

Political Culture in Aging Societies

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What is Political Culture?

„The political culture of a nation is the particular distribution of orientations towards

political objects“ (Almond & Verba 1963)

political participation, involvement, trust in/
satisfaction with political system, efficacy

...

What do we compare?

- Different settings of political culture:
political histories and national institutions
- Different cohort structures
,political generations‘
- Different cultures of aging

What does demographic change mean for Political Cultures?

- Changing political importance of different political generations
- Increase of effects associated with later phases of the life course

Research Question

- Which effects are influential on the political attitudes and behavior?
- Do these effects differ in different countries?

Focus on negative effects of the later phases the in life course

Design & Data Base

Subset of western European Countries:

- Similiar cohort socialisation
- Stable democracies with long time multiparty systems

Austria, Belgium, Germany, France & Netherlands

Data Base: European Social Survey 2

„attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of ist
diverse European populations“

„methodologically bullet-proof study“

more than 20 participating countries average n:
1900

public data access:

www.europeansocialsurvey.org

Main Questionnaire

Political interest, efficacy, trust, electoral and other forms of participation, party allegiance, socio-political orientations, subjective well being, social exclusion, religion, discrimination, national/ethnic Identity, Values

Rotating Modules

- **2002** Citizenship, Involvement and Democracy & Immigration
- **2004** Family, Work, and Well-being, Opinions on Health and Care Seeking & Market Society and Citizenship
- **2006** Personal and Social Well-being & The organisation of the life course in Europe

Basic Comparison

- Univariate: high similarities in distributions
- Bivariate on cohorts:

Chi Square based analysis of residuals in cells

- Mainly similar patterns
- Distinct similarities between cohorts overall especially in the oldest cohort

Political Interest

	Very interested	Quite interested	Hardly interested	Not at all interested
18 - 27			FRA, GER AUS BEL	
28 - 37			GER	
38 - 47		AUS		
48 - 57	AUS GER	GER		
58 - 67	FRA, NTH, AUS BEL, GER	FRA GER		
68 - 77				BEL
78 +				FRA, NTH, AUS BEL, GER

Politics too complicated too understand

	Never	seldom	ocassionally	reguarlly	frequently
18 - 27			GER	GER	
28 - 37			BEL		
38 - 47					
48 - 57		GER		NTH	
58 - 67	GER, NTH				
68 +				GER	AUS, BEL GER, FRA NTH

Making mind up about political issues

	very easy	easy	neither difficult nor easy	difficult	Very difficult
18 - 27		NTH	GER	AUS, GER	
28 - 37			BEL		
38 - 47			NTH		
48 - 57		GER			
58 - 67		GER			
68 +				BEL, GER	AUS, BEL, GER, NTH

France no (!) significant values

In some countries not enough cases in cells

How often do you socialy meet with friends

	Never to once monthly	Twice a month to once weekly	More than once weekly
18 - 27		GER	FRA, GER, NTH AUS, BEL
28 - 37			FRA, GER, NTH AUS
38 - 47		FRA, GER AUS, BEL	
48 - 57		GER, NTH BEL	
58 - 67	FRA, GER	GER, AUS	
68 - 77	GER, AUS		
78 +	FRA, GER, NTH AUS		

Social activities compared to others same age

	less	same	more
18 - 27		BEL, GER	
28 - 37		NTH	
38 - 47			
48 - 57			FRA
58 - 67	BEL		
68 - 77	BEL		NTH
78 +	BEL, AUS, NTH GER, FRA		

(No) POLITICAL ACTION

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,23**	1,21*	1,16*	,91	1,54***
NO PARTNER	1,34**	,93	1,36***	1,27**	1,29**
LESS ACTIVITIES	,95	2,36***	1,18**	1,21*	1,65***
FEW MEET	1,45***	1,03	1,17*	1,32**	1,04
Hamper	1,04	1,11	1,20**	1,19*	,87
Nagelkerke R Square	.016	.063	.016	.016	.033

No Political Action 60 +

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,25**	1,20**	1,17**	,92	1,57***
NO PARTNER	1,35**	,97	1,38***	1,28**	1,30**
LESS ACTIVE	,95	2,29***	1,19**	1,20	1,65***
FEW MEET	1,41**	1,00	1,15	1,30**	1,01
AGE 60+	1,39 **	2,08***	1,38***	1,54***	1,58***
HAMPER	,98	,97	1,09	1,07	,82**
Nagelkerke R Square	.019	.088	.022	.026	.044

