

8 New modes of participation and norms of citizenship

*Jan W. van Deth*¹

Participation is organization?

Almost by definition, politics – as the art or science of government or governing – is a collective and social phenomenon. Politics deals with the processes by which groups of people make decisions; not with purely private, non-public or individual matters. For that reason, *political participation is organization*: joining a party, attending a demonstration or signing a petition is done by at least a few people sharing the same interests or aims. Besides, political decision making in mass democracies involves a virtually endless list of parties, interest groups, movements, associations, committees, pressure groups and the like. Recently, the neo-Tocquevillean revival expanded the set of politically relevant groups by emphasizing the importance of engagement in all kinds of voluntary associations for a vibrant democracy. Arthur Bentley's century-old claim that: "When the groups are adequately stated, everything is stated" might be a bit too strong, but still captures much of the essence of the collective and social character of political life correctly.

Although individualistic modes of participation are long-standing (e.g. casting a vote, donating money, signing a petition), these modes require some kind of organization: you can't support a political cause if there are no political organizations to vote for, or support (financially or with time). This is a rapidly changing situation. New forms of participation such as boycotting or buycotting products or ethical shopping appear to be individualistic in a way not seen before. Refusing to buy specific products or brands in order to withhold support for, say, the destruction of rainforests does not require any organization or collective action. To be effective, a large number of people should behave in a similar way – but they can all act individually and separately. Of course, there needs to be some form of political entrepreneurship or organization that raises consciousness. Internet technologies have the potential to significantly enhance these modes of participation and make conventional organizations appear outdated. Accordingly, the organizational costs of participation have been lowered and all kind of concerns and aims are mobilized that may not have been articulated before, or at least would have found it even difficult. As a consequence, almost everybody can be politically active at any moment in time. Shirky (2008)

summarized this development neatly in the title of his book *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations*.

The mounting reluctance of citizens to base the expression of their demands and concerns on organized modes of participation has been reinforced by the growth of professionalized associations and groups and their heavy reliance on patronage and acceptance of the role of agents in a principal-agent relationship. Citizens seem to be content to contract out participation in policy-making processes to professionals and pay for this service (Jordan and Maloney 2007: 158–63; Saurugger 2007: 397–8). Chequebook participation and “outsourcing activism” (Fisher 2006) is widely accepted by many citizens and groups. In this division of labour, both citizens and associations can efficiently focus on their own goals. As a result, however, organizations and associational involvement has become less important for citizens and increasingly dispensable for political participation. Although organizations are necessary for decision-making processes, they are not conceived as mass political bodies for the direct involvement of citizens. In fact, contacts between organizations and citizens are increasingly characterized as supplier-customer relationships.

The two developments mentioned – a rise of individualized modes of participation and the professionalization of groups – strengthen each other and the combined effects could have important consequences for democratic citizenship. Citizenship includes engagement in public and political affairs, responsibility, solidarity, equal opportunities and individual rights. The very recognition of these requirements transforms people living in communities into citizens of a democratic polity. In his seminal work Marshall (1950) depicted citizenship as a status granted to individuals who meet specific requirements, changing people from subjects of political processes into participants and doers. Citizenship defines both rights and duties: i.e. citizens have entitlements within their communities/countries as well as obligations towards state institutions (Marshall and Bottomore 1950: 41–3, 45–6). If organizational activity is no longer a requirement for political participation, then engagement in public affairs loses its prominent position in the list of requirements for democratic citizenship. Consequently, some authors note the rise of a new concept of citizenship which is “marked by a radical individualism and extreme libertarianism” and is labelled “The S.U.V. model of citizenship: floating bubbles, buffer zones, and the rise of the ‘purely atomic’ individual” (Mitchell 2005: 77).

In this chapter the presumed increase in the prominence of new individualized modes of participation (especially boycotting) and its relevance for democratic citizenship are analysed. The first question to be addressed is the extent of individualized political participation and its impact on other modes of participation. Second, citizens using new modes of participation are supposed to be motivated by a lack of enthusiasm for organized forms of participation as well as relatively strong ethical/moral considerations and a focus on global issues. Reliance on Internet technologies is presumed to be another feature of these citizens. Consequently the entry barriers may be reduced and the traditional inequality in political participation may also fall. The empirical validity of these claims will

be assessed here by analysing cross-national survey data (especially the European Social Surveys) for a number of established democracies.

Developments in political participation

A continuous expansion?

Political participation can be loosely defined as citizens’ voluntary activities aimed at influencing political decisions. While this is a parsimonious definition a virtually endless list of definitions of political participation have been outlined.² The main reason for this lack of consent is obvious: politics is a highly diffuse and contested concept. Besides, citizens basically have the opportunity to engage in any kind of activity they consider appropriate to influence political decisions that is not explicitly illegal.³ Introducing new forms of political participation, then, is straightforward and a continuous expansion of the repertoire seems obvious.

In all established democracies the modes of participation have been expanding rapidly since the 1950s and 1960s. This development reflects the growing relevance of government and politics for citizens in modern societies, the rise of skills and competences among citizens, as well as continuing the blurring of the distinction between political and non-political spheres. In the seminal voting studies of the 1940s and 1950s political participation was mainly restricted to casting a vote and campaign activities. By the early 1960s it was broadly understood as activities concerned with campaigning by politicians and parties, and contacts between citizens and public officials. These forms of activities became known as “conventional” modes of participation. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the modes of political participation were further expanded. First, due to the growing relevance of community groups and direct contacts between citizens, public officials and politicians, and, second, societal developments challenged the idea that political participation only consisted of broadly accepted forms or “conventional” modes. Protest and rejection joined the domain of participation (Barnes *et al.* 1979) and were labelled “unconventional” because they were not in line with social norms in the early 1970s. In the 1990s the disappearing borderline between political and non-political spheres and the revival of neo-Tocquevillean and communitarian approaches ushered in an expansion of political participation to include “civil” activities such as volunteering and social engagement (Putnam *et al.* 1993; Putnam 2000; Norris 2002). The most recent expansion has been characterized by the spread of individualized, ethically/morally based acts of participation such as “political consumption” (cf. Micheletti 2003; Micheletti and Stolle 2007) or, more generally, “ethical consumer practices” (cf. Harrison *et al.* 2005) are recognized. The continuous expansion of the repertoire of political participation has grown from voting and campaigning in the 1940s to almost every conceivable form of activity imaginable now (van Deth 2001, 2010 or Zukin *et al.* 2006: chapter 3).

Empirically the expansion of the repertoire of political participation is predicted on cross-sectional studies advocating for the relevance of some specific

(usually “unconventional” or “new”) mode of participation. For instance, the authors of the Political Action study (Barnes *et al.* 1979) convincingly argued that protest activities belong to the repertoire of political participation, but they could not document an *expansion* or a *shift* in it since previous studies were simply restricted to conventional modes. Although there are numerous cross-national studies conclusions about long-term developments are not easy to validate empirically.⁴ This is mainly due to the fact that, almost by definition, newer modes of participation have not been included in older studies. More frustratingly, however, is the apparent lack of willingness to include instruments in similar ways in different studies. Question wording, response scales or the number of items used differ considerably between various studies and make comparison difficult.⁵ Furthermore, more recent studies use a 12 month time horizon for engagement in relevant activities. Scrutinizing the questionnaires of the Political Action study (PA), World Value Surveys (WVS), European Social Surveys (ESS) and the Citizenship, Involvement, Democracy study (CID)⁶ results in only four modes of participation that have been used in each study in more or less similar ways:

- voted in the last (national) elections⁷
- signed a petition
- took part in a (lawful) demonstration
- boycotted certain products.

While this very short list falls quite some way short of covering the almost unlimited repertoire of political participation, it clearly includes the most important modes of participation. If the barriers to political participation have disappeared and people increasingly tend to prefer individualized modes of participation, then we can expect a continuous rise in the use of especially boycotting. Beside, the total share of people being politically active is likely to increase, since the addition of newer forms of participation to the action repertoire will increasingly mobilize parts of the populations that have not been active before.

Figure 8.1 shows the use of boycotting products for political reasons as a major form of individualized political participation for the seven European countries included in the first wave of the PA study in the period between 1974 and 2008. The graph corroborates the expectation of a rise of individualized modes of political participation in the last 35 years. Whereas less than 5 per cent of citizens had boycotted a product in the early 1970s this rises in each country until the late 1990s.⁸ Contrary to expectations, however, the percentages of people using boycotts does not increase continuously but remains more or less at the same level (Finland), increases (Germany) or goes down (all other countries) in more recent studies. Although country-specific differences are considerable, in general boycotting products for political reasons increased popularity and reached a plateau between 1999 and 2002.

The distributions of voting, signing a petition, demonstrating and boycotting for the seven countries between 1974 and 2008 are summarized in Table 8.1

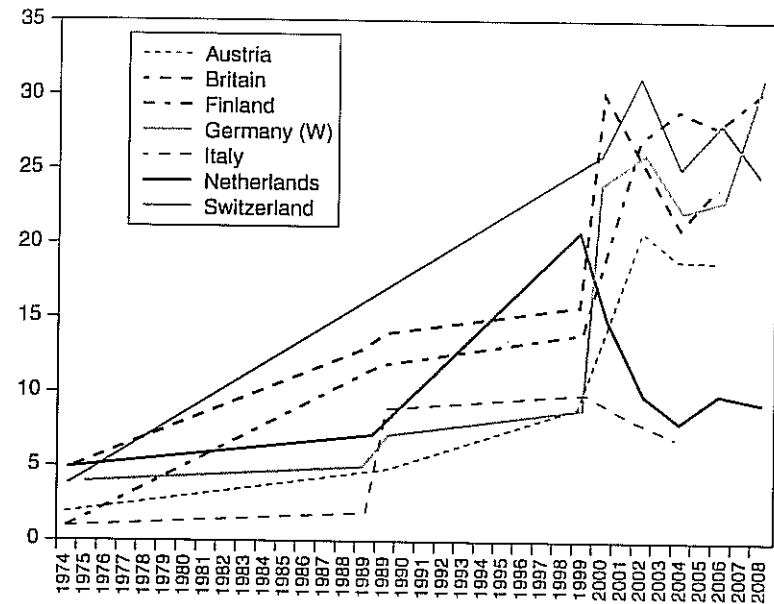


Figure 8.1 Use of individualized modes of political participation (boycotting) in Austria, Britain, Finland, West Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Switzerland, 1974 to 2008 (sources: datasets used: PA-1 (1974), EB-31 (1989), WVS (1989 and 1999), CID (2000), ESS (2002, 2004, 2006, 2008)).

Notes

Percentages “have done” of the total number of respondents; weighted with design weights, PA not weighted.

(first parts of the table for each country). These figures partly support the expectation. Firstly, the rise of boycotting for political reasons is mirrored in the figures for demonstrations. The percentages of people demonstrating in the early years are higher than those for the more recent period, and the last decade seems to show a stabilisation or slight reduction in the use of this form of participation. These results corroborate the idea that organized, collective modes of participation have become less attractive. As a mixed type of participation signing petitions developed differently in several countries, with a clear increase in Finland, Britain and Italy; a stabilization in Germany and the Netherlands; and a decrease in Austria and Switzerland. Finally, voting is declining in all countries. The more recent ESS studies show considerable fluctuations in participation rates in a short period of time. The general picture, then, suggests the growing importance of individualized modes of participation such as boycotting, which seems to have peaked around the turn of the century.⁹

In order to trace the developments among the different modes of participation several indicators have been computed (second parts for each country in Table 8.1). Looking at the percentages of citizens using at least one of the four modes

Table 8.1 Forms of participation in Austria, Britain, Finland, West Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Switzerland, 1974 to 2008

		<i>PA-1</i>		<i>EB31</i>		<i>WVS 2, 4</i>		<i>CID</i>		<i>ESS 1, 2, 3, 4</i>		
		1974	1989	1989	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008		
Austria	Vote ^a	87	–	71	71	–	81	65	76	–		
	Petition	34	–	45	56	–	27	24	21	–		
	Demonstration	6	–	10	16	–	10	7	4	–		
	Boycott	2	–	5	9	–	21	19	19	–		
	At least one ^b	90	–	82	86	–	87	75	82	–		
	None ^c	10	–	18	14	–	13	25	18	–		
	Consistency ^d	0.31	–	0.38	0.42	–	0.42	0.37	0.39	–		
	Coherence ^e	0.03	–	0.07	0.05	–	0.03	0.05	0.04	–		
	Britain	Vote ^a	72	78	82	69	74	67	62	67	64	
		Petition	22	68	75	78	41	40	35	41	38	
Demonstration		6	11	13	13	4	4	4	4	4		
Boycott		5	13	14	16	30	26	21	24	24		
At least one ^b		78	93	94	91	85	80	76	78	77		
None ^c		22	7	6	9	15	20	24	22	23		
Consistency ^d		0.33	0.37	0.45	0.44	0.41	0.44	0.41	0.46	0.44		
Coherence ^e		0.07	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.10	0.07	0.12	0.13		
Finland		Vote ^a	76	–	68	77	–	72	73	75	73	
		Petition	19	–	34	47	–	24	26	32	32	
	Demonstration	6	–	12	14	–	2	2	2	3		
	Boycott	1	–	12	14	–	27	29	28	30		
	At least one ^b	81	–	78	86	–	82	83	86	85		
	None ^c	19	–	22	14	–	18	17	14	15		
	Consistency ^d	0.26	–	0.45	0.53	–	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.49		
	Coherence ^e	0.05	–	0.08	0.11	–	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.05		
	Germany (West)	Vote ^a	88	78	83	72	79	78	72	73	76	
		Petition	31	28	57	48	31	30	32	27	31	
Demonstration		9	7	25	25	9	11	9	7	8		
Boycott		4	5	7	9	24	26	22	23	31		
At least one ^b		92	83	92	85	85	85	81	81	84		
None ^c		8	17	8	15	15	15	19	19	16		
Consistency ^d		0.35	0.38	0.46	0.46	0.49	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.40		
Coherence ^e		–0.00	0.10	0.06	0.05	0.10	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.04		
Italy		Vote ^a	76	57	62	61	–	84	79	–	–	
		Petition	10	38	42	52	–	17	13	–	–	
	Demonstration	17	18	32	33	–	11	12	–	–		
	Boycott	1	2	9	10	–	8	7	–	–		
	At least one ^b	83	72	79	82	–	88	83	–	–		
	None ^c	17	28	21	18	–	12	17	–	–		
	Consistency ^d	0.13	0.43	0.50	0.47	–	0.44	0.43	–	–		
	Coherence ^e	–0.01	0.13	0.08	0.07	–	0.03	0.04	–	–		

