new politics' that measures whether parties emphasize issues concerning the New Politics more than other parties in the country.

Since the classification based on party families is supposed to capture both dimensions of nicheness, ideological distinctiveness, and programmatic content, the first model with party level predictors includes only a basic niche versus mainstream classification, and the second model includes two other variables. Table 4.1 summarizes the results from all
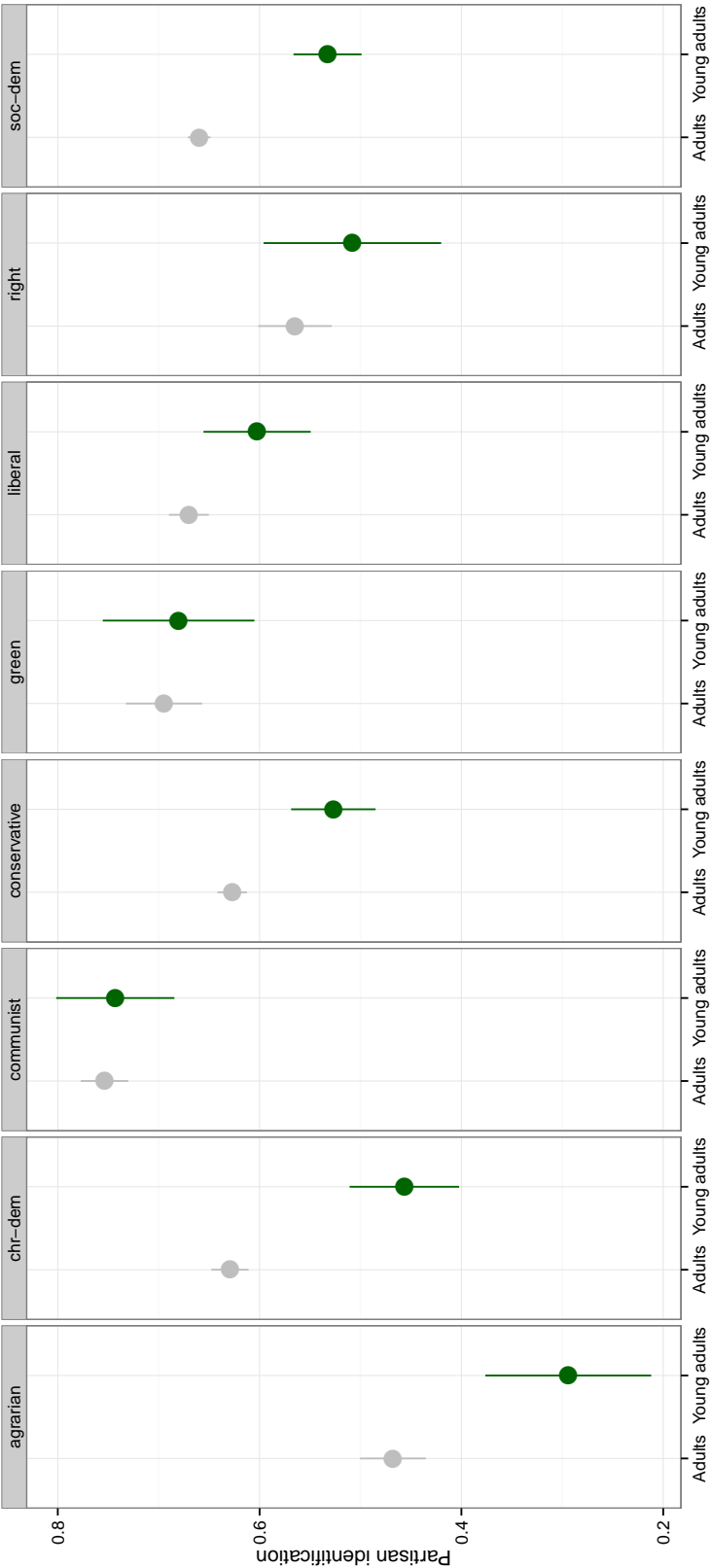
Figure 4.3: Age differences in partisanship and party families.Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.
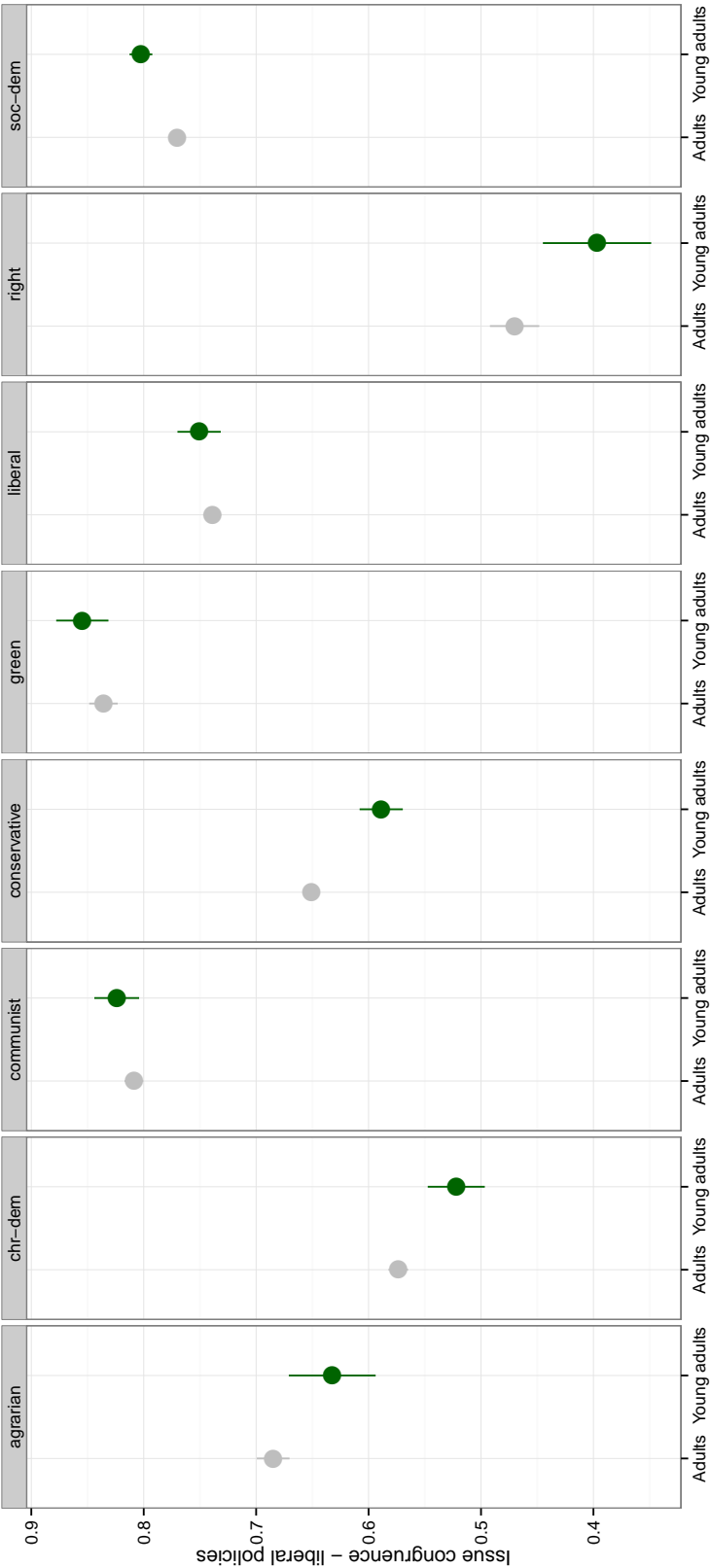
Figure 4.4: Age differences in congruence for liberal policies and party families. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.
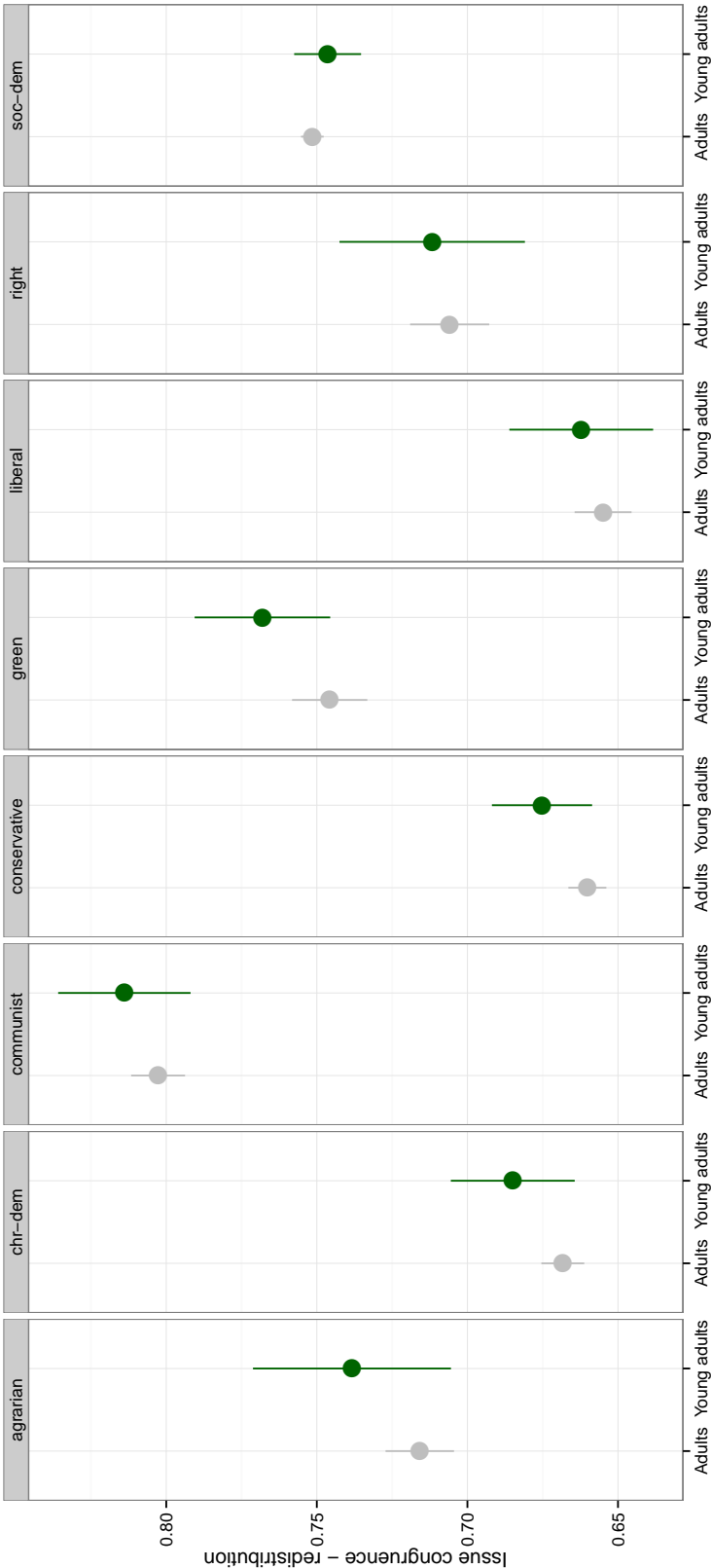
Figure 4.5: Age differences in congruence for redistribution policies and party families. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

models for partisanship. The results from the baseline model indicate that around 4% of variance in partisanship can be attributed to party specific characteristics, while 7% of variance remains at the country level.

To test the first hypothesis, the model is estimated with a cross-level interaction between party characteristics and 'young' variable. However, cross-level interaction parameters and its significance should be carefully interpreted. All of the cross-level interaction specifications will include an interaction between an indicator 'young' (dummy) and an indicators on party characteristics, which also all take on the values of 0 or 1. The estimated parameter of 'young' will let us know whether there are significant differences in partisanship and congruence between young people and adults, and the parameter of party level characteristics whether there are significant differences in partisanship and congruence within party types. When these two indicators interact, the main parameters cannot be interpreted as a single constant, like the coefficient of x on y in a simple linear additive model (Kam and Franzese, 2007).

The 'main' effect will thus be the effect of x when the moderator value is at its 0 value. That is why it is recommended to plot the marginal effects of x for all the values of the moderator that are of interest with 95% confidence intervals around the estimates (Kam and Franzese, 2007). The marginal effects plot will be easy to interpret as the conditional values of all moderators can only be 0 or 1. The marginal plot can show whether the age gap is contingent upon relevant party characteristics. For instance, by plotting marginal effects of 'young' indicator on the dependent variable for distinctive and non-distinctive parties, the confidence interval around the estimates will show whether there is a significant age gap in partisanship and congruence for two types of parties. Both hypotheses postulate that age gap will not be present for niche parties, so the confidence interval around the marginal effect should cross zero for niche parties, and vice versa, and should be distinguishable from zero for other parties.

Table 4.1: Mixed models for partisan identification

Partisanship	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
(Intercept)	0.50***	1.38***	1.35***	1.36***	1.33***	1.34***	1.34***
	(0.12)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.17)
Young		-0.32***	-0.32***	-0.38***	-0.32***	-0.34***	-0.34***
		(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Political interest		-1.73***	-1.72***	-1.73***	-1.73***	-1.73***	-1.73***
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Years of education		-0.22*	-0.23*	-0.23*	-0.22*	-0.23*	-0.23*
		(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Income		-0.28***	-0.28***	-0.28***	-0.28***	-0.29***	-0.28***
		(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
PM index		0.44**	0.43**	0.44**	0.44**	0.44**	0.44**
		(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)
Niche (by party family)			0,17	0,11	-	-	-
			(0.10)	(0.10)	-	-	-
Young: Niche				0.36*	-	-	-
				(0.14)	-	-	-
Non-centrism				0.30**	0.29**	0.29**	
					(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
New politics emph.					-0.09	-0.1	-0.11
					(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Young: distinctive						0.13	-
						(0.13)	-
Young: new politics							0.14
							(0.13)
AIC	24584	23652	23651	23647	23646	23647	23646
BIC	24608	23715	23722	23742	23724	23749	23749
Log Likelihood	-12289	-11818	-11817	-11811	-11813	-11810	-11810
Observations	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540
Parties	132	132	132	132	132	132	132
Countries	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Variance:party/country	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.11	0.11
Variance:country	0.25	0.27	0.26	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.25
Variance:Young				0.06		0.07	0.07

Note: Generalized linear mixed model fit by maximum likelihood (Laplace Approximation) with 'lme4' package in R (version 3.1.0). Standard errors in parenthesis.*** p<0.001, ** p <0.01, * p <0.05.

The results from model 3 in Table 4.1 suggest that there is a significant interaction

effect between age and niche vs. mainstream parties, and a significant main effect for distinctly non-centrist vs. moderate parties. Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show the marginal plots for both cross-level interactions. Within supporters of niche parties there are no statistically significant differences between young people and adults regarding their levels of partisan identification. This finding confirms the expectations from the first hypothesis. Moreover, the results from the models with a more nuanced differentiation between niche and mainstream parties show that the same holds for parties that are distinctly non-centrist. This implies that the equalizing effect of niche parties on age differences in partisanship can mainly be attributed to the clarity of a niche party's ideological positions compared to the other parties in the system. Also, previous studies show that young people are more likely to vote for extreme right parties (e.g. Arzheimer and Carter, 2003), and the preliminary analysis shows that age differences in partisanship are very small. Since extreme right parties are not not the owners of post-materialist issues such as anti-growth or international peace, often advocating quite the opposite policies, part of the explanation for the right's appeal for young people should be attributed to its distinct non-centrist positions.
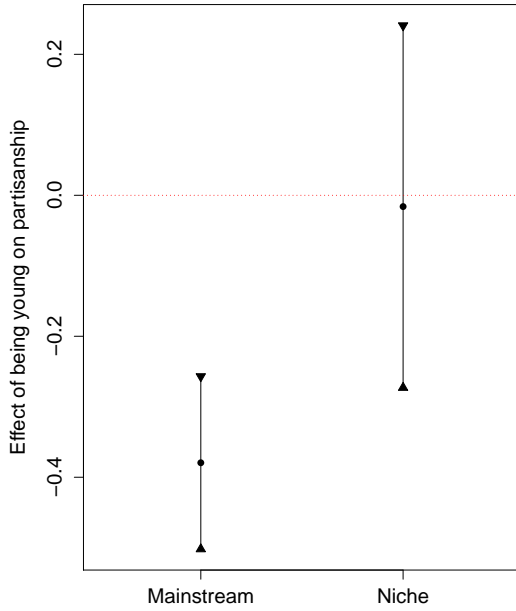
Figure 4.6: Marginal effects of 'young' on partisanship and niche vs. mainstream parties. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.
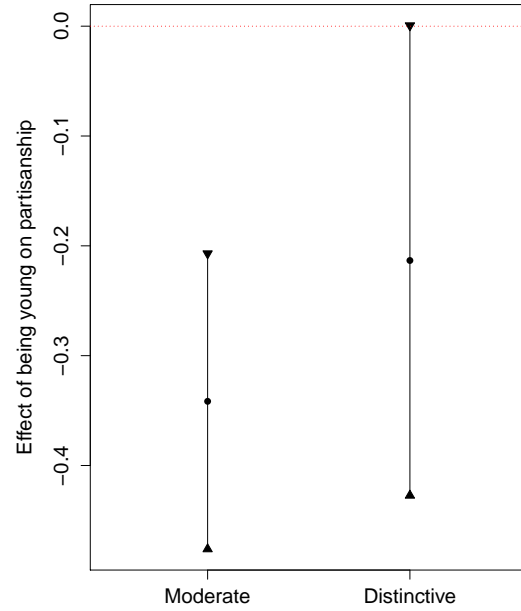
Figure 4.7: Marginal effects of 'young' on partisanship and non-centrist vs. moderate parties. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 present the results regarding the determinants of issue congruence. A closer look at variance decomposition, the rounded-up results which are shown at the bottom of the table, show that around 37% of the total variance in voter-party congruence for liberal policies is at the level of national parties, and only 2% can be attributed to country differences. For redistributive policies the respective figures are 25 and 4%, again underlying the importance of party-level factors for congruence.

Table 4.2: Mixed models for issue congruence: liberal policies

	Liberal policies						
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	0.70***	0.70***	0.69***	0.69***	0.71***	0.71***	0.71***
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Young		-0.02***	-0.02***	-0.02*	-0.02***	-0.01	-0.01
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(-0.01)	(0.00)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Political interest		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
		(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Years of education		0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
		(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Income		-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
		(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
PM index		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
		(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Niche			0.03	0.02	-	-	-
			(-0.03)	(-0.03)	-	-	-
Young: Niche				0.00	-	-	-
				(-0.02)	-	-	-
Distinctive parties					-0.01	0.00	0.01
					(-0.03)	(-0.03)	(-0.03)
New politics					-0.03	-0.03	-0.04
					(-0.03)	(-0.02)	(-0.03)
Young: distinctive						-0.03*	-
						(-0.01)	-
Young: new politics							0.00
							(-0.01)
AIC	-10611	-10582	-10575	-10653	-10569	-10651	-10647
Log Likelihood	5310	5300	5298	5340	5295	5339	5337
Observations	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540
Parties	132	132	132	132	132	132	132
Countries	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Variance: party/cntry	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Variance: country	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Variance: Young				0.00		0.00	0.00

Note: Linear mixed model fit by REML. Standard errors in parenthesis.*** p<0.001, ** p <0.01, * p <0.05.

The results show that voter-party congruence is very high for both policy domains with an intercept of 0.70 and 0.75. Moreover, for congruence on liberal policies young people are slightly less congruent than adults, while age differences are not significant for voter-party agreement on redistribution policies. The last five models for each policy test the impact of party characteristics. The only significant party level characteristic for the models regarding issue congruence on liberal policies is whether a party is distinctively non-centrist, however Figure 4.8 plots the marginal effects of age differences in congruence for both types of parties. Contrary to expectations from the second hypothesis, age differences in congruence are clearly present among the supporters of parties with distinct ideological positions and they are not present among the supporters of moderate parties. This finding can be attributed to the very high congruence of young adults with socio-democratic parties.

Table 4.3: Mixed models for issue congruence: redistribution

	Redistribution						
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	0.70***	0.75***	0.73***	0.73***	0.72***	0.72***	0.72***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Young		0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Political interest		0.01**	0.01**	0.01**	0.01**	0.01**	0.01**
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Years of education		0.05***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***	0.05***
		(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Income		-0.05***	-0.05***	-0.05***	-0.05***	-0.05***	-0.05***
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
PM index		-0.12***	-0.12***	-0.12***	-0.12***	-0.12***	-0.12***
		(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)	(-0.01)
Niche			0.07***	0.07***	-	-	-
			(-0.02)	(-0.02)	-	-	-
Young: Niche				0.00	-	-	-
				(-0.01)	-	-	-
Distinctive parties					0.04*	0.04*	0.04*
					(-0.02)	(-0.02)	(-0.02)
New politics					0.04*	0.04*	0.04*
					(-0.02)	(-0.02)	(-0.02)
Young: distinctive						0.00	-
						(-0.01)	-
Young: new politics							0.00
							(-0.01)
AIC	-14626	-14887	-14891	-14896	-14881	-14886	-14886
Log Likelihood	7317	7452	7455	7461	7451	7457	7457
Observations	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540	19540
Parties	132	132	132	132	132	132	132
Countries	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Variance: party/cntry	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Variance: country	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Variance: Residual	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
Variance: Young				0.00		0.00	0.00

Note: Linear mixed model fit by REML. Standard errors in parenthesis.*** p<0.001, ** p <0.01, * p <0.05.

Figure 4.8: Marginal effects of young on congruence in liberal policies or moderate vs. distinctive parties. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

On the other side, models for congruence regarding issues of redistribution show a different relationship. The main effects of all party level characteristics are significant, with niche, ideologically distinctive parties and parties that emphasize New Politics issues performing better in terms of issue congruence than the rest. Moreover, the models also suggest that both defining characteristics of nicheness, ideological distinctiveness, and an emphasis on non-economic issues have an equal role in explaining the high levels of voter-party congruence. However, none of the cross-level interaction effects are significant. From the Figures 4.9 and 4.10 it can be seen that while distinctive and New Politics parties

perform better in terms of the overall levels of congruence, there are no significant differences in redistribution policies agreement within age groups for all types of parties. This is a finding that goes against the second hypothesis but is good news for age equality in representation.
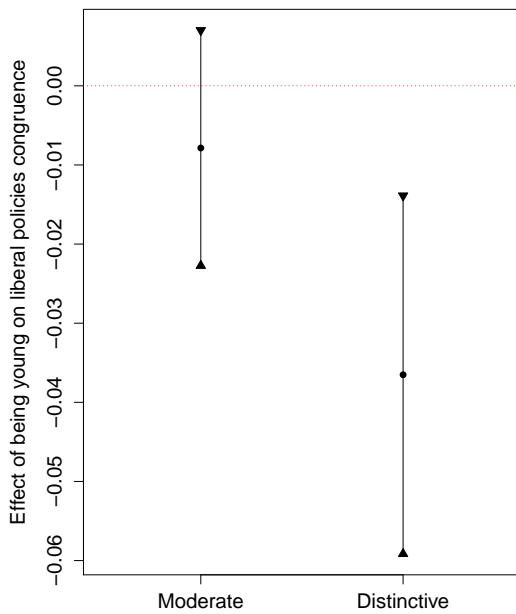
Figure 4.9: Marginal effects of 'young' on congruence for liberal policies and ideological distinctiveness. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.
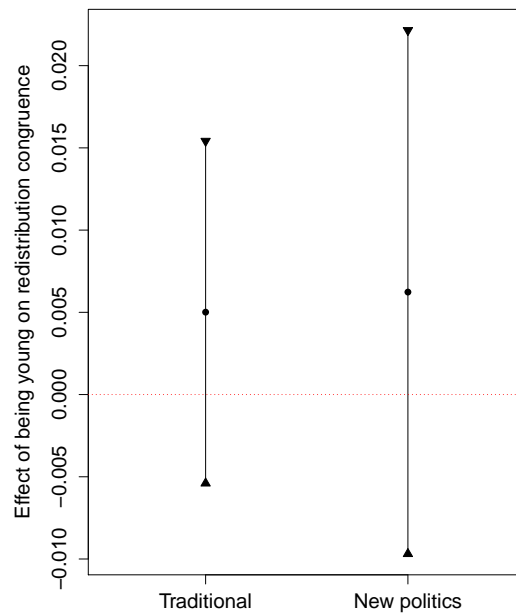
Figure 4.10: Marginal effects of 'young' on congruence for liberal policies and emphasis on non-economic issues. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

4.5   Conclusions

The main intention of this chapter was to build on the previous findings on party appeal and youth turnout inequality, since we do not know what types of parties attract young people or about the age differences in representation through parties. To asses this linkage, the analysis was limited to the inquiry about the voter-party linkages and has focused only

on those citizens of all age groups who have reported a vote choice in previous national elections. Voter-party linkages were operationalized as partisan identification, issue congruence on liberal policies regarding moral issues, and issue congruence on redistribution policies. Because of the significant relationship between turnout bias and party appeal in the domain of New Politics found in the previous chapter, the main tasks of the analysis were to see whether there are significant age differences in the composition of partisans within two types of parties, and whether the age differences in issue congruence are smaller for supporters of niche parties.

