

Bachelor Thesis

BSc European Studies

School of Management and Governance

*Bachelor Thesis Project
on the European Parliament Elections 2009*

**Explanations for lower turnout among
young voters**

A study by Judith Benda

University of Twente, the Netherlands

August 28th, 2009

Judith Benda

Address

Oldenzaalsestraat 178
7514 DV Enschede (NL)

Contact

judithbenda@googlemail.com

Study

European Studies, BSc
University of Twente (NL)

Student number

0155349

Supervision

Dr. Martin Rosema (Examiner)

School of Management and Governance
Department of Political Science and Research Methods (POLMT)

Bengü Dayıcan MA (Co- reader)

School of Management and Governance
Department of Political Science and Research Methods (POLMT)

Abstract

This Bachelor thesis was part of a broader project on the European Parliament elections 2009. Central in this project was a survey that was carried out around the EP elections. Due to practicalities, the focus lies only on one country, namely Germany.

The main question of the thesis is *Why is turnout lower among young voters (18-24 years) compared to the rest of the population?*

Thus, it is about differences between age groups in electoral participation. Individual characteristics, especially psychological explanations for lower youth voter turnout, hence the micro-level, is the main focus of attention.

The research was conducted in two steps: a theoretical part looking at the existing research on electoral participation and a statistical analysis of survey data. Based on the theoretical part, a model has been developed which is tested during the empirical analysis. It includes six hypotheses, involving the following factors: political interest, internal political efficacy, sense of civic duty, other forms of political participation, party identification and external political efficacy. In a first step, the relationship between age and the six factors is explored, followed by the examination of the relation between the six factors and electoral participation. During the last phase the relationship between age and electoral participation when controlled for the several factors is tested.

Especially the expectations relating to the first step in the analysis, could not be confirmed. Only the hypothesis regarding lower political interest among young people was approved.

However, the link between the several factors and electoral participation has been almost perfectly approved, except other forms of political participation. In regard to the mediation effect, it can be stated that partial mediation is dominant, meaning that the relationship between age and electoral participation is partly mediated through the factors mentioned.

Moreover, the study showed that there is not much European about the explanation of electoral participation and that the sources of low turnout are complex. Further research on determinants of low youth voter turnout and subsequent studies are reasonable.

Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Table of Contents	3
List of Tables and list of Figures	5
Chapter 1 – Introduction	6
Chapter 2 - Existing research on electoral participation	9
2.1 Micro and macro approach to the understanding of electoral participation	9
2.1.1 Individual characteristics (micro- level)	10
2.1.1.1 Socio- demographic characteristics	10
2.1.1.2 Psychological political orientations	11
2.1.1.2.1 General political orientations	12
2.1.1.2.2 EU- specific political orientation	13
2.1.2 Country characteristics (macro- level)	13
2.2 A theoretical framework for explaining electoral participation	14
2.3 Age and electoral participation	15
2.3.1 Model to be tested	17
Chapter 3 – Data and Methods	19
3.1 Participants and Procedure	19
3.2 Shortcomings	20
3.3 Measures	20
3.4 Methods	22
Chapter 4 – Discussion of research findings	24
4.1 Description of data – overview	24
4.2 Hypotheses testing	24
4.2.1 H1: Age – political interest – electoral participation	25
4.2.1a Age and political interest	25
4.2.1b Political interest and electoral participation	25
4.2.1c Age – political interest – electoral participation	26
4.2.2 H2: Age – internal political efficacy – electoral participation	26
4.2.2a Age and internal political efficacy	26
4.2.2b Internal political efficacy and electoral participation	26
4.2.2c Age – internal political efficacy – electoral participation	27
4.2.3 H3: Age – sense of civic duty – electoral participation	28
4.2.3a Age and sense of civic duty	28
4.2.3b Sense of civic duty and electoral participation	28
4.2.3c Age – sense of civic duty – electoral participation	28

4.2.4 H4: Age – other forms of political participation – electoral participation	29
4.2.4a Age and other forms of political participation	29
4.2.4b Other forms of political participation and electoral participation	29
4.2.4c Age – other forms of political participation – electoral participation	30
4.2.5 H5: Age – party identification – electoral participation	30
4.2.5a Age and party identification	30
4.2.5b Party identification and electoral participation	31
4.2.5c Age – party identification – electoral participation	31
4.2.6 H6: Age – external political efficacy – electoral participation	32
4.2.6a Age and external political efficacy	32
4.2.6b External political efficacy and electoral participation	32
4.2.6c Age – external political efficacy – electoral participation	33
Chapter 5 – Conclusion	34
Appendix 1 : Questionnaire	37
Appendix 2 : SPSS output: Frequencies	46
References	50

List of Tables

Table 1: Age and electoral participation	25
Table 2: Age and political interest	25
Table 3: Political interest and electoral participation	25
Table 4: Age - political interest - electoral participation	26
Table 5: Age and internal political efficacy	26
Table 6: Internal political efficacy and electoral participation	27
Table 7: Age – internal political efficacy - electoral participation	27
Table 8: Age and sense of civic duty	28
Table 9: Sense of civic duty and electoral participation	28
Table 10: Age – sense of civic duty - electoral participation	29
Table 11: Age and other forms of political participation	29
Table 12: Other forms of political participation and electoral participation	30
Table 13: Age – other forms of political participation - electoral participation	30
Table 14: Age and party identification	31
Table 15: Party identification and electoral participation	31
Table 16: Age – party identification - electoral participation	32
Table 17: Age and external political efficacy	32
Table 18: External political efficacy and electoral participation	33
Table 19: Age – external political efficacy - electoral participation	33
Table 20: Summary of findings	34

List of Figures

Figure 1: Turnout in EP Elections 1979-2009	6
Figure 2: A typology of the variables affecting voter turnout (Sinnott 2003)	14
Figure 3: Model to be tested (own design)	18

Chapter 1 - Introduction

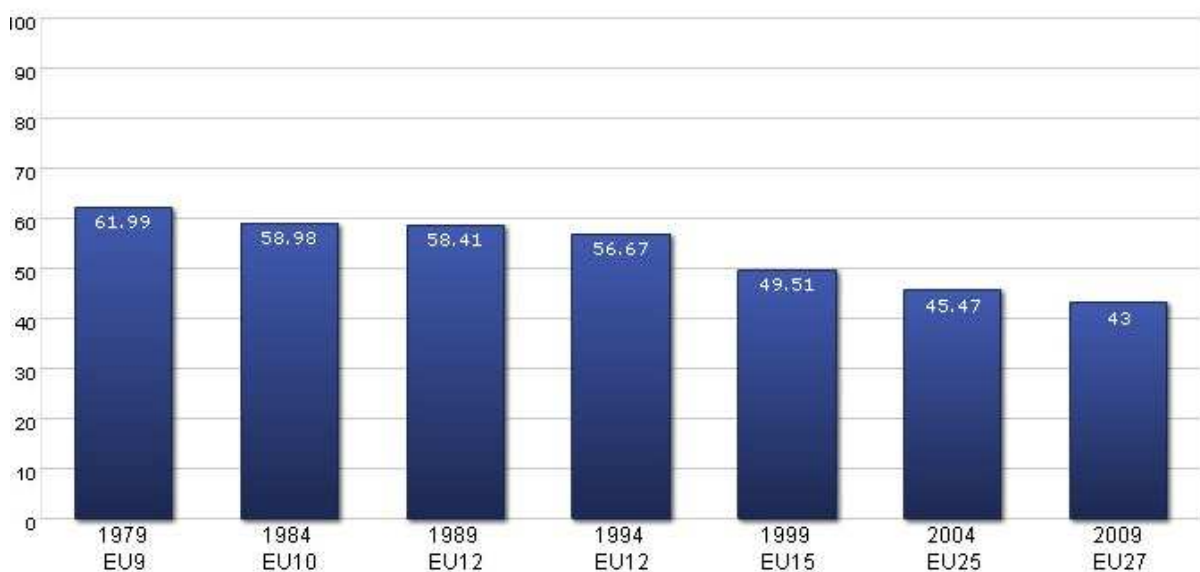
"Turning out to vote is the most common and important act citizens take in a democracy and, therefore, is one of the most important behaviours for scholars of democratic politics to understand. And yet, it is not well understood."

(Aldrich 1993:246)

There has been a considerable amount of study in the field of political participation, meaning "all activities of the citizens which are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/ or the actions they take" (Verba and Nie (1972), cited by Steinbrecher 1995:99). Electoral participation, which is one of the many forms of political participation, has been and still is one of the main focus in this area. "Elections are the central institution for popular participation in government" (Rose 1980:1). They are regarded as the core of a democracy. According to Rose (1980:75), "as an institution of democratic politics, elections perform two different functions. In the first place, they "give voice to the principal cleavages and issue conflicts in society, and secondly, "elections have a plebiscitary function". One of the most striking and fatal aspects about elections is the low voter turnout, which can be observed, even though elections are considered to be central in a democratic system.

When looking at the European Parliament (EP) elections, this is in particular remarkable. The EP is the only multinational democratic assembly in the world. Since its first direct elections in 1979, the EP increased as a consequence of several enlargements, but also gained more competencies, due to changes in treaties. Despite the growing importance of the European Parliament, turnout in the EP elections constantly decreased.

Figure 1: Turnout in EP Elections 1979-2009¹



¹ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/archive/elections2009/de/turnout_de.html

In 1979, turnout on a European level was 62% whereas in the recent European Parliament elections, which were held between 4 and 7 June 2009 and were "being billed as the largest trans-national election in history"², only 43% of the voters cast a ballot- the lowest voter turnout in the European elections ever. Mattila (2003:450) summarizes the situation of low turnout in EP elections as follows: "When one looks at the EP elections in particular, low turnout means problems (or at least reflects them) for the legitimacy of the European Parliament and even the whole EU".

When examining different age groups, considerable gaps in turnout can be observed. It is striking that young people are less likely to vote than the rest of the population. To give an example, in the EP elections in 2004, where there was an overall European turnout of about 46%, solely 33% of young people between 18 and 24 years participated (Flash Eurobarometer 162 "Post European elections 2004 survey":10). The same holds true when looking at a specific European country, e.g. Germany. In the EP elections in 2004, turnout in Germany was 43,7%, "while the lowest number of participation fell in the group of young voters at the age of 21 to 25. Their turnout was only 30,5 per cent (...)" (Feldmann-Wojtachnia 2008:1). For the recent EP elections, figures displaying the turnout and the distribution among the age groups are not yet available, but we can expect poor outcomes. Already in the run-up to the elections, a disastrous low turnout in general, and especially among young voters, was predicted³.

Young people have since long been identified as the group of the electorate least likely to vote. According to Oppenhuis (1995: 23), "it is often found that younger age groups are less likely to turn out in an election than older ones". Blais (2004:2) underlines this idea: "We know that age is the best predictor of voting: the older one is, the more likely one is to vote". There are around 75 million Europeans between 15 and 25 years old who constitute, according to Aline Sierp (2008:1) "an enormous potential when it comes to the mobilisation for or against the European integration process".

In my opinion, low youth voter turnout is an extremely important matter and I am greatly interested in understanding why it is the case that young voters show lower levels of turnout. Thus, the thesis will focus on this topic.

The significance of the issue is obvious. The figures are alarming and it is important to think of ways out of the turnout crisis, especially regarding younger age groups. Knowledge of the causes of voter abstinence facilitates the discussion of specific possibilities to resolve the situation and the implementation of appropriate measures. This seems to be indispensable in light of the worrying figures. Striking in this context is that various institutions seem to have noticed the problem and started to work on possible solutions. The European Parliament for instance organised for the first time since the first direct elections of the EP in 1979, a European-wide voter mobilisation campaign to raise people's awareness of its role and urge them to vote using the slogan "It's your choice!"⁴.