Table 8.1 Continued

		<i>PA-1</i>		<i>EB31</i>		<i>WVS 2, 4</i>		<i>CID</i>		<i>ESS 1, 2, 3, 4</i>		
		1974	1989	1989	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008		
Netherlands	Vote ^a	75	79	87	90	76	81	77	.77	80		
	Petition	21	49	49	59	35	22	23	20	24		
	Demonstration	7	13	24	31	5	3	4	3	3		
	Boycott	5	7	8	21	16	10	8	10	9		
	At least one ^b	80	89	93	95	85	86	81	81	84		
	None ^c	20	11	7	5	15	14	19	19	16		
	Consistency ^d	0.38	0.37	0.55	0.56	0.31	0.31	0.36	0.35	0.49		
	Coherence ^e	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.02	–0.02	0.06	0.05	0.02		
	Switzerland	Vote ^a	58	–	55	–	56	54	55	51	53	
		Petition	44	–	61	–	36	39	38	35	38	
Demonstration		8	–	15	–	7	8	9	7	8		
Boycott		4	–	–	–	26	31	25	28	25		
At least one ^b		74	–	78	–	73	73	73	69	69		
None ^c		26	–	22	–	27	27	27	31	31		
Consistency ^d		0.38	–	0.44	–	0.40	0.44	0.45	0.47	0.50		
Coherence ^e		0.08	–	0.17	–	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.13	0.09		

Notes

Percentages "have done" of the total number of respondents: weighted for design effects, PA not weighted.

a For the WVS: percentages of respondents mentioning a party on the question "Which party would you vote for?"

b Percentage of respondents having used at least one of the four modes of participation.

c Percentage of respondents having used none of the four modes of participation.

d Association between modes of participation (Cronbach's Alpha for the four items).

e Relationship between voting and the three other modes of participation (average beta coefficient controlled for age, sex and education).

of participation (first row) or not a single one (second row) it is clear there is no general increase. In most countries, participation in general seems to be steady or to go down slightly, with the clear exception of Austria and West Germany where the willingness to participate was higher in the early 1970s than revealed by more recent studies. In spite of the evident growth in the percentages of citizens using boycotting for political purposes in the last decades, the total number of participants does not seem to increase continuously. This result suggests that newer modes of participation are integrated into existing forms and are not used as vehicles to recruit new parts of citizenries. This interpretation can be further tested by computing indicators for consistency and coherence among the various modes of participation (third and fourth rows). Consistency is indicated by the average inter-correlations (Cronbach's Alpha) for the set of four items in each country. As Table 8.1 indicates these items are positively related, but their inter-relationships are not very strong. In general, the coefficients tend to increase, which suggests that the four modes increasingly can be seen as specimen of a common latent construct. In other words, boycotting is increasingly integrated in

the concept of political participation. Finally, the average correlation between voting and the three other modes is used as a measure of the coherence of political participation in each country. With a few very minor exceptions, these coefficients are all positive. In spite of the relatively low levels obtained for this indicator, an increasing trend is evident in many countries. This finding highlights the fact that individualized modes of participation have not only become more popular – they are increasingly part of the political action repertoire of citizens and should not be viewed as a specific special type of behaviour.

These conclusions are bolstered when we use a larger set of similar items available in the PA and ESS studies. Table 8.2 shows that between 1974 and 2002 only the use of boycotts for political reasons has increased strongly and significantly.¹⁰ Furthermore, all other indicators in the bottom part of the table underline the idea of stabilization or even a modest decline in political participation at the aggregate level since the turn of the century. Although the relatively high coefficients for consistency might be inflated by the larger number of items available, they certainly support the idea that the eight modes of participation – including boycotting – do not exclude each other. In a similar way, the positive coefficients for coherence support this conclusion. Although the three sets of countries consist of very different countries, no compositional effects are evident. Apparently, the development of participation is more or less similar in all European countries in the period considered.

New modes of what?

The lack of continuous growth of individualized political participation in the last decade and the stabilization at a relatively high level requires further examination. The consistency and coherence indicators presented in the previous subsection suggest that strong crowding-out effects between boycotting and other forms of political participation are unlikely. Yet these newer forms are not simple extensions of the political action repertoire of citizens. How, then, is boycotting related to other modes of political participation, especially to explicit organized and collective forms such as working in a party or in some other organization?

With the recent expansion of the action repertoire the nature of political behaviour changed. Older forms of participation are specific types of behaviour designed to “influence political decisions”: casting a vote, joining a demonstration or supporting a candidate are all examples of such activities. As such, refusals to buy, say, a specific brand of coffee or athletic shoes are not forms of political participation, but non-political types of behaviour that could be used for political aims. In this way, the expansion of the political participation repertoire to include individualized forms differs clearly from previous expansions. Whereas, for instance, the addition of protest forms of participation to the action repertoire in the 1960s and 1970s implied an extension with specific types of political behaviour (demonstrating, painting slogans, collecting signatures etc.). The newest forms are characterized by the use of non-political modes of

Table 8.2 Forms of participation in Europe, 1974 to 2008

	All countries available in each study				Same countries in all five studies ^a				Same countries in all four studies ^b					
	PA-I		ESS 1, 2, 3, 4		PA-I		ESS 1, 2, 3, 4		ESS 1, 2, 3, 4		ESS 1, 2, 3, 4			
	1974	2002	2004	2006	2008	1974	2002	2004	2006	2008	2002	2004	2006	2008
Voted last election	77	73	71	69	72	78	74	69	71	72	72	70	70	72
Contacted politician	28	15	12	12	11	27	15	13	14	17	15	13	13	14
Worked in political party	15	4	4	4	3	15	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
Worked in another organization	–	14	12	11	10	–	16	16	17	19	15	15	15	15
Worn badge/sticker	–	8	8	6	5	–	7	6	6	6	8	7	8	7
Signed a petition	26	26	21	20	17	28	33	32	32	33	28	27	27	27
Demonstrated	9	9	10	7	7	7	8	7	6	6	9	10	8	8
Boycotted products	3	17	14	13	13	4	24	20	22	25	19	18	18	20
At least one ^c	86	83	81	77	79	86	85	81	82	83	82	81	81	81
None ^d	14	17	19	23	21	14	15	19	18	17	18	19	19	19
Consistency ^e	0.51	0.62	0.62	0.61	0.62	0.53	0.58	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62
Coherence ^f	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
N (weighted)	10,869	37,793	47,799	49,207	58,456	6,588	14,093	14,285	14,438	14,567	29,736	30,250	30,710	31,116

Notes

Percentages “have done” of the total number of respondents; ESS weighted with design weights and weights for country size; PA not weighted.

a Same countries in all five studies: Britain, Finland, Germany (West), Netherlands, Switzerland.

b Same countries in each of the four ESS studies: Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia.

c Percentage of respondents having used at least one of the modes of participation.

d Percentage of respondents having used none of the modes of participation.

e Association between modes of participation (Cronbach's Alpha for the sets of items).

f Relationship between voting and other modes of participation (average beta coefficient controlled for age, sex and education).

behaviour (product boycotts etc.) for political purposes. The distinction between boycotting a product because you don't like its taste or shape on the one hand, and boycotting it for political reasons on the other, can *only be based on the expression of these aims by the person involved*.¹¹ Especially Micheletti (2003: 14) advanced a strong argument for "political consumerism" as a newer form of individualized collective action.

political consumerism is politics when people knowingly target market actors to express their opinions on justice, fairness, or noneconomic issues that concern personal and family well-being. When they shop in this fashion they are using their consumer choice as an ethical or political assessment of favorable and unfavorable business and government practice.

Apparently neither the activity as such, or the target is crucial to the political consumerism label. New individualized modes of participation should be "ethically" based and considered as an "expression of opinions".¹² As Shirky (2008) and many others remind us, instead of conventional (mobilizing) organizations it is the opportunities provided by modern Internet technologies that are crucial for mobilization via these new modes of participation.

As a radically different type of participation boycotting products for political reasons does not have to be related systematically to other modes of political participation. Although the figures for coherence and consistency presented above are not very strong, they do suggest that boycotting belongs to the political action repertoire of citizens. As novel as boycotting may be it is systematically related to other political activities. In order to explore this interpretation more closely we examine the correlations between boycotting and other modes of participation. Instead of exploring bivariate coefficients separately the relationships between boycotting and other modes of participation, we investigate the latent structure. Table 8.3 shows the results of these explorations (PCA) for eight modes of participation available in all four waves of the ESS. If boycotting is a mode of political participation it should be grouped among other modes of political participation on some latent dimension which can then be interpreted as "political participation".¹³ Starting with boycotting the number of political items included in the analyses is increased step-wise until a one-dimensional solution is no longer appropriate (eigenvalue of a second component evidently larger than 1.0). After several attempts a similar single dimension appeared in both sets of countries in each of the four waves including six of the eight modes of participation available. The parameters for the fit of this single dimension all suggest that it can be seen as an appropriate summary of the six items in each study. The position of boycotting on this dimension is ambivalent. On the one hand, boycotting fits into the structure and is clearly positively correlated with such political activities as working in a party or attending a demonstration. Boycotting, therefore, is an ordinary part of the *political* action repertoire as defined by the six items. On the other hand, we see that boycotting products for political reasons is a very weak member of the set of participation items: the communalities for boycotting

Table 8.3 Exploratory structure of political participation in Europe, 2002 to 2008

	All countries available				Same countries in all four studies ^a			
	ESS 1	ESS 2	ESS 3	ESS 4	ESS 1	ESS 2	ESS 3	ESS 4
	2002	2004	2006	2008	2002	2004	2006	2008
Worked in political party or action group	0.30	0.32	0.31	0.29	0.30	0.32	0.28	0.26
Worked in another organization	0.35	0.40	0.37	0.38	0.34	0.38	0.36	0.36
Worn badge/sticker	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.42	0.43	0.41	0.43	0.41
Signed a petition	0.43	0.42	0.43	0.45	0.41	0.41	0.43	0.42
Demonstrated	0.42	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.43	0.37	0.40	0.36
Boycotted products	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.32	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.30
Variance explained (%)	37	37	37	37	36	36	36	35
KMO-Test	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.74
Cronbach's Alpha	0.64	0.65	0.64	0.65	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.61
N (weighted)	37,793	47,799	49,207	58,456	29,736	30,250	30,710	31,116

Notes

Excluded items: "vote in last election" and "contacted a politician".

Principal component analyses; communalities of single dimensional solutions; weighted with design weights and weights for country size.

^a Same countries in all four studies: Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia.

are among the lowest in each analysis.¹⁴ Boycotting belongs to the political action repertoire, but it clearly is one of the weakest among the set of items defining political participation.

Structural analyses as summarized in Table 8.3 corroborate the conceptualization of individualized forms of participation as modes of political participation. They do not establish a unique type of behaviour unrelated to activities such as working in a party, signing a petition or attending a demonstration. The spread of newer modes of participation implies an *extension* of the political action repertoire of citizens and not the rise of radically different or alternative modes of participation (cf. de Rijke *et al.* 2008: 142–3). Mainly due to this extension the general level of political participation has been stabilized at a relatively high level in Europe in the last few years.

Citizenship

Although the various modes of participation belong together different parts of the populations might select different modes of participation for a variety of reasons. As noted above, several authors maintain that there has been a shift from collective, organized modes of participation towards individualized, “ethically” based forms. These two statements are not mutually exclusive: newer, individualized forms of participation can be part of the political action repertoire and – at the same time – be used by people who dislike organizations and are motivated mainly by normative considerations. Do people supporting specific norms about the role of citizens in democratic societies use new modes of participation more frequently than those less supportive of such norms? If individualized forms of participation are meant to express and emphasize moral/ethical considerations, are people using these newer modes characterized by relatively high levels of support for democratic norms of citizenship?

Determinants of individualized and collective forms of participation

In order to explore the impact of ethical/moral considerations empirically, a typology of participants using only individualized and organized modes of participation is constructed (i.e. boycotting and buycotting).¹⁵ While other modes of participation might have individual features, boycotting and buycotting do not require some kind of organizational or collective coordination. To be effective, it certainly helps that a large number of people behave in a similar way – but they can all act individually and separately and no top-down coordination is required. With the items “worked in a party or action group” and “worked in another organization or association” two unambiguous organizational modes of participation are available. With these two sets of two variables four types of participants can be identified (see Table 8.4).

The first type consists of people who do not discriminate between available modes of participation and are involved in both individualized and organized forms. They are labelled *activists*. Next, we have *individualists* who specialize in

Table 8.4 A typology of individualized and organized modes of participation

	<i>Individualized modes of participation:</i>	
	<i>used boycotting or buycotting</i>	<i>not used</i>
<i>Organized modes of participation:</i>		
<i>active in party or association</i>	Activists	Collectivists
<i>not active</i>	Individualists	Others

individualized modes of participation and do not use organized forms. *Individualists* are characterized by the combination of involvement in individualized modes of participation and abstention from organized forms. Similarly, we distinguish *collectivists* as those citizens who are engaged in organizations but do not use individualized modes of participation. The remaining citizens are simply called *others*; they are not involved in either individualized or organized modes of participation analysed here, but they may of course, be involved in some other mode of participation. Table 8.5 shows the distributions of these four types of participants in each of the four waves of the ESS. These figures, once again, underline that individualized modes of participation are very popular in Europe, but that a continuous increase cannot be observed.¹⁶

The difference between *individualists* and *collectivists* is expected to be closely related to a distinction in the normative orientations they support. Information about norms of citizenship seems to be particularly relevant for understanding changes and differences in participation. Norms of citizenship shape citizens’ behaviour in specific ways (cf. Theiss-Morse 1993: 370; Verba *et al.* 1995: 105–21). Since *individualists* are likely to base their actions on ethical/moral considerations they are expected to show relatively high levels of support for various norms of citizenship as compared to *collectivists*.

Although discussions about the various meanings of citizenship are centuries old, there is a paucity of empirical research on the normative aspects of citizenship.¹⁷ In the first wave of the ESS a question on the personal image of a “good citizen” is used which captures various aspects of these normative considerations:

To be a good citizen, how important would you say it is for a person to . . . :

- support people who are worse off than themselves?
- to vote in elections?
- always obey laws and regulations?
- form their own opinion, independently of others?
- be active in voluntary organizations?
- be active in politics?

Respondents expressed their opinion for each item on an 11-point scale ranging from “extremely unimportant” to “extremely important”. On the basis of a similar set of items in the CID study Denters *et al.* concluded that: “in each of

Table 8.5 Types of participation in Europe, 2002 to 2008

	All countries available in each wave					Same countries available in all waves ^b				
	Types					Types				
	Activist	Individualist	Collectivist	Others	N	Activist	Individualist	Collectivist	Others	N
2002 ^a	8	21	7	64	37,793	9	24	8	60	30,656
2002	5	12	10	73	37,793	6	13	11	70	30,656
2004	5	10	9	77	47,799	6	13	10	71	31,250
2006	4	9	9	78	49,207	6	13	11	71	31,738
2008	4	10	8	79	52,747	6	14	10	70	31,116

Notes

Percentages of each type of the total number of respondents, weighted with design weights and weights for country size.

a In 2002 also boycotting products is available and included in the four item typology as a mode of individualized political participation.

b Countries included: Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Slovenia.

our countries the majority of citizens internalized a fully-integrated concept of citizenship" (2007: 106). Yet support for the various norms appears to differ widely (cf. Roßteutscher 2004; Denters and van der Kolk 2008; van Deth 2009). Whereas autonomy, law-abidingness, solidarity and voting are considered to be very important by (large) majorities of citizens in each country, engagement in voluntary associations and political activities lack broad support. Apparently, casting a vote is widely seen as an important aspect of a "good citizen", but further engagement is considered to be much less relevant. In fact, for many people a "good citizen" is someone who visits the ballot box – not someone who is engaged in public and political affairs beyond voting.¹⁸ People are consistently reluctant to place much value on both social and political participation as core aspects of being a "good citizen" (cf. Theiss-Morse and Hibbing 2005: 242–5). Obviously, the "ideal citizen is not the enlightened political participant cognizant of the common good but the effective one" (Gross 1997: 233).

Are differences in support for these norms of citizenship relevant for participation, or, more specifically, does strong support for these norms increase the likelihood of using individualized modes of participation? In order to answer this question major antecedents of belonging to one of the four types of participants are outlined in the (logistic) regression analyses (see Table 8.6).¹⁹ The first two blocks consist of factors that are considered to be relevant for the use of individualized modes of participation: various norms of citizenship and use of the electronic means of communication.²⁰ In addition major antecedents of political participation are added: social participation (following the neo-Tocquevillean interpretations that engagement in voluntary associations facilitates political engagement), political orientations (ideology, political interest, efficacy and discontent all have an impact on the willingness to participate), socio-demographic features (traditionally age, sex and education are relevant for participation) and finally dummies for the contextual effects of country-specific factors (participation depends at least partly on the opportunities, institutions and events available in some country).

The results of the regression analyses corroborate a number of expectations. Individualized modes of participation are preferred by people who strongly support the norms to vote in elections and to form their own opinions. On the other hand, support for law abidingness and organizational and political engagement does not increase the chances of engaging in individualized modes of participation. It is of little surprise that people strongly supporting the idea that organizational engagement is an important aspect of a "good citizen" are highly likely to be active in political organizations (the *collectivists*). The coefficients for the prospect of becoming an *individualist* exhibit relatively weak effects (all about 1.0). Concentrating on individualized political actions is not very likely if one strongly supports norms of citizenship – favourable for that type of activity is a combination of support for independence and a rejection of law abidingness and social and political engagement. In other words, support for being a "good citizen" does not increase one's chances of engaging in new individualized modes of participation.²¹ However, in line with the expectations, the Internet has

Table 8.6 Antecedents of types of participants, 2002

	Types							
	Activist		Individualist		Collectivist		Others	
	Exp b	R ²	Exp b	R ²	Exp b	R ²	Exp b	R ²
Norms of citizenship:		0.01		0.01		0.01		0.01
• solidarity with people	1.02		1.00		0.94***		1.00	
• vote in elections	1.04***		1.04***		1.00		0.95***	
• form own opinions	1.02		1.09***		1.01		0.93***	
• obey laws and regulations	0.92***		0.96***		1.04***		1.08***	
• be active in organizations	1.10***		0.98**		1.14***		0.95***	
• be active in politics	1.03*		0.97***		0.99		1.01	
Use of the Internet:		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.01
•	1.09***		1.05***		1.01		0.92***	
Social participation: ^a		0.10		0.00		0.02		0.05
•	1.47***		0.97**		1.27***		0.70***	
Political orientations:		0.02		0.01		0.00		0.03
• left-right placement	0.93***		0.97***		1.04***		1.06***	
• political efficacy	1.10***		1.03*		1.05***		0.92***	
• political interest	1.60***		1.24***		1.28***		0.63***	
• satisfaction with democracy	0.97***		0.99*		1.00		1.03***	
Socio-demographic features:		0.00		0.03		0.01		0.02
• age	1.00		1.03***		1.00		0.98***	
• age (square)	1.00		1.00***		1.00		1.00***	
• sex (male)	0.86***		0.60***		1.73***		1.38***	
• education	1.04***		1.07***		0.98**		0.93***	
Country dummies: ^b		0.03		0.06		0.03		0.06
• Austria	0.55***		0.44***		1.70***		2.29***	
• Belgium	1.29**		0.38***		2.71***		1.42***	
• Britain	0.62***		0.84*		0.64*		1.55***	
• Czech Republic	1.38*		0.46***		3.08***		1.10	
• Denmark	0.62***		0.82*		0.88		1.71***	
• Finland	2.26***		0.72**		2.82***		0.62***	
• France	1.29*		0.55***		1.78***		1.15	
• Germany	0.87		0.68***		1.22		1.43***	
• Greece	0.57***		0.22		1.56**		2.80***	
• Hungary	0.33***		0.22***		0.63*		4.54***	
• Ireland	0.64***		0.44***		1.38*		2.28***	
• Israel	0.32***		0.34***		0.97		3.79***	
• Italy	0.39***		0.18***		1.41*		4.19***	
• Luxembourg	0.62***		0.55***		0.97		2.15***	
• Netherlands	0.54***		0.31***		2.06***		2.94***	
• Norway	1.05		0.47***		2.11***		1.50***	
• Poland	0.44***		0.20***		1.49**		3.35***	
• Portugal	0.39***		0.15***		1.16		4.80***	
• Slovenia	0.18***		0.24***		0.83		5.38***	
• Spain	0.93		0.20***		3.82***		1.82***	
• Sweden	1.29*		1.07		1.07		0.78**	
Nagelkerke R ²	0.26		0.16		0.12		0.35	
N (weighted)	34,327							

Notes

Binary logistic regression; Nagelkerke R²; weighted with design weights.

Significance: * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001; R²: variance explained by subsets of variables after controlling for all other variables.

a Number of voluntary associations being a member of.

b Reference category: Switzerland.

a positive impact on the selection of these modes of participation. Although a relatively high level of Internet access is conducive for all four participative types, the impact is much clearer for *activists* and *individualists* than *collectivists*.

Since the focus here is on explanatory factors for new modes of participation, the results for the remaining blocks of variables are not considered in detail. The prospect of being an *individualist* increases with the level of subjective political interest (although the effect is stronger for the other types). Since both the coefficients for age and its square are significant and larger than one, the chances of being an *individualist* also increase with age, but are lower for the youngest and oldest cohorts. Younger people do not find individualized modes of participation very attractive, being young increases the likelihood of passivity. The results for sex are more straightforward. While males are highly likely to belong to the *collectivists* group, or to the less active type, females are more likely to use individualized modes of participation. This reversal of the conventional gender bias in political participation has been noted by many researchers (cf. Stolle *et al.* 2005: 263; van Deth 2010).²² The effect of education demonstrates another difference between the backgrounds of people preferring individualized as opposed to collective modes of participation. A relatively high level of education increases the chances of becoming an *individualist* but appears uncondusive for selecting collective modes of participation (cf. van Deth 2010). Finally, we see that country-specific effects are especially relevant for this category of participants.²³ Sweden is the only country that does not show significant differences with Switzerland (reference category). More importantly, however, is the fact that the likelihood of becoming an *individualist* depends strongly on specific country features, underlining the strong context dependency of using individualized modes of participation. This last result is surprising since the objects and goals of these actions are usually depicted as aspects of globalization – or at least address causes that are not restricted to the politics of a particular nation state. Apparently, boycotting and buycotting are not expressions of “Ethical Globalization” (Clark 2001: 17–18).

The fit of the models presented in Table 8.6 is not very impressive, but reaches acceptable levels especially for respondents who are either not very active (*others*) or use both individual and collective modes of participation (*activists*). However, comparing *individualist* with *collectivists* we see that a large part of the variance is explained by country-specific factors. Various expectations about the impact of major antecedents are confirmed. Internet usage, social participation, sex and education all affect the choice between individual and collective modes of participation. However, it is clear that newer, individualized modes of participation are not strongly determined by support for norms of citizenship. Apparently, the likelihood of becoming an *individualist* does not depend on whether one supports such norms. The highly significant but low coefficients for the support for traditional citizenship norms – law abidingness, social activities, political engagement – indicate that these ethical/moral considerations are not particularly relevant for the use of newer modes of participation.

Characteristics of participants

The democratic consequences of shifts in participation do not rely solely on the major antecedents of new modes of participation, but also on specific individual characteristics. If different groups select different modes of participation their impact on political decisions and the character of their contributions might be different too. The key question is: does the spread of individualized modes of participation contribute to more equality in participation and representation?

Usually, the problem of unequal participation and representation is approached by comparing the opportunities different groups have to participate (cf. Teorell *et al.* 2007). Since the main concern here is with characteristics of people using individualized modes of participation, that procedure is not followed. Instead, the perspective is reversed and we focus on the characteristics of different types of participants.²⁴ Table 8.7 shows the main characteristics of the

Table 8.7 Main characteristics of participants in Europe, 2002

	Types				Average
	Activist	Individualist	Collectivist	Others	
Norms of citizenship: ^a					
• form own opinions	+0.23	+0.23	+0.18	-0.13	8.20
• obey laws and regulations	-0.19	-0.06	+0.09	+0.04	8.05
• vote in elections	+0.29	+0.16	+0.21	-0.12	7.51
• solidarity with people	+0.15	-0.01	+0.08	-0.02	7.39
• be active in organizations	+0.31	-0.08	+0.43	-0.06	5.45
• be active in politics	+0.33	0.00	+0.23	-0.07	3.95
Use of the Internet: ^b	+0.59	+0.33	+0.18	-0.20	0.39
Social participation: ^c	+0.08	+0.26	+0.59	-0.29	1.15
Political orientations:					
• left–right placement ^a	-0.24	-0.07	+0.05	+0.05	4.92
• political efficacy ^d	+0.39	+0.17	+0.24	-0.14	2.82
• political interest ^e	+0.68	+0.38	+0.38	-0.25	2.37
• satisfaction with democracy ^a	+0.06	+0.06	+0.11	-0.04	5.19
Socio-demographic features:					
• age (mean)	-0.10	-0.07	+0.08	+0.03	45.67
• sex (share of males)	+0.07	-0.11	+0.34	-0.01	0.474
• education ^f	+0.62	+0.37	+0.23	-0.23	11.80

Notes

Differences between group average and total average divided by standard variation per variable; weighted with design weights and weights for country size.

a Based on mean scores on 11-point scales.

b Based on mean scores on a dichotomous scale: 1 = use of Internet; 0 = no use of Internet.

c Based on mean scores on 13-point additive scale for number of memberships in voluntary associations.

d Based on mean scores on 5-point efficacy scale.

e Based on mean scores on 4-point scale for subjective political interest.

f Based on mean scores for the number of years of full-time education.

four types of participants indicated by the standardized deviation of each specific group from the total average.²⁵ The first block contains the deviations for the support for various norms of citizenship. Surprisingly, the *individualists* show remarkably low levels of support and do not reach the highest score for any of the norms mentioned. In fact, support for norms of citizenship hardly differs from the support that each norm obtains in general.

Support for norms of citizenship does not only appear to be irrelevant for engagement with individualized modes of participation (see above, "Determinants of individualized and collective forms of participation") – citizens using these modes do not support these norms more than others.²⁶ On the contrary, while *individualists* exhibit relatively low levels of support, it is the *collectivists* and the *activists* who show clear support for norms of citizenship. Claims that people using individualized modes of participation are characterized by relatively high levels of ethical/moral considerations are evidently not valid for long-established norms of citizenship.²⁷ Moreover, the depiction of new modes of participation as "responsibility-taking" activities (Micheletti and Stolle 2007; Micheletti and McFarland 2011) appear to be true in a rather remarkable way. *Individualists* take responsibility by stressing the importance of forming one's own opinion, but are reluctant to show solidarity with people worse off or to be engaged in organized social activities. Individualized political action apparently is based on rather self-centred considerations.

Individualists and *collectivists* differ in the use of the Internet and the scope of their social networks in the expected ways. In terms of political orientations, however, the distinctions between these two types are modest at best. Much clearer are the socio-demographic differences: on average, *individualists* are younger and more highly educated than *collectivists* and there are clear sex differences. While men represent a clear majority among *collectivists*, women are overrepresented among users of individualized modes of participation. New modes of participation seem to contribute to greater gender equality in participation. Yet the emancipatory gains obtained by the fact that women use boycotting and buycotting more frequently than men are mixed since these higher rates are – at least partly – based on a rather conventional division of tasks with women still mainly in charge of shopping. With respect to the standardized coefficients in Table 8.7, however, the conclusion is more appropriately stated by referring to the fact that larger deviations are found both for *activists* and *collectivists*. The most active part of the population is most clearly characterized by conventional features of engaged citizens.²⁸

Comparing the columns in Table 8.7 it is clear that the *individualists* do not deviate strongly from the population in general. It is the *activists* – and not the *individualists* – who use the Internet frequently, have the largest social networks, are more left-leaning, who exhibit higher levels of political efficacy and interest, and are relatively young and highly educated. For *activists* individualized modes of participation seem to be a simple extension of their participation repertoire. These results are in line with the findings presented above on the relationships between several modes of participation (see above, "New modes of what?").

Individualized modes of participation used in combination with other forms of participation by *activists* are characterized by relatively strong support for norms of citizenship and Internet usage. People using only individualized modes of participation do not strongly support these norms – apparently their norms of citizenship are highly individualized too.

Conclusion

As democracy constantly evolves, so does participation. The continuous expansion of the repertoire of political participation is a feature of a vibrant democracy and the creativity of its citizens. Yet the latest round of expanding the modes of political participation appears distinct from previous developments. New modes of participation are individualized: non-political types of behaviour such as boycotting and buycotting do not require any organization or collective endeavour. These forms are expected to be used by people who are looking for opportunities to express ethical/moral points of view and are likely to (gradually) eschew organized modes of participation. Furthermore, the Internet is presumed to facilitate these newer forms of participation.

The empirical analyses presented in this chapter partly support these claims. First, political participation has indeed expanded in many countries in the last decades. This rise is clearly visible in the use of individualized modes of participation that rose rapidly until the turn of the century. However, the recent plateauing – at a relatively high level – casts doubts on the expectation of a continuous rise in the use of these modes of participation. Second, new modes of participation do not appear to be distinct from other modes: i.e. individualized modes of participation fit systematically into a meaningful structure with other forms of *political* participation. Besides, the antecedents of using newer modes of participation are rather similar to the antecedents of the total population, and people using these modes do not establish a clearly distinct part of the population. Finally, several of the presumed characteristics of people using individualized modes of participation were not confirmed. Country-specific factors appear to be very important for the spread of newer forms of participation, challenging the globalization thesis. *Individualists* do not show a high level of support for norms of citizenship and do not use the Internet unusually often. In fact, people using organized modes of participation appear to deviate more strongly from the total population than *individualists*. In that sense, the rise of individualized modes of participation contributes to a reduction of political inequality documented in every study of political participation.

The rise of individualized modes of participation, then, has mixed consequences for democracy and the further development of democratic citizenship. Although any reduction of inequality in participation should be welcomed, it is clear that people using newer modes of participation do not strengthen support for norms of citizenship. In fact, people using only individualized modes of participation are characterized by relatively low levels of support for these norms. Their idea of "responsibility taking" is evidently self-centred and based on clear

support for the norm to form your own opinions and a reluctance to support solidarity and social engagement. Fisher's observation that recent organizational developments have "significantly limited the diversity of entry points into progressive politics from the grassroots level" (2006: 85) is certainly not compensated by the rise in individualized modes of participation since this rise implies a weakening of support for norms of citizenship. Citizens using organized modes of participation or those who combine organized and individualized modes appear to be much more supportive of citizenship norms. *Activists* and *collectivists* differ, more clearly from the general population than *individualists*. Support for norms of citizenship comes with less equality whereas more equality implies less support for citizenship norms.

Politics is still strongly based on organization and many citizens do not discriminate between individualized and collective forms of participation. Those who restrict their activities to individualized modes are not distinct from the general population. Therefore, "the power of organizing without organizations" (Shirky 2008) will change the issues articulated and weaken the position of conventional associations in political decision-making processes since it is the *activists* and *collectivists* who differ more clearly from the total population. The more important development, however, is the weakening of support for norms of citizenship which comes with the spread of individualized modes of participation. In spite of fashionable (post-modern) claims about the evaporation of the borderline between private and public affairs, *individualists* seem to be most clearly characterized by this distinction. They have much more in common with the image of a consumer than a citizen: 'the transformations of citizens into consumers is understood as diminishing the collective ethos and practices of the public domain (embodied in the figure of the citizen) and both privatizes and individualizes them (in the figure of the consumer)' (Clarke *et al.* 2007: 17). How to cope with the combination of individualized participation and a rising accentuation of self-centred norms among participants seems to be an important challenge for the way contemporary democracy functions.

Notes

- 1 I am grateful to Christian Schnaudt and Sarah Odrakiewicz for their assistance preparing the empirical results presented in this chapter and my collaborators at the Department of Political Science and at the Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung (MZES), University of Mannheim for their stimulating comments on an earlier draft.
- 2 See Verba und Nie (1972), Brady (1999) or van Deth (2001) for overviews of the literature.
- 3 This open-endedness has been a characteristic of many definitions of participation for a long time: "citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. ... it is a means by which [the have-nots] can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society" (Armstein 1969: 216).
- 4 See Inglehart and Catterberg (2002) for an exception.
- 5 For instance, the World Values Surveys do not ask about voting behaviour and the European Social Survey changed the number of participation items in its first three

waves considerably. Examples of the arbitrary design of instruments offer the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) and the Eurobarometer (EB). For instance EB 62.2 presents a list of 11 participation items at once and invites the respondent to tick the items used. The ISSP module on Citizenship (2004) simply combines boycotting and buycotting. As a result of these practices, the levels of participation measured are unrealistically low or high in each country – making any comparison with the results from other studies meaningless.

- 6 Detailed information and data for the studies used can be obtained from the following sources – PA, online, available at: <http://info1.gesis.org/dbksearch13/SDesc2.asp?no=0765&search=political%20action&search2=&db=E>; WVS, online, available at: www.worldvaluessurvey.org/; ESS, online, available at: <http://ess.nsd.uib.no/index.jsp?year=1&module=download&country=>; CID, online, available at: <http://info1.gesis.org/dbksearch13/SDesc2.asp?no=4492&search=CID&search2=&db=E>; EB, online, available at: <http://zcat.gesis.org/webview/index.jsp?object=http://134.95.45.58:80/obj/fStudy/ZA1750>.
- 7 Astonishingly, not even voting is included in each study. In order not to lose information about the most common mode of participation, for the WVS the question "Which party would you vote for?" had to be used. All respondents mentioning a party are considered as voters here.
- 8 Changes in question wording clearly speak against this trend. Whereas PA and WVS simply ask for activities, EB-31 mentions as a time horizon for being politically active "the last ten years". Starting with the CID study this time horizon has been lowered to "the last 12 months". These restrictions make a reduction of the level of participation as measured with the unrestricted questions very likely. Yet boycotting has not been strongly affected by this bias: the number of people using this mode of participation is much higher in the newer studies where a very restricted time horizon is applied.
- 9 The lower levels of participation in the recent studies, however, might be another artefact of the ways participation is measured by introducing time horizons for these activities (see Note 6).
- 10 The results in Table 8.2 are for several sets of countries – all countries available in each study, the same five countries available in each study from 1974 to 2008, and the same 14 countries available in each study from 2002 to 2008.
- 11 See van Deth (2010) for a discussion of the consequences of this changing character of the modes of participation by solely relying on expressions of participants.
- 12 More extreme modes are usually presented as indicators of "the irresistible rise of global anticapitalism" (cf. online, available at: www.weareeverywhere.org/).
- 13 Notice that the aim of these analyses is not to detect a latent structure for "political participation" but to explore the correlations between boycotting and other modes of participation efficiently.
- 14 The communalities for boycotting are computed using the square of the loadings as a measure of the variance accounted for by the single dimension constructed.
- 15 The terms buycotting refers to buying products for political reasons (usually to support some producer or product) as opposed to boycotting which means a refusal to buy certain products. Both activities are specimens of "political consumerism", "ethical shopping" or "ethical consumer practices" (cf. Harrison *et al.* 2005: 3). Much more elaborated variants are known under such labels as "consumer guerrilla" or "hedonism" (cf. online, available at: <http://hedonist-international.org/?q=en/taxonomy/term/10>).
- 16 On the basis of British data Pattie *et al.* present similar conclusions and suggest that the "rise of individualistic forms of participation at the expense of collectivist forms" has already resulted in the spread of "atomised citizens" (2004: 275).
- 17 A detailed analysis of the various concepts of citizenship is presented by Janoski (1998). See van Deth (2007a), Dalton (2008a) and Pammatt (2009) for empirical research in this area. A different approach is presented by Hooghe and DeJaeghere (2007).

- 18 See van Deth (2007a, 2009). Other surveys relying on measures from the CID project arrive at similar conclusions (cf. Pattie *et al.* 2004: 48–50; Dalton 2008b).
- 19 Unfortunately, only the first wave of the ESS contains all relevant variables. Besides, since the objective here is to detect determinants of each of the four types of participants, multinomial models are not applied.
- 20 The use of the electronic communications is measured by the question “how often do you use the Internet, the World Wide Web or e-mail – whether at home or at work – for your personal use?” (seven-point scale ranging from “never” to “everyday”). For Germany the additional category “don’t know” has been treated as “never”. In France the highest score of the two distinct responses for “at home” and “at work” is used as a proxy.
- 21 Although Dalton does not focus on newer modes of participation, his findings for the US underline that norms of citizenship “encourage electoral participation but do not carry over to other forms of action, and actually discourage participation in protest” (2008b: 88).
- 22 Notice, however, that these claims are usually based on the fact that women are over-represented among citizens using newer modes of participation whereas the results here indicate that being a woman increases your chances of becoming an *individualist* (see below, under “Characteristics of participants”).
- 23 See for a clear description of cross-national differences in participation and the importance of socio-demographic factors Marien *et al.* (2010).
- 24 An example can make the differences between these two perspectives clear. If equality of opportunities is the main concern we point out, for instance, to the fact that donating money is higher among highly educated people than among people with low levels of education. If the characteristics of donating money as a type of political participation are relevant we have to show that people donating money are higher educated than people not using that mode of participation.
- 25 In order to compare the impact of various factors Table 8.7 contains the standardized differences between the average score for a group and the total average for that variable. The original differences between the averages for the four types all are highly significant (F-Test; $p < 0.000$) for each variable.
- 26 See van Deth (2010) for similar conclusions based on analyses of the CID data.
- 27 In fact, these characteristics are astonishingly similar to the depiction of a “consumer” from a “neo-liberal” point of view: “The consumer thus embodies the private (rather than the public), the market (rather than the state) and the individual (rather than the collective)” (Clarke *et al.* 2007: 18).
- 28 This deviation has been noted by many authors and does not necessarily have to be considered as negative for democracy (Jordan and Maloney 2007: 188–92).

9 A remedy for unequal participation?

How welfare states impact on social and political engagement

Isabelle Stadelmann-Steffen

Introduction

An active civil society is often seen as an antidote to declining political participation rates. This perception may be somewhat optimistic as civic participation suffers from the same deficiencies as conventional political engagement and collective decision making. Only a minority of citizens participates and, more importantly, civic engagement is unequally distributed among the citizenry, i.e. individual volunteering tends to increase with rising education attainment and income levels (Brady *et al.* 1995: 285; Friedman 2003: 15; Gaskin *et al.* 1996; Wilson and Musick, 1997; Verba *et al.* 1995).

There are two main reasons why unequal civic participation should be viewed as a ‘problem’ (Schlozman *et al.* 1999). First, civic engagement can be seen as a means for (equal) protection of interests in public life. Through civic activities – similar to conventional political participation – citizens have the possibility to articulate and aggregate their preferences and influence policy outcomes. Unequal civic engagement implies that a specific social group (usually more advantaged citizens) has their interests more effectively represented. As long as individuals differ in their preferences and interests, civic participation needs therefore to be equal (*ibid.*: 429f.). Second, participation in voluntary activities is also supposed to develop individual capacities. In this view, civic engagement is educational and those that get engaged become ‘more independent, efficacious, and competent, larger in their capacities for thought, greater in their respect for others and their willingness to take responsibility, better able to appraise their own interests and those of the community’ (*ibid.*: 428). Moreover, through civic engagement individuals make social contacts and become part of a network. If less resource rich citizens are underrepresented in civic activities they are likely to profit less from these advantageous effects of civic participation. Unequal civic engagement is likely to increase the political inequality gap between citizens with low and high socio-economic status (SES).

Accordingly, this chapter assesses the extent to which welfare state policy can moderate the (in)equality of social and political civic participation. In so doing, it follows an important strand of research on the relationship between welfare state and civic activities (i.e. Boje and Strandh 2005; Curtis *et al.* 2001; Dahlberg