

# **The impact of decentralisation on the political activities of men and women in Europe.**

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## **Abstract**

This research paper studies the effect of decentralisation, gender and their interaction has on eight different forms of political participation. Decentralised institutions have long been held up as a significant determinant in raising citizens' participation rates. Based upon existing theory it is speculated that decentralisation may have a different impact on participation rates between men and women. This argument is empirically tested using data from the ninth edition of the European Social Survey (ESS). Results from eight logistic regression analyses indicate that for most types of participation the effect decentralisation does not differ for men and women. Moreover, the findings indicate that men and women are more likely to engage in different categories of political participation. Additionally, it was found that decentralisation is significantly related to all but one type of political participation. These findings add onto the existing debate on the role of decentralisation as well as the current discussion about gender disparities in political participation.

Key words: political participation, decentralisation, gender disparity.

## Introduction

For most of democratic history, exerting influence over political decision-making processes and shaping policy was reserved for a select few who held a privileged position in society. Fortunately for most, today's political landscape has drastically changed. In modern Western democracies, those holding political power represent 'the people' by constitutional degree. 'The people', in turn, includes all citizens no matter ethnicity, gender, sex, or ability. As such, the political domain is meant to be open to all voices. For many this is the case, even to the extent that political acts such as voting or having a discussion with friends and family on political subjects are taken-for-granted. Some may even see these acts as a burden; not everyone shares the same eagerness to partake in politics. Whilst the act of voting within many Western countries has become more or less equal between subsets of society, for many other modes of political participation substantial inequality still exists (Beauregard, 2014). The gender gap in political participation is a well-known phenomenon in the field of political sociology. Women tend to fall behind men when it comes to participating in different modes of political activity. Studies conducted on gender difference in political attitudes and behaviours illustrate that women are less likely to have political knowledge, political efficacy, and political interest (Adman, 2009; Beauregard, 2014; Ondercin & Jones-White, 2011). Findings such as these are often used as an explanatory mechanism for the gender gap in political participation. Yet, these explanations do not consider the complexities of the variations of these gender gaps between countries.

According to institutional theory, system-level characteristics matter in the context of political attitudes and behaviours. The institutional context may favour certain groups of people over others. Previous research has already shown that institutions can have a gendered impact upon their citizens. The proportionality of an electoral system was found to have important implications for the psychological engagement of its constituents resulting in a smaller gender gap (Kittilson & Schwindt-Bayet, 2012). Beauregard (2014) took these findings as a starting point and researched the effects of proportionality of the electoral system on the gender gap in political participation. Whilst it could not be proven that the smaller gap in psychological engagement translates to a smaller gender gap in participation, Beauregard (2014) did find that in plurality electoral systems the gender gap in participation is smaller. Plurality systems, which usually consist of less parties, reduce the number of resources needed in the decision-making process. Thus, those who have less resources, often women, face fewer barriers of entry in order to participate (Beauregard, 2014). This study illustrates how institutional features may interact differently with groups in society depending upon their socio-economic resources.

Surprisingly, decentralisation, an institutional feature proposed by many to impact political participation, has not been given much attention in regard to the underlying mechanisms of the gender gap of participation. Decentralisation refers to the distribution of power in political institutions. When institutions are highly decentralised, this indicates that power has been transferred from national institutions to the local institutions. On the other hand, in a highly centralised country, power is located in one national-level institution. According to political opportunity structure (POS) theory, institutions which are more open, as indicated by a higher degree of decentralisation, provide their citizens with more

opportunity to participate in politics as well as a higher chance of succeeding once they do (Fatke, 2016; Spina, 2014). Consequently, it can be expected that citizens who are part of open systems are more likely to participate. Within the social movement's literature, this approach has been used to argue why some movements succeed where others have failed (Vráblíková, 2014). The concept of decentralisation has been a popular topic of exploration, especially in relation to political participation. However, a gap in literature seems to exist when it comes to linking the gender gap in participation to the degree of decentralisation. The aim of this research is to add to existing literature covering decentralisation as well as to uncover whether the degree of decentralisation of political institutions in varying countries impacts the gender gap in political participation. More specifically, this paper is led by the question: *does the degree of decentralisation of political institutions have a differing impact between genders upon citizens political participation?*

### **Relevancy**

Just as citizens have the right to participate in politics and have their interests represented, they also have a right to abstain from partaking if they so choose. If so, why should this gender gap in participation be a societal issue? Political participation is an essential element for the functioning of representative democracies. By participating in the political domain, citizens ensure that their interests are represented in the policies implemented by a government. Apart from representing their voice, high rates of political participation are crucial in holding public officials accountable. Public officials being held accountable prevents corruption in addition to legitimizing the government. As such, high participation rates across all subsections of society is a goal which any true representative democracies should want to strive for. Uncovering how contextual features such as decentralisation may impact why some demographics are more likely to participate than others can illuminate ways in which participation might be increased. In this way, this paper adds to existing knowledge for policy makers and academics alike and presents another step forward on the road to achieving fair and equal democratic processes. In order to answer the research question, first a theoretical foundation shall be laid which covers the concepts of gender disparities in political participation and decentralisation. Based upon the known theories, hypothesis shall be presented. Next, the research design will be presented. Subsequently, the empirical findings of the logistic regression analysis will be reported and discussed in with respect to the hypotheses and the theory. Lastly, a concluding section will sum up the most important implications of the study.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Political participation and its determinants**

Generally, political participation is defined as any “activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government actions – either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by affecting the selection of people who make those policies” (Verba et al., 1995, pg. 38). Moreover, for an activity to be conceived of as political participation it should be performed voluntarily by citizens, not by politicians or lobbyists (van Deth, 2014). From the definition alone, it is understandable why the concept of political participation is best understood as an umbrella term for an incredible number of different activities. It has become common practice to distinguish between different types of political participation by categorising them as either conventional or unconventional. Conventional, sometimes called institutional, political participation includes those activities which are formally linked to the domain of politics, the government or the state. Examples of these types includes traditional activities such as voting, contacting politicians, being part of a political party, or serving in public office (van Deth, 2014). Unconventional, also known as non-institutional, political participation are activities which are still targeted at politics, the government or the state but which are often performed outside of the formal domain of politics. These are often the newer forms of political activities such as peaceful demonstrating, signing petitions, and boy/buycotting products (van Deth, 2014).