² <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,619104,00.html>

³ <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,619104,00.html> and <http://euobserver.com/883/27942>

⁴ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/008-55968-131-05-20-901-20090515STO55963-2009-11-05-2009/default_en.htm

Besides, the EP even established sites on young people- dominated platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook, MySpace and Flickr, and thus entered the realm of young people. Another attempt to boost higher youth turnout was the youth European Union (EU) election campaign "Can You Hear Me, Europe?", by the European Commission and the MTV network of television channels.⁵ The initiative followed the model of the "Rock the Vote" campaign in the US.⁶

In my Bachelor thesis, I will try to find an answer to the following question:

Why is turnout lower among young voters (18-24 years) compared to the rest of the population?

Thus, I will contribute to the debate and understanding about electoral participation and especially youth voter turnout. In order to analyse the research question, several sub-questions are needed that help to frame the research and the paper.

It is said that a multitude of factors has an influence on the decision to turn out to vote or not. Hence, the next step in order to be able to answer the research question is finding out which factors influence participation in elections at the individual level?

After having identified the most relevant factors involved, the following question has to be dealt with: Do young voters score differently on those factors and does this explain the difference?

Due to practicalities, I will limit the context in which I study the issue empirically. I will focus on the occasion of the 2009 EP elections in Germany. With the help of a survey, I try to reveal the rationales for low youth voter turnout, by concentrating on individual characteristics, hence, the micro-level, rather than country/ systemic factors, being part of the macro- level.

The paper is divided into five sections. Following the introduction, section two explores the existing research on electoral participation. The micro and macro approach to the understanding of electoral participation will be included as well as a theoretical framework for explaining electoral participation. The relationship between age and electoral participation will be discussed in a separate paragraph and following, a model to be tested will be presented. The third section describes the data and methods, including participants, procedure, shortcomings, measures and methods. The fourth section is concerned with a discussion of the research findings and the fifth section serves as a conclusion, including the main findings and suggestions for future research.

⁵ <http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/mtv-launches-youth-eu-election-campaign/article-181201?Ref=RSS> and <http://euobserver.com/883/27942>

⁶ for more information, check: <http://www.rockthevote.com/>

Chapter 2 – Existing research on electoral participation

Electoral participation has been studied in various ways and the resulting literature is extensive. On the contrary, literature on the relationship between age and turnout, especially youth voter turnout, is by far not developed in that depth.

To begin with, I will focus on the micro and macro approach to the understanding of electoral participation. A selection of individual characteristics, including socio- demographic and psychological political orientations, and country/ systemic characteristics, which are brought up in the literature and said to have an influence on electoral participation, will be presented. Since the main focus of attention of my thesis lies on differences between individuals, the part about country factors will be dealt with to a shorter extent. This is the case because country characteristics are not that relevant for my study since within- country differences between age- groups cannot be explained on that basis. Within a certain country, all individuals have similar circumstances in terms of system characteristics, hence this cannot explain age differences.

Subsequently, a theoretical framework for explaining electoral participation will be explained and afterwards I will focus on explanations of lower youth electoral participation, put forward in the literature. Eventually, I will be concerned with a model to be tested including several hypotheses.

2.1 Micro and macro approach to the understanding of electoral participation

There are many ways to classify the factors which influence electoral participation.

According to Flickinger and Studlar (2007:384/385), "many studies of EP election turnout are similar to those of turnout in national elections in that they emphasize either the role of individual characteristics such as socio-economic traits (education, sex, age, income, location), attitudes (general political interest, party identification, sense of civic responsibility) and political behaviour (organizational membership, discussion of politics). Other have considered the impact of institutional factors (electoral systems, patterns of party competition, forms of government, election cycles)".

This distinction can also be referred to as macro- and micro-level analyses. Following Wass (2008: 13), "on the macro level studies are usually comparative because the interest is in the differences between countries, and especially in factors related to higher turnout in some and lower turnout in others".

On the micro- level on the contrary, the focus lies on differences between individuals.

The micro- sociological approach, which can be traced back to Paul F. Lazarsfeld ("Columbia School"), can be mentioned in this context. It usually refers to party choice instead of electoral participation but can nevertheless be quoted because it also provides information about the decision to vote or not. According to this theory, participation is determined by individual's socio-economic characteristics and civic orientations. Factors such as socio- economic status, religious affiliation and the place of residence play a central role, as well as characteristics like age, education, income, gender, race. These determinants apply a sociological pressure to the electoral decisions of individual voters and

hence have an important effect on turnout and political behaviour. Summarizing, to speak in Lazarsfeld's words (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944:27): "A person thinks politically as he is socially. Social characteristics determine political preference."

This section comprises several individual (micro- level) and country/ systemic characteristics (macro-level) characteristics in detail which have been suggested by the literature to have an influence on electoral participation.

However, is not intended to be a comprehensive, all-embracing review of the literature on the subject, but rather a presentation of the factors that are most often mentioned and which are most important for my paper. Thus, this part is by no means exhaustive.

2.1.1 Individual characteristics (micro- level)

The literature puts forward a distinction of two kinds of individual characteristics: socio- demographic characteristics and psychological political orientations.

2.1.1.1 Socio- demographic characteristics

The relationship between socio- demographic characteristics and the propensity to turn out to vote has been studied at great length. The following characteristics are often mentioned to explain electoral participation: subjective social class, education, age (see 2.3), gender, income, ethnicity, membership of organisations and trade union, size of town, marital and employment status, occupational sector, home ownership, residential stability and religion (e.g. Oppenhuis (1995), Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980)). Only some factors will be dealt with in detail.

Regarding *social class*, it is widely assumed that "the higher one's social economic status, the more one is inclined to participate in politics" (Oppenhuis 1995:21). Goerres (2007:98) also mentions the so-called "standard model" of political participation, including the idea that "higher socio-economic status has a positive impact on participation". When looking at voting, as one form of political participation, "upper and middle class voters are more likely to turn out than working class people" (Oppenhuis 1995:21). Verba and Nie (cited by Oppenhuis 1995:22) are concerned with four aspects of social class, namely education, trade union membership, income and self-reported social class.

In the literature, *education* is seen as positively related to electoral participation. It is said that "the highly educated are more likely to vote" (Tenn 2007:446/447). In this context, the civic education theory plays a central role which states that "education develops the civic skills and knowledge that facilitate political engagement" (Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), Verba Schlozman & Brady (1995), cited by Tenn 2007:446/447). The "paradox of voting" has to be mentioned in this regard. It is an established fact that age is related to electoral participation, thus the young vote less. However, one can observe a discrepancy, since on the other hand young people are mostly better educated, thus command a high cognitive mobilization and it is also proven that well educated people

vote more. While having in mind that sometimes young people score higher on particular factors that increase the propensity to vote, e.g. education, one could expect that young people vote more rather than less. But, paradox, this is not the case. Thus, there must be other factor influencing this relationship.

When looking at *income*, as another aspect of social class, it can be noted that "low- income groups participate in elections at lower levels than high- income groups" (Oppenhuis 1995:22). Connected to this idea is the hypothesis that the level of economic development in a country plays a crucial role (Oppenhuis 1995). In a country which is not that well economically developed, it is likely that people are first of all concerned with supplying their needs and not with getting involved in politics.

According to Goerres (2007:98), "*membership in a political organisation* is a strong mobilising factor in voting because members are exposed to the activists' efforts to make them cast their vote favourably to the organisation". In order to participate and get active in an organisation or association it is assumed that a certain amount of trust is necessary. Phelps (2006:22) states that "people who trust their fellow citizens volunteer more often (...) participate more often in politics and community organizations". Sometimes the number of group affiliations is highlighted and it is assumed that persons are more likely to vote when they are affiliated with a high number of groups (Fieldhouse (2007)).

Moreover, the literature puts forward that *religious* voters are more likely to turn out than others (Oppenhuis 1995: 23). Often the variable is measured by finding out the frequency of church attendance. Following Oppenhuis, "voters with a strong religious affiliation (frequent churchgoers) are more likely to turn out than others" (1995:23). Elections represent an "opportunity to express support for a party that represents their religion" and " frequent churchgoers have a stronger sense of civic duty" (Oppenhuis 1995:23).

There is no uniform evidence that a relationship does exist between *gender* and electoral participation. Some studies have shown that "men are more likely to turn out in an election than women" (Oppenhuis 1995:24). Others however, did not detect a connection between the two variables (e.g. Rubenson et al. 2004).

2.1.1.2 Psychological political orientations

Under this heading, the socio- psychological model ("Michigan or Ann- Arbor model") can be mentioned. It is again rather focusing on the decision for a particular party but the core statement of this section, namely that behaviour is dependent on attitudes, can be approved with this model and it offers as well explanatory aspects for electoral participation. According to the socio- psychological approach, no single sociological determinant is sufficient to explain political behaviour - proximate and psychological influences are the most powerful predictors of voting behaviour. Psychological political orientations are often referred to as motivational factors in the decision about taking part in an elections or not. According to Oppenhuis (1995), one can distinguish two types of political orientations

and attitudes, namely general political orientations and type-of-election specific political orientation.

In this section, I will first of all deal with general political orientations and afterwards refer to EU-specific political orientation, since this thesis is concerned with the European Parliament elections.

2.1.1.2.1 General political orientations

In respect of electoral participation, the following factors in the realm of general politics are frequently given: political interest, party identification, strength of adherence and membership, perceived importance of elected institution, sense of civic duty and political efficacy.

Starting with *political interest*, it is widely assumed that "voters who are (highly) interested in politics are much more likely to participate in politics, including electoral participation, than voters who have no interest at all" (Oppenhuis 1995:28). According to Goerres (2007:99), "political interest is (...) a strong predictor of political participation because it decreases information costs". For politically interested people procuring information on political issues is assumed not to be a burden, but rather a pleasure.

Party identification implies "the stable and deep-rooted feeling of attachment to and support for a political party" (Newton, van Deth 2005: 357). With the publication of *The Voter Decides* (Campbell,1954) and *The American Voter* (Campbell et al.,1960) party identification, a variable having a long- term dimension, has become a central element in the literature and research about electoral participation and voting behaviour. The concept also includes two-short- term dimensions, namely issue and candidate orientations. Following Milbrath and Goel (cited in Oppenhuis 1995: 29), "(...) persons who strongly identify with or intensively prefer a political party (any party) are more likely to participate in the political process". Steinbrecher (2007:87) argues as well that that "the stronger the party identification, the higher the probability that somebody will take part in an election". It is often stated that older people have a higher level of party identification since they have time to grow attached. The concept of "dealignment" is frequently quoted regarding the subject of party identification. There is agreement that the share of people with party identifications in a society is declining over time.

Coming to sense of civic duty, an individually felt subjective norm, Steinbrecher (2007:95) states that, "(...) the feeling of voting as a *citizen's duty* is the basis which ensures that even those people who lack other motivation turn out".

Lastly, I want to mention the concept of *political efficacy*. Following Campbell et al. (cited by Acock and Clarke 1990:87), it is the "feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties." Two types of political efficacy can be distinguished: internal and external political efficacy (Wass 2008:18). The former refers to the belief that one can understand politics and therefore participate in politics and the

latter implies the belief that public officials and political institutions are responsive to citizen demands, hence it refers to the actual influence one has on politics. Following the literature, it is assumed that young people have a lower political efficacy, which is partly due to their "disenchantment with politics". On the one hand, they do not feel heard and thus do not have the feeling of a good understanding of politics. As well, they rate their influence on politics not very high and often the attitude involving the idea "my vote does not count" dominates.

2.1.1.2.2 EU- specific political orientation

There is a large number of attitudes that can be regarded as Europe-specific.

According to Steinbrecher (2007:273), "Europe-specific attitudes comprise several kinds of attitudes, like satisfaction with democracy at the European level, the assessment of the European institutions, opinions towards the integration process and the European Unions (EU)'s membership of one's own country". Moreover, the literature suggests knowledge about and interest in European politics, the perceived salience of European issues, the approval of the European Community and the perceived importance of the EP to be included in the field of EU- specific political orientations. Oppenhuis (1995:26) states that "electors who are better informed, who perceive European issues and the EP to be important, who are more interested in European politics and who express a greater approval of the European Community, are more likely to participate in the European elections".

However, following Mattila (2003:466), it can be said that to a large extent, "turnout in the European Parliament elections is affected by the same factors as turnout in normal national parliamentary elections". In his view, EU- or EP- specific factors are also relevant but only have small effects. Oppenhuis (1995:169) argues that "there is not much European about the explanation of electoral participation" and "European elections are indeed little more than second- order national elections". By saying this, he refers to a concept developed by Reif and Schmitt, following the first European Parliament elections in 1979. According to them, the dominant paradigm for understanding elections to the European Parliament is that they are "second-order national elections". They "assert that the national arena is the most important one in European nation-states ("first- order elections") (Marsh 1998:592), hence in second- order elections "there is less at stake" (Matilla 2003:453).

2.1.2 Country characteristics (macro- level)

As outlined, country characteristics belong to the macro level, and include institutional setting, the party system and the socio-economic environment.

Oppenhuis (1995) mentions electoral system characteristics, which can be divided into legal and administrative rules and the translation of votes into seats. Appertaining to the first category are among other factors compulsory and Sunday voting and registration rules. Regarding the second group, three systems can be named: system of proportional representation (PR), Single Transferable Vote (STV) and First-past-The-Post (FPTP). Other characteristics which are supposed to be relevant to

electoral participation, concern the party system of a country. In this regard, the number of political parties, party competition, the complexity of a party system, the closeness of elections, campaign expenditure and political fragmentation are often mentioned factors. Concerning the political and social context, the fact whether national elections are held on the same day as European ones, is central. Besides concurrent national elections, the existence of a political culture in a country is also often mentioned.

Blondel et al. (1998:2) argue that “(...) turnout is high in political systems where voting is compulsory or where votes are translated into seats with a high degree of proportionality...Sunday voting helps, but more import is...the presence of concurrent national elections”.

2.2 A theoretical framework for explaining electoral participation

In this section a general theoretical perspective on electoral participation will be presented.

It is often stated that factors influencing turnout can be of a facilitative or a motivational nature (Blondel et al.(1998), Oppenhuis (1995)). According to Sinnott (2003:4), “facilitation refers to any process or variable that makes voting easier. Mobilisation is any process or variable that provides an incentive to vote”. The processes of facilitation and mobilisation operate both at the level of institutions/organisations and at the level of individuals, hence it is the question of a fourfold classification of the variables affecting electoral participation.

Figure 2: A typology of the variables affecting voter turnout (Sinnott 2003)

<i>Nature of the effect</i>	<i>Location of the variable</i>	
	<u>Institutional</u>	<u>Individual</u>
<u>Facilitation</u>	<p>Institutional facilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Features of the regulation of elections and features of prevailing political communication processes that make voting easier <p>(infrastructure of political participation and political communication)</p>	<p>Individual facilitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Characteristics of individual electors that make voting easier <p>(election-related capacities and personal circumstances)</p>
<u>Mobilisation</u>	<p>Institutional mobilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Features of the political system and of the political process that provide incentives for voting <p>(political institutions and party campaigns)</p>	<p>Individual mobilisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Features of individual electors' political outlook that provide incentives for voting <p>(political attitudes and preferences)</p>

Institutional facilitation consist of two sets of variables. On the one hand, practical administrative arrangements that govern the way in which the election is conducted play a role. Such include e.g. the presence or absence of compulsory voting, the month in which the election takes place, whether polling takes place on a weekday or at the weekend, the hours of polling, the accessibility of polling stations, the availability of postal voting etc. On the other hand, the second set of institutional processes that facilitate voter participation, is called the process of cognitive facilitation. This term refers to the action of "increasing citizens' capacity to deal with political issues and (...) increasing their level of political knowledge" (Sinnott 2003:5). Examples in this contexts are neutral information campaigns related to the election or to the institution in question, extent and quality of media coverage of electoral politics and election campaigns, the availability of free television air-time for party broadcasts, etc.

Institutional mobilisation comprises long-term as well as short-term aspects. Sinnott (2003:5) states that "in the long term, the characteristics and the role of the elected body lead to stronger or weaker incentives to vote". The short-term aspects of institutional mobilisation refer to the campaigns by the parties and the candidates, partisan media coverage and non-partisan campaigns trying to increase turnout.

Individual facilitative characteristics are mainly referred to as social structural or socio-demographic variables, thus attributes of the individual that make voting easier or more difficult. Such can contain practical matters, such as disposable time, residential stability, proximity to the polling station, but also politically relevant resources and capacities, like the individual's level of education, level of media consumption, political knowledge and sense of political competence.

Attributes of individuals that provide incentives to vote are called *individual mobilisation*. In this context long standing attitudes on the one hand play a central role (e.g. party identification, ideological commitments, sense of civic duty, sense of social solidarity), and on the other, short-term perceptions should not be underestimated (e.g. experiences and preferences acquired in the course of the campaign, such as issue and leadership preferences, sense of issue salience, and election-specific party and candidate differentials).

2.3 Age and electoral participation

Age is probably one of the most prominent factors scholars mention regarding electoral participation. According to Blais (cited by Wass 2008:16), "of the socio-demographic variables, age has by far the strongest impact on an individual's propensity to vote". Scholars agree that the relationship between age and turnout is curvilinear. Following Blondel et al. (1998:200), "voting is lower among the young and the old and higher in the middle of the age distribution". Regarding age and general political orientations, it is widely assumed that young people have less interest in formal politics (see e.g. Goerres 2007). In addition, he states (2007:99) that "younger generations identify less with parties than with other political groupings with a smaller scope of activity". Thus, they often do not really

develop a party preference and as a result, incentives to vote are low. The sense of civic duty is said to be more prominent among older people. Goerres (2007) refers to "norm habituation over a lifetime", meaning that as people grow older, they acquire and retain social norms, such as voting. It is a widely established fact that older people are more likely to vote than younger ones (e.g. Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980), Oppenhuis (1995), Blais (2004)). *But how can this be explained?*

In this section, I will outline the arguments which are put forward in the literature.

Differences in turnout between age groups can be explained with the help of three types of effects, namely cohort (or generational), life cycle and individual ageing (Goerres 2007).

Following Goerres (2007:92), "a cohort effect describes the shared experience by a group that was born during a certain period". Based on the diverse experience, the different age groups in society develop different models of political participation. Martikainen et al. (2005:649) also refer to generational effects and state that "large-scale abstention has become a permanent feature of young people's political orientation, stemming from the socialization process common for the young age groups. This implies that today's young voters will never achieve the higher turnout of older voters".

Life cycle effects are said to "dissipate with age and are usually associated in turnout studies with low levels of turnout among young adults" (Phelps 2006:15). The theory suggests that participation levels rise over the life span, as people age and become more integrated into society. Following Anderson and Goodyear- Grant (2008:21), "young adults vote less than older age groups because they are faced with start-up problems: pre-occupations outside the political sphere that lead to low attachment to civic life". One can separate the social life course of a person into different life stages, each involving different social contexts and thus, different requirements on a person, resulting in a higher or lower propensity to vote. Hence, it seems that low youth voter turnout can be attributed to a large extent to non-political factors.

The strongest effect according to Goerres (2007) is individual ageing. He assumes that "as we age, there are two universal human features that increase the likelihood of voting". On the one hand, past voting experiences seem relevant. Among scholars there is agreement that voting behaviour is habitual (e.g. Plutzer (2002), Phelps (2006), Geys (2006)). As Goerres (2007:90) puts it: "(...) older people (...) have habituated voting over their lifetime and feel a stronger subjective norm to vote". "The older we are, the more likely we are to know the show" (Goerres 2007:93).

On the other hand, the adherence to the social norm of voting plays a crucial role. It is assumed that young people do not yet have a high sense of civic duty. Blais suggests (2004:234), "(...) they are less likely to adhere to the norm that voting is not only a right but also a moral duty."

Besides the three concepts, scholars associate other factors with low youth turnout which are to some extent however linked to the effects just explained.

According to Wattenberg (cited by Fieldhouse 2007:798), young voters are "less informed about politics", resulting in a lower propensity to vote. Following Oppenhuis (1995:24), "the forces that

hamper turnout among the younger age groups are: greater geographical mobility, lower involvement in politics and higher proportions of single persons (less settled)". Anderson and Goodyear- Grant (2008) enumerate single hood, greater mobility, lower political knowledge, greater partisan de-alignment and a preference for non-electoral political participation. Hooghe (2008:2) picks up the latter idea and states that "various authors have pointed to the fact that young people still remain firmly engaged, but maybe to a lesser extent in the formal political realm". He goes on saying that "young people are more firmly engaged in all kinds of civic engagement, or in various informal networks." Phelps (2006:5) also states that "(...) young people are concerned about political issues but that these issues tend not to be recognized by mainstream political science as "political". In the White Paper called "A new impetus for European youth" (European Commission, 2001) the idea of youth participation in rather non-political formats is also underlined. The report states that "young people are now less committed than in the past to the traditional structures for political and social action (e.g. parties, trade unions) (...)" (European Commission 2001:10).

2.3.1 Model to be tested

As already outlined, in my analysis I will focus on a selection of individual factors influencing electoral participation, hence micro- level aspects.

When referring to the above described theoretical framework for explaining electoral participation and the fourfold typology, two components of it, namely individual facilitation and individual mobilisation, play an important role in my analysis. The former is related to the social structural or socio-demographic variables, thus characteristics of individual electors that make voting easier.

The hypotheses which are derived from the theoretical background, regarding individual facilitation, are the following:

- **H1:** I expect young people to have a *lower political interest* than older people, resulting in lower turnout among young voters.
- **H2:** I expect young people to have a *lower political efficacy* (internal) than older people, resulting in lower turnout among young voters.

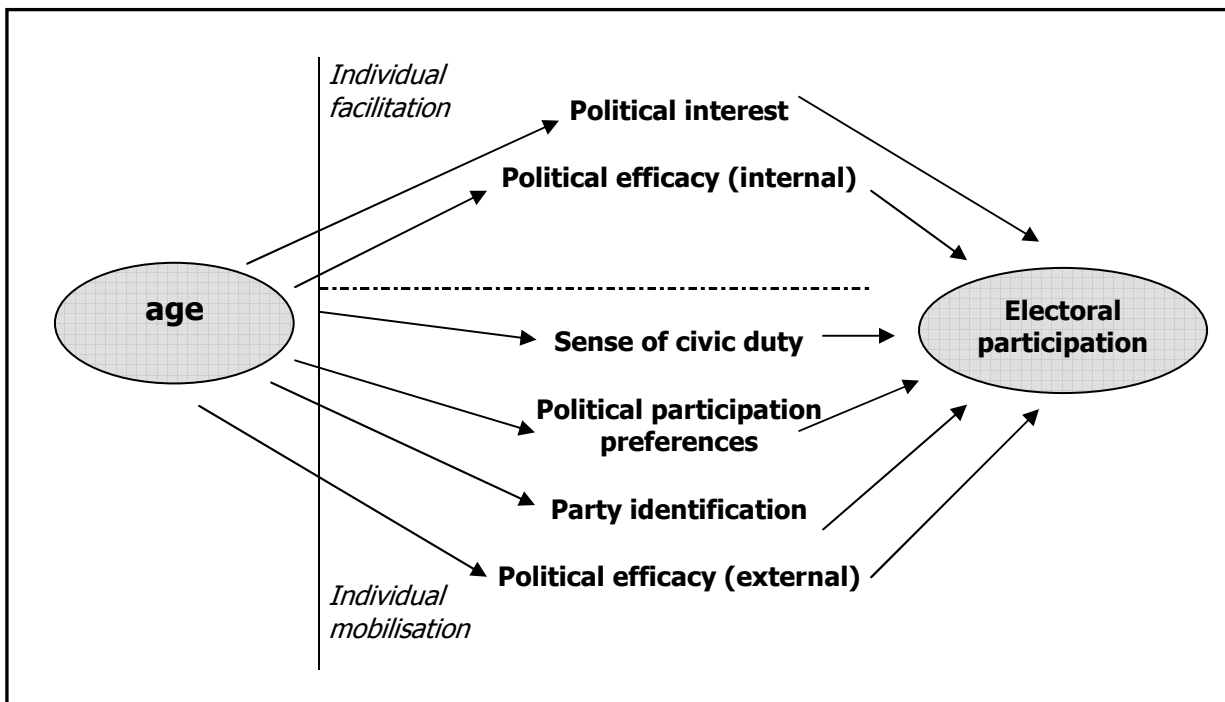
Individual mobilisation refers to features of the individual elector's outlook that provide incentives for voting. The hypotheses which are derived from the theoretical background, regarding individual mobilisation, are the following:

- **H3:** I expect young people to have a *lower sense of civic duty* than older people, resulting in lower turnout among young voters.
- **H4:** I expect young people to prefer *other forms of political participation* than those commonly practiced by older people, resulting in lower turnout among young voters.

- **H5:** I expect young people to *identify less with political parties* than older people, resulting in lower turnout among young voters.
- **H6:** I expect young people to have a *lower political efficacy* (external) than older people, resulting in lower turnout among young voters.

As a result, I have developed the following model which I will test during the empirical analysis.

Figure 3. Model to be tested (own design)



Chapter 3 – Data and Methods

3.1 Participants and Procedure

My research was part of a broader project on the European Parliament elections 2009, involving a group of three students. In the first stage, each of us individually developed an own research question and theoretical framework and then we jointly developed and conducted a survey that enabled us to answer our research questions. This was done by using Question Pro, a survey software for online surveys.

For my study, a post- election survey was reasonable. Thus, one week after the elections have been held, we activated the survey and spread the link. It was provided to a large amount of people. Firstly, we used our university networks and sent mails including the link to mostly students. As well, private networks have been used. Family and friends were contacted and also asked to spread the link. Besides the rather personal networks, we contacted organizations and more neutral agencies, e.g. youth facilities, randomly picked from the internet, nursing homes, other clubs and associations etc. We tried to reach as many different people as possible and to present the larger population accurately. But this was a real challenge and probably it is a convenience sample, instead of a random sample, at least partly, when referring to the participants of our survey. The survey had been online for about four weeks. Besides the online survey, we created a paper version of it, hoping to increase the number of respondents. However, because of the length of the survey (average completion time for online- survey about 18 minutes), we soon noticed that it was unsuitable for a face-face-survey on the street. Fortunately, with the help of private networks, it was nevertheless possible to distribute about 100 paper questionnaires among mostly students in Berlin. All in all, the vast majority of the rest of the questionnaires has been filled out via the online-questionnaire. Putting the two modes, paper and online survey, together, I finally reached the number of 376 respondents.

As already outlined, I focused on Germany. This was mainly due to practicalities, because within a framework of a Bachelor thesis a study on one country seemed appropriate to me. Furthermore, the choice of the country can be traced back, presumably to the highest extent, to my nationality. I am a German citizen and therefore the link to this country is obvious and I am especially interested in the political situation within my home country. The discussion about low turnout and low youth turnout and engagement in politics in Germany have been a real-life experience, which is another source of my interest. I wanted to study "my" generation in "my" country. Moreover, Germany seemed to be a suitable case for this study because of different aspects: It is one of the European Community (EC) founding states, thus has a long history within the EC and the EU. As well, it has the largest population of the 27 member states of the EU and hence is a key player and is for this reason often mentioned in publications on EU issues. Besides, on an international scale, Germany is a country with a traditionally rather high turnout- even though it constantly increased since the 1970s. Nevertheless, electoral participation as such might be a more up to date and discussed topic in Germany than in other countries. A disadvantage of the choice of this country might be the fact that, as outlined, it is a

quite stabilized country within the framework of the EU in which people reflect on the issue of electoral participation. Perhaps a more "underdeveloped" country in this regard might have been an interesting case as well, in order to explore youth voter turnout in a region or country where this has not been done a lot beforehand.

As already outline, the respondents were German citizens which were eligible to vote, meaning at least 18 years old. As formulated in the research question, I focused on young voters, aged 18-24. This range is often used when talking about young- and first- time voters. As well, the age range between 15- 24 is a widely recognized definition of "youth". The United Nations uses this classification for example ⁷, as well as the World bank ⁸ or the European Commission for its Eurobarometer surveys. Nevertheless, for the sake of comparability as well as to attempt representing the population at large, it was indispensable to also include older age groups.

3.2 Shortcomings

Following Blondel et al. (1998), there might be two main problems when focusing on the individual. Firstly (1998:26), "data collected directly from individuals are only as good as the quality and range of questions asked" and the second weakness can be seen in the fact that the survey is "based entirely on the willingness and ability of those interviewed to give accurate responses" (1998:28). Referring to the latter aspect, surveys often overestimate the extent of participation. This is just a remark which should be stated before doing the analysis.

Goerres (2007:91) mentions a "lack of generalisation" when referring to the disadvantage of the one-nation approach. However, within the scope of a Bachelor thesis, an approach with only one nation is justifiable since it already helps to explain differences in turnout between age groups in a given country.

Moreover, as already brought up, our survey was quite long, including 46-47 questions. It is likely that respondents were more or less interested in the subject and willing to spend much of their time. Thus, the results might be distorted to a certain extent, including a large amount of people with a high interest in the subject.

3.3 Measures

In this section, I will explain the measurement of the several variables involved in the analysis. I used a German questionnaire, but when referring to specific questions, I will only mention the English translations of these.

Gender was assessed by asking the question "What is your gender?", using the categories man and woman.

⁷ <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm>

⁸ <http://youthink.worldbank.org/glossary.php#yyy>

In order to find out the *age* of the respondents, the following question was asked: "What is your year of birth?", using a scale from 1900- 2000. For the analysis and following the research question, I transformed the data into only two groups, namely people aged 18- 24 and people aged 25 and older.

Electoral Participation was assessed by a self- reported statement whether one voted in the 2009 EP elections or not, hence the categories involved were yes, no and do not know.

Political interest has been measured by asking the respondents to rate their interest in politics in general and specifically in EU- politic ("Generally, to what extent are you interested in politics?" and "To what extent are you interested in European politics?"), both with the categories very interested, fairly interested, little interested, not interested and do not know. Moreover, the participants were asked to describe their behaviour in conversations about politics, including the categories take part in conversation, listen with interest, listen without interest, do not listen and do not know. These three items have been the basis for an index for political interest. The answer categories of the third variable have been adjusted to the other ones (take part in conversation= very interested, listen with interest= fairly interested etc.) and the three variables have been added (VAR008+VAR009+VAR039) and in the next step divided by three, thus the number of variables involved. In order to work with the index, to present it in tables etc. two categories have been assigned: high and low.

To see how well a set of variables or items measures a certain construct, one can conduct a reliability analysis and interpret the outcome, the Cronbachs alpha. In this case we get a Cronbachs alpha of 0,732, indicating that the three items seem appropriate for an index since often a rule of thumb is a value of 0,70 for a good index.

As already explained, *political efficacy* can be grouped into internal and external political efficacy. Regarding these concepts, four questions were included in the questionnaire, all having categories from disagree fully to agree fully (VAR057a-d). *Internal* political efficacy was assessed by the following statements: "Sometimes I have the feeling that politics is so complicated that I can't really understand what is going on" and "I don't understand politics" (VAR057b and d). The other two statements, namely "I think that politicians don't care much about what people like me think" and "Politicians are only interested in votes and not in what the voters actually want" (VAR057a and c), were included to test *external* political efficacy. For the two forms of political efficacy, I created separate indexes, including the appropriate questions indicated above. For the index for internal political efficacy, I first had to recode the question referring to understanding of politics since in the questionnaire it was a positively posed question, whereas in the SPSS file the question was somehow transmitted negatively. Afterwards, I added the two variables (VAR057 b and d and VAR057a and c) and divided by two because in both cases the index is comprised of two variables. Cronbachs Alpha in this context was 0,559. The index for external political efficacy has the same categories as just mentioned, and a Cronbachs alpha of 0,691. Hence, both indexes seem to be suitable for measuring the certain constructs.

The *sense of civic duty* of the respondents was assessed by means of two questions. Firstly,

respondents were supposed to give an answer to the following question: "How concerned are you about the low voter turnout in European elections?" (VAR042), having the categories very concerned, fairly concerned, little concerned, not concerned and do not know. Secondly, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of voting in EP elections, using a 0-100 scale, ranking from very unimportant (0) to very important (100) (VAR079). These two questions have been the basis for the civic duty index. Before just adding the variables (VAR042+VAR079) and then dividing by two, I recoded VAR079, since for this variable high values indicated high levels of civic duty whereas for VAR042 high values indicated low levels of civic duty. The recoding was done by putting the following categories and parts of the scale together: very strong and 80- 100 (1), fairly strong and 50-80 (2), somewhat strong and 20-50 (3) and not strong and 0-20 (4). Finally, the civic duty index has two categories, namely high and low, because the existing four have been put into two groups. The Cronbach's alpha in this case is 0,687, indicating a good measurement of the construct by our set of variables.

Political participation preferences were measured with seven items. The respondents were asked to state whether they have done any of the following during the last 12 months: Contacting a government official and work for a political party have been used as more traditional forms of participation (VAR010a and b). Contrary, other forms of political participation include work for other organisation, wearing a campaign button or sticker, signing a petition, demonstrate and boycotting (VAR 10c-g). I created a political participation index, including the five other forms of political participation. I used the count command (count occurrence of values within cases) to determine the number of times a given value (here 1 for yes) occurs in a group of variables. In a next step, I created three categories: 1 low level, 2 medium level and 3 high level of other forms of political participation. The Cronbach's alpha of 0,703 shows the suitability of the variables to be put together to an index and to measure the construct.

The concept of *party identification* in this analysis means strength of identification and not direction of identification. The latter was also included in the questionnaire and has been measured by means of the question whether the respondents consider themselves to be close to any particular party. The answer categories were none, CDU-CSU, SPD, FDP, Grünen, DIE LINKE, Republikaner, do not know and other party. However, the former, strength of identification, is more relevant in the context of this paper. Respondents were asked to indicate the strength of identification, including the categories very strong, fairly strong, not strong and do not know.

3.4 Methods

For the analysis of the data, I will use SPSS, a computer programme.

To begin with, I will be concerned with frequencies which is a useful procedure for summarizing information about one variable, without making any inferences or generalizations.

In a next step, I will work with cross tabulations (cross-tabs), a SPSS procedure which is particularly

useful in hypothesis testing. It generates information about bivariate relationships. Following Huizingh (2007:95), "one usually places the independent variable (the "cause") in the rows and the dependent variable (the "effect") in the columns".

I will explore the relationship between age and the six factors included in the model to be tested. I will make use of the Chi-Square statistics, the primary statistics used for computing the statistical significance of the cross-tabulation table. This method allows us to state whether or not the two variables included in the table are independent. In this regard the p-value has to be mentioned, a measure of how much evidence we have against the null hypothesis. It represents the hypothesis of no change or no effect. Chi-square probability of 0.05 or less is commonly interpreted by social scientists as justification for stating that a statistically significant relationship exists between the two variables (Huizingh 2007). The smaller the p-value, the more evidence we have against the null hypothesis and the more "statistically significant" the result. Then we can state that the variables are found to be related. If the variables have no relationship, thus are independent, the results of the statistical test will be "non-significant". What has to be noted is that chi-square becomes unreliable when a table has cells with expected frequencies below 5, hence it is a large sample test. What is important to note concerning the Chi square test is the fact that it is affected by sample size. Measures of association on the other hand do not depend on sample size and thus, the focus of the analysis will lie on the latter.

Kendall's tau b, a measure of association, is used as well. It tests the strength of association of the cross tabulations and is suitable for relationships between ordinal variables, including dichotomous nominal variables. Kendall's tau b ranges from -1 (100% negative association, or perfect inversion) to $+1$ (100% positive association, or perfect agreement). A value of zero indicates the absence of association. In this analysis, this measure of association is often used for 2x3 or 2x3x2 tables.

Subsequently, I will explore the relationship between the six factors and electoral participation, using cross-tabs and Chi Square for significance as well as the contingency coefficient, a coefficient of nominal association that measures the strength of the relation for nominal variables. It attains values between zero and less than one. In this analysis, this measure of association is often used for 2x2 tables, including the central relationship between age and electoral participation as well as the third step of the analysis when exploring mediation of a factor on the relationship between age and electoral participation.

When working with cross-tabs, it is possible to use a third variable to layer the cross-tabs output, thus to control for a third variable. This means to take into account the possible effect of a third variable on the relationship between the other two variables. Hence, in a next step, I will create tables of the relationship between age and electoral participation with a mediating variable (one of the factors from the model to be tested) as control variable and will then compare and examine the contingency coefficient for the bivariate relationship between age and electoral participation with the one for the multivariate relationship, including age, electoral participation and one of the factors. This procedure should already suffice to draw interesting conclusions about why age has an effect on the vote.

Chapter 4 – Discussion of research findings

4.1 Description of data – overview

When concentrating on Germany and adding online and paper post- election survey, the number of respondents is 367.

Concerning *age* in years (n=317, 50 missing), the following distribution can be observed: 60, 6% of the respondents fall into the youngest age group (18- 24 years) and the rest, 39,4% belongs to the age group 25 and older. This shows that the youngest age group is represented to an over proportional extent.

The participation of *female and male* respondents (n=363, 4 missing) is well balanced. According to the numbers, 51,5% of the participants were women and 48,5% men.

When examining the *respondent's place of residence* (n=364, 3 missing), the predominance of Berlin is obvious. 46,2% of the participants live in Berlin, followed by 14% living in North Rhine- Westphalia and 12,9% in Brandenburg. The other federal states are represented with percentages under 5%. What is striking in this context is the fact that except Saarland we managed to reach respondents in all federal states of the country as well as German people living outside of Germany.

With regard to subjective *social class* (n=360, 7 missing), almost half of the respondents classified themselves into the group of middle class (46,7%), followed by upper middle class with 20,6% and upper working class/ lower middle class with 17,2%. 11,1 % of the participants said they belong to the working class and only 0,8% to the upper class. 3,6% did not know what to answer.

Coming to *electoral participation* in the 2009 EP elections (n=364, 3 missing), the high participation rate is outstanding. Whereas the European- wide turnout was 43% and the German-wide turnout 43,3%, in our survey 75,0% of the respondents stated they turned out to vote, whereas 25,0% did not make use of their voting right. As mentioned in the section on shortcomings, it is important to keep in mind that often electoral participation is overestimated in surveys.

Regarding *party choice* (n=269, 98 missing), the following ranking can be made: Grünen (28,6%), DIE LINKE (24,5%), SPD (14,5%), CDU-CSU (11,9%), FDP (6,7%), Piraten (4,1%) and the rest of the parties under 1%, except other parties (4,5%) and do not know (3%).

4.2 Hypotheses testing

In this part I will describe the research findings for each hypotheses, including the three steps of the analysis described above.

Before coming to the first hypothesis, I will briefly say something concerning the relationship between age and electoral participation which is essential for the third step because this relationship is the basis for the comparison and examination of the effect of a control variable. The following values are

the comparative parameters for the third step, including age, electoral participation and one factor. The strength of association of age and electoral participation is 0,133 (for contingency coefficient of nominal association). The p-value for age and electoral participation is 0,017, indicating a statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

Table 1: Age and electoral participation

<i>age</i>	<i>Electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
18-24	75%	25%	100% (191)
25+	86%	14%	100% (125)

Chi-square = 5,7; d.f. = 1, p = 0,017. Contingency coefficient = 0,133

4.2.1 H1: Age – political interest – electoral participation

4.2.1a Age and political interest

Following the statistics, the p-value is significant (0,019), hence it can be stated that age and political interest are dependent, meaning that they are somehow related. The contingency coefficient is 0,131, indicating a low relation between the two variables. This measure of association does not say much about the direction of the relationship. However, by examining the crosstab it can be stated political interest is higher among people aged 25 and older (93% compared to 84%). This finding confirms the assumption that young people are less interested in politics.

Table 2: Age and political interest

<i>age</i>	<i>Political interest</i>		total (N)
	low	high	
18-24	16%	84%	100% (192)
25+	7%	93%	100% (125)

Chi-square = 5,5; d.f. = 1, p = 0,019. Contingency Coefficient = 0,131.

4.2.1b Political interest and electoral participation

According to the p-value of 0,000, there is a statistically significant relationship between political interest and electoral participation. When looking at the cross-tab, it is remarkable that people with high political interest are more likely to vote (79,4%), than people with low political interest (49,1%). The contingency coefficient of 0,240 indicates a weak relation between the two variables.

Table 3: Political interest and electoral participation

<i>political interest</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
low	49%	51%	100% (53)
high	79%	21%	100% (311)

Chi-square = 22,3; d.f. = 1, p = 0,000. Contingency Coefficient = 0,240

4.2.1c Age – political interest – electoral participation

When controlled for high political interest, the strength of the relationship between age and electoral participation has become weaker (contingency coefficient of 0,097), but nevertheless higher for low political interest (contingency coefficient of 0,151). Both effects are rather small, hence it seems that the effect of age on electoral participation is hardly mediated by political interest.

Once I added political interest as control variable, the existing statistically significant relationship between the two variables is not visible anymore, neither for high, nor for low political interest.

Table 4: Age - political interest - electoral participation

<i>political interest</i>		<i>electoral participation</i>			total (N)
			yes	no	
low	<i>Age</i>	18-24	48%	52%	100% (31)
		25+	67%	33%	100% (9)
high		18-24	81%	19%	100% (160)
		25+	88%	12%	100% (116)

Chi-square = 0,94, d.f. = 1, p = 0,334. Contingency Coefficient = 0,151 (low political interest)
 Chi-square = 2,56, d.f. = 1, p = 0,105. Contingency Coefficient = 0,097 (high political interest)

4.2.2 H2: Age – internal political efficacy – electoral participation

4.2.2a Age and internal political efficacy

According to the p-value (0,038), we can talk about a statistically significant relationship. Thus, it seems that the variables are dependent. However, following the Kendall's tau-b another picture can be observed: The value is very close to zero (0,066), which is an indicator of the absence of an association between the two variables. Summarized, an association could not be observed and hence we have to reject the hypothesis regarding age and internal political efficacy.

Table 5: Age and internal political efficacy

<i>age</i>	<i>internal political efficacy</i>			total (N)
	low	moderate	high	
18-24	38%	33%	30%	100% (192)
25+	26%	46%	29%	100% (125)

Chi-square = 6,6; d.f. = 2, p = 0,038. Kendall's tau-b = 0,066

4.2.2b Internal political efficacy and electoral participation

Internal political efficacy and electoral participation are related- this can be concluded following the p-value of 0,000. There is clearly a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. Following Kendall's tau-b, there is a moderate positive relation between internal political efficacy and electoral participation (0,290). This result indicates that the lower the internal political efficacy, the lower the electoral participation or vice versa, the higher the internal political efficacy, the higher the

electoral participation. This pattern can be confirmed when observing the crosstab: 59,1% of the people having a low internal political efficacy took part in the election, whereas 76,8% of the respondents with moderate and even 92,9% of the participants with high internal political efficacy voted.

Table 6: Internal political efficacy and electoral participation

<i>Internal political efficacy</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
low	59%	41%	100% (127)
moderate	77%	23%	100% (138)
high	93%	7%	100% (99)

Chi-square = 34,4; d.f. = 2, p = 0,000. Kendall's tau-b = 0,290

4.2.2c Age – internal political efficacy – electoral participation

When controlled for high and low internal political efficacy, the strength of the relationship between age and electoral participation has become higher (contingency coefficient of 0,204 and 0,263), but for moderate internal political efficacy lower (contingency coefficient of 0,067). It seems that the effect of age on electoral participation is partly mediated by internal political interest. Once I added internal political efficacy as control variable, the existing statistically significant relationship between the two variables is still visible for high (p-value of 0,044) and low (p- value of 0,006) internal political efficacy but not anymore for the moderate category (p- value of 0,464).

Table 7: Age – internal political efficacy - electoral participation

<i>internal political efficacy</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
		yes	no	
low	18-24	56%	44%	100% (71)
	25+	84%	16%	100% (32)
moderate	18-24	84%	16%	100% (63)
	25+	79%	21%	100% (57)
high	18-24	90%	11%	100% (57)
	25+	100%	0%	100% (36)

Chi-square = 7,63, d.f. = 1, p = 0,006. Contingency Coefficient = 0,263 (low internal political efficacy)

Chi-square = 0,54, d.f. = 1, p = 0,464. Contingency Coefficient = 0,067 (moderate internal political efficacy)

Chi-square = 4,05, d.f. = 1, p = 0,044. Contingency Coefficient = 0,204 (high internal political efficacy)

4.2.3 H3: Age – sense of civic duty – electoral participation

4.2.3a Age and sense of civic duty

With a contingency coefficient of 0,026, we cannot talk about an association between age and sense of civic duty. The p-value is also not significant (0,640), indicating independence between the two variables. With such outcomes, we have to reject the hypothesis regarding age and sense of civic duty.

Table 8: Age and sense of civic duty

<i>age</i>	<i>sense of civic duty</i>		total (N)
	low	high	
18-24	17%	83%	100% (192)
25+	15%	85%	100% (125)

Chi-square = 0,22; d.f. = 1, p = 0,640. Contingency Coefficient = 0,026

4.2.3b Sense of civic duty and electoral participation

Following the p- value of 0,000, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between sense of civic duty and electoral participation. As the cross-tab shows, the higher the sense of civic duty, the higher the likelihood of turning out to vote. 80% of the people with a high sense of civic duty turned out to vote whereas only 49,2% of the respondents with a low sense of civic duty participated in the elections. According to the contingency coefficient of 0,254, we can conclude that there is a weak relation between the two variables.

Table 9: Sense of civic duty and electoral participation

<i>Sense of civic duty</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
low	49%	51%	100% (59)
high	80%	20%	100% (305)

Chi-square = 25,1; d.f. = 1, p = 0,000. Contingency Coefficient = 0,254

4.2.3c Age – sense of civic duty – electoral participation

The strength of the relationship between age and electoral participation has become weaker (contingency coefficient of 0,107) when controlled for high sense of civic duty and stronger when controlled for low sense of civic duty higher (contingency coefficient of 0,223). On grounds of these numbers, it seems that the effect of age on electoral participation is partly mediated by the level of sense of civic duty. Concerning the p- value, it can be observed that once I added the control variable, the existing statistically significant relationship has disappeared (0,079 and 0,099).

Table 10: Age – sense of civic duty - electoral participation

<i>Sense of civic duty</i>		<i>electoral participation</i>			total (N)
		yes	no		
low	18-24	39%	61%	100% (33)	
	25+	63%	37%	100% (19)	
high	18-24	83%	17%	100% (158)	
	25+	91%	9%	100% (106)	

Chi-square = 2,73, d.f. = 1, p = 0,099. Contingency Coefficient = 0,223 (low sense of civic duty)
 Chi-square = 3,09, d.f. = 1, p = 0,079. Contingency Coefficient = 0,107 (high sense of civic duty)

4.2.4 H4: Age – other forms of political participation – electoral participation

4.2.4a Age and other forms of political participation

Following the statistics, it can be said that there is no association between the two variables, because the value of Kendall's tau-b is very close to zero, indicating the absence of an association (-0,086). Moreover, the p- value is also not significant (0,135), hence we can talk about independence between age and other forms of political participation. Thus, the hypothesis that young people prefer other forms of political participation than those commonly practiced by older people has to be rejected.

Table 11: Age and other forms of political participation

<i>age</i>	<i>other forms of political participation</i>			total (N)
	low level	medium level	high level	
18-24	55%	13%	32%	100% (144)
25+	43%	21%	36%	100% (106)

Chi-square = 4,01; d.f. = 2, p = 0,135. Kendall's tau-b = -0,086

4.2.4b Other forms of political participation and electoral participation

Following the p-value of 0,000, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between other forms of political participation and electoral participation. As the cross-tab shows, the participation rate in the EP elections is higher for people who have a high level of other forms of political participation (97% compared to 84% for medium level and 70% for low level of other forms of political participation). The value of Kendall's tau-b is -0,283, hence it is the matter of a moderate negative association. Regarding the related hypothesis, it can be stated that the higher the level of other forms of political participation, the higher the electoral participation. This finding contradicts the assumption stated in the beginning that people with a high level of other forms of political participation have a lower propensity to turn out to vote.

Table 12: Other forms of political participation and electoral participation

<i>other forms of political participation</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
low level	70%	30%	100% (151)
medium level	84%	16%	100% (44)
high level	97%	3%	100% (87)

Chi-square = 24,8; d.f. = 2, p = 0,000. Kendall's tau-b = -0,283

4.2.4c Age – other forms of political participation – electoral participation

The strength of the relationship between age and electoral participation has become weaker (contingency coefficient of 0,040) when controlled for low level of other forms of political participation and stronger when controlled for medium level and high level of other forms of political participation (contingency coefficient of 0,186 and 0,172). It seems that the effect of age on electoral participation is partly mediated by other forms of political participation. Concerning the p- value, it can be observed that once I added the control variable, the existing statistically significant relationship disappears (0,652, 0,226 and 0,109).

Table 13: Age – other forms of political participation - electoral participation

<i>other forms of political participation</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
		yes	no	
low level	18-24	75%	25%	100% (79)
	25+	78%	22%	100% (46)
medium level	18-24	84%	16%	100% (19)
	25+	96%	4%	100% (22)
high level	18-24	94%	6%	100% (46)
	25+	100%	0%	100% (38)

Chi-square = 0,204, d.f. = 1, p = 0,652. Contingency Coefficient = 0,040 (low level)

Chi-square = 1,46, d.f. = 1, p = 0,226. Contingency Coefficient = 0,186 (medium level)

Chi-square = 2,57, d.f. = 1, p = 0,109. Contingency Coefficient = 0,172 (high level)

4.2.5 H5: Age – party identification – electoral participation

4.2.5a Age and party identification

Following the statistical data, namely the value of the Kendall's tau-b (0,071), we have to conclude that age and party identification are not associated. Such a low value is again evidence for the absence of an association. As well, the p-value is not significant (0,430), hence age and party identification seem to be independent.

Table 14: Age and party identification

<i>age</i>	<i>party identification</i>			total (N)
	not strong	fairly strong	very strong	
18-24	46%	44%	10%	100% (129)
25+	40%	44%	16%	100% (97)

Chi-square = 1,7; d.f. = 2, p = 0,430. Kendall's tau-b = 0,071

4.2.5b Party identification and electoral participation

With a p- value of 0,002, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between party identification and electoral participation. As party identification increases, the propensity to vote rises as well: Whereas 75,2% of the respondents not strongly aligned with a party turned out to vote, 89,5% of the people with a fairly strong party identification and even 96,6% of the ones with a very strong party identification participated in the elections. The Kendall's tau- b of 0,213 indicates a weak positive relation between the variables. In regard to the hypothesis, this implies that the lower the party identification, the lower the electoral participation and vice versa. This finding is in line with the assumption made in the beginning.

Table 15: Party identification and electoral participation

<i>Party identification</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
Not strong	75%	25%	100% (109)
Fairly strong	90%	10%	100% (105)
Very strong	97%	3%	100% (29)

Chi-square = 11,9; d.f. = 2, p = 0,002. Kendall's tau- b = 0,213

4.2.5c Age – party identification – electoral participation

The analysis has shown that with the presence of party identification as a control variable the strength of the relationship between age and electoral participation has become higher to a small extent (contingency coefficient of 0,202) but only for very strong party identification. For a fairly strong and not strong identification, the relationship has become weaker (contingency coefficient of 0,020 and 0,101). Since all effects are rather small it seems that the effect of age on electoral participation is hardly mediated by party identification. Whereas a significant p- value could be observed for the initial relationship, this was not the case anymore once I added the control variable (0,274, 0,840 and 0,316).

Table 16: Age – party identification - electoral participation

<i>Party identification</i>		<i>electoral participation</i>			total (N)
			yes	no	
Not strong	<i>Age</i>	18-24	76%	24%	100% (59)
		25+	85%	15%	100% (39)
Fairly strong		18-24	90%	10%	100% (57)
		25+	91%	9%	100% (43)
Very strong		18-24	92%	8%	100% (13)
		25+	100%	0%	100% (15)

Chi-square = 1,00, d.f. = 1, p = 0,316. Contingency Coefficient = 0,101 (not strong party identification)

Chi-square = 0,41, d.f. = 1, p = 0,840. Contingency Coefficient = 0,020 (fairly strong party identification)

Chi-square = 1,19, d.f. = 1, p = 0,274. Contingency Coefficient = 0,202 (very strong party identification)

4.2.6 H6: Age – external political efficacy – electoral participation

4.2.6a Age and external political efficacy

Following the statistics, there is no association between age and external political efficacy (Kendall's tau-b of 0,066). Furthermore, the p- value is not significant (0,921), hence age and external political efficacy seem to be independent. This finding is not in line with the hypothesis.

Table 17: Age and external political efficacy

<i>age</i>	<i>external political efficacy</i>			total (N)
	low	moderate	high	
18-24	57%	26%	18%	100% (192)
25+	58%	26%	16%	100% (125)

Chi-square = 0,17; d.f. = 2, p = 0,921. Kendall's tau-b = 0,066

4.2.6b External political efficacy and electoral participation

Its seems that there is no statistically significant relationship between external political efficacy and electoral participation. A p- value of 0,068 implies independence between the variables. However, the results from the crosstab indicate that the higher the external political efficacy, the higher the likelihood of voting (86,7% of people with high political efficacy voted, 74% of the respondents with moderate and 72% with low external political efficacy). The value of the Kendall's tau-b is 0,290, pointing to a moderate positive relation between the variables. This implies that the lower the external political efficacy, the lower the electoral participation and vice versa, which is also presented by the percentages in the crosstab.

Table 18: External political efficacy and electoral participation

<i>External political efficacy</i>	<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)
	yes	no	
low	72%	28%	100% (200)
moderate	74%	26%	100% (104)
high	87%	13%	100% (60)

Chi-square = 5,37; d.f. = 2, p = 0,068. Kendall's tau-b = 0,290

4.2.6c Age – external political efficacy – electoral participation

When controlling for external political efficacy, the strength of the relationship between age and electoral participation becomes higher (in all categories – high (contingency coefficient of 0,147), moderate (contingency coefficient of 0,230) and low (contingency coefficient of 0,155). It seems that the effect of age on electoral participation is partly mediated by external political efficacy. Referring to the p- value, we can observe different outcomes once I add the control variable. The statistically significant relationship between age and electoral participation remains for moderate and low external political efficacy (0,034 in both cases) and disappears for high external political efficacy (0,280).

Table 19: Age – external political efficacy - electoral participation

<i>external political efficacy</i>		<i>electoral participation</i>		total (N)	
		yes	no		
low	<i>Age</i>	18-24	70%	30%	100% (109)
		25+	84%	16%	100% (73)
moderate		18-24	76%	24%	100% (49)
		25+	94%	6%	100% (32)
high		18-24	94%	6%	100% (33)
		25+	85%	15%	100% (20)

Chi-square = 4,49, d.f. = 1, p = 0,034. Contingency Coefficient = 0,155 (low external political efficacy)

Chi-square = 4,51, d.f. = 1, p = 0,034. Contingency Coefficient = 0,230 (moderate external political efficacy)

Chi-square = 1,17, d.f. = 1, p = 0,280. Contingency Coefficient = 0,147 (high external political efficacy)

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

This research was conducted in two steps: a theoretical part looking at the existing research on electoral participation and a statistical analysis of the survey data.

The central question of the study was *Why is turnout lower among young voters (18-24 years) compared to the rest of the population?* In order to answer the question, I concentrated on psychological explanations for lower youth voter turnout. The model to be tested included six hypotheses, relating on the one hand to individual facilitation and on the other to individual mobilisation. Only one hypothesis, namely the first one, could be entirely proven. Especially the expectations relating to the first step in the analysis, the relationship between age and the six factors, could not be confirmed. However, the link between the several factors and electoral participation has been almost perfectly confirmed, except other forms of political participation. In regard to the mediation effect, it can be summarized that partial mediation is dominant.

The following table is an illustration and summary of the research findings.

Table 20: Summary of findings

	electoral participation			
age	p=0,017, CC=0,133			→ basis for comparison to explore mediation
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	y			
	age	electoral participation	mediation (comparison CC)	main hypothesis confirmed (y/n)
factor_1: Political interest	p=0,019, CC=0,131	p=0,000, CC=0,240	partly	
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	y	y	y	y
factor_2: Internal political efficacy	p=0,038, Ktau-b=0,066	p=0,000, Ktau-b=0,290	partly	
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	n	y	y	n
factor_3: Sense of civic duty	p=0,640, CC=0,026	p=0,000, CC=0,254	partly	
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	n	y	y	n
factor_4: Other forms of political participation	p=0,135, Ktau-b=-0,086	p=0,000, Ktau-b=-0,283	partly	
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	n	n	y	n
factor_5: Party identification	p=0,430, Ktau-b= 0,071	p=0,002, Ktau-b=0,213	partly	
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	n	y	y	n
factor_6: External political efficacy	p=0,921, K tau-b= 0,066	p=0,068, Ktau-b=0,290	partly	
hypothesis confirmed (y/n)	n	y	y	n

Regarding age and the six factors, only the assumption that young people are less interested in politics could be confirmed.

When exploring the relationship between the factors and electoral participation, all hypothesis expect the one concerning other forms of political participation could be approved.

In the third step of the analysis, I examined the extent to which the several factors mediate the relationship between age and electoral participation. In all six cases we can speak of partial mediation, however when political interest and party identification have been involved, the mediation effect has been a bit weaker. Besides the mediation effect on the basis of the comparison between the values of the contingency coefficient, concerning the third and last step of the analysis, it can be stated that only when the factor was related to age as expected and when the factor was related to electoral participation, thus when the answer is positive twice, the effect of age on electoral participation can be partly explained on the basis of how age relates to that factor. This is only the case in regard to political interest.

Furthermore, as a result of the research findings, it can be concluded that a whole range of issues may have an impact on the lower turnout of young people. This is in line with the following statement by Blondel et. al (1998:199): "the sources of low turnout are undoubtedly complex".

This study shows the need for further work on determinants of low youth voter turnout since the existing body of research cannot be concerned with all possible determinants (e.g. focus on life-cycle effects, socio-demographic factors etc.). Thus, for future research it might be interesting to broaden the scope of the research and to focus also on other determinants, not only psychological aspects. The sample size in the study at hand is quite large but nevertheless it is questionable to what extent the results of this research can be generalized, because the sample deviates from the population at large in several respects, e.g. region, age, education, electoral participation. A majority of the respondents seemed interested in the subject which can be assumed because they spent a rather long time filling in the questionnaire and also the results showed a high degree of interest. Another point to mention is the high education of the sample.

Perhaps it would be a good idea to design another research including a shorter questionnaire and rethink the distribution channels of the survey, thus trying to reach other people, such as non-voters, uninterested people or lower educated ones and not, like it was mostly the case in this research, already active, interested and educated people. Fore sure, a subsequent research should try to use a random sample, in order to better represent the population at large.

Event though the results might be distorted to a certain extent, they can be seen as a small hint to change the often prevalent opinions and prejudices in society about young people and their supposed lack of motivation and disenchantment with politics- since it really seems to be the case that young people, at least in the sample at hand, are concerned, interested and active and hence, that young people and adults are not that different as often assumed.

As an advice for the future, the following statement by Kofi Annan, made at the First World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in 1998, seems to go into the right direction: "No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth." (IDEA 1999) Linked to this idea, Sierp stated (2008:11): "A real participative political culture has to be developed if a real change should take place (reference to Rappenglück 2006)" and "suggestions on how to develop such a culture are numerous and their detailed investigation would go beyond the scope of this paper".