No Political Action 70 +

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,25**	1,18*	1,16*	,91	1,55***
NO PARTNER	1,32**	,90	1,31***	1,25**	1,26**
LESS ACTIVITIES	,95	2,30***	1,16*	1,19	1,65***
FEW MEET	1,41***	1,03	1,16*	1,33**	1,01
Age 70+	1,74**	3,23***	2,18***	2,36***	2,15***
Hamper	,98	,97	1,05	1,03	,80**
Nagelkerke R Square	.020	.094	.033	.039	.048

No Efficacy

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,76***	1,42***	1,57***	1,48***	1,43***
NO PARTNER	1,44***	1,10	1,35***	1,24**	1,01
LESS ACTIVITIES	1,18	1,36**	1,16**	1,37**	1,14
FEW MEET	1,00	,96	,78**	,92	1,07
Hamper	1,07	1,00	1,04	,98	1,48***
Nagelkerke R Square	.037	.019	.031	.024	.024

No Efficacy 60 +

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,72***	1,42***	1,58***	1,48***	1,42***
NO PARTNER	1,43***	1,09	1,33***	1,24**	1,01
LESS ACTIVITIES	1,18	1,35**	1,16*	1,37**	1,14
FEW MEET	1,04	,96	,80**	,93	1,08
Age 60+	,58***	1,00	,67***	,92	,91
Hamper	1,18	1,00	1,16*	1,00	1,49***
Nagelkerke R Square	.047	.019	.040	.024	.025

No EFFICACY 70 +

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,75***	1,42***	1,59***	1,43***	1,43***
NO PARTNER	1,45***	1,08	1,38***	1,01	1,02
LESS ACTIVE	1,18	1,38**	1,19**	1,14	1,14
FEW MEET	1,01	,96	,78**	1,07	1,08
AGE 70+	,77	1,32*	,67**	1,48***	,77
HAMPER	1,10	,96	1,11	,47***	1,52***
Nagelkerke R Square	.038	.021	.035	.024	.026

Political Action with Spain, Sweden and Portugal

	SPAIN	SWEDEN	PORTUGAL	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,18	,80**	1,63***	,91	1,55***
NO PARTNER	1,19	1,20*	,66**	1,25**	1,26**
LESS ACTIVE	1,42**	1,32**	1,38**	1,19	1,65***
FEW MEET	1,30**	1,29**	1,66**	1,33**	1,01
AGE 70+	3,87***	2,14***	2,83***	2,36***	2,15***
HAMPER	1,43***	,83	1,12	1,03	,80**
Nagelkerke R Square	.119	.039	,060	.039	.048

Results

- Effects can be found
- Effects of aging are different for the attitudinal and the behavioral elements of Political Culture
- Effects differ in countries, which can be interpreted as context effects

Questions

- **How are the effects moderated by other dimensions?**
- **What causes the differences between countries?**
- **What are the effects on other dimensions of Political Culture?**

(No) TRUST in national political Institutions

	AUSTRIA	BELGIUM	GERMANY	FRANCE	NETHERLANDS
	EXP (B)				
GENDER F	1,35***	1,11	1,10	1,10	1,10
NO PARTNER	1,15	,98	1,02	,81**	,85
LESS ACTIVITIES	1,37**	1,230**	1,30**	1,61***	1,68***
FEW MEET	,91	1,06	1,11	,89	1,07
Age 70+	,46***	1,01	,83	,55***	,71**
Hamper	1,54***	1,47***	1,61***	1,43***	1,65***
Nagelkerke R Square	.035	.017	.028	.034	.040

Anyone to discuss intimate and personal matters

	yes	no
18 - 27	FRA, AUS, BEL	
28 - 37	FRA, NTH, AUS	
38 - 47	NTH	
48 - 57		
58 - 67		AUS
68 - 77		FRA, NTH, AUS BEL
78 +		FRA, GER AUS, NTH, BEL

Variables analyzed

- Political Attitudes and Behavior:
(Internal) Political Efficacy, Political Action
Trust in national political institutions
- Aging related
Social contacts, Activities, Being
hampered & bad subjective health,
Gender, Having a Partner