The results show that within supporters of niche parties there are no statistically significant differences between young people and adults regarding their levels of partisan identification, while within supporters of mainstream parties such differences are present. Moreover, to see where does the niche appeal for the young come from, I have also introduced two alternative measures of nicheness. I have tested whether niche parties attract more young people and reduce age based differences in partisanship because they are distinctly non-centrist, because they emphasize issues that matter more for younger generations or because of the combination of both characteristics. When both components of nicheness are introduced in the model, instead of simple niche vs. mainstream dichotomy, only ideological distinctiveness is significant.

The fact that ideologically distinctive parties reduce the gap in partisanship between age groups does not imply that young people's centrism is not a true policy position. It can simply be that distinct policy programs reduce costs of mobilization, because parties that emphasize newly salient issues, often outside of the classical left-right competition space, probably need fewer resources in gaining media attention, and even those who are not paying close attention to politics hear their messages. Moreover, perceptions of party positions might differ between experts and citizens. Because non-centrist parties often emphasize particular social problems, and often do not compete on the issues such as

economy, which mainstream parties cannot ignore, people can perceive them as moderate as they cannot categorize them as distinctly left or right.

As for the second measure of voter-party linkages, agreement on specific policy issues, results are not straightforward. The first striking finding is that voter-party congruence is very high for both policy domains, and that variations in issue congruence are largely due to the differences within political parties and not countries. Moreover, young people are slightly less congruent than adults on liberal policies, while age differences are not significant for voter-party agreement on redistribution policies. For congruence on liberal policies, age differences are not less pronounced among supporters of niche parties, and in fact, socio-democratic parties are better at representing young people than adults. And finally, both components of nicheness help in increasing the overall levels of voter-party congruence regarding redistribution policies.

Chapter 5

Unequal Participation and Interest Representation

5.1   Introduction

Preference representation includes only the representation of existing citizen demand regarding which policies to follow. Even if the explicitly stated preferences of citizens and elected officials match perfectly, the concealed preferences of politicians or the combined impact of corruption, clientelistic networks, strong interest groups, bureaucratic inefficiency or other constraints may well create a smaller or bigger gap between the declared preferences of incumbent politicians and the actual policy output of government. It is not hard to imagine that even with the best of intentions to follow-through on declared policy goals, politicians' actions can also be constrained by a number of exogenous environmental factors such as the impact of the global economic crisis. Moreover, politicians are sometimes better off if they try to anticipate the fundamental needs of voters in future elections rather than satisfying the often "ephemeral or weakly held policy preferences" (Page, 1978, 221). There are also circumstances when upon later reflections constituents also might change their minds and will be pleased that representatives did not act upon

short-term fluctuations at the polls. In that case a "good" representative will depart from the preferences of her constituents because she knows better what is in their best interest (Mansbridge, 2003; Rehfeld, 2009).

I have already demonstrated that young people are not only better off in terms of policy preference representation than adults, but age-based turnout inequalities do not have an impact on the differences in policy congruence rather, given the above considerations, it is also necessary to see whether there are significant age differences in the representation of citizens' interests. That is, do age-based participatory inequalities have an effect on interest representation? This last analysis is very important. By focusing exclusively on descriptive or policy preference representation, empirical studies fail to provide evidence on the interconnection between different lanes of representation (Mansbridge, 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005).

This research strategy also conforms to a number of normative and empirical studies on representation that suggest we should think about representation in terms of different pathways through which citizens' needs and desires can be transferred into the decision-making process (Pitkin, 1972; Hill et al., 1995; Mansbridge, 2003; Powell, 2004, 2014; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005; Dalton et al., 2011). Pitkin's treatment of representation as a multidimensional concept that includes formal, descriptive, substantive and symbolic lanes of representation is possibly the most often cited systematic understanding of this process (Pitkin, 1972, 2004). Her contribution is not in identifying different aspects of representation, but in emphasizing that these dimensions have to be conceived as parts of a "coherent whole" (Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005, 407). She argues that democratic representation cannot rest only on the congruence between the preferences of citizens and politicians, since that kind of congruence is also possible in non-democratic systems, but that representation should include democratic mechanisms that systematically induce multiple, strong linkages between citizens and their representatives (Pitkin, 1972).

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This is why this chapter will first adress whether there are age differences in interest representation, and second, test the linkage between stages of representation by asking whether differential policy representation has an impact on age differences in interest representation.

5.2   Defining and Measuring Interest Representation

The fundamental difference regarding political representation, as embodied in the mandate-independence controversy, is the practical confrontation between expressed preferences and the genuine interests of the represented (Pitkin, 1972). On the one side, mandate theorists see representatives as delegates who receive instructions from electors and are obliged to conform to the opinion of their constituency. On the other side, independence theorists as the eighteenth century response to imperative mandate requests deny the power of delegation and believe that representatives should aim at the good of the entire nation and base decisions on their own independent judgment (Manin, 1997). Compromise between these two understandings has resulted in the now traditional account of political representation offered by Pitkin (1972) as a common sense notion that representation includes both normative poles, adding up to a paradoxical requirement that the represented should simultaneously be both present and not present. In practical terms, what a representative actually did as well as the way in which he or she did it are the crucial aspects of the act of representing. The act of representing thus includes substantive issues and intermediate range problems that "involve both facts and value judgments, both ends and means" (Pitkin, 1972, 212).

The difference between preferences and interests, however, is not straightforward. Even Pitkin has recently acknowledged that her concept of substantive representation "is too broadly vague to help in sorting out the many particular senses, often with incompatible

implications or assumptions..." and that her study of "representation was not technically oriented but conceptual and theoretical" (Pitkin, 2004, 2). This is the reason why most empirical studies on representation focus on preferences only. Nevertheless, there are three crucial distinctions between preference and interest representation.

Firstly, interest representation involves the assessment of a representative's actions and not of election commitments. To borrow from Rogowski, interest representation reflects the degree to which a representative acts in such a manner that he or she reflects the "ideal preferences" of citizens (Rogowski, 1981). Mansbridge refers to this type of representation as anticipatory representation in the sense that a "representative tries to please the voter not of the past but of the future" so he or she must anticipate citizens' interests based on expressed preferences (Mansbridge, 2003, 517).

The second and the most important distinction between preference and interest representation revolves around the substantive content of representation. The former includes rather weak and often inarticulate policy preferences, while the later includes "fundamental needs and values" (Page, 1978, 221-2). Dahl defines the interest of a person as "whatever that person would choose with fullest attainable understanding of the experience resulting from that choice and its most relevant alternatives" (Dahl, 1989, 180). Similarly, Connolly suggests that "Policy x is more in A's interest than policy y if A, were he to experience the results of both x and y, would choose x as the result he would rather have for himself" (Connolly, 1972, 472). Bartels describes interests as "enlightened preferences" as he believes that this "definition is flexible enough to accommodate the actual usage of the term 'political interests' by analysts inhabiting a fairly wide range of philosophical, scientific, and ideological positions" (Bartels, 1996, 2).

Hence, whilst policy representation involves expectations regarding trajectories of future policies, interest representation is all about evaluating the final impact of those policies. Preference and interest representation should be closely related. In an ideal democracy

representatives would have fewer problems in anticipating citizens' fundamental needs if elections could successfully aggregate public preferences. There is, nevertheless, always a possibility that preferences and interest might diverge and not coincide, in which case the representatives face a difficult task ahead.

Although empirical research into political representation, both qualitative and quantitative, includes a wide range of general and more specific research questions, methodological approaches and varying conceptualizations of political representation, a majority of these studies claim to measure substantive representation. Still, these studies rarely pay attention to the proper definition of the concept of representation and in most cases focus exclusively on ideological or preference congruence as measures of the fit "between the preferences of the citizens and the committed policy positions of their representatives" (Powell, 2008, 2).

For instance, Kim and colleagues go as far as to assert that the agreement between citizens and representatives is so important for our notions of democracy that it is not necessary to "debate alternative definitions or explore the complexities of interests and preferences"(Kim et al., 2010, 167) to provide evidence for this assumption. But conceptualizing substantive representation in terms of ideological or policy congruence is just one way of approaching the problem (for a detailed discussion see Powell, 2014). Even different measures of ideological congruence result in conflicting empirical results (Golder and Stramski, 2010). Consequently, if we ignore that there is such a thing as interest representation not captured by measures of correspondence of public preferences with campaign commitments or legislative behaviour, the current results of empirical studies on representation might be systematically biased.

The question of how to measure interest representation and, more specifically, how to measure age differences in interest representation still remains. Bartels (1996) argues that there are two distinct approaches in conceptualizing interests as enlightened preferences:

by looking at *objective* and *subjective* interests. Each of the two approaches has its shortcomings. The first notion relies heavily on Marxist theorists who believed that interests should be inducted independently of any subjective preferences an individual might have. This idea of objective interests goes hand in hand with the notions of the public good, public interest or salus populi. To decide what the objective interest is, necessarily includes some analytical strategy in designing standards used as an a priori justification, a justification that is then always arbitrary.

As an example, comparative research on democracy and comparative public policy relies on objective measures of interest (e.g. Powell, 1982; Putnam et al., 1994; Lijphart, 1999; Roller, 2005). Their assumptions are radical in that they take for granted that all citizens want certain political results such as higher economic growth or gender equality, and they evaluate government abilities to produce those goods as in the interest of all citizens. These studies, however, are very close to the notion of an objective interest and still quite an improvement when compared to analyses that focus on preference comparison only. In all fairness, the main intention of these studies is often not to provide a systematic account of the quality of the representative process. Rather, these analyses more often ask which specific institutional arrangements might be more conducive for particular policies, such as certain labour market arrangements or lower unemployment or inflation rates or intend to show that different types of political actors and political institutions might facilitate different political outcomes and outputs.

Subjective interests are a liberal idea suggesting that expressed preferences should be taken as a substitute for interests since everyone knows best what is in their best interest. Bartels explains that "in this interpretation, preferences are accepted as reasonable, convenient proxies for interests under 'normal' circumstances, even as the door is left open in principle for divergences between what people are observed to want and what is in their interest" (Bartels, 1996, 3). But the subjective interpretation of interests often faces

the obstacle that people rarely have access to complete information. Moreover, citizens might not always support what is in their best interest. Famous study by Bartels (2008) shows striking real-world examples of this scenario. Bartels explains why a large share of working-class voters give their confidence to the Republican party and thus act against their own economic interests. These findings also correspond to Verba's warning that complete equality in political participation is "rarely unambiguously desirable" (Verba, 2003, 663) and enlightened preferences do require a certain degree of enlightenment.

Interestingly enough, there are many studies that, although not at all implicitly, essentially analyse the effectiveness of legislatures and governments in providing those results which should reflect the subjective interests of the represented (e.g. Erikson, 1976; Erikson et al., 1993, 2002; Hobolt and Klemmensen, 2005, 2008; Brettschneider, 1996; Brooks, 1987, 1990; Brooks and Manza, 2006; Soroka and Wlezien, 2004, 2005, 2010). Opinion-policy studies are a good example of such work. One of the earliest studies is Cnudde and McCrone's analysis of the relationship between expressed preferences and congressional voting behaviour in the US (Cnudde and McCrone, 1966).

In the same line but in Europe, Brooks (1990) uses a range of opinion surveys on national policy-oriented questions in Germany to see whether there is a consistency of mass support or opposition towards particular policies and government decisions. Similarly, Page and Shapiro (1983) conducted the most extensive study in 1983, when they looked at more than three hundred issues from surveys conducted between 1935 and 1979 in the US. Until recently, most of these studies were restricted to the United States and Canada. Some new advances include the analysis of budgetary spending in the United Kingdom (Soroka and Wlezien, 2005); the study on the relationship between public preferences and economic reforms in post-communist countries (Roberts and Kim, 2011) or the comparative analysis of the public policy-public opinion nexus across 17 developed democracies (Wlezien and Soroka, 2012).

In any case, a political system should accommodate a continuum of articulate and inarticulate preferences as institutionally aggregated demands. The quality of the representative process should then depend on the absorption capacity of the system to relate diverse preferences to specific interests and on the ability of elected officials to respond to those interests with responsive actions. A way to approach the problem of interest measurement would be to use citizens' own assessments of government effectiveness, preferably on specific policy areas. This way only one assumption is necessary, that citizens have enough information to assess whether governments are acting in their best interest or not, and to evaluate their performance accordingly.

5.3   Theory and Expectations

I have argued that youth turnout inequality might become problematic if it has consequences for the subsequent steps of the representative process. The second chapter analysed whether this is indeed the case when we consider policy preference representation. Normative justifications behind that analysis were based on the expectation that citizen involvement should serve to increase the quality of governmental outputs (in terms of specific policies) and outcomes (in terms of direct policy output results). The policy positions of political parties taken as collective agents were used as a substitute for their actual legislative and governmental behaviour and a crucial assumption was made, mainly that ideological positions of political parties provide a clear signal of their future policy behaviour.

However, the principle of political equality does not only imply that parties should aggregate the preferences of their voters, but also that they should fulfil their electoral promises and represent the preferences and interests of all voters equally or as many citizens as possible (Lijphart, 2008). No single social group's interests should have priority in

parties' decisions on specific policies. After all, a number of studies on the public policy-public opinion nexus expect that there is some congruence and even dynamic responsiveness between the expressed preferences of the public and actual policy output (e.g. Bartels, 2008; Gilens, 2005, 2012; Soroka and Wlezien, 2010; Erikson et al., 2002; Stimson et al., 1995). The representation regarding political outputs should also then be affected by differential rates of electoral participation.

Although such analyses are rare, there are several empirical studies that confirm this expectation (Hill and Leighley, 1992; Hill et al., 1995; Martin, 2003; Gallego, 2015). Hill and Leighley (1992) have analysed the link between class bias in the active electorate and the generosity of welfare spending policies, and have offered consistent evidence that greater class bias in the electorate is related to the lower levels of welfare spending. If lower class citizens do not participate in elections, policies that favour their economic interests are less likely to be implemented. In a later study, Hill et al. (1995) test the same hypothesis on a cross-sectional and time-series data and find additional support for their argument. Moreover, in a more recent study, Campbell (2003) shows that there is actually a reciprocal relationship between political participation and public policy. By analysing the rise in the turnout rates of senior citizens, she shows how their higher political activity has influenced the implementation of the Social Security and Medicare programs. With over 40% of the Federal budget, those same programs have empowered the elderly to actively defend the policy status quo and as a consequence the programs have continuously grown and the programs for the poor have been cut.

Also, turnout inequality can have an impact on interest representation even if policy congruence is equal across all relevant groups or even if young people's participation rates do not influence their policy representation. Therefore, I expect that:

H1 (*the Inequality in Electoral Participation*): Interest representation of young adults is expected to be less favorable relative to other age groups in countries where age-based

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turnout inequalities are bigger (and thus less favorable for the youth).

The link between young people's engagement in unconventional forms of participation, especially in non-governmental organizations and interest representation should be self-explanatory, however the empirical evidence is ambiguous (Schneider and Ingraham, 1984). There are numerous historical and more recent examples of grass-root movements, citizens' protest or NGO's campaigns that had an immense impact on policy making. One of the most famous examples is the influence of organized labour movements and NGO's on the introduction of social insurance systems in Europe (Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981). On the other side, Schneider and Ingraham (1984) have found that voter participation has a more consistent impact on the expansion of social welfare programs than unconventional participation such as protest activities. They argue that "although unconventional political activities exert an impact on policy adoptions and expansion during particular time periods, the impact of protest on program development is itself dependent upon the existence of other economic, social, and political factors." (Schneider and Ingraham, 1984, 119).

However, non-governmental organizations, protest movements or any small group of citizens are more likely to attract media attention and direct access to politicians today then was the case 30 years ago, and civil society organizations have become more professionalized pressure groups (Saurugger, 2009; Martens, 2005). Moreover, the second chapter has provided evidence on the positive impact of young people's non-electoral participation on policy representation, so I also anticipate that:

H2 (*the Inequality in Non-electoral Participation*): The interest representation of young adults is expected to be more favorable relative to other age groups in countries where age-based inequalities in non-electoral participation are more favorable for the youth.

I will also test whether there is a linkage between policy and interest representation. Democratic theory offers strong support for this expectation. Powell (2004) provides a schematic overview of the concept of systematic responsiveness and sees different modes of

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representation as a causally connected chain with four major linkages called 'Structuring Choices', 'Institutional Aggregation', and 'Policy Making' connected with four stages of responsiveness. First, citizens' preferences are formulated (stage 1), then citizens' attitudes influence citizens' voting behaviour (stage 2), next citizens' voting behaviour influences election outcomes and government formation (stage 3) and, finally process of linkages ends with government formation affecting public policies and outcomes (stage 4). In a similar vein, Dalton et al. (2011) identify five types of linkages as specific party functions on each level of the democratic decision-making process: campaign, participatory, ideological, representative and policy linkages. Both of these examples are perfectly aligned with the normative suggestions on the proper conceptualization of political representation as a dynamic and reciprocal process, and they imply that good representation in one stage of the process should have an impact on the other stages of representation.

Empirical approaches to political representation mostly focus only on a particular aspect of representation, and the attempts to study connections between the components of representation are rare. The most obvious example are studies on the impact of descriptive representation on policy representation of women (e.g. Wangnerud, 2009; Bratton and Ray, 2002; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005). More recently, however, there have been a few studies that analyse the relationship between ideological congruence and government spending moderated by a number of contextual factors such as electoral system or policymaking mechanisms (e.g. Kang and Powell, 2010). For instance Kang and Powell (2010) have found that ideological positions of the median voter has a significant impact on comparative welfare spending, although the impact of citizens' preferences is short-term. Moreover, there is a growing body of literature that studies the extent to which electoral promises are in congruence with public policies, while also analysing the impact of policy on interest representation (Warwick, 2001; Bevan et al., 2011; McDonald and Budge, 2005; Green and Walgrave, 2014). There is already some comparative evidence that governments

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often realize their promises, with single and stable party governments more than others and more often when campaign promises have favoured the status quo (Thomson et al., 2010).

However, any deviations in the stages of representation should signal whether serious obstacles exist in the policy process, such as vote-seat distortions related to the electoral system's design, party switching, decree-power use and policy deadlocks or various forms of political corruption that can distort linkages at any stage (Powell, 2004). On the other side, such situations will not occur if the formal and informal environment provides supporting inducements that " might flow from: 1) the systematic eviction of unresponsive or inept policy makers, encouraging their successors to anticipate and realize citizens' desires more carefully; 2) the direct election of powerful, promise-keeping governments that are publicly committed to policies the citizens want; and 3) the election of multiple, representative parties that are committed to negotiating as agents on behalf of the respective policies favoured by the various subgroups of citizens who elected them."(Powell, 2004, 92). If all of the above conditions are met, and if citizens preferences are aligned with party positions, we should also expect that parties' policy platforms determine party legislative decisions and decisions in government. Therefore, I expect that policy preference representation should have an impact on interest representation and in this particular case:

H3 (*Policy-Interest Link*): Age differences in interest representation are expected to be generated by differential policy representation.

It should be mentioned however, that the confounders of this relationship are multiple and the lack of expected connection between policy congruence and the representation of interests should not always be considered as an indicator of bad representation. A number of exogenous conditions can be beyond the control of policy-makers, such as dependence on international trade in achieving economic growth, or an increasing representative strain for political parties who have to consider the views of an increasingly diverse groups of

citizens (Powell, 2004; Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). Therefore, it would be nave to expect a perfect alignment between policy and interest representation.

The second chapter has provided a test of the relationship between inequalities in participation and policy preference representation, while the first model in this chapter will move a step further and test whether age based inequalities in electoral and non-electoral participation have an impact on interest representation. Moreover, given the expectations on the linkages between stages of representation, I will also test whether the good representation of young people has an impact on age differences in interest representation. If the levels of ideological congruence do not matter for the equal representation of young adults in interest representation, then further research should focus on the factors that might influence that relationship.

5.4   Data and Measurement

The European Election Study from 2009 (henceforward EES, van Egmond et al. (2013)) brings a unique set of questions asking respondents to evaluate government influence on five specific policy domains: "do you think [country] government policies have had a positive influence, a negative influence or no influence on the [domain outcomes] in [country]?" These questions were only one component of a module of questions on attributions of responsibility and performance evaluations, conducted as a part of the EES and designed by Hobolt et al. (2012). The battery on evaluations includes questions concerning government performance on economic conditions, health care standards, immigration levels, interest rates, and climate change. Respondents could choose whether the government had a positive influence, a negative influence, or no influence at all on each of the aforementioned outcomes. By using it as a proxy for interest representation, I assume that citizens will positively evaluate those governments that produce outcomes in the interest

of the public good and/or the respondents. For instance, if an individual has a cosmopolitan attitude towards immigration, a higher inflow of immigrants in the country would be evaluated as a positive government influence.

It is possible, however, that citizens are neither informed about nor interested in all policy decisions. And policy outcomes are often the results of incremental policy change that might have started years before and even the most skilled policy analyst or policymaker themselves would find it hard to gauge the degree of output efficiency. But if the goal is to evaluate the patterns of interest representation across developed democracies, then the "gross differences in democratic quality" such as "numerous broken campaign promises" or "rampant corruption" might be visible even if citizens have not "mastered all the intricacies of their nation's political process" (Powell, 2004, 102). Moreover, the very assumption that "citizens are, in the end, the best judges of what is important to them, is fundamental in many kinds of democratic theory and distinguishes justifications of democracy from various forms of guardianship"(Powell, 2004, 5).