One of the most popular approaches in explaining why some citizens tend to participate more than others is the Civic Voluntarism Model of Verba, Scholzman and Brady (1995). This model was first developed as an attempt to uncover the explanatory mechanism behind differences in voter turnout in the United States. However, over the years it became an accepted practice to apply this model to other less conventional modes of political participation. The civic voluntarism model consists of three main features which, when absent or lacking, would lead an individual to abstain from partaking in political activity. The model is best summarized by its originators who state that a person does not partake in politics “because they can’t, because they don’t want to, or because nobody asked” (Verba et al., 1995, pg. 271). The first part of this iconic quote “because they can’t” refers to the resources an individual has at their disposal. These include time, money or skills in communication or organization (Barkan, 2004). An individual with a lower socio-economic status may not be afforded the time to spend on political activities when their main priority is providing for their household. Secondly, “because they don’t want to” refers to psychological engagement. Psychological engagement concerns the general attitude an individual holds towards politics (Barkan, 2004). For example, whether he or she is interested in politics, if they feel like they are confident and competent in their political opinions, or whether their voice play a significant role in the political process. It matters little if an individual has the time, competency, or money to be involved in political activities if they are not interested in partaking in the first place. Thirdly, “because nobody asked” refers to the recruitment network surrounding an individual. The recruitment network consists of people in the individual’s network who encourage them to take part in political activities. The more an individual is active in their networks, the greater the chance is that he or she will be recruited (Barkan, 2004).

With respect to the gender gap in political participation, CVM has often been utilised to explain why women seem to participate less than men. Women tend to have a lower socio-economic status in comparison to men, which presents one barrier to participation (Adman, 2009). Additionally, when it comes to psychological engagement, women seem to score lower than men too (Hinojosa, Fridkin and Kittilson, 2017). Numerous studies have found that women tend to be less interested in politics, score lower in political efficacy, and have less political knowledge (Adman, 2009; Beauregard, 2014; Karp & Banducci, 2008). These findings together with CVM theory present a simple picture, namely that due to inequalities in resources and psychological engagement there exists a gender gap. Yet, when it comes to empirically proving this theory, researchers have found that these individual-level factors do not have full explanatory power (Fakih & Sleiman, 2022). For example, Beauregard (2014) performed a cross-national comparative analysis of the electoral systems in 21 countries. It was found that individual-level factors were not able to account for all the variance in political participation as dependent variable. Moreover, Adman's 2009 study into the so-called 'Swedish situation' illustrates the complexity of participation gaps or lack thereof. In Sweden, the participation rates between men and women are more or less equal. However, this outcome is not due to an equal distribution of resources or similar levels of psychological engagement between men and women; women in Sweden still fall behind men in these features. Furthermore, cross-national differences in participation rates exist; the gender gap is not the same in every single country (Beauregard, 2018).

Since there is such variety in acts of political participation, their typology and the contexts in which these acts are performed, it has been difficult to narrow down the exact disparity in gendered participation. In research presented by Burns, Schlozman and Verba (2001), women are outperformed by men in almost every type of activity: the two genders only participated equally when it came to the act of protesting. Research conducted in the Middle East and North Africa also found that women were less likely to engage in all forms of political participation they tested (Fakih & Sleiman, 2022). Contrary to these findings, in a British research report of the gender gap it was found that women participated equally to men to vote. Moreover, women were found to engage in activities which designated as cause-oriented activities: "activities focused on specific issues and policies outside of the electoral arena" (Norris, Lovenduski and Campbell, 2004, pg. 18). Men, on the other hand were much more likely to participate campaign-oriented activities such as contacting politicians, donating money, and working for or being a member of a political party (Norris et al., 2004). Moreover it was found that women were less likely than men to join these voluntary associations (Norris et al., 2004). Interestingly, the cause-oriented and campaign-oriented activities correspond with the concepts of conventional and unconventional political activities. In support of these British findings, other research projects have also found that women are more likely than men to engage in unconventional, or non-institutional, of political participation too (Marien, Hooghe & Quintelier, 2010; Hooghe & Stolle, 2004). The reasoning behind this phenomenon is that unconventional politics is often not labelled as politics by individuals themselves. Additionally, unconventional politics takes place outside of often male dominated formal sphere of politics (Marien et al, 2010). Based upon these recent findings, the first hypothesis reads:

*H1: Women are more likely to engage in unconventional political activities than men.*

### **Decentralisation and political participation**

Decentralisation refers to the “transfer [of] power and responsibility from higher to lower levels of government” (Spina, 2014, pg. 449). Practically this entails that there are more actors, on multiple levels, in the political process instead of one central state organ which holds all decision-making power. Since the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, proponents of decentralisation have argued it to be one of the most influential determinants in raising citizen participation rates. According to the proponents of POS theory, it is this dispersion of power from higher to lower levels of government which facilitates political participation by providing opportunities for citizens (Fatke, 2016; Spina, 2014; Vráblíková, 2014; Quaranta, 2013). POS theory posits that if government institutions are highly centralised, the opportunity structure is said to be closed; a high degree of decentralisation in institutions is interpreted as an open opportunity structure (Vráblíková, 2014). Decentralised institutions or an open opportunity structure raises participation rates since these institutions signal to citizens that they will have a) more opportunities to access the political domain, and b) more chance of influencing political decision-making processes once they choose to partake. Due to the decentralisation of power, there are more institutions and actors available for citizens to access. Moreover, due to the multiplicity of actors, there is a greater chance that one will be convinced to listen to the interest of the citizens in question. In centralised systems, however, the access points for the political arena are comparably less. When one or few actors hold most of the power they are not constrained by other actors in their decision-making processes. As such citizens have less chance of succeeding (Vráblíková, 2014). Consequently, in open systems, citizens are much more motivated to participate in the political arena (Fatke, 2016; Vráblíková, 2014; Quaranta, 2013).

Furthermore, scholars argue that decentralisation increases interest in political decisions and local politics due to the closer proximity of political processes (Fatke, 2016; Spina, 2014; Quaranta, 2013). One argument in favour of this theory posits that people are educated by their local institutions. The chance of citizens becoming acquainted with local politicians is much greater in decentralised systems than in centralised systems. Local political actors may provide additional services to their community as well as make more public appearances (Spina, 2014). Additionally, local decision-making processes are much more likely to directly influence citizen’s life. As such, there is a greater incentive for an individual to participate in these processes (Spina, 2014). Lastly, it is argued that decentralisation facilitates increased participation rates due to its mobilisation effect in social networks (Vráblíková, 2014). Whilst it might be hard for a single ordinary citizen to distinguish whether they live in an open or closed system, they need not explicitly know. Political actors in social networks are argued to be more effective in recruiting or mobilising individuals in systems which are more open, acting on the opportunities it provides. Social networks in turn lower the costs for individuals to partake in political activities (Vráblíková, 2014). Moreover, social networks exert pressure upon the individuals embedded within them to participate politically if this is the norm (Vráblíková, 2014). As suggested by Adman (2008), social networks in the form of friends, family but also organisations such as voluntary

organisations are argued to positively affect political participation. In line with these theoretical expectations, the second hypothesis is as follows:

*H2: The degree of decentralisation has a positive association with political participation.*

Apart from driving up participation rates in general, decentralisation has been argued to increase the participation rates of minorities, such as women (Pandey, 2020 & Chhetri, 2013). As previously mentioned, CVM theory has often been utilised to explain why women participate less frequently than men. In particular, scholars have fixated upon women's lack of resources as well as lack of psychological engagement. A decentralised context may interact with these individual-level determinants in several different ways to raise participation rates of women. Firstly, POS theory posits that decentralised institutions give citizens more access to and a bigger chance of success in influencing political processes. Apart from lowering the cost to access the political arena, these features raise the motivation to participate as it changes citizens' attitudes towards the political system. As women often score lower in terms of political knowledge, interest and efficacy, decentralised systems may be crucial in raising these factors. Secondly, by bringing the political process closer, decentralisation enables access to an arena which has long excluded women. As mentioned before, the closer proximity of these institutions and citizens' increased interaction with them allows for learning and the development of crucial political skills and knowledge (Spina, 2014). This in turn, may motivate participation in groups which previously lacked the psychological engagement necessary to become politically active.

Lastly, both Quaranta (2013) and Vráblíková (2014) stress that decentralisation has an impact on mobilisation agents, facilitating mobilisation. Their research stresses that the degree of decentralisation mainly impacts political participation rates through other determinants. As decentralisation facilitates mobilisation and recruitment, the cost of political participation becomes lower (Vráblíková, 2014). Generally, it is costly to obtain political information as well as to understand and navigate the complexities of political processes. According to CVM theory, women commonly lack the resources or psychological engagement to become politically active. However, in decentralised countries, the increased mobilisation effect may compensate for this lack. Social networks lower the costs of being politically active, providing the resources, skills, or information necessary (Vráblíková, 2014). Moreover, being a member of a social network, whether formal or informal, enables citizens to build up their political knowledge and skills due to member interactions such as political discussions (Vráblíková, 2014). Since it is easier for mobilising actors to recruit citizens in open political opportunity structures, it is more likely that women in decentralised countries are recruited into participation. Consequently, these women are more likely to have higher psychological engagement with the political process and the costs of participation are reduced for this group.

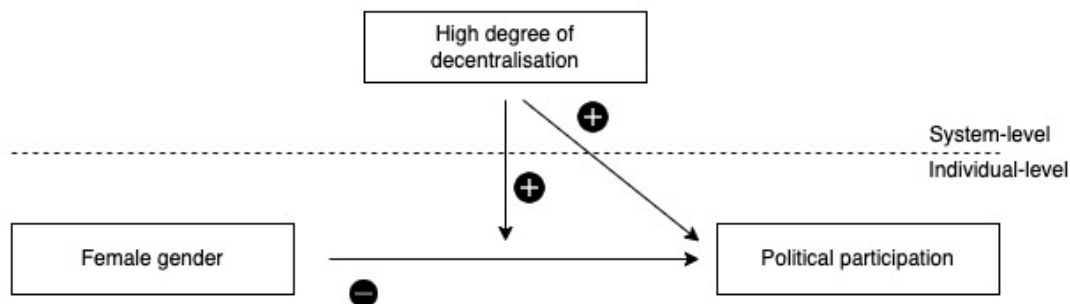
Of course, decentralisation would be expected to impact men's rates of participation too. Yet, if CVM theory is correct in assuming that men already possess the psychological engagement and resources necessary to participate, the threshold for participation is most likely already reached for many of them. It is not theorised that decentralisation does not impact the male population; however, it may be the case that the interaction effect between

gender and decentralisation on political participation may be less great for males than for females. A decentralised context may impact males less than groups which are lacking in the determinants which have commonly been assumed to drive political participation. This, in turn, would mean that the gap between participation rates of the genders may become smaller. Decentralisation may be an institutional feature which lowers the cost of participation, raises psychological engagement, and interacts with the recruitment networks proposed by Verba et al. (1995). In turn, decentralisation can lower the barriers to access the political domain. Based upon this theory, the third hypothesis reads:

*H3: The degree of decentralisation has a greater positive effect on political participation for women than for men.*

Yet, despite these arguments in favour of decentralisation raising participation rates, it is important to remain critical about these theoretical speculations. Empirical research conducted on decentralisation and its relationship to political participation has led to conflicting results. Spina's (2014) analysis of 22 European states found no relationship between decentralisation and political participation. On the other hand, several authors have found a significant association between decentralisation and participation. However, findings vary greatly, for example, both Quaranta (2013) and Fatke (2016) included protest behaviour in their analysis. Yet where the former found a positive association the latter found that decentralisation has a negative effect on participation. Vráblíková (2014) did find a relationship between decentralisation and political participation, however, it is important to note that the dependent variable was indicated by six items which were added together to create a scale variable. Yet, as shall be argued in the methods section, the types of political participation are best examined separately since the determinants can vary. Only one study homed in on decentralisation, gender and politics: Rhoads (2012) illustrates that Indonesia, decentralisation actually reduced female participation in politics. The change from a centralised authority to decentralised regional authority resulted in the solidification of traditional customs which have excluded women from the political decision-making process. The lack of studies into these specific combination of decentralisation, participation and gender underlines the importance of further investigation.

Figure 1: Conceptual model based upon the discussed theory





## Data and method

This study relies on data from ninth round of the European Social Survey (ESS) conducted in 2018. The ESS covers 30 European countries (all of which are included in the analysis) and asks the respondents a plethora of questions regarding social, political, and cultural values, attitudes, and behaviours. A well-known downside of utilizing a secondary dataset is the lack of control over the data collection process as well as lack of input on the formulation of the questions. However, for the scope of this research project, the ESS covers a large pool of respondents which allows cross-national analysis. Moreover, apart from being cost and time effective, the survey is devised to ensure methodological consistency (Fieldhouse et al., 2007). All respondents from the ESS are anonymous. Due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable, binary logistic regressions were employed to test the hypotheses. The test was run in two steps, which results in two models. In the first step, all variables were added into the analysis except for the interaction term (gender\*RAI). In the second step the interaction term was added. The first step allows for an independent examination of the significance of both the gender variable and the RAI variable. The second step illustrates the significance of the interaction term.

The dependent variable is political participation. As stated previously, the concept of political participation may be defined as any activity aimed at influencing the political process (Verba et al., 1995). As such, many different types of political activities fall under the umbrella term of political participation. The operationalisation of the concept of political participation, thus, is of great importance for the findings. In this research study, the choice was made to include as many forms of participation as possible and to analyse these dependent variables independently. Previous research has already established that the determinants for each type of political participation differ according to gender and country (Beauregard, 2018). Moreover, participating in one activity might not require the same number of resources or psychological engagement as another. Since it is hypothesised that these factors are crucial in determining participation rates, it would not make sense to merge all these types of political participation together into one indicator. Therefore, in order to gain a clear picture on the factors influencing political participation, the decision was made to include eight dependent variables and to run separate analyses for each. The dependent variables were covered by one question each, the respondents were asked if they: a) voted in the last election, and if in the last 12 months they b) were part of a public demonstration, c) signed a petition, d) worn a campaign badge or sticker, e) contacted a politician or government official, f) shared anything regarding politics online, g) worked in a political party or action group, and h) worked for another organisation or association. Each variable was recoded so that '0' indicated 'no' and '1' represents 'yes'.

The independent variable is gender, which is a dichotomous variable in this data set. The variable was recoded so that '0' indicated 'male' and '1' signifies 'female'. Degree of decentralisation per country is indicated by the Regional Authority Index (RAI) created by Hooghe et al. (2016). Just like many, if not all, concepts in the field of political sociology, decentralisation may be conceptualised in a variety of ways. The RAI is often used in research concerning decentralisation since it accounts for the variety of ways institutions may be decentralised. The RAI is a score composed of two categories: self-rule and shared rule. In

addition, each category consists of five dimensions. For self-rule these dimensions are: institutional depth, policy scope, fiscal autonomy, borrowing autonomy, and representation. For shared rule these dimensions are: law making, executive control, fiscal control, borrowing control, and constitutional reform (Hooghe et al., 2016). Regions are given a score according to each dimension, which are then weighted by population and summed up in order to derive an annual country score (Hooghe et al., 2016). Scores from the year 2018 are utilised in the analysis.

As previous research has already illustrated a myriad of factors influence participation rates, therefore it was especially important to add control variables in the analysis. Individual-level control variables are derived from the ESS. On an individual-level age was chosen since younger people tend to be less politically active than older people, at least regarding institutional participation such as voting (Fieldhouse, Tranmer and Russel, 2007; Gimpel, Morris and Armstrong, 2004). The association between education and political participation, too, has been well known in the world of social research. As such, it too was chosen as an individual-level control variable. Education is said to increase cognitive skills, political knowledge, as well as political efficacy (Persson, 2013). Moreover, education has often been used as a proxy variable for socio-economic status. Noticeable is that in recent scholarly research, it is challenged whether education has a direct relationship to political participation. Instead, it is argued that education acts as a proxy variable for other pre-adolescent characteristics such as personality (Kam & Palmer, 2008; Persson, 2013). Nevertheless, despite the ongoing discussion, the statistical association between education and participation rates must be considered. Since respondent's hail from all over Europe, educational level was indicated by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Respondents are classified into categories ranging from ISCED 0 (no formal education) to ISCED 8 (achieved a doctoral or equivalent).

Two other important individual-level control variables are political interest and political efficacy. As discussed before, these two variables have been strongly associated with political participation. For political interest, respondents were able to answer how politically interest they perceived themselves to be. Respondents were able to answer this question on a scale ranging from 1 (very interested) to 4 (not at all interested). For political efficacy, the mean of two questions were taken. The first question concerned the respondent's confidence in themselves to participate in politics and the second question regarded whether the respondent thought people were able to influence the political system. For both questions, respondents had five options to choose from which presented a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal). Furthermore, system-level variables were added to account for any cross-national differences, namely gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and the female labour force participation rate. GDP illustrates the level of economic development per country. The percentage of female labour force participation is an important control variable since it has been argued that a larger percentage of women participating in the work force signifies greater equality between men and women in the general culture which would, subsequently, translate into greater equality in participation rates (Beauregard, 2018).

## Results

Below the findings of the binary logistic regressions are reported. There are a few points of interest to keep in mind whilst reading the result section. First, the table report the coefficients from the final model, the main variable of importance is the interaction term between gender and decentralisation. However, since the analysis was conducted in two steps, for the variables of gender and decentralisation the odds ratios and confidence intervals resulting from the first step will be given in the text. In addition, in line with the logistic regression analysis, the table reports the odds ratio that the dependent variable occurs for one unit increase in each predictor variable whilst all other variables are kept equal. Another note regarding the results displayed in the tables concerns the variable of political interest. Political interest was coded as followed: 1 for 'very interested', 2 for 'quite interested', 3 for 'hardly interested' and 4 for 'not at all interested'. Whilst for all other variables an odds ratio above one indicates a positive effect, meaning that the individual is more likely to engage in the political activity, for political interest an odds ratio above one indicates that the person is less likely to engage in the activity of the dependent variable as political interest increases. For the total sample the response rate was quite high,  $N = 49519$ . However the number of respondents included in each analysis differs (see appendix A.). Respondents were excluded from analysis if they gave don't know answers, refusals or no answers to one of the questions. The sample was relatively balanced in terms of male and female respondents, there were slightly more female respondents than male. The oldest age of respondents was 90, whereas the youngest age was 15. The average age of a respondent was 51 years old.

For all analyses, the findings indicate that the odds ratio for gender was statistically significant. Several positive associations between gender and political participation were found. Firstly, in the context of the analysis, women are more likely to vote than men (OR = 1.145, 95% CI [1.088, 1.206]). Moreover, the findings for the dependent variable of wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker indicate that women are more likely than men to wear or display a campaign badge or sticker (OR = 1.466, 95% CI [1.369, 1.570]). In relation to signing a petition, the findings indicates that, in comparison to men, women are more likely to sign a petition (OR = 1.338, 95% CI [1.279, 1.401]). When it comes to taking part in a lawful public demonstration, too, a significant difference in odds ratios was found, which indicates that women are more likely to take part in a demonstration than men (OR = 1.133, 95% CI [1.055, 1.217]). Lastly, for the dependent variable posting or sharing anything related to politics online, the analysis indicates that women have higher odds to post or share something related to politics online than men (OR = 1.103, 95% CI [1.045, 1.018]). However, not every analysis between gender and the dependent variables resulted in positive associations. For several types of political participation, women are less likely to engage in the activity than men. Findings indicate that gender is significantly associated with the dependent variable contacting a politician or government official (OR = .871, 95% CI [.826, .919]). In other words, women are less likely to contact a politician or government official in comparison to men. Additionally, regarding the dependent variable working in a political party or action group, the results indicate that women are less likely to join a political party or action group in comparison to men (OR = .891, 95% CI [.810, .979]). Similarly, for the dependent variable of working for another organisation or association the findings show that

in comparison to men, women are less likely to be part of another type of organisation or association (OR = .864, 95% CI [.819, .911]).

Significant associates were found for all dependent variables except for the variable of voting in the national election (OR = 1.001, 95% CI [.998, 1.004]). Starting with the positive associations, for the dependent variable of working for another type of organisation or association a significant odds ratios was found (OR = 1.021, 95% CI [1.018, 1.023]). Individuals who live in more decentralised contexts are more likely to be part of another type of organisation or association. Moreover, the analysis shows that decentralisation is significantly associated with signing a petition (OR = 1.009, 95% CI [1.006, 1.011]). In a more decentralised context, the odds that an individual will sign a petition are higher. Decentralisation, too, is significantly associated with taking part in a lawful public demonstration. In more decentralised contexts, an individual is more likely to partake in a demonstration (OR = 1.014, 95% CI [1.010, 1.018]). Furthermore, the variable of decentralisation is significantly associated to posting or sharing political content online: an individual in a more decentralised context is more likely to post or share anything related to politics online (OR = 1.003, 95% CI [1.001, 1.006]). On the other hand, the results of the analysis indicate that some dependent variables have a negative relationship with the variable decentralisation. According to the findings, there was a significant difference in the odds of contacting a politician or government official between centralised and decentralised contexts (OR = .994, 95% CI [.991, .997]). Accordingly, an individual living in a more decentralised country is less likely to contact a politician or government official. In addition, the analysis showed that in a more decentralised context the odds that an individual will work for a political party or action group are slightly less (OR = .994, 95% CI [.989, .999]). Lastly, the findings indicate that in a country which is more decentralised, an individual will be less likely to wear or display a campaign badge or sticker (OR = .981, 95% CI [.977, .984]).

Regarding the interaction effect of gender and decentralisation on political participation, not a lot of significant results were found. As reported in table 1, no significant interaction effect was found for the dependent variables of voting in the national election, working in a political party or action group, wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker, taking part in a lawful public demonstration, and the activity of posting or sharing anything related to politics online. For three dependent variables, however, significant odds ratios for the interaction effect were found. Firstly, the interaction effect between gender and decentralisation on the variable contacting a politician or government official is just above one. This indicates that the negative effect decentralisation has on the dependent variable is slightly stronger for men than for women. Secondly, a significant interaction effect between gender and decentralisation on the variable working in another organisation or association was found. The odds ratio is above one, which indicates that the positive effect of a higher degree of decentralisation is greater for women than for men. Finally, the last significant interaction effect was found for the dependent variable of signing a petition. As the odds ratio is above one, the effect that decentralisation has on the likelihood of signing a petition is greater for women than for men. Thus, women are even more likely to sign a petition in comparison to men in contexts which are characterised by a higher degree of decentralisation.

Across all analyses, the control variable of age gave significant findings except for the variable working for a political party or action group. For the dependent variables voting in

the national election, contacting a politician or government official, and working for another organisation or association, the odds ratio for age is above one. This result indicates that older people are more likely to engage in these types of activities. Contrastingly, for the dependent variables: wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker, signing a petition, taking part in a lawful public demonstration, and posting or sharing anything related to politics online, the odds ratio was below one. As such, these activities are more likely to be performed by younger people. Both variables political interest and political efficacy resulted in significant findings for all dependent variables. Respondents who were very politically interested and/or scored high for political efficacy were more likely to engage in all the political participation types analysed. The findings for education conformed to what was theoretically expected: those who are higher educated are more likely to take part in political activities. However, these findings are not significant for each mode of political participation (e.g. working in a political party or action group and wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker). Nor are all levels of education significant for the dependent variables: contacting a politician or government official, working in another organisation or association, and taking part in a lawful public demonstration. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that the sub-set of respondents which fall under a very high (e.g. getting a doctoral degree) or very low level (not receiving any formal education) of education are much smaller in size than those who have finished, for example, secondary school. As such, any further interpretation one may draw from these findings should be regarded critically.

GDP appears to be a significant variable for all analyses except for the dependent variable working in another organisation or association. For the dependent variables: voting, wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker, signing a petition, and posting or sharing anything related to politics online, the odds ratios are above one. This indicates that an individual who lives in a country in which GDP is higher, the likelihood that they will engage in these activities is higher. Furthermore, for the dependent variables: working in a political party or action group or partaking in a lawful public demonstration, the odd ratios are below one. Thus, the higher GDP is, the less likely an individual is to perform these political activities. The findings for female labour force participation rate are significant for all dependent variables except contacting a politician or government official. The findings display odd ratios above one for the dependent variables: working for a political party or action group, working for another organisation or association, wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker, and signing a petition. As such, individuals living in a context in which the female labour force participation rate is higher are more likely to partake in these activities. On the other hand, for the dependent variables: voting and taking part in a lawful public demonstration, the odds ratios are below one. These results indicate that an individual in a context in which female labour participation rate is higher are less likely to vote or take part in a demonstration.

Table 1: results of the logistic regression analysis

Variables	Voting in national election			Contacting a politician or government official			Working for a political party or action group			Working for another organisation or association		
	Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval		Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval		Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval		Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval	
		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper
Gender	1.151	1.063	1.248	.812	.745	.885	.863	.743	1.002	.737	.674	.806
Decentralisation	1.001	.997	1.005	.992	.988	.995	.993	.987	.999	1.016	1.012	1.019
Gender*Decentralisation	1.000	.995	1.004	1.005	1.000	1.010	1.002	.994	1.011	1.010	1.006	1.015
Age	1.027	1.025	1.029	1.004	1.003	1.006	1.002	.999	1.005	1.003	1.001	1.004
Political interest	.516	.499	.535	.659	.637	.682	.452	.423	.483	.686	.663	.711
Political efficacy	1.445	1.390	1.502	1.607	1.550	1.665	2.241	2.111	2.380	1.653	1.594	1.714
Education level 0												
Education level 1	1.564	1.240	1.973	1.220	.835	1.782	1.384	.612	3.132	1.374	.910	2.074
Education level 2	1.522	1.218	1.901	1.145	.793	1.653	1.452	.660	3.194	1.392	.934	2.075
Education level 3	1.998	1.604	2.490	1.368	.953	1.965	1.454	.667	3.172	1.673	1.128	2.482
Education level 4	2.437	1.917	3.099	1.966	1.355	2.853	1.650	.743	3.664	1.941	1.295	2.911
Education level 5	2.260	1.776	2.876	1.929	1.332	2.794	1.932	.876	4.260	2.403	1.608	3.593
Education level 6	3.477	2.747	4.402	2.038	1.413	2.940	1.736	.792	3.807	2.633	1.768	3.922
Education level 7	3.108	2.454	3.935	2.094	1.453	3.019	1.670	.763	3.657	2.712	1.822	4.037
Education level 8	2.567	1.747	3.773	1.911	1.260	2.900	2.042	.885	4.709	2.527	1.622	3.937
GDP	1.005	1.002	1.007	1.004	1.002	1.007	.978	.973	.983	.998	.996	1.001
Female labour force participation	.978	.971	.984	1.006	.999	1.012	1.014	1.002	1.026	1.060	1.053	1.067
Constant	3.603			.063			.031			.003		

Table 1 continued:

Variables	Wearing a campaign badge or sticker			Signing a petition			Taking part in a public lawful demonstration			Posting or sharing anything related to politics online		
	Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval		Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval		Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval		Odds ratio	95% Confidence interval	
		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper
Gender	1.384	1.238	1.547	1.219	1.131	1.313	1.111	.985	1.253	1.090	.997	1.192
Decentralisation	.979	.974	.984	1.005	1.002	1.008	1.013	1.009	1.018	1.003	.999	1.007
Gender*Decentralisation	1.004	.998	1.011	1.006	1.002	1.010	1.001	.995	1.007	1.001	.996	1.006
Age	.989	.987	.991	.986	.985	.987	.983	.981	.985	.967	.966	.969
Political interest	.645	.617	.674	.640	.621	.659	.583	.556	.611	.518	.500	.537
Political efficacy	1.619	1.548	1.694	1.334	1.293	1.376	1.325	1.263	1.389	1.340	1.292	1.390
Education level 0												
Education level 1	1.213	.719	2.049	1.701	1.108	2.611	1.365	.742	2.511	3.468	1.590	7.566
Education level 2	1.326	.800	2.197	2.190	1.444	3.320	1.373	.762	2.476	4.116	1.911	8.862
Education level 3	1.160	.703	1.914	3.407	2.254	5.148	1.493	.833	2.678	5.429	2.528	11.658
Education level 4	1.269	.758	2.123	3.931	2.583	5.983	1.681	.924	3.058	6.843	3.170	14.775
Education level 5	1.419	.852	2.364	5.244	3.451	7.970	1.962	1.083	3.556	7.279	3.375	15.699
Education level 6	1.463	.883	2.424	4.784	3.156	7.252	2.141	1.189	3.856	7.343	3.413	15.798
Education level 7	1.455	.879	2.411	4.927	3.251	7.467	2.232	1.240	4.016	7.345	3.414	15.798
Education level 8	1.612	.921	2.822	6.632	4.214	10.437	2.513	1.328	4.754	8.426	3.816	18.605
GDP	1.015	1.012	1.018	1.005	1.003	1.008	.994	.991	.998	1.003	1.001	1.006
Female labour force participation	1.012	1.004	1.020	1.018	1.013	1.024	.988	.980	.997	1.002	.996	1.009
Constant	.032			.071			.411			.274		

## Discussion

As has been theorised, the results of the analyses indicate that there is still a disparity in political participation between men and women. However, women are not always less politically active than men. In fact, for five out of the eight dependent variables tested in this research project, the odds for women were higher than the odds for men. The results of these analyses show that women are more likely to engage in activities such as petitioning, partaking in demonstrations and sharing or posting political content online. The results echo those of a 2004 British research study as women are more likely to engage in cause-oriented activities (Norris et al., 2004). Similarly, in this study, men are found to be more likely to partake in campaign-oriented and civic-oriented activities, again mirroring the results of Norris et al. (2004). Men were more likely than women to contact a politician or government official, work in a political party or action group, and work in another organisation or association. Apart from being cause-oriented, some of the activities in which women engage more may also be categorised as unconventional participation (e.g. signing petitions, posting online, demonstrating). These findings support the first hypothesis which predicted that women would be more likely to engage in unconventional forms of political participation. In contrast, men engage in more traditional, conventional, political activities. It might be the case that women are seen as less likely to participate because many still think of politics as the conventional activities often associated with the political process. For women, who have long been excluded from the political process, it may be easier to engage in activities which are not located in a traditionally male dominated sphere of politics (Hooghe & Stolle, 2004; Marien et al, 2010).

The second hypothesis of this study poses that when the degree of decentralisation is greater political participation will increase. Due to the variation in results for each dependent variable, this hypothesis cannot be fully accepted. The findings show that voting is not significantly related to decentralisation. This is a finding which is shared by scholars such as Fatke (2016) and Spina (2014). Voting in an election has been established to be a very different type of political participation in comparison to the many other modes, which serves to explain the lack of relationship to decentralisation (Vráblíková, 2014). Another factor may be that the indicator concerned voting in the national election. It would have been interesting to see if the results would be significant for the electoral turnout in regional elections. One can stand to reason that if people interact more with their local politicians due to a higher degree of decentralisation, they would be more inclined to vote in regional elections. Regional elections tend to have smaller turnouts than national elections and citizens tend to know less about the local politics (Spina, 2014). Unfortunately, regional voting turnout was not an indicator available in the dataset. All other modes of political participation are significantly associated with decentralisation, either positively or negatively so. When compared with Spina (2014), who found no significant associations between decentralisation and participation types, this is a notable finding as the operationalisation of the dependent and independent variables in this research project most closely matches theirs. This may be explained by the time period in which the data was collected and/or the types of control variables added into the analysis. Whilst the odds ratios are only slightly above or below one, the effect that decentralisation has on the participation types is much smaller in comparison to



other determinants such as education or political interest and political efficacy. However, it is important to keep in mind that as the odds increase per one unit; a high degree of decentralisation may still be fairly impactful for some types of political participation. Thus, whilst other variables might be greater determinants of political participation, the institutional context in terms of decentralisation should still be considered.

Quite noticeable is that all dependent variables which are positively related to decentralisation can be described as part of unconventional participation whereas those which are negatively related to decentralisation fall under the category conventional participation. In the case of positive associations, these findings seem to support the idea that for unconventional activities the number of access points through which citizens can reach the political domain and the increased chances of impacting the political process, motivates citizens to become politically active. On the other hand, the negative effect that decentralisation has on conventional political activities might seem strange at first glance. According to POS theory, decentralisation would make it easier to engage in conventional politics as there are more access points available as well as a higher chance of success (Fatke, 2016; Vráblíková, 2014; Quaranta, 2013). If your local politicians hold more decision-making power, it might be a good move to strike up a conversation with them. However, it might also be the case that if your local politicians hold more power, they also hold the power to veto one another. When power is more dispersed within institutions, decision-making processes are slower and big policy changes are less likely to happen (Vráblíková, 2014). In this way, decentralisation may be a factor which decreases interest in conventional political activities. Especially so when other forms of political activity such as signing a petition or posting online are still less costly, even in a decentralised system, than joining a political party and may end up in getting the same result. In more centralised systems being part of conventional, or institutional, politics may be the most effective way of impacting the political decision-making process and policy since the power is located in the one central institution. This might explain why individuals are more likely to partake in conventional politics in more centralised systems and less likely in decentralised systems.

With respect to the research question, based on the findings of this study, the answer to the question: *‘does the degree of decentralisation of political institutions have a differing impact between genders upon citizens political participation?’* the answer is yes with a caveat. The results of the analyses concerning the interaction effects between gender and decentralisation on the modes of political participation mainly serve to highlight that for most types of political participation, the degree of decentralisation does not impact women differently as compared to men. Since the sample size used in this study is quite large, it should have the appropriate power to make inferences from. Accordingly, the third hypothesis, which states that the effect of decentralisation is greater for women than for men, cannot be fully accepted. Where there was a significant interaction found, the odds were not particularly large. However, again, it should be remembered that as the degree of decentralisation increases, so do the odds. In two cases, the degree of decentralisation has a greater effect for women than for men, namely for working in another organisation or association and for signing a petition. For the other interaction effect (concerning contacting a politician or government official) it was found that for women, the negative effect of decentralisation was weaker than for men. Unlike the findings for the previous variables, it is

difficult to draw any concrete implications or conclusions from these three significant interaction effects. Since there are so many insignificant results, no pattern can be established. However, this does not mean that nothing may be said about these findings. Firstly, it may be speculated that due the multiplication of access points and increased chances of success, as well as the lowered cost due to the mobilisation effect is what makes women more eager to join organisations and associations in decentralised contexts. Moreover, it may be the case that women choose to join these organisations instead of a party or action group as women prefer unconventional forms of participation. Secondly, it is quite interesting that decentralisation has a greater effect for women than men in terms of signing petitions. It was speculated that the effect of decentralisation would be greater for women than for men because men already engaged in many political activities. In this study women already engage in this behaviour more than men which conflicts with the previously made speculations. Lastly and most curiously, is the finding that women are already less likely to contact a politician or government official and a higher degree of decentralisation would make everyone less likely to seek contact. Yet, for women, the negative effect of decentralisation is less strong which does not fit with any of the theory.

## Conclusion

To conclude, this study looked into the possibility that the degree of decentralisation serves as a system-level determinant of political participation. In particular, it was speculated that the impact of decentralisation could differ between two genders. In order to test these possibilities, eight logistic regression analyses were employed. These analyses resulted in three main implications. For the most part, this study was unable to prove that decentralisation has a gendered impact upon political participation. However, for three types of political participation decentralisation did have a differing impact between the genders. For two of these variables (working for another organisation or association and signing petitions) the effect of decentralisation was greater for women than for men. For one variable (contacting a politician or government official) the negative effect of decentralisation was less great for women. Overall, this investigation added to the existing literature on, gender disparities in political participation as well as the role of decentralisation in the ongoing debate of its effectiveness as a tool which increases participation rates. Whilst decentralisation might not have the biggest effect on gender, it was significantly related to all participation types except for voting. These findings oppose critics who argue the impact of decentralisation on participation rates. However, the finding that decentralisation has an opposing effect for each of the categories of participation is quite new, it would be interesting to see if these results could be reproduced. Moreover, for the scope of this paper, only the interaction effect between decentralisation and gender on political participation types was tested. For further research it would be interesting to see if other determinants of political participation types interact with decentralisation.

Significant findings on gender and political participation were discovered too. It was found that men and women tend to engage in different categories of political activities. Women are more likely to engage in unconventional activities, whereas men seem to prefer conventional activities. For conventional activities, on the other hand, are negatively associated to decentralisation. These findings serve to underline the importance of including more unconventional types of political activities in scholarly research. Whilst it has become more common to investigate unconventional political activities, researchers have long preferred studying participation types such as voting or joining a political party. The perception that women are less active than men may be the result of a much too narrow conception of what counts as political acts. Moreover, activities such as signing petitions, demonstrating or sharing political posts online have become common place. They should be considered as an important element of political participation. For policy, too, this is an important consideration. Over the last few decades, one worry in Europe that its citizens are becoming less active voter turnouts have been decreasing (Hadjar & Beck, 2010). Yet, voting is not the only activity which should be considered as political participation. If policy makers want to increase the political participation of the public, they should include different forms of participation in their strategies.

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## Appendix A: Extra information on data and variables

### Individual-level variables

Gender Female respondents are coded 1, male respondents are coded 0.

Age Age of respondent in year, ranges from 15-90 years.

Highest educational level Respondents educational level, reported as ISCED level.

ISCED 0 = no formal education, has not completed ISCED 1  
ISCED 1 = primary education  
ISCED 2 = lower secondary education  
ISCED 3 = upper secondary education  
ISCED 4 = post-secondary, non-tertiary education  
ISCED 5 = short cycle tertiary education  
ISCED 6 = bachelor's degree or equivalent  
ISCED 7 = master's degree or equivalent  
ISCED 8 = doctoral or equivalent

Political interest Respondents' answer to the question: "How interest would you say you are in politics – are you..."

1 = Very interested  
2 = Quite interested  
3 = Hardly interested  
4 = Not at all interested  
7 = Refusal  
8 = Don't know  
9 = No answer

Answer 7, 8, and 9 were coded as missing data.

Political efficacy Mean value of the respondents' answers to the questions: 1) how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?

1 = Not at all  
2 = Very little  
3 = Some  
4 = A lot  
5 = A great deal  
7 = Refusal  
8 = Don't know  
9 = No answer

And 2) how confident are you in your own ability to participate in politics?

- 1 = Not at all confident
- 2 = A little confident
- 3 = Quite confident
- 4 = Very confident
- 5 = Completely confident
- 7 = Refusal
- 8 = Don't know
- 9 = No answer

For both questions, answer 7, 8, and 9 were coded as missing data.

**System-level variables**

GDP per capita, PPP	Gross domestic product per capita based on purchasing power parity per country. Reported in current international \$, which was divided by 1000. Data provided by the World Bank.
Female labour force participation rate	Female labour force participation rate, estimated percentage of the female population (15+ years) per country. Data provided by the World Bank.
Decentralisation	Degree of decentralisation is indicated by the Regional Authority Index score. Data is provided by Hooghe et al. 2016

**Dependent variables**

Voting in national election	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Contacting a politician or government official	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Working in a political party or action group	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Working in another organisation or association	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Wearing or displaying a campaign badge or sticker	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Signing a petition	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Taking part in a lawful public demonstration	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983
Posted or shared anything related to politics online.	Number of respondents included in analysis N = 42983

## Appendix B: Ethics and privacy checklist

### CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

#### INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website ([http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page\\_id=17](http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17)). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

#### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Testing the impact of decentralisation on the gender gap in political participation in Europe

Name, email of student: Karlijn van Linschoten, [463871kl@student.eur.nl](mailto:463871kl@student.eur.nl)

Name, email of supervisor: Jeroen van der Waal, [vanderwaal@essb.eur.nl](mailto:vanderwaal@essb.eur.nl)

Start date and duration: 01-02-2022, 5 months.

Is the research study conducted within DPAS YES

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?  
(e.g. internship organization)



## PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. YES  
*If 'NO': skip to part V.*  
  
If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? NO  
*Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).*
2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. NO  
  
*If 'YES': skip to part IV.*
3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). YES  
  
*If 'YES': skip to part IV.*

### **PART III: PARTICIPANTS**

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES -  
NO
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES -  
NO
3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES - NO
4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? YES -  
NO  
*Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).*
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? YES -  
NO
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES - NO
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES - NO
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES -  
NO
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? YES -  
NO
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES -  
NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

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What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

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Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

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*Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.*

*Continue to part IV.*

#### **PART IV: SAMPLE**

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

The European Social Survey (2018).

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

$N = 49519$ , however the sample will be smaller based on missing values.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

The population size of Europe is 746,4 million inhabitants in 2018.

*Continue to part V.*

## **Part V: Data storage and backup**

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

On Microsoft one drive.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I am.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

One drive automatically updates and saves data.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

Data in the survey used is already anonymous.

## **PART VI: SIGNATURE**

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Karlijn van Linschoten  
Date: 21/08/2022

Name (EUR) supervisor:  
Date: