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Trust in Representative Democracy and Protest
Behavior. A Multilevel Analysis of European
Democracies

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Abstract

The relationship between trust in representative political institutions and extra-representational protest behavior is contested. For some time, scholars have assumed that distrust is a major source of protest behavior. However, another interpretation highlights that protest has become normalized over time. Thus far, empirical studies have yielded mixed and inconclusive results. This working paper contributes to the debate by linking it to recent studies on how contextual factors both affect the amount of protest and interact with individual-level predictors. More specifically, we consider the institutional and cultural openness of political systems as a key contextual factor. With a multilevel analysis of 21 European countries, we show that citizens who distrust the national parliament, a key institution of representative democracy, are indeed more likely to take part in protest activities. Moreover, in open political contexts, citizens are more likely to protest, and we find a stronger negative micro-level association between political trust and protest behavior.

Keywords

Trust, protest behavior, political systems, national parliaments.

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Introduction

The wave of protest related to the current economic crisis underscores the idea that protesters not only raise specific political demands but also criticize representative political institutions more generally. Apart from fighting against strict austerity measures, protests by the Indignados and Occupy groups vehemently criticize representative democracy, and call for alternative forms of democracy under the slogan ‘*democracia real ya!*’ (real democracy now!) (della Porta & Reiter, 2012). Similarly, protest campaigns against infrastructure projects are often portrayed as challenges to the way representative democracy works. This is well illustrated by the massive protests against a new train station in the German city of Stuttgart in 2010. As an on-site demonstration survey shows, more than fifty percent of the respondents state democracy deficits as the main reason for their protest against the project (Ramid, Stuppert, & Teune, 2012).

These illustrative examples highlight the fact that distrust in representative political institutions is often seen as key source of extra-representational protest behavior. Unsurprisingly, the relation between political trust and protest behavior has been a central topic of research into political participation since the late 1960s (e.g., Barnes & Kaase, 1979; Gamson, 1968; Gurr, 1970; Inglehart, 1977; Muller, Jukam, & Seligson, 1982; Nilson & Nilson, 1980; Useem & Useem, 1979). However, scholars still disagree on how the two concepts are theoretically and empirically linked. In theoretical terms, the literature offers contrasting hypotheses. The standard approach is in line with the examples and assumes a negative relationship (e.g., Dalton, 2006; Hooghe & Marien, 2012; Inglehart, 1977). It is argued that trust in representative institutions is negatively related to protest behavior because citizens who are disaffected with established channels of representative democracy are most likely to engage in extra-representational forms of participation. By getting involved in protest activities, citizens try to more directly intervene in the political process, with specific demands instead of just choosing broad ideological packages in elections. However, taking up the idea that citizens in Western countries are increasingly likely both to perceive protest as legitimate and to take part in protests, other scholars have argued that we should no longer find such a negative relationship between political trust and protest behavior (e.g., Dubrow, Slomczynski, & Tomescu-Dubrow, 2008; Norris, Walgrave, & Aelst, 2005; van Aelst & Walgrave, 2001). Instead, protesters’ social-structural and attitudinal characteristics should not differ much from citizens who are involved in representative and institutionalized forms of participation. Unfortunately, the available empirical findings offer no conclusive answer to this controversy, since studies report negative, positive or statistically non-significant effects (see Norris, 2011: 223f.).

This working paper attempts to shed light on this ongoing debate by linking it to recent studies on how country differences both affect the overall amount of protest and interact with micro-level predictors of protest behavior (e.g., Anderson & Mendes, 2006; Christensen, forthcoming; Dalton, van Sickle, & Weldon, 2010; Dubrow et al., 2008; Fatke & Freitag, 2012; Marien & Christensen, 2013; Morales, 2009; van der Meer, van Deth, & Scheepers, 2009; Vráblíková, 2011). We believe that embedding the relationship between political trust and protest in its broader political context helps us to get one step further in solving the controversy in the field. While the level of trust in representative institutions might be a key source of protest behavior in some countries, it might be less so in others.

As stated by Kriesi (2008: 148) the literature on political participation has long suffered from an “individualistic bias” and has only recently started to systematically examine the impact of factors relating to the political context. Therefore, we rely on the political opportunity structure approach within social movement studies to come up with central elements of the political context faced by protesters (for reviews, see Kriesi, 2004; Meyer, 2004). More specifically, we focus on macro-level factors, which indicate how open or accessible a political context is for political mobilization. We follow the literature on social movements by looking at factors that indicate both the institutional and cultural openness of political contexts (Gamson & Meyer, 1996). Most importantly, this working paper looks at how the micro-level association between political trust and protest behavior might be conditioned by the openness of the political context. First contributions to this debate by Dalton et al. (2010), as well as by Marien and Christensen (2013), suggest that the negative micro-level association

between political trust and protest behavior might be stronger in *closed* political contexts. While they find only little support for this idea, we introduce and empirically confirm the counter hypothesis, i.e., the negative micro-level association is stronger in *open* political contexts. We suggest that citizens in highly accessible political contexts have many channels and levels through which they can be heard and, therefore, protest politics might be more the terrain of those who are disaffected with these other channels. To put it differently, the association between political trust and protest behavior may be less strong in closed systems, since all citizens that are negatively affected by some political decisions need to become active outside of established channels from time to time, since there are simply fewer alternative, institutionalized access options in which to do so.

The paper is structured as follows. The next section elaborates on the micro-level relationship between political trust and protest behavior. Thereafter, we introduce the contextual level and discuss the expected direct and contingent effects of a political system's openness. In the next section, we present the data, indicators and methods used. We rely on the European Social Survey (ESS). Based on the ESS, protest behavior is operationalized as citizens' involvement in extra-representational forms of political participation outside of institutionalized channels, i.e., participation in boycotts, petitions, and public demonstrations (Teorell, Torcal, & Montero, 2007: 341). Political trust is measured as citizens' trust towards the parliament, as a key institution of representative democracy. The following section presents our empirical findings, while the final section concludes with a summary and implications of the results.

Political trust and protest behavior: the micro-level relationship

For decades, scholars have adopted political distrust to explain why people take part in protest activities (e.g. Gamson, 1968; Gurr, 1970; Muller et al., 1982). Norris, Walgrave and van Aelst (2005: 189) have labeled this micro-level explanation of protest politics "*disaffected radicalism*". The reasoning as to why political distrust should feed protest behavior has changed over time, however. In the early 1970s, scholars like Gurr (1970) and Crozier et al. (1975) described protest behavior "as a rebellious expression of discontent with the conventional channels of representative democracy and the search for alternative ways to challenge the regime" (Norris, 2011: 222). While conventional political participation was considered a stabilizer for the political system, protest participation was perceived, rather, as a threat (Nilson & Nilson, 1980: 385). Since then, the idea of protest politics as disruptive and irrational behavior has been replaced by another perspective. In this view, protest politics is conceived as an alternative and legitimate channel for political action, i.e., as a more direct and issue-specific possibility for participating in the political process (e.g., Dalton, 2006; Inglehart, 1977). Protest activities are no longer perceived as either an exit strategy, or as violent acts that threaten the stability of political systems. However, citizens who are critical of political authority in general, and of representative democracy in particular, are still expected to be more likely to engage in such "elite-challenging activities" (Inglehart & Catterberg, 2002: 302).

In contrast to this standard hypothesis, some authors have formulated an alternative hypothesis on the relationship between political trust and protest by highlighting that the public in Western countries is increasingly likely both to perceive protest as legitimate and to take part in such activities. For example, van Aelst and Walgrave (2001) have argued that protest activities and the protesters themselves have become normalized over recent decades and, therefore, we should not find pronounced differences between protest participants and participants in more institutionalized participation in terms of social-structural characteristics and attitudes (see also Meyer & Tarrow, 1998). As Norris et al. (2005: 191) have highlighted, this explanation sees protests as "*conventional strategic resources*". While the normalization thesis suggests changes over time, we still base our analysis on the standard assumption that distrust in representative political institutions is a source of extra-representational protest behavior:

Hypothesis 1: The less citizens trust in representative political institutions, the more likely they are to take part in extra-representational protest activities.

Empirically, the link between political support in general, or trust in state institutions, and protest behavior has been explored in various studies.¹ Contrary to the strong theoretical arguments, most studies have shown that protest behavior is not directly linked to political support or trust (for overviews, see Norris, 1999: 261ff.; 2011: 223f.). This missing link has been revealed in various empirical studies; for example, very early on in the five-nation Political Action Study (Farah, Barnes, & Heunks, 1979: 437-440), but also later on in empirical studies based on selected countries, or large-scale cross-national comparisons (e.g., Booth & Seligson, 2005; Christensen, forthcoming; Dalton et al., 2010; Norris et al., 2005; Schussman & Soule, 2005; Thomassen, 1990). Contrary to these findings, some studies have been able to detect a significant negative relationship between political trust and protest behavior (e.g., Dalton, 2004; Hooghe & Marien, 2012; Norris, 1999, 2011). In addition, scholars who focus only on specific samples of the population have also found statistically significant negative relationships (e.g., Nilson & Nilson, 1980; Useem & Useem, 1979). A more recent study has supported the strongest version of the normalization thesis by empirically showing that political trust is positively related to protest behavior (Dubrow et al. 2008). For these authors, trust in parliament increases protest behavior since it “subsumes a belief that legislators are willing to hear the voice of the people and are able to introduce changes in the conditions that bother citizens” (Dubrow et al., 2008: 38).

To sum up, empirical studies on the link between political trust and protest offer no clear answer. To resolve the controversy, we suggest that researchers need to embed this micro-level relationship into its broader political context. A closer look at previous studies already indicates cross-national variation. Dalton (2004: 176), for example, has shown that, in Italy and France, political trust and protest behavior are positively related, whereas a negative relationship can be found in most of the other Western democracies. The following section discusses how the openness of political systems might directly affect the amount of protest and interact with the micro-level relationship between political trust and protest behavior.

Introducing the contextual level: the openness of political systems

Conceptualizing openness and its direct effects on protest behavior

The idea that protest activity outside of mainstream political institutions is closely tied to its wider political context is far from a recent discovery. It is one of the key insights of the so-called political opportunity structure approach within social movement research (see Kriesi, 2004; Meyer, 2004). To put it simply, one can distinguish two groups of studies within the approach. One group of (mostly American) scholars emphasizes the more volatile elements of the political process to study the emergence and development of movements. Another group of (mostly European) scholars focuses more closely on the approach’s hard core, i.e., the political opportunity structures, to explain cross-national variation in mobilization levels, forms, and outcomes (e.g., Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, & Giugni, 1992, 1995; Rucht, 1994). These latter studies are most important for the present study.

Since Eisinger (1973) introduced the term political opportunity structures, movement scholars have tried to assess how open or accessible a political context is for mobilization. Eisinger (1973), for example, emphasized the differences between elected and non-elected city mayors as a key indicator for the formal structure of the local government. In his cross-national study of anti-nuclear movements, Kitschelt (1986) assessed the openness of political systems on the input side by looking at the number of political parties, the relationship between legislators and the executive, as well as at the established patterns of interest intermediation. Furthermore, Kitschelt argued that the capacity of political systems to implement policies is another crucial aspect of the opportunity structure faced by

¹ We consider findings on both trust in state institutions and more general system support since research on the link between political trust and protest behavior does not usually distinguish as clearly between the two concepts (e.g., Schussman & Soule, 2005; Thomassen, 1990).

social movements.² Kriesi et al. (1992, 1995) presented a similar list of structural features. More specifically, Kriesi et al. focused on territorial centralization and functional power sharing, as well as on access options in the parliamentary, administrative and direct-democratic arenas. Lijphart's (1999) distinction between majoritarian and consensus democracies offers yet another possibility to assess how the institutional setting of mobilization varies across countries. Again, consensus democracies, which disperse political power within and between institutions, are seen as more accessible but also more constrained in their capacity to act than majoritarian democracies, where power is far more concentrated (see, e.g., Kriesi, 2004; van der Meer et al., 2009).

This focus on institutional context factors has been criticized in the social movement literature. For example, Gamson and Meyer (1996: 287) argued that, "opportunity has a strong cultural component and that we miss something important when we limit our attention to variance in political institutions and the relationships among political actors." Therefore, Gamson and Meyer (1996) urged movement scholars to incorporate cultural or perceived opportunities into their models. Thus, access seems to depend both on the formal institutional setting and on more informal preconditions. To get closer to this cultural side of opportunity structures, Kriesi et al. (1995: 33ff.) introduced the concept "prevailing strategies" to the study of social movements. "Prevailing strategies" refers to the kind of strategies authorities usually employ when they deal with challengers. The authors distinguished between inclusive and exclusive strategies. A strategy of exclusion is characterized by repression and tends to lead to a polarization of conflicts, while a strategy of inclusion tries to incorporate challengers and might lead to a moderation of conflicts.

So far, we have discussed what kind of institutional and cultural elements social movement researchers had in mind when discussing the openness of political systems. But what are the likely effects of open and closed contexts on the amount of protest activities? In very bold strokes, social movement scholars expect that open political systems encourage political mobilization in general.³ As Kriesi et al. (1995: 46; emphasis added) argue, "the *aggregate* level of mobilization increases with the weakness of the state and the inclusiveness of elite strategies, and will be highest where both combine." In other words, states that offer many access points, and facilitate the mobilization of challengers, encourage participation in the political process and, therefore, we expect higher mobilization and participation rates in open contexts as compared to closed contexts. Note that this expectation holds for moderate forms of political participation only.⁴ Thus, the overall level of participation is expected to increase with the openness of the political context, while the involvement in more radical (often violent) action forms is expected to decrease (see also Kitschelt 1986: 66).

Empirical studies on political participation did not take particular notice of social movement research, and on the whole looked at micro-level factors to explain people's engagement in protest activities (Kriesi, 2008: 148). However, this has changed lately, since there are an increasing number of studies that try to explain protest behavior by incorporating individual and contextual factors. In line with the social movement literature, these studies focus on the direct effects of institutional and cultural elements of the political context on the amount of protest. It depends on the country selection

² Kitschelt (1986) emphasized that states have a higher capacity to act when the state apparatus is centralized, the executive independent from other institutions (e.g., national courts), and when political institutions control a large amount of the economic resources.

³ To be precise Eisinger (1973: 15) and many others assumed a curvilinear relationship between the openness of political opportunity structures and the level of protest mobilization: "Protest is not likely to occur in extremely closed (repressive) systems or extremely open (responsive) systems." However, we think that none of the countries covered by our analyses offers such an extremely closed or open context, respectively.

⁴ The moderate/assimilative vs. radical/confrontational division comes close to central dichotomies found in the literature on political participation, for example, conventional vs. unconventional (Barnes & Kaase, 1979), elite-led vs. elite-challenging (Inglehart, 1977) or institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized (Marien, Hooghe, & Quintelier, 2010). However, the moderate/radical dichotomy rather divides the forms of confrontational and violent protest (e.g., blockades, occupations or arson attacks), on the one side, from less radical protest forms (e.g., petitions or political festivals) and institutionalized participation (e.g., organizational membership or involvement in direct-democratic votes), on the other (e.g., Kriesi *et al.* 1995: 44ff.). We see the three forms covered by the empirical part of our study (i.e., petitions, public demonstrations and boycotts) as belonging to the moderate category.

whether the studies focus on very general measures of democratic development (e.g., Anderson & Mendes, 2006; Dalton et al., 2010) or on more specific aspects of the political opportunity structure faced by protesters in democratic contexts (e.g., Christensen, forthcoming; Dubrow et al., 2008; Fatke & Freitag, 2012; Morales, 2009; van der Meer et al., 2009; Vráblíková, 2011).

In general, the studies report stronger positive effects on the level of protest when it comes to democratic development as compared to the variation found among democracies. For example, Dalton et al.'s (2010) findings based on WVS data indicate that the amount of protest in a given country increases with the level of democratic development, which is measured by the World Bank's rule of law index. By contrast, van der Meer *et al.* (2009) find no significant relationship between Lijphart's two-dimensional classification of democracies and the amount of protest marches and demonstrations in their study of twenty Western countries. Similarly, Christensen (forthcoming) finds no significant effects of institutional openness (as measured by a combined index) on the participation in petitions, lawful demonstrations and/or illegal protest activities.

The interaction between macro and micro effects

Apart from studying the direct effects of political opportunity structures on protest behavior, political participation scholars have started to focus on how these contextual factors interact with micro-level predictors of protest behavior (e.g., Dalton et al., 2010; Marien & Christensen, 2013; van der Meer et al., 2009; Vráblíková, 2011).⁵ To the best of our knowledge, only two studies have begun to look at how the micro-level association between political trust and protest behavior might be conditioned by its wider political context.

In their large-scale comparative study of seventy-nine countries, Dalton et al. (2010) expect that grievances in general, and political dissatisfaction more specifically, should be more important triggers of protest in closed systems than in open systems. "In closed systems, grievances may stimulate protest because they provide the motivation to overcome the barriers to protest activity" (Dalton et al., 2010: 57). Empirically, they do not find support for the hypothesis, as the interaction between political dissatisfaction (measured by trust in the parliament) and political development (measured by the World Bank's rule of law index) is not significantly related to protest activity. Dalton *et al.*'s study is a good starting point, but it does not focus on variation across established democracies. By contrast, Marien and Christensen (2013) zoom-in on variation among twenty-six established democracies.⁶ They measure institutional openness by the effective number of political parties and fiscal decentralization, as well as by a combined index of the two. Again, the authors expect that political trust should have a stronger negative effect on non-institutionalized participation in closed political contexts: "[W]hen the political system makes it difficult for citizens to channel demands into the political decision-making, the non-institutionalized activities are to a larger extent driven by distrust. Conversely, when the political system invites citizen input, the non-institutionalized activities are not to the same extent expressions of political distrust" (Marien & Christensen, 2013). Their empirical findings are mixed at best. While the results suggest that political distrust is a more important source of non-institutionalized participation in closed systems as measured by the effective number of parties, the other two measures of the political context do not yield significant interaction effects.

Based on the political opportunity structure approach, one can however also formulate a counter hypothesis to the one presented by Dalton et al. (2010) and by Marien and Christensen (2013):

⁵ This contrasts with the social movement tradition that has mainly relied on case studies and protest event data to examine the link between political opportunity structures and the level of protest. In the most comprehensive effort, Dalton *et al.* (2010) studied how the level of political development interacts with various grievance-, resource-, and value-based correlates of protest behavior. In their study on democratic and non-democratic countries, they found that the effects of education, group membership, left-right ideology and post-materialism on protest behavior increase with the level of democratic development.

⁶ In contrast to the present working paper, Marien and Christensen (2013) focus on a broader set of institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms of political participation, and do not systematically distinguish between cultural and institutional context factors.

the negative effect of trust in representative institutions on protest activity might be more pronounced in open political contexts. In such a political context, citizens have many channels and levels through which to be heard and, therefore, protest politics might be the terrain of those who are dissatisfied with the way they can actively participate and communicate in these other channels. Thus, distrust in representative political institutions should not be seen as a proxy for political grievances in general but as signaling a more specific critique of the way representative democracy works. This is also illustrated by the examples discussed in the introduction. In turn, such a critique should more likely differentiate protest participants from non-participants in open political contexts as compared to closed ones. Or, to put it differently, the association between political trust and protest behavior may be less pronounced in closed systems, since all sorts of citizens who might be negatively affected by some political decisions need to become active outside of established channels from time to time because there are simply fewer institutionalized channels through which to do so. To conclude, we test the following two competing hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2a: The more open a political system, the weaker the negative micro-level association between political trust and participation in protest activities.

Hypothesis 2b: The more open a political system, the stronger the negative micro-level association between political trust and participation in protest activities.

To conclude the theoretical discussion, Figure 1 summarizes the hypotheses. Apart from the micro-level relationship between political trust and protest behavior, the figure maps the direct effects of the openness of political systems on the amount of protest as well as the contingent relationship between the wider political context, political trust and protest behavior.

[Figure 1]

Measurement and methods

We rely on the European Social Survey (ESS) to test our hypotheses for two reasons. First, because it allows us to focus on the contextual variation among a large-number of established democracies. Second, because the ESS offers sophisticated measures of both our main individual-level variables (political trust and protest behavior) and many control variables. On average, we have information on all variables for 6,872 respondents per country ($SD=1,972$). The minimum number of respondents is 3,721 (Slovakia) and the maximum number is 12,682 (Germany). To account for this differing sample size, the countries were weighted equally in the following analysis. Since the ESS traces engagement in protest activities by referring to the last twelve months, we restrict our analyses to those twenty-one countries that have been included in at least three rounds of the ESS (rounds 1 to 5) (see Table 1). By doing so, peculiarities of a single year should be less likely to affect our results, or to dwarf the effects of the more stable structural features that we are interested in.⁷

Protest behavior: The standard ESS questionnaire covers three items on participation in extra-representational protest activities: signing petitions, boycotting products, and taking part in a lawful public demonstration.⁸ As we are not interested in differences between these forms, but rather see

⁷ We are not interested in temporal changes, but focus instead on the whole time period from 2002 to 2010, to investigate the prevailing relationship between political trust and protest behavior.

⁸ As protest is not easy to define, authors disagree on the ESS items included in their analyses. For example, Hooghe and Marien (2012) rely on the same three measures to operationalize the concept “non-institutionalized” participation, while Dubrow et al. (2008) use the same dataset but combine (a) contacting a politician/government/or local government official, (b) signing a petition, (c) taking part in a lawful public demonstration in their measure of “soft” political protest. However, a factor analysis (principal component with varimax rotation) indicates that the three items (petitions/demonstration/boycotts) load on a different factor than more institutionalized forms of participation (contacted a politician/work for political party or action group/work for another organization) (all countries included in the analysis). Therefore, we combine them in one measure and stick to the label ‘protest behavior’ instead of ‘non-institutionalized’ participation (see Dalton et al., 2010; Quaranta, 2012).

them as part of a common, one-dimensional action repertoire (see also Quaranta, 2012), we combine the three items into one single measure that indicates whether the respondent has taken part in at least one of the three activities. Again this should minimize the effects of specific events, since the opportunity to take part in at least one of the three activities should not depend as much on single campaigns (e.g., the large-scale demonstrations against the war in Iraq 2003). Furthermore, we checked the results by relying on two of the three items only. The findings do not significantly differ from those reported below. The phrasing and coding of the questions for all variables are presented in the appendix.

Political trust: The ESS asks for trust in different political institutions, e.g. trust in a country's parliament, in politicians, in political parties, in the legal system, or in the police. Generally, regulatory institutions are conceived as similarly relevant to the political system as representative institutions. However, since the logic of our argument focuses on representative institutions, we rely exclusively on trust in the national parliament, i.e., the key representative institution in modern democracies. The question has been asked using a 0-10 scale with 10 indicating the highest level of trust.

Institutional context factors: Following the social movement literature, we look at the power dispersion within and between political institutions and levels (see Section 3). More specifically, we rely on three indicators to assess the institutional openness of political systems. By doing so, we are able to cover all three dimensions of democracies identified by Vatter (2009) in his recent re-assessment of Lijphart (1999). First, we rely on Lijphart's (1999) executives-parties dimension to assess the horizontal power-sharing within institutions. This index combines information on the number of effective parties in parliament, the absence of minimal winning and single-party majority cabinets, the proportionality of electoral systems (Gallagher index), and a measure for cabinet dominance (average cabinet duration). Second, we look at fiscal decentralization, measured by the share of state and local government as percentage of total taxation. This indicator is used to assess the vertical power dispersion or concentration (see also Christensen, forthcoming; Morales, 2009; Vráblíková, 2011).⁹ Third, we take into account another arena that may provide access to challengers by focusing on the availability of direct-democratic instruments. More specifically, Hug and Tsebelis' (2002) differentiation of referenda is used to construct an index. The index ranges from zero (no referenda) to four (required referenda and three types of non-required referenda available). As can be seen in Table 1, the twenty-one countries differ significantly on all three indicators. Switzerland turns out to be the most open or accessible context, based on all three indicators, while the United Kingdom differs most in terms of Lijphart's executive-party dimension and Slovenia in terms of fiscal decentralization. Regarding direct democracy, seven countries under scrutiny offer no such instruments at the national level.

[Table 1]

Cultural context factors: The cultural side of political opportunities is less often discussed in the literature and it is harder to come up with established quantitative indicators. Nonetheless, we also assess the cultural (or perceived) openness of political systems with the help of three indicators. To begin with, we rely on Jepperson's (2002) distinction between statist and non-statist societies; referring to the main conception of statehood and state-society relations that prevail in a given country. The concept "statism" can be seen as the ideational supplement to the institutional state strength. Furthermore, this concept comes close to the notion of prevailing strategies, which we discussed in the previous section. It refers to a continuum between two ideal types: a centralized and totally autonomous state apparatus at one end and a totally decentralized form of political power within an

⁹ We did not take Lijphart's second federal-unitary dimension. On the one hand, it is not included in the data of Armingeon et al. (2011). On the other hand, Roberts (2006) has shown that the anomalies for Eastern European countries are far stronger for this second dimension, when compared to the first one.

active and organized society at the other.¹⁰ Following Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas' (2001) study on associational involvement, we rely on a dummy variable to measure this admittedly complex concept. France and Germany are key examples for high statism, as are most continental European countries with an absolutist legacy. By contrast, the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries are found on the other side of the continuum (although they exemplify different types of non-statist societies) (Figure 1).

To get closer to the way citizens actually perceive the openness of the political system, we consider two additional indicators based on survey data. On the one hand, we use the citizens' evaluation, on whether political parties represent their views well, to assess the responsiveness of the representative institutions of each country. Since we are located now at the contextual level, we are not interested in each individual's evaluation, but in the aggregate level of party responsiveness. On the other hand, we look at the aggregate level of political trust. For both, the aggregate level of political trust and party responsiveness, we take the level of perceptions in a society as an indicator for the perceived openness and responsiveness of the political system: higher trust or responsiveness indicates a more open political system. Both measures vary significantly across the twenty-one countries. The average trust level is highest in Finland (5.84 on a ten-point scale) and lowest in Bulgaria (2.15), whereas the share of citizens that feel well represented by a political party differs from 86.6 percent in Switzerland to 28.9 percent in Slovenia.

Apart from the six indicators on the contextual level, Table 1 also shows two combined indices¹¹ for the two dimensions and the share of respondents that have taken part in at least one of the three protest activities. For the sake of simplicity, the following models report only the results based on the combined measures (results based on the individual indicators available from the authors).

Control variables: The general aim of the individual-level analyses is to measure the relationship between protest behavior and political trust. However, our analysis is aimed to control for other possible effects, in order to get an unambiguous answer to the question of the relationship between protest behavior and political trust. Therefore, we take into account the core individual-level sources of protest behavior as control variables: social-structural characteristics, political involvement and political preferences (e.g., Dalton et al., 2010; Schussman & Soule, 2005). The literature suggests that social-structural characteristics, also described as biographical availability, have an impact on protest behavior. We take into account an individual's sex, age, education, and social class. Moreover, we include marital status, the question of whether children still live at home, and the area in which the respondent lives. Generally, scholars studying participation in protest assume that middle-aged, higher educated, unmarried people without children are more likely to participate in protest. In addition, we include an elaborated measure of social class in our model and assume that people belonging to parts of the new middle class and students are most likely to protest.

Besides biographical availability, we also take into account the involvement of citizens in political life and political preferences. We refer to political knowledge, political interest, and the mobilizing structures as indicators for citizens' involvement in politics (mobilizing structures are measured rather poorly through the union membership of the respondents). Moreover, political preferences are also considered as important sources of protest behavior, and can serve as a control for the scenario that dissatisfaction with the current work of the government is the trigger for protest behavior, instead of a general disaffection with representative democracy. Mostly, scholars opt in this case for a left-right scale. Since we know, though, that political preferences are multidimensional, we use Kitschelt's (2012) classification for citizens' political preferences on 'greed', 'grid', and 'group'

¹⁰ In his detailed study, Jepperson (2002) combines two dimensions ("statism" and "corporateness") to arrive at a four-fold classification. The second dimension, corporateness, deals with the way society should be organized. The question is whether society should be organized along individualistic and market-oriented models, on the one hand, or whether it should reflect a more corporate organization, on the other hand.

¹¹ We ran separate principal component analyses resulting in each case in one single factor – one institutional and one cultural factor.

issues.¹² Moreover, we also consider extreme positions on each of the mentioned political preferences. Although these explanations are rarely used to explain protest behavior, they are highly relevant to our research question. By doing so we ensure unambiguously that those who are dissatisfied with representative institutions are more likely to protest, and not those who are not interested or not involved in politics more generally or who hold extreme ideological positions.

Statistical models: Since the combination of micro- and macro indicators within one model causes statistical problems (e.g., underestimation of standard errors) when the two-level-structure (individuals nested in countries) is ignored, we estimate the effects through a multilevel approach. We use a hierarchical linear and nonlinear modeling (HLM)¹³ to estimate both individual-level and contextual-level effects independently, controlling simultaneously for the effects of each level. This model also tests cross-level interaction effects to explore whether cultural or institutional indicators of the national context shape the individual level sources of protest behavior. The empty model illustrates (table not presented) that there is a significant variation in protest behavior between the countries under consideration. The findings show an intra-class-correlation (ICC) of .18, signifying that 18 % of the variance can be explained by contextual level indicators. Since the ICC confirms that a large amount of variance can be attributed to the contextual level, we now pass to the test of our hypothesis.

Empirical findings

Table 2 reports six multilevel models explaining participation in protest activities. Model 1 includes only the individual-level predictors. Since we are primarily interested in the individual-level relationship between trust in the national parliament and extra-representational protest behavior, only these coefficients are presented, though we controlled in each model for all relevant individual-level predictors (for full tables see Appendix). In model 2 to 6 the contextual-level indicators are entered step by step. In model 2, we add the institutional index, which played a central role in the early social movement literature. Thereafter, we supplement the institutional explanation with the index that indicates the cultural openness of political systems. While model 4 includes the two indices, in model 5 and 6, we present the interaction between each index and trust in the national parliament.¹⁴

The results reported in Model 1 show that distrust in representative political institutions is still a source of protest behavior. The findings confirm the standard assumption found in the literature and run against a strong version of the normalization thesis: the more citizens distrust the national parliament, the more likely they are to take part in political activities outside of institutionalized and representational channels (*confirming Hypothesis 1*). While this contrasts to studies that could not find a significant link between political trust and protest behavior (e.g., Booth & Seligson, 2005; Christensen, forthcoming; Dalton et al., 2010; Farah et al., 1979; Norris et al., 2005; Schussman & Soule, 2005; Thomassen, 1990), it corroborates recent studies that found such a link (e.g., Hooghe & Marien, 2012; Norris, 2011). Although these effects are not very strong, we think that the results clearly indicate that discontent with *representative* forms of democracy are a source of citizens' engagement in *extra-representational* protest activities since we controlled for many alternative

¹² First, 'greed-based' preferences refer generally to the desire for income and "concern the extent to which income allocation should be based on market contracting or authoritative redistribution of resources through the state" (Kitschelt 2012: 141). In our analysis we measure this attitude through the agreement with measures to reduce differences in income levels. Next, the question of social organization ('grid') divides individualist-universalist libertarians from collectivist-particularistic authoritarians. In order to measure these preferences appropriately, we used the respondent's attitudes towards the equality of homosexuals. Finally, another important aspect for political preferences is the group dimension, where positions range from universalistic inclusiveness to exclusionary positions. The group dimension is measured in our analysis through the question whether immigration can undermine or enrich a country's cultural life.

¹³ We use the abbreviation HLM, although hierarchical modeling refers to both nonlinear and linear modeling. We used the hierarchical model for binary data in HLM 6.04.

¹⁴ As stated before, we cross-checked our results by entering only the single indicators for institutional and cultural openness in the model, and not the combined indices. Since the findings do not differ substantially, we decided to show only the models for the indices. The few differences are mentioned in the text. Furthermore, we checked our results using a slightly different dependent variable, excluding "petitions" from the protest behavior index. Again, the findings do not differ significantly to those reported.

social-structural, biographical and attitudinal factors associated with protest behavior. In other words, we suggest that trust in the national parliament should not just be interpreted as a proxy variable for general political dissatisfaction (as done by Dalton et al., 2010).

[Table 2]

The findings for the individual-level control variables confirm the literature, since highly educated, middle-aged people that belong to the new middle class (mainly social-cultural professionals) are most likely to take part in protest activities (see, e.g., Dalton et al., 2010; Schussman & Soule, 2005). Furthermore, when controlling for occupational status, women are even more likely to take part in protest activities than men. In addition, the results highlight that protestors are more interested in, and better informed about, politics than non-protestors. Finally, our results highlight that protest participants are more likely to have left-libertarian and extreme attitudes towards greed and grid issues (measured by attitudes about economic redistribution and equal rights for homosexuals). At the same time, we do not find such a clear-cut picture across Europe when it comes to group issues (measured by attitudes towards immigration).

Let us now turn to the direct effects of the openness of political systems on the amount of protest. As shown in Table 2 (Models 2 to 4), all significant effects support the claim that the amount of protest increases with the openness of the political system. To be more precise, only the cultural index, but not the institutional one, turns out to be significantly related to protest behavior. This is in line with the results found by other scholars who tried to assess the influence of institutional context factors on protest behavior, and mostly failed to do so (e.g., Christensen, forthcoming; Morales, 2009; van der Meer et al., 2009). Thus, it seems that it is not the institutional structure per se, but rather the openness as it is perceived by the citizens of the state that influences the amount of protest behavior. This underscores Gamson and Meyer's (1996) advice that (social movement) scholars should focus both on institutional and on cultural elements of the political opportunity structure faced by protestors. This finding is emphasized when comparing the ICC of the different models. We have already mentioned that about 18 percent of the variance can be attributed to the original contextual level, as the empty model showed. This value can be reduced, generally, step by step, in each model we presented. About two percent of the variance can be ascribed to the mere institutional factors (Model 2), but 9 percent are due to cultural contextual factors (Model 3).

The findings for the single indicators support the results based on the two combined indices (tables available from the authors). All three factors used to assess cultural openness significantly affect the amount of protest, whereas this holds for only one of the three 'institutional' factors. In other words, protest participation is more widespread in non-statist societies, as well as in countries where the average citizen feels better represented by political parties and trusts more in the national parliament. By contrast, we only find such an effect for our measure of fiscal decentralization: the more decentralized a country, the higher the amount of protest. Hence, only more access options along the vertical dimension seem to increase the amount of protest, but not power-dispersion along the horizontal dimension (as indicated by Lijphart's party-executive dimension). In contrast to Fatke and Freitag's (2012) comparative study of the Swiss cantons, the degree of direct democracy is also *not* significantly related to the amount of protest in our cross-national study (see also Morales, 2009: 202).

Finally, we look at the interaction across the two levels. Is the micro-level association between trust in representative institutions and protest behavior conditioned by the openness of political systems? For this purpose, Model 5 and 6 report the interaction terms between the two contextual indices and trust in the parliament. As we have already discussed, only the cultural openness of a political system is significantly related to participation in protest activities, and we also observe only negative significant interaction effect when it comes to the cultural side of political opportunities: the more open a political system is in cultural terms, the stronger the negative micro-level association between political trust and protest behavior.

Figure 2 illustrates this interaction: in societies with a low perceived openness, we find far lower levels of protest participation and no pronounced differences between citizens with low and high levels of trust in the national parliament. In societies with higher perceived openness and thus

culturally more open political systems, the overall amount of protest is far higher and we find a strong negative relationship between political trust and protest behavior. This contradicts the idea put forward by Dalton et al. (2010), as well as by Marien and Christensen (2013), that political distrust should be a more important source of protest behavior in closed political contexts (*disconfirming Hypothesis 2a*). By contrast, it supports our counter Hypothesis 2b that the association between political trust and protest behavior is less strong in closed systems as compared to open systems, since all citizens that are negatively affected by some political decisions might need to become active outside of established channels from time to time, since there are simply less alternative, institutionalized access options in which to do so.

[Figure 2]

Conclusion

This working paper took up the controversial debate over the relation between trust in representative political institutions and protest behavior. More precisely, we highlighted that the literature on political participation offers both contrasting hypotheses and inconclusive empirical findings as to whether those citizens who distrust representative political institutions are more or less likely to engage in alternative, extra-representational forms of participation. We tried to move one step further in solving this ongoing controversy, by linking it to research that deals with the questions of how contextual factors both affect the amount of protest and interact with micro-level sources of protest behavior (see, e.g., Anderson & Mendes, 2006; Christensen, forthcoming; Dalton et al., 2010; Dubrow et al., 2008; Fatke & Freitag, 2012; Marien & Christensen, 2013; Morales, 2009; van der Meer et al., 2009; Vráblíková, 2011). To do so, we reviewed the literature on social movements, and introduced several institutional and cultural factors that indicate the openness of political systems: Lijphart's (1999) executives-parties dimension, fiscal decentralization and the degree of direct democracy were introduced as measures for institutional openness, while Jepperson's (2002) statist/non-statist society distinction, as well as perceived party responsiveness and average level of political trust, were introduced as measures for cultural or perceived openness.

Empirically, the paper covered twenty-one European countries that were included in at least three ESS rounds. By combining data from several ESS rounds, we tried to minimize the effects of single year or mobilizing events on our results. Furthermore, the ESS offered sophisticated measures both of our main individual-level variables, i.e., political trust and protest behavior, as well as of many additional sources of protest behavior (which we tried to control for to reach an unambiguous answer to the question of how trust in representative institutions is related to engagement in protest activities).

Relying on multilevel logistic regressions, we showed that people taking part in petitions, public demonstrations or boycotts are indeed more likely to distrust the national parliament (see also Hooghe & Marien, 2012; Norris, 2011). As we controlled for many alternative micro-level factors associated with protest behavior, we think that this negative micro-level relationship can be interpreted to indicate that discontent with *representative* forms of democracy leads people to take part in extra-representational protest activities. Moreover, our results highlighted that one should indeed embed this micro-level relationship in its broader political context. We show that in culturally more open political contexts, citizens are more likely to engage in protest activities. This underscores that scholars should focus in particular on more cultural or perceived elements of the context faced by protesters (see Gamson & Meyer, 1996). While the cultural context factors are significantly related to the amount of protest, the institutional index turned out to be not significantly related. Furthermore, we found that the micro-level relationship between political trust and protest behavior is conditioned by the openness of the political system: the more open a political system, the stronger the negative micro-level association between political trust and participation in protest activities. Again, this effect can only be observed when taking into account measures on the cultural side of the political context.

Referring back to the examples in the introduction, our results clearly underscore that a critique of representative democracy is a major source of protest behavior. However, such a critique tends to differentiate protest participants from non-participants far more in those democracies that are generally perceived as already quite open to citizens' demands. Thus, we could also interpret this as a

sign of a vibrant and critical political scene, where those disaffected with representative political channels do not become apathetic but, rather, raise their voice in alternative, extra-representational channels. Future research should however rely on alternative data sources (e.g., on-site protest surveys or panel studies), both to better understand the claims made by the protestors when criticizing representative democracy as well as to answer the question of how (sustained) protest participation and unfulfilled expectations might influence citizens' attitudes towards representative institutions (see, e.g., della Porta & Reiter, 2012; Ramid et al., 2012). However, we advise scholars to not lose sight of the wider political context when studying these phenomena.

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Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Direct and contingent effects of the openness of political systems

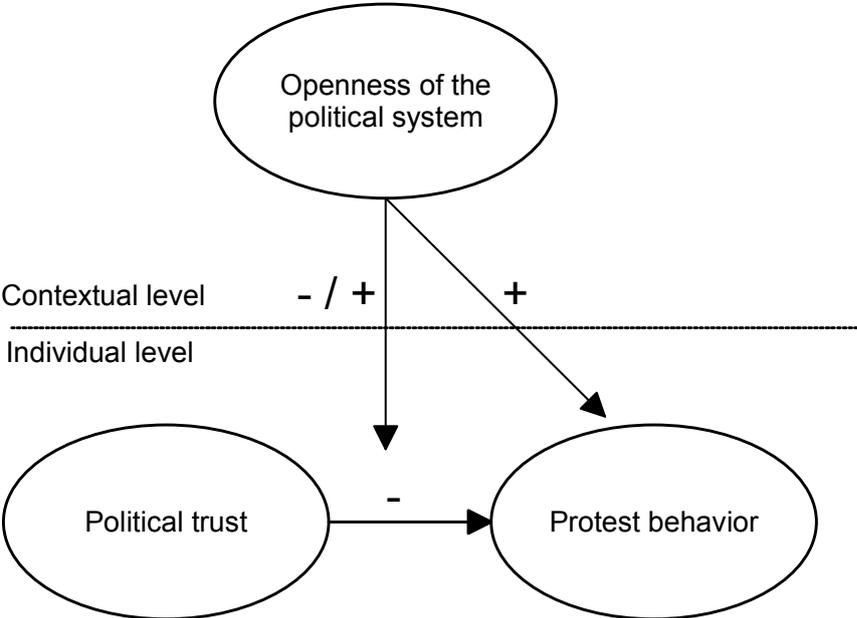


Table 1: Country sample and contextual factors

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Lijphart's executives-parties dimension</i> | <i>Fiscal decentralization</i> | <i>Direct democracy index</i> | <i>Institutional index</i> | <i>Non-statist societies</i> | <i>Aggregated party responsiveness</i> | <i>Aggregated political trust</i> | <i>Cultural index</i> | <i>Share of protest participants</i> |
|--|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bulgaria | -0.67 | 5.7 | 1 | -0.80 | 0 | 54.4 | 2.15 | -1.68 | 6 |
| Hungary | -0.77 | 5.8 | 2 | -0.58 | 0 | 86.6 | 3.80 | -0.40 | 7 |
| Portugal | -0.68 | 6.1 | 1 | -0.79 | 0 | 77.9 | 3.60 | -0.89 | 7 |
| Poland | -0.26 | 10.8 | 2 | -0.11 | 0 | 74.1 | 3.02 | -1.49 | 8 |
| Slovenia | 0.81 | 1.5 | 3 | 0.35 | 0 | 83.9 | 3.95 | -1.40 | 8 |
| Estonia | 0.52 | 13.2 | 2 | 0.40 | 0 | 74.1 | 4.20 | -0.44 | 10 |
| Czech Republic | 0.23 | 13.0 | 0 | -0.31 | 0 | 64.5 | 3.27 | -0.49 | 13 |
| Greece | -1.29 | 0.8 | 1 | -1.32 | 0 | 57.5 | 4.40 | -0.50 | 13 |
| Slovakia | 0.21 | 6.5 | 3 | 0.24 | 0 | 73.4 | 3.84 | -0.34 | 13 |
| Netherlands | 0.42 | 3.7 | 0 | -0.59 | 1 | 59.3 | 5.19 | 0.92 | 14 |
| Ireland | -0.29 | 2.0 | 2 | -0.48 | 1 | 73.2 | 4.47 | 0.77 | 21 |
| Spain | -0.50 | 25.9 | 2 | 0.37 | 0 | 78.1 | 4.84 | 0.02 | 26 |
| Austria | -0.09 | 18.4 | 2 | 0.28 | 0 | 73.0 | 4.90 | -0.43 | 27 |
| United Kingdom | -2.20 | 4.5 | 0 | -1.93 | 1 | 81.8 | 4.26 | 0.58 | 28 |
| Germany | -0.64 | 29.2 | 0 | -0.12 | 0 | 40.1 | 4.26 | -0.20 | 31 |
| Denmark | 1.07 | 34.5 | 2 | 1.53 | 1 | 55.8 | 6.24 | 1.59 | 32 |
| Switzerland | 2.23 | 40.5 | 4 | 2.93 | 1 | 77.7 | 5.69 | 1.44 | 34 |
| Finland | 0.88 | 21.3 | 0 | 0.36 | 1 | 28.9 | 5.84 | 0.97 | 38 |
| France | -1.03 | 10.6 | 1 | -0.79 | 0 | 65.2 | 4.34 | -0.57 | 38 |
| Norway | 0.86 | 14.1 | 0 | 0.06 | 1 | 75.1 | 5.70 | 1.33 | 41 |
| Sweden | 0.61 | 31.8 | 1 | 0.91 | 1 | 54.4 | 5.76 | 1.25 | 43 |
| Correlation with share of protest participants | r=0.26 | 0.66 | -0.22 | 0.36 | 0.60 | 0.51 | 0.77 | 0.73 | - |

Note: All indicators are explained in the text. Institutional and cultural indices are factor scores of a principal component analysis for which the single cultural and institutional indicators were recoded to vary between 0 and 1 (1 indicates high openness of the political system).

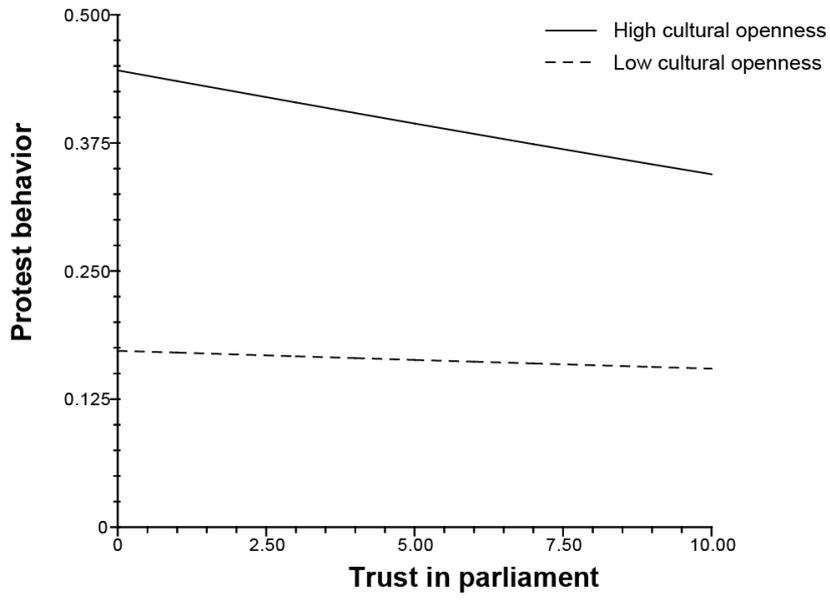
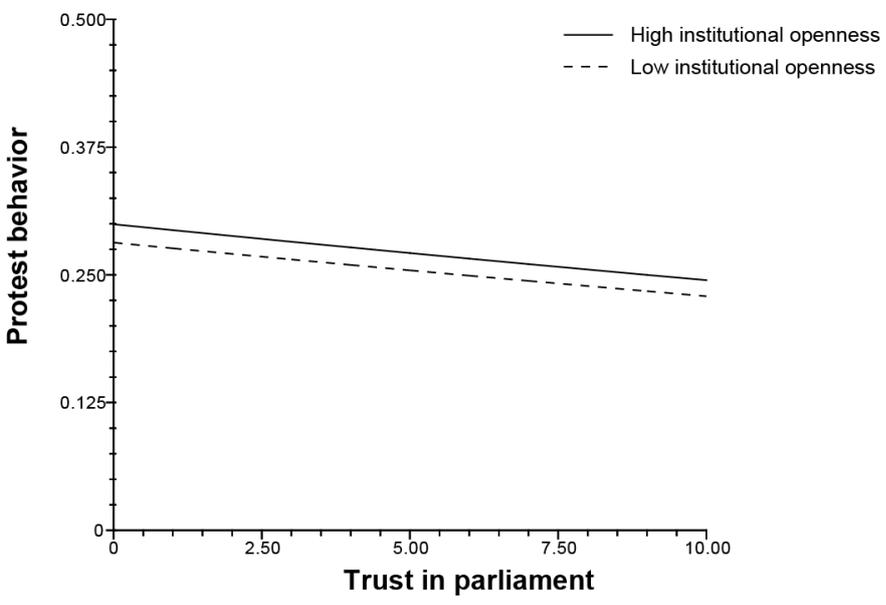
Sources: The measures for the three institutional context factors are based on the comparative political data set of Armingeon et al. (2011) (years 2000 to 2009); the statist/non-statist classification is based on Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas (2001); the aggregated values for party responsiveness are based on survey data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) (survey question: “Would you say that any of the parties in [country] represents your views reasonably well?” yes/no; the values for most countries are taken from the second wave of the CSES (2001-2005), while missing data has been filled up with the third wave (2008-2011); the aggregated values of political trust and the share of protest participants are based on the cumulative ESS data set used for this analysis (political trust is measured by the average value for trust in the national parliament in a given country, ranging from 0 ‘no trust at all’ to 10 ‘complete trust’; the share of protest participants indicates the share of respondents in percent that has taken part in at least one of the three protest activities, i.e., ‘signing a petition’, ‘taking part in lawful demonstration’, ‘boycotting certain products’).

Table 2: Logistic multilevel regression of participation in protest activities

| | Model 1 | | | Model 2 | | | Model 3 | | | Model 4 | | | Model 5 | | | Model 6 | | |
|--|-------------------------|------|---------|--------------------------|-------|---------|---------------------|-------|---------|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------------------------|-------|---------|---------------------------------|-------|---------|
| | Only individual factors | | | Plus institutional index | | | Plus cultural index | | | Plus institutional & cultural indices | | | Interaction with institutional index | | | Interaction with cultural index | | |
| | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value |
| Constant | -4.51 | 0.33 | *** | -4.49 | 0.33 | *** | -4.45 | 0.30 | *** | -4.45 | 0.31 | *** | -4.45 | 0.31 | *** | -4.44 | 0.31 | *** |
| <i>Individual-level effects</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trust in nat. parliament | -0.03 | 0.00 | *** | -0.03 | 0.00 | *** | -0.03 | 0.00 | *** | -0.03 | 0.00 | *** | -0.03 | 0.00 | *** | -0.03 | 0.00 | *** |
| Control variables are included in all models (For full tables, see Appendix) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Contextual-level effects</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Institutional index | | | | 0.313 | 0.179 | n.s. | | | | 0.038 | 0.146 | n.s. | 0.016 | 0.147 | n.s. | 0.044 | 0.145 | n.s. |
| Cultural index | | | | | | | 0.632 | 0.128 | *** | 0.615 | 0.147 | *** | 0.615 | 0.147 | *** | 0.676 | 0.146 | *** |
| Interaction trust*institutional index | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0.004 | 0.003 | n.s. | | | |
| Interaction trust*cultural index | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -0.015 | 0.003 | *** |
| ICC | 0.18 | | | 0.16 | | | 0.09 | | | 0.09 | | | 0.09 | | | 0.09 | | |
| Variance | 0.73 | 0.85 | | 0.62 | 0.79 | | 0.31 | 0.56 | | 0.33 | 0.57 | | 0.33 | 0.58 | | 0.32 | 0.57 | |
| N (Individuals/Countries) | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | |

Notes: Entries are unstandardized multilevel logistic regression coefficients, standard errors and p-values (***<0.01; **<0.05; *<0.10). We used weighted data (ESS design weight and country/wave adaption). ICC is estimated as $p = \text{var}(u_j) / (\text{var}(u_j) + \pi^2/3)$ (see Snijders & Bosker, 1999: 224).

Figure 2: The micro-level association between trust in the national parliament and protest behavior in open and closed contexts



Note: The lines indicate the effect of political trust on protest behavior when the indices of institutional openness and cultural openness are one standard deviation below and above the average values (i.e., at -1 and 1)

Appendix

Table A.1: Coding of individual-level variables

| Variable | Phrasing of questions and coding | Min | Max | Mean | SD |
|--|--|------|------|-------|------|
| Dependent variable | | | | | |
| Protest index | Index based on the following three questions: There are different ways of trying to improve things in [country] or help prevent things from going wrong. During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following? Have you ...signed a petition? ...boycotted certain products? ...taken part in a lawful public demonstration? The index indicates whether the respondent has taken part in at least one of these activities; 0=no, 1=yes | 0 | 1 | 0.33 | 0.47 |
| Main independent variable | | | | | |
| Trust in parliament | Please tell me on a score of 0-10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions ([country]'s parliament)?; 0=no trust, 10=complete trust | 0 | 10 | 4.58 | 2.48 |
| Control variables | | | | | |
| <i>Social-structural characteristics</i> | | | | | |
| Sex | Gender of respondent; 0=female, 1=male | 0 | 1 | 0.48 | 0.5 |
| Age | Age of respondent | 13 | 105 | 47.44 | 18.1 |
| Age (log) | Age of respondent (log) | 2.56 | 4.65 | 3.78 | 0.43 |
| Education | Education of respondent; 1=less than secondary, 2=lower secondary completed, 3=upper secondary completed, 4=post-secondary completed, 5=tertiary completed. | 1 | 5 | 3.04 | 1.31 |
| Social class (dummies): | Recoded from respondent's description of social class into 10 different categories (according to Kriesi, 1998) | | | | |
| <i>Self-employed</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.04 | 0.19 |
| <i>Manager</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.11 | 0.31 |
| <i>Technical expert</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.06 | 0.24 |
| <i>Soc.-cult. specialist</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.09 | 0.28 |
| <i>Non-manual worker</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.06 | 0.23 |
| <i>Worker</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.16 | 0.37 |
| <i>Retired</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.26 | 0.44 |
| <i>Housewife/men</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.09 | 0.29 |
| <i>Student</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.09 | 0.28 |
| <i>Unemployed</i> | | 0 | 1 | 0.05 | 0.22 |
| Married | Marital status of respondent; 0=not married, 1=married | 0 | 1 | 0.54 | 0.5 |
| Children | Children living at home; 0=no, 1=yes | 0 | 1 | 0.38 | 0.49 |
| Urban | Respondent's description of domicile; 1=farm or home in countryside, 2=country village, 3=town or small city, 4=suburbs or outskirts of big city, 5=a big city | 1 | 5 | 3.07 | 1.21 |

| <i>Political involvement</i> | | | | | |
|--|--|---|----|------|------|
| Political knowledge | Respondent's description of media use on political issues (radio, television, newspaper); exemplary question on television: On an average weekday, how much of your time watching television is spent watching news or programs about politics and current affairs? Recoded to vary between 0 and 7 with 0 indicating no media use on political issues (i.e. smallest degree of political knowledge) | 0 | 7 | 2.01 | 1.16 |
| Political interest | How interested would you say you are in politics – are you very interested (1), quite interested (2), hardly interested (3), not at all interested (4) | 1 | 4 | 2.56 | 0.88 |
| Union membership | Are you or have you ever been a member of a trade union or similar organization? 0=no, 1=yes | 0 | 1 | 0.45 | 0.5 |
| <i>Political preferences (Greed-Grid-Group-Classification according to Kitschelt, 2012)</i> | | | | | |
| Greed issues | Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: the government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels; 1=disagree strongly, 5=agree strongly | 1 | 5 | 3.8 | 1.05 |
| Greed (extreme) | Recoded the above cited indicator into moderate and extreme positions; 0=moderate, 2=extreme | 0 | 2 | 1.15 | 0.65 |
| Group issues | Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries? 0=cultural life undermined, 10=cultural life enriched | 0 | 10 | 5.58 | 2.51 |
| Group (extreme) | Recoded the above cited indicator into moderate and extreme positions; 0=moderate, 2=extreme | 0 | 2 | 0.79 | 0.73 |
| Grid issues | Please say to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish; 1=disagree strongly, 5=agree strongly | 1 | 5 | 3.81 | 1.13 |
| Grid (extreme) | Recoded the above cited indicator into moderate and extreme positions; 0=moderate, 2=extreme | 0 | 2 | 1.22 | 0.68 |

| <i>Table A.2 (continued)</i> | Model 1 | | | Model 2 | | | Model 3 | | | Model 4 | | | Model 5 | | | Model 6 | | |
|---|-------------------------|------|---------|--------------------------|-------|---------|---------------------|-------|---------|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|--------------------------------------|-------|---------|---------------------------------|-------|---------|
| | Only individual factors | | | Plus institutional index | | | Plus cultural index | | | Plus institutional & cultural indices | | | Interaction with institutional index | | | Interaction with cultural index | | |
| | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value | Coef. | SE | P-value |
| Political knowledge | 0.04 | 0.01 | *** | 0.04 | 0.01 | *** | 0.04 | 0.01 | *** | 0.04 | 0.01 | *** | 0.04 | 0.01 | *** | 0.04 | 0.01 | *** |
| Union membership | 0.32 | 0.02 | *** | 0.32 | 0.02 | *** | 0.32 | 0.02 | *** | 0.32 | 0.02 | *** | 0.32 | 0.02 | *** | 0.32 | 0.02 | *** |
| Political interest | -0.50 | 0.01 | *** | -0.50 | 0.01 | *** | -0.50 | 0.01 | *** | -0.50 | 0.01 | *** | -0.50 | 0.01 | *** | -0.50 | 0.01 | *** |
| Greed issues | 0.02 | 0.01 | ** | 0.02 | 0.01 | ** | 0.02 | 0.01 | ** | 0.02 | 0.01 | ** | 0.02 | 0.01 | ** | 0.02 | 0.01 | ** |
| Greed (extreme) | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** |
| Group issues | 0.00 | 0.00 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.00 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.00 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.00 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.00 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.00 | n.s. |
| Group (extreme) | 0.00 | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.00 | 0.01 | n.s. |
| Grid issues | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** | 0.07 | 0.01 | *** |
| Grid (extreme) | 0.14 | 0.01 | *** | 0.14 | 0.01 | *** | 0.14 | 0.01 | *** | 0.14 | 0.01 | *** | 0.14 | 0.01 | *** | 0.14 | 0.01 | *** |
| <i>Contextual-level effects</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Institutional index | | | | 0.313 | 0.179 | n.s. | | | | 0.038 | 0.146 | n.s. | 0.016 | 0.147 | n.s. | 0.044 | 0.145 | n.s. |
| Cultural index | | | | | | | 0.632 | 0.128 | *** | 0.615 | 0.147 | *** | 0.615 | 0.147 | *** | 0.676 | 0.146 | *** |
| Interaction political trust*institutional index | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0.004 | 0.003 | n.s. | | | |
| Interaction political trust*cultural index | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | -0.015 | 0.003 | *** |
| ICC | 0.18 | | | 0.16 | | | 0.09 | | | 0.09 | | | 0.09 | | | 0.09 | | |
| Variance | 0.73 | 0.85 | | 0.62 | 0.79 | | 0.31 | 0.56 | | 0.33 | 0.57 | | 0.33 | 0.58 | | 0.32 | 0.57 | |
| N (Individuals/Countries) | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | | 143445 / 21 | | |

Notes: Entries are unstandardized multi-level logistic regression coefficients, standard errors and p-values (***<0.01; **<0.05; *<0.10). We used weighted data (ESS design weight and country/wave-adaption). ICC is estimated as $p = \text{var}(u_j) / (\text{var}(u_j) + \pi^2/3)$ (see Snijders & Bosker, 1999: 224).