Before I test the main expectations regarding the link between turnout inequality and interest representation, and policy representation and interest representation, some preliminary analysis of interest representation is necessary. Figure 5.1 shows the average differences between the young and other age groups for all countries across the five policy domains as a preliminary test. Young people's performance evaluation of government policy output are harsher than those of their older counterparts. While this trend is apparent across all policy domains, the differences between generations are largest for government performance in broadly conceptualized economic conditions, and they are the smallest for the assessment of performance regarding rising standards of health care. Also, all citizens tend to give less credit to a government in specific policy domains such as immigration or interest rates, while incumbent performance in broader areas like economic conditions or standards of health care receives a higher mark. This is especially evident for young

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people.
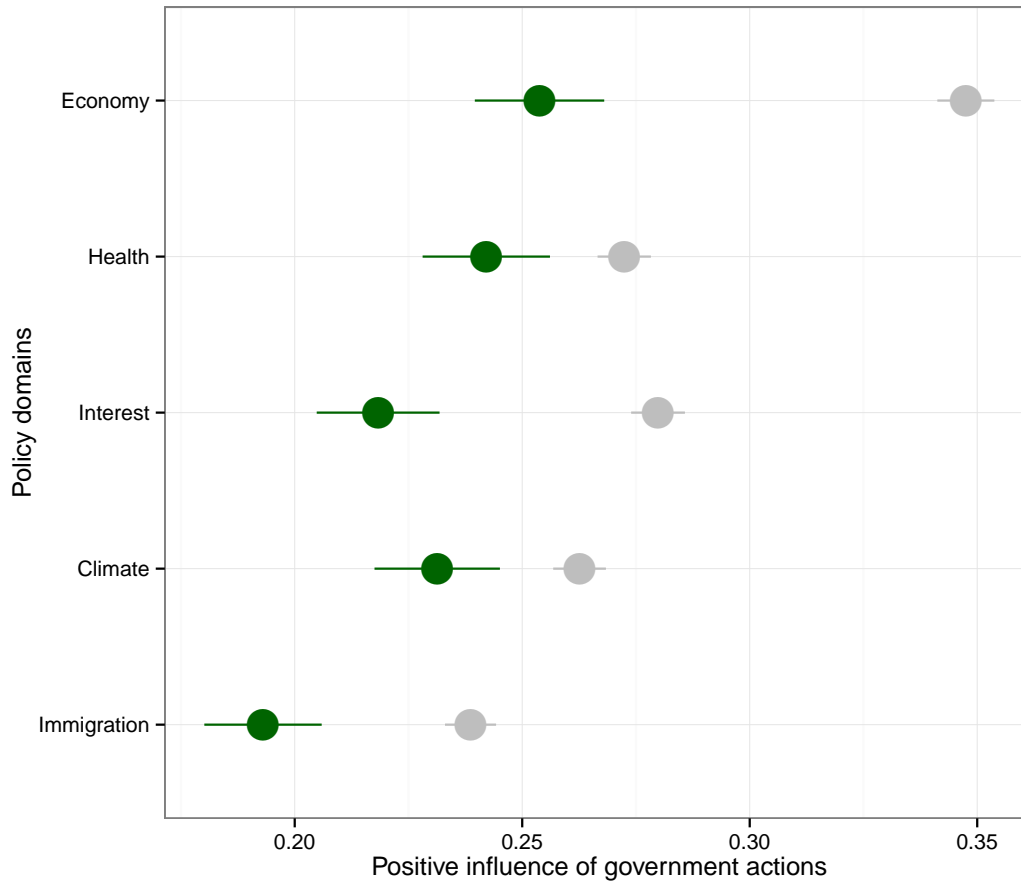
Figure 5.1: The fraction of respondents with positive evaluations (cross-country average). Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

Respondents' evaluations of policy domains are mutually dependent. The coefficient of internal consistency (Guttman's Lambda 6) across responses about government performance in five domains is 0.74.[1] Given the relatively high item consistency, the answers regarding the five policy domains were aggregated into an index of interest representation

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[1]However, it should also be mentioned that the coefficient of internal consistency for the young and for other age groups is not the same. The strength of the relationship between answers to five policy domains for young people is slightly weaker than for other age groups. Guttman's Lambda 6 for young people is 0.65 and it is statistically different than for other age groups, indicating lower-item reliability.

for further analysis. Since the original variables take on the values of -1 when respondents evaluate government influence as negative, 0 for no influence, and 1 for positive influence, every variable was first dichotomized where 1 signifies the positive subjective evaluation of government performance and 0 no influence and negative influence. An index was then created by adding answers on government performance in five domains and it ranges from -5 (a completely negative evaluation) to 5 (a completely positive evaluation). Figure 5.2 shows the distribution of aggregated responses across countries. Respondents have given mostly negative evaluations of government performance across all policy areas, although in Latvia younger citizens are slightly less negative about government performance than other age groups.
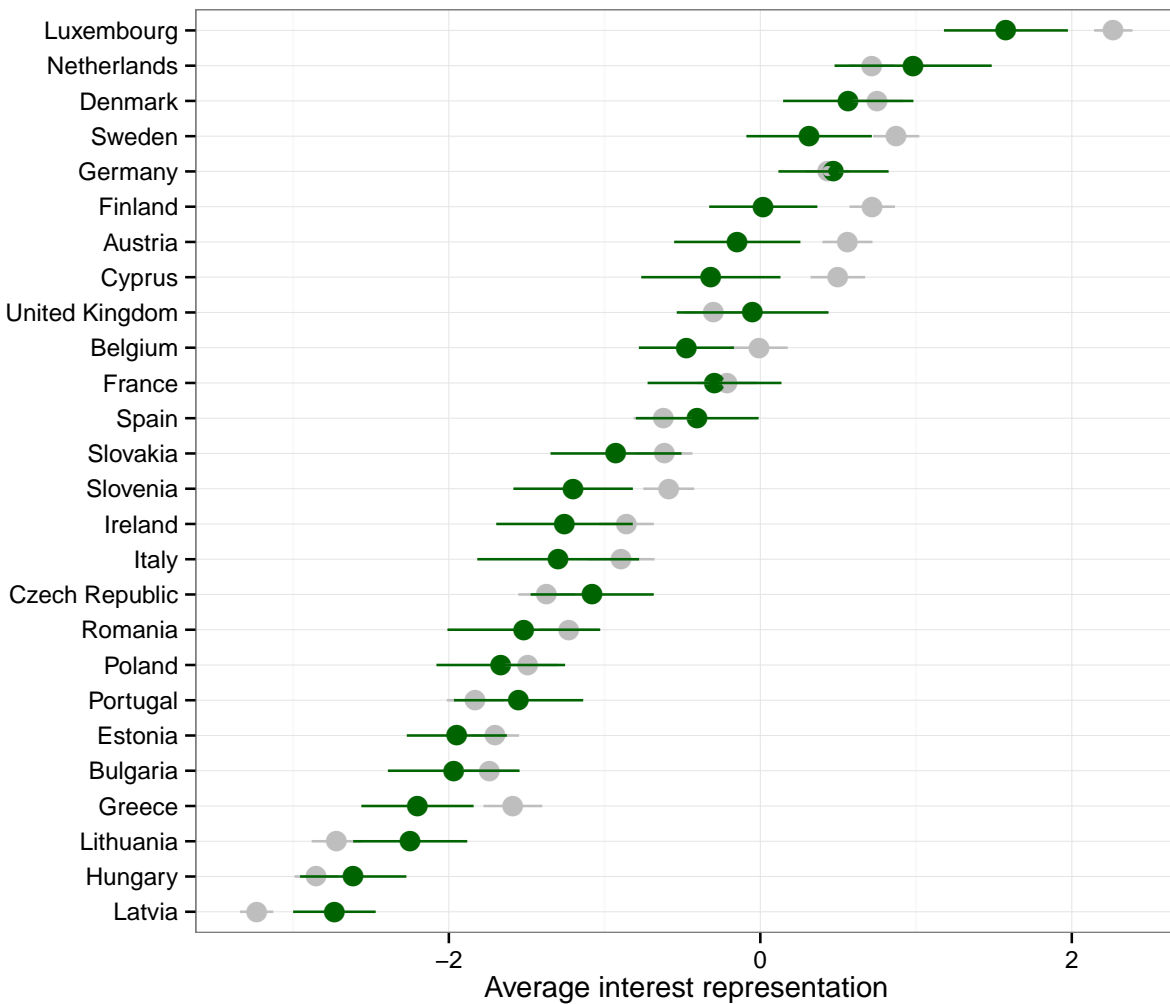
Figure 5.2: Dependent variable: index of interest representation. Horizontal lines represent 95% confidence intervals associated with each estimate.

In order to test the first two hypotheses on the impact of participatory inequalities on interest representation I will estimate a series of two-level mixed effects models with the coefficient of inequality in electoral participation (PIE) and the coefficient of inequality in electoral participation (PINE) included at the second level. These were already calculated for the second chapter. Moreover, since the substantive interest of this analysis is to see whether the relationship between age and interest representation change as a function of participatory inequalities the main goal of the model's estimation is to test cross-level

interaction effects between 'young' and PIE and PINE (Steenbergen and Jones, 2002).

At the individual-level, the main theoretical predictor of interest is a respondent's age, which is included in the models as a binary variable. Younger respondents (from 18 to 29) are coded as 1, and adults are the baseline category (0). Age differences might actually reflect differences in other attributes and attitudes, so all models for individual i in country k include additional predictors at the first level of analysis. Previous studies have demonstrated that overall satisfaction with democracy and trust in the political institutions increase with socio-economic resources, most notably with education and income (e.g Magalhales, 2014; Schafer, 2012). People who support democracy the most are those who are economically better off; citizens make rational calculations when deciding on political issues (Downs, 1957).

According to previous studies, affluent citizens are insulated from short-term changes in government performance and they will be more inclined to positively evaluate government performance if no serious disruptions have occurred in their living standards. Also, Anderson and Just (2012) have demonstrated that partisanship is an important anchor for beliefs in a system's legitimacy and that partisans have higher levels of support for parties, for the party system and the political order. What is more, they found that age acts as a moderator in that relationship, with a higher support for the system among older partisans (Anderson and Just, 2012). Similarly, if citizens have a say in the political process, through political participation, they are more likely to positively evaluate the process's outcomes (Toka, 1995; Fuchs et al., 1995). All models also control for the respondents' sex.

At this point I also include an indicator of policy preference representation. Respondents who are ideologically closer to the government might have more positive evaluations. So models will also include an indicator of the absolute difference between the respondent's left-right position and the government's ideological position, which was calculated by taking the absolute value of the mean ideological self-placement of each respondent from the

weighted mean position of parties in government. The data on party position was extracted from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (see chapter 2). Both individual and party placements are measured on the same 11-point scale. The mean position for each national parliament on the leftright dimension is calculated by taking into consideration the number of seats each party received in the parliamentary elections closest to the survey year 2009 (Döring and Manow, 2012).

Furthermore, to improve the substantive interpretation of effects and the certainty of those effects, all country-level predictors were centered prior to the analysis (Kam and Franzese, 2007), and all individual-level predictors are recoded so that they have a meaningful zero value. Table 5.1 presents the results of the analysis. The first model is the baseline model without any substantive predictors, the second model includes only the young' indicator at the individual level, the third model also includes additional individual level controls, and the last four models include PIE and PINE, and cross-level interactions. Models 4, 5, 6 and 7, which include country level measures of participatory inequalities were estimated using the same two-step estimation procedure that was introduced in the second chapter. I have first estimated 1,000 parameters of both measures with an ordinary nonparametric bootstrap procedure on random subsamples of each country and year. So every mixed model with PIE and PINE presented in Table 1, is estimated with 1,000 versions of both variables and results were aggregated using Rubin rules with a correction for small samples with the 'mice' package (van Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011) in R (version 3.1.0).

Results from the baseline model show that 20% of variance can be attributed to the country level differences, so the mixed-model estimation was appropriate. Moreover, models 1 and 2 suggest that differences between the young and old remain stable and significant even when we introduce possible confounders. Young people are more critical of government performance than other age groups, and this difference is only slightly smaller when

Table 5.1: Mixed models for interest representation

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
(Intercept)	-0.57**	-0.53 **	-3.03 ***	-3.03***	-3.02***	-3.01***	-3.00***
	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.28)	(-0.27)	(-0.28)	(-0.33)	(-0.34)
Young		-0.30 ***	-0.28 ***	-0.27***	-0.28***	-0.28***	-0.28***
		(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.10)
Female			-0.38 ***	-0.38***	-0.38***	-0.38***	-0.38***
			(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Secondary edu.			0.11	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
			(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Tertiary edu.			0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.18
			(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Economic std.			0.20 ***	0.20***	0.20***	0.20***	0.20***
			(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Employed			-0.39 ***	-0.39 ***	-0.39 ***	-0.39 ***	-0.39 ***
			(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Vote			0.41 ***	0.41 ***	0.41 ***	0.41 ***	0.41 ***
			(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Partisanship			0.41 ***	0.41 ***	0.41 ***	0.41 ***	0.41 ***
			(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Government cong.			0.20 ***	0.20 ***	0.20 ***	0.20 ***	0.20 ***
			(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
PIE				0.19	0.19	-	-
				(0.36)	(0.37)	-	-
Young:PIE					0.05	-	-
					(0.16)	-	-
PINE						-0.66	-0.62
						(0.72)	(0.74)
Young:PIE							-0.34
							(0.30)
AIC	45838	45828	45408	45410	45410	45407	45400
BIC	45859	45857	45494	45503	45525	45500	45515
Log Likelihood	-22916	-22910	-22692	-22692	-22689	-22690	-22684
Observations	9812	9812	9812	9812	9812	9812	9812
Countries	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
Variance:c.	1.63	1.61	1.26	1.3	1.36	1.21	1.28
Variance:res.	6.18	6.17	5.89	5.89	5.88	5.89	5.88
Variance:c./y.					0.07		0.06

Note: *** p<0.001, ** p <0.01, * p <0.05. Standard errors in parenthesis. Models with PIE and PINE were calculated across 1,000 values of bias estimators and aggregated using adjusted Rubin rules for small samples.

additional factors are taken into consideration. Most previous empirical analyses lend strong support to the expectation that actual policy performance of the political system has a strong effect on citizens' attitudes towards the system (both specific and diffuse) (e.g. Magalhales, 2014; Clarke et al., 1993; Schafer, 2012).

Survey data on which the models are based has been collected at the beginning of the economic crisis and there is strong evidence that young people's economic positions have significantly deteriorated in that period so it is not surprising they are more critical of government performance (Breen and Buchmann, 2002; Furlong and Cartmel, 2006). In the context of the crisis's aftermath, young people are more likely to be affected by the current decline in wages, they are most vulnerable to layoffs, and they are the least protected by increases in social transfers (ILO, 2013). Moreover, young adults should have the strongest response to the crisis, not only because their rates of unemployment have seen the largest annual rise in the last 20 years, compared to all other age groups in the population, but also because they did not have a say in the policies that brought about these results. Also, regardless of the objective individual economic position, young people might react more strongly to negative economic conditions than their older counterparts as they have not yet developed a reservoir of democratic patience. They are inexperienced in politics, decide on problems issue by issue, and are simply more critical of everything and inherently sensitive during their formative years.

The last four models test the expectations formulated in the first and second hypotheses, regarding the spill-over effect of participatory inequalities on interest representation. Against the expectations of both hypotheses, spill over effect between the inequalities in participation and age differences in interest representation are not confirmed.

An important finding for the next analysis is that those respondents who are ideologically closer to the incumbent government are also more positive in their evaluations of government performance, as the models also show that policy representation does have an

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impact on interest representation, Figure 5.3 plots the relationship between the two stages of representation. Moreover, when policy representation is included in the model, with all other controls, age differences in interest representation are slightly reduced. However, to provide a more reliable test of the impact of policy preference representation on age differences in interest representation it is necessary to see exactly how much of the variance in interest representation that is explained by age these differences is reduced when we introduce an indicator of policy preference representation in each country. The difference between the variance explained by the young indicator when policy representation is not in the model, and the variance explained by the young indicator when we include government congruence will show how much of age inequalities in interest representation can be reduced when we include citizen-government policy agreement. If the young are unhappy with outcomes in spite of their stronger policy congruence, then their overall unhappiness with outcomes may be even bigger if the higher policy congruence was not there.
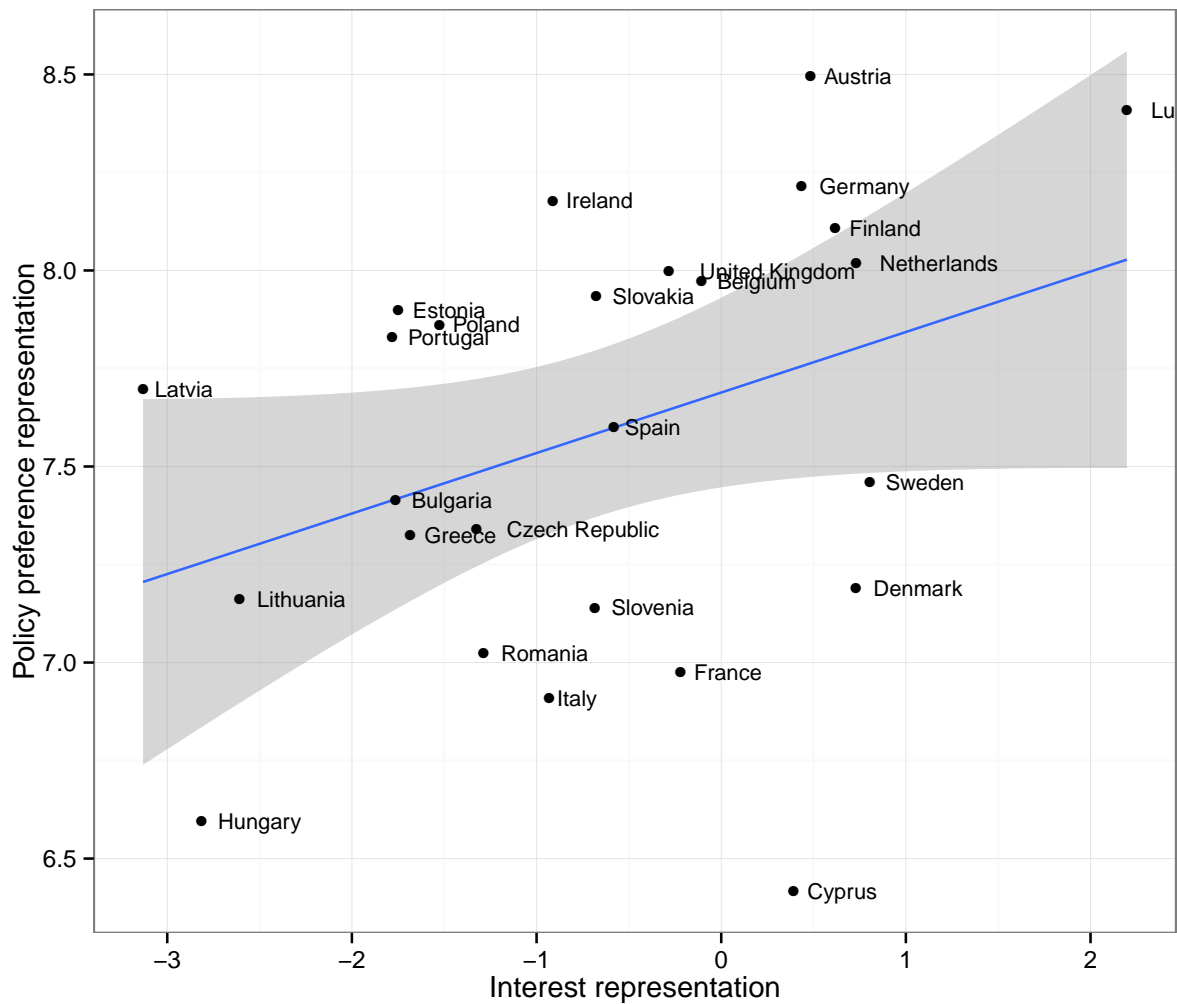
Figure 5.3: Relationship between policy representation and interest representation.

The most common approach to assess the variance of an individual predictor, often referred to as the 'relative importance of predictors' is variance decomposition. It is estimated by comparing the increment in R squares in a step-wise multiple regression (for an example see Medina, 2013). However, the order by which predictors are introduced in the model can influence the result, because the predictors are often correlated, and it is not so straightforward to estimate the R-square for individual predictors (Grömping, 2006). Fortunately, a number of solutions have been provided for this problem all of which are con-

ceptually very similar (Lindeman et al., 1980; Grömping, 2007). The most commonly used is the method proposed by Lindeman and colleagues, called 'LGM', that uses averaging over sequential sums of squares over all possible orderings of regressors. The interpretation of the LGM estimators is equivalent to the interpretation of the R-square, as the values estimated for each parameter in the regression reflect the proportion of the total variance that is explained by a given factor or set of factors. Grömping (2006) has developed a package in R that is used to implement this routine to test the third hypothesis. The results are presented in Table 5 2.

An OLS regression with interest representation as the dependent variable is estimated for each of the 26 countries separately. The baseline model includes our main predictor of interest 'young' and a set of control variables as in the models presented before (age, education, living standard, employment status, partisan identification and electoral behavior). Second, the full model includes all the predictors from the first model and an indicator for policy representation -government congruence.

Table 5.2 shows the relative importance metrics for the 'young' variable without (baseline) and with policy representation included (full model). Since the relative importance metrics are normalized to sum to 100%, the second column for each model shows the total R-square. An F test shows whether the inclusion of policy representation results in a better model fit, and the last column shows the percentage change in the relative importance of young, also normalized to sum to 100%. For instance, according to the baseline model in Denmark, age (young vs. adults) explains 22.9% of variance in interest representation. When government congruence is included in the second, full model, the effect of age on interest representation is reduced by 77%. Hence, policy representation reduced the age gap in interest representation by 77%. In 16 of 26 countries we see that differential government congruence plays a statistically significant role in generating age differences in interest representation.

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Table 5.2: Relative importance models for 'young' regarding policy representation

Country	Baseline model R2 'young'	R2	Full model R2 'young'	R2	F test	% R2 change 'young'
Austria	25.3%	7.9%	24.6%	8%		3%
Belgium	51.9%	3%	40.5%	4.3%	*	22%
Bulgaria	0.4%	5.4%	0.3%	5.4%		12%
Cyprus	3.1%	2.2%	2%	5.2%	***	35%
Czech R.	6.7%	8.3%	5.2%	9.5%	*	22%
Denmark	22.9%	3.3%	5.3%	12.3%	***	77%
Estonia	3.7%	14.5%	3.8%	16.1%	*	-3%
Finland	1.5%	6.5%	1.4%	7.2%	*	9%
France	0.6%	4.9%	0.1%	19.9%	***	77%
Germany	4.9%	9.7%	4.3%	11%	*	13%
Greece	19.9%	2.2%	7.4%	5.6%	***	63%
Hungary	6.8%	4.5%	5.4%	5.5%	*	21%
Ireland	9.6%	2.3%	9%	2.8%		6%
Italy	8.2%	6.9%	3.6%	16.1%	***	56%
Latvia	54.9%	4.3%	53.7%	4.3%		2%
Lithuania	6.3%	7.2%	6.1%	7.4%		3%
Luxembourg	36.6%	4.8%	35.4%	5%		3%
Malta	0.5%	9.6%	0.4%	11.3%	*	20%
Netherlands	0.8%	5.2%	0.8%	5.3%		1%
Poland	1.8%	13.4%	1.6%	14%		11%
Portugal	0.2%	5.6%	0.2%	6.2%		-13%
Romania	6.6%	7%	4.1%	8.7%	*	38%
Slovakia	7.2%	6.4%	6.6%	6.8%		8%
Slovenia	13%	5%	10.5%	6.5%	**	19%
Spain	6.7%	1.8%	5.8%	2.2%		14%
Sweden	5.5%	9.3%	1.7%	21.3%	***	69%
UK	4.5%	1.7%	3.4%	2.4%	*	24%

Note: Relative importance metrics are normalized to sum to 100%. Models also include a set of control variables (age, education, living standard, employment status, partisan identification and electoral behaviour).

5.5 Conclusions

I started this chapter by asking whether age based participatory inequalities have an impact on interest representation. As a second stage of the representative process, interest representation is crucial in understanding the quality of political representation as it includes anticipated citizen demand on what kind of policies politicians should follow and what kind of outputs are expected. It was expected that age based participatory inequalities have an effect on age differences in interest representation, by following the same line of argumentation that was presented in the second chapter, when the first stage of representation was the focus of the analysis. In terms of turnout inequalities, the results tell the same story, differential rates of young people's participation compared to adults does not have an impact on interest representation. The lack of significant findings on the spill-over effects of turnout inequalities implies that those inequalities are neither enhancing nor ameliorating inequalities in interest representation, which is a good thing given the warnings on the consequences of youth disengagement on their representation. However, the second finding points to a different conclusion, while young people's increased engagement in non-electoral participation does enhance youth equality in ideological congruence, it does not have an impact on the representation of anticipated demands towards political outcomes.

Following the normative suggestions, first elaborated by Pitkin (1972), I have also tested whether citizens' proximity to political parties in terms of policy congruence determines the extent to which they are satisfied with the decisions taken by the government. The first set of models has indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between policy representation, operationalized as the level of ideological agreement between the citizens and their governments and interest representation. Moreover, the last analysis has shown that differential government congruence plays a statistically significant role in generating

age differences in interest representation. Specifically, on average 25% of the age differences in interest representation are generated by this mechanism.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

From the viewpoint of normative theory, political participation is the main pillar of democracy, as it is the mechanism through which citizen's preferences and interests get transferred into the decision-making process. If this mechanism is flawed in any way, the gap between the citizens and the rulers can be widened. Previous studies on political participation have provided unambiguous evidence that citizen involvement in established democracies is unequal, as participation is seriously skewed towards those who are more affluent, highly educated, and politically involved. This is why the core intention of this dissertation was to provide an empirical test of the possible consequences of those flaws. If certain groups of citizens do not participate, are their preferences and interests transferred into the decision-making process, or in the words of Berinsky (2004), can the representatives hear their 'silent voices'?

To answer this question I have focused on the group of citizens whose relationship to politics has not only spurred academic attention, but has also received a central spot on the political and media agendas of the majority of established democracies: young people. If young people's involvement is a window into the future and can provide us with valuable cues to the future of representative democracies, the study of the consequences of young people's unequal participation in the decision-making process is a perfect litmus test of the

status of political equality in European democracies.

6.1   Key findings from each chapter

The second chapter studied the impact of participatory inequalities on the first component of representation - policy preference representation. The analysis showed that turnout inequality across age groups exists in nearly all of the examined countries and that the young nearly always participate at a lower rate than older cohorts; however, the size of this difference varies. By relying on survey data from the European Election Survey in 26 democracies I tested whether turnout inequalities have an impact on age differences in policy representation. Moreover, given that the analysis showed there are no participatory inequalities in association membership, and that in some countries young people are more active in nongovernmental associations than adults, I expected that the lower non-electoral participation should be associated with smaller age gaps in policy representation. While the latter hypothesis is confirmed, the empirical evidence revealed an interesting puzzle regarding the first expectation.

First, young people are in fact more congruent with their parliaments than older respondents, and second, the relationship between the inequality in electoral participation and youth policy preference representation is not confirmed. I have argued that the first finding should be taken with a grain of salt since I also found that the young are more likely to be self-described moderates. Since the measure of ideological congruence takes as a measuring rod the weighted average of the left-right positions of all parties in parliament, and since they are on average almost always more or less ideologically moderate, this might be problematic. Citizens with moderate positions will therefore have a representational advantage over those citizens who do not describe themselves as being in the center of the ideological scale. If this moderate position is a true centrist position that

is not problematic, but there is a possibility that centrism might be a concealed type of non-response.

I have also offered an empirical test of this puzzle and asked whether those young people who place themselves at the center of the left-right scale identify more with centrist parties, and whether they behave differently than moderate adults. The results showed that there is no evidence that young moderates are any different from adult moderates. So at least in terms of their differences in ideological congruence, I can safely conclude that young people are in fact better off in terms of policy representation than adults. Moreover, I have also conducted an additional analysis to check whether good congruence of young people and their parliaments holds when other measures of policy representation are considered. Comparison of age differences in issue congruence on two specific policy domains, liberal policies and redistribution, confirms previous findings regarding youth congruence. The young are indeed better off than their older counterparts in terms of policy representation.

The second finding is more puzzling and it goes against all theoretical expectations. Despite the large turnout differences young people are not worse off in terms of their policy preference representation. I argue that it is possible that the effects of youth turnout bias on policy representation are not present, partly because unequal non-electoral participation works in favor of the policy representation of the young and partly because parties try to respond to inequalities in turnout by increasing their policy appeal to the young.

The second explanation is tested in the third chapter. Turnout inequality has for these purposes been treated as the independent variable and the party appeal towards young people, operationalized as the salience of issues in the domains of New Politics in party platforms, as the dependent variable. The measures were calculated for 15 countries and 98 elections by using the Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002 and the Manifesto Research Project Data Set on party policy platforms. In almost all countries and election years young adults were found to be less likely to turn out than adults and

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the results strongly suggest that age-based turnout inequalities are not a recent, but a persistent problem. Also, contrary to the widely accepted assumption that parties should not respond to groups of citizens who do not vote (e.g. Key, 1949), the results suggest that parties do listen, and that in fact, they adapt their campaign promises to appeal to the young.

The findings from the third chapter also imply that parties are trying to mobilize young people to the polling stations. However, the literature on young people's political participation often argues that parties are first to blame if young people decide to disconnect from conventional politics (Henn et al., 2002, 2005; Henn and Weinstein, 2006; Mycock and Tonge, 2012; Kimberlee, 2002). If parties are not performing their roles, young people will react by staying home. But we do not know much about the differences in party-voter linkages between age groups, so I asked whether those parties that manage to get young people to vote, with whom young people identify, are also able to perform their representative functions. To test the differences within party types I used a rather recent conceptual distinction between 'mainstream' and 'niche' parties (e.g. Meguid, 2005, 2008; Adams et al., 2006), because it perfectly captures those differences between parties that should be the most important for age based differences in partisan identification and representation. The results confirmed that niche parties are able to attract both age groups equally, thus, reducing the differences in partisan linkages.

However, an analysis of voter-party representative linkages tells a different story. The first finding is striking: voter-party congruence is exceptionally high for both policy domains, moreover, while young people are slightly less congruent than adults on liberal policies there are no age differences for voter-party agreement on redistribution policies. This finding resembles the findings in young people's policy representation and gives strong support to the conclusion that we should not worry about young people's policy representation. Moreover, regarding congruence on liberal policies, age differences are no less

pronounced among supporters of niche parties than supporters of mainstream parties, and in fact, socio-democratic parties are better at representing young people than adults. These results also indicate that parties are not only doing a good job in representing their supporters' views, but they manage to represent all age groups equally well.

I argued in the introduction that, in terms of the assessment of political equality, it is not only relevant that participatory inequalities do not have a spill over effect on policy representation, but also interest representation. The principle of political equality does not only imply that parties should aggregate the preferences of their voters, but also that they should fulfil their electoral promises and represent the preferences and interests of all voters as equally as possible (Lijphart, 2008). No single social group's interests should have priority in the parties' decisions on specific policies. So the last chapter tests this proposition by taking citizen's own assessments of government performance as a benchmark. Results show that age groups are not equally represented when it comes to interest representation. Moreover, compared to adults, differential rates of young people's participation in elections, but also in non-electoral forms of engagement, do not have an impact on interest representation.

This implies that turnout inequalities are neither enhancing nor ameliorating inequalities in interest representation, which is a good thing given the warnings on the consequences of youth disengagement from their representation. However, results also show that young people's increased engagement in non-electoral participation does nothing to enhance youth interests' equality in political outcomes. Note that additional analysis did show that citizens' proximity to political parties in terms of policy congruence determines the extent to which they are satisfied with the decisions taken by the government. So while the link between unequal participation and representation is absent, there is a strong link between policy and interest representation.

6.2 Limitations, Policy Implications and Further Research

The attention to unequal participation of young people in Europe has already resulted in a number of policy documents such as the Commission White Paper on Youth published in 2001, the European Youth Pact adopted by the European Council in 2005, or even in the special Eurobarometer editions on Youth Participation in Democratic Life (see for example Flash Eurobarometer 375). Moreover, a significant amount of money has been given to youth participation related projects in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes.[1]. In the light of the growing concern over young people's politics, the most important finding of this dissertation is that age bias in turnout does not have negative consequences on the policy and interest representation of age groups. In fact, young people are on average closer to their representatives than adults, and the parties they support represent their views as much as the views of other age groups. In other words, young people's disengagement from politics does not have immediate consequences for their political representation.

While it is still clear that political participation might be valuable per se, because it has numerous positive effects on young people's development as democratic citizens, the findings presented here at least cast a long shadow on the severity of young people's political positions. To put it bluntly, if unequal turnout does not have an impact on the social, economic and political positions of young people in European societies, some additional theoretical arguments are needed to justify the need for the proliferation of studies on young people's engagement in politics. The studies on youth participation,

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[1]As an illustration, in the latest EU funding program for research and innovation Horizon 2020 29,450,000 was made available only for the studies on young people's values and attitudes towards sustainable development and their societal and political engagement (H2020-YOUNG-SOCIETY-2014-2015)

however, should not be taken lightly, as I have also demonstrated that young people's engagement in non-alternative forms of participation can reduce the gaps in ideological congruence between age groups.

The findings presented above also have important implications for the study of political representation and party politics. The third chapter showed that the emphasis on issues that matter to young people in parties' electoral platforms follows the changes in age-based electoral inequalities. If we also take into consideration that not all parties were covered by the analysis, as the data on party platforms (CMP) does not include smaller parties without parliamentary representation, the impact of unequal turnout on party appeal towards young people might be even larger. This finding alone shows that parties do not necessarily target only those citizens who turn out. If it is in their best interest, they will also appeal to those citizens from disadvantaged groups just because they are less likely to vote. By extending the case selection, both in terms of more countries and longer time periods, and by testing this mechanism for other politically relevant groups, it is possible to see whether this spontaneous market correction really acts as the invisible hand of democracy every time a group looks to abstain from the polls in large numbers.

However, the third chapter provides only indirect and suggestive evidence on why we do not see spill-over effects from turnout bias onto political representation. A more compelling analysis would require a survey of party leaders and campaign strategists that could reveal whether changes in party platforms are intended to attract younger voters and what kind of other strategies do parties adopt when mobilizing new voters. Also, an analysis of legislative and governmental agenda setting could show whether low turnout rates at previous elections provide an impetus for parties to incorporate interests of non-active social groups in their political agendas.

Next, the findings from the fourth chapter suggest that niche parties have more young partisans, but also that even the mainstream parties perform rather well when it comes

to voter-party issue congruence. Moreover, voter-party agreement is here assessed on two domains on which age differences in attitudes were found to be the most pronounced, positions towards redistribution and liberal policies, such as abortion rights or gay marriage. This implies that parties successfully balance heterogeneous requests from different age groups, and they all perform their representative roles quite well. While it would still be necessary to assess how this mechanism works in a dynamic setting, with longitudinal data sets, so we can talk about good policy responsiveness, this is nevertheless good news for the future of representative democracies and bad news for those who argue that parties have lost the ability to represent diverse views and perform their most important roles.

This all being said, the present study has several limitations. First and foremost, the crude division of young adults and adults, although not foreign to studies on young people, was conducted in this manner because of the measures of participatory inequality which necessarily include a comparison of participation rates of one group pitted against another. Related to this, it is also important to keep in mind that young people can share similar life styles or even political positions, but they are still a very heterogeneous group and all of the conclusions reached above only capture very general patterns of young people's politics.

Secondly, the analysis of the impact of inequalities in non-electoral participation on representation was based only on the age differences in associational membership. Conclusions stemming from empirical tests on non-electoral participation can be rather limited. It is necessary to see whether this relationship holds when a plethora of other possible forms of non-electoral participation are considered. It would be, for instance, crucial to include new forms of participation, such as online activism or social network participation, where young people are disproportionately represented, if the survey data would allow such queries.

Thirdly, we have already seen from the beginning that the measure of ideological con-

gruence has serious shortcomings, but its closest replacement, the measures of issue congruence, are also limited. The selection of appropriate issues will always be restricted with the availability of data for both citizens and parties, and the available issues might not always be applicable when analyzing subgroup representation. For instance, if we were to assess the differences in policy representation between those citizens with a lower income status and those who are affluent, congruence on abortion rights or environmentalism might not be the most appropriate benchmark for comparison, unlike congruence on more specific economic policies or welfare state issues.

And lastly, alternative measures of interest representation should also be explored. A comparative and longitudinal study of the age differences in policy priorities compared with the analysis of actual agenda setting, in a manner similar to the emerging studies on priority representation (e.g. John et al., 2013; Reher, 2012; Bevan and Jennings, 2014), would be ideal. This research design, which would be hard to implement because of the lack of available data, would enable us to see whether the differences in preferences, and sequentially in representation, can be attributed to the life-cycle, cohort, or period effects.

Despite these limitations, several important findings should be reiterated at the end. Evidently, young people show high unequal turnout rates, and if theories on cohort effects are right, these patterns of abstention from the electoral process may have lasting implications for the turnout rates in the future. However, turnout inequality does not create inequalities in policy and interest representation. This is partly because young people's engagement in alternative forms of participation works to their advantage and partly because parties react to inequalities in youth turnout by increasing their appeal towards the youngest members of the electorate. This special attention probably comes from the characteristics of this particular social group. First, young people are a heterogeneous group and an amalgam of all types of socio-economic categories and second, investment in young people might yield long-term benefits for vote-seeking parties. However, while

we should not be concerned about young people's policy representation, their interest representation is evidently unequal. Further studies are necessary to ascertain what kinds of factors create such inequalities in political outcomes that are present even when group policy representation is satisfactory.

Appendix A

List of datasets, countries and parties

A.1 List of datasets

Individual observations for Chapter 2, 4 and 5 are observed from the European Election Study 2009, included countries are Hungary, Poland, Romania, Latvia, Czech Republic, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Sweden, United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Portugal, Denmark, Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Belgium, Austria, Greece and Spain.

The European Election Study does not include variables inquiring about any political engagement besides voting, so the measure PINE has been calculated from the Eurobarometer 73.4 from 2010.

A.2 List of parties

Party positions are observed from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2010 for the analysis in the second chapter, and for the analysis in the fourth chapter party positions were calculated from the Rohrschneider and Whitefield expert survey. Additional information on political parties was collected from the ParlGov database and other national sources.

Table A.1: List of countries and parties included in Chapter 4

Country	Party name	Party abbreviation
Belgium	Christian-Democrat and Flemish/New Flemish	CD&V
	Reformist Movement	MR
	Flemish Interest	VB
	Flemish Liberals and Democrats	VLD
	Francophone Socialist Party	PS
	Socialist Party	SPA
	Humanist Democratic Centre	CDH
	Francophone Ecologists	ECOLO
	List Dedecker	LDD
	Green!	GROEN
	National Front	FN
Denmark	Liberal Party of Denmark	V
	Social Democrats	S
	Danish Peoples Party	DF
	Socialist Peoples Party	SF
	Conservatives	KF
	Danish Social-Liberal Party	RV
	New Alliance	NA
	Red-Green Alliance	EL
Finland	Finnish Centre	KESK
	National Coalition Party	KOK
	Social Democratic Party of Finland	SDP

	Left Alliance	VAS
	Green League	VIHR
	Finnish Christian Union	KD
	Swedish People's Party	SFP
	True Finns	PS
France	Union for a Popular Movement	UMP
	Socialist Party	PS
	Democratic Movement	MoDem
	French Communist Party	PCF
	National Front	FN
	Greens	VERTS
	New Centre	NC
	Radical Party of the Left	PRG
	The Movement for France	MPF
Germany	Christian Social Union	CSU
	Social Democratic Party	SPD
	Free Democratic Party	FDP
	The Left	DIE
	Alliance 90/Greens	GRUNE
Greece	New Democracy	ND
	Panhellenic Socialist Movement	PASOK
	Communist Party of Greece	KKE
	Popular Orthodox Rally	LAOS
Ireland	Fianna Fail	FF
	Fine Gael	FG
	Labour Party	LAB

	Sinn Fein	SF
	Green Party	GP
Netherlands	Christian Democrats	CDA
	Labour	PvdA
	Socialist Party	SP
	People's Party for Freedom	VVD
	Party for Freedom	PVV
	Green Left	GL
	Christian Union	CU
	Libertarians	D66
	Party for the Animals	PvdD
	Political Reformed Party	SGP
Portugal	Socialist Party	PS
	Social Democratic Party	PSD
	Ecology Party/Greens	PEV
	Democratic and Social Centre	CDS-PP
	Bloc of the Left	BE
Spain	Spanish Socialist Workers Party	PSOE
	Popular Party	PP
	United Left	IU
	Convergence and Unity	CiU
	Republican Left of Catalonia	ERC
	Basque National Party	EAJ-PNV
	Galician Nationalist Block	BNG
	Navarre Yes	Na-Bai
Sweden	Social Democrats	SAP

	Moderate Coalition Party	M
	Centre Party	C
	Liberal People's Party	FP
	Christian Democrats	KD
	Left Party	VP
	Greens	MP
United Kingdom	Labour	LAB
	Conservatives	CON
	Liberal Democrats	LD
	Scottish National Party	SNP
	Plaid Cymru	PC
Bulgaria	Coalition for Bulgaria	CfB
	GERB	CEDB
	National Movement Simeon II	NMSS
	Movement for Rights and Freedoms	MRF
	National Union Attack	NUA
	Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria	DSB
Czech Republic	Civic Democratic Party	ODS
	Czech Social Democratic Party	CSSD
	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	KSCM
	Christian Democratic Union/People's Party	KDU-CSL
	Green Party	SZ
Estonia	Estonian Reform Party	RE
	Centre Party of Estonia	EK

	Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica	IRL
	Social Democratic Party	SDE
	Estonian Greens	ER
	People's Union of Estonia	RL
Hungary	Hungarian Socialist Party	MSZP
	Fidesz	FIDESZ
	Alliance of Free Democrats	SZDSZ
	Hungarian Democratic Forum	MDF
	Christian Democratic People's Party	KDNP
	Hungarian Justice and Life Party/Jobbik and Third Way Alliance	MIEP
Latvia	People's Party	TP
	Green and Farmers' Union	LZS
	New Era	JL
	Harmony Centre	SC
	Latvia's First Party	LPP
	For Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK	TB/LNNK
	For Human Rights in a United Latvia	PCTVL
Poland	Law and Justice	PIS
	Civic Platform	PO
	Left and Democrats	LiD
	Self-Defense of the Republic	SRP
	League of Polish Families	LPR
	Polish Peasants' Party	PSL
Romania	Greater Romania Party	PRM
	Conservative Party	PC

	Democratic Union of Hungarians	UDMR
	Christian-Democratic National Peasants' Party	PNTCD
Slovakia	Christian Democratic Movement	KDH
	People's Party/Movement for a Democratic Slovakia	HZDS
	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union/Democratic Party	SDKU
	Direction – Social Democracy	Smer
	Party of the Hungarian Coalition	MKP
	Slovak National Party	SNS
Slovenia	Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	LDS
	Slovenian Democratic Party	SDS
	United List Social Democrats	SD
	Slovenian People's Party	SLS
	New Slovenia	NS
	Slovenian National Party	SNS
	Democratic Party of Retired People	DSUS

A.3   List of countries and years

For the analysis in chapter 3 individuals are observed from the Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2002, and party policy salience from the Manifesto Research Project data set (version MPDS2015a).

Table A.2: List of countries, survey and election years included in chapter 3

Countries	Eurbarometer	Election year
Austria	1995; 1999; 2002	1995; 1999; 2002
Belgium	1973; 1977; 1978; 1981; 1985; 1987; 1991; 1995; 1999; 2002	1974; 1977; 1978; 1981; 1985; 1987; 1991; 1995; 1999; 2003
Denmark	1973; 1975; 1977; 1979; 1981; 1984; 1987; 1988; 1990; 1994; 1997; 2000; 2002	1973; 1975; 1977; 1979; 1981; 1984; 1987; 1990; 1988; 1994; 1998; 2001; 2005
Finland	1995; 1999; 2002	1995; 1999; 2003
France	1973; 1978; 1981; 1986; 1988; 1993; 1997; 2000	1973; 1978; 1981; 1986; 1988; 1993; 1997; 2002
Germany	1973; 1976; 1980; 1983; 1987; 1990; 1994; 1997; 2002	1972; 1976; 1980; 1983; 1987; 1990; 1994; 1998; 2002
Greece	1981; 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993; 1996; 2000	1981; 1985; 1989; 1990; 1993; 1996; 2000
Ireland	1973; 1977; 1981; 1982; 1987; 1989; 1992; 1997; 2002	1973; 1977; 1981; 1982; 1987; 1989; 1992; 1997; 2002
Italy	1976; 1979; 1983; 1987; 1992; 1994; 1996; 2000	1976; 1979; 1983; 1987; 1992; 1994; 1996; 2001
Luxembourg	1973; 1979; 1984; 1989; 1994; 1999; 2002	1974; 1979; 1984; 1989; 1994; 1999; 2004
Netherlands	1977; 1981; 1982; 1986; 1989; 1994; 1997; 2000; 2002	1977; 1981; 1982; 1986; 1989; 1994; 1998; 2002; 2003
Portugal	1985; 1987; 1991; 1995; 1999; 2000; 2002	1985; 1987; 1991; 1995; 1999; 2002; 2005
Spain	1986; 1989; 1993; 1996; 2000; 2002	1986; 1989; 1993; 1996; 2000; 2004
Sweden	1997; 2000; 2002	1998; 2002; 2006
UK	1973; 1979; 1983; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2000; 2002	1974; 1979; 1983; 1987; 1992; 1997; 2001; 2005

Appendix B

Supplementary models and results

B.1 Detailed results for chapter 2

To test whether young people are true moderates, I have asked whether those young people who declare themselves as ideologically moderate also identify with moderate parties and whether their levels of partisanship are equal to those of moderate adults. Table B.1 shows the results from a three-level mixed-effect model (Snijders and Bosker, 1999; Steenbergen and Jones, 2002) with partisan identification as a dependent variable. Individuals at level-1 are nested according to their future vote choice within parties at level-2. Future vote choice, rather than previous vote choice, is selected to ensure that the sample size of young adults is large enough to conduct a three-level analysis with enough young people nested within parties.

Countries are included at the level-3 but as a control variable and without any specific predictors. Two variables are included at level-1, a dummy variable that captures whether a respondent is moderate or not and a dummy variable 'young'. Only one variable is included at level-2, a dummy variable that captures whether the party they voted for is a centrist party or not. Those parties that are 1 standard deviation away and less from the left-right mean position of all parties in the country are considered centrist parties.

Table B.1: Models for partisanship, moderate voters and moderate parties

Partisanship	M1	M2	M3	M4
(Intercept)	1.19 ***	1.23 ***	1.21 ***	1.23 ***
	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Young	-0.29 ***	-0.30 ***	-0.23 **	-0,18
	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Moderate respondents		-0.58 ***	-0.59 ***	-0.66 ***
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Moderate parties		0.46 ***	0.54 ***	0.45 ***
		(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.11)
Young: Moderate r.		-0,09		-0,26
		(0.17)		(0.20)
Moderate r.: Moderate p.			-0.42 *	-0.60 **
			(0.18)	(0.21)
Young: Moderate p.				0.29 *
				(0.15)
Young: Moderate r.: Moderate p.				0.65
				(0.38)
AIC	10320	10195	10190	10184
BIC	10348	10260	10254	10271
Log Likelihood	-5156	-5088	-5086	-5080
Observations	9851	9851	9851	9851
Parties	123	123	123	123
Countries	24	24	24	24
Variance: party/country	0.15	0.17	0.18	0.17
Variance: country	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66
Variance: party/young		0.06	0.06	0.06

Note: Generalized linear mixed model fit by maximum likelihood (Laplace Approximation) with 'lme4' package in R. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05. Standard errors in parenthesis.

B.2 Detailed results for chapter 3

Table B.2: Pooled linear regression models for party appeal: additional analysis

Variables	Un-weighted BootM1	Weighted BootM1	
Lagged PIE t-1	0.09	-0.02	
	(0.08)	(0.05)	
Lagged party appeal	0.65***	0.75***	
	(0.07)	(0.06)	
Constant	0.11	0.1	
	(0.05)	(0.05)	
R-Squared	0.48	0.6	
Parties	98	97	

Note: *** $p<0.001$, ** $p<0.01$, * $p<0.05$. 1,000 bootM models are estimated with Zelig package in R (Imai et al. 2015), and pooled using "mice" package (van Buuren and Groothuis-Oudshoorn, 2011). R square for the boot models is calculated with 'mice' package (Harel, 2009).

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