Appendix 1

Questionnaire : Post- election survey, Germany, neutral version

Für unser Studium in Verwaltungswissenschaften machen wir eine Untersuchung über aktuelle Themen. Wir möchten Sie bitte uns dabei zu unterstützen, indem Sie einige Fragen beantworten. Dies wird ca. 10-15 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen. Ihre Antworten werden selbstverständlich vertraulich behandelt und bleiben anonym. Vielen Dank für Ihre Hilfe!

Mit freundlichen Grüßen, Judith Benda, Eelko Molenhuis und Stefan Michel, *Universiteit Twente*

Bitte geben Sie Ihre Antwort, indem Sie ein Kreuz in den zutreffenden Kästchen machen.

1. Wie oft schauen Sie die Tagesschau/Tagesthemen im Fernsehen?

- (fast) jeden Tag
- oft
- manchmal
- (fast) nie
- Ich weiß es nicht

2. Wie oft schauen Sie andere Nachrichtensendungen (RTL, Sat1, N24,...)?

- (fast) jeden Tag
- oft
- manchmal
- (fast) nie
- Ich weiß es nicht

3. Wenn die Tageszeitung (Print- und Onlineausgabe) über nationale Nachrichten berichtet, z.B. über Probleme der Regierung, wie oft lesen Sie diese Artikel?

- (fast) immer
- oft
- manchmal
- (fast) nie
- Ich weiß es nicht
- ich lese keine Tageszeitung (auch nicht im Internet)

4. Wenn die Tageszeitung (Print- oder Onlineausgabe) über internationale Nachrichten berichtet, z.B. über die EU, wie oft lesen Sie diese Artikel?

- (fast) immer
- oft
- manchmal
- (fast) nie
- Ich weiß es nicht
- ich lese keine Tageszeitung (auch nicht im Internet)

5. Wenn Sie mit Freunden oder der Familie über Politik sprechen, was machen Sie normalerweise?

- Ich nehme an der Unterhaltung teil
- Ich höre mit Interesse zu
- Ich höre ohne Interesse zu
- Ich höre nicht zu
- Ich weiß es nicht

6. Wie sehr interessiert sie Politik im Allgemeinen?

- Ich bin sehr interessiert
- Ich bin ziemlich interessiert
- Ich bin ein wenig interessiert
- Ich bin nicht interessiert
- Ich weiß es nicht

7. Haben Sie während der letzten 12 Monate...

	Ja	Nein	Ich weiß es nicht
eine/n Politiker/in oder Regierungsangehörige/n kontaktiert	[]	[]	[]
für eine politische Partei oder ein Aktionsbündnis gearbeitet	[]	[]	[]
für eine andere Organisation oder Verband gearbeitet	[]	[]	[]
einen Button, Pin oder Sticker für eine Kampagne/ politisches Thema getragen	[]	[]	[]
eine Petition unterzeichnet	[]	[]	[]
an einer Demonstration teilgenommen	[]	[]	[]
bestimmte Produkte boykottiert	[]	[]	[]

8. Gibt es eine politische Partei, der Sie nahe stehen? Wenn ja: Welcher?

- Nein → weiter bei Frage 10
 CDU/CSU
 SPD
 FDP
 GRÜNEN
 DIE LINKE
 REPUBLIKANER
 Ich weiß es nicht → weiter bei Frage 10
 Andere: _____

9. Wie stark fühlen Sie sich mit dieser Partei verbunden?

- sehr stark
 ziemlich stark
 nicht stark
 Ich weiß es nicht

10. Wie wichtig sind Parteien für eine Demokratie, ihrer Meinung nach?

- Sehr wichtig
 Ziemlich wichtig
 Wenig wichtig
 Nicht wichtig
 Ich weiß es nicht

11. Was halten Sie, so ganz allgemein, von den politischen Parteien in der Bundesrepublik? Sagen Sie dies bitte anhand dieser Skala. 100 bedeutet, dass Sie sehr viel von der Partei halten. 0 bedeutet, dass Sie überhaupt nichts von ihr halten. Mit den Werten dazwischen können Sie Ihre Meinung abstimmen.

	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
CDU/CSU	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
SPD	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
FDP	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
GRÜNEN	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
DIE LINKE	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
REPUBLIKANER	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

12. In der Politik wird oft von links und rechts gesprochen. Wenn Sie an Ihre politischen Sichtweisen denken, wo auf einer Skala würden Sie sich am ehesten einordnen?

Links Mitte Rechts
[] [] [] [] [] [] []

13. Wir bleiben bei links und rechts. Bitte geben Sie auf einer Skala an, an welcher Stelle Ihrer Meinung nach die folgenden Parteien stehen.

	Links		Mitte			Rechts	
CDU/CSU	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
SPD	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
FDP	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
GRÜNEN	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
DIE LINKE	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
REPUBLIKANER	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

14. Haben Sie bei der Europawahl, am 7.Juni, gewählt?

- Ja (bzw. per Briefwahl)
- Nein → weiter bei Frage 17
- Ich weiß es nicht → weiter bei Frage 18

15. Welche Partei haben Sie bei der Europawahl gewählt?

- CDU/CSU
- SPD
- FDP
- GRÜNEN
- DIE LINKE
- REPUBLIKANER
- FREIE WÄHLER
- DIE GRAUEN
- PIRATEN
- TIERSCHUTZPARTEI
- Ich weiß es nicht
- Andere: _____

16. Wie oft haben Sie bereits für diese Partei gestimmt?

- immer
- oft
- manchmal
- selten
- nie
- Bei der Europawahl war ich ErstwählerIn
- Ich weiß es nicht

17. Bitte geben Sie kurz an warum Sie nicht gewählt haben.

18. Wie oft haben Sie, 3 bis vier Wochen vor der Europawahl am 7.Juni, ...

	Oft	Gelegentlich	Nie	Ich weiß es nicht
etwas über die Wahl im Fernsehen gesehen?	[]	[]	[]	[]
einen Bericht über die Wahl in der Zeitung gelesen?	[]	[]	[]	[]
über die Wahl mit Freunden oder der Familie gesprochen?	[]	[]	[]	[]
eine Wahlveranstaltung besucht?	[]	[]	[]	[]
im Internet eine Webseite über die Wahl angesehen?	[]	[]	[]	[]

19. Wie sehr interessiert sie EU-Politik?

- Ich bin sehr interessiert
- Ich bin ziemlich interessiert
- Ich bin ein wenig interessiert
- Ich bin nicht interessiert
- Ich weiß es nicht

20. Inwieweit fühlen Sie sich über die Politik in der Europäischen Union informiert?

- Sehr gut informiert
- Ziemlich gut informiert
- Wenig informiert
- Nicht informiert
- Ich weiß es nicht

21. Ist Ihnen ein Mitglied des Europäischen Parlaments (MdEP) namentlich bekannt?

- Ja, ein MdEP
- Ja, zwei MdEP
- Ja, mehr als zwei MdEP
- Nein

22. Wie beunruhigt sind Sie über die geringe Wahlbeteiligung bei der Europawahl?

- Sehr beunruhigt
- Ziemlich beunruhigt
- Wenig beunruhigt
- Nicht beunruhigt
- Ich weiß es nicht

23. Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit der Art und Weise, mit der die Demokratie in Deutschland funktioniert?

- Sehr zufrieden
- Ziemlich zufrieden
- Ziemlich unzufrieden
- Sehr unzufrieden
- Ich weiß es nicht

24. Wie zufrieden sind Sie mit der Art und Weise, mit der die Demokratie in der EU funktioniert?

- Sehr zufrieden
- Ziemlich zufrieden
- Ziemlich unzufrieden
- Sehr unzufrieden
- Ich weiß es nicht

25. Wie zufrieden sind Sie damit, was die Regierung in den vergangenen Jahren gemacht hat?

- Sehr zufrieden
- Ziemlich zufrieden
- Ziemlich unzufrieden
- Sehr unzufrieden
- Ich weiß es nicht

26. Wie viel Vertrauen haben Sie in die folgenden Institutionen?

	Kein Vertrauen	Wenig Vertrauen	Normales Vertrauen	Viel Vertrauen	Ich weiß es nicht
Deutsche Regierung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Europäische Kommission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deutsches Parlament	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Europäisches Parlament	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bundesgerichtshof	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Europäischer Gerichtshof	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. Was denken Sie, wie viel Einfluss haben die folgenden Institutionen auf Ihr Leben?

	Kein Einfluss	Wenig Einfluss	Normaler Einfluss	Viel Einfluss	Ich weiß es nicht
Landkreis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bundesland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bundesregierung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Europäische Union	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. Wie schätzen Sie den Einfluss Ihrer Stimme bei den angegebenen Wahlen ein?

	Nicht vorhanden	Gering	Klein	Groß	Ich weiß es nicht
Landkreis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bundesland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bundesregierung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Europäische Union	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. Haben Sie jemals bei nachstehenden Wahlen gewählt?

	Ja	Nein	Bisher nicht wahlberechtigt	Ich weiß es nicht
Kommunalwahl	[]	[]	[]	[]
Landtagswahl	[]	[]	[]	[]
Bundestagswahl	[]	[]	[]	[]
Europawahl	[]	[]	[]	[]

30. Auf dieser Liste stehen Aussagen über das Verhältnis von Bürgerinnen und Bürgern zur Politik. Geben Sie auf einer Skala zu jeder Aussage an, inwieweit diese Ihrer Meinung nach zutrifft oder nicht.

	Trifft überhaupt nicht zu				Trifft voll und ganz zu
Ich glaube, dass sich die PolitikerInnen nicht viel darum kümmern, was Leute wie ich denken.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Manchmal finde ich die Politik viel zu kompliziert, als dass ein normaler Mensch sie noch verstehen könnte.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Die PolitikerInnen sind doch nur daran interessiert, gewählt zu werden, und nicht daran, was die WählerInnen wirklich wollen.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Ich verstehe eine Menge von Politik.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

31. Auf dieser Liste stehen politischer Aussagen. Inwieweit stimmen Sie persönlich diesen Aussagen zu?

	Stimme überhaupt nicht zu				Stimme voll und ganz zu
Unser Land sollte mehr Geld in Entwicklungshilfe investieren.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Abtreibung sollte immer verboten werden.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Einkommensunterschiede in unserem Land sollten kleiner werden.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Die Türkei sollte ein Mitglied der Europäischen Union werden.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Die Regierung sollte mit Verbrechen strenger umgehen.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Unser Land sollte weniger Asylsuchende aufnehmen.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sterbehilfe sollte immer verboten werden.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Die Europäische Einigung ist zu weit gegangen.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. Sind Sie, oder waren Sie jemals, Mitglied in einer der folgenden Organisationen?

	Aktives Mitglied	Inaktives Mitglied	Nein	Ich war, bin aber ausgetreten
Sport- oder Freizeitverein	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kunst-, Musik- oder Bildungsverein	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirche oder religiöser Verein	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gewerkschaft	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Politische Partei	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Umweltorganisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Humanitäre oder wohltätige Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verbraucherorganisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beruflicher Verband	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Andere Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. Was ist Ihr Geschlecht?

- Mann
 Frau

34. In welchem Bundesland leben Sie?

- Baden-Württemberg
 Bayern
 Berlin
 Brandenburg
 Bremen
 Hamburg
 Hessen
 Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
 Niedersachsen
 Nordrhein-Westfalen
 Rheinland-Pfalz
 Saarland
 Sachsen
 Sachsen-Anhalt
 Schleswig-Holstein
 Thüringen
 -- Ich lebe nicht in Deutschland --

35. Was ist Ihre Nationalität?

- Deutsch
- andere innerhalb der EU
- andere außerhalb der EU

36. Fühlen Sie sich ausschließlich deutsch, oder auch europäisch?

- Nur deutsch
- Erst deutsch, dann europäisch
- Erst europäisch, dann deutsch
- Nur europäisch
- Weder deutsch, noch europäisch
- Ich weiß es nicht

37. Was ist Ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?

- Kein Schulabschluss
- Hauptschulabschluss
- Realschulabschluss
- Abgeschlossene Ausbildung
- Fachhochschulreife
- Abitur
- Abgeschlossenes Studium (Bachelor/Vordiplom)
- Abgeschlossenes Studium (Master/Diplom)
- Abgeschlossenes Studium (Promotion)
- Ich weiß es nicht

38. Wenn es um die soziale Klasse/ Schicht geht, wo würden Sie sich einordnen?

- Oberklasse
- Obere Mittelklasse
- Mittelklasse
- Untere Mittelklasse
- Arbeiterklasse
- Ich weiß es nicht

39. Fühlen Sie sich zugehörig zu einer religiösen Gruppe? Wenn ja, welche Gruppe?

- Keine religiöse Gruppierung
- Römisch-katholische Kirche
- Evangelische Landeskirchen
- Islam
- Buddhismus
- Judentum
- Andere religiöse Gruppe
- Ich weiß es nicht

40. Wie oft besuchen Sie religiöse Veranstaltungen?

- Einmal oder mehr pro Woche
- 2 bis 3 mal im Monat
- Einmal im Monat
- Weniger als einmal im Monat
- Sehr selten
- Nie
- Ich weiß es nicht

41. In welchem Jahr wurden Sie geboren?

19____

42. Wenn am kommenden Sonntag Europawahlen stattfinden würden, mit welcher Wahrscheinlichkeit würden Sie wählen gehen?

Sehr unwahr- scheinlich										Sehr wahr- scheinlich
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

43. Wie wichtig ist es aus Ihrer Sicht, dass Menschen bei der Europawahl abstimmen?

Sehr unwichtig										Sehr wichtig
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

44. Im September findet die Bundestagswahl statt. Bitte geben Sie auf einer Skala an, wie wahrscheinlich es ist, dass Sie wählen werden.

Sehr unwahrscheinlich										Sehr wahr scheinlich
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

45. Wenn die Bundestagswahl nächste Woche wäre, und Sie wählen würden, welcher Partei würden Sie Ihre Erststimme (Wahlkreisstimme) geben?

- CDU/CSU
- SPD
- FDP
- GRÜNEN
- DIE LINKE
- REPUBLIKANER
- Ich weiß es nicht
- Andere: _____

46. Und welche Partei bekäme Ihre Zweitstimme?

- CDU/CSU
- SPD
- FDP
- GRÜNEN
- DIE LINKE
- REPUBLIKANER
- Ich weiß es nicht
- Andere: _____

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!

Appendix 2

SPSS output: Frequencies

Age in years neu

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	25+	125	34,1	39,4	39,4
	18-24	192	52,3	60,6	100,0
	Total	317	86,4	100,0	
Missing	System	50	13,6		
Total		367	100,0		

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	man	176	48,0	48,5	48,5
	woman	187	51,0	51,5	100,0
	Total	363	98,9	100,0	
Missing	System	4	1,1		
Total		367	100,0		

Bundesland of respondent's residence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Baden-Württemberg	13	3,5	3,6	3,6
	Bayern	11	3,0	3,0	6,6
	Berlin	168	45,8	46,2	52,7
	Brandenburg	47	12,8	12,9	65,7
	Bremen	2	,5	,5	66,2
	Hamburg	6	1,6	1,6	67,9
	Hessen	9	2,5	2,5	70,3
	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	6	1,6	1,6	72,0
	Niedersachsen	16	4,4	4,4	76,4
	Nordrhein-Westfalen	51	13,9	14,0	90,4
	Rheinland-Pfalz	4	1,1	1,1	91,5
	Sachsen	5	1,4	1,4	92,9
	Sachsen-Anhalt	3	,8	,8	93,7
	Schleswig-Holstein	5	1,4	1,4	95,1
	Thüringen	3	,8	,8	95,9
	Ich lebe nicht in Deutschland	15	4,1	4,1	100,0
	Total	364	99,2	100,0	
Missing	System	3	,8		
Total		367	100,0		

Social class self-image

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	upper class	3	,8	,8	,8
	upper middle class	74	20,2	20,6	21,4
	middle class	168	45,8	46,7	68,1
	upper working class/lower middle class	62	16,9	17,2	85,3
	working class	40	10,9	11,1	96,4
	do not know	13	3,5	3,6	100,0
	Total	360	98,1	100,0	
	Missing	System	7	1,9	
Total		367	100,0		

Voting behaviour EP elections - electoral participation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	273	74,4	75,0	75,0
	no	91	24,8	25,0	100,0
	Total	364	99,2	100,0	
Missing	do not know	1,3			
	System	2,5			
	Total	3,8			
Total		367	100,0		

Voting behaviour EP elections - Party choice (D)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CDU-CSU	32	8,7	11,9	11,9
	SPD	39	10,6	14,5	26,4
	FDP	18	4,9	6,7	33,1
	Grünen	77	21,0	28,6	61,7
	Die Linke	66	18,0	24,5	86,2
	Republikaner	2	,5	,7	87,0
	Freie Wähler	1	,3	,4	87,4
	Die Grauen	1	,3	,4	87,7
	Piraten	11	3,0	4,1	91,8
	Tierschutzpartei	2	,5	,7	92,6
	do not know	8	2,2	3,0	95,5
	other party	12	3,3	4,5	100,0
	Total	269	73,3	100,0	
	Missing	System	98	26,7	
Total		367	100,0		

References

Articles

- Acock, A. C., Clarke, H.D. (1990). Alternative measures of political efficacy: models and means. *Quality&Quantity*, Vol. 24, No.1, pp. 87-105.
- Aldrich, J., H. (1993). Rational Choice and Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 246-278.
- Anderson, C, Goodyear-Grant.E (2008).Youth Turnout: Adolescent Attitudes toward Political Involvement in Ontario. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*.
- Blais, A., Gidengil, E., Nevitte, N. and Nadeau, R. (2004). Where does turnout decline come from? *European Journal of Political Research*, 43: 221- 236.
- Feddersen, T., Sandroni, A.(2006). A Theory of Participation in Elections. *The American Economic Review*, 96 (4), 1271-1282.
- Fieldhouse, E., Tranmer, M. & Russell, A.(2007). Something about young people or something about elections? Electoral Participation of young people in Europe: Evidence from a multi- level analysis of the European Social Survey. *European Journal of Political Research*, 46:797- 822.
- Flickinger, R.S, Studlar, D.T (2007). One Europe, Many Electorates? Models of Turnout in European Parliament Elections After 2004. *Comparative Political Studies*, 40 (4), 383-404.
- Gallego, A. (2009). Where Else Does Turnout Decline Come From? Education, Age, Generation and Period Effects in Free European Countries. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol.32, No.1, pp. 23-44.
- Geys, B. (2006). Explaining voter turnout: A review of aggregate-level research. *Electoral Studies* 25. pp. 637-663
- Goerres, A. (2007). Why are Older People More Likely to Vote? The Impact of Ageing on Electoral Turnout in Europe. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 9, pp. 90-121
- Marsh, M. (1998). "Testing the Second-Order Election Model after Four European Elections"
British Journal of Political Science. 28(4): 591-607.
- Martikainen, P., Martikainen, T., Wass, H.(2005). The effect of socioeconomic factors on voter turnout in Finland: A register-based study of 2.9 million voters. *European Journal of Political Research*. Vol.44, Issue 5, pp.645-669
- Mattila, M. (2003). Why bother? Determinants of turnout in the European elections. *Electoral Studies* 22:449-468.
- Phelps, E. (2006). Young Adults and Electoral Turnout in Britain: Towards a Generation Model of Political Participation. *SEI Working Paper*, 92:4-48.
- Plutzer,E. (2002).Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources, and Growth in Young Adulthood. *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 96, No. 1. pp.41-56

Rubenson, D., et al. (2004). Accounting for the Age Gap in Turnout . *Acta Politica*. Vol.39, No.4 pp. 407-421(15)

Sierp, A. (2008), *Young Europeans: From pro- european to eurosceptic?* Paper prepared for the 4th ECPR Pan- European Conference on EU- Politics, 25.-27. September 2008, Riga, Latvia, pp.2-14.

Tenn, S. (2007). The Effect of Education on Voter Turnout. *Political Analysis*. 15:446-464.

Wass, H. (2008). *Generations and turnout. The generational effect in electoral participation in Finland.* Academic Dissertation. Acta Politica 35. Department of Political Science. University of Helsinki.

Books

Blondel, J. et al. (1998). *People and Parliament in the European Union, Participation, Democracy, and Legitimacy*. Clarendon Press: Oxford

Brosius, F. (2006), *SPSS 14, Das mitp- Standardwerk*. Redline GmbH: Heidelberg.

Campbell, A. et.al (1960). *The American Voter*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London

Déloye, Y., Bruter, M. (2007). *Encyclopaedia of European Elections*. Palgrave Mc Millan: New York, pp.501-503

Huizingh, E. (2007). *Applied Statistics with SPSS*, SAGE Publications Ltd: London.

Newton, K., van Deth, J. W. (2005). *Foundations of Comparative Politics. Democracies of the Modern World*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Niemi, R. G., Weisberg, H. F. (1984). *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. Congressional Quarterly, Inc.: Washington D.C., 2nd edition

Oppenhuis, E.(1995). *Voting Behavior in Europe. A comparative analysis of electoral participation and party choice*. Het Spinhuis: Amsterdam.

Roholt, R.V., Hildreth, R.W., Baizerman, M. (2008). *Becoming Citizens: Deepening the Craft of Youth Civic Engagement*, Routledge: London.

Rose, R. (1980). *Electoral Participation. A Comparative Analysis*. SAGE Publications Ltd: London.

Säve-Söderbergh, B.(Eds.). (1999). *Youth Voter Participation- Involving Today's Young in Tomorrow's Democracy*. IDEA: Stockholm.

Steinbrecher, M., Huber, S., Rattinger, H. (1995). *Turnout in Germany. Citizen Participation in State, Federal, and European Elections since 1979* (H. Rattinger, O. W. Gabriel, R. Schmitt- Beck). Nomos: Baden- Baden.

Wolfinger, R.E., Rosenstone, S.J. (1980). *Who votes?*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Other

Ballington, J. (2001), *Youth and political participation: Tuned in or tuned out?* IDEA: Stockholm.

EurActiv (2009). MTV launches youth EU election campaign. Retrieved: May 14, 2009
<http://www.euractiv.com/en/eu-elections/mtv-launches-youth-eu-election-campaign/article-181201?Ref=RSS>

EU observer (2009). *EU elections heading for record low turnout*. Retrieved: May 14, 2009
<http://euobserver.com/883/27942>

European Commission (2001). White Paper called "A new impetus for European youth"
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A5-2002-0126+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

European Parliament (2009). *FAQ's on Parliament's election campaign*. Retrieved: May 15, 2009
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/008-55968-131-05-20-901-20090515STO55963-2009-11-05-2009/default_en.htm

European Parliament (2009). *Ergebnisse der Europawahlen 2009*. Retrieved: May 15, 2009
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/archive/elections2009/de/turnout_de.html

Feldmann-Wojtachnia, E. (2008). *Elections to the EP in 2009: Youth, Europe and the role of peer-group activities*, CAP Aktuell (3), Forschungsgruppe Jugend und Europa pp.1- 7

Feldmann-Wojtachnia, E. (2009). *Europawahl 2009: Jugend, Politik und europäisches Bewusstsein*, CAP Aktuell (2), Forschungsgruppe Jugend und Europa, pp.1- 7

Flash Eurobarometer 162 "Post European elections 2004 survey", European Commission, Retrieved: May 14, 2009, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/FL162en.pdf

Hooghe, M. (2008). Youth and Politics: Strange Bedfellows? Comparative Perspectives on Political Socialization. Call for Papers. International Conference, Bruges (Belgium)

Rock the Vote (2009). <http://www.rockthevote.com/> Retrieved: May 18, 2009

Sinnott, R. (2003). *Electoral participation/ abstention: a framework for research and policy-development*. Plenary meeting of the FP5 *Changeequal* network, Mannheim 10-12 April 2003.

Spiegel Online International (2009). *Survey Signals Low Turnout in EU Parliament Elections*. Retrieved: May 15, 2009. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/0,1518,619104,00